

simon fraser
student society

**SFSS BOARD
OF DIRECTORS
SEMESTER
REPORT**



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Arts & Social Sciences Rep

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Executive Summary

I am Sude Guvendik, the Faculty Representative of Arts and Social Sciences for 2020-2021.

This semester, I have been part of the External and Community Affairs Committee FARM committee and First-year engagement committee; even though I had initially signed up to chair the first-year engagement committee, I was advised not to continue with that role due to my recently developed medical condition. It had been a very stressful semester to work under the pandemic's challenges; however, I am grateful to my team for acknowledging my situation and respecting my accommodation needs.

Currently, I am working on projects such as the Cultural Week as part of the virtual clubs day, FASS Panel Discussions, Trans Mountain Expansion Project (TMX) Advocacy and Awareness, which I partake in as part of an advocacy project for the ECAC committee,

Emerge SFU where I serve as the brand ambassador, and I am also in the hiring committee for hiring a CRP Research Assistant.

Additionally, I attend the weekly FASS DSU and Society of Arts and Social Sciences' meetings.

Completed Projects

1. **FASS Panels**

I host panel discussions that are open for all students but mainly for the first years of the arts and social sciences faculty. I had realized that not only first-year students needed these panels but any student who was struggling with adapting to the challenges of university life. Hence, the panels' purpose was to give pro tips, advice, and recommendations for students who were undecided majors, recent graduates or first-year students. I created an excel sheet and promoted the panels on social media and during our DSU and SASS meetings. The presenters for each week's panels were signing up on the excel sheet, and I was also personally reaching out to some of the student leaders at SFU to invite them. I did not want these panels to be formal social events, but more of an experience-sharing platform with casual tea talks hosted by fellow students selected to be the event's panellists. In total, I hosted six panels;

i) Coffee Break with Undecided Majors:

This was the first panel that I had hosted with the FASS EPA, Shahvir Sarkar and the panellists Environment Representative Anuki and Society of Arts and social sciences executive, Teah. Since this was our first panel, I took some time to learn about creating the

Eventbrites for each panel and the zoom links. The panel targeted students who had questions about electives, joint majors, certificates, exchange and co-op opportunities. It was an experience-sharing event where I monitored the zoom session and prepared questions for both the panellists and the participants.

You can find the description of this panel:

<https://coffeebreakwithundecidedmajors.eventbrite.ca>

ii) Pro Tips for FIC Students:

Since FASS is the largest faculty at SFU, most of the transfer students from FIC are in our faculty, and this transition could be frantic if they don't get enough protips for survival at SFU. For that reason, I decided to host this panel with students who had transferred to SFU, which included the FCAT rep, Haider Masood, FASS EPA Shahvir and Political Science FASS Representative, Mughees. During the panel, some answered questions regarding course selection, Upass, clubs, DSUs, the SFSS, MSP, and residence life.

You can find the description of this panel: <https://protipsforficstudents.eventbrite.ca>

iv) Teatime with recent Graduates:

As a first-year student, I was curious to hear any advice from the graduates. Graduating during a pandemic was already a unique experience on its own; however, both of the presenters' had even more inspiring stories to share with us. We did get a lot of participation for this panel as there were a lot of students who wanted to speak to the panellists as well as student leaders of SFU about the SFSS and its committees and campaigns such as Tuition freeze, DSUs, Co-op, protips for resume writing and job interviews.

Description of this panel: <https://teatimewithrecentundergraduates.eventbrite.ca>

iii) Actively involved- DSU execs:

This was our last panel of the month, and it was mostly targeted at students looking for opportunities to be more actively involved via the SFSS or DSUs. I knew the importance of

being as engaged as possible during the first year as it set the tone for the university experience. For that reason, connecting with DSUs and the SFSS was something I had recommended to all the students as it would enable them to expand their university experience and open up various networking opportunities. I had contacted the president of the SFSS, OSob Mohamed, to be one of the presenters of the panel as her journey with the SFSS was a very inspiring one. We had four panellists in total, I had also contacted the president of PSSU and SASU's exec, and after hosting a mock session, we were prepared for the questions submitted by students. The panel was very fruitful as over 40 students joined to ask their mindboggling questions.

You can find the description of this panel: <https://activelyinvolveddsuexecs.eventbrite.ca>

On-going Projects

1) **Students Against TMX campaign:**

Students Against TMX is our campaign made up of the SFSS, DogwoodSFU, and Justice, No Pipeline. It was initiated by Science rep Wei-Chun, Simran from DogwoodSFU, Iulia, Environment Rep Anuki, Christina and Jane from Justice, No Pipeline. We wrote a letter with signatures from student unions, student groups, and allies calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to immediately stop the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion due to safety concerns, Indigenous sovereignty, environmental and economic concerns. I was responsible for contacting various student groups and professors in BC.

The letter: <https://tinyurl.com/yxquzhvm>

Student Counsellor and Peak editor Victor helped us create our video, which was released alongside our letter: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=776410333211955>

2) Cultural Groups Welcome video and Cultural Week:

The VP student life and At-Large Rep and I took on this project and contacted almost all of the cultural and religious groups at SFU, and the goal was to help incoming students feel more welcomed and included. Cultural groups were showcased in the video and promoted on SFSS social media. I reached out to many cultural groups, helped with the script and worked together to maintain the communication between them and Jennifer as she was collecting the clips. The eight-minute video was created featuring some clubs; SFU Taiwanese Association, Society of African and Caribbean Ancestry, Pakistan Students Association, K.Storm, Muslim's Students Association and First Nations Students Association and many more. This video will be shared on the SFSS page as well as by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Here is the video: <https://www.facebook.com/sfss1/posts/3906535776030469>

3) Emerge SFU:

Emerge SFU is a project that strives to instil valuable industry skills in students through a series of workshops over the course of four to six weeks. By providing a free, easy-to-access program consisting of engaging workshops to teach these skills, we hope to improve their toolbox of employable skills and guide them into a career path they are passionate about. I serve as the brand ambassador, and more role is to represent Emerge at promotional events and other marketing initiatives. I also contact universities from all over the world to create international chapters. I am currently contacting coding instructors from "SheCodes," which hosts free workshops for interviews in October.

The "who we are" video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8yNuOS2UuY>

Biweekly FASS DSU Meetings

Since there are over 26 departmental student unions in FASS it is challenging to stay connected with each one of them. However, during our DSU meetings, we update each other about upcoming events, discord activity, elections and the SFSS related news. Prior to the meeting I would contact Jess or Shahvir regarding the agenda items to have a brief discussion with them before attending the meeting.

I also try to add each DSU's channel on Discord and turn on my notifications to literally receive all the news and updates about them. The meeting is also attended by SFSS VP student life who also served as the former FASS rep. Therefore, whenever I am confused or stuck I make sure to spam her as she is a great source and offers a lot of advice and creative ideas.

Pain Points

It was challenging for me to type during the meetings due to my medical condition; therefore, I was advised not to chair any committees, and that was a hard decision to make. With time, I got used to this newly emerging obstacle in my life. Balancing board work and FASS related work was a bit stressful, especially during the panels. I am a perfectionist, and I came to the unfortunate conclusion that I could only do the best of my capabilities and not everything I wished I could do. This realization brought up new ideas as I felt more encouraged to host online events.

Moreover, my housemate was tested positive with Covid-19, and I was more than worried for her and myself even though I tested negative. My parents were very concerned about

my health; thus, I have recently moved back home to Ghana. The time difference here is a challenge, but I am now adapting to sleeping in the afternoon and joining meetings at night.

Recommendations

I was unfamiliar with Roberts Rules when I first started my term; however, with my colleagues' help, particularly VP UR Gable Liosis and the cheat sheet, I was able to feel more confident about it. I would recommend taking notes during meetings and not only watching but observing them. And most importantly, do not be scared to ask questions. I would also recommend using Google calendar as that is how I learnt to manage my time. I set reminders for studying or for upcoming meetings, and it saves my life. Downloading discord and the slack app was also essential in maintaining communication with all the committees and projects.

