

2020-2021



simon fraser
student society

SCIENCES REP'S EXIT REPORT

WeiChun Kua

Simon Fraser Student Society

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Executive Summary

Hello everyone,

My name is WeiChun Kua (柯伟俊) and I'm your 2020-21 Faculty of Science Representative. I sat on the University and Academic Affairs (UAA) Committee, External and Community Affairs (ECA) Committee, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Committee, Faculty, and At-Large Representatives Members (FARM) Committee, Governance (GOV) Committee, and Transition Steering Committee. I worked on 16 projects and initiatives over my term, including the Students Against TMX campaign, #StudentDeserveSpace campaign, the Burnaby Pilot Food Hub, and the SUB Activism project.

This year definitely posed a challenge for our Board as we're the first board to serve our entire term online and during a global pandemic. Students needed the support of the SFSS more than ever with increasing tuition despite a global pandemic, social isolation and the rapid transition to online classes, and invasive exam invigilation. But overall I think our amazing team of board members, staff, and student at-larges did a really good job of supporting students with the online transition and extenuating circumstances.

Additionally, our board also continued the work of the previous progressive board caucus with shifting the SFSS towards more advocacy, protecting marginalized students, rebuilding meaningful relationships with constituency groups, and building back student power. We did an administrative restructuring and as well as governance restructuring with empowering the SFSS Council to be the legal board of directors again. More issues policies were also added to ensure SFSS is taking stances on social and political issues that affect the safety and wellbeing of BIPOC and marginalized folks, and fighting for climate justice.

I am so proud of the work that our team has done this year, and have no doubt that the SFU Progressives will continue the good work at the SFSS in building student power, stronger!



Overview

Role Breakdown

The role of the Science Representative is to serve as the liaison between the SFSS and the Science Departmental and Faculty student unions but votes in the interest of all students, not just their faculty. I meet with the Presidents of Science student unions bi-weekly and as well as their Council Representatives or the rest of the executive team when they need any support or advice.

I also worked closely with the Science Engagement Coordinator of the Science Dean's Office, Thomas Leischner as his role pertains to the engagement and retention of students in the Faculty of Science. We have the mutual interest to work collaboratively to ensure Science students are well supported and that their issues are heard and adequately addressed in the faculty.

Challenges


The 2020-2021 Board year has proven to be a very unique and challenging time as we started and ended our Board year completely online and virtual for the very first time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has created online burnout, increased stress, and decline in mental health in many students, including myself, as we are more socially isolated than ever before.

Adapting to a sudden and rapid shift to an online learning environment is difficult enough, but adding learning how to be a board member for the first time while online as well was no easy task. On top of attending online lectures, the number of online meetings as a board member can easily add up to experiencing online burnout.

The biggest challenge for my board term was building relationships and connecting with students while online. Much of what SFSS as a student union is supposed to do is to mobilize and recruit students to build student power. Without building that base and collective power, our advocacy is less effective and weaker with less numbers behind our voice.

Learning Experiences

I had the opportunity to be on several committees during my board term including the Governance Committee, External and Community Affairs Committee, BIPOC Committee, University and Academic Affairs Committee, and Faculty and At-large Representative



Members Committee. Being on the Governance committee allowed me to better understand the SFSS By-laws and Policies that shape and govern the SFSS, and had the opportunity to draft a “Climate Justice and Sustainability” issue policy. The External and Community Affairs committee gave me the opportunity to lobby the Provincial and Federal Government on issues such as the Trans Mountain Expansion project, raced-based data collection, cap on international tuition fees, and defunding the police.

One of the most fulfilling experiences for my board year was being a member of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) committee. It’s the first of its kind at the SFSS where racialized students are able to have a safe and inclusive space to discuss issues that affect the BIPOC community at SFU. Some of the BIPOC committee’s achievements and initiatives includes successfully lobbied SFU to change the VP People, Equity, and Inclusion (VPPEI) job description and role to center students, [#OurDecisionSFU](#), and supporting First Nations Students Association’s [#LetUsSpeak](#) campaign.

Key Contacts

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Projects and Initiatives

Summer Lab Courses Survey




Summary

As the entire Summer semester shifted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students who are transitioning into a whole new and unknown online learning environment, are missing out on valuable lab experience and as well as facing barriers with not having access to required/recommended software that they would otherwise have access to with on-campus computers. Myself, and Harry Preet Singh (Faculty of Applied Science Representative), put together an online survey to gauge these barriers faced by students and incorporate the results into the SFSS COVID-19 survey report.

Goals

To understand what are the challenges students face in online lab-based courses and if they are adequately addressed by the instructor

- 
- Sent out the survey on May 8th on SFSS social media accounts, and posting in SFU Facebook groups like “SFU Must Know Courses
 - Questions in the survey included why students are taking lab courses despite knowing it’s online, if they should be paying less tuition for these courses, and if the instructor provided accommodations

Results

Results were compiled on May 14th with 61 reponses, and published on the SFSS website.

Students were not properly informed about how online labs were being conducted

- 57.4% of respondents did not receive any updates from their instructor on how their labs will be conducted

Students felt that tuition for courses with remote labs should be reduced to match the reduced quality and lost of in-person lab experience that is crucial to the course

- 96.7% of respondents think they should be paying less tuition
- 23.0% of respondents have one or more courses that require software that they do not have access to while working from home, or the software is incompatible with their computer’s operating system
- 77% of respondents are taking lab courses because it's required in their degree, and 74.7% wanted to stick with their degree planning and be on track to graduate

Students gave their suggestions on how their department can better accommodate these courses:

1. Reduced tuition fees for semesters with remote lab work
2. More clarity and communication from professors (e.g. more office hours and earlier communication of the course syllabus)
3. Restructured lab formats (e.g. offering additional time slots, creating lab tutorial videos, and using “breakout rooms” with smaller instructor-to-student ratios)
4. More course options (e.g. courses without lab requirements)
5. Pass/Fail grading options continued into the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters
6. Free learning resources (e.g. textbooks and software)

Read the full survey report and recommendations [here](#).

SFU C-19 Coalition Student Town Hall



Summary

The Simon Fraser Student Society collaborated with SFU C-19 Coalition (C19C) to organize our own student town hall, “The Future of SFU Education”. This was in response to SFU’s own lackluster student town hall where there was minimum interaction between students and SFU admins, which resulted in students’ concerns not properly addressed or answered. The project was led by Balqees Jama (Student At-large Representative), and grassroots organizers from C19C. I provided tech support and helped moderate during the event.

Goals

To provide an interactive and accessible platform for students to ask questions and express their concerns with online education

- Integrated Zoom into Slido that provided interactive polls and upvoting questions
- Had an amazing live volunteer captioner that made the event accessible
- The town hall was streamed on Slido, Facebook and Youtube

Opportunity for students to ask questions to a diverse panelist who had different insights into the future of SFU education during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Panelists included representatives from SFSS, C19C, the Graduate Student Society (GSS), the Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU), and Tuition Freeze Now (TFN).

Results

Overall, the event was a success with 350+ live attendees and the recording on Facebook has over 5,900 views. The interaction and dialogue with students helped us better understand the major on-going concerns and barriers students face. We will continue to lobby and escalate actions against SFU's belief that the quality of education remained the same if not better in the transition to online education. The student town hall brought students' voices to the forefront and provided us with more leverage to push the university to do better for students.

Watch the recorded live stream [here](#).

Brief on Canada's COVID-19 Response



Brief on Canada's COVID-19 Response

June 2020



Summary

Balqees Jama (Student At-large Representative) and I submitted a brief to the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, to provide comments on the Federal Government's "Canadian Response To The Covid-19 Pandemic". Our brief highlighted students' financial and mental health struggles in this pandemic, especially international students who are often left out, despite contributing a significant amount to Canada's economic, and job growth.

Goals



To ensure students concerns and hardships are taken into consideration as the Federal Government put together their COVID-19 recovery plans

- From February to March 2020, the number of postsecondary students in the workforce, aged 15-29, decreased by 28%
- Students who have graduated or who are nearing graduation will likely face difficulty in finding employment in their field of study as Deloitte Insights forecast a deep recession which will be more detrimental than the 2008-09 global financial crisis
- According to the SFSS COVID-19 [survey](#), almost 50% of students reported that they are experiencing mental health issues as a result of COVID-19

To call on the Federal Government to commit to a Just Recovery for all

- Urging the government to create their recovery plans based on the Just Recovery [principles](#) that is endorsed by over 400 organizations
- The SFSS has also passed a [motion](#) to endorse the Just Recovery Principles

Results

The brief is submitted and is publicly available on the House of Commons [website](#). This ensures students' concerns are heard and taken into consideration with upcoming and future COVID-19 recovery plans. We will continue to make sure students have a voice and are not ignored in these tough times by meeting with politicians, lobbying not only the Federal government but all levels of government, and through advocacy campaigns.

Reflection on canada day



Summary


At the SFSS we acknowledge that we are working and operating on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), Sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-Waututh), kwikwə́łəm (Kwikwetlem) and q̓ícəy̓ (Katzie) Nations. But we must do more than mere land acknowledgement, so I put together a [statement](#) along with educational [resources](#) compiled by Iulia Zgreabă (External and Community Affair At-large member), Jane Kim (SFU Undergrad), and Matthew Provost (VP Student Services) in order for our communities to reflect on canada day, and start respectful conversations about what it means to [decolonize](#).

Goals

To urge our community members to reflect and start respectful conversations as they celebrate canada day

- Encourage the student society to be more mindful of what we celebrate and consider the harm and violence that we may perpetuate with this celebration
- Acknowledge that the creation of canada is intrinsically linked to the continued genocide of Indigenous people, and oppression of Black and People of Colour
- University of Victoria Students' Society chose not to support the celebration of canada day this [year](#)

Results



There were really good educational resources compiled by community members for community members to educate themselves on Canada's colonial past and present. Making an anti-colonial narrative a normal conversation, especially at the student society level, is really important in making sure we decolonize every aspect of the student society. We must consider our Indigenous communities on campus, and how we can support them, amplify their voices and show solidarity with more than just mere land acknowledgements.

Science Welcome Day Event

Summary

I presented about the SFSS at one of the Science Welcome Day Events planned by student Senior Welcome Leaders as part of SFU Virtual Welcome Day.

Goals

To welcome our Fall 2020 new undergraduate Science students to SFU and educate them about the SFSS

- Presented about organizational structure, constituency groups, independent student groups, activism, services we offer, our lobbying & advocacy work, and how to get involved with the SFSS

Results

It was a good opportunity to let new students know about the SFSS and to let them know that we are here to advocate for and represent them. Student Senior Welcome Leaders planned it well but it definitely felt kind of rushed and there wasn't a lot of back and forth with attendees that we would otherwise have if it was in-person.

Burnaby Pilot SFU Food Hub Program



Summary

The pilot SFU Food Hub [program](#) on Burnaby ended in late October 2020 after running for three months since July 2020. This pilot was a collaboration between the SFSS and SFU, and was led by myself and Samad Raza (SFSS VP External), and Tara Flynn (Coordinator, Civic and Community Engagement) from SFU's Office Of Community Engagement.

The pilot program was overall successful, averaging around 55 applications per week with an average of 35 of those applicants coming up to the Burnaby campus to pick up their free groceries. Applicants included undergraduate, and graduate students who stated that the Food Hub provided a much needed relief during the pandemic where pre-existing financial stress is being exacerbated. It is clear that food insecurity continues to be an issue to both undergraduate and graduate students at SFU and there is a need to see this pilot program established as a permanent low barrier and accessible program.

A survey has been sent out to applicants to collect feedback and will be incorporated into a report that will be presented to the SFSS Board to determine next steps and explore the potential of establishing a permanent Food Hub program.

Special thanks to our partners Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Offbeat Produce, Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society, and EMBARK, for providing fresh produce and non-perishable foods. Gratitude to volunteers who came to help out, including Matthew Provost (VP Student Services), Gabe Liosis (VP University Relations), Helen Pahou (Student At-Large, UAA Committee), Abishek Parmar (Student At-Large, Events Committee), and EMBARK's Food Rescue volunteers.

Goals

- To provide free weekly supplementary groceries to the SFU community during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To provide fresh and nutritious produce to help students meet their nutritional needs.

Results

- The Food Hub received an average of 55 applications per week with an average of 35 of those applicants coming up to the Burnaby campus to pick up their free groceries.
- Fresh produce was provided by Offbeat Produce every week, and any leftovers were sent back to Burnaby Neighbourhood House. Less common produce were less likely to be picked up by applicants like Kohlrabi.
- The SFSS provided SFSS branded reusable bags for applicants and most of the time they brought them back to use for the next pick up so we reduced the use of plastic bags.

Operations Organizer Hiring



Summary

The SFSS undertook an administrative and governance restructuring so we needed to hire an [Operations Organizer](#) that handled human resources and the operations of the SFSS to fit the model that we went with. I sat on the Operations Organizer hiring committee and we conducted two rounds of interviews with several candidates, and held debrief sessions. The committee recommended a candidate and the candidate is expected to start their term in Spring 2021.

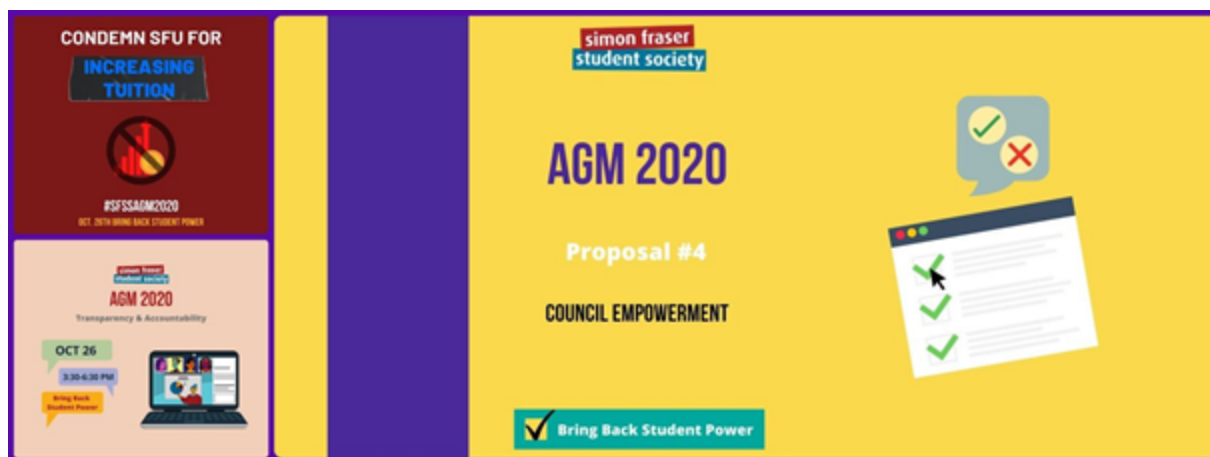
Goals

- To hire an Operations Organizer whose role is to handle the day-to-day staff relations and operations of the SFSS, and reports to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors through the President.

Results

- Successfully recommended a candidate to hire as the Operations Organizer.


SFSS 2020 Annual General Meeting



Summary

This was the first time ever that the SFSS held a completely online Annual General Meeting (AGM) due to the COVID-19 pandemic so a substantial amount of planning was needed to tackle the unknown technical, and logistical issues. The AGM Committee handled the tech and financial side of the AGM such as getting a Zoom webinar from SFU IT Services, and writing a script.

The Board also met to discuss and brainstorm ideas on how to reachout, and get students to attend the AGM. We came up with a campaign plan that included promo videos, raffle prizes, and outreach goals. Our VP Student Services, Jennifer Chou also created an [AGM Cheat Sheet](#) to better help students understand the major [By-Law changes](#) that were going to be voted on at the AGM.



I reached out to students, Science students unions, and clubs such as SFU350 to promote the AGM and encourage students to attend. This meant a significant amount of time was invested into messaging individual students to attend and also making sure they understood the proposed By-Law changes that they were going to vote on.

Overall, the 2020 AGM was a huge [success](#), other than some tech issues, with over 600 students attending, all the proposed By-Laws being passed and as well as a [condemnation vote](#) condemning SFU for raising tuition fees in the midst of a global pandemic was also passed.

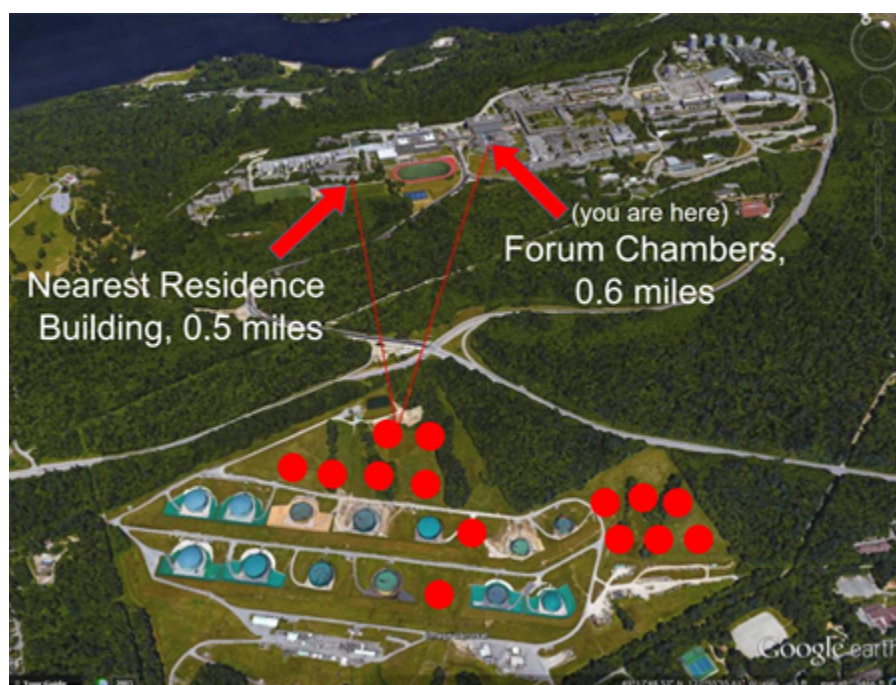
Goals

- Ensure all the proposed By-Laws changes, and condemnation votes are passed.
- Achieve quorum and get as many students to attend as possible.

Results

- Over 600 students attended and voted at the AGM
- By-Laws were passed that empowered Council, ensured compliance with BC Societies Act, new Executive Committee portfolios, and clearer definition of student groups.
- Condemned SFU for raising tuition in the midst of a pandemic.

TMX Burnaby Tank Farm Awareness




Source: https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Council_2016-09-28.pdf

Summary

I was contacted by Angela Brooks-Wilson (Professor, Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology) to attend a meeting with SFU's Martin Pochurko (VP Finance and Administration), and Mark LaLonde (Chief Safety Officer) on Nov 19 to discuss the danger and safety of the Burnaby tank farm and its on-going expansion due to the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project (TMX). The tank farm poses significant [risks](#) to the SFU community and SFU has not done enough to ensure the safety of its students.

Others in attendance as well were Samad Raza (SFSS VP External), Matt McDonald (GSS Director of External Relations), Pierre Cenerelli (GSS Exec. Director), Tim Takaro (Professor, Medical Doctor, Faculty of Health Sciences), John Clague (SFU Professor Emeritus, Earth Sciences, Officer of the Order of Canada), and Karl Perrin (Spokesperson for Burnaby Residents Opposing the Kinder Morgan Expansion [BROKE] and UniverCity resident). Full minutes of the meeting [here](#).



Myself and Faculty allies have been pressuring SFU to take a stronger stance in opposing TMX as the fight against TMX have been ramping up on the frontlines with Indigenous land defenders violently arrested, and activists, including SFU's Health Science professor, Tim Takaro are protesting to protect the trees in Burnaby that are getting cut without permits for the pipeline's construction.

On April 12, the SFSS conducted a survey to assess the perspective of the SFU community on the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm. The survey received 571 responses with 93% identifying as students and the remaining 7% identifying as SFU Faculty, SFU Staff, UniverCity Resident or other. Regarding whether community members have knowledge about the proximity of the tank farm to SFU and the risks it poses, 64% of respondents stated that they do and 51% stated they are very concerned of the risks. Additionally to the safety risks, 66% of respondents said that they're against TMX with the main reasons surrounding three themes, the violation of Indigenous rights and sovereignty, risk to the environment, and endangering the local community.

Finally, an overwhelming majority of the respondents with 83%, said they are not aware of any steps that SFU has taken to address the safety concerns and 42% stating that the steps that are taken are inadequate. SFU has the responsibility to educate its students, faculty and staff about the tank farm and its risks, which 84% of respondents agree with.

Read the full survey report [here](#).

Goals

- To get SFU to reaffirm and take a stronger [stance](#) on the unacceptable safety risk of the Burnaby tank farm, and oppose the TMX entirely with an emphasis on violation to Indigenous sovereignty, and goes against meaningfully addressing climate change. Lastly, asking SFU to also commit to educating the SFU community about the pipeline and the tank farm.

Results

- President Joy Johnson released a [statement](#) on April 8th, 2021 on TMX expressing support for a firehall on Burnaby Mountain. This is an inadequate response that does not even do the bare minimum of mentioning the project's huge violation against Indigenous rights and sovereignty, and risk to our climate in a climate crisis.

Students Against TMX



[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Campaign video](#)

Sign on to the letter [here](#)

Email your representative [here](#)

Media Coverage:


National Observer: [Post-secondary students call on Trudeau to abandon TMX](#)

BurnabyNow: [SFU students get 13 student unions to sign anti-TMX letter](#)

The Peak: [Student groups organize anti-Trans Mountain Expansion letter](#)

Summary

The Students Against TMX is a campaign launched in summer 2020 between the SFSS, 'Justice, No Pipeline', and DogwoodSFU, in demanding a stop to the Trans Mountain Expansion Project TMX in pursuit of a Just Recovery, and respecting Indigenous rights and



titles. The letter has signatures from 14 student unions which represents over 680,000 students across Canada and the United States, and as well as allied groups and unions such as the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), and SFU Faculty Association.

The letter was sent to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in September 2020 but we didn't receive any response. An email [campaign](#) was started so students can send emails to their local representatives. We also launched the campaign video which gained over 2.7k views on Instagram and 1.8k views on Facebook, and 600+ views on Twitter.

Goals

To advocate for the safety of our students

- TMX comes with the expansion of the Burnaby Tank Farm which is located right below the only intersection off the mountain, Gaglardi Way.
- It is also 800 m away from the closest SFU Residence building

To get the Federal Government to commit to taking real climate action and transition away from fossil fuels

- The expansion will add approximately 400,000 tonnes of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere per year.
- Canada is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world.
- Invest in Indigenous-led green infrastructure and green job-retaining initiatives

Immediately cease TMX and commit to honouring Indigenous sovereignty

- Call for the immediate ratification and legislation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in present-day Canada.

Science All DSU Meeting

Summary

The Science All DSU meetings is a biweekly meeting that I co-chaired with Thomas Leischner, Science Engagement Coordinator of the Faculty of Science Dean's Office. Presidents or representatives from all the Science Departmental and Faculty Student unions attended the meetings and we discuss current issues that student unions and Science students are facing and share advice and tactics on how to tackle them. A huge organizing effort this year was around the Pass/Credit/No Credit (P/CR/NC) grading scheme. The meeting was also an opportunity for us to share updates with each other.

Especially this year with the SFSS Governance structure change with Council becoming the legal board of the society, I made sure that the changes were clearly communicated and understood. Additionally, I also guided and gave the Science student unions advice to ensure that they hold their Council elections in accordance with the new SFSS By-law changes.

Goal

- To ensure that I'm in tune with the activities, concerns and issues of Science student unions and provide support to them.
- To communicate the activities and decisions of the Board to Science student union.

Results

- Guided and ensured Science student unions held their Council elections in accordance with the new By-law changes.
- Co-developed a plan to help Science student unions mobilize their members and advocate to expand the Pass/Fail/No Credit grading scheme.
- Engaged in conversation and encouraged Science student unions to put more effort towards more advocacy, social justice, and equity, rather than just planning social events.

SFU Migrants Student United (SFU MSU)



The SFU Migrants Student United (SFU MSU) is a coalition made up of the Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU), Graduate Student Society (GSS), and the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS). SFU MSU brings together representatives from each group with the goal of

advocating for international students at SFU and works closely with the larger Migrant Students United organization. I regularly attended SFU MSU's meeting where we strategize on how to mobilize and recruit international students at SFU to organize with the group.

On March 30th, 2020, we organized a webinar to talk about the Post-Graduate Work Permit extension to show that when we come together and fight, we win! Over 40 students attended the webinar and shared their struggles and concerns. They were also encouraged and motivated to see the wins we can achieve due to collective effort.

The SFU MSU will continue to mobilize, recruit, and organize for PR status for all, elimination of International Student Health Fee, and many other international student issues.

International Student Advocates (ISA)



Summary

The International Student Advocates, formerly International Student Group, is a constituency group that advocates for the needs and rights of international students at SFU. The group has been inactive in a few years so me and a few other international students worked on reviving the group with running the Executive election. We also rebranded the group and updated the group's constitution. SFU announced an increase in tuition fees for the next two years in the middle of a pandemic and international students already face high tuition fees with no cap on yearly increases. So there is a need for this

group to advocate on behalf of international students among other issues that international students face such as the high cost of International student health fees.

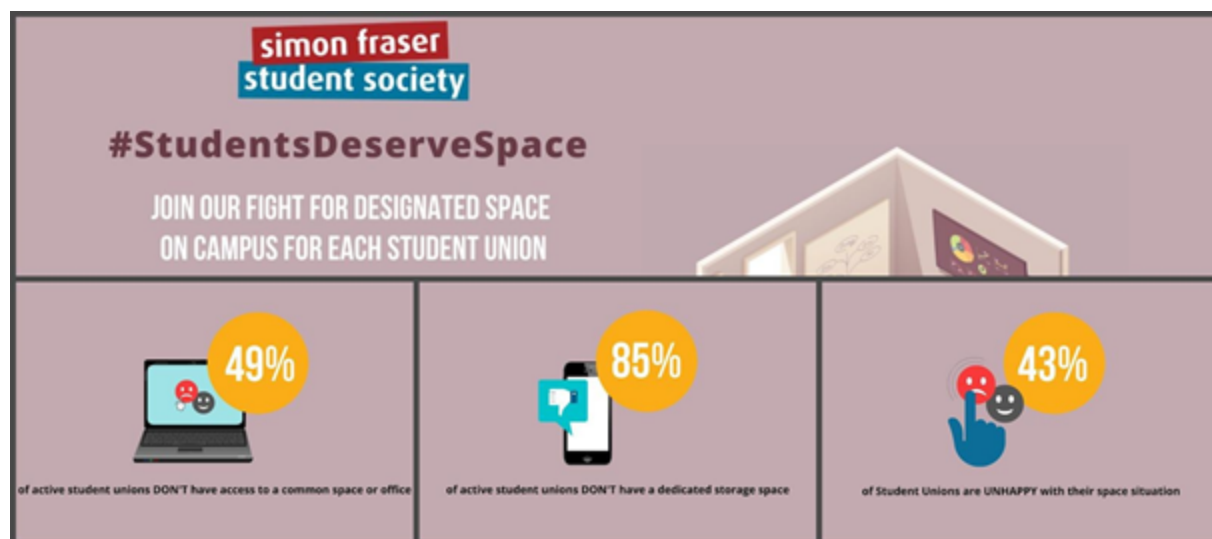
Goals

- Revived the ISA so international students have a voice on council and a group that advocates on behalf of their needs and rights

Results


- Amend the constitution and successfully ran an election. The Secretary and Treasurer positions remained vacant as no there were no candidates. A by election will have to be called by the new executive team.

#StudentsDeserveSpace



Summary

On October 31st, the Environmental Science Student Union (EVSCSU) and Bachelor of Environment Student Union (BESU) announced that the School of Environmental Science is [seizing](#) their current shared common room in TASC 7470 to be turned into a laboratory space by the end of the semester. Although the school has expressed commitment to find alternate space for both student unions, this was still done without any advance notice or prior consultation with BESU or EVSCSU.



The above eviction proves the needs for Faculty Student Unions (FSUs), and Departmental Student Unions (DSUs) to establish a formal agreement for their common room space or to look for one if they currently do not have one between their faculty/department. Student spaces on campus are vital and important to the well-being and success of students. They provide a collaborative space and where students can go to seek support from their FSU or DSU.

I worked with the Molecular Biology and Biochemistry Student Union (MBBSU) Council representative and submitted a [briefing note](#) with a motion that passed for Council to launch a [#StudentsDerserveSpace](#) campaign for the purpose of securing long-term student union common rooms.

This campaign is ongoing until all DSUs/FSUs secure long term common rooms.

Goals

- Secure long-term common room spaces with departments and faculties.
- Establish written agreements between all DSU and FSU and their respective department or faculty.

Results

- Council wrote a letter that aligned with the space campaign briefing note and will be sent to their respective department and faculties
- DSU and FSU work with their respective departments and faculties to look for spaces that fit their needs and sign an agreement to secure them.
- Myself, the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) President, and the Faculty of Science's Dean's office drafted a MoU that will most likely be signed on the next SFSS board term.

SFSS Endorses the Braided Warriors



Summary


On February 19, 2021, the Braided Warriors were violently removed and arrested by approximately 25 Vancouver Police Department (VPD) officers during a peaceful sit-in and engaged in ceremony in the BMO building, which houses AIG Insurance. Four warriors were arrested and two of which sustained physical injury but were denied medical attention while in custody for five hours.

The Braided Warriors, Black Lives Matter Vancouver, and Defund 604 Network wrote an open letter condemning the VPD and calling for accountability of their racist and violent actions. The letter currently has signatures of 33 organizations and 300 individuals.

As the SFSS acknowledges that it is located on the unceded Coast Salish Territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), Katzie, and kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem) Nations, we need to condemn any sort of violence against Indigenous land defenders, stand in solidarity and support them. Myself and Balqees Jama, At-Large Representative prepared a briefing [note](#) and put forward a motion for SFSS to support the Braided Warriors

Read the full statement [here](#).

Goals



SFSS to signs and distributes the open letter regarding the violent arrests of Braided Warriors on February 19, 2021, written by Braided Warriors, Black Lives Matter - Vancouver, and Defund 604 Network

Results

The motion passed and SFSS signed onto the open letter and posted it on our social media.

Climate Justice and Sustainability Issue Policy

Summary

The SFSS had previous existing Issues Policies on SFSS stances on various issues but it was repealed during the SFSS structure change in 2015. It was brought back in 2019 but with only one existing issues policy on Reproductive Rights and in 2020, a second issue policy was added on Black History Month. The Governance Committee in April worked on adding more issues policies and I was tasked with drafting the Climate Justice and Sustainability issue policy.

The Climate Justice and Sustainability issue policy aimed to clarify SFSS' stance on tackling climate change and advancing sustainability in an intersectional way. Meaning addressing the root causes of climate change which included but not limited to the fossil fuel industry, extractivism, racism, capitalism, white supremacy, settler colonialism, policing, ableism and patriarchy. It also emphasizes the SFSS' role and responsibility as a student society that represent over 26,000 undergraduate students, "to foster activism, advocacy and civic engagement that are necessary to address climate change".


Special mention to the First Nation Students Association (FNSA) and Disability and Neurodiversity Alliance (SFU DNA) for their contribution and help with the consultation of this policy.

Read the full Issues Policies [here](#).

Goals

To clarify the SFSS' stances on climate justice and sustainability such as but not limited to supporting:

- Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, the LandBack movement, and meaningful and proper consultation with Indigenous Host Nations and communities
- Full divestment from funds invested in the fossil fuel and other extractive industries,

- 
- Investing in student led activism, advocacy, and research around climate justice
 - Meaningful and proper consultation with Indigenous students and the First Nations Student Association (FNSA), and as well as amplifying and supporting their work,
 - Sustainability practices and policies that are equitable and center the needs of marginalized communities and disability justice by conducting proper consultation with marginalized communities,

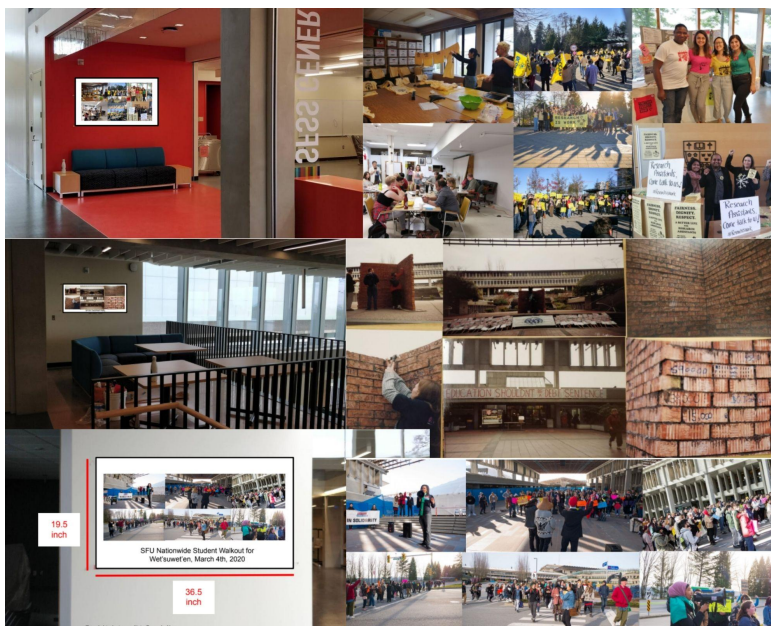
SFSS Opposes:

- Funding and construction of new and existing fossil fuels infrastructures such as
- the Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) and Coast GasLink (CGL) Pipeline,
- Extractive projects that do not have the free, informed, and prior consent of
- Indigenous Host Nations and communities,
- Funding and construction of new and existing clean energy projects that
- disproportionately negatively impact marginalized communities and thus are
- antithetical to climate justice,
- Police violence and arrest of Indigenous warriors and climate activists that protest
- peacefully for climate justice,
- Inequitable, racist, and oppressive climate solutions and policies that further
- perpetuate harm to low-income, marginalized, and racialized communities.

Results

The Issues Policies was successfully repealed and replaced at the April 23rd, 2021 Board meeting with additional new issues policies added including Climate Justice and Sustainability, Tuition Affordability, Disability Justice, Living Wage and Union Rights, Indigenous Inclusion and Reconciliation, Anti-Racism, and Police and Militarization.

SUB Activism Project



Summary

Currently, the SFSS does not have any showcase of the history of student activism and the nature of the radical SFU campus. It is vital that the SFSS preserve and showcase this history of radical student activism to inspire and motivate students towards demonstrating collective student power.

The former Build SFU General Manager had possession of SFSS activism archive content and handed them over at the end of his employment with the SFSS. The content included pictures of student protests and rallies that dated as far back as the 60s.

SFU was once known as the radical campus that was full of progressive and radical student activists and faculty allies that held rallies, actions and protests against SFU administration, and other external governing bodies relating to tuition fee increases, anti-war protests, academic freedom, and LGBATQ+ rights.

This project was initiated by myself and Jennifer Chou, VP Student Life.

Read the full briefing note [here](#).

For more information on the radical history of SFU, read the book, "[Radical campus: making Simon Fraser University](#)" by Hugh Johnston.



Goals

- To install student activism photos in the Student Union Building (SUB) to showcase the radical student movement at SFU.
- To inspire and motivate students towards demonstrating collective student power.

Results

The Board passed a motion and approved \$23,921.30 from the Build SFU fund for the SUB Activism project. The project will be taken on by the next Board to print, and install the photos in the SUB.

Recommendations


Prioritize Being A Board Member And Student Leader

Being a Board member of the SFSS representing over 26,000 undergraduate students is a serious position and should not be taken lightly. My recommendations for incoming board members, is to really prioritize your role as a board member and student leader as much as you can, which means limiting taking up additional responsibility outside of the SFSS. The nature of this job requires addressing pressing issues that arise from time to time such as the [violent arrest](#) of Black SFU alumnus on December 11th, or the Pass/Credit/No Credit grading [scheme](#), or the common room [eviction](#) of the Environment student unions . It is especially important when it comes to issues that affect marginalized students that need the immediate attention and support from the SFSS.

Relationship Building with Students and Other Organizations

Taking the time to meet and talk with students is also an important part of being a student leader. Mobilizing your local union members to attend meetings, updating and consulting with them, and strategizing together around issues will ensure more successful advocacy and actions when there is wider support from your union members. It also helps to engage students that are otherwise disengaged or uninformed with what's happening in your department, faculty or the wider SFU community.

Building relationships and cross solidarity with other organizations such as the Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG), SFU350, EMBARK, Teaching Support Staff Union (TSSU), Faculty Association, and Graduate Student Society (GSS) are vital to building a larger movement on campus that will benefit your union members and everyone involved.



Issues such as tuition increases, exploitation of labour of student workers and faculty members, oppression of BIPOC folks are all part of a larger systemic issue of the white supremacist and colonial system, education funding cuts from the government and public education institutions running businesses. These issues need to be addressed on a systemic level and requires solidarity and different organizations and communities supporting each other.

Useful guide on how to organize as a student union: [Fundamentals of Students' Unionism](#) by Zachary E Crispin

Final Thoughts

As my term ends, it's hard to believe all that our team managed to accomplish in an unusual and difficult time of a global pandemic and truly amazing to be under the leadership of the very first Black hijabi woman President, Osob Mohamed. I and the progressive board members ran for the SFSS because we saw that there needed to be change within the SFSS. The Rotunda community's eviction was what motivated us to run and now at the end of our board term, they have long-term space in the SUB. It is rewarding and fulfilling to know that we're leaving the SFSS in a better place than when we came in. I want to acknowledge and give credit to the previous progressive board caucus, Giovanni HoSang, Shina Kaur, Osob Mohamed, Fiona Li for their foundational work in changing the SFSS. I also want to acknowledge the labour of Black students from SOCA for their resilience because their resistance was a necessity for their survival and existence on campus, and I hope future SFSS Board members will learn from the mistake and harm caused by past board members as there should be no tolerance for anti-Blackness in a student society.

To future board members, I hope our work this year will inspire and motivate you to continue on the work of building student power. Keep in mind of the impact your decision making power will have on especially marginalized communities and BIPOC folks at SFU. Do not shy away from taking bold and progressive stances if it means standing up for their wellbeing and safety, and amplifying their voices. Continue to push for a tuition freeze, safety on campus for BIPOC students, and make sure that student voices cannot be ignored.

The best of luck to the future board, and always feel free to reach out to me and other previous board members for advice and guidance. It is a huge responsibility being a student representative and leader, so take the role seriously and remember that you're voted in by students that believe in you to make decisions in the best of interest of students, but especially marginalized students.