

MSU PRESIDENT TRANSITION REPORT



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Prepared for Jovan Popovic 2023-2024

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Introduction

Hey Jovan!

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 Jovan, 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 Description:

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 in writing a letter on behalf of a club to a third party. She also is a phenomenal minuter and I 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 similar 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

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-opressive 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 eachothers 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 wont 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 presidents office, so you will only need to share your availabilities. I would heavily suggest talking as a board and sorting priorities as this years 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 Roberts 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 actionable 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 Wooder are observers on these meetings and offer insight often. I find Wooder 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 committees 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 additional 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 Ombuds.

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 your 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 Clubs Department 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 or information to be 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

o 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 bridg 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 insupporting 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 wish 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 issued to clubs, to resolve this, smaller purchases will be combined and issued 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.

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.

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: Sonia Anand
 - o Sonia is great and will be a great help to connect you to different folks in the office if needed, though she is transitioning out of the role as she is only temporary.
- SWC: Rosanne 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: Debbie Martin
- GR: Alex Lawson, Joe Finkle
 - Superstars who we worked with a lot this year when it came to the provincial election. I would suggest connecting early on to let them know your priorities

- GR: Alex Lawson, Joe finkle
- Jeannie An, Nidia Cerna, and Susan McCracken – LinkedIn Learning
- Abeer Siddiqui and Joanne Kehoe - OER
- Kate Whalen, Liana Bontempo, Dave Cano, and Wayne Terryberry – Sustainability
- Elizabeth Way – Student Financial Aid
- Carolyn Brendon and Meghan Rego – Ombuds Committee
- Andrea Thyret-Kidd – University Secretariat

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, to better understand what lobby meetings will look like. With OUSA in mid-November of 2022, Vice-President (Education) Elizabeth Wong and I went to Toronto for one week to advocate for student concerns at the provincial level in collaboration with our provincial-level advocacy body, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA). This opportunity allowed us to advocate to Member of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) on how the Provincial government can better support the academic, professional, and overall societal success of students. There were four main topics we advocated it on, specifically Affordability, Gender-Based and Sexual Violence, Sector Sustainability, and Rural & Northern Students, the latter of which specifically focusing on how to better bolster Health & Transit supports. Through this lobby week, OUSA met with well over 30 MPPs across the province, with me specifically having more than 6 meetings mainly with GTA and Hamilton area MPPs. Not only were we able to learn about the intricacies of lobbying, but also apply our knowledge in a direct avenue with politicians. This opportunity has also allowed us to develop new collaborations and potential links with those in government which I feel will further foster positive outcomes for students and can be used by our successors to further advocate for student concerns. Overall, OUSA's Student Advocacy Conference was a wonderful avenue in which we were able to share student perspectives and lay the groundwork for positive change at one of the highest levels. I highly encourage you to work closely with you VP Education to ensure that your provincial-level advocacy goals are represented in the work that OUSA does this coming year.

UCRU and CASA:

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 the vp education. The same week as the Holiday Market, near the end of November and the beginning of December, VP (Education) Elizabeth Wong and I were on Ottawa to lobby the Federal government regarding student advocacy goals. This was a collaborative event done with the Undergraduates of Canadian Research-intensive Universities (UCRU), an organization representing eight student unions of U15 universities. Collectively, UCRU met with an excess of 20 different Members of Parliament (MPs), with me personally meeting with about 4 MPs. Through this advocacy, UCRU and the MSU shared student concerns and request further investment in the realm of Student Financial Aid, Student Employment, Mental Health, and Indigenous Student Education. This advocacy had a significant focus on international student concerns as well, and overall allows us to share valuable perspectives with elected representatives from across Canada. Overall, UCRU has many flaws and is uninspiring, disorganized, and at times unproductive. In past years it wasn't like this, with UCRU garnering more than 80 MP meetings in 2020-2021, showing things have been better in the past.. This motivated the MSU's decision to become observers of CASA, an organization with far more robustness and internal structure. We hope you investigate the similarities and differences between the organizations as it will be very important to deciding how the MSU invested its limited funds for the future.

Municipal Lobbying

Vice-President (Education Elizabeth Wong) worked with community partners and students to create a list of advocacy goals to the City of Hamilton. We selected three main advocacy goals each with multiple sub-points, specifically regarding Affordable Housing, Sustainability and Waste Management, as well as Public Spaces and Infrastructure. Additionally, we also shared student perspectives regarding the Nuisance Party Bylaw, and its negative impacts on student wellbeing. These goals were created by collating student concerns and conducting research to develop recommendations for how the municipal government can work to improve Hamilton to allow for the success of students in the future. The lobbying in many ways was modelled of the provincial and federal level work. To summarize, the meetings with the City were a wonderful success, as the MSU was able to meet with more than 10 of the 15 City Councillors, the Mayor of Hamilton Andrea Horwath, and was also able to delegate to City Council as a whole during pre-budget deliberations. These conversations allowed for the development of multiple touch points for future collaboration, as many newly elected representatives have progressive social, economic, and political views generally aligned with student needs. The positive relationships we fostered can be a great launching point for you to have many meetings and build deep relationships this year with some councillors.

Ensure you work closely with Municipal Affairs committee to develop a high quality brief with well informed research, (including surveys/polling/testimonials/other data created at McMaster by the MSU). Lack of leadership within the Education Team last year meant the information we had was much more crude and based solely on a limited number of student voices, and mostly online research. By having more fruitful research and recommendations, and meeting potentially multiple times with Councillors throughout the year, deep, long-lasting relationships can be fostered that will benefit students in the long-run.

Liu Hours:

Liu 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.

President's 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.

Light-Up The Night Planning

I am happy to share that Light Up The Night (LUTN) returned for the first time since 2019. LUTN is one of the largest annual events that takes place in the McMaster community, and is a celebration of amazing student performers, community members, and artists who show their wonderful talents in a fun and engaging environment. Students were able to take part in amusement park rides, eat from a selection of diverse foods, and play unique games offered by a diverse selection of vendors. I worked with multiple partners in the MSU and McMaster to assist in the organization of this event and have specifically focused on collecting sponsorship opportunities. I encourage that you have a similar role, but also give forth your ideas about event planning.

Board of Directors Remuneration

This is a brewing idea that exists within the SRA. There was a preliminary submission brought up by Kevin Hu of SRA Engineering. To summarize, it basically pertains to increasing salaries of the Board of Directors positions to be more in-line with the average seen for graduates of undergraduate institutions in Ontario. While this idea has merit, I think there are complications that mean it cannot be done haphazardly or without reflection.

Firstly, we must ensure that when a salary is selected, the salaries seen in the non-profit sector are benchmarked, as this is the sector relevant to the MSU. Furthermore, any changes should be implemented for future years, as it should not be perceived by the student body that MSU Board of Directors are directly increasing their own salaries, and thereby financially benefiting from these changes. Additionally, as will be reflected later in this piece, the role of the MSU President is

often severely unappreciated, nor given due recognition. This is because of the more informal, unstructured nature of the work, and because it does not supervise staff or directly work with the MSU's pre-existing internal structures in nearly the same capacity as the Vice-President role. Thus, while a salary increase is worthwhile, it should be done with an amount that maintains parity amongst the four roles so to prevent any perceived sense of greater importance of reduced importance between the roles. Differential salaries between the roles, especially any in which one Vice-President role makes more than another, or most worryingly, where one Vice-President makes more than the President, would likely incentivize interpersonal conflict that would reduce efficiency and cause antagonism. As a result, while BoD remuneration should be investigated, it must be done with the consideration that the roles themselves, their scope and purview, must be reassessed. I believe this should be done with the review being done by Gallagher. A report from this group that outlines how BoD salary should be increased in a way that recognizes the work being done and duly values it is key, as it can be a strong, third-party analysis that can be referenced by Board of Directors when they publicly will vouch for a salary increase, if they wish to do so, and if that is what the report recommends.

Campus Master Plan

The Campus Master Plan is an overarching vision for how McMaster University sees for the University's physical environment to evolve over the coming years. July was also a noteworthy month during my term for the MSU's advocacy within the development of the McMaster Campus Master Plan. Multiple Design "Charettes" (Feedback Sessions) were held, and I had the opportunity of meeting representatives of BDP Quadrangle, - the consultancy firm working with McMaster University on its Campus Master Plan. The focused discussion sessions were regarding the topics of Energy & Infrastructure, Stormwater & Ecology, and Transportation, as all three are key tenets in the process of developing a more accessible, equitable, hospitable, and sustainable McMaster campus. Other Board members of the MSU also gave forth valuable insight in these discussions. Everything from affordable housing, greenery of McMaster's campus, the environment created by that, prevalence of automobile parking, accessibility concerns, and how to create a healthier, more active McMaster community was advocated for by the MSU. Overall, our contribution was vital to ensuring strong recognition of student perspectives within the development of the plan. As the Campus Master Plan continues to develop and evolves into a more finalized document, I look forward to seeing you continue to guide it in a manner most appropriate to the prosperity of the student body. It is integral that you share perspectives which allow for the development of the physical environment of McMaster to be inline with sustainable development ideals, including making campus less car-centric, having more transit connections, greater accessibility, and designed to incentivize biking and walking. In addition, ensure that the development of this plan allows McMaster to aim for ambitious ideals that can be leveraged by the MSU and community members to ensure investment into things such as new housing development, sustainability, and positive community building. McMaster has already instituted many, quite vague goals that

speak to this, but as these items become more specific in the future, or are leverage for specific projects, ensure you are present to showcase how a specific piece speaks to your goals and the goals of students. For example, McMaster aims to expand access to housing as part of the Campus Master Plan. This is where community groups such as the Hamiltonians for Affordable and Manageable Rents (HAMR) could come in. If they continue to make progress on their goals, and have a viable, quickly replicable, affordable housing unit that can be constructed, your role in being able to advocate for McMaster to construct more of these units would be vital, as McMaster could be motivated to do so as a direct result of their publicly given statements of wanting to build more affordable housing. In many ways, the purpose of your role is to function as a check on McMaster and as a public critique mechanism, and while this exact tactic has been underutilized, it has significant potential due to the MSU's standing as the chief representative body of students at McMaster University.

Metrolinx

This year, I met with Kelly Anderson of Metrolinx (you can find her email in your email history by searching her name) on a couple different instances to advocate for the increased frequency of GO Transit, and for the reintroduction of express busses. Overall, our work was a success, and resulted in a degree of increased service, as well as express buses to, high traffic locations (such as Bramalea GO, Square One GO, Union Station...) returning. However, a lot of this was already planned to have been done by Metrolinx in anticipation of returning demand. As a result, continued collaboration and communication is key moving forward. Please set up a meeting with her to discuss the current situation, the current level of ridership, and where she feels that increased services at McMaster University can be fostered. Metrolinx has very in-depth data as they record almost all transit pickups and drop offs on the GO network via the Presto system, and due to the lucrative potential of this data, they are unwilling to share with outsiders such as the MSU, fearing a leak that could give a competitive advantage to competitors. Nonetheless, working with committees such as the Municipal Affairs or Provincial and Federal Affairs committees to do research into student ridership, and present this to Metrolinx might be a novel way of not only showing your seriousness of increased transit, but also to potentially reveal new data that they could use in planning. Ideally, if you come armed with this knowledge, you will be in a good place to advocate for increase transit routes, increased frequency, and increased presence of express buses to high-traffic destinations. Metrolinx is also a partner in the upcoming Light-Rail Transit (LRT), thus building a positive relationship in the organization could be a potential inroad that you can leverage for other opportunities moving forward.

Staff Etiquette

The full-time staff of the MSU, as mentioned in earlier sections, are vital assets without whom you could not complete your work. The support given to hiring, to communications, to content creation, to outreach, to delivery of services, the health and dental plan, and a whole host of other topics is a direct result of the staff.

For the most part, they are admirable, hard-working people that the MSU is grateful to have, and with you can foster a lovely relationship. With this can be a complicated issue as the fact that you are younger than most staff and less versed in the MSU, can create a sense of entitlement some staff feel. This is rare, and few and far between, but, essentially, you are likely to get a little less respect and consideration in the MSU than most President & CEOs would get of other companies. This is in many ways a strength, people are willing to critique and share negative concerns, one which you should take with significant humility. However, this can also breed negative implications, including a sense of entitlement, and a tendency to gossip that is likely much more common than the MSU than in most organizations. You should also be aware that there are some individuals who are more likely to engage in these activities than others, and those that do likely do so from a place of insecurity. If a matter is top secret, it should not be shared outside of the Board of Directors, General Manager, and Executive Assistant. Other trusted allies exist within staff, and you likely will very quickly develop an understanding of who you can and cannot trust. As long as you ensure you are being an upstanding person that has candor, is fair, just, and mature, I have no doubt you can overcome whatever likely small tribulations you will face, with ease.

McMaster Off-Campus Housing Strategy

In mid-January, the MSU collaborated with Housing and Conference Services (HCS) to have an off-campus housing feedback session. As part of this event, HCS and the MSU collected feedback via one-to-one testimonials of students. More than 35 students came to the event and shared their experience living in off-campus housing around McMaster as well as the successes and difficulties faced throughout the process of finding housing. The event was attended by numerous SRA members, FYC members, and general students within the McMaster community. The information gained has already been very valuable, as insights were shared into Municipal level advocacy that was done. You can find the associated files that collate the research in your email (simply look up "Off Campus and it should come up). Please use these insight to better understand the state of the rental market around McMaster and to develop useful solutions that can better alleviate student concerns. Also, encourage another collaboration with McMaster this year that collects more information.

Rental Housing Financial and Institutional Support Initiative

I had the opportunity to learn from multiple SRA members regarding the difficulties they experience as renters, the difficulties in looking for rental housing, and the further barriers faced by international students specifically. This has led to the creation of an idea to create a new fund or additional support for students, - potentially international students specifically, regarding rental housing. I had some conversations with Elizabeth Way of Student Aids and Awards to plan for a potential project/proposal that can make a positive impact on the student body. She referred me to individuals, namely Victoria Joseph and Jamie Wang.

MUSC/Gilmour Hall Courtyard

There were ideas had by the Board this year to develop the Courtyard behind MUSC and Gilmour Hall into a usable space. I had conversations with Lynn Armstrong of the Okanagan Committee about this topic this year, and she had some preliminary conversations with those in Facilities to discuss this. I encourage you to continue this work and to develop a plan for the use of the space, whether it be for studying, student events, an outdoor lounge/sitting area or other ideas. Currently, the location is a prime spot in which recreation or some kind of fun can be introduced to enliven the space. An MSU-led initiative here would likely be very well received if students feel the new offering speaks to their goals.

Collaborative Hamilton Organizations

I had a wonderful time connecting with some community groups, and making new collaborations which will further the interests of students in Hamilton. Workforce Planning Hamilton, Hamiltonians for Affordable and Manageable Rents, YWCA Hamilton, Waste Management of the City of Hamilton, Smart Commute Hamilton, and ACORN Hamilton are four of multiple prominent groups with whom we re-established or strengthened communication moving forward. Hamilton Ontario Youth is one for which I hoped to have had greater communication, but it was lost with other obligations which continually came up. Smart Commute Hamilton is another group, which I first was connected with in November of 2022. Juby Lee of Smart Commute Hamilton has been a prominent individuals that has helped me better understand the work done by non-for-profits that are established in the Hamilton community, and allowed for me to discover multiple new potential projects. I hoped to champion the Smart Commute app, - a tool that can be used by individuals to plan carpooling, bike sharing, public transit use, and other methods of sustainable transport, can be more successfully promoted to students. Additionally, I was working with Juby to lay the groundwork for student engagement in future events Smart Commute is planning. Specifically, Smart Commute hopes to promote walkability of Hamilton public spaces and reduction of automobile-centric design, a factor in which I believe it is key for students to be involved. Working with these groups is vital to further student interests in relation to rental housing rights, waste management, connecting students to work opportunities, and building a sense of belonging, so I highly encourage you to do so.

Study led by Dr. Marisa Young

Dr. Marisa Young had proposed a study that she is doing in collaboration with Harvard University to study more about student's physical and mental health outcomes. At the time, it seemed like a very interesting opportunity, thought it resulted in relatively little progress. I highly recommend that you reach out to her, as there is a potential for the project to unveil a lot of high-quality data on a long-term basis about students's health outcomes with a variety of markers.

SLEF/USIF Usage

SLEF and USIF are funds which exist to incentivize student ideas to be brought forward and funded so as to improve life for students. A huge variety of different ideas have come forward over the years, and they generally represent interesting new additions to the student community. There is also a large reserve that exists in the SLEF/USIF as of this time, some of which is allocated to be used by my OER project, and other amounts that are wanted to be kept in reserve for the opening of the HUB. There likely will be a further amount, likely in the range of several tens of thousands of dollars that will be available and unused even after these items are accounted for. I believe you and the other Board of Directors should plan for the usage of these funds for projects, as they can be a valuable resource outside of the internal MSU funds to help create new additions to the MSU's offerings.

Senate/Board of Governors

The McMaster Senate and Board of Governors are the highest authoritative bodies within McMaster University. The Senate is more of a policy-focused body, while the Board of Governors has final say regarding McMaster's finances. You are a non-voting honorary member that can attend meetings for both of these groups and oversee as well as speak to decisions being made.

MSU Alumni Network

The establishment of an MSU Alumni Network, if pursued, has the potential to have positive ramifications on the impact of the MSU's long-term relationship with the previous Board members and staff. For Board of Directors, there is an MSU Alumni Facebook Page that contains approximately the past 20-25 years of Board members. This is an occasionally used forum of communication that somewhat allows former MSU Board of Directors to maintain and foster relationships with Board members outside of the few years before and after whom they may have known via personal relationships. In addition, Vice-President's up to 3 years prior are invited to Student Recognition Night, a courtesy extended 10 years for MSU Presidents. While these methods are somewhat utilized to foster networks, it is a less efficient or successful fostering of this community than is potentially possible. I encourage you to work with the full-time staff to devise a method of incentivizing former Board of Directors to periodically meet up and have social interactions. Fostering this via luncheons, potentially done on an annual or twice annual basis have the potential to create deeper bonds that can then be parlayed to professional growth for Board of Directors after they have left their roles. Currently, there is no long-term staff-based network, as once staff leave the organization, they are basically never contacted or engaged in any way. Forming a similar method of engagement for full-time staff that may have worked for the organization, but left after sometime may also help ensure potentially beneficial contacts are kept and that future and past members of the MSU community can benefit from each other's knowledge and insights, while being exposed to new professional growth opportunities.

McMaster Sustainability Activity Council (MSAC)

MSAC is a wonderful opportunity to learn about novel sustainability ideas that are being created at McMaster, share your insights, and champion new projects with a series of individuals who work in the field of sustainability across the institution. This can be a forum via which you create and trial new ideas, understand what is being done on the topic of sustainability, and target individuals who have access to monetary, human, and personal resources for the success of your projects. In many ways, this committee has the same draw backs as other committees, in that it is in some ways bloated with too many individuals that bring conflicting, often amorphous ideas. But, it is also a group that you can inspire and leverage to get support for a noteworthy, sustainability-oriented idea if you champion one.

More collaboration on advocacy with Education Team

Greater collaboration with the Education Team is key. Advocacy was an area in which insufficient progress took place this year, especially on the Municipal front. While we had a sufficient number of stakeholder meetings with MPs, MPPs, and ironically, Councillors as well, the work we did to create new student insights and share them, was tepid. Despite securing meetings with 9 Councillors and the Mayor, the information we shared was of only moderate quality. Everything was factually accurate and based on research, but there were no hallmark findings that were the result of McMaster-specific research or work such as McMaster surveys and analyses. Additionally, while literature review was conducted by the MSU, the scope and depth could have been much deeper. The same applies to work done at the provincial and federal level, in which the President is less directly involved. I encourage you to attend meetings of the AVPs in the Education Team, share your ideas, and showcase why they should be championed as a point that is worked on by the committees. Doing so is key to ensuring that you can leverage the resources of several individuals who work and volunteer in the committees to do more work than could be done individually by yourself or the VP (Education). Additionally, ensure that you are collaborating with the VP (Education) so they can share your advocacy goals and have them represented in discussions at OUSA, UCRU, and CASA. This year, lack of communication knackered our capacity to have many of my ideas represented within the lobbying work of OUSA and UCRU, and I am hopeful that the same will not happen for you.

More collaboration with Services and Clubs

Akin to the above piece, greater collaboration is needed between your role and the MSU's Services as well as the Clubs network. I would recommend working closely with the VP (Administration) and VP (Finance) to better understand how you can leverage your role to support services and clubs. Ensure that you involve them in events you plan, and use the human capital in their purview to help foster this. Feel free to have conversations with Directors and Coordinators of services to help understand how your ideas, in a way, can become the goals of services or clubs. Doing so will not only reduce the burden upon you to complete tasks, more importantly, it will also ensure greater uptake of your events, greater interests, and

ensure the events and initiatives can be better molded to fit the desires of the student demographic you are trying to target. A similar strategy can be employed when collaborating with clubs, and highly recommend working with the Clubs Administrator to help foster this.

Four Step Plan for Success in Goals

This is a crude philosophy that I believe you can use as a method of increasing the likelihood that your ideas are successful. Firstly, pick an idea that you want to accomplish which has a student interest as a component, which is quite self-explanatory. Second, understand what human capital, financial resources, or other assets you will need to accomplish this, and how you will utilize them to achieve the goal. Third, assess what the outcomes are, and how they can be modified to ensure they are most beneficial for students, but also for other stakeholders, which likely will include the MSU as an organization, McMaster University, the City of Hamilton, or a myriad of other partners. The above strategies in many contexts will be sufficient to ensure success, but often times, even with that being the case, roadblocks might be faced. Here is where the fourth item comes in. This is especially important if you are working with one or particular stakeholders who must provide human capital, monetary resources, or other items that ensure success of your project. This fourth piece is that you must understand how your initiative will benefit, or be aligned with the pre-existing goals of that party. This might not always be an important component of your plan, and sometimes, depending on your goal, appeasing this third party (McMaster University, the City of Hamilton, Province of Ontario, Metrolinx...) may be opposite to your envisioned endpoint. However, especially if the project requires buy-in or support from that third-party, basically being able to provide a solution to a problem/goal they already have is a very likely mechanism of ensuring its success. I experienced this viscerally in my term. I had an initiative aimed at increased reusable container usage at McMaster. I spoke with third parties, understood necessary costs and human capital requirements, and created a plan that was less expensive, less environmentally impactful, and would be a huge public relations win for McMaster University. This essentially qualified all three of the first steps, but as Hospitality Services had other plans for the future of the institution's food delivery, this project was not pursued. Meanwhile, for the OER project, not only were the first three items qualified, but there were also staff who had a vested interest in and the university had the Partnered in Teaching and Learning Strategy which I pointed to as a clear, public support for the goals that will be furthered by OER. Essentially, the OER project showed success because I was able to present a solution to a pre-stated "problem" McMaster had stated that it wanted solved, while for the reusable contained project, as this was not done, the short-term negative implications were prioritized over long-term gain by the University. Therefore, I hope when you make plans for goals you want to execute, you think of these ideals and how you can leverage them to ensure greatest success.

Hamiltonians for Affordable and Manageable Rents (HAMR)

This is a group of wonderful community leaders who brought forth a proposal for modular, inexpensive, mini-apartment/townhouse-style housing units which could be implemented within Hamilton in the coming years. This proposal offers the opportunity to have easily produced, inexpensive, and low environmental impact housing that can make renting significantly more affordable in Hamilton for both students and community members. The group has formalized more of their operations, including by applying for formal non-for-profit status. They are also in talks with local rental owners and construction companies, with a prospective plan for the first construction in the fall of 2023. I think if this idea takes off, the capacity for new construction of affordable housing is immense, and for the MSU to be involved in the funding and creation of this would be an idea for community perceptions about the role of students. Simultaneously, if this is continued in the future, the potential increase in housing supply could be significant and benefit student life greatly, so I highly recommend further collaboration with this group.

Ecosia

In collaboration with Zero Waste McMaster, I hoped to promote Ecosia more widely in the McMaster community. Ecosia is a search engine, just as Bing or Google. The main aspect is that for every 45 searches done, Ecosia plants 1 tree. Ecosia is free to use just as other search engines, can function via Bing and/or Google's advanced search algorithms, and has similar terms of use. Overall, it appears to be a straightforward approach that can be used to plant trees, - thereby having a positive environmental impact, with no cost and basically no change in the everyday practices of individuals. The progress on this project was delayed by other endeavours, but I hoped to work with the MSU's Director of Information Technology, Pauline Taggart, and Clubs Administrator, Nardos Tedros, to institute the search engine more broadly within the MSU and promote it to clubs as well. My hope is that in the near future, many more individuals can use this no cost, low barrier to entry alternative which will result in a positive impact on the environment. I highly encourage you to investigate what Ecosia is and champion its uptake in the MSU.

Structure of Board of Directors

The current structure of the MSU Board of Directors is quite flawed, as it overburdens some roles, namely the VP Administration role with excessive built-in responsibilities. Furthermore, it devalues the importance of the MSU President role, the one role that is elected at large by the student body. The President has no staff under their purview through which they can effectively delegate goals they have, and while traditionally VPs would take up this mantle, this was only informal in nature. There is nothing mandating that the VPs give priority to the perspectives and goals of the President, an aspect that I believe should be somewhat mandated considering the fact that the President is the only position elected at large, and thus the only one that was directly elected by students. As a result of this form, the President's role should take priority over the VPs in terms of the consideration of whose ideas take precedence. I propose a dual-reporting mechanism in which VPs report both to the SRA and the President. Such a mechanism, in my view, will better ensure that the

VPs can still maintain their own ideas and goals, but the President can leverage formal structures to allow for their initiatives to be prioritized. The current paradigm can breed resentment amongst board members due to differential formal responsibilities, and can also be used to undemocratically hamper the capacity of the President to fulfill their mandate. There are literally in excess of three projects which I was unable to accomplish because of uncooperative VPs, who did not necessarily even oppose my views, but simply were uncollaborative, after which I had no resources to ensure that they would in fact do their democratic obligation to support the furthermore of my goals. Some may worry that such a change would make the structure overly hierarchical, though I disagree, as the VPs will still be in the majority, and there will still be numerous checks and balances brought forward by staff and the SRA. If this change however is not desired, a new model should be adopted in which there are four or more equal board of directors, with no assumed superiority based on role title, though this should come with the stipulation that all roles have multiple part-time staff underneath their purview who can be relied upon and to whom work can be delegated.

MSU Organizational Structure Review

I hoped to work with MSU General Manager John McGowan and the Director of Human Resources Renee McIntosh to review the internal structure and Human Resources practices of the MSU. It is my view that the MSU's internal structure is overly flat, thus I feel these changes may help in creating a more pyramid-shaped hierarchy which will allow for employees to progress up the organization as they gain experience and seniority. This would be for the purpose of understanding how resources of different units can be better re-organized to allow for more internal efficiency. These changes in-keeping with best business practices would hopefully create a stronger, more sustainable organizational structure which may also unveil new student work and volunteering opportunities. Please collaborate with Gallagher to achieve something along the lines of this and review the KPMG report as a useful piece of knowledge that can inform them.

CFMU, The Silhouette, and Campus Media

You will be sent an associated document outlining my recommendations regarding this topic.

Recommendations for the Increased Proliferation of Open Educational Resources (OER)

You will be sent an associated document outlining my recommendations regarding this topic.

LinkedIn Learning Recommendations

As has been occurring throughout my term, I collaborated with Jeannie An to develop steps to better promote existing resources. LinkedIn Learning adoption has risen notably since the past report, with approximately 45% of students having

activated their accounts. Nonetheless, more progress is needed. As a result, I feel the following recommendations should be implemented:

1. Creation of long-term plan to achieve goals outlined
2. Promotional Campaign involving collaborations with MSU Clubs, MSU Services, Faculty Societies, MSU elected representatives, and Library Ambassadors
3. Incorporation of LinkedIn Learning in introductory courses across McMaster University, on a faculty-wide basis.
4. Replication of COMMERCE GR0 courses in a field-specific manner within all faculties at McMaster University.
5. Creation of novel supports and potential addition of greater staff members within educational development to assist professors in the incorporation LinkedIn Learning and similar tools within courses
6. Targetted development of novel LinkedIn Learning courses/videos/content by McMaster faculty, staff, and even students. Development of content creation toolkit to assist in development, and standards for content quality assurance.
7. Benchmarking of 90% activation and 50% usage of platform

Student Involvement in Course Design and Assessment Creation Pilot with Dr. Felicia Vulcu

You will be sent an associated document outlining my recommendations regarding this topic..

Reusable Containers in MSU and local Hamilton businesses

I will first begin by discussing the Choose 2 Reuse, reusable container program I hope to champion. I was able to have good conversations with potential external partners which started this initiative from a good basis. Nonetheless, I have faced less support from McMaster than was initially envisioned or communicated to me. Thus, this proposal has been modified in how I hope to pursue it. Firstly, McMaster is reintroducing the original version of its Choose 2 Reuse initiative, - the one which inspired mine, though it will remain focused only on first year students, unlikely my proposal which aimed to focus on all years. Furthermore, this will go hand in hand with a "Bring Your Own Container" (BYOC) program that will be aimed at upper year students by McMaster. As these initiatives have a similar goal of ensuring reduction of waste production and thereby reducing emissions, I will support these and help ensure that the largest portion of the student body takes part. Nonetheless, I feel there is still a need to pursue my original initiative not only because it will help make reusable containers more ubiquitous and directly accessible to all students, but also because it will also be used help foster the original goal of ensuring widespread application of reusable containers within the Hamilton community and ideally build a stronger sense of continuity between McMaster and the local Hamilton region. The process by which this year plan goal will be modified to fit the changing situation is still be discussed, and I look forward to sharing more concrete changes to my original plan in the coming weeks and months.

Future Homecoming Event

You will be sent an associated document outlining my recommendations regarding this topic.

Bikeshare Hamilton Agreement with the MSU

A petition was signed by more than 3% of the student body advocating for an agreement with Hamilton Bikeshare be made in which Bikeshare bikes (formally Sobi) be offered at reduced cost to students. The students had made good progress with the Bikeshare Hamilton and had a prospective agreement, including one in which despite the reduce fee that would be garnered, students would still be able to opt-out if they so wished. While this was remarkable, it comes with many complications, such as how the app will be modified, who will collect the money, how verification will take place. All these questions need to be answered. Due to the low turnout of the Presidential election, it was thought that the project would likely fail if the referendum was done in March. As a result, we planned for it to happen in January 2024 with the next Presidential election. You should work with Bikeshare Hamilton and do necessary consultation with students and staff to make a prospective Memorandum of understanding that can be used to make an agreement between the MSU and Bikeshare Hamilton. With that, students can make an informed choice at the next Presidential Election if they want the option to have a reduced Bikeshare fee as an option.

Review of MSU, GSA, and Faculty Societies for Prospective Amalgamation

The fact that McMaster University has dozens of different student groups which advocate for interests of different single demographics is unproductive. It results in insufficient use of resources and inefficiency that prevent the different groups from impacting their respective demographics as much as they could if they were all as one united entity. Not only are the division on the undergraduate level would also between the graduate association and the MSU, an aspect which has to be alleviated. There were conversations that were done by last year's presidents council about potentially having a review or some form of consulting style analysis done by students who are in particular, consulting focused commerce classes. This would be to basically analyze the issue and give recommendations about prospective amalgamation. It is unknown whether involving should be supported by McMaster or many these student groups if that is the recommendation, as they likely would see themselves losing power and independence. The MSU which would be the entity that because of its large size would inevitably had the greatest say and come out and she is the leading figure. It is most likely that the faculty societies, part-time students association, and graduate student association would simply be joined into the MSU, with significant modifications to the MSU's structure. Nonetheless, if this is pursued there's potential for the creation of 1 major university representative body that represents graduate, undergraduate, and part time students, while having inroads into faculties and other specific to demographics. Currently faculty societies have a lot of student engagement but comparatively few

funds. Thus, amalgamation could allow for them to utilize their structures to bring the spirit and culture that they have into these new and improved, and larger-scope MSU programs. Essentially, this offers an opportunity through which we can take our separated groups and leverage their combined benefits to curtail many the negatives that they currently have and create a future that is much better for student life. The study regarding this would reveal whether or not my presumption is true, but if so, I hope the changes can be implemented by the time of your successor.

MIRA iGen Collaboration

In late December, I was reached out to by researchers at McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) to collaborate on their Intergenerational Study (iGEN). The purpose of this is to study the impacts of an aging population on society, on wellbeing of individuals, and whether social connections and family bonds can be leveraged to not only increase societal cohesion, but also health of individuals. While primarily focused on the elderly, this study will also focus on all age groups, including those of University age to see interrelations of factors that impact health as well as social bonds. As this study has the opportunity to unveil factors that can benefit or disadvantage a variety of students of diverse cultural, ethnic, or socioeconomic backgrounds, I feel there is significant opportunity for the MSU to learn information that can be used for future advocacy. Thus, I hoped to embark on a collaboration to not only learning more information, but also laying the ground work for a long-term collaboration that will give the MSU access to more granular and analytical data about how culture, disability, ethnicity, wealth, gender, sexuality, and other factors can impact the lives of students. Sadly, due to time limitations, I was unable to do this, so I highly recommend that you reach out to this group and re-establish contact.

Okanagan Committee Led Projects

Thrive Week: Mindfulness Pottery Painting

The MSU has a close collaboration with the McMaster Okanagan Committee. This is a body which plans events and initiatives that exist to improve general wellbeing within the McMaster community. Thrive Week is an initiative aimed at improving mental health. As part of this collaboration, the MSU organized *Mindfulness Pottery Painting*, an event which would be an opportunity for students to step away from the stressors of school, work, and extracurriculars to engage in a couple hours of pottery painting as a means of relaxation and mindfulness. To say the least, this event was a rousing success. There were approximately 60 pottery pieces in total, a number which was completed exhausted by attendees in less than half an hour of the two hour event. The entire event was marked by need for more resources, whether they be pottery, paintbrushes, or cleaning utensils. Not only did I have to purchase more supplies during the event, I had to improvise by giving attendees card stock paper on which to paint after the pottery was exhausted. Overall, more than 100 people likely attended the two-hour event and made fabulous artwork on either pottery or card stock, all which were taken as mementos

to a wonderful experience by attendees. By attendance, Mindfulness Pottery Painting was by far the most successful event of Thrive Week, replicating the MSU's success during MacMoves Week at an even greater scale. When reflecting on the success of the event, it clearly displayed the wonderful passion students have when engaging in fun, mindfulness-oriented activities. I hope you can create either a similar event (feel free to use this idea), or create a novel idea for an event that can be similarly successful.

MacMoves Week

In September, I collaborated closely with the Okanagan Committee and its subgroup, the MacMoves Committee to help organize MacMoves Week. This was an initiative to help promote physical health and wellness in the McMaster community. Together with the committee, we planned events for a period of one week, with each day led by different departments of McMaster University as well as the MSU. The MSU specifically decided to hold a friendly frisbee game in BSB Field. We purchased 100 frisbees, which were distributed to MSU and McMaster staff, as well as students who attended the event and took part. It was a wonderful opportunity in which staff and students were able to take a break from their hectic and busy days to both relax and engage in some low barrier physical activity. The event was noted on socials as also being the most attended of all MacMoves events which I feel is a strong commendation of the positive community environment we are building. Another frisbee event, or a similar topic focused on an idea that is low barrier to entry likely has high potential to be successful in your term.

Charity Ball Fundraising

An additional fundraising piece I took part in was for Charity Ball. Charity Ball, which took place a couple weeks prior, is one of the largest formal events in the McMaster community. The event also supports individuals who may be facing food insecurity, by raising money for Hamilton Food Share. To help gain interest for the student body and raise funds for Charity, Vice-President (Finance) Sarphina Chui and I dressed up as Santa Claus on two days in mid-November, after which students, staff, and faculty had the opportunity to take pictures after making a small donation. This experience was a fun, and truly one-of-a-kind opportunity to take time away from my workday, interact with those in our community, and do so all for a positive cause.

Holiday Market

Taking place near the end of November and beginning of December, the Holiday Market was a wonderful initiative which I supported in collaboration with Campus Events and the Vice-President (Finance) Sarphina Chui. This event was a beautiful showcase of unique and local Hamilton vendors, allowed for students to listen to live music, and have fun social interactions just before the stressful period of exams. While I was unable to take part in the Holiday Market myself as I was in Ottawa for Federal Lobbying, by all accounts, it was a wonderful success and I am

happy to have supported in aspects of the background, specifically in searching for sponsorships. The success of the Holiday Market is a testament to the MSU's strong working relationship with McMaster University as well as community partners, so I look forward to seeing it become a recurring, annual event moving forward.

FYC + SRA Collaborations

I have had the pleasure of connecting with numerous FYC and SRA members to learn of their perspectives and goals. While these conversations are still ongoing, they have been a useful window into the passion for leadership had within the MSU's elected representatives. I look forward to collaborating on projects that are currently in planning stages and sharing updates on items in which I have been requested to support.

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 Jovan!