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SFSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEMESTER REPORT

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Science Representative



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Executive Summary

Hello,

My name is Simran Uppal and I am currently in my 2nd year in the Faculty of Science. My position on the Simon Fraser Student Society Board of Directors is Science. Committees that I am a part of include Surrey Campus Committee and Federal, Provincial and Municipal Lobbying Committee.

Some of the projects I have collaborated on include Monthly ALL DSUs meeting for the Faculty of Science, SUS study sessions/ice cream giveaways, and CCR recognition. A major project I will be working on with the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) is to host a icebreaker/meeting at the SFU Surrey Campus. The Science First Year Programs 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; therefore it would be great to expand SUS's presence. Furthermore, considering the fact that 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.

I have fully adjusted into my role as a Science Representative and I understand my responsibilities. In the beginning of my term, I struggled with understanding the structure and knowing who to contact for the correct information, however I am aware of who to contact and how to get answers to my questions. Unfortunately, board meeting times interfere with my class schedule, however I read the meeting minutes from each meeting to stay caught up. It would be great to have a Board social/get together to talk and socialize about what everyone has been up too!

I would say my overall rating of my term has been fairly well as I have learned so much from this role and I continue to gain new skills each and every day. I have experienced many challenges and realized some projects take time, patience and dedication. There have been opportunities and projects in which I invested time into understanding that unexpectedly came my way, and I would say that is my favourite part of this job, you never know what's going to come your way!

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. Our meeting begin with roundtable introductions, in which everyone briefly describes what projects they are/will be working on along with any questions or concerns. At this time, I am able to update DSU executives on any changes to policy/procedures happening at the board table or answer any question related to SFSS. Furthermore, recently there have been many question regarding room booking procedure along with an estimated time it takes to get a response back, therefore I attached the procedure with the meeting minutes. Moreover, Thomas and I are working on having short interactive/team building activities.

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. Some months we do have a lot of members come out, we have opened up these meetings to any executives (doesn't have to be president) and this has brought up our attendance rates.

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. Additionally this meetings have opened up space for collaboration and support on projects.

FROSH

Our Science FROSH was a success, however the weather was not very favouring. Some of our attendees had to leave early due to the weather. Along our outdoor activities still with on, it rained throughout the entire activity. Despite that, everyone seemed to have a great time, met new people, acquainted with their fellow class-mates, got an opportunity to talk with professors, and build memories!

Outcomes

We got a lot of positive reviews after the event and throughout the event everyone seemed to enjoy the activities, food and prizes! Unfortunately, not everyone who purchased a ticket attended FROSH, this was most likely due to the weather conditions.

Results

This event was a success as all activities ran smoothly, we created networking opportunities for students to become involved with the broader scientific community and encouraged school spirit.



Projects in Progress

ALL DSU SOCIAL

Summary

Having a DSU social 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 this social and some presidents have agreed upon taking responsibility for figuring out the best available times for their DSU's.

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

Currently reaching out to the Study and next step is sending out a When2Meet

CCR

Summary

The CCR is the reference document for you Co-Curricular involvement at SFU, listing your activities outside of classes (e.g., leadership programs and volunteer roles). It is an university document easily assessable via myInvolvement. The program is currently being given a second-look now that it has existed for a bit so now is the perfect time to push for any changes we feel would make it better for science students.

Outcomes

This was introduced and discussed at a DSU meeting.

Feedback regarding CCR:

- many executives did not know about it
- Canvas course material and modules was not very helpful
- Did not receive conformation after course was completed
- If volunteer meet the requires they should be given credit

Timeline

Working with the Science Engagement Coordinator to gather more information gathering CCR and requirements. Next steps would be to set a meeting with Faculty of Science staff responsible for CCRs.

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

To increase engagement and opportunities for first year students. I would like to have this project completed in the month of April and extensively promote the Science undergraduate Society and all Science DSU at the Surrey Campus.

Timeline

Formally introduce the idea of hosting a SUS meeting at the Surrey Campus at next SUS meeting. Brainstorm and elaborate on this idea during SUS meeting and independently. Begin promoting meeting, book a room to hold the meeting at the Surrey Campus and create a meeting agenda.

Projects to Start

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.

Pain Points

Being on Board while taking a full time course load all comes down to time management! There are times when unexpected circumstances arise, therefore that is something to be aware of. Initially, being on Board was a tough learning curving as it was a new environment and responsibilities weren't clearly defined. It definitely took a couple months to grasp some major concepts and familiarize myself with all the resources that were available to me to be successful.

Being on Board has taught me the importance of communication amongst individuals working as a team. That is something that has been lacking throughout the term, it is extremely important to have a general understanding and create comfortable environment in which concerns, and personal opinions can be positively accepted. Having a Board that is united as one is essential, however throughout this term the Board has been split into two sides. Board solidarity is crucial while maintaining transparency

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. Additionally, if you have a particular goal or project, start early because you never to what barriers and/or unseen circumstance may rise.

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 comes with a lot of ups and down but overall it is an amazing experience!

