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SFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEMESTER REPORT

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[Sciences Representative]



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Executive Summary

Hello! My name is Simran Uppal, I will be going into my 2nd year in the Faculty of Science. I ran for this position so I can make a difference in my Faculty and create a welcoming and reassuring atmosphere for students where they can openly communicate their concerns without hesitation. The committees I am a part of are the Surrey Campus Committee and Federal, Provincial Municipal Lobbying and Advocacy Committee.

As of now, a project I have completed is having All DSU Meeting and this will continue throughout my term. Additionally, two major projects in process are Science FROSH 2019 and Fall Kick Off, both these projects require dedication and a lot of emphasis on advertising and selling tickets; the ultimate aim is to create a memorable experience for the student body. Some upcoming projects include, introducing OER's with the Dean, FIC and U-Pass, Development of Surrey Science Undergraduate Society and more SCC events at the Surrey Campus.

Running in my first-year was tough due to lack of experience with DSU's however, I was eager to get involved and I knew I would be able to bring a fresh perspective to the table. I was able to grasp the role of a Sciences Representative fairly quickly, however, I do believe there should be more guidelines outlining the overall role of a FARM rep in order to have a smooth transition between faculty representative. Luckily, Natasha, the last Sciences Representative, provided me with a list of the 4 main duties for the Science Representative and I was able to work my way from there.

My biggest recommendation would be to get comfortable with the resources offered as soon as possible and understand the overall structure of the SFSS. Being aware of all the support that is offered for you to fulfill your platform goals and complete projects is essential.

From a personal sense, I have created many connections and met many new people while being on the board and helping out DSU's. Sometimes I find it difficult to find a balance between school work and board work, however the SFSS staff is extremely supportive and available when assistance is needed.

From a professional sense, I have improved my organizational and time management skills when working on projects while maintaining a balance between work and school. Most importantly, this role emphasizes board solidarity and accountability because at the end of the day all board members representing the SFSS therefore it is important to be mindful of your actions. Being a part of the board brings a strong sense of professional maturity and ethics. Attending conferences, board meetings, dealing with SFU administration and other board members allowed me to build important connections and taught me to approach matters professionally. The skills I am acquiring in my role will benefit me throughout my life! I am truly honoured to be given an opportunity to bring change within my faculty while representing the SFSS.

Projects Completed

All DSU Meetings

Summary

The Faculty of Science has many DSU's (8 departmental student unions) and it is fairly difficult to attend all their meetings. Therefore, Thomas (the new Science Engagement Coordinator) and I are working together on hosting ALL DSU Meetings once a month, where DSU executives attend and share projects they are working on, get volunteers, ask for money, promo their events, etc. This presents a great opportunity to take a look at what everyone is planning on doing in the semester or upcoming months and seek assistance on any projects. Furthermore, these meetings help break the barrier between SFSS and student unions, along with barriers between DSU's themselves. In addition to that, I am able to update DSU executives on any changes to policy/procedures happening at the board table. After roundtable and updates are complete, the meeting is followed by an interactive activity to increase engagement between executives of different DSU's and create a comfort zone. Furthermore, I am aiming to have more team building activities and workshops for DSU executives and an introduction to the strategic plan by the Science Recruiter.

Outcomes

I hope to have these DSU meetings once a month for the rest of my term and have majority of DSU executives come out. So far we had two ALL DSU Meetings, not many executives came out, as many DSU are inactive in the summer; I hope to have a better turnout in the upcoming semesters. I would like DSU executives to gain skills and positive relationships during these meetings as well. In addition to that, I would like to gain a better understanding for some major goals DSU executives have of the Faculty of Science.

The ultimate outcome from these meetings is to:

- Increase collaboration
- Streamline initiatives and communications
- Work together to cultivate a healthy and engaged student community in the Faculty of Science.

Results

So far the DSU executives who have attended enjoyed the meetings and were able to grasp a basic idea of what other DSU's are planning. The numbers of executives who have attended the first two meetings is low, hopefully more individuals will come out to the meetings in the Fall semester!

Projects in Progress

Science FROSH 2019 — Under the Sea

Summary

Science FROSH 2019 is a 24- hour non-alcoholic welcome event for first-year students located at the SFU Burnaby Campus. FROSH is a great opportunity for first-year science students to become part of the SFU community and make lasting friendships. We are expecting 200 attendees and the day will include 3 meals, a student-professor meet and greet, field games, trivia, and many more activities. I am working closely with the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) on organizing this event. As of now, I have helped with reviewing the sponsorship package, editing the FROSH leader and volunteer packages, contacted Sindhu regarding social media advertisement, taking an initiative for making buttons (pins) for FROSH and reaching out to a couple potential sponsors. Additionally, I'm talking to Shelley at the Surrey Campus to come up with ways to promote FROSH at the Surrey Campus. Tickets for FROSH are now on sale therefore we are putting a lot of emphasis on advertising.

Outcomes

This project will be completed on September 14th

Some desired outcomes include:

- To have a high number of attendees at FROSH and have all activities run smoothly
- Positive reviews at the end of the event
- Create a memorable experience for all attendees
- Encourage school spirit
- Create networking opportunities for students to become involved with the broader scientific community
- Give first-year students an opportunity to get acquainted with their fellow classmates

Timeline

Completed steps include: Room and field bookings, FROSH leader/ volunteer applications, edited and reviewed FROSH sponsorship package and leader/volunteer orientation packages, SFSS social media take over.

The next steps for FROSH is to get posters printed out soon and put them up at the Burnaby and Surrey Campus, make buttons (pins), place significant emphasis on advertising, get supplies needed for FROSH and contact more sponsors.

Fall Kickoff

Summary

Fall Kick off is an event hosted by SFSS in collaboration with CRESCENDO1 and Timbre Concerts. This event is essentially a concert to start the school year off, and create a sense of university spirit and community. This event is expected to have around 2,000 attendees and tickets are now on sell. I am a part of the Fall Kick off Committee

and I am helping out with the sales team. Our major goal to get as much tickets sold as possible, by placing significant emphasis on advertising as well as, by reaching out to friends and others to purchase tickets. The Kick off Committee will be tabling as much as possible, students will be given a chance to purchase Kickoff tickets at tabling events. All ticket sales are online, no hardcopies of tickets will be sold.

Outcomes

This project will be completed on September 20th.

Outcomes:

- A safe and successful event with a high number of attendees
- Create a memorable experience for those who attended
- Further elevate a sense of school pride

Timeline

Completed steps: have a venue, early bird tickets, release talent line up, \$500 worth of tickets will be given away, wristbands, logistics etc..

Next steps:

Put a lot of emphasis on ticket sales, table as much as possible, work on giveaways once line up is secured, advertise as much as possible and help out on the day of the event.

Surrey Campus Committee — Pancake Breakfast

Summary

As being a member of the Surrey Campus Committee, we are organizing a Pancake Breakfast. This pancake breakfast is going to be one of the major events on the Surrey Campus. Taking data of the last pancake breakfast into consideration, around 300 students will be coming out to this event which is taking place on the first day of classes. The SCC has finalized a budget for the event and as of now we are trying to get as many people to help with set up, food prep, handing out prepped food, managing lines, maintaining a clean area, clean up. Responsibilities will be delegated to members on this committee and additional volunteers to ensure the event will run smoothly.

Outcomes

This event will be taking place at the Surrey Campus on September 3th.

Due to Surrey being considered a satellite campus not many events take place, therefore it is important to make sure this pancake breakfast occurs and students come out and enjoy the free food. The Surrey campus is a major target for first year students and this pancake breakfast is a gesture of a warm welcome for incoming students as well as students returning back to classes.

Some desired outcomes include:

- Not having too much leftover material
- A high turnout of students
- Create a sense of belonging and community at the Surrey Campus

- Increase student engagement at the Surrey Campus

Timeline

Completed steps include: finalizing a budget, deciding what materials are needed, choosing a location (outside in the parking lot), have vegan options, referring back to what material Shelley already has in the storage (there is no need to buy paper plates, knives and forks; this was cut out of the budget)

Next steps: going grocery shopping for materials, getting more volunteers to help out because we need at least 7 people at the table at all times, figuring out the logistics.

ALL - DSU Social Events

Summary

Having DSU socials once a month, depending on everyone's availability, will create a more comfortable working environment and increase interaction between DSU's. I have asked a few DSU presidents what their thoughts on having monthly socials are and they seemed excited and looked forward to having this laid back, enjoyable event.

Executives of all Science DSU's will be welcome to attend these monthly socials and some presidents have agreed upon taking responsibility for figuring out the best available times for their DSU's. Due to many executives being away in the summer semester and many inactive DSU, I was not able to host a DSU social in this semester. However, once Fall semester begins more DSU's will be active resulting in a greater turnout these socials.

Potential places to host a social:

- The Study
- Picnic
- Karaoke Night
- Bonfire
- Game night
- Bowling
- Restaurant

Outcomes

- Building trusting relationships; making friends in a workplace or student union will increase the overall productivity of work and improve problem solving

- Create motivation; sometimes being an executive can be overwhelming, especially when finding balance between school work and commitments within DSU's; therefore having a monthly social will help ease some of this pressure.

- Celebrate each others achievements and encourage each other when putting on events

- Create a collaborative working environment; socials can definitely break some barriers and create a comfortable working environment which allows for more success.

- Stronger communication; good communication is essential as it tends to boost team morale

Timeline

I will reach out the DSU presidents in the first week of September, gather everyone's availability and ask for any recommendations as to where they would like the first social to take place. Additionally, there will be an All DSU meeting on August 27th where I will mention the DSU Social again.

Projects to Start

Meeting with Faculty of Science Dean — OER's

Summary

I would like to meet with the Dean of Science to discuss some of the goals I have for the Faculty of Science and create a connection between SFSS and the Dean. I would also like to ask DSU's presidents whether they have any questions or concerns, in particular, that I can address to the Dean. I believe it is important to create a connection between students in the Faculty of Science and the Dean, therefore I will approach students and try to get a sense of how they feel in this faculty and some improvements that can be made. Additionally, at the first DSU meeting we asked a couple executives "What's wrong with the way things are now in the FSci student community?" and we brainstormed a list of things that could potentially be improved upon; I would like to share this with the Dean. Another important matter I would like to bring up is regarding Open Education Resources within our Faculty and encourage professors to incorporate open educational resources into their classrooms. Additionally, having a Social Media campaign showcasing professors who use OER's, why they chose to do this and discussing the importance of open education may initiate a movement within the Faculty of Science along with having the Dean's support. I will discuss more ideas with the Science Engagement Coordinator regarding the meeting with the Dean.

Outcomes

I would like to meet with the Faculty of Science Dean in the coming months and advocate for OER's in the Faculty of Science throughout my term

Desired Outcomes:

- Create a positive relationship between SFSS and the Dean
- Gain a better understanding of the Dean's role
- Understand what the Dean's perspective on OER's
- Successfully encourage professors to create more detailed powerpoint so students do not need to purchase textbooks unless they want to.
- Encourage professors to post textbook questions in their online lecture slides
- Indicate which classes provide OER sourced textbooks when students are selecting classes

Timeline

I would like to bring up the idea of meeting with the Dean with the Science Engagement Coordinator sometime in the first week of September and then gather any concerns or questions for the Dean at September All-DSU Meeting. Also, I would like to gather some questions from students in the month of September. I am aiming to have a meeting with the Dean sometime in October. Furthermore, I will continue to encourage professors to incorporate OER's in the lectures and advocate for OER's in the Faculty of Science throughout my term.

Development of Surrey Science Undergraduate Society

Summary

A majority of DSU's and FSU's are concentrated on the Burnaby campus, the satellite campuses are often left disengaged. The Science Year-One Program at SFU Surrey has a large amount of students in the Faculty of Science, yet there exists no DSU or FSU at this campus for students in the Faculty of Science who wish to become involved in their faculty. A major goal I have with the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) is to have a few meetings at the Surrey Campus because there is a large presence on science students there. Also because the Surrey campus does have a lot of first year student, it would be a perfect place to increase engagement because everyone's still new and learning. Although I don't think it is a good idea to have a separate SUS at the Surrey campus as it will further divide the two campuses, having a branch of SUS at the Surrey Campus will get students more involved in their faculty.

Outcomes

I presented this idea to the president of SUS and she also agrees that there needs to be more engagement at the Surrey Campus. Additionally, the SUS VP Academic is working on ways to increase engagement and opportunities for first year students. I would like to have this project completed in the month of February and extensively promote the Science undergraduate Society and all Science DSU at the Surrey Campus.

Desired Outcomes:

- Have many students come out to SUS meeting at the Surrey Campus
- Have a branch of SUS at the Surrey Campus
- Ensure that first years are aware of all the opportunities and chances they have to get involved in the SFU community

Timeline

Formally introduce the idea of hosting a SUS meeting at the Surrey Campus at a SUS meeting in the month of October. Brainstorm and elaborate on this idea during SUS meeting and independently. Begin promoting meeting at the Surrey Campus, 3 weeks prior to meeting date. Book a room to hold the meeting at the Surrey Campus and create a meeting agenda.

Fraser International College (FIC) and U-Pass

Summary

Currently, international students do not have access to the U-Pass as they are not eligible according to the U-Pass BC criteria. International students do not get the same benefits as SFU students while paying two to three times the fee paid by Canadian citizens; they have now become a major component of the funding model of BC's public post-secondary information system. Many international students rely heavily on transit and having access to the U-Pass will greatly benefit them. Most importantly, incorporating international students in the U-Pass will decrease the overall cost for all students and become more affordable.

Outcomes

There is no exact completion date for this project.

Desired Outcomes:

- Decreased cost of U-Pass
- Fairness for international students

Timeline

I will meet with SFSS VP Student Services and discuss this potential project and initiate conversations with others to gain a better understanding of the U-Pass and calculate the difference in cost if international students are incorporated in the U-Pass.

Events at the Surrey Campus with the Surrey Campus Committee

Summary

Increasing engagement on the Surrey Campus is one of the key points in my platform and I will be able to fulfill this goal while being a member of the Surrey Campus Committee. After our brainstorming session for potential events we would like to take an initiative on, we will surely increase engagement and bring back university pride/spirit on this campus.

Potential Projects:

- Semesterly and partner with MSESS, SSSS, SIATSU
- Pumpkin carving in a classroom
- Costume Pub Night
- Gingerbread house making contest
- Santa Pictures
- Haunted House
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Large Christmas Tree (tree decorating)
- Valentines Day Cards in the Mezz

Outcomes

These projects will continue throughout the semesters.

Desired Outcome:

- Being able to conduct as many projects as possible
- Having enough volunteers at all events
- Increasing engagement
- All students feel at sense of belonging at the campus
- Promotion of SFSS and SCC
- Collaborations with other student unions

Timeline

We are hoping to have at least one major event during Halloween, Christmas, Valentines Day, Easter, in addition to one pub night every semester.

Pain Points

As a Faculty Representative, I had difficulties obtaining the email list for the presidents on DSU, it took me quite some time to gather all the contacts. Due to the fact that DSU's have elections at different times, the student centre did not have an updated list. Also, when I needed assistance from the board or wanted to start working on a new project, I was not sure who I needed to approach and exactly what resources are available to me. Being a part of the board was an extremely new experience for me therefore it took a while adjusting to board exceptions.

As a general Board member, I often felt that my voice was not heard compared to VP's or the President. Additionally, due to conflict between board members and many cases of miscommunication I often felt frustrated. Hopefully, the Leadership Development Workshop in the upcoming weeks will help rebuild relationships and reach common ground

Recommendations

My recommendation for future Sciences Representative, is if you come up with an idea or are interested in a particular project, discuss it with another Board member or staff to come up with actionable goals. I found great success once I became familiar with my resources and knew who to contact.

My recommendation for future Board members is to become comfortable and aware of the resources offered and ask for assistance when needed, all the SFSS staff is there to support projects that you are deeply passionate about. Being on the board is a very unique experience and there is a lot of learning that comes with it, it was a tough learning curve when you first begin. It is important to have an open mindset and be adaptive because you never know what is going to come your way!

Sometimes Board work and initiating new projects can get overwhelming, make sure to pace yourself and take the weekends off. There are going to be times where you will be mentally drained, it is okay to take a step back and brainstorm and recollect your ideas. Being on the Board is an amazing experience!