



REPORT

From the office of the...
AVP University Affairs

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Hargun Kaur, Associate Vice-President University Affairs
SUBJECT: SRA 210 Report
DATE: February 5, 2022

Dear Members of the SRA,

I hope you have had a great start to the second semester and are slowly transitioning into the soon approaching in-person return to campus. I have had an exciting past couple of months in my role as Associate Vice-President University Affairs (AVP UA). The committee has done excellent work so far and has split up into project groups as we work on our projects, campaigns, and advocacy. I will briefly outline our activities and other work I've been up to below.

Progress on Yearplan

- **International Student Task Force**
 - We will be organizing a larger task force meeting following the full in-person return to courses. We will establish a regular meeting time and begin developing a list of projects for this year. We will also be creating a terms of reference to ensure this committee will continue beyond. Data from this task force will be provided directly to International Student Services to improve their operations.
- **SUSTAIN 2SS3 Creating the MSU's Inaugural Sustainability Report**
 - Siobhan and I are working directly with the SUSTAIN 2SS3 group this semester. We had our first meeting with the group earlier this week and I have attached the project description below for those interested
 - *The McMaster Students Union (MSU) has a goal to enhance sustainability of its services and operational units, with a focus on intersectionality, environmental, accessibility, and financial components of sustainability, as demonstrated in their Sustainability Operating Policy. To support the MSU's sustainability goals, SUSTAIN 3S03 students consult with approximately five MSU services in the Fall of 2021 to capture their current progress and goals to enhance sustainability in their respective business unit. The outcomes of this work included a report of each service's progress, goals, and challenges; a presentation to the Student Representative Assembly; and a transition report aimed to support SUSTAIN 2SS3 students in continuing this work in the Winter of 2022*

The next steps, and goals for SUSTAIN 2SS3 students, will be to follow-up with each service to 1) support them in achieving their goals, where

appropriate, 2) capture their progress on meeting and achieving their goals, and 3) prepare the MSU's first-ever sustainability report highlighting the work of the five key services.

Past Events, Projects, & Activities

- **THRIVE Week**
 - Various peer support services carried out incredible events for THRIVE Week! I hope you had a chance to drop by and support our services 😊
- **Methods of Assessment**
 - Committee members did a lot of amazing work on brainstorming and consulting with other organizations on alternate methods of assessment. This was presented in front of Dr. Kim Dej and was very well-received. Further collaborations have also been discussed.
- **iCent Application: MSU Information**
 - Michael Wooder, our Director of Marketing & Communication, updated the MSU information on this application following conversations with the committee about what should be added.
- **December 6th: Panel on the Impacts of COVID-19 on Gender-Based Violence**
 - The MSU was actively involved in planning this along with a university committee. Their panel was held on December 6th from 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM EST and had great attendance!
- **International Student Survey Results**
 - The results of the International Student Survey from last year were presented at the International Student Working group to various university staff working on bettering the experience for international students. We were encouraged to conduct a follow up survey to help International Student Services better tailor their services to the evolving need for international students.

Upcoming Events, Projects, & Activities

The following are projects that have been started and are currently being further developed by committee members. Many projects are championed by a small number of committee members, with opportunities for others to contribute as they'd like.

- **Reading Week Moratorium and Date Change**
 - Will and Olsen, SRA Health Sciences, have completed their reading week survey. I am working on a time for these results to be shared with Dr. Kim Dej to ensure reading week adjustments are created with student interests in mind.
- **International Student Survey**
 - We are planning a follow-up survey to last years to determine how the international student experience has changed as we return to in-person learning. This survey will be run in partnership with International Student Services and the results will be used to inform their services to create a better experience for international students.
- **Indigenous Student Representation in the MSU**

- We are hoping to set up meetings with Indigenous student groups and Indigenous Student Services which has been a bit difficult with everyone's busy schedules as we near the end of the year. This will be something that will be further focused on later in February/early March.
- **Showcase of Literature on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response**
 - An idea that arose from a conversation with Wil Fularczuk, Coordinator of Sexual Violence Prevention Education at the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office, committee members came up with a possible idea of highlighting literature on the topic in the library. We have been having some trouble scheduling a time with the Display Committee to carry this out, but will be following up following the return to campus.
- **MSU/McMaster Academic Accommodations & Mental Health Resources**
 - We had a meeting with Dr. Kim Dej and the McMaster communications department about communication regarding the MSAF and academic accommodation process. One of the key stakeholders from McMaster has gone on leave and this project has not moved forward as a result. This project has been put on hold with the focus on return to campus. However, Dr. Kim Dej has been making multiple posts to clarify the accommodation process based on misconceptions brought up during our meetings.
- **Echo360/Transcripts Resources**
 - The committee has shifted their focus from student resources to a focus on faculties to understand barriers to the implementation of Echo360. Members of the committee are currently working on drafting a survey to be sent out to faculty members to assess challenges with implementing Echo360 in their classes.
- **Menstrual Equity Campaign**
 - The Menstrual Equity project is being run by SRA members on the University Affairs committee. This campaign is likely to be held later this semester, pending thoughts from the other members working on this outside the university affairs committee
- **Peer Support Hub**
 - I am working with Student Accessibility Services and the MSU Peer Support directors to set up an introductory meeting. This collaboration will be focused on creating a support hub for all peer support directors and potentially volunteers along with university administration.

Successes

There have been many successes over the past few months in the role. Some key areas include engagement of committee members in bringing new ideas and taking the lead on projects, active collaboration with the Board of Directors and other AVPs, as well as building and strengthening relationships with community and campus partners. They have started taking on a larger role within the committee as they begin to self-organize and lead their own projects as well as take the lead in meeting with community stakeholders.

Current Challenges

The scheduling of meetings remains a challenge, with school getting busier on my front and being unable to find a meeting time that works for everyone in the committee. especially as committee members get busier with school. We are hoping to divide into two meetings based on availability and work according to projects.

Volunteers

I would like to thank Olsen Chan, Lindsey Zhang, Callista Liu, William Pereira, Simran Dhindsa, Maya Mabalay-Bynoe, Ezra Nadler, Rebeena Subadar, and Aisha Baig for their contributions to the work of the University Affairs Committee. They have all been eager and excited to contribute ideas and time to the committee's ongoing projects. Since July, we have been meeting, and many members are taking on increasing responsibility to be involved with consultations, advocacy meetings, and preparing materials for campaigns. They have all been a pleasure to work with and very patient for the start this semester. I'm looking forward to our continued work together.

Best,

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