



REPORT

From the Office of the...

Vice-President (Administration)

TO: Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Mitchell German, Vice-President (Administration)
SUBJECT: SRA 22G Report
DATE: Sunday, September 26th, 2022

Progress on Year Plan

Below, I will outline the progress I have made thus far in my role as the Vice-President (Administration) in relation to the year plan I had originally submitted to the SRA:

Objective 1A: Implement MSU-Wide Indigenous Cultural Competency Training – **Started**
Objective 2A: Implement MSU-Wide 2STLGBQIA+ Training – **Started**
Objective 5A: PTM Hiring Timelines and Transitionary Periods – **Started**
Objective 6A: Incentivization of PTMs for Transition Report Submission – **Completed**
Objective 7A: MSU Maroons Services Awareness Training – **Completed**
Objective 2B: Implementation of Diversity and Equity Network (DEN) as a Peer Support Service – **Started**
Objective 1C: Highlighting MSU Services During Welcome Week – **Completed**
Objective 2C: WW Rep Appreciation Vouchers with TwelvEighty – **Completed**
Objective 3C: Welcome Week Rep Wellness Lounge – **Completed**
Objective 4C: Welcome Week Advisory Committee (WWAC) -- **Started**
Objective 2D: Part-Time Staff Lieu Hour Approval Process Policy – **Started**
Objective 5D: PTM Socials – **Started**
Objective 6D: PTM Cluster Meetings – **Started**

Past Events, Projects, & Activities

1. **Objective 6A: Incentivization of PTMs for Transition Report Submission – Completed**

This has been passed by the Executive Board but I am unable to elaborate as it is not yet public knowledge, nor has this been communicated to PTMs. I will be able to expand on this point in the future.

2. **Objective 7A: MSU Maroons Services Awareness Training – Completed**

New this year, the Maroons received MSU Services Training prior to beginning their roles during Welcome Week. This was completed recognizing that the Maroons are the MSU's Reps, and it is expected that they have knowledge of the support that the MSU can provide to students, and how we work to enhance student life. Therefore, this training was organized by myself, and provided by the Maroons Coordinator (Sinead)

prior to Welcome Week so that this information could be shared with incoming first years at McMaster.

In an effort to ensure that the Maroons had the appropriate resources to rely on throughout the year about the MSU Services, the training was supplemented with an 'MSU Services Guidebook' that was distributed to all Maroons in the form of a PDF. This went through the differences between the Student Life Enhancement Services and the Peer Support Services, as well as when the Maroons should refer a first year to a particular Service, when they have hiring opportunities, what they do, and how they can be contacted. This information was taken from the MSU website, as well as shared through collaborations with PTMs. Below, I will link the Guidebook that was created on Canva (please note, this is for internal use only).

MSU Services Guidebook:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAEj_wTyUpM/C4rOb3tzxKMWqh6FU-JWsg/view?utm_content=DAEj_wTyUpM&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

3. Objective 1C: Highlighting MSU Services During Welcome Week – Completed

As the Vice-President (Administration), I sit on the Welcome Week Advisory Committee and play a part in executing the MSU signature events during Welcome Week (i.e., BBNO\$ Concert, Headphone Disco, Airbands, Monday Night Lights, etc.). However, despite this role, it has still been historically difficult to have the MSU Services involved in Welcome Week. This is because we want to leave space for the faculties, Maroons, and ResLife to plan their events without excessive overlap. Further, physical space is quite booked up during this time, which can make it difficult for the MSU Services to reserve space late in the Summer for any Welcome Week-related initiatives.

Coming into this role as Vice-President (Administration), I wanted to take advantage of the early exposure opportunities for MSU Services to interact with incoming first years during Welcome Week. These early interactions would set the stage for increased engagement with the MSU Services as McMaster students return to campus. I was able to secure space for all MSU Services (including departments such as The Silhouette and CFMU), to be involved in the Student Services Fair organized by the SSC. During this time, thousands of students had the opportunity to interact with all of our Services. Also, I had the opportunity to speak in the Mac Welcome video created by SSC where I was able to highlight the role of the MSU and its many Services. This was shared during the Mac Welcome event itself (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSXlzHPkmMk>). Additionally, during the events organized by MSU Campus Events including the BBNO\$ Concert, Headphone Disco, and Monday Night Lights (Maroons), the Women & Gender Equity Network (WGEN) and Student Health Education Centre (SHEC) were present to provide peer support if necessary, as well as share information about their Service to any interested first years. Finally, SHEC also collaborated with the Maroons in an event during Welcome Week called 'Mindfulness with the Maroons feat. SHEC'.

All in all, the PTMs worked extremely hard to ensure that all MSU Services were visible during Welcome Week to establish early contacts and relationships with incoming first years. These efforts have paid off as we have seen an increase in engagement with

multiple MSU Services compared to previous years. This is in both the quantity of students accessing the Services for support, as well as wanting to be involved in a larger capacity.

4. Objective 2C: WW Rep Appreciation Vouchers with TwelvEighty – **Completed**

A priority of mine, having been a past Welcome Week Representative for the Faculty of Health Sciences, was to ensure that all WW Reps felt appreciated for their efforts to plan and execute a successful Welcome Week. Feedback in the past had suggested that WW Reps did not feel that their efforts were recognized.

In collaboration with Student Affairs through the WWAC, I was able to organize a Welcome Week Rep Appreciation Lunch (Lunch, On Us) through TwelvEighty on the Thursday and Friday of Welcome Week. This was financed through the WW Levy collected from first years. All Welcome Week Reps (over 1,100) were invited to this, and they were able to pick-up a FREE lunch pack that included a wrap, apple, granola bar, juice box, and bag of chips. This was done to ensure that our Welcome Week Reps were well-fed and fueled so that they can continue to support first years throughout this high-energy week.

A concern of mine while organizing this was the potential for large amounts of food waste. However, all lunch packs were either picked up by Welcome Week Reps or donated to Living Rock, our Welcome Week charity.

5. Objective 3C: Welcome Week Rep Wellness Lounge – **Completed**

With help from the Board of Directors and with financial sponsorship from the McMaster Alumni Association, we were able to have a Welcome Week Rep Wellness Lounge open for the entire duration of Welcome Week. This was located in Clubspace (special shoutout to Nardos, the Clubs Administrator for allowing us to use this) and was open from 11am-8pm daily.

Within this space, there was \$2500 worth of snacks and drinks that were stocked daily by the BoD alongside plenty of lounging space and fans. This was a space that was exclusive to WW Reps where they could re-charge during this long week. The following items were ordered:

- Awake Milk Chocolates
- Frito-Lay Lunch Variety Chips
- Oasis 100% Juice Assorted Flavours
- Mott's Fruitsations, Assorted Fruit Shapes
- Hospitality Services Water
- Kirkland Signature Dipped and Chewy Granola Bar
- Kirkland Signature Soft & Chewy Granola Bars
- HALLS Mentho-Lyptus Cherry Cough Drops

HALLS Mentho-Lyptus Honey-Lemon Cough Drops
Kirkland Signature Mini Chocolate Chip Cookies
Nestlé - Mini Halloween Assorted Candy Bars
Airheads Mini Assorted
Goldfish Baked Snack Cheddar Crackers
GoGo SQUEEZ Organic Fruit Sauce Variety Pack
Apples, Bananas, Oranges

Overall, this initiative was a huge success, and many WW Reps from different faculties/residences had the opportunity to socialize and relax. We have received phenomenal feedback regarding this initiative, and I would recommend that similar initiatives be carried out for WW Reps in the future to ensure their wellbeing is prioritized during Welcome Week.

6. Objective 6D: PTM Cluster Meetings – Started

As stated in my platform, I plan to run PTM Cluster Meetings between the Student Life Enhancement and Peer Support Services, respectively. I have already conducted one with the PTMs prior to the academic year, and it was an opportunity to connect with them on a personal level, as well as listen to any ideas and feedback they have for the upcoming year. As well, the PTMs had an opportunity to ask me any questions they had and connect with other PTMs with similar purviews. Ultimately, I think that this will help to streamline the MSU Services' programming, by facilitating opportunities for collaboration amongst PTMs. This will reduce the redundancy of our programming, while simultaneously increasing its quality.

I received positive feedback from PTMs about these Cluster Meetings, and they will continue throughout the duration of the year if PTMs continue to find them helpful.

Upcoming Events, Projects, & Activities

1. Objective 1A &2A: Implement MSU-Wide Indigenous Cultural Competency and 2STLGBQIA+ Training – Started

The original intent was that this Indigenous Cultural Competency Training and 2STLGBQIA+ Training would be established this year for the current round of MSU-Wide Trainings (2022/23). However, due to other components of our traditional MSU-Wide Training not being in place prior to transitioning into my role (AOP, Accessibility, SVPR), this resulted in setbacks in the planning process as I had to prioritize ensuring these trainings were in place. Therefore, the current PTMs/Execs/Volunteers of the MSU are only being trained on AOP, Accessibility, and SVPR for the 2022/23 year. Despite this, I have no doubts that the MSU is still able to provide high-quality, pragmatic training for our student leaders.

Recently, I have hired the Administrative Team Research Assistant, Vivien Trinh, who will work alongside me throughout the duration of the year. During this time, we plan to organize this Indigenous Cultural Competency Training and 2STLGBQIA+ Training alongside multiple internal and external stakeholders to ensure it is in place for the next

year (2023/24). This will help to ensure that the MSU is able to support a broader population of McMaster students through safe(r), culturally sensitive practices. As a note, the MSU's traditional trainings (AOP, Accessibility, SVPR) will continue to be delivered in addition to the new trainings being introduced.

2. Objective 5A: PTM Hiring Timelines and Transitional Periods – Started

Last year, for a multitude of reasons, PTMs were hired quite late in the year which resulted in quick transitions into their role. This included multiple PTM positions not being vacant as I began this role as the Vice-President (Administration). While we are back on track at this point, and all PTM positions have been successfully hired, we will be organizing the PTM hiring process far earlier in the year to mitigate any similar setbacks for the 2023/24 year. Many of the PTMs have already been made aware of this.

Currently, I am collaborating with the MSU's Human Resources Director (Renee) and Administrative Services Coordinator (Victoria) to organize the PTM hiring schedule for this year. As of now, it is set to start in late December/early January and will be split into Student Life Enhancement Services and Peer Support Services, with the former starting first. This is recognizing that many of the MSU's Student Life Enhancement Services (e.g., Maroons, EFRT, Spark, etc.) start earlier than the Peer Support Services. Thus, we want these PTMs hired as early as possible and take priority. This year, the Office Clerks will also help in scheduling the interview processes, and the Administrative Team Research Assistant will support HR and myself to develop a newly improved interview question bank. This is being completed recognizing that many of the interview questions between different PTM positions were the same or very similar. This gave candidates applying to multiple PTM positions within the MSU an unfair advantage at times in the interview process.

At this point in time, transitional periods for PTM positions are being discussed at the Board-level. It is anticipated that there will be an overlap between the incoming and outgoing PTMs' contracts (and a reduction of hours) that will ensure both employees are paid for their transitional efforts. This structure for PTM transition will be somewhat similar to how it was executed in the 2020/21 year.

3. Objective 2B: Implementation of Diversity and Equity Network (DEN) as a Peer Support Service – Started

Diversity + Equity Network (DEN), previously referred to as Diversity Services, was established as a Peer Support Service of the MSU back in 2020/21, along with a re-branding. However, until recently, there was no position within the DEN Executive Team that could support this new expectation to provide peer support to the BIPOC students at McMaster.

As such, I have been working closely with the DEN Director, Administrative Services Coordinator, Administrative Team Research Assistant, and Human Resources Director to create a Peer Support Coordinator role within DEN. This recently established position is quite similar to the Peer Support Coordinator role that exists within SHEC currently, but it has a BIPOC-focus. Now that there is a Peer Support Coordinator within DEN's Executive Team, the Operating Policy will have to be changed in the coming weeks to

reflect this. Further, the next steps include working alongside the Administrative Team Research Assistant and DEN Director to establish Peer Support Training that can be provided to DEN's Volunteers to support this change.

4. Objective 4C: Welcome Week Advisory Committee (WWAC) -- Started

The Vice-President (Administration) sits on the WWAC alongside the Vice-President (Finance), and both of us are involved with high-level decision making for Welcome Week in collaboration with Student Affairs. Our upcoming meeting will include a debrief of Welcome Week where we will evaluate the insights/statistics collected and set directions for the upcoming year. During this time, I am also responsible for providing an overview of the Welcome Week Rep initiatives that were organized through the MSU, what worked and what didn't, and any suggestions for improvements in this realm.

5. Objective 2D: Part-Time Staff Lieu Hour Approval Process Policy – Started

Previously, the MSU has noticed that PTMs have been working beyond their contracted weekly hours without approval from the Vice-President (Administration). It has already been communicated to all PTMs this year that all lieu hour request *must* be approved in advance by the Vice-President (Administration) prior to being worked. There are no exceptions to this.

To ensure that this information was clearly communicated to PTMs so that they are made aware of the proper protocols, I have recently sent out an email to all Directors, Assistant Directors, and Coordinators that outlines the lieu hour approval process, as well as hour tracker submission deadlines. For the SRA's knowledge, all PTMs are expected to abide by the following processes:

- Hour trackers are submitted to the Vice-President (Administration) on MSU paydays (biweekly on Fridays).
- PTMs should *not* be working during the unpaid periods that were communicated.
- PTMs are *not* permitted to work beyond their contracted weekly hours unless:
 - They send an email to the Vice-President (Administration) requesting a specific amount of lieu hours and explaining why there is the need for overages. Attached should be their updated hour tracker. Only after their lieu hours have been approved can they be worked and tracked.
 - All PTMs should take time off in subsequent weeks if lieu hours are approved (e.g., if you received 2 lieu hours, you are expected to work under your weekly hours by 2 hours in subsequent weeks).
 - All lieu hours must be tracked in their personal hour trackers.

At this point, the lieu hour approval process has *not* been integrated into the Part-Time Staff Employment Policy. However, this is because I am unsure if this is the path I want to take. Instead, I am considering working with the HR Director to potentially have this included in all PTS employment contracts.

6. Objective 5D: PTM Socials – Started

As the Vice-President (Administration), it is a priority of mine that our PTMs feel appreciated for the work to do to enhance student life and make McMaster a safe(r)

space. As such, I am currently in the process of organizing a PTM Social in late September or early October. I have sent them a Microsoft Form with some ideas that I had, and provided a section where they could suggest potential ideas. I truly am looking forward to this, and feel that it will be an opportunity to establish personal connections with the PTMs. These will continue to happen throughout the duration of the year.

7. PTM Performance Evaluations – Started

PTM Performance Evaluations used to be conducted annually by the Vice-President (Administration), but were paused during COVID-19. This year, I plan to bring them back and am currently constructing the questionnaire that will be circulated to Executives and Volunteers of all MSU Services. This will be done in collaboration with the Administrative Team Research Assistant, Human Resources Director, Administrative Services Coordinator, and the AVP Services. They will likely be circulated around late November and will provide an inside glimpse into the managerial functioning of all our Services that I may not see in my personal interactions with PTMs. Proceeding this questionnaire period, all data will be compiled, and I will conduct 1-on-1s with all PTMs to review the feedback. This will all be done under the strictest of confidentiality.

Outreach & Promotions

With the goal to enhance the presence of the MSU Services on campus, and subsequently increase engagement between them and the student body, I have had the Communications Department focus on highlighting some of our Services.

Thus far, promotional videos have been created for EFRT (5,280 views), SWHAT (3,615 views), and Spark (12.5k views). Coming up, we are currently producing a video for SHEC, and will be curating one for FCC in the coming weeks. Additionally, during Welcome Week, I helped to produce our #Back2MacU video which accumulated 22.6k views.

The MSU Comms Department is continuing to post about the Student Assistance Plan (SAP) as well as Health and Dental Opt Out (Sept 30th).

Successes

Below, I will share some successes within my purview that were separate from my initial year plan submitted to SRA:

1. Rise and Shine: Welcome Week Rep Pancake Breakfast:

In collaboration with Student Affairs through the Welcome Week Advisory Committee, the MSU was able to provide a pancake breakfast for upwards of 400 WW Reps on the first day of Welcome Week. This was catered through Hospitality Services, and included pancakes, fresh fruit, coffee, and tea. It was an opportunity for WW Reps to feel appreciated, and unwind before the high energy of Welcome Week. This was all provided to WW Reps at no charge, and took place in MUSC by the Starbucks. WW

Reps seemed excited to be there, and the BoD had received positive feedback on all of our appreciation initiatives for WW Reps this year.

2. Welcome Week BoD Popsicles:

Throughout the duration of Welcome Week, the BoD had the opportunity to drive around campus and provide first years and WW Reps with popsicles. This allowed us to connect with both first years and WW Reps on an individual basis, hear how Welcome Week was going, and establish personal connections. Inherently, it was also a demonstration of the BoD's appreciation for our WW Reps and our priority to ensure their well-being.

3. Welcome Week 2022

This year was our first predominantly in-person Welcome Week since 2019 (there was still 15% of programming taking place virtually for accessibility purposes). The MSU was able to bring back many of its high-impact events including:

- BBNO\$ - Most highly attended event during Welcome Week (~3,000 attendees)
- Headphone Disco – 2,253 attendees
- Monday Night Lights (Maroons) - 857 attendees
- Airbands – Attendance was not recorded on Presence for this event. Faculty of Commerce won the MSU Faculty Cup. Emceed by the Vice-President (Administration).
- Charity Carnival – Organized by the Maroons and all proceeds donated to Living Rock (our designated Welcome Week Charity)

Currently, the WWAC is busy discussing statistics pertaining to Welcome Week, and strategizing on how to improve operations for the years to come. I also wanted to take this opportunity to provide a HUGE shoutout to MSU Campus Events and MSU Avtek for all of their hard work to ensure that Welcome Week was a success and that first years felt welcomed to the McMaster community.

4. Hiring

Coming into the role of Vice-President (Administration), there was a considerable amount of hiring that still had to be completed. This included the PCC Director and AD, the Maccess Director, the WGEN Director and AD, AVP Services, AVP Internal Governance, the CRO, and the Administrative Team Research Assistant. Since my last SRA report, I can happily announce that all of these positions have been filled, and I look forward to working with these incredible folks throughout the duration of the year!

Current Challenges

Throughout the Summer, there were issues with PTMs not submitting their EB reports on time, and not attending scheduled EB meetings. Ultimately, this was having an impact on the effectiveness of EB to be able to help support the MSU Services, due to a lack of communication between EB and PTMs. Since then, I have been quite stringent with PTMs on ensuring that all EB reports are submitted on time, and reminded them of the importance of this. Additionally, they are expected to be at *all* EB meetings, and if

they cannot make it due to scheduling conflicts, they must let me know in advance so that I am prepared to present on their behalf.

Volunteers (Standing Committees)

Services Committee – Justin (AVP Services) has done a phenomenal job at beginning to organize the Service Reviews that will take place later in the year. He has had an initial meeting with members of the Services Committee, and delegated tasks including conducting external research and helping to develop the Microsoft Forms that will be circulated. We are currently meeting on a bi-weekly basis, and he has communicated all expectations and plans with me in an effective manner. Justin has also taken the initiative to meet with all the PTMs of the Services being reviewed (Macademics, Maroons, PCC, and SWHAT) and answer any questions they had about the process. He and I have also recently talked about our promotional plan to increase responses to ensure the accuracy and validity of the results of the Service Reviews. This includes incentivization tactics, promotional videos, physical promotions, and talking at large lectures (or having posts made to Avenue). I am very proud of Justin and all the efforts I have seen from the Services Committee!

Internal Governance Committee – Aiman (AVP IG) has been meeting with Victoria (ASC), Daniela (Executive Assistant) and I quite frequently to develop a plan for the year. She has been working diligently to schedule an initial meeting with the IG Committee, but there have been slight delays due to limited availability in schedules. For the most part, Aiman and the IG Committee will be following our internal policy review schedule, but exceptions will be made as necessary. She has received the go-ahead from the Administrative Team, and is currently working on the first set of policies that are up for review. Aiman was hired relatively late in the year, so these delays are expected. I am confident in her abilities to lead the Internal Governance Committee to success this year, and her efforts and initiative continues to impress me!

Other:

If you would like any updates on the operations of particular MSU Services, please don't hesitate to ask during SRA 22G, or check out the EB reports they have submitted on the MSU website. This is always a fantastic way to stay up-to-date on our Service operations throughout the year, and they are all publicly available.

Closing Remarks:

Thank you for taking the time to read this SRA report. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask during SRA 22G. Additionally, if there is any way that I might be able to support you within your specific portfolios, I am always an email away. I want nothing more than to see you all thrive within your roles!

Sincerely,



Mitchell German

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