



# REPORT

*From the office of the...*

**Spark Director**

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TO: Members of the Executive Board  
FROM: Serena Bansal  
SUBJECT: Spark Report 5  
DATE: October 31, 2024

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## **Yearplan Update**

I'm happy to report that Spark's programming is progressing well in line with our year plan. We are currently at the halfway mark of our Fall weekly sessions program, with 4 more weeks of sessions left for the semester. We held Spark's first ever sessions kickoff event, which was a great way for Sparklings to meet the Team Leaders in the service and learn more about the ways Spark can support them during their first year. We have also been planning for a Halloween themed event pumpkin painting, in collaboration with two other McMaster clubs, MacCrafters and Mac Arts for Children. Lastly, most of our efforts this month have been focused on planning for First Year Formal, which is coming up on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Our events and programming are moving forward as planned, and through our service activities, our team has started to feel more cohesive as well.

## **Events, Projects, & Activities**

### *General Service Usage*

Weekly Sessions began during the week of September 30<sup>th</sup>, with ~130 first year students registered in the Fall Mentorship Program.

### *Projects & Events: Spark-Off, Sessions Kick-Off Event (Complete)*

In previous years, we've found a disconnect between the number of students who sign up for the Fall Mentorship Program during Welcome Week/the first few weeks of the semester, and those who actually attend the weekly sessions. To address this, we held a mixer style event in LR Wilson for first years registered in the program to meet each other, the Team Leaders they'll be meeting with throughout the semester, and learn more about how Spark can be there for them as they settle into university life. We held board games, ice breakers, and other small activities for attendees and Team Leaders to participate in. Overall, the event was a great success in creating more knowledge about our service and building community within Spark as well.

### *Projects & Events: Weekly Sessions/Sessions Training (Ongoing)*

Our weekly sessions that make up the Fall Mentorship Program have been progressing well. So far, our sessions have focused on introducing students to the supports/resources available for them to access on campus, as well as exploring study strategies during midterm season and places to visit in Hamilton for those new to the area. A big goal of ours with sessions this year was to change our traditional campus tour session into something that would be more appropriate for students, realizing they've already been on campus for about a month by the time this session happens. Our Sessions Coordinators worked very hard to modify the session to instead create a campus scavenger hunt, having students visit different MSU/other student services to learn about the supports they provide and how they can get involved in the service as well. A big thank you goes out to all the services that provided us with physical promotional items to hand out or had volunteers in their space tell the Sparklings a little bit about their service: SHEC, WGEN, SWHAT, EFRT, FCC Maccess, Ombuds Office, Student Success Centre, Student Accessibility Services, and the Student Wellness Centre.

### *Projects & Events: Writing & Academic Skills Hub with the Student Success Centre (Ongoing)*

This year, we have an exciting new collaboration with the Student Success Centre, to bring drop-in academic support to students on campus. The Education Team connected us with the SSC, who were interested in having some Spark Team Leaders present at these sessions to provide their advice and support to students looking for help. The first drop-in session was this past Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, and the next one is coming up on November 25<sup>th</sup>. I'm excited to see how this may both expand our service reach and allow our Team Leaders to provide mentorship in a new and different setting!

### *Projects & Events: Spook or Spark, Pumpkin Painting Event (Upcoming)*

We are holding a pumpkin painting event, Spook or Spark, in the 1280/Grind space on October 30<sup>th</sup>, in collaboration with MacCrafters and Mac Arts for Children. We've collaborated with MacCrafters in previous years on similar events and seen great turn out, so we're excited for this event to be a success as well! Partnering with different clubs on campus provides us with a opportunity to reach a new audience that may not yet be familiar with our service. We're looking forward to seeing how the event goes.

### *Projects & Events: First Year Formal (Upcoming)*

First Year Formal is one of Spark's biggest endeavors throughout the year. This year, the Formal is being on November 14<sup>th</sup> on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Hub, and is themed: Winter Wonderland!! We have confirmed our booking with AVTEK and a DJ, and are currently selecting catering options with 1280. Our Events Coordinators have been working very hard to finalize all the details ahead of the event, and our entire Exec team has been excited to brainstorm decor/other fun

ideas for the event. We are selling tickets in a tier system, with Tier 1 tickets at \$25, Tier 2 tickets at \$30, and Tier 3 tickets at \$35. It seems like students are excited about the event, as our social media post has gotten extremely high engagement.

We are also working with First Year Council to put together promo for the event. Along with our social media post, posters, and banner ordered from the Underground, the FYC team will be creating reels to post on social media to boost engagement. We feel that it will be beneficial for first years to hear from the voices of students in their cohort to inspire attendance.

### *Projects & Events: Spark Ambassadors (Upcoming)*

Spark Ambassadors is a program organized by our Outreach & Engagement Coordinators, which allows Sparklings to take on a leadership role and learn more about the behind-the-scenes processes that take place within the service. They also help us learn more about how we can better support the first-year student population accessing our resources and events. We are currently working on restructuring this program in light of lower attendance in previous years.

## **Outreach & Promotions**

### *Summary*

This month, our promotions have been focused on our upcoming events, Spook or Spark (pumpkin painting), and First Year Formal. Seeing as we've just launched First Year Formal ticket sales, we will be posting reels in the coming weeks to promote the event. Social media engagement has been very high this month, especially considering we've just posted still posts and haven't started launching First Year Formal reels yet.

### *Promotional Materials*

Spook or Spark (pumpkin painting event in collaboration with MacCrafters and Mac Arts for Children) graphic:

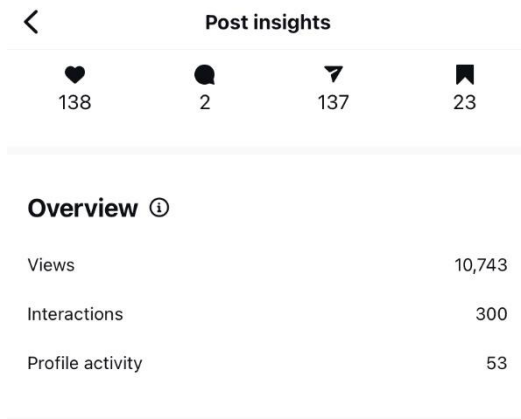


First Year Formal graphic:



Social Media Engagement since the Previous Report

Spook or Spark post engagement:

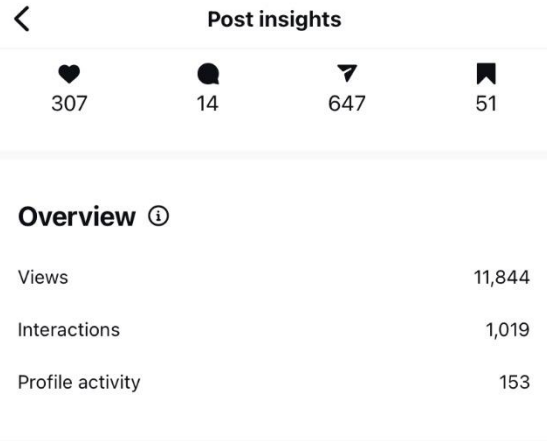


Views ⓘ

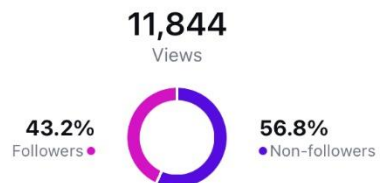


Home	4,555
Profile	274
Explore	7
Other	5,907

First Year Formal post engagement:



Views ⓘ

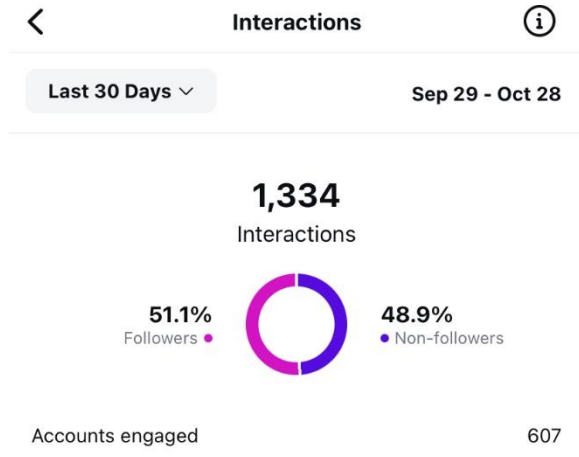
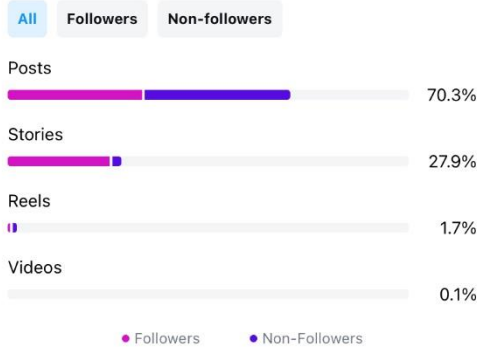


Home	5,452
Profile	195
Other	6,197

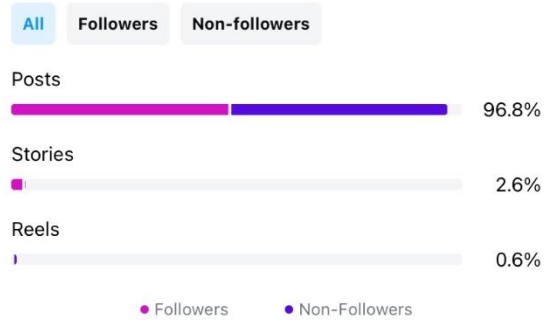
## Overall social media engagement:



### By content type



### By content type



## Finances

### Budget Summary

This month, we spent on supplies and food for our sessions and events, as well as on social media posts for our upcoming events.

ACCOUNT CODE	ITEM	BUDGET / COST
5003-0125		50
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	0
	REMAINING IN LINE	50
6103-0125		3500
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	533.21
	REMAINING IN LINE	2966.79

6494-0125		550
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	196.85
	REMAINING IN LINE	353.12
6501-0125		3800
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	1721.95
	REMAINING IN LINE	2078.05
6802-0125		650
	TOTAL SPENT IN LINE	0
	REMAINING IN LINE	650
<b>TOTAL BUDGETED DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		8550
<b>TOTAL ACTUAL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		2452.04
<b>REMAINING DISCRETIONARY SPENDING</b>		6097.96

6602-0125-0100	SPARK- First Year Formal Exp	SPARK- First Year Formal Expense	\$5,500.00
6602-0125-0100	SPARK- First Year Formal Expense	First Year Formal AVTEK	\$3,566.62
6602-0125-0100	SPARK- First Year Formal Expense	First Year Formal HUB	\$565.00

## Executives & Volunteers

- Morale amongst execs and Team Leaders seems high. As the semester progresses, there have been more opportunities for members of the team to get to know each other, which has benefited team dynamics.
- We are planning exec and Team Leader one on ones in the coming weeks to see how we can improve their experience on the service.
- Our Intramurals are helping the team get to know each other outside of the service and Sanjanaa and I are upcoming socials after First Year Formal to thank everyone for their efforts over the semester!

### Spark Team at Ultimate Frisbee Intramurals!



## **Successes**

- First Year Formal Planning: Everyone on our exec team's combined efforts have gotten us to a good place with all the moving parts of this event, and things seem to be going smoothly! I am excited to see how ticket sales progress in the coming weeks.
- Our Execs have so many great ideas for the formal which Sanjanaa and I are excited to look into and implement. It's great to see them taking initiative in this way!

## **Current Challenges**

- A recurring challenge in our service is retention of Sparklings over the course of the semester. This can be demotivating for our Sessions coordinators who work so hard to create activities and resources for sessions, and our Team Leaders, who show up every week ready to help students out. We are working to brainstorm ways to increase engagement in sessions for the final weeks of Fall and as we head into the Winter term.

## **Miscellaneous**

N/A. Thank you for reading this report!