



REPORT

From the office of the...

AVP Internal Governance

TO:	Members of the Student Representative Assembly
FROM:	Aiman Dhiloon, Associate Vice-President (Internal Governance)
SUBJECT:	SRA 22L Report
DATE:	January 10, 2023

Progress on Yearplan

The Internal Governance Committee is looking forward to the Winter semester, where we will be continuing with our policy reviews and sending items to the SRA for approval.

Past Events, Projects, & Activities

Completed Policies/Bylaws:

Bylaw 2 – MSU Membership, Bylaw 5 – Executive Board

Policies Undergoing Consultations:

These are all policies that the committee has reviewed, but that need additional consultations from MSU or external staff members and partners.

- MSU Governance & YOU
 - o This policy had some major updates to be made in terms of leadership and membership. While the majority of the edits have been made, we are still working with Indigenous Student Services and looking for a suitable Indigenous student group that can send a student representative. Please see the Challenges & Other sections of this report for more details.
- Interfaith Council
 - o Like MSU Governance and YOU, we are looking for Catholic student representation on this committee. I was able to talk to Nardos, who was very helpful!
- Role of the MSU during Labor Disputes
 - o Before the break, I had hoped to set up meetings with the VP Education and General Manager. I'm hoping we can pick these up in the new year!

Upcoming Events, Projects, & Activities

This month's goal on my end is to wrap up the policies that were yet to be completed from the fall term, and to get those to the SRA for approval as soon as possible. From the committee side of things, we will be continuing with new policies in accordance with the schedule we created at the beginning of the year.

Future Policies:

- Bylaw 3/A - Assembly Procedures, Bylaw 9 - Financial Affairs, Elections Department, Campus Events, Child Care Centre, Child Care Centre Advisory Committee, Valedictorian Selection, Welcome Week Awards, Employment Wages

Successes

- Everyone we have had the chance to collaborate with has been very helpful. A huge shoutout to Nardos (our clubs administrator) and Shylo from Indigenous Student Services!

Current Challenges

- Being in this role has really opened my eyes to how long it takes some information to be updated and publicly shared within the university. The main challenges and delays in the committee's policy review stem from the conflicting and out of date information found on official university websites – I have outlined one such notable experience in the "Other" section of this report.

Volunteers

- I am so incredibly proud of all the members of the committee – Yatharth, Nelosha, Fizzah, Aniruddh and Mannat have been such an awesome group to work with, and I hope we are able to keep it up over the winter term!

Other

Even in today's day and age, where information is available at our fingertips, I still find myself shocked at how long it can take things to be reviewed. I ran into one such example recently, when making the edits for the MSU Governance and YOU Policy, and I think this experience needs to be brought to light for the SRA, if only to highlight the importance of policy reviews and the challenges that IG Committee can sometimes face.

MSU Governance and YOU Committee aims to increase diversity in student government at McMaster by bringing together representatives from various underrepresented groups. Part of doing policy reviews is ensuring that any groups listed in a committee's membership are still operating - in doing so, I noticed that the McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance (MISCA) had dissolved. I got this information from their Facebook page, which announced that MISCA disbanded in July of 2021.

This was not an issue – I simply noted that the group needed to be updated and set out to search for an active alternative. My search led me to the Indigenous Studies Department website. Surprisingly, I found that MISCA was still prominently listed as an active group here. Confused and looking for answers, I clicked on a link they provided, which *said* "read more about MISCA on the OPRIG website". To my absolute shock, this led me to a page discussing – I kid you not – dentistry. Instead of learning about MISCA on the OPRIG website, I was now looking at a webpage for [OPIR General Dentistry](#). Now more confused than ever, I scrolled to the bottom of the Indigenous Studies Department page and clicked on another hyperlink for MISCA. Once again, I landed on the same dentistry page.

I decided to explore another possible group: the Indigenous Education Council. In looking through the council's membership, I noticed that they had listed a student representative on behalf of a group called the McMaster First Nations Students Association (MFNSA). However, I could not find any information about the MFNSA online. I finally uncovered that this was the previous name of MISCA. Out of suspicion, I turned to MISCA's Facebook page to see just how recent the name change was. I scrolled through their entire timeline and discovered that the Facebook page was created in 2014, when they were already using the name MISCA. In other

words, the membership list for the Indigenous Education Council had not been updated since 2014.

To me, this raises many crucial questions about the realities of Indigenous advocacy and policy reviews at McMaster, which I will be exploring further. When websites and documents are left unupdated, either due to a lack of information or a lack of prudence, it creates disadvantages and barriers for members of the community. Imagine if I had been an Indigenous student, looking for ways to participate in advocacy or community initiatives, and been met with the issues I have described here. It may seem like a minor issue, but to leave information unupdated for **9 years** is not right, and it is not fair.

I hope this outlines the importance of reviewing policies and other information in a timely manner and encourages the SRA members to keep up with the work of IG committee going forward.

Best,

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