



REPORT

From the office of the...

President

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Denver Della-Vedova, President and CEO
SUBJECT: SRA 21F Report
DATE: July 18, 2021

To the most honorable Assembly,

This is a list of highlights, milestones and goals as of July 18th 2021.

Year Plan Developments (Completed)

The board and myself continued our fortnightly meetings highlighted in my report to 21E. At this point we are all submitting our year plans, but recognize with the ever evolving environment in and around our campus due to Covid-19 that these documents will be truly living documents compared to previous years.

As well we have connected with SRA caucuses to aid in year plan development for them, but again these are living documents. Those who have not made contact are still welcome to touch base and further develop these plans.

Past Events, Projects, & Activities

This month has been slightly more developmentally focused, coalescing final items on several committees and beginning others. As well many individuals at McMaster University have taken vacation, meaning many committees have been on hold until their new starts in late July or early August

Meetings of note

Many of the following are outlines of ongoing conversations that will develop into more actionable items as the year progresses. This is not a summary of all meetings but rather highlights.

Sean Van Koughnett

I met with Sean several times through many shared tables but more recently we have had two small group discussions surrounding the non-academic activities planned for the fall. The first of these revolved around a need for stronger communication between the institution and students. I highlighted key reasons such as housing requirements as to why and where the communication needs to be stronger. I was directed to several other helpful sources and followed up on this (highlighted below). Our second conversation much more recently revolved around campus extracurriculars and the optimism towards finding some spaces and ability to host in person events, although there are more conversations to be had with several campus partners including EOHSS to determine how or if this could occur.

Kim Dej

Kim and I had a fruitful conversation surrounding the need for clearer communications with students. I highlighted specifically the need for clearer language on winter 2022; this included clarity on the large number of “TBD” room assignments as these are just meant as temporary place holders. As well we discussed a need for clearer expectations on fall courses including the spaces, what the in-person courses will look like, amenities and study spaces this fall and transparency surrounding the decision making processes.

Presidents council

Presidents council had its first meeting near the end of June. Attendance was strong and the group discussed a number of initiatives for the year. There was significant interest in collaboration and the intent to create three committees. One for the Lotus initiative (a project started by Giancarlo to unify long term strategy amongst student leadership), another to discuss orientation plans for the class of 2024 and the final to an events committee to keep all parties in the loop on upcoming events in an attempt to spur collaboration and reduce duplicated efforts.

Other

As well I have had many other committees or 1:1 meetings with the university/other stakeholders. The following is a list of folks/groups you are welcome to reach out regarding,

Sexual violence Prevention and Response Task Force

Sexual Violence and Prevention Response Office

MUSC Board of Management 21/22

Return to McMaster Oversight Committee Meeting

McMaster Okanagan Mental Health Task Force

Sustainability Advisory Committee

Return to Work Operations Group

Full - time staff (all)

Several different staff departments

IT hiring Committee

HR hiring Committee

The library leadership

Jenna courage and clubs

Campus Wireless and MS 365 Student Email Steering Committee

Ath and Rec

Empowerment Squared

Student housing survey

The board and our comms department developed a survey which can be found [here](#). The intent for this is to have a clear idea of what our student population and traffic will look like on and off campus. With this we can better provide services based upon the needs of our student body for the fall semester.

Hiring committees

I was on several hiring committees this month, aiding in the selection of an HR director, a graphic designer at The Underground, a club's assistant and a senior information tech. As well I have been recruited for a Director for the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO) and Anti-Oppression Program (AOP). The timeline for this hiring board is much longer than the previous four but should complete by the end of September.

Undergraduates of Canadian Research-Intensive Universities (UCRU)

Internally

Siobhan, Sneha (AVP PFA) and I have met to discuss federal goals but this is an ongoing conversation. Sneha and I will look for ways to secure funding for UCRU and in turn offset costs.

UCRU Governance

I now have a seat on the UCRU Governance Committee. So far we started a policy review of our elections policy, which will be ongoing throughout the next few meetings.

UCRU Advocacy Committee

I have a seat on the UCRU Advocacy Committee where we have discussed some of the goals for the organization surrounding our priorities. These are being brought by member schools, but in addition to these we are drafting a letters to both the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and the Minister of Infrastructure & Communities on international student vaccine access and emergency funding for interregional support respectively. In addition to this I had drafted a letter on indigenous student needs highlighting the lack of action regarding specific parts of the TRC. Advocacy committee will be addressing this in the near future.

Meetings through UCRU

We have met with Landon Wilcock Senior Policy Advisor to the Liberal Caucus. We highlighted student's concerns surrounding student financial aid, mental health, international students & students with disabilities and followed up with a letter highlighting specific asks around each of these points.

Office hours and year plans

The board has continued our commitment to office hours for the SRA to assist with year plans and goals. These will become regular check ins sorted by caucus come the fall to aid folks where applicable.

Housing

With a recognition that the summer is coming to a close, the ad hoc committee to create a housing based event for students has decided to gear it more towards tenant rights and support systems for students as tenants. The group has committed to meeting regularly with goals currently set to find groups willing to participate in an event. More updates will come in the near future but I encourage anyone interested to reach out.

Current Challenges

Hiring committees were quite busy but have for the most part subsided! Looking forward to the tail end of this summer!

I wish you all the best with the second half of your summer,

Thank you,

Denver Della-Vedova

President and CEO

McMaster Students Union

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