

SFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEMESTER REPORT

September 2019 - December 2019

FIONA LI
FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION, ART AND
TECHNOLOGY REPRESENTATIVE

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Executive Summary

I am the 2019/2020 Faculty Representative for Communication, Art and Technology. This fall semester I continued my participation with:

- Vancouver Campus Committee
- Surrey Campus Committee
- Governance Committee
- Finance and Audit Committee

Some projects I worked on during the fall Increasing Engagement at the Vancouver Campus, Increasing Engagement at the Surrey Campus, the Menstrual Products Initiative, adjudicating the FCAT FUNds as well as hosting a monthly FCAT DSU President's Meeting across all 3 campuses.

I took 3 intensive courses at the time and was absolutely swamped with team meetings and weekly deliverables. It was a constant struggle balancing my school work, personal life and my work on the SFSS, especially factoring in that my courses all take place at the surrey campus. Due to course conflicts, I was unable to make any board meetings for the entire semester. I've learned to make the best use of phone calls and video meetings to maintain an up to date relationship with my Faculty's Director of Student Affairs. So if anyone finds themselves in a similar position, don't hesitate to schedule meetings over the phone or over video.

As the FCAT rep, we're lucky that the DSUs in FCAT are all highly independent and well-oiled machines. They work well on their own, but there is also a great desire to work together. The President's meetings served its purpose by bringing together all 7 DSUs, and from there, relationships start growing to connect all 3 campuses.

In the Spring, I have taken on new projects like revamping the event bulletin boards at the Burnaby campus, and there are quite a few large-scale events being put on in the spring semester by these DSUs at the Vancouver campuses, there is huge interest for collaboration with the Vancouver Campus Committee. For my final semester on the board, there are a lot to look forward to.

Fiona Li

PROJECTS

SFU SEI X SFSS

Summary

The Student Experience Initiative has approached the SFSS with a project idea from the previous board. After having discussed this with this year's board, we've decided to move forward with our own idea of revamping the bulletin boards across campus.

A working group consisting of myself, Shina Kaur, the VP University Relations and Jennifer Chou, the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Representative, will go through the student survey data to locate any pain points pointed out by students that is realistic for us to take on as a project in terms of timeline. That is how we decided on tackling "students not knowing when the events are happening on campus". Revamping the cork boards around campus (particularly the Burnaby campus) and organizing them to make it easier to find content. In addition to organizing the boards and creating a template for clubs/DSU's to follow, we want to replace the boards as well.

New boards will equal a fresh mindset and new rules for the boards will be easier to follow. We are still working with SEI to get this project approved and start the process with Facilities.

Outcomes

- Make it easier to find events happening around campus
- Ideally increase attendance through increased awareness

Timeline

- October 2019 → Presented idea to the board and created working group
- October 2019 → Worked with Shina and Jennifer to create project idea and proposal for the board
- November 2019 → Finalized the project idea and got board approval
- January 2020 → Submit project idea to SEI and get approval
- February 2020 → (Pending SEI approval) work with Facilities to start the project
- March 2020 → Finalize the installation of new boards and explain new structure to the clubs/DSU's

PROJECTS

Free Menstrual Products Initiative

Summary

Working with the Graduate Student Society, Women's Center, and Out on Campus Center, we drafted a proposal to submit this as a pilot project for the Student Experience Initiative.

The working group has secured funding from SEI for this project and assigned a designate from the GSS to work with the SEI manager as a Research Assistant to see the project through. This RA is currently conducting consultations with the New Westminister School System. There will also be further consultations for students, staff and faculty at the SFU campuses.

Outcomes

- Provide access to free menstrual for self-identifying women on all three campuses
- Create a culture of normalizing menstruation
- Lobby the Municipal, Provincial and Federal Government to eventually fund this initiative

Timeline

- May 2019 → Created the working group and figured out our goals
- June - July 2019 → Drafted and finalized the proposal for SEI
- August 2019 → Submitted proposal and waiting on response
- November 2019 → Confirmation of budget approval
- December 2019 → Assign GSS designate to work on the project full-time
- Spring 2020 → Provide feedback where needed as the project goes through next Steps

PROJECTS

Engagement at the Vancouver Campuses

Summary

Historically, the SFU Vancouver campuses have had a lack of engagement from the SFSS. As the chair of the Vancouver Campus Committee, I leveraged my existing networks of staff at the Vancouver campus to obtain engagement opportunities for the VCC at campuses like Harbour Centre and Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. Being in contact with engagement coordinators at the Vancouver campus throughout the summer semester to have the SFSS involved at the Welcome Back BBQ, Vancouver Campus Resource Fair in September as well as the Winter Warm-up event in November.

The committee connected with Precious Lle, working in SFU Student Services, to help her understand the demographics of the Vancouver campus and how to reach the variety of students that attend Vancouver full time.

Outcomes

- Ensuring the SFSS has a supportive presence to our diverse student population across all Vancouver campuses
- Bridging the gap between the Vancouver campus and the SFSS

Timeline

- June 2019 → Initial conversations with Engagement Coordinator at Woodward's
- August 2019 → SFSS presence at the Welcome Back BBQ and the Vancouver Campus Resource Fair
- October 2019 → Connect with SFU Student Services to better explain Vancouver student population
- November 2019 → Table at the Vancouver Winter Warm-Up
- Spring 2020 → Get involved with the Week of Welcome festivities at Harbor Center

PROJECTS

Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology Dean Search Committee

Summary

Sitting on this committee along with various staff and faculty The purpose of this committee is to establish a candidate description of who we envision as the Dean of FCAT. When reviewing and interviewing candidates we will reference our candidate description to ensure that we are limiting personal biases and are following the guidelines we have set for ourselves. There has been a consultation session with the community to provide us insight into what those in FCAT are looking for in a Dean. The committee will ramp up heavily in the spring semester when applications are being received and candidates are being interviewed.

Outcomes

The FCAT has been without a Dean for quite some time now. From a student's perspective I have limited experience in the roles and responsibilities of a Dean. In the initial committee meeting we went through confidentiality and the processes of how the committee will function. I am looking forward to learning more about Dean searches in the upcoming Spring term.

Timeline

This committee has pre-set meeting times from January until April, depending on the length of the search. By April we hope to have secured an ideal candidate who can start their term in the Fall or 2020.

Pain Points

After 2 semesters, it is still hard to balance the FCAT DSUs across all 3 campuses. Being an IAT student, most of my time is spent in Surrey where IATSU is. And being a Communications student, I already have a good relationship with CMNSU. There is still a barrier of distance between myself and the DSUs at Woodward's. The monthly DSU meetings have been working well, but the turnout is always lower later on in the semester. However, I feel that this can easily be alleviated by allowing the presidents to voice call or video in to the meeting. If they're unavailable, they can also send you paragraph snapshots of what they've been up to for the past month. It's hard but it's not impossible.

Another pain point for me was that my course conflicted with the board meetings, causing me to miss out on SFSS meetings for an entire semester. I felt isolated over at the Surrey campus, and because of that I'm sure other students in Surrey and those in Vancouver must feel the same. SFSS as an organization should be accommodating of students at all campuses as I know future board members will not only consist of Burnaby-based students (FCAT reps especially). I focused on my own projects and my own Faculty for the Fall, but as a result, I was also left out of many exciting projects that went down at the Burnaby campus.

Recommendations

I recommend for the next FCAT rep to be prepared to commute and to initiate. Engagement across campuses relies on you being the glue that holds everyone together. If you cannot commit to establishing a group chat, conducting meetings at all campuses, and putting in the effort to bring everyone together then this role will be incredibly difficult for you. As mentioned in my Summer report, the hardest part was finding ways to contact all the DSUs. You will need strong determination to make this work as there will be many factors like a lack of response, or lack of engagement. What's important is that you show the DSUs that you're there for them if they need, as that is what was reported back to me as the most comforting part of my presence as the FCAT rep.

The other important recommendation I have for FCAT reps is to be mindful of balancing your work load. You may be studying Communication, IAT, or in the SCA, which means that Burnaby will most likely not be your home base. It's also not the home base for most of your DSUs. Because of this there will be travel time to factor in, lack of resources, and a lack of guidance. From my 2 semesters as the VCC chair, the SFSS is not prepared to support students at the Vancouver Campus, and we have extremely limited resources to support students at the Surrey campus. You will be setting your own schedule, making up your own rules and guidelines, which means you will also need to make up your own break times. We have very intensive workloads in FCAT, don't overwork yourself!