

MSU PRESIDENT TRANSITION REPORT



Prepared by Denver Della-Vedova 2021-2022

Prepared for Simranjeet Singh 2022-2023

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Introduction

Hey Simranjeet!

I want to start off by saying congrats on this year, it's going to be a wild ride but I think you are going to enjoy it and do a lot of good along the way!

In this document I have pulled bits and pieces of past transitions with the obvious realization that this year will be quite different from my own. Despite that, I hope this document is comprehensive and useful for yourself throughout the year. This is not meant to be a guide for everything through the year, but rather a guide for some of the questions, tough times, or seemingly open-ended scenarios where you might be seeking some additional and/or preliminary guidance.

I would suggest over and above this document relying on staff, board, and the SRA for information, opinions and advice. At the end of the day, ownership of many decisions is not solely your own, as decisions are made in collaboration with others. That being said, many will look to you for direction, and in turn you hold a special place of liability. That being said, VP's have specific portfolios and there are aspects in which they will be more knowledgeable or more directly in charge. Do not be afraid to split responsibilities with these folks as **you will not be able to do it all**. A big thing to remember is that individuals that work with a less diverse portfolio *will typically know more* about a topic than you that they make ask for your opinion on. This isn't a bad thing, but just something to keep in mind as you work on challenges with individuals.

It's important to keep communication open with the VP's, staff and sort out who handles what, what people's boundaries are, and where your roles can intersect. Your role is very project based, so set out projects and figure out your approach. If you get too caught up in what a typical year or day looks like, it can be really challenging, especially coming off this year.

It will be part of your role to keep parties in the loop, and to check in on projects. Often for many in our organization this is one of the biggest roles folks have ever had. That being said, it is easy to have scope difficulties, either individuals taking on too little or not enough. This is somewhere where you can connect different groups, teams or individuals and find ways to redistribute tasks if needed.

Board dynamics are an important part to manage. I know there were certainly times I felt as though I was forced to go against what I felt was right, but there are certainly many opportunities you and I have in this role that are not had by other board members. I would recommend letting board members take a lead on a project if it falls under both your purviews, and being a supporting or secondary role, despite the personal difficulty you might have with that.

Another aspect of this role I want to highlight is that you are not alone, even though it may feel that way sometimes. The role can be isolating as almost anything you say to anyone who isn't a close confidant could be taken out of context. I would recommend finding some people in your life you can chat with openly about issues. I found this helpful as I saw different aspects of myself in this role, and sometimes the "MSU focus" aspect, the moral compass, and the personal feelings didn't always fully align. This was a challenge but is definitely conquerable, just it needs a very reflective approach of yourself as challenges arise, and I found the best way to be reflective was conversation with those close to me. Despite this, I would suggest you be yourself, make friends, build relationships and do your best to enjoy the role.

At the end of the day, you earned this role sim, I wish you all the best and I look forward to see the great things to come this year.

Best of luck! C:

Governance

SRA:

These meetings can range significantly, anywhere from 40 minutes to 16 hours across two days. My biggest piece of advice going into SRA meetings is make sure you know Roberts Rules and know our bylaws and policies. The SRA can make a lot of big decisions and its important you know how the meetings work and what guidelines we need to follow so you can prevent issues before they happen. The other significant advice I would give is to ensure that the SRA members are aware as well. They are not paid staff, and often spend significantly less time with the MSU than yourself. I made a specific push to ask POI on things I knew that others may not, or add myself to the SL to explain something that others may be unaware of. Lastly, do your best to keep SRA in the loop and engaged. The engagement part was something we struggled with this year, and I would suggest really focusing on this come the fall with the hopeful return of in person SRA meetings.

Within SRA you will also have MSU inc and CFMU inc. These are meetings you chair. All capital budget requests and expenditures go through here so make sure you are communicating with your board if you want to make any requests. I would usually ask JJ to move any motions I had regarding capital requests since I felt weird moving the motion and chairing the meeting at the same time. This is much more formal than executive board so even more important to follow Robert's rules and lean on Victoria if you need help. It is ok to ask victoria if you are confused (it is better to do this than to make a mistake).

SRA really is the biggest political sphere in the MSU. This being said, all members want to improve student life, but sometimes we disagree on how to get there. You will see disagreement, and this is ok. This is where I would suggest you do your best to facilitate strong

conversation and come to a consensus. SRA attendance is not mandated for the board, but I would suggest attending all meetings if possible. Also follow agenda's to ensure you do not miss anything contentious. Also it is important to be cognizant of your role and that SRA and the Board may lean on you for contentious decisions since you are a very knowledgeable leadership role in the org. Make sure you are supporting your SRA and VPs and understanding that they experience these meetings differently.

General Assembly:

This is a beast of an event and is definitely something that will be hanging over your head. I don't really have that much advice from when it actually happens since attendance was under 10 this year. We tried our best to increase attendance this year by advertising that students can put forward motions and assisting them in doing that. The biggest reason why we have such low attendance is because nobody really brings motions. Support the speaker in planning this event. You will likely have more event planning experience than them, so I would sit on the planning committee and offer advice and take tasks where possible. You will be presenting a state of the union so make sure you think about this in advance and summarize projects and the fiscals of the org. Mike Wooder can aid with this process. Also ensure if you know any motions coming forward have structural errors to try and aid the students with these. This makes sure that anything passed is sound with our policies and bylaws and also shows that GA isn't just an opportunity to circumvent the SRA and BoD and that it is an opportunity for everyone to get involved.

Bylaws, Operating Policies & more:

These are all on the website so there isn't much I need to put about those in here, but you should familiarize yourself with these when you have time. Key ones would be: constitution, all cooperate bylaws, clubs, services, central support services, SRA, and realistically any bylaw that has to do with an aspect of the union you would interact with. Victoria is your biggest asset with these and can help you when it comes to understanding bylaws and knowing what bylaws apply to what situation. Daniela also is a great voice here.

Corporate Structure & Support

Full-time staff:

The full-time staff are one of your greatest assets when it comes to creating change in the MSU. They are the ones who provide the departmental expertise, institutional memory, and support for the projects that you want to take on. Keep in mind the challenges that come from working from the MSU. Having a whole new set of bosses each year who most of the time don't really know what they are doing can be hard. Make sure that you listen to them, value their input, and appreciate them. The biggest piece of advice I would give here is "trust but

verify”. This ensures you don't take too much of a personal opinion over an org or student body opinion.

Job Descriptions:

Job descriptions need to be addressed and this was the idea behind more HR support. I think you should prioritize this since lack of job descriptions can cause confusion amongst roles and challenges with wage review. Scope creep was the number one issue in the KPMG review. I would recommend allowing HR to take the lead on this if there is the capacity to do so since for the past few years it has been a board project and consistency sees very little progress.

FT Staff and the Board:

Each board member interacts with full-time staff differently so take the first few weeks to understand their roles and your own and think about what that might look like. Communicate with your board about full-time staff communication and support so everyone can be on the same page. Your decisions have implications on every full time staff so understanding who they are is very important. That said, in terms of direct day to day interactions, those will likely be a bit more concentrated depending on your plan for the year. I just wanted to go into more detail about those I worked with most closely

General Manager: John is your biggest support. He has 20+ years of insight and will sometimes guide you in directions but ultimately always respects the boards directions. He will not overstep and won't impose his ideas on yours so don't be afraid to ask for advice when needed. I would recommend setting up a standing meeting with him. At first, he and I did more chill drop in meetings which we changed to more formal bi-weekly meetings. I found this helpful because you technically can go weeks without updating each other on things, so having a standing meeting is helpful to make sure everyone is in the loop. Make sure you stick to those meetings, I missed more than a couple which I definitely think made things a bit more challenging.

Executive Assistant: Daniela is an amazing resource for all your odds and ends. She was amazing this year for handling some of those admin pieces I didn't know how to do. Examples like organizing a FT staff bowling event or aiding ith writing a letter on behalf of a club to a third party. She also is a phenomenal minuter andI have asked her to come to the odd event outside the regularly scheduled ones if I need a hand.

Administrative Services Coordinator: Victoria is all all-star and you will work together on executive board, SRA, and other projects. She has so much institutional knowledge so if you

have a question about anything you can always go to her. Often she helps me discern what bylaws or policies are relevant or need to be revamped depending the subject.

Marketing and Communications: Mike is absolutely a star in the marketing and relations world. For anything from difficult emails, to PTM concerns, to media requests (think sil, hamilton papers, cbc, radio, film, ect.) he can help you achieve your goal. He also does a lot within the org and with students promoting different initiatives and services. The communications team will meet with you weekly, and often will have a fairly full schedule but still find time to achieve the board goals. Mike was also a great resource during any sort of public crisis and I found his feedback helpful (just chatting about issues and approach is something he excels at).

Network Administrator: Pauline is another great source of institutional memory. I obviously went to her with computer issues, but I found her really useful when I had questions about SRA meetings from a long time ago, old contracts, and historical issues within the MSU. She is able to track down our online archives and is really helpful when it comes to understanding context from previous issues dating back up to 30 years ago. She has a great insight on the MSU and how it has changed over the years. As well, she is looking to forward our tech department and this is an important task moving forward. I would suggest working with her towards this and trying to move the MSU onto the university license.

Human Resource Director: Renee is a great resource for all things HR, from staff conflict to the legal end to policy to hiring. Her role was new this year and she was hired at end of summer, so I recommend working with her to better shape her role, the HR department and its relation to the MSU and finally in getting an additional support role for herself.

Director of Finance and Accounting:

This is a great group and they will go out of their way to help you if you have questions or concerns. Do not be shy, feel free to acquaint yourself with these folks and they will aid you with any financial related questions. I found it important to know this group and interact with them, even with a VP finance role existing. They have many years of experience as individually and combined and an enthusiasm around finding better and more efficient solutions. No question is a dumb question with these folks and make sure you have a strong understanding of organizational fiscals.

Child Care Centre:

The Child Care Centre is a group I truly wish we worked with more this year. I would recommend meeting with this group a few times this year, and keeping them in the loop of what's going on in the MSU. Its a lot of fun if you can find a half day for the board to swing in and do activities with the kids, it used to be a tradition of boards before covid and heavily helps morale.

Full-Time Staff meetings:

These happen in the first week of each month. These meetings used to have staff meet for the first 15 minutes then the board and John would join. This was a better format as this year the staff rarely brought issues to us, and that is the whole point of these meetings. John chairs the general full-time staff meetings and will ask the board if they have updates. This year the board rarely had updates and they mostly came through John, I would suggest this year discussion these meetings at BoD the week of to have more board directed updates. You have everyone in the room for this so if you have any updates or would like feedback on any issues this is the time to do it since things can get lost in translation when it comes through email.

Full-Time Staff Appreciation:

There is a budget for this! With Daniela's or Renee's help you can run some events through the year. Bowling was a big success this year and I would recommend something along those lines. Pauline is a great one to ask as she has a lot of spirit and has been around so long. I would recommend hosting a few of these this year, including the golf tournament that used to happen.

Full Time Issues Committee:

As mentioned previously, there will be one BoD member present at FT issues meetings along with John. Chat with your board as to who best fits to solve issues presented at this committee. The past couple years they have been more finance focused so the VP Finance has sat on it, which I predict will continue onto this year. However, if you notice they have more of a wholistic organizational focus that extends over a few different portfolios, you may be better suited to sit on it. I would suggest communicating with the VP finance about this committee in a short standing meeting just to stay in the loop.

Benefits:

This applies to you and the board as well! After a three month probationary period you have access to the full time staff benefits. Since you are no longer eligible for the Student Health & Dental plan make sure you use this! I didn't use it as much as I would have liked so get a massage, buy new glasses, or get acupuncture. They are there for you to use so might as well use them to your benefit! Ask Daniela about how these work and she can help.

Workplace Culture:

This is important and setting a tone earlier will definitely benefit you later on. Workplace culture was very hard to foster this year considering that the workplace was so divided. This will be your opportunity to reunite the workplace and build back up some of what existed. I would suggest asking some of our long term staff (John, Pauline) about this and to get advice on what was the norm. I apologize I cannot help more with this, but it is something we did not get

the opportunity to explore in the way you will. I would suggest social events, getting to know staff personally and creating community as some key goals. They can be smaller events, like a lunch just with a department or smaller group (but obviously an open invite to all). We are a student union so a fun environment is the general goal. A place people are excited to go to work. Try to figure out the culture that already exists and how you would like to improve it. It is definitely a unique structure so you want to make sure the culture allows for people to work optimally and efficiently while still being connected to the BoD and the governance aspect of the MSU. Things like birthdays, retirements, holidays, and other milestones are all great opportunities to get everyone together and celebrate. When in doubt, do karaoke!

Other Schools:

I would suggest getting to know some other student unions. Having a network is important and those folks will understand your role very well, as they are in an identical role.

Utilizing past files

If you ever need to consult a paper or recorded resource, I would recommend checking SRA minutes/ livestreams, searching through the email, or asking Pauline as she will be able to find the files you cannot. This is an important part of the role and often is a great initial place for research on any topic.

Committees Chaired by the MSU President

President's Council:

Presidents council is a great opportunity to touch base with faculty societies and connect different student groups on campus. This is a group that I put a lot of effort into supporting, because although we may not be directly helping the MSU here, we help students through the faculty societies. Little pieces such as connecting them with admin or sending a joint email can go a long way to aid these groups in their goals and strengthen our connection with faculty societies. Some of the major things we discussed at this table where

Welcome week:

This was quite controversial and there was a lot of frustration from faculties. I spent a lot of time aiming to support them in the aftermath and ensure we have better practices moving forward.

Controversial statements/Covid changes:

This group was great for getting insight into how different faculties were affected by changes of the university or instructors, as well as how these changes ended up functionally as they did not always happen the way the university intended.

Supports for faculties and training:

The faculties were hoping to borrow some of our avenue training modules. This was not addressed before year end but I would suggest discussing this with Mitchell to see what we could lend them. Specifically around anti-oppressive practices and similar topics.

Finally I suggest having a loose agenda, Josh had more formal ones but I found the informal friendly nature worked really well for me. This is just different leadership styles. I also would suggest if they are in person to occasionally bring snacks or food.

Board of Directors Meetings:

These meetings are weekly and typically early week or on Fridays. These should correspond with BoD/Comms to be able to align action items in a timely manner. BoD meetings should not be missed as this is your opportunity to connect and ensure everyone is up to date on each others portfolio. This is for collaboration and support but also for accountability to ensure folks are moving forward with goals. If they are not, that is when you can default back to better ways to support each other. These are the least formal meetings you will have with votes being rare (but occasionally occurring). Most of these meetings have things decided by conversation but a few motions will pass through. These meetings are fully closed, so only you, the VPs, John, and Daniela will be present. Past boards did not invite others into these meetings as they might with EB, but we did once or twice with Mike as we saw it helpful for a section of the meeting. Most asks that staff have though will be passed along from either a memo or having a board member/John discuss with them and raise their concern for them.

CFMU BoD:

These meetings are held once a month, typically on a Friday. These meetings are generally just an update about the happenings of CFMU. Honestly these were fairly uneventful outside of covid discussions and updates on what was happening with rules/with CFMU offerings. Daniela is the one who coordinates these meetings and it is comprised of yourself, the vice-president administration, vice-president finance, John, Emma, Jamie, Sandeep and two community radio show hosts. Honestly I felt a little lost as to what these meetings intend to accomplish (especially since I was involved in the campus media ad hoc committee) but using them as a space as a brainstorming tool for fundraising, see where the MSU channels could support the promotion of

CFMU and connect with SSC to promote their jobs. This is a good committee, just sometimes challenging to see how it can be leveraged for improvements.

Admin Con:

Your board has already attended one of these so I won't go into as much detail, but, this is the Student Administration Consultation Committee which consists of senior leaders throughout the university, MSU, GSA and MAPS. It is chaired by you and the President of the University, though I found I chaired most meetings and David was more hands off letting the BoD take a lead. We would prep in advance with a loose agenda with topics circulated between ourselves, maps and the GSA, but in hindsight I would suggest a more formal agenda circulated to them in advance. These are coordinated by the president's office, so you will only need to share your availabilities. I would heavily suggest talking as a board and sorting priorities as this year's board felt very disjointed in these meetings.

Executive Board:

This committee you should be familiar with being in regular attendance but I will give some additional insight. EB is the committee where you oversee the day to operations of the MSU. At this meeting agenda items all the way from HR issues to approving new logos are brought to the table. In the summer they meet bi-weekly and in the school year they meet weekly. Victoria is the secretary of these and will have suggestions of how these meetings are run but ultimately it is up to you if you think certain things have to happen a certain way. These typically are less formal than SRA but I tend to try to keep them in a similar vein as Robert's rules really helps with organization. If you have questions about the actual act of chairing or are ever unsure I would suggest meeting with Victoria. As well you can ask her mid meeting if you have a procedural question. Also regularly read reports, starting with the concerns sections as they were the most actionables will result from. Discuss any major items with the board to ensure you all have a plan for resolution you can bring to the group if possible. Attendance is monitored by yourself and Victoria and the positions on this board can be lost with absences. Finally I suggest all of board regularly attend and make a maximum effort not to miss these meetings.

John and Woode are observers on these meetings and offer insight often. I find Woode particularly helpful with PTM issues around promotions and a lot of those do arise. As well, try to encourage questioning around reports as that is something we did not see much of this year. Part time issues committee is supposed to run through EB and Victoria can tell you more about this.

As well, EB can be a great space to get insight into PTM and student/SRA opinions. You can get an idea in info/question period around the thoughts of SRA on big topics coming to SRA meetings. As well you will hear concerns from PTMS, but it is important to manage expectations

at these meetings with them, and for yourself specifically to back up your VP Admin. I know issues were raised this year that were ultimately a miscommunication from a prior staff to a PTM, that resulted in a lot of frustration. This is something I stepped in on to clarify after educating myself on the issue as the VP Admin was receiving the same unfounded complaints over and over again regarding this topic.

MUSC Board of Management:

You do not *have* to chair this meeting but I would recommend it. These meetings are relatively easy, scheduled by Victoria and act as the MSU inc. equivalent for MUSC. This group is the ideal for any issues around the development of space, changes or space allocation within musc. Chat with Lori about any agenda items you plan to bring to this meeting prior to it happening as she is likely the one who you will work with if they get approved. John is also a great first contact here for insight into historical events.

MSU/University Committees

SSAC: Student Services Advisory Committee:

They will reach out to you with agenda items and you should add any you have in advance. This being said you can always bring things up in the meetings. It is good that the university members are aware ahead of time of what the MSU will be discussing so they can plan and have answers ready and information readily available. Some topics we discuss are SLEF, Student wellness centre and Mental Health Supports as well as international student challenges.

This is another meeting I would suggest all board members attend regularly and do not book over. John will also be in attendance and can support the board at these. If you have additional questions you can ask him about them. You will also be discussing the CAF agreement and discussing the subcommittees. Josh did some research on trends regarding this fee so you can find those on the desktop if you are interested in what they look like at some other schools. he utilized the presidents from other student unions as well when reviewing the fee to determine the best course of action as well. Every school has one of these fees and agreements and committees, so you have examples of different options.

PACCR: President's Advisory Committee of Community Relations

This is a committee with Mac Government Relations, you, and various members of the community. Essentially your role is to communicate on the MSU's behalf of what the student's union is doing regarding community relations and the City of Hamilton. In past some major topics were go busses, lighting on and off campus, concerns around policing of students, St patty's/FOCO, and rental pricing/the new rental bylaw and finally Covid concerns from and pertaining to students. This is typically a strong space to highlight the perspective of students

while simultaneously looking for ways to work with community partners to better our community. The university tends to be very in line with us as we are a great example of students at their best. If your board does move forward with trying to have some events planned by the MSU for FOCO I would suggest including Trish/any other VPS who are part of this to explain what our goals are there. Mike should also be in this conversation at least internally before.

EDI Strategy Steering Committee:

Equity diversity and inclusion is a committee Arig started as a part of the EDI action plan, so I encourage you to read through the outline of the plan to get an idea of short term, medium term, and long- term projects the university will be taking on to support this work. Review this committee with Elizabeth and chat about how you will approach this committee and all its subcommittees. Come prepared because you are the one who they will often turn to for the student voice.

Teaching and learning digital strategy:

The committee's goal is to advance teaching and learning at McMaster to support curiosity, build interdisciplinarity, and ultimately advance human and societal health and well-being. McMaster's Teaching and Learning Strategy 2021–2026 lays out a plan to grow teaching and learning excellence, to continue to lead into the future, and to provide McMaster students with unique ways of building their own knowledge and potential. This committee and its subcommittees will likely be divided amongst your board. Your role will predominantly be to offer insight from the student perspective with this group, and that may include data collection through comms support or UA committee to get a better sense of what the students want.

Miscellaneous Committees

Hiring committees:

These will be struck throughout the year and will vary significantly depending upon the role and the applicants but our FT staff will have some guidance on how these work for your first few. As well, John and Renee will be a great resource if you have questions. These will typically take about 6-8 hours per of your time as a heads up. You will be asked to be on many and may have to delegate, but I would suggest you be on these for larger roles in the org if asked, in addition to the mandated ones. Try to split these amongst the board where possible though.

As well, do not stress too much for these, ultimately you are the interviewer, not the interviewee. I know I felt a lot of pressure but often this is felt by candidates, so try to have a calm, composed approach.

Media ad hoc committee:

These meetings technically have ceased, but I wanted to share an update. All information around these meetings can be found in SRA notes, (ask Victoria or look on the website). This committee

led to the changes to the Sil this year, and we did discuss keeping a few meetings in circulation to touch base and maybe discuss CFMU. As well we discussed a sub or separate committee to follow up on the Sil changes and see if they are making differences (spoiler they are). This sub committee should have some SRA be involved ideally and the VP Finance as they are on the publishing committee.

Ombuds advisory committee:

This committee is technically chaired by yourself and the university president, but he sends a delegate in place. In the past it was maddison who attended these, but this year I took over as Renee was not initially hired and was in transition. It is up to you if you would like to delegate to her, and if so I would suggest you still attend as they are infrequent. This committee is made of 3 MSU members (2 sra), 3 university staff, and Caroline of ombods.

Student Mental Health and wellbeing Strategic Advisory Committee:

This is a part of a larger student affairs project that is aiming to improve mental health support at the university, which is being led by Dr. Catherin Munn who previously was a psychiatrist at SWC. She is an absolutely lovely lady but this committee certainly could use more input if you have ideas to bring forward! I know Sarphina had suggestions and I would suggest inviting her to this committee or possibly swapping places for the year.

General Assembly Planning Committee:

This is led by the SRA speaker and has support from Trish and Wooder, so if you don't show up, they can continue without you. Keep in mind you are the only BoD member on this committee and you have a decent role in GA so it would benefit you to be a part of the planning process. This being said, it is not extremely hands on for yourself. I mostly offered input on students and engagement and any problem solving. Wooder can give you insight on what your role in this committee might look like this year, but try to ensure you are keeping informed about what is happening with GA regardless so you ensure it is progressing at a rate you are happy with. This will be the first in person one in a few years and will have more involvement than this year did.

President's Award for Outstanding Service:

This committee selects awards for a number of folks in the university. This year I raised some concerns about the criteria and the lean towards certain roles who benefited more from the scoring criteria compared to others. This happens near year end but is quite time consuming so make sure to leave it a lot of time when you receive the email package with nominations.

University Memorial Service Committee:

This committee did not exist during covid but may return, here are Josh's comments. "This committee was started by Eva and is now led by Esme from the President's office. The purpose of the committee is to create an event that occurs each year in order to commemorate those in the

McMaster Community who have passed away the year prior. This was planned to occur around fall reading week and we planned a small service to happen in convocation hall. I am unsure about how COVID will affect this so that will likely be a discussion you have. Currently, the planning committee is in the process of actually planning the event, but it may come back to you if they need to trouble shoot ideas.”

Age-Friendly University Committee:

This is a subcommittee of the EDI steering committee and is working to ensure McMaster's accessibility to older folks who might be attending as students or alumni. This committee has had some great output in the past like a walkability study, but I was unable to attend/ cancellations led to me only attending once this year if i correctly recall. There are not many meetings so it is not a huge time drain.

Volunteer Day Committee:

I was not on this committee this year, as I believe it did not run but it was passed along in transition. Josh's notes were the following “This was started by Karen from Alumni in an effort to recognize all the volunteer work folks in the McMaster community do. Again, we only met once as it was decided that the timeline was a bit tight for this year, so you will likely be a part of this committee to determine a fun way to recognize and quantify the amount of volunteer work people do around campus if this project is going to be continued by the alumni office.”

IT Advisory Committee:

The goal of this committee is to guide the direction of IT on McMaster. The big example this year was the changeover to office 365. I would look at utilizing this space for discussions (after some preliminary chats with Pauline, and folks in IT) surrounding the MSU on the microsoft license.

I'm sure there are other committees I am forgetting, but those are the ones that came to mind. Committee work is really interesting because there are definitely some that are super useful and create good outputs, but there are also a lot that are not useful at all. Often you will get requests to sit on committees so think about whether you would like to have an MSU seat on the committee and who might be the best one to sit on it. My opinion was that any opportunity to get you voice at the table is useful so I never really said no to sitting on committees because even if you got one ask in or pushed forward one objective just a bit, its movement that would not have happened otherwise. That said, it can be hard to find people who are willing to sit on the committee, so if the committee is one that fits in your portfolio or if the portfolio who is does fit under is not interest in it, you will be the one to sit on it. That said, most of the time the committees that don't have great outputs barely meet so it may seem like a big commitment, but it usually is not.

Clubs Department Changes

Clubs has had a few changes in the last 2 years. One with the hiring of a new clubs administrator, and the second with the clubs advisory council. The council has been changed (last year) to be reviewing the activity of clubs social medias and comparing this to clubs events. This was too large a task for the clubs department, but with the council meeting somewhat regularly (weekly throughout the semester) can be achieved by the group.

As well, your role with clubs is going to be supporting both clubs and the clubs department staff with large issues as they arise. Some club leaders may not know the appropriate channels to discuss concerns with and honestly you won't have time and it is not within your scope to deal with them, so it is fair for you to forward concerns to the club's administrator to handle. This being said, some issues may be either escalated to you, or clubs may take an issue public rather than using the appropriate channels. In these cases you will be involved.

As well, clubs is the biggest way potentially that students interact with the MSU. With this in mind, it is important to be conscious of any changes that may be made to clubs may be met with resistance. An example would be some of the changes in joshes year which have been somewhat backpedaled with covid. I would recommend looking into these and determining what might be best for a new norm for clubs, as there were issues with clubs which may not be contributing the way clubs are intended to to the student body. Here are the changes that had been made in Joshes year.

Clubs Operations

Operating Policy – Clubs Operations is the central operating policy for the MSU Clubs Department. This is a policy that folks will consult if they would like to know general information about the ClubsDepartment and highlights the core definitions of the department and acts as the guiding document. The sections and major changes are as follows:

- o **Purpose**

- § Minor wording and formatting changes

- o **Club Definition**

- § New section to highlight what defines an MSU Clubs

- § Defines core requirements for a group to be defined as an MSU Clubs

o Clubs Membership

§ Minor wording changes to section 3.3

§ 3.4 onward highlight concerns regarding membership and removal of members. This arose from a number of concerns brought forward by club members and club executives regarding a lack of support in disciplinary procedures for individual club members.

o Clubs Privileges

§ Minor wording and formatting changes

o Clubs Duties

§ New section to further explain what a club is required to do throughout the year. This allows for clubs to have a more centralized section to clearly define what is required of them throughout the year so there is less confusion and tasks do not fall through.

o Personnel

§ Revising Clubs Administrator role from Student Opportunity Position (. 1- year contract) to Continuing Full-time to allow for more continuity and expertise in the department. This came from concerns raised this year regarding continuity and transition within the department.

§ Revising Assistant Clubs Administrator role. Currently two part-time roles responsible for event/logistic support and media/communications resort, though feedback shows they are very underutilized. This will transition to one part-time role that will mimic our Associate Vice-President roles in that they will oversee the Clubs Advisory Council, write reports for the SRA, manage recognition procedures, and assist the council in making directional decisions for the department. They will overall be empowered to show more leadership in the department than they currently are permitted to do.

o Executive Authority

§ Unchanged – minor formatting and wording changes

Clubs Status

· Operating Policy – Clubs Status is a subsection of Operating Policy – Clubs Operations and highlights the recognition, ratification, renewal, judicial policies, and

clubs appeal board. This policy is where you will see the most substantial changes as it covers implications the status of clubs, which tend to be more contentious. Due to the contentious nature of these situations, we made it a priority to more clearly outline procedures, allow for more research and time to be put into new club ratification, ensure more continuity in ratification, ensure processes are still student led, made processes more efficient where possible to allow more time to be put toward processes where gaps were identified, and ensured options for appeal at an MSU level, as well as impartial higher level appeal body for foundational decisions such as ratification, disbandment, and removal. This addresses a large number of concerns raised by students throughout the summer and in the year and will ensure we have a fair process that allows for student concerns to be addressed more effectively. Students would consult this policy regarding any questions regarding the status of a club, whether that be creating a new club, submitting a complaint about a current club, or renewing their club's status for the following school year. The sections and major changes are as follows:

Purpose

- o This highlights the purpose of this specific policy which is communication procedures of recognition, ratification, and sanctions

New Club Recognition

- o This is a new section as we have now separated new club ratification and existing club renewal. The reasoning for this separation is the notion that a club is ratified based on student interest, purpose, and benefit to students at McMaster. Their core mandate/purpose cannot change from year to year, or else that would constitute a new club. To allow for the SRA to do more research into new club applications we have separated the two and to allow for a more comprehensive ratification process for new clubs. This will allow for more information and consultation on applicants and ensure students are aware of every club they are giving recognition to.

- o We have more clearly defined what mandate and/or purpose would allow for a student group to fall under the MSU umbrella. Currently, there is confusion as there are a number of departments apart from the MSU a student group can fall under, so this streamlines that process. These mandates have been determined in consultation with our current policy, internal governance committee, clubs executive council, and student union best practices. This adds limitations to:

- § Athletic clubs – these clubs fall under Ath & Rec currently and this is meant to align our policy with McMasters Student Groups policy and add more clarity to applicants

- § Fundraising/Charity based clubs – This is to ensure all clubs are fulfilling the requirement of holding events for the student body.

Currently we have a number of causes that have one club for information sharing and one for raising funds and this is meant to consolidate that. Additionally, there are a number of times where the amount of money given to clubs in funding is more than the amount they have raised to causes would be better supported through our Sponsorship and Donations committee. This is not meant to, and will not, get rid of all fundraising clubs, but rather to ensure our resources are used effectively and we can best support charitable causes and our students

§ Teach or train academic skills – academic skills and conference are better suited under the purview of their respective faculty societies to ensure there is correct information and more appropriate oversight

§ Recruit volunteers on behalf an external organization – events need to be for our campus communities and run by students. Our club's system is not meant as volunteer recruitment, and we are developing a volunteer experience hub in collaboration to fill gaps that may arise from this change

§ Replicate or reasonable replicate mandates – Clubs Advisory Council will be more critical of overlapping mandates and encourage collaboration where possible to ensure that our resources are used effectively, and clubs can grow with the needs of the student body

o These new requirements, as will all application and ratification requirements, will take place for the 2021 ratification cycle, as if it not fair to applicants who applicant to make these changes after they have submitted their applications.

Club Application

o More clearly outlined application requirement

o Increase of required events from 1 to 3 events

o New requirement of at least 1 event per semester

o Membership increase from 10 students to 25

o Deadline pushed forward to December 1st. This allows for an experience CAC and SRA to review new club applications. One of the biggest challenges this year was having clubs apply with one club's administrator and having staff and student turnover on May 1st, prior to ratification. By pushing the deadline for new clubs forward we will allow the same group to review, interview, and recommend new clubs

o Clubs Advisory Council will now be the group making recommendations to the SRA. This allows for more vetting and research to be done prior to the

ratification stage. A challenge the department has faced in the past is making more directional decisions regarding clubs, as full-time staff are not in the

place to make those more directional decisions, which was why anyone who completed an application was brought forward to SRA. Now, the CAC will be reviewing and interviewing applicants to make a more informed recommendation

- o Introduction of CAC meeting/interview with new clubs to gain more insight and ask questions

- o New stipulations of resources of the MSU. Now the Clubs Administrator will review the resources available and determine the number of clubs we can feasibly support in the coming year. Though it is great we have such a large club department, we have seen in recent years that the number of clubs can cause challenges in responding and addressing to issues. By determine a ballpark of how many new clubs we can accept (which will be determined prior to applications opening), we are ensure that clubs are being supported in the best possible way and we don't bite off more than we can chew in a sense.

- o If the CAC chooses not to put forward a club to the SRA, the decision can be appealed through the Clubs Appeal Board, and if the decision is overturned, the club will be brought to the SRA and they will determine ratification. If CAB overturns a CAC decision the SRA is not obligated to ratify that club

- o Added clearer timelines for SRA review of clubs ratification and reconsiderations of ratification

Clubs Status Renewal

- o Clubs will still remain on probation for one year

- o Change in that the Clubs Advisory Council can renew clubs status and returning clubs do not need to go back to the SRA. The reasoning behind this is that once a mandate is ratified, that should not change based on the assembly (in the same way that SRA statements and stances do not change based on the assembly). By streamlining the renewal process it allows for more time and consideration to go into new clubs. If a returning club has violated clubs policy that should go through the judicial procedure and be reviewed that way.

- o If clubs do not submit for renewal, they automatically lose recognition to prevent dormant clubs

Judicial Policy

- o Minor changes to offences

- o Additional clarification of section 5.1.1.3 to specific imagery that is inappropriate, disturbing, or potentially harmful for general public

consumption, dissemination of false information with the intent to mislead the general public, and other actions deemed to cause significant nuisance as determined by CAC

§ Currently if we receive complaint regarding significant nuisance, those are referred to the university. These additions allow the Clubs Advisory Council to review complaints and deem imagery to be inappropriate if information is false or misleading even if an external group determines it to be permitted. It adds more clarity and gives the CAC

more authority in these cases. This was amended as a result of a number of student concerns and challenges addresses those concerns within our previous framework, which this will hopefully address

- o Addition of Clubs Appeal Board as an impartial appeal body for severe sanctions such as disbandment
- o Clarification on reasoning behind why a club may have their club status removed through disbandment

Clubs Appeal Board

- o The addition of an appeal board to allow for decisions of the CAC to be appealed to a higher body
- o This board was mirrored after our electoral appeal board and is responsible for ensuring MSU Bylaws and Policies were followed
- o Clubs Appeal Board decisions cannot be overturned or reconsidered

Executive Authority

- o No changes Clubs Financial Systems

Operating Policy – Clubs Financial Procedures is a subsection of Operation Policy – Clubs Operations and highlights functions, requirements, privileges, and requirements associated with the finances of MSU Clubs. This policy is new and was built upon from Section 9 – Funding from the previous Clubs Operating Policy. Upon consultation with other student unions and through reviewing common challenges associated with club operations, we have decided to move all clubs banking to our internal systems. This will allow us to save money in bank fees, which have gone to cover the salary of the new full-time internship position of Clubs Accounting & Accounts Receivables Clerk. Additionally, this change will allow clubs to utilize our purchase order systems, apply for bridge financing, utilize advance payments for large invoices, and greatly improve our reimbursement and auditing systems. It is important to note that clubs funding comes from student money, so in supporting our clubs it is our responsibility to ensure the funds are used appropriately. The creation of this policy was spearheaded by Alex (VP Finance), in consultation and coordination with myself, Sean (Director of Finance),

and John (General Manager). Additionally, we consulted a number of student groups on campus to gain a better understanding of the requirements and subjects this policy should cover. It was largely based off of club's financial procedures from our key comparators, particularly Western USC and Waterloo WUSA, both of which have well developed club systems. These procedures will greatly improve the support we are able to give to clubs, address a number of concerns from our smaller clubs, and ensure appropriate financial management of club funding. The sections and major changes are as follows:

Purpose

- o This highlights the purpose of this specific policy which is to procedures surrounding clubs' finances within the MSU

Signing Authority

- o This section outlines requirements surrounding signing authorities/officers, who are the executive members that are allowed to expend and access funds in their MSU Clubs account
- o Currently, we do not have any guidelines surrounding signing officers, creating issues where one executive member can expend club finances without the knowledge or authorities of other signing officers

Membership Fees

- o We have now set a base membership fee for clubs. The reason for this is to ensure clubs have adequate budget support for their activities, improved budget planning, and to ensure club members are committed to their roles within a club.
 - § Clubs will set their individual clubs fees
- o Additionally, as we will be collecting these fees through our central accounting systems, it allows us to accurately keep track of club membership to better identify clubs that have become dormant
- o Additional section to clarify process of refunding clubs' fees for members who feel as though the club is not delivering on its promised mandate

Budget, Insurance, & Auditing

- o This clarifies budgeting requirements for MSU clubs as well as auditing measures to ensure appropriate spending

Financial Assistance

- o We have added a bridge financing option, which is a short-term, no interest loan
- o This will allow clubs to hold larger events which they may not be able to front the upfront costs for

· **Contracts**

o This section highlights requirements surrounding clubs who which to enter into contracts with external vendors

· **Sponsorship & Co-promotion**

o This section highlights requirements for clubs who would like to partner with an external group for sponsorship of an event

· **Funding**

- o The funding guidelines are largely the same as they were previously
- o Clubs are now required to use our internal ticketing systems if they wish to do online ticketing
- o Provided information on grants that are given to MSU clubs for their operations

· **Reimbursements**

- o Currently, all transactions are completed through reimbursements. This policy will continue that method for expenditures that are under \$150.
 - § This is to allow club members to make small purchases more easily and prevent an overload of our purchase order system
- o A common issue is members not coming to pick up their checks, we have resolved this by mailing checks out if not picked up in 20 business days
- o An additional concern is the number of small checks being issues to clubs, to resolve this, smaller purchases will be combined and issues in one reimbursement of \$50 or more to prevent our accounting team from consistently issuing and spending money on multiple smaller checks.

· **Payments**

- o We are now allowed clubs to utilize our purchase order system for payments that are over \$150
- o This means that clubs executives will not be required to rely on reimbursements and instead will be allowed to draw funds directly from their accounts
- o To pay for an invoice via check, club members must submit the specified requirements and payment will be sent directly to the vendor or picked up at the MSU Accounting Office by a designate
- o We are also allowing clubs to make online purchases through our Clubs Accounting & Accounts Receivables Clerk
 - § This will allow groups to make smaller purchases or a number of different purchases for items online and have them shipped to the MSU office without having to rely on reimbursements

· **Use of Funds**

- o This section highlights guidelines and limitations surrounding club revenue and MSU club funding
 - § This was based off of best practices for clubs as well as guidelines used for other MSU collected fees distributed to student groups,

such as the Welcome Week Orientation Levy which is distributed to Faculty Planners

- **Executive Authority**

- o No changes, consistent with other MSU policies Clubs Advisory Council

- **Operating Policy – Clubs Advisory Council** is an additional policy under Operating Policy – Clubs Operations which highlights the purpose, roles, and membership of the new Clubs Advisory Council. This was adapted from the current Clubs Executive Council, which is a group that works with the Clubs Administrator on general suggestions for the Clubs Department and acts as an appeal board for disbandment. Something we saw this year was the need for a larger advisory board to provide guidance to the Clubs Department on

matters of ratification, policy, judicial matters, and other directional decisions regarding the Clubs Department. A challenge this year was that due to the limitation of the Clubs Executive Council, we saw many decisions go to the SRA where they would be suited for another council that is able to meet more frequently, have more expertise, and facilitate better communication. This is why we have developed the Clubs Advisory Council in a way that they can provide direction to the Clubs Department and manage decisions and matter that are not under the purview of the SRA. To facilitate this, we have allocated more resources to the committee and increased the size of the committee to ensure adequate student representation. We have also added a number of measures to address concerns coming from this year and to improve our club system overall. The major changes are as follows:

- **Purpose**

- o Additional purpose of facilitate representation of MSU students in ratification and disbandment decisions
- o Ongoing advisory responsibilities for the Clubs Department
- o Review of MSU Policies

- **Membership**

- o Clubs Assistant Administrator will take on a role similar to that of an Associate Vice President and chair the committee and facilitate all committee business
- o Increase of divisional chairs from 5 to 10 (5 MSU Members, 5 SRA)
- o Change of role of SRA from general member to divisional chair
- o Increase SRA membership from 2 to 5

Duties

- o Will now be actively overseeing and participating the ratification process by reviewing and interviewing applicants within their division
- o Act as the primary ratification body in that they are the body recommending new clubs for ratification to the SRA and renewing ratification status of existing clubs
- o First meeting will now be prior to June 1st
- o Divisional chairs will take on more of a leadership and guidance role for clubs within their division
- o SRA members will now be updated the SRA of relevant CAC and Clubs Department activities

KPMG Organizational Review

The KPMG review was done during Josh's year but is still quite relevant. Some of the major takeaways are that the org structure is too flat and that we should shift focus in revenue generators. With this there were also suggestions to take some of our department heads and create a leadership team of these roles. I would suggest reading this review as it offers a lot of insight into the orgs' tough points.

Month by Month Summary

It is in the bylaw to include a month by month summary, so I will be including it, but this role varies a lot year to year. I would suggest using this only as a rough guide.

May

- o Transition
- o Set up standing meeting times
- o Set up email distribution lists for committees (i.e. presidents council)
- o Clubs Ratification
- o Staff Training
- Board connection
- Getting to know staff
- Year planning

June

- o Clubs Ratification
- Year planning
- Provincial election

- July
 - o Clubs Ratification
 - Year plan submission
- August
 - o finish up summer projects
- September
 - o Welcome Week
- October
 - o Elections
- November
 - o Provincial Lobby Week
 - Federal lobby week (potentially)
- December

Federal lobby week (ostensibly)

- o BoD Exam SWAG
- January
 - o Elections
- February
 - o Federal Lobby Week (maybe)
 - o Elections
- March
 - o General Assembly
 - o Student Rec Night
- April
 - o Elections
 - o Transition

Important Dates, Deadlines, and Policy Requirements

Again, all of this is pretty dependant on what your specific projects are so I'll just try my best to highlight what I think will be helpful.

Dates + Deadlines:

- SRA + EB Documents: Tuesdays except for select documents
- MSU Inc Documents: Thursday the week prior to the meeting (not the week of the meeting)

- Clubs Applications Due: December 1st
- General Assembly: Lots of different requirements so review the bylaw (the speaker will actually do it but still good to know)

Bylaws and Policies to Review:

- Constitution: highest governing document
- Corporate Bylaw 1: will help you understand what MSU inc is
- Corporate Bylaw 3: highlights how the financial approval process works
- Bylaw 3: All things SRA
- Bylaw 4: What you need to do as officers of the organization
- Bylaw 6: Executive Board
- Bylaw 7/A: Presidents Council
- All the Clubs Operating Policies
- Central Support Services Operating Policies
- equitable purchasing policy as changes were being made but not completed this year

Ongoing Projects

Equitable purchasing policy:

This policy was being developed to follow our commitment and direction from SRA to ensure our purchasing practices are equitable for all groups, focusing on avoiding purchasing from any groups who may unfairly benefit on the labor of others or directly contribute to the harm of others. I would suggest discussing this with Mike and consulting the email threads relevant to it.

Posting of wage grid and chart:

You were involved on SRA at the time of these motions, so I would suggest reviewing the sra notes. Essentially this has evolved into developing the secondary HR role (we had our Hr generalist leave and ultimately revamped the department) and going through a wage review process to accompany the posting of wage grids. This was to better support staff and have clear direction to point to as to why we pay staff what we do.

HR role:

This secondary role has been workshopped a fair bit. I would suggest talking to Renee to catch you up to speed, but it likely will no longer be a generalist role and rather more of a support role

to the HR director and focus upon some of the more day to day tasks to allow the director to tackle larger challenges related to HR in the org.

RFP for wage review:

This RFP is something your board will have to make a decision on. I know we have talked at length about this, but as a recap the proposal did not do very well due to the time of year it was submitted. Despite this we finally received responses and a decision needs to be made as to what the scope should be of this project.

Expenditures

There are few expenditures you will have throughout the year. Ultimately, most will be through the Board Special Projects line as they will be larger projects. This line is intended for odds and ends projects or new ones without a dedicated line. This year it was underutilized due to Covid. In past it has been used for projects like new things at clubsfest or 1280 to go promo. Technically this is shared amongst the board, but does not necessarily have to be split 4 ways if the board all feels certain projects need more funding. You should check at board before you put in a PO though.

You will use **Exec Travel and Conference** if you are ever traveling to a meeting or for any of your lobby/ousa trips. The MSU has like a million aeroplan miles as well so flights are cheap/free for the org. You would use the **MGMT Training, SRA Summer Meetings, and Exec Awards & Meetings** for things like SRA training, full time staff training, getting the SRA food for super long meetings and other things that have to do with full-time staff, part-time staff, and SRA that don't necessarily fall under appreciation but are more for general training or meeting requirements. We did not use most of these due to covid but I would suggest if you have questions to talk to accounting/Sarphina.

Important Contacts

Key people you will work with this year:

So the following is folks you will interact with for sure this year, but there are many more! If you ever are looking for a contact, google the department and thats the easiest way to find them.

· President's Office: David Farrar, Kerry, Esme

- o Reach out to the president's email and Kerry will direct it to whoever the email applies to
- Student Affairs: Sean VK
 - o You can email the avp students email directly, If you don't know who to go to for something, this is a good first step
- SSC: Arlene, Andrijana, Gisela, Ana
 - o Depending on what you would like to do you may reach out to different people
 - o Arlene is a great first contact to reach out to if you want to to even have a broader discussion about opportunities for collaboration and she can loop people in as needed. You will likely work with Ana regarding international student support

Gayleen Gray

- o Gayleen will be your main contact for tech in the Uni, I would suggest if you have any related projects to connect with her
- Kim Dej
 - o Kim is an excellent resource for most things related to education and discussion around the T&L Strategy. I had biweekly meetings with her in calendar and she was a great help to stay up to date on the universities happenings.
- EIO: Arig
 - o Arig is great and will be a great help to connect you to different folks in the office if needed
- SWC: Rossane Kent
 - o operational suggestions can be done through Rosanne but higher level ideas might be best through sean
- Provost: Susan Tighe
 - o Depending on what projects you have you may work with them or you may not. Susan is one of your biggest contacts when it comes to academics.
- University Advancement: Vacant
 - o Mary has left her role, and I am unsure who will be filling it after. Despite this the UA email will still function and they can be contacted for questions on any external relations aspect of the university. This is a very important contact to have when it comes to PR, GR, and the events you will be asked to

attend and speak at throughout the year so I would recommend introducing yourself and building this relationship for the MSU

GR: Alex Lawson, Joe finkle

- o Superstars who we worked with a lot this year when it came to the federal election. I would suggest connecting early on to let them know your priorities

Year Plan

The bylaw says to include my year plan. It can be found on both the website and in the email. (I don't believe it makes sense to copy paste into this document)

Odds and Ends

OUSA:

OUSA is a provincial lobbying group for students the MSU is a paid member of. You will likely be attending the lobby weeks/general assemblies for this group. I would suggest reaching out to the OUSA Chair, or talking to elizabeth/mike if you have questions of what these look like.

UCRU:

UCRU is a newer federal Lobbying organization the MSU is a member of. This coming year they will be developing a fee and based off the discussion I would recommend the MSU continue our A level membership. The org is still running without a fee so the MSU may be asked for some small contributions in conjunction with all member schools this year. These would be voted upon at UCRU and approved at that level. As well you will likely be asked to be in a lobby week for them with elizabeth.

Liue:

Liue is a strange beast in our roles as we so regularly work outside a 9-5. I recommend a strong hour tracker setup and keeping on top of it daily. Do not accumulate over 50 hours, as they get very hard to spend as the year ramps up and they are not paid out at year end.

Services:

Services are something that does not fall directly under your purview, but I suggest keeping an eye on them and staying in the loop to aid Mitchell if needed. There is a lot of supervision for the VP Admin and sometimes they will need support as the year goes on.

Covid:

Obviously this has been a challenge this year. I would just like to leave a note about the changes to the workplace that will come this year as we (fingers crossed) return to in person activities. I would just like to highlight there are some concerns amongst staff about work changes and I would recommend asking around and getting opinions to try and come up with the best return plan.

Signing Authority:

I'm sure you will hear this phrase but less about what it means. Essentially, you are one of the few in the org to be able to sign financials and contracts for the org. When it comes to signing cheques, I suggest talking to accounting about anything you may have questions with. Even at year end I had the odd thing I flagged and had questions about. Honestly, I never had one I didn't ultimately sign, but you should always be sure about anything you are signing.

Report writing:

Report writing is something I found tough personally, but I would suggest looking at past one for inspiration if you ever have questions and/or concerns.

Welcome week:

Welcome week is something you do not directly oversee, but is something I was involved out of necessity based on concerns of faculty societies this year. You should not take a lead here, but be in the loop to bring to the president council and a few of the groups you may get invited to.

Lobby meetings:

Mike is going to be your big resource on how to prepare for these. I suggest some practice sessions with him in a group setting with the board to get an idea of how these work. At the end of the day the big thing I try to remember is politicians are just people, and some will or won't have views that align with you. Do not stress too much, but rather go in clear headed and confident. I know I had meetings that went very well and very poorly, so don't beat yourself up if one happens to go bad.

Pres page:

The President's page is something you will be able to use monthly to connect to students, sharing your ideas, strategic pieces, lobby efforts, highlight services, or anything else you see fit to include.

Time management and asking for help:

Snowballing is the bane of the MSU president. It certainly happens and quite easily, but I suggest setting deadlines, sticking to your calendar, setting timelines, and leaning on your board to help with accountability if needed. If things do get out of control though, don't be afraid to lean on people, as it will continue to snowball.

Conclusion

Well this isn't everything, but this is a good start! I know you have a lot of experience and prep you put into this, and I think you will do great! You are going to have tough times im sure, but we all do. Feel free to reach out, not only to me but any past presidents. We all understand the unique stress of the role and are happy to help even if its just a friend to listen to. Lean on staff and VP's, make friends, and enjoy this year! Get everything out of it that you can!

Best of luck Sim!