Dear Students,

Our executive team is so proud to present the USC’s 2020-2021 Executive Roadmap, an overview of our priorities for this academic year. This document is a reflection of our student body, built upon the conversations that you had with us during office hours, the perspectives that you shared with us throughout consultations, and the critical insights you offered to us through student feedback. As an organization that is built by students and for students, we hope that this roadmap can be as much yours as it is ours.

As we navigate through these unprecedented times, not many things are certain. But one thing is for sure — our team is committed to providing students with services, resources, programming, and advocacy that matter to them. This is not meant to be a consolidated list of everything we hope to accomplish this year, but rather, it is an outline of what we intend to spend our time, energy, and resources on. This document provides the Western community — our Council, our Board, our constituents — with the opportunity to hold us accountable for achieving our goals and forwarding the mission of the USC, to enhance the educational experience and quality of life for all undergraduates at Western.

Our team is incredibly excited for the opportunity to lead this organization through what will be an undoubtedly challenging, but equally rewarding year. We cannot wait to start innovating, developing and mobilizing — alongside our fellow students, we know that we truly have the power to change the world.

Sincerely,
Your 2020-2021 USC Executive Team

Matt Reesor, President
Victoria Barroso, VP University Affairs
Mackenzy Metcalfe, VP External Affairs
Hannah Tobias-Murray, VP Student Support and Programming
Marc St-Pierre, VP Governance and Finance
Camellia Wong, VP Communications and Public Affairs
Ensuring Equitable Access to Transportation

Public transit is an essential part of student life — it provides students with the mobility that they need to learn, rest, and work in the London community. This year, we are dedicated to advocating for increased service on essential student routes, including the 6, 106, 2, 102, 27, and 34. Additionally, we will work toward increasing the diversity of the Mustang Express service to provide students with free access to rides downtown, to campus, and to the grocery store. Investments in public transit will enable Western students to meaningfully participate in the London community and engage with their local neighbourhoods for years to come.

Expanding On-Campus Food Options

Our campus community is incredibly diverse and we are committed to ensuring that all students have equitable access to food options on campus. This year, we will advocate to our university administrators to expand eateries and menus across campus to accommodate students who may have religious or dietary restrictions — and raise the importance of affordable food options in buildings across campus. Additionally, we will actively work to increase students’ knowledge of existing halal, kosher, vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free options to ensure all students can access a variety of food options.

Creating a More Sustainable Campus

We believe that students have the power to change the world and it starts right here, with our organizations and institutions. This year, we will take a multi-faceted approach to creating a more sustainable, eco-conscious campus. We are committed to providing our students with resources to fuel their sustainable projects and increase awareness around greener food options on campus. Additionally, we will work to reduce waste on our campus and in the London community by advocating for paper towel-only garbage bins, community green bins, and a mug-share project. Long term, we hope to set the USC and the university up for a sustainable future by writing and implementing an organization-wide sustainability policy and lobbying the university to include innovative sustainable practices in their upcoming strategic plan.


**Improving Student Life**

*Enhancing Your Student Experience*

We know that student life is about more than what you learn inside of the classroom — it is the inclusive programs and initiatives that immerse students in campus life. That is why we are committed to improving Orientation Week, expanding USC Peer Programs’ events, and increasing the diversity of our event offerings. Further, we are committed to advocating for the creation of safe spaces, including gender-neutral bathrooms and women’s only sections at the recreation centre, to ensure that all students feel safe and welcome in our community. It is essential that our work is informed by student voices, so whether it is the development of our strategic plan, our advocacy on the university’s strategic plan, or our lobbying efforts to various levels of government, we will continually field students’ feedback and uplift their voices.

*Bettering Campus Life*

The USC’s mission is to enhance the educational experience and quality of life for all students at Western and this year, we are excited to do just that. To us, campus life represents all the additional aspects of the Western community that make your day just a little bit better. Whether it is implementing an external battery rental service so you don’t have to look for that elusive plug or creating new spaces on campus for you to unwind, we are committed to leaving this campus better than we found it.
Increasing Student Engagement

Our Clubs System
The USC’s over two hundred clubs are a staple for student engagement and this year, we are committed to enhancing the experience of both club executives and general members. We are focussed on bolstering the online presence of the clubs system, increasing engagement with our affiliate clubs, and furthering cross-collaboration between club members. As the USC clubs system continues to grow, our full-time staff and student leaders will be ready to help develop event proposals, answer questions, and support students’ goals.

Reimagining USC Programming
USC programming will undoubtedly look different this year, but we maintain a commitment to fostering a campus community and connecting students with like-minded peers. In light of COVID-19, we will develop creative solutions to long-standing Western traditions, such as Rick’s on Wednesdays, while ideating new and exciting opportunities for programming. We know that many of our students may not frequent the University Community Centre — home to the USC and its services — especially given the changes that have come along with COVID-19. That is why we are providing access to USC programs and services, including our financial literacy sessions, peer programs events, and our income tax clinic in a variety of different locations and mediums, ensuring that all students can access our events and services.

Bolstering Our Promotions
As an organization that is built for students and by students, it is important that our constituents are aware of who we are and what we do. We are committed to bolstering our relevancy, digitally and physically, which can be measured through metrics including social media growth, engagement in our programming and initiatives, and annual voting patterns. Through initiatives such as engaging open office hours, guerilla marketing campaigns, a revamp of our digital presence and visual brand identity, the implementation of a USC ambassador program, and increased external communications of the multifaceted nature of our organization, we hope that our promotions will be increasingly engaging to our student body.
Increasing Student Engagement

Engaging with External Partners
Our relationships with external partners enable us to share students’ voices and accomplish our goals. This year, we will actively collaborate with our partners at Western Student Senators and Western Athletics to bolster academic policy efforts and sport-based programming. Additionally, we will increase our outreach to various cohorts of student leaders on campus, including our clubs, sports teams, and Greek community to ensure we are engaging with all of our students. The USC will also continue close partnerships with external advocacy organizations, such as the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) and the Undergraduates of Canadian Research Intensive Universities (UCRU) to raise students’ concerns to various levels of government. With the creation of the VP External Affairs position, we are committed to making these organizations stronger and more resilient through reviews of organizational bylaws and policies, participation in collective advocacy processes, and information sharing with student unions across the country.

Creating a More Inclusive Elections Process
As an organization that is built for students and by students, USC elections are an important time for the Western student body to express their priorities and concerns. This year, we aim to make our elections more accessible to Western, King’s, Brescia and Huron students through informative training sessions, diverse programming, and a robust get-out-the-vote campaign. Specifically, we aim to uplift the voices of marginalized and underrepresented students to ensure that our student leaders are reflective of our diverse student body.

Improving Our Internal Operations
The USC’s internal operations are equally as important as our external ones. This year, we hope to expand internal programs, such as the USC Recognition and Rewards Program, to recognize students for their incredible achievements. Additionally, we will continue to work toward financial transparency and actively engage with USC councillors to ensure that the concerns of all our constituents are adequately addressed. Further, our team is committed to providing student leaders with development opportunities. We will work to expand the USC Foundation with the goal of maintaining meaningful relationships with our alumni and providing greater services to our students.
Bolstering Student Support

**Tackling Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

The USC is committed to providing education, programming and advocacy dedicated to addressing sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) on our campus and in our community. As an organization heavily involved in the consultation, revision and publication of Western's new sexual violence policy, it is part of our mission to ensure students are aware of available resources and procedures in place to support them. We will continue to collect feedback on this new process and work with the university to make amendments moving forward. That being said, we also recognize the work that still needs to be done to address rape culture and facilitate conversations around consent. In order to foster change, we need to start internally; we will launch a more robust training for USC staff who serve alcohol to combat sexual and gender-based violence in our community.

**Equity and Inclusion**

As the representatives of Western's diverse undergraduate population, we strive to embed a lens of equity and inclusion into everything we do. The USC is committed to creating an inclusive campus environment for students of all cultures, religions, gender and sexual identities, and abilities through the implementation of programs, such as campus-wide access to menstrual products, prayer spaces, accessibility audits, and more. This year, the USC is proud to be working alongside the Special Advisors to President Alan Shepard on Anti-Racism to develop a robust strategy and concrete actions to address racism on our campus and in our community. We also will look internally at our own practices and operations to ensure that we are modelling this value at our core. We have begun by addressing discrimination in our Orientation Program and will continue examining our policies to find additional ways to improve.
Bolstering Student Support

Support Resources

It is important that all students feel safe and supported on our campus. As a representative of students at both Western and the affiliates, it is imperative that we work toward collaborative communication with all students. Specifically, we aim to increase awareness of the shared access of student support resources with King’s, Huron, and Brescia. Additionally, we hope to increase campus-wide awareness of the student programs run by the USC, including our Peer Support network, the Peer Programs, and the grants program. Through increased promotions of these initiatives, we hope to provide students with the support and resources they need to maintain physical and mental wellness, feel empowered to kickstart initiatives on campus, and accomplish their goals.

Peer Support Model

We know that university is a transformative time for many students and our approach to support must be multifaceted and intersectional. With the acquisition of new space, the USC will create a physical space for students to access the Peer Support Network, including: (a) the Peer Support Centre; (b) Food Support Services; (c) Health Promotions; (d) USC Accessibility; (e) Allyship Network; (f) Ethnocultural Support Services; (g) Gender Equality Network; (h) Indigenous Relations; (i) International Student Support; (j) PrideWestern. Through the creation of the Peer Support Model, we hope to create a safe space for communities across campus and provide a more holistic support system for Western students.
Bolstering Student Support

Wellness

One of the USC’s top priorities is the health and wellbeing of our students. Particularly in the age of COVID-19, we know that students may face challenges to accessing holistic wellness support. We are committed to providing students with an online platform that consolidates resources, provides diverse counselling options, and prioritizes a student-centric approach to wellness. Additionally, we understand that students may experience crises that require immediate support; we will continue to work alongside our partners at Student Health Services to improve on-campus resources and crisis counselling options. Aside from this, there is still work to be done. We will bring together student-led mental health advocacy groups to facilitate discussion and solicit feedback on ways the USC can best support students and ensure their success throughout the year.

Residence Staff

Residence staff are an integral part of our first year students’ support system. Since 2018, USC Council has acknowledged the need to support residence staff in their calls for improvements to health & safety, compensation structures and workplace culture. We will actively engage with residence staff to gain their insights on the meaningful changes that need to be made at Western to address their concerns.
Investing in Student Development

**Student Development**

The USC is committed to empowering and encouraging young leaders to grow. This year, we are excited to carry out our flagship development programs, including Women in House, Local Advocacy Week, and the Executive Shadowing Program, while developing new ones. Though these programs may look a little different this year, we remain eager to provide our student leaders, including our USC Coordinators, Associates and Interns, Councillors, Orientation Leaders, and club members with the opportunity to learn new skills, gain hands-on work experience, explore their passions, and accomplish their goals.

Amplifying Student Advocacy

**Academics**

It is the educational opportunities and academic experiences that unite us as Western students. With the creation of the VP University Affairs role, our capacity to liaise with administrators has increased, allowing us to place academic advocacy at the forefront of our priorities. From improving systems such as academic counselling or policies such as self-reported absences, we are committed to ensuring that your educational experiences are of the highest quality. Beyond academic standards, the USC aims to explore the use of open educational resources, experiential learning and innovative tools and technologies to enhance your ability to learn. In this unpredictable year, we are working hard to develop opportunities for students to actively provide feedback on their experiences and are committed to sharing these insights with the university to address the shared challenges that come with the shift to online learning.
Amplifying Student Advocacy

Experiential Learning
Experiential learning is an integral aspect of university coursework, providing students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful work experience through practicums, coops, and work-integrated learning. As the workforce of tomorrow, students should have the opportunity to participate in programs that allow them to apply the knowledge they learned in the classroom to practical, hands-on settings. This year, the USC will actively advocate for increased work-study, work-integrated learning, and community-engaged learning opportunities to forward students’ development.

Community Relations
The City of London has an immense impact on students’ educational experiences — from housing to community safety to transit, our team is committed to engaging with our community partners to amplify students’ concerns. This year, the USC will advocate for increased lighting and sidewalk clearing, clearer off-campus housing rights, and more. In addition, our External Affairs portfolio will engage with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance to author a paper regarding transit, housing and community development. Through this policy paper, the USC will help inform best practices for community safety on university campuses across the province for years to come.

Affordability
We know that affordability is top of mind for our students, which makes it a top priority for the USC. On the university level, the USC is committed to advocating for the removal of tuition late fees, increased bursaries and scholarships, and expanded work-integrated learning programs. Externally, we are calling on governments to convert students’ loans to grants, mitigate interest on student loans, and increase funding for OSAP. With these supports, we hope to continue working to make post-secondary education more accessible for everyone. Additionally, the USC recognizes that international students face unique challenges as they head to Canada for their studies. This year, the USC will produce a tuition policy paper to address these issues through research-informed solutions.