

MITCHELL GERMAN

FOR VICE-PRESIDENT ADMINISTRATION



WELCOME

Dear Union,

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Mitchell German (he/him) and I am currently completing my final year in the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) program. I feel beyond privileged to have the opportunity to share my passions and ideas surrounding the role of VP Administration with you, in the hopes of finally supporting the transition of the MSU back to its full capacity after the lengthy COVID-19 pandemic. This will be a year of bringing back lost traditions to McMaster, and fostering community within our campus.

I first became involved in the MSU back in my 2nd year when I became a Team Leader (TL) in Spark. I took on this role as a TL after being 'ditched' by the 'Upper Year Buddy' I was assigned by my faculty. Being involved in MSU Spark, I could personally ensure that first years felt supported in their transition to McMaster, and didn't have to navigate that daunting process alone, like I had. Since then, I have held multiple other positions within the MSU (SHEC Peer Support Volunteer, Spark Director, Spark Sessions Coordinator, SWHAT Dispatcher), and have worked with all MSU Services and all faculty societies to some extent. Having progressed through the ranks of the MSU and having just been a PTM, I have had the privilege to grow alongside the impressive leaders that have been hired as incoming Directors/Coordinators, and have existing personal and professional relationships with the majority of them. Taken together, these PTM relationships and my experiences in the MSU Services are an asset in my candidacy as VP Administration. Navigating the inner workings of the MSU Services, learning the role that each Service plays on campus, and understanding the day-to-day responsibilities of a PTM, are all experiences that will support my success in this role, and that cannot be learned overnight. Being a current PTM, I know from experience what works and what doesn't, and I am committed to providing PTMs with the individualized support that is necessary for them to expand their Service and achieve their goals. Looking at the political branch of the VP Admin role, my platform will outline how I plan to support the SRA (including the Speaker) and the AVPs (Internal Governance and Services), something that is of equal importance to me.

While politics might admittedly be new to me (however, I am confident I will catch on quickly based on my experience presenting at Executive Board and my consults with SRA), supporting a team and building a community is not. Rather, I would argue that's my specialty, and that is what the VP Administration role predominantly consists of. Whether it's supporting the students, volunteers, executives, or my fellow PTMs, I have always been there, and plan to be there for you too if given this opportunity (in the way you like to be supported). As the Spark Director, I was able to rebuild our community this past year, increasing engagement with the Service by over 350% compared to previous years. As VP Administration, I would be committed to translating these results over to the MSU, so that I can help to rebuild your community too. Let's work together to rebuild the McMaster community that was lost in the COVID-19 pandemic, but I cannot do it alone, and neither can you.

Thank you for taking the time to read my (admittedly lengthy) platform. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sending joy,



Mitchell German (he/him)

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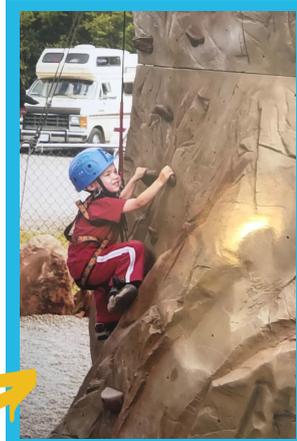
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ABOUT ME



I've always been a hands-on type of person

I've always been up for a challenge no matter how big



I lived in Woodstock Hall in my first year. Anybody else in the Woodstock family?



Graduating in 2022 with my Bachelor of Health Sciences (yay!)



I joined Spark as a Team Leader in 2nd year, and immediately fell in love with the Service. I later became the Sessions Coordinator, then Director



Your typical first year photo with William McMaster



I can never turn down a Coote's Hike (or golden hour)



Spark at Welcome Week 2021

FUN FACT: I met Gina Rodriguez (from Jane the Virgin) on Mac's campus!



RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS

MSU SERVICES

MSU Spark

Spark Part-Time Manager (Director) - (2021-22)*

Won the **Part-Time Manager of the Year Award and **MSU Spirit Award (Spark)***

Spark Sessions Coordinator - (2020-21)

Spark Team Leader - (2019-2021)

MSU Student Health Education Centre (SHEC)

SHEC Peer Support Volunteer (2STLGBQIA+ focused) - (2020-21)

MSU Student Walk Home Attendant Team (SWHAT)

SWHAT Dispatcher - (2022)

SOCIETIES

Bachelor of Health Sciences Society (BHSS)

Welcome Week Representative - (2021-22)

Upper Year Buddy - (2020-21)

MCMMASTER UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Health Sciences

Indigenous Health (HTHSCI 3AH3) Peer Mentor - (Fall 2021)

First Year Inquiry Peer Tutor - (2021-22)

OTHER RELATED EXPERIENCES

McMaster Intramurals

Co-ed and Men's Volleyball Play Comp Division - (2018-22)

Hospitality Services Passion Project

Project Lead - Collaborated with MSU FCC to work towards changing McMaster's Meal Plan

Tiering System to promote a safe(r) campus community for first years with EDs - (2020-22)

Tutor

Nursing Anatomy Tutor - (2020-21)

ORGANIZATIONS I'VE WORKED WITH:

Spark, Student Walk Home Attendant Team (SWHAT), Student Health Education Centre (SHEC), Maroons, Maccess, Pride Community Centre (PCC), Student Success Centre (SSC), Food Collective Centre (FCC), Diversity + Equity Network (previously Diversity Services), **all Faculty Societies (through Spark)**, First Year Council, etc.

PLATFORM POINTS

Overview

PTM/SRA TRAINING & TRANSITIONING

☆ = Major Platform Point

- More Comprehensive 'Who's Who in the MSU' for PTMs and SRA
- Provide Disclosure Training for PTMs (and WW Faculty Planners) ☆
- Continue to Work on Event Planning Training Modules for PTMs on A2L
- Promoting Diversity in Hiring Practices and Breaking Down the 'MSU Bubble' ☆
- Providing PTMs with 'Best Practices' for AD, Executive, and Volunteer Hiring ☆
- Ensuring Adequate Training for AVP IG and AVP Services

WELCOME WEEK

- Welcome Week Return to (BIG) In-Person Events (if COVID-19 permits) ☆
- Highlight MSU Services During Welcome Week ☆
- Ensure WW Values Funding is Communicated to MSU PTMs
- Free WW Rep Parking and Supporting President Elect in Expanding Metrolinx Go Busses During Peak Periods
- Ensure Timely Reimbursement of Faculty Societies and Planners ☆

PROMOTING SAFE(R) SPACES ON CAMPUS

- Indigenous 'Cultural Sensitivity' Training for Service Volunteers ☆
- Supporting Diversity Services (now Diversity and Equity Network) as a Peer Support Service ☆
- Work with Food Collective Centre (FCC) for Meal Plan Tiering System Advocacy
- Ensure Peer Support Service PTMs Who Chair Committees Aren't Tokenized and Encourage McMaster to Pay Their Hours ☆

WORK FEASIBILITY FOR PTMs and AVPs

- Give Incoming PTMs an Opportunity to Ask Questions During VP Admin and VP Finance Elections
- More Efficient Hour-Tracking System for PTMs ☆
- Historic Budget Use Review of MSU Services
- Transition Reports as Working Documents
- Sponsorship Templates for PTMs to Seek Out External Funding
- Advocate for PTMs to be Paid Over Reading Week ☆
- Encourage Wage Review of Spark, EFRT, & Maroons
- Semesterly Review of PTM Overtime (OT) Hours ☆
- AVP Services Budget Line for Incentivization ☆

SUPPORTING THE MSU, MCMASTER, & HAMILTON COMMUNITY

- Regular Check-Ins with AVP IG and AVP Services, Bi-Monthly for SRA ☆
- MSU Services Executive Appreciation ☆
- Advocate for Increased SWC Counsellor Appointments and Mental Health Supports ☆
- Liaising with Compass for the Promotion of MSU Business Units
- Support the Completion of a Community Needs Assessment
- PTM and SRA Bonding/Social Opportunities
- Hamilton Community Spotlight Partnerships in Union Market
- Bringing Back PTM Clusters (Peer Support Services VS Student Life Enhancement Services) ☆

PTM/SRA HIRING & TRANSITION

More Comprehensive 'Who's Who in the MSU' for PTMs and SRA

PTMs and SRA always come into the roles eager to bring forward new initiatives that will enhance student life at McMaster. However, a common theme this year was not knowing who to go to for what, both within and outside the MSU. To help streamline communication to PTMs and SRA, I plan to create a more comprehensive 'Who's Who in the MSU' that can help to point them in the right direction regarding who to contact for what. This will reduce emails, back-and-forth communication, and ultimately the prolonged timelines spent by VP Admin, PTMs, and the SRA while trying to introduce new initiatives to McMaster. This will likely be an independent project, with help from Victoria Scott and other full-time staff within the MSU who have extensive knowledge in this field. I plan for this to be a working document that can be updated based on PTM and SRA feedback throughout the year.

Provide Disclosure Training for PTMs (and WW Faculty Planners) ☆

With the return to campus and past situations that have arisen within the MSU that should not be ignored, it is necessary that PTMs and Welcome Week Faculty Planners receive 'Disclosure Training' prior to the start of their roles. To make this possible, I will work alongside the Equity and Inclusion Office (specifically with Wil Fularczuk in SVPRO) to outline a comprehensive training for how PTMs and WW Faculty Planners can navigate these situations. Appropriate responses to disclosures is of the utmost importance to establish a safe(r) space on campus and to ensure these students receive adequate support. During this Disclosure Training, I want PTMs and WW Faculty Planners to know that this is not something they have to handle independently. As VP Admin, I would ensure I can support them in a confidential and safe way, and debrief with them (if necessary), recognizing the emotional and mental toll this can have on a PTM/WW Faculty Planner.

Continue to Work on Event Planning Training for PTMs on A2L

The current VP Administration (Christina) has started working on an Event Planning Training Module for PTMs on Avenue to Learn (A2L). From what I have been told, this was worked on in collaboration with a third party organization. In the role of VP Admin, I would plan to continue working on this Event Planning Training Module, and also collaborate with Trish Vardon from Campus Events to cross-check the information that we are providing PTMs. This Event Training is imperative, recognizing that many of the PTMs likely haven't had the opportunity to organize large-scale events previously and would appreciate this knowledge during a predominantly in-person year. This will help to ensure MSU Services continue to run high-quality events.

Promoting Diversity in Hiring Practices and Breaking Down the 'MSU Bubble' ☆

While I think it is valuable that the MSU states they promote diversity (of folks with disabilities, the 2STLGBQIA+ community, racialized communities, etc.) through their hiring practices, I think there needs to be specific practices in place to hold accountability for this. This includes blinding names, faculties, and other identifying-factors on resume and cover letter submissions for PTM, Executive, and AVP positions. To help break down the 'MSU Bubble', new initiatives could include introducing some form of Conflict of Interest (COI) policy so we can help to prevent nepotism in the MSU hiring process and friends hiring friends. Preventing the same deck of cards from being shuffled to different positions can help to mitigate this notion that the MSU is an 'elite' bubble, and also enhances opportunities for other folks to be involved in the MSU. To further hold accountability, some form of 'Diversity Audit' that could ensure the individuals working in the MSU represent the diverse student body at McMaster would be beneficial. This audit could also be used to measure the success of any newly introduced diversity enhancing policies/procedures. I would work with EIO, Renee (HR) and AVP IG (for any necessary policies) in this platform point.

PTM/SRA HIRING & TRANSITION

Provide PTMs with 'Best Practices' for Executive and Volunteer Hiring ☆

Newly hired PTMs coming into the role are expected to hire their Assistant Director (if required), Executives, and Volunteers. However, many of these PTMs don't have previous experience leading a large-scale hiring process. This can cause lots of stress and a lack of clarity amongst PTMs, which ultimately results in deviating from proper hiring practices, compromising the professional image of the MSU. This was something I experienced first-hand this year while interviewing with an MSU Service for an Executive position. To help PTMs feel more prepared and supported during hiring, VP Admin should provide PTMs with 'best practices' for hiring during PTM Training, allowing HR to share their insight during this time, and explain what the standard hiring protocols of the MSU are. Setting these expectations in advance, and following-up during major hiring periods throughout the year can ensure that our practices remain professional, objective, and inclusive. A hiring guidelines document should also be circulated amongst Executive Board and anybody else hiring on behalf of the MSU. I would work alongside Renee from HR to make this possible, as she is the expert in this field.

Ensuring Adequate Training for AVP IG, AVP Services, and the Speaker

Recognizing that as VP Admin I would be working closely alongside the AVP IG, AVP Services, and the Speaker, I want to ensure that they feel they have been adequately transitioned into their role, and that they can also depend on me for support in this transition. With that being said, not having much personal prior experience working with AVPs (aside from AVP Services for Spark review), I want to almost transition into the role with them, read the transition reports, and ensure that I have a solid and thorough understanding of their day-to-day roles and responsibilities. In a similar regard, I would also like to work alongside the Speaker and potentially set up 'mock SRA meetings' to help them find comfort in the position, and also to familiarize myself with the role of Deputy Speaker in their absence. It will be a low-stakes opportunity to learn as we go, and also devise a plan of action in the event of the Speaker's absence.

WELCOME WEEK

Welcome Week Return to (BIG) In-Person Events (if COVID permits)

This has been long-awaited for the MSU and student body alike. As VP Admin, I would advocate on the Welcome Week Advisory Committee (WWAC) for the return back to the large-scale in-person events that the MSU previously used to conduct during Welcome Week, like concerts. These types of events not only help to increase Marauder spirit, but truly brings the campus together as a community. Nobody does this better than Campus Events, and I plan to consult with Trish Vardon to achieve this platform point. Considering that the current 1st and 2nd years never truly got the Welcome Week experience that McMaster typically provides and that they had expected (e.g., only 1 Level II day this year that not every 2nd year was able to register for), I would also advocate for some type of 'all years' event towards the end of Welcome Week or the beginning of the academic year. This could be similar to Light up the Night that McMaster typically hosts annually, and it would represent the coming together of the McMaster community after 2ish long years of COVID-19 restrictions. Having it at the end of Welcome Week (or the weekend after) also helps to ensure that upper year students are in Hamilton and can attend. I have already talked with Trish from Campus Events, and something along these lines is certainly feasible.

Highlight MSU Services During Welcome Week ☆

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MSU Services have seen a significant decrease in engagement with the student body at McMaster, despite the enormous support they can provide. This is largely because students don't know about their existence, or the role the MSU plays in the campus community. Further, in a predominantly virtual environment, the only people that are seeing MSU Services' promotions are those who follow us (and thus, already know about us). As VP Admin, I would advocate in the WWAC for times during Welcome Week for MSU Services to conduct programming that could enhance our outreach and exposure. Alternatively, we could also expand Clubs Fest to ensure greater MSU inclusion. Our events would also not be faculty-specific, and thus all students could participate. This would also establish early points of contact with first years, so we can support them throughout the entire duration of the year. This past year, nobody had reached out to the Maroons to be involved in Welcome Week. As our campus spirit experts, we should also work towards integrating them more heavily into Welcome Week to ensure the MSU's presence, and to help support MSU programming (and other programming if needed). To make this possible, I plan to work with Trish Vardon, the WWAC, PTMs (especially the Maroons Coordinator, Sinead), and the Comms Team to ensure adequate promotional materials.

Ensure Welcome Week Values Funding is Communicated to MSU PTMs

Yearly, Welcome Week Values (previously called Strategic Themes) are outlined and if organizations run an event with that particular theme during Welcome Week (e.g., harm-reduction, mental wellbeing, etc.), they can receive funding. This past year, the Student Success Centre (SSC) spent the vast majority (thousands) on guest speakers without telling the MSU, and as a result, this funding opportunity was not communicated to MSU Services. As VP Admin, I would ensure that the MSU, who provides significant funding for Welcome Week, is viewed as an equal partner and isn't simply being directed to take on initiatives that are not in the interest of the first year community. This can be done by continuing to prioritize advocating on behalf of the student body in the WWAC. By ensuring the MSU is viewed as an equal, we can ensure that these funding opportunities are available to the MSU Services to apply for and are thoroughly understood. To make this possible, I will collaborate with VP Finance, Trish Vardon (Campus Events Director), the SSC Associate Director, Student Affairs Financial Dept., and the PTMs.

WELCOME WEEK

Free Welcome Week Rep Parking and Supporting the President Elect in Expanding Metrolinx Go Busses During Peak Periods

Faculty Representatives are a vital part of Welcome Week, and without them, it simply wouldn't happen. These WW Reps donate countless hours for free to ensure first years receive a supportive and warm welcome to McMaster. Recognizing their efforts, as VP Admin, I would work towards ensuring all WW Reps and Planners have access to free parking on-campus during Welcome Week, otherwise, any commuters are actually losing money taking on this role that betters the community. Paying for parking on-campus or risking a parking ticket also has a disproportionate impact on WW Reps from a low SES background. Implementing free parking for those who require it through the use of a daily pass (provided by the MSU) will help increase the accessibility of the role itself, whereby commuters (who can directly connect with first years who also commute) are able to reasonably take on these roles. To follow through with this, I have already talked to the General Manager and Trish Vardon, and will further consult with Security Services, the University, and the WWAC. To further enhance the accessibility of Welcome Week for Reps and students alike, I would support President Elect, Simranjeet, in expanding Go Busses that come to campus during this time (and other peak periods). This will enhance campus accessibility for students in the GTA, Toronto, and beyond. Everybody has a right to participate in Welcome Week!

Ensure Timely Reimbursement of Faculty Societies and Planners ☆

During Welcome Week, Faculty Planners will receive a budget from their faculty, and the MSU/SSC to help fund their programming. However, the budget provided by the MSU/SSC is technically not really 'there'. Rather, it is an approved amount they can spend (or their faculty) and the MSU/SSC will reimburse them for this purchase. This leads many WW Faculty Planners to pay out of pocket, but they won't receive a reimbursement for their purchase until January. Keeping in mind that these are students, who may use credit cards and accumulate interest (and who may also be from a low SES background), there are clear inaccessibilities in this current system, especially for faculties that have large budgets (like Science, ~\$70,000). As VP Admin, I would work alongside Student Affairs, the SSC Financial Department, and VP Finance to advocate for at least a 50% reimbursement promptly following Welcome Week, and a full reimbursement by January.

PROMOTING SAFE(R) SPACES ON CAMPUS

Indigenous 'Cultural Sensitivity' Training to Service Volunteers ☆

Within the training that we provide to the MSU Service volunteers, there is currently an underrepresentation of Indigenous identities. This year, I brought Indigenous Cultural Sensitivity Training to the Team Leaders in Spark as the Director, as I felt it helped to fill the gaps in knowledge of our trainings, and would allow us to work more safely with a larger proportion of the student body at McMaster (specifically Indigenous peoples). To do this, I worked alongside Professor Stephanie George (McMaster) to ensure the delivery of this training component. I would also like to extend this to our MSU-wide volunteer training, recognizing how imperative it is to continue making efforts towards decolonization and reconciliation in our campus community. At some points, land acknowledgements aren't enough. To make this possible, I would consider working with Stephanie George in the future, but also HR, EIO, and stakeholders of the Indigenous Studies Program at McMaster.

Supporting Diversity Services (now Diversity and Equity Network) as a NEW Peer Support Service ☆

Diversity and Equity Network has recently undergone a re-branding, and now falls under the Peer Support Services category. As all other Peer Support Services, it is imperative that Diversity and Equity Network has a physical space they can operate out of that is exclusively for BIPOC folks. Currently, the Diversity and Equity Network has quite a tiny space that would not be adequate to provide peer support, and is currently crowded with AV equipment. The current VP Admin (Christina) has worked diligently to try and make this possible, but there were no available spaces. With the opening of The Hub (Student Activity Building), FCC plans to open a Community Kitchen here, and we could potentially move the Diversity and Equity Network into FCC's previous location. If this is not possible, we can clean out the current space they have for the interim and continue to look for alternative solutions in The Hub or other locations. To achieve this, I will work closely with the incoming PTM, Facility Services, MUSC, and the MSU President.

Work with the Food Collective Centre (FCC) for Meal Plan Tiering System Advocacy

This was an initiative that I personally started in my third year, then began collaborating with FCC to enhance our impact. Essentially, McMaster's Meal Plan Tiers currently consist of Minimum, Light, Regular, and Varsity. These names carry connotations about the body type and/or eating habits of the individuals who purchase them. For example, if you don't purchase the 'Regular' plan, this necessarily implies that your eating habits are irregular. Ultimately, this can exacerbate new or previous EDs that first years struggled with. I have talked with the Incoming FCC Director (Chitri) and she is interested in potentially taking this advocacy project on. In helping to support this, I plan to work with Hospitality Services (Chris Roberts who I have already been in contact with), SWC, and external Hamilton organizations (e.g., Body Brave Hamilton) to hear their perspectives and try to negotiate a change to make the campus safe(r) for folks with EDs.

PROMOTING SAFE(R) SPACES ON CAMPUS

Ensure Peer Support Service PTMs Who Chair Committees Aren't Tokenized and Encourage McMaster to Pay Their Hours ☆

The PTMs of the Peer Support Services oftentimes chair committees within the McMaster community. However, many of them have expressed feeling tokenized, and as though they are just part of a checklist that 'student voices were heard'. Many of them feel as though their opinion isn't truly listened to by the University within these spaces, despite their expertise and lived experiences. Further, with many Peer Support PTMs going overtime in hours, chairing committees outside their Services' Operating Policy (OP) contributes to this. To mediate these problems, as VP Admin I would ensure PTMs are communicated what their purpose is on these committees (e.g., SVPR Task Force, PACBIC, etc.) by the full-time staff involved and what is expected of them. They should also be adequately introduced to these committees prior to chairing them, instead of simply being thrown in. This should help to enhance PTM comfort in speaking up as necessary. Further, I plan to regularly check in with these PTMs to ensure their participation is continuing to be valued. I will also work with VP Finance to look into additional ways these PTMs can be compensated for the time they spend chairing these committees and advocate to upper levels in McMaster University. However, I want to iterate that I think it is imperative that positive relationships between the MSU and McMaster are prioritized above all else.

WORK FEASIBILITY FOR PTMS AND AVPS

Give Incoming PTMs an Opportunity to Ask Questions at VP Admin and VP Finance Elections

Considering that the VP Admin directly supervises the PTMs and that PTMs work with VP Finance on a regular basis throughout the year for them to access their budget/funds, I think it is logical that incoming PTMs have the opportunity to ask the VP Admin and VP Finance candidates questions during the questioning period of the election. While I recognize that significant policy changes would be required for the PTMs to be able to vote in the VP elections, at least providing the opportunity to ask questions could further help the SRA discern the most suitable candidate by including both of these perspectives (i.e., the SRA and PTMs). Having this practice in place could also help to hold accountability for earlier hiring of the PTMs, a process that has been significantly difficult in recent years (largely as a result of remote operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the addition of the AD role). To make this possible, as VP Admin I would work alongside the SRA and AVP IG for any necessary policy changes.

***More Efficient Hour-Tracking System for PTMs* ☆**

Being a PTM myself, I am quite familiar with the inaccessibilities of the current system for PTM hour-tracking. However, I will acknowledge that VP Admins always make this a platform point, but it is extremely hard to perfect. Ultimately, there is no perfect solution, but there is one that increases accessibility. This year, with many PTMs going overtime, it becomes quite tedious to have to explain every task you have completed in an Excel sheet with 365 rows, including the 15 minutes you spent sending off an email. A PTM's work is too unscheduled to use this system. Instead, I would propose a system whereby PTMs clock in through the Teams 'shift' function. This is something SHEC has used in the past. I anticipate it will be a learning curve for PTMs, and they might forget to clock-in/out while getting used to the system. However, I know the PTMs also forget now anyways. Through reminders and consistent communication, I think this will be more efficient and accessible in the long-term. PTMs wouldn't be required to explain their tasks unless they went overtime (OT). As VP Admin, I would be able to see directly which PTMs are going OT in their hours on my end earlier in the year, and check-in with them to determine why this is happening and how I can support them.

Historic Budget Use Review of MSU Services

Within the MSU, there are some Services that have historically not used a significant portion of their budget (e.g., SWHAT, Maroons). An example would be Maroons, who have an advocacy line in their budget, but haven't engaged in much advocacy work that would require that level of funding from the MSU (we have the Peer Support Services for this type of advocacy). With this in mind, as VP Admin I would advocate for the reallocation of some of the money that is being put into obsolete budget lines in these MSU Services. This reallocation would ensure that student money is going back towards the McMaster community, and actually enhances student life. I would like to work with VP Finance to look at what Services have historically not used their budget (outside of COVID-19, because that resulted in underspending of all MSU Services) so that this money can be used more effectively for the future years.

WORK FEASIBILITY FOR PTMS AND AVPS

Transition Reports as Working Documents

Yearly, PTMs and AVPs are expected to complete transition reports for their successors. However, these templates have changed between the years, and each PTM/AVP is expected to start from scratch, in addition to PTMs having to provide a very similar Year in Review to EB. As VP Admin, I would propose using transition reports as working documents, whereby PTMs and AVPs can simply edit (add new relevant info, and get rid of irrelevant info) the previous transition report, and submit this to VP Admin. Different colours or types of font could be used to indicate which year the PTM/AVP who added specific information had worked in the role. While it might look a bit silly, this would make transition reports more comprehensive as knowledge gaps can be filled based on experience and it also ensures that all roles have a transition report to rely on. Further, these transition reports are upwards of 60-70 pages, and would save a lot of time for the PTMs who are consistently going over their weekly hours.

Sponsorship Templates for PTMs to Seek Out External Funding

Often times, the budget provided to MSU Services is enough to carry out their Operating Policy, but not enough for PTMs to expand their Services and bring new ideas to the table that enhance the McMaster community. To receive additional funding, they can seek out external sponsorships (within or outside the McMaster community), but many newly hired PTMs are unfamiliar with this process. Having sought out an additional \$1500 from various stakeholders within Spark this year, I have become quite accustomed to this process, and would like to work with VP Finance to devise a general 'Sponsorship Template' that PTMs can use to seek out additional funding. Having a comprehensive template for PTMs to follow will save them time in their roles, maintain the professional image of the MSU, enhance the likelihood they will receive the funding, and expand the impact their Service has in the McMaster community.

Advocate for PTMs to be Paid Over Reading Week ☆

MSU PTMs are not paid over reading week. While it is understandable that the MSU does this from the empathetic standpoint of wanting the PTMs to take a break to prevent burnout, it is also unrealistic that the PTMs won't work at all. If they don't work during this time and catch up on any outstanding tasks, they will come back after reading week to what feels like (in my personal experience) chaos. Balancing academics and being a PTM is a difficult feat, and reading week can actually be an opportunity to play catch up in your Service. Recognizing this reality and wanting the work of our PTMs to be valued, I would like to advocate as VP Admin for at least paying PTMs 50% of their wage during this time. I think this would be a fair compromise, recognizing that they will only be working half their hours which should also allow for a break. To bring about this change, I plan to work with VP Finance on possible solutions to this problem.

WORK FEASIBILITY FOR PTMS AND AVPS

Encourage Wage Review of EFRT, Spark, & Maroons

There was recently a wage review of all MSU Services with the introduction of the Director/AD roles last year (by Graeme Noble, past VP Admin). However, since then I think it is justified to engage in this process again for EFRT, Spark, and Maroons. EFRT's Director has consistently gone over hours (~600 OT hours this year), and there has been talks about making this a full-time position. In terms of Spark, this Service is now responsible for Summer programming based on Horizons being rescinded, transitioning it from operating only during the academic-year, to being a full-year Service. Maroons is now responsible for charity funding during Welcome Week (added to their Operating Policy), when there used to be an entire WW Planner responsible for coordinating this (e.g., Shinerama). The Maroons Coordinator is also supposed to be paid 30 hours/week in the Summer, but is not. As such, with these significant increases in responsibility in their job description, I plan to work with (or be on) the Wage Review Committee (EB Member, Board Member, typically VP Finance, and HR/GM) to make this possible.

Semesterly Review of PTM Overtime (OT) Hours ☆

As of now, the PTMs who go OT will have their hours reviewed at the end of the year (right about now). This includes how many lieu hours they had, how many they used, and what the resulting OT hours amount to. Instead of waiting till the end of the year for this review, as VP Admin I would propose this happens semesterly (at the end of the Summer term, Fall, and Winter). Not only will this permit a more timely reimbursement of PTMs, allow them to actually remember why they went into OT in the first place, and familiarize them with the OT process, but it will also provide the MSU with insight about what PTMs are consistently going over hours, why this is happening, and how we can mitigate this. To make this possible, I will work with the Executive Board to see if some increased flexibility of OT review can be permitted.

AVP Services Budget Line for Incentivization ☆

Service reviews and the AVP Services role are imperative for the continued growth, efficiency, and accessibility of the MSU Services. AVP Services puts in a lot of effort in the creation of these surveys, and low response rate not only impacts the level of evidence that the data provides, but is also discouraging. As VP Admin, I would like to work with VP Finance to provide AVP Services with a dedicated budget line for incentivization for next year (2023/24, because budgets have already been planned). This year, incentivization helped to significantly increase response rates, and it would be up to the discretion of AVP Services as to what type of incentivization they would like to provide.

SUPPORTING THE MSU, MCMMASTER, & HAMILTON COMMUNITY

Regular Check-Ins with AVP IG/Services, Bi-Monthly for SRA ☆

The VP Admin role is about support. With this in mind, as VP Admin I would plan to meet with AVP IG and AVP Services on a minimum bi-weekly basis, and weekly during busier periods throughout the year. Regular communication with the AVPs is imperative to ensure the MSU is cohesive, and everybody is on the same page. It would also be an opportunity to touch base on any outstanding tasks, or see where I can provide additional support. As for the SRA, I would plan to meet with each Caucus on a bi-monthly basis to also see how I can support them in their role, make their experience in the SRA enjoyable, and support any initiatives they have worked on. It's an opportunity to bring the voices of the student body to upper levels of leadership within the MSU. Regular communication with both the SRA and AVPs ensures that I (as VP Admin) am meeting their expectations, and is an opportunity to look for areas of improvement in my leadership.

MSU Services Executive Appreciation ☆

The MSU Service Executives work extremely hard, and show dedication and passion through all the work they do. Oftentimes, they will put in nearly as many hours as the Director, but for free. As such, they should be praised and recognized for their efforts. I would like to work with VP Finance to see if there is any form of budget line we can either provide PTMs with directly to organize a lunch/dinner event with their Execs, or if that is something that the MSU can provide generally for all Executives. Appreciation is important, and this can also help to create MSU-loyalty amongst the Execs, feeding back into our Services.

Advocate for Increased SWC Counsellor Appointments and Mental Health Supports ☆

With the COVID-19 pandemic, there is undeniably an increased need for mental health supports on campus, but somewhat of a decreased supply (limited operations of the SWC). When the majority of students at McMaster seek out SWC Counsellor appointments, they are left to wait upwards of months for the initial intake. To put it bluntly, this is unacceptable. In alignment with the President Elect's platform point, I plan to support him in this endeavour, and also expand it slightly. It would begin with advocating for an increased appointment availability at the SWC, whether that's through extended hours or additional providers. I plan to work with the MSU President as well as Debbie Nifakis, a psychologist and the Associate Director of Counselling at the SWC, who is somebody that I have also met previously. Further, on the syllabi for academic courses there is a section called "Health and Wellness Resources for Students" where on- and off-campus resources are provided, including the SWC and SVPRO. I would like to advocate to faculties and McMaster Administration for the inclusion of MSU Peer Support Services to be included here, as they are often times more accessible to students, are identity-based, and can offer non-emergent support. Some students may also simply prefer to connect with a peer. This would not only increase support for McMaster students, but also engagement of MSU Services.

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Liaising with Compass for the Promotion of MSU Business Units

Compass Group (not MSU Compass) will take over the management of The Grind, TwelvEighty, and Union Market as of April. However, the MSU will still make a portion of the profits. With this in mind, I want to specifically bring back the old feel of these business units. When I was in first and second year, I would go to Union Market far more frequently than I should have, listen to the music, read the quote of the day on the wall, grab a donut from Donut Monster, and wait in a huge lineup to toast my bagel and grab a freshly brewed coffee. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, business units like Union Market have lost the attention of students, and this is something that we need to bring back. The MSU still sits on committees with Compass Group, and bringing these student-led businesses back to life is possible. I have already talked with the General Manager, John McGowan, and this is something that we can reasonably work towards.

Support the Completion of a Community Needs Assessment

After working with Renee (HR) to hire an Admin Research Assistant, it is necessary that the MSU conducts a Community Needs Assessment to learn about what gaps exist in the support that we provide. Especially considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and our return back in-person, it would be a perfect opportunity to learn how we can move forward to continue to support the McMaster community to the best of our ability. This also aligns with the President Elect's platform point to build a stronger community. Based on the results of this assessment, we can initiate any necessary changes in the programming that the MSU provides for the previous year to ensure we remain student-centred.

PTM and SRA Bonding/Social Opportunities

Team-building has always been a priority of mine in every leadership position I have taken on, and this is something I would like to bring to the position of VP Admin. Getting to know the people you work with can create a community of support, as well as forge life-long friendships. As such, I would like to plan PTM and SRA bonding opportunities throughout the year as an appreciation for their work, and an opportunity for them to get to know each other outside of their roles. Specifically for SRA, I think it is imperative to also hold some form of social proceeding by-elections, to allow the new SRA members to easily integrate into the SRA community. This is something that I plan to work on collaboratively with the Speaker (they arguably know the SRA best), the SRA (to hear what they want in a social), the PTMs (again, to hear their opinions), and VP Finance to access this budget.

Hamilton Community Spotlight Partnerships in Union Market

While Union Market (UM) might now be under Compass management, it is still a business unit that the MSU profits from. In the effort to try and integrate the Hamilton community onto McMaster's campus, I would encourage UM to engage in 'Spotlight Partnerships' whereby they sell food items from local Hamilton small businesses (e.g., Donut Monster). This somewhat falls under the President Elect's platform of creating a stronger community. Ultimately, this will help UM to get back on its feet by enticing more students to come in and buy products. It may also encourage them to try out other small businesses local to Hamilton. To make this possible, I would work with Compass, the UM Manager, and potentially VP Finance to see what types of spotlights we could provide and on how consistent of a basis (e.g., same day every week).

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Bringing Back PTM Clusters (Peer Support Services VS Student Life Enhancement Services).

Previously, the VP Admin would divide the MSU Services into clusters that would allow the Peer Support Services to work together, and the Student Life Enhancement Services to work together. This is mostly for the benefit of the Peer Support Services (SHEC, WGEN, PCC, Diversity and Equity Network, and Maccess) allowing them to advocate collectively, bring forward new innovative peer support education, share resources as necessary (e.g., Collective Care between SHEC and WGEN), and collaborate on similar programming to reduce money spent from their respective budgets. As VP Admin, I would want to bring this back and encourage the Peer Support Services to have monthly meetings to promote consistent communication. I would be present at these once a semester at the minimum, but am always willing to come more frequently if this is requested by these PTMs. Ultimately, this will help the Peer Support Services to function as a more cohesive unit of the MSU to develop a community of support at McMaster. As necessary, I would also encourage AVP Services to be part of this.

Thank-You

Thank you to everybody who gave up their time to consult with me and share their MSU knowledge. Please note that the following does not necessarily indicate an endorsement of my VP Admin platform:

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Thank you for your time!