

2020-2021



simon fraser
student society

ENVIRONMENT REP'S EXIT REPORT

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Executive Summary

Hello! My name is Anuki Karunajeewa, my pronouns are she/her/hers, and I am the last Faculty of Environment Representative for the 2020/2021 Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) Board of Directors, given the fact that there is a new governance structure for the upcoming year. As the very last Environment representative I spent my time advocating for SFU undergraduate students and marginalized communities, and working on and leading events. It was quite a fulfilling experience and role.

This report showcases all the work that I have done, relationships I have built, resources, advice and initiatives I have led and helped support. I end my SFSS term while also ending my undergraduate degree at SFU. I could not have asked for a better experience!




Overview

The Faculty of Environment Representative plays a focal role in supporting Environment students and enhancing the overall student experience at SFU by liaising with faculty, staff, students, and other decision-makers in the community. The following are groups and individuals that I worked closely with to achieve my goals this term:

- SFSS University and Academic Affairs Committee
- SFSS External Affairs Committee
- SFSS Mandatory Anti-Racism Education working group
- SFSS Events committee
- SFSS BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) committee
- Faculty and At-Large Representative Members (SFSS FARM) committee
- The SFSS Admin Assistant Hiring committee
- The Students Against TMX campaign team

Role Breakdown

As the Faculty of Education Representative, I am responsible for liaising with the Faculty of Environment, which includes the Dean of Environment and all the Faculty of Environment Departmental Student Unions (DSU's). I advocate for




students within the faculty and across other faculties, and convey student experiences on student affairs. I attend departmental student union and club meetings or events, and when I am not able to attend meetings I ensure to communicate with council representatives or DSU presidents. I convey information about my faculty and student issues to other SFSS board of directors during board of director meetings.

As a Board Member, as previously mentioned I serve all undergraduates, not just within my faculty, and I ensure my work serves their best interests. I vote in the best interests of all students, assist, support, and communicate with student groups (clubs, department student unions, and faculty student unions) related to their faculty and organize and participate in events relating to their faculty.

Challenges

Some challenges I faced were balancing heavier course loads online with SFSS and towards the end of my term I was hired at a woman's clinic so I was working 2 jobs. I took 4 courses this semester while working 2 jobs, which I was not used to. But I found ways of managing my time, I learned how to have stronger boundaries and learned how effective it is to say "no" and when it is appropriate to say "no". I think I was struggling with creating a healthy schedule and sticking to it but I started to write things down, and make reminders which helped take better




care of myself while also achieving all my work and school goals. It can be hard to add everything onto work reports, and a lot of work happens outside of meetings and projects, for example talking to students on social media or helping out in other ways, and this labour can go undocumented.

Learning Experiences

- Working online during Covid was a challenge but also a learning experience, along with learning how to balance 2 jobs, personal life and school.
- Learning how to create social media posts and manage accounts, learning how to promote events and SFSS resources
- Educating on intersectional environmentalism, how to be anti-racist and other intersectionalities that are vital to human lives
- Maintaining work relationships
- Keeping up with emails
- Lobbying effectively through the external committee and meeting with MP Ron Mckinnon

Key Contacts

- Faculty of Environment Associate Dean Paul Kingsbury kingsbury@sfu.ca
- Dr. Ataman Avdan aavdan@sfu.ca - From Food Justice workshop
- Dr. Annie Ross annie_ross@sfu.ca - Indigenous education workshop

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- Terri Ruddy terri.ruddy@gmail.com - Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion consultant
 - Athena Guertin womenscentre-admin@sfss.ca - Women's center coordinator

Projects and Initiatives

If I miss any projects or work I have completed or worked on in this exit report, please have a look at my previous semester reports linked below.

Summer 2020 semester report

<https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Environment-Rep-Semester-Report-Summer-2020-Anuki-Karunajeewa.pdf>


Fall 2020 semester report

<https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Fall-Semester-Report-Environment-Rep.pdf>

All biweekly reports: <https://sfss.ca/reports/>

SFSS Food Justice event

I wanted to share knowledge about food justice with students, therefore I created an interactive event. I brought the idea to VP student life Jennifer and the events committee and created a working group with student senator



Abhishek. We hosted the event in September. My professor from my sociology of food and social thought class was invited to be a speaker of the event. Students enjoyed learning about food justice and doing the trivia afterwards. We also gave out prizes for the winners.


SFSS New Music Mondays and music event

I worked with Jennifer Chou and Ahad Ghani to create music Mondays on our SFSS events Instagram page. It was fun doing this because we engaged with students and received song recommendations from them, while also giving a Spotify gift card giveaway. This also helped bring students awareness of the SFSS and gain followers for the SFSS events page. We also had a trivia night about songs and artists on Kahoot! Everyone enjoyed it and we had 3 winners.

SFSS Admin assistant hiring

I joined the admin assistant hiring committee for the employer side. I worked with Lawrence Jones, Nancy Mah, Shelley Durante, Zoya Nari and Melanie Ling in this committee. I enjoyed working with everyone, I learned many skills including interview skills, resume and cover letter writing. I also improved on my communication skills through this committee. We hired 4 admin assistants through this committee.

Mandatory Anti Racism Education Workshops




Health science rep, Nafoni Modi, and I started a working group under the UAA and BIPOC committee called MARE which stands for Mandatory Anti-Racism Education. We were discussing how there needs to be mandatory anti-racism education implemented within each faculty at SFU and how there is a lack of race-based information and justice around campus. Then, the Education rep Emerly connected with us and introduced us to an education PDP student named Jasmine and all of us together started meeting for this working group. This working group has now grown to include members of the BIPOC committee. We decided to host a series of workshops which we could create to educate students. We sent out a survey to the undergraduate population asking what they would like to learn about. We then used the data from the survey to host 2 workshops. The first was on anti-Indigenous racism education led by Dr. Annie Ross and the second on anti-Black racism education led by Terri Ruty.

After the workshop I created this social media post with all the resources mentioned by Terri.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/COBzxRHMjdz/>

Save the BESU/EVSCsu common room

The bachelor of environment student union and the environmental science student union reached out to me bringing my attention to a letter that the school of



environmental science sent to them without prior notice stating they will be losing their common room space. The common room space was being converted into a lab space. This decision was made without consultation and it gave hardly any time for the unions to find a new space. We wrote a letter addressed to the school of environmental science and faculty of environment and sent it out. The letter:

https://sfss.ca/save-the-besu-and-evscsu-common-room/?fbclid=IwAR2OGc9SU6qzXLU8GjLAYdaU24jLmtN8_lui_qlqiFaX6titqO1g8w-gZnk

I communicated with the faculty liaison and they are working towards solving this issue.

Students against TMX

We released the letter that we wrote and shared our social media campaign on instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/studentsagainstmx/> and <https://www.facebook.com/StudentsAgainstTMX> and we also released our campaign on the sfss website <https://sfss.ca/studentsagainstmx/>. Through NewMode we can allow students to send emails and sign on which can be seen on the website. Towards the end of the spring semester we sent out a survey asking students how they feel about the TMX project:

<https://www.facebook.com/sfss1/photos/a.163993313618086/4530956533588387/>



#GiveStudentsALift campaign

Worked on a video to help promote and support the Burnaby Mountain Gondola project

<https://twitter.com/SFSS1/status/1357833885501984772>

Other Works

Footprints City Centre invited me to be a guest speaker on their sustainability panel, where I spoke to youth ages 12-18 on intersectional environmentalism

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CMaijIqN2Bm/>

I was a panelist on the SFSS women's centre leadership panel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k2KRLSw6N0>



Recommendations

I recommend typing all notes during meetings in the work reports. This way work reports are not done last minute and are not rushed; this creates less stress too. I also recommend using Notion to create schedules, organize work and tasks. But if you create this you need to keep up with it and check it everyday. There are some templates from youtubers online. I use this for my classes and work. Create smaller goals and to do lists, once completing these take breaks and give yourself a reward.

Downloading the google app calendar and discord app on my phone helped me with work. I also recommend turning on notifications for these as well so nothing is missed. Turning off or muting unimportant notifications helps prioritize important notifications. Set screen time for apps if you do not want to delete apps off your phone. It is also important to set time blocks to study and always get schoolwork done ahead of deadlines. I think scheduling and laying out everything visually helped me with school and the SFSS work. Seek help and resources when needed, SFU has beneficial counseling and health resources I would recommend which I have used. Here is also a resource for BIPOC counselling and therapists <https://www.healingincolour.com>



Positional How-Tos

Stay up to date with meetings happening in your faculty DSU's, and if you are busy to attend check in afterwards or read meeting minutes. Establish good working relationships within the faculty and across campus. Communicate information and consult with students using the Faculty email list, social media and Surveys. I utilized my faculty DSU facebook pages and groups, as well as their discords and class discords as a way to connect with students within the faculty.

Final Thoughts

It has been such a pleasure and I am so grateful for being able to serve as the Faculty of Environment rep for a year. I could not have done my work without such an amazing group of individuals on the board, and all the amazing staff. So much of this work requires the work of others, it can't all be done alone. The amount of relationships I built made this job even more special. Advocacy work requires a great deal of empathy, understanding, knowledge as well as relationship building. Thinking back to my second year when someone told me I should run for this position, I was so intimidated! But I think now I realized it's not intimidating but fulfilling, and I would recommend running. I think if you want to advocate for



students, create progressive meaningful change that will last for the future and spark inspiration, you should run.