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SFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEMESTER REPORT

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[Faculty of Education Representative]



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Executive Summary

Hello there! My name is Emerly Liu, I will be heading into my 3rd year here at SFU, and I am the current Faculty of Education Representative for the 2019/2020 SFSS Board of Directors. As such, I sit on the Accessibility Committee, Events Committee, and University and Academic Affairs Committee.

Within the past four months, I have spearheaded and collaborated on the following projects:

- SFSS x Club/Student Union June/July Collaborations
 - SFSS x Anime Club Instant Ramen Movie Night
 - SFSS x Better Life Food Drive
- Welcome Day Faculty Session
- Learning Disability Assessment Pilot Project
- ESA EDventure Day
- SFU Ed Review Fall Symposium
- SFSS Fall Kickoff DSU Ticket Giveaways

My work, thus far, primarily focuses on maintaining Faculty and student engagement and improving SFSS relations with our clubs and student unions. A major challenge I faced while organizing the SFSS x Club/SU collaborations was coming to terms with my lack of knowledge surrounding MECS SFU policies. A pain point pertaining specifically to my role on the Board of Directors is learning to efficiently balance SFSS and Faculty business.

As a student, Faculty Representative, and Board member, learning to prioritize tasks is imperative to the success of all objectives. Moving forward, I highly recommend practicing various strategies for managing time appropriately and accordingly. Furthermore, I would like to emphasize the significance of proper research and comprehension of policies prior to committing to or actioning an idea.

I am greatly appreciative of my fellow Board members for the immense amount of support that everyone has demonstrated during this time of transition and growth. I find myself constantly inspired by these individuals who motivate me to strive for greater heights. The diverse backgrounds and skill sets that each member brings to the table provides me with a wider perspective and deeper understanding of SFU, SFSS, and our membership, which I value deeply.

The opportunity to continue to work closely with the Faculty of Education while interacting with and building relationships with other Faculties has been eye-opening, to say the least. The resources supplied by the SFSS, despite several complications, has effectively enhanced my work. These collaborations with SFSS staff, Board of Directors, and Committee At-large members have heavily contributed to my professional development and I look forward to learning more from them every day.

Projects Completed

Project One: SFSS x Club/Student Union Collaboration Pilot Project Matrix

Summary

I created this initiative in collaboration with the SFSS VP Student life for the purpose of (1) cultivating relationships with club and student union members, (2) supporting our clubs and student unions by providing additional resources and funding, and (3) raising awareness of SFSS and our vision. The matrix to assess proposals focuses on (1) how well the club or student union's event aligns with our values, (2) progress of logistics planning, (3) the accessibility of the event (4) the perceived value that it may bring to the SFSS community, and (5) the balance of club and student union monthly collaborations.

Outcomes

The ideal outcome of this project is to build a close-knit community of proactive leaders who support one another, uphold the SFSS mandate, and create opportunities to engage with our membership. This matrix will be used to maintain equitable decision-making and ensure that the SFSS vision and membership are always considered. The success of each monthly collaboration will be measured by club/student union executive feedback and student participation in the event.

Timeline

[May 27] Meeting with SFSS VP Student Life, Communications Coordinator, General manager to discuss process of evaluation and approval of submissions

[June 5] Meeting with Communications Coordinator and General manager to discuss Surrey club/SU submissions and finalize matrix

Results

I believe that the matrix will be effective tool in the decision-making for ongoing SFSS x club/student union collaborations. The SFSS staff members who participated in the creation of this matrix provided exemplary suggestions and feedback that will help us to realistically achieve the aforementioned outcomes. Originally, my desire was to include all three campuses, but since this pilot project is operating with the Events Committee budget, it was decided to fixate on Burnaby campus clubs and student unions and expand to the other campuses in the future. Meanwhile, any submissions for events located on Surrey campus will be forwarded to the Surrey Campus Committee.

Project Two: SFSS x Anime Club Instant Ramen Movie Night

Summary

This event was the first installment of the SFSS x Club/Student union collaboration pilot project that I am currently managing within the SFSS Events Committee as the Collab Portfolio Manager. An anime movie was displayed, and instant cup noodles and popcorn were distributed. During the days leading up to the event, the SFSS Student Centre promoted the event details to SFSS' various club and student union executive members and the SFSS Communications Coordinator actively shared the Anime Club's event page on the SFSS Facebook account.

Outcomes

To promote the Anime Club while simultaneously raising awareness of SFSS. By boosting their event through SFSS channels, we were able to encourage more students to attend and reach out to students who may have been unaware of the Anime Club. This is an opportunity to bring people with common interests together and further enhance the sense of community on campus, especially during the summer semester.

Timeline

[June 3] SFSS Events Committee partnership with the Anime Club was approved for the month of June

[June 12] Meeting with the Anime Club executive members to discuss logistics and funding

[June 17] Motion was passed at the Events Committee meeting for up to \$499.99

[June 18-28] Correspondence with the Anime Club President

[June 28] Day of the event

Results

The SFSS Events Committee provided \$172.18 to the Anime Club for a data projector, instant cup noodles, juice boxes, popcorn kernels, corn oil, butter, napkins, and paper bags. The event received more than 50 attendees, doubling the attendance rate of the Anime Club's last movie event. In addition to the materials mentioned above, we supplied the Anime Club with the SFSS popcorn machine and enlisted help from one Events Committee member to volunteer to operate the equipment. In these respects, the event was successful; however, there was an issue with the event location. I had mentioned AQ 3150 as a suggestion but neglected to confirm with SFSS Student Centre staff about the MECS regulations surrounding external catering in SFU designated areas. Thus, the Anime Club had to change their location to MBC Forum Chambers. Additionally, there was some miscommunication about how much of the event the SFSS would be funding – which was only for food related items, as discussed in the meeting on June 12. When prompted to request chairs from facilities for the new location, I was given a quote. The Anime Club executive members misunderstood and presumed that the chairs, projector, and microphones would be paid for, as well. I was able to resolve these problems, but from them I learned to make better, informed decisions and use SFSS staff as a resource, and to communicate with clarity with my partner, which are my recommendations moving forward.

Project Three: SFSS x Better Life Food Drive

Summary

The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of resources and information available to students, provided by the SFSS Food Bank Program and Greater Vancouver Foodbank (GVFB), for those who need additional monetary, or food resources. To achieve this, fundraising tables were set up across campus to acquire non-perishable food and monetary donations. All monetary donations will be provided to the SFSS and non-perishable food items will be donated to the GVFB, who partnered with us for this fundraiser. Raffle prizes were used to incentivize donations, which were comprised of SFU Bookstore gift cards, “Ban the Bottle” reusable water bottles, and SFSS draw string bags.

Outcomes

Students becoming more informed about the resources and services that SFSS provides and give back to the Greater Vancouver community. In addition, SFU Better Life, as a new humanitarianism-focused club, was able to spread their vision across campus, inspiring others to be proactive and to get involved. We hope that other clubs and student unions follow suit and organize events that support our membership’s health and well-being.

Timeline

[July 2] SFSS Events Committee members unanimously voted in favor of SFU Better Life over SASS

[July 9] Meeting with SFU Better Life executives to outline SFSS funding

[July 17] Facility order for table and chairs confirmed

[July 23] Motion was passed at the Events Committee meeting for up to \$499.99

[July 22 – 26] Fundraising period

Results

SFU Better Life used \$133.29 on posters, flyers, and snacks, such as muffins, popsicles, and candies, to hand out to donators over the course of 5 days. The two \$25 gift card prizes were provided by the SFU Bookstore and the rest of the prizes were supplied by SFSS. They raised \$301.30 towards the SFSS Food Bank Program and were able to raise awareness by distributing information flyers in lecture halls and hallways. The GVFB received 123 non-perishable food items. Donators included students, SFU faculty members and staff, and notably, doctors and staff at the SFU Health Clinic who were eager to help when the President of SFU Better Life reached out to them. The fundraiser was a huge success; however, it’s important to note that there had been an issue with MECS. On July 24, it came to my attention that prior to booking the table and chairs, I should have submitted a request to book the space between Images theatre and the Education Building where the club would be situated on for 5 days. It was not of my knowledge, but it was a topic that I should have consulted with SFSS staff about. The SFSS Events Coordinator and the General Member Services Coordinator were able to resolve the situation with the MECS supervisors to allow Better Life to table at the location for the rest of the week. This problem, similar to the last issue with MECS policies, reminded me to do my research about SFU processes before committing to anything. Another recommendation moving forward would be to work more closely with SFSS Coordinators and perhaps have the Events Coordinator attend SFSS x club/student union meetings with me.

Project Four: Welcome Day Faculty Session

Summary

I worked closely with the Faculty of Education Academic Advisor to develop an agenda for the two-hour Faculty Session on Welcome Day. This event is where majority of incoming first-year students will be introduced to some Faculty and staff, peer mentors, and other resources, as well as an opportunity to meet and socialize with other first-years; therefore, it is extremely crucial to organize it well.

Outcomes

I would hope that this session leaves a good impression on the incoming Education students; that they view the Faculty of Education as welcoming and supportive of their students. I want them to leave knowing that there are resources and services that can assist them in their undergrad career, and most importantly, know that they're not alone. I hope that they reminisce about Welcome Day as a good experience, wherein they had fun and met peers with whom they would forge lasting friendships. Furthermore, I hope that they feel inspired and motivated to get involved in the Education community – be it by participating in the Education Student Association (ESA) or by attending ESA events.

Results

The Faculty session was a massive hit! The Academic Advisor and I decided to begin with presentations from our Associate Dean, Director of Undergraduate Programs, PDP Admissions Manager, and Academic Advisor, followed by presentations about co-op, ESA, Friends of Simon, and the Peer Mentorship Program. I believe that this was an informative overview of the Faculty that will prove beneficial in their coming years. The icebreaker activities facilitated by Welcome Leaders filled majority of the time, which were very successful in engaging the students. During “Human Bingo”, I observed many of the students actively conversing with others and getting to know one another. Afterwards, in groups, they participate in a team building activity that they appeared to enjoy very much. It was heartwarming to watch people bonding with each other. The remaining time was used as an opportunity for the students to ask the presenters questions, encouraging dialogue,

Projects in Progress

Project One: Learning Disability Assessment Pilot Project

Summary

Continuing the work of the previous SFSS Faculty of Education Representative, I will be collaborating with SFU, most notably, the Director of Centre for Accessible Learning, to develop an assessment service to identify students with disabilities. This project primarily focuses on individuals with learning disabilities (LD) and providing them with the necessary resources and services to accommodate their diverse needs so that they can achieve academic success.

Outcomes

Through this initiative, I hope to ensure that students with learning needs receive the assistance they require to learn at an optimal level. As the point of contact for this project, I will engage with other universities, such as UVIC and UBC, to learn about what worked and what didn't, and maintain communication with SFU staff. I will also enlist the help of the Accessibility Committee members for feedback.

Timeline

[August 20] Meeting with Director of Centre for Accessible Learning and previous SFSS Faculty of Education Representative to transition information and re-evaluate options
[September] Reach out to UVIC Centre for Access

Project Two: EDventure Day

Summary

Currently, I am working alongside the Education Student Association to organize their FROSH event. The general outline of this event at the moment consists of an icebreaker activity followed by "Running Man" gameshow-like activities and food.

Outcomes

This is a great opportunity for new Education students to meet and get to know other first-years, as well as students from all years and walks of life. One thing that ESA is incredibly passionate about is hosting events, such as this, that engages people in a lighthearted, fun manner. I hope that the students who attend this event are able to develop a supportive network of friends and become more involved in the community and ESA.

Timeline

[August 28] Online meeting with ESA executives
[August 30] Booked rooms
[September] Promote event through social media platforms and peer mentorship program

Project Three: SFU Ed Review Fall Symposium

Summary

A collaborative effort between ESA and SFU Ed Review and EGSA team, whom I have been working with since January. This symposium event consists of presentations from keynote speakers, mostly SFU professors, whose research has been featured in SFU Ed Review's publications. As their events coordinator, I oversee catering, floor layout, and accessibility mapping.

Outcomes

The initial reason for this partnership was to develop relationships with SFU Ed Review and EGSA; however, it has become much more. The SFU Ed Review team has created many opportunities for Education students to participate on the journal team as a communications coordinator and as volunteers for the event. This supports the "student experience" portion of the *Faculty of Education Five Year 2018–2023 Academic Plan* which states: "Expand research and leadership development opportunities and support for students". I hope that other groups in the Faculty decide to partner with ESA and rely on undergraduate students more.

Timeline

[January – August 2019] Event planning. The symposium was intended to occur in September but was postponed until October
[October 19] Event day

Project Four: SFSS Fall Kickoff F/DSU Ticket Giveaways

Summary

The Kickoff sales team set aside two free tickets for every registered, active student union. My job was to write up the terms and conditions of the partnership and description of rules for the social media posts and contact the student unions.

Outcomes

Encourage more students to attend Fall Kickoff 2019. The giveaway requires for the participant to follow/like SFSS and the F/DSU's Facebook and Instagram accounts; thus, it will grow both our social media followings. Subsequently, those individuals who follow us will receive notification of upcoming events and news. Ultimately, the goal is to promote Kickoff.

Timeline

[August 22] Finalization of giveaway rules
[August 28] Finalization of terms and conditions
[August 28] Enlistment of help from other SFSS Faculty Representatives to reach out to their Faculty's student unions
[August 30] Student Centre newsletter emailed out with embedded giveaway opportunity

Projects to Start

Project One: Faculty of Education Undergraduate Facebook Group

Summary

This idea spawned from my experience within the Faculty. Due to my involvement in the ESA, I was able to gain wisdom from the older members with regards to Faculty of Education resources, work and volunteer opportunities, and course advice. I've seen people in the SFU Must Knows Facebook page inquire about these types of topics before and I realize that many of them do so because they don't have the same support network that I do. Thus, I have decided to create an Education-specific social platform for students to share course experiences and tips, job/volunteer postings, used Education textbooks, and so on.

Outcomes

Producing channels of communication to bring Education students closer together while simultaneously working to improve their undergrad career.

Timeline

[July 11] Meeting with the Dean of Education for feedback

[September] Implementation of group

Pain Points

The first four months of transitioning into this position were challenging with regards to upholding my responsibilities as SFSS Faculty of Education Representative, as a Board member, and as a student working part-time. It was difficult for me to prioritize duties because I felt that as a student elected on behalf of the Faculty, I should be dedicated to working on the projects that I had promised to do. At the same time, I felt this pressure to do as much work as my other committee members. All this while taking 7 units of coursework while working up to 20 hours a week was not ideal. I'm the type to constantly think which stresses me out, and I don't handle stress well.

As mentioned, my issues with MECS policies and processes were upsetting because it negatively affected my partners – the club executive members who worked hard to plan their events. Due to my neglect, I gave misinformation and failed to follow the correct procedures required for space booking. I thought that I knew how to plan events, being an active executive member and previous President of ESA, we had organized numerous events, but I was careless.

Recommendations

Yes, you have a responsibility to the students in the Faculty of Education, but more importantly, you also have a responsibility to yourself. If you do not take care of your health, you will not have the capacity to help others. Learning to prioritize roles are a key element of this job. If you're feeling overwhelmed, remember to reflect and consider which tasks need to be completed immediately and which ones can be managed at a later time. To successfully execute your projects, always write them down, as it is essential to have everything clearly mapped out. If two obligations overlap, don't be afraid to rely on others; for instance, if you can't attend a Faculty council meeting due to a Board meeting, ask an ESA member to go in your place. You're only one person, but you are not alone.

In a short-term role such as this, you must learn to adapt fast because you can't keep making the same mistakes. Take your time and to review policies, even if you think you know, always fact check. To prevent errors, do not commit to something if you are unsure. Don't be afraid to admit that you don't know. Talk to Board members and ask staff questions, they are here to help you.