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Vote on March 15th



The Communications Strategy

TeamUSC

Principle:

TeamUSC has made great progress this year. We need to continue to strengthen our promotions team's presence on campus by focusing on the results beyond Orientation Week. Next year, Team USC's year-long commitment will be crucial to its success. That being said, the team's role in introducing incoming students to the USC while welcoming them to our campus will not be forgotten. TeamUSC's focus on experiential marketing, social media campaigns and face-to-face promotions gives Western students the opportunity to participate in our programming and connect with the USC's brand and broader mission. An organized and prepared TeamUSC will ensure that their promotions budget is being used effectively.

Proposal:

Next year, TeamUSC will strive to be the most visible orientation team on campus. As a former member of the team, I will be prepared to execute logistical planning and delegate responsibilities appropriately. The knowledge I have acquired and the relationships I have built will put me in a position to help the team succeed and reach new levels of legitimacy. I will meet with the entire team on a monthly basis, provide communications training, and ensure that the members of TeamUSC are able to make contributions across the Communications Portfolio. I will give them the creative freedom to manage their own affairs while ensuring that they are focused on year-long results. We will be all over campus working closely with student governments, orientation teams, and residences to connect with students on the ground. TeamUSC won't be hard to find.

Big Purple Couch

Principle:

Big Purple Couch (BPC) provides students with volunteer opportunities and infotainment-based programming. BPC needs to do a better job of sharing information and providing our elected councillors with opportunities to connect with their constituents through coverage. There are several mediums that provide students with entertainment. On the other hand, there are very few outlets that students can utilize to receive information about the USC. This absence of information was evidenced by the rebellious creation of Fuss on the Buss. The purpose of this medium was to identify a need for coverage that was not being addressed. BPC is perfectly capable meeting this student need while providing entertaining content. BPC can be about more than just interviewing potential USC presidents, and next year's USC will demonstrate that reality. Rather than continuing to create and build new mediums in the hope that they will resolve our communications issues, we should work to help BPC reach its potential.

Proposal:

I will work to ensure that BPC is doing all it can to share information with students and provide our elected councillors with coverage. This will contribute to our goals of being an effective advocacy organization that enables students to connect with their representatives and share their concerns. I will work with BPC to implement an institutionalized, structured volunteer management and training program as we strive to reach a level of legitimacy similar to that of The Gazette and CHRW. Policy implementation and a strategic review of the medium will help facilitate this transition. More specifically, we can make BPC more effective by sponsoring episodes with USC initiatives, changing the season format to emphasize themes of coverage, ensuring that BPC has made the necessary capital purchases etc. I will appreciate that BPC reporters deserve the freedom to run their own programming while providing institutional support and focusing on the medium's long-term success.

Radio Western:**Principle:**

During the 2012-2013 academic year, CHRW created a survey for Western students. The results indicate that students don't know about our campus radio station. However, they also indicate that students would demonstrate interest if they knew it existed. 78% (5,100) of the 6,800 respondents have either never or rarely listen to CHRW. It's great that CHRW is our cure for corporate radio, but we need to ensure that their audience expands beyond students who appreciate an alternative to mainstream content. Students deserve to receive value for their \$14 student fee. It is possible for us to emphasize the importance of providing broadcasting experience while also acknowledging our responsibility to produce value for the entire student body. CHRW has committed to creating and delivering programming to Western students by the most appropriate and efficient means and technologies possible.

Proposal:

As the Chair of CHRW's Board, I will push for a visual identity change on behalf of students. According to the survey, 77% (5,235) of respondents favor a name change to Radio Western. While CHRW is already called Radio Western, reconsidering the medium's visual identity will improve its visibility on campus. This will be a major project that will require a great deal of input. In addition to this, I will work to give our elected representatives more opportunities to share information with their constituents through Radio Western. If elected, I will commit to making Radio Western identifiable on campus, promotionally viable, campus-focused, and increasingly relevant to Western students.

The Gazette**Principle:**

The Gazette is a training ground for emerging journalists and editors that simulates the pressures of a real news room. The newspaper also serves as the student government's watchdog on behalf of students. It is important for the relationship between the USC and The Gazette to be as open and transparent as possible. The Gazette needs to be treated as an equal strategic partner, not an operation. The USC handles the administration of student fees and the relationship is principally

financial. However, there are broad editorial and legal connections as well. Unlike many other business operations, in this case the owners are not the masters. The masters of the paper are the students of Western who pay for the paper and deserve to be informed. The USC must work with The Gazette to ensure that the publication is meeting student expectations, as outlined in their Strategic Review.

Proposal:

I will work to ensure that both parties are open to collaboration and constructive criticism. In terms of content, I will emphasize high quality reporting, campus focused news, and accessible information sources on campus. Several proposed improvements have been identified through The Gazette's Strategic Review. Specifically, the newspaper requires additional management support, a strategic plan based on the review, and changes to their governance structure. In terms of finances, The Gazette is highly dependent on the student fees, which account for nearly 75% of revenue. Therefore, The Gazette must identify alternative advertising revenue streams. The USC can play a role in facilitating these changes by developing an open working relationship that will result in collaboration and positive change. I can and will support The Gazette in any way that I can without making the relationship unnecessarily political. My strong knowledge and understanding of The Gazette's policies will enable me to hold them to a standard.

Publications Support

Principle:

Supporting a diverse campus media environment is crucial to facilitating critical discussions on campus and preventing a monopoly of one type of opinion to shape the perspective of Western students. The USC needs to do a better job of giving constituency councils the means to build up their own publications, should they choose to do so. As this happens, it will become easier for councils to share faculty specific news and The Gazette will be able selectively prioritize major stories from across campus. Students will benefit by receiving pertinent community news, gaining valuable experience through the creation of volunteering opportunities, and sharing their opinions. This support can come in the form of financial planning, distribution strategies, design expertise and policy implementation. Without this support, maintaining a strong publication can be incredibly difficult for student volunteers who haven't been trained.

Proposal:

If elected, I will work with the Publications Coordinator to support constituency councils in a way that will give them the opportunity to improve their publications. My experience working with The Grapevine at Huron has given me a clear understanding of the obstacles that these publications face. In some cases, they are not legitimate enough to monitor their student governments. For example, The Grapevine essentially operates through the HUCSC's Communications Portfolio. Having no formal training or administrative support, and having to learn on the fly, can lead to inefficient management. If the USC is going to extend coverage opportunities to members of the student media, we should ensure that they are equipped to handle that coverage.

Constituency Councils

Principle:

Constituency Councils have access to USC resources. However, they are not necessarily aware of the available opportunities or equipped to take advantage of them. These Councils serve as a first point of student government contact for many Western students. That is why the USC needs to do a better job of supporting them. Part of the reason why USC initiatives fail is because we expect these Councils to spread our message without providing the necessary support. If they have trouble spreading their own message, why would they be inclined to prioritize USC messaging? Helping to build these bodies will enable our elected representatives to serve the students they know best by connecting with them at a grass-roots level.

Proposal:

I understand the challenges facing these Councils. I also recognize that candidates promise to support faculty councils every single year. I pledge to give a presentation about the USC to each of these Councils during one of their meetings. I am hoping that my fellow executives will join me in this initiative by giving a few presentations of their own. Informing our associate student governments in this way will give them the means to tell the USC how to support them. Specifically, the sharing of best practices amongst organizations will go a long way in shaping the principles that we adhere to as a collective network of student governments at Western.

The League of Communications

Principle:

The Vice-President Communications from each Constituency Council can benefit from USC support. In many ways, they have the power to do great things for their Councils. However, they are easily bogged down by work as they are responsible for managing an organization, where they may have limited administrative support and access to expertise, all while being students. The USC Vice-President Communications can provide this support and expertise by uniting their counterparts and sharing best practices. Constituency Councils benefit because their Vice-President Communications is able to utilize the USC for support, learn from their counterparts across campus, and use the broad media landscape to promote their initiatives and raise awareness. The USC benefits by creating a promotional network and empowering these executives to serve their constituents through collaboration.

Proposal:

The VP Communications Roundtable has been around for a few years now and has generally been ineffective. Next year's League of Communications will be a useful body. We'll be like a superhero group of expert communicators at Western. I will meet with my counterparts monthly, provide them with executive training, and send them pertinent information and press releases for them to share with their constituents. Outside of meetings, I will do whatever I can to provide one-on-one support. My experience as a former Vice-President Communications has given me insight into the challenges facing these executives across campus, and I am committed to putting these individuals in a position to succeed during their terms. Overall, these roundtables, if used correctly, are a great way for executives to work collectively.

Communications Portfolio

Principle:

The Vice-President Communications is responsible for developing a broad, strategic communications strategy that enables the Communications Portfolio to work effectively each and every day. Commissioners need the freedom to manage their complex schedules without being micromanaged while ensuring that they regularly provide progress updates. The USC's Commissioners are experts in their field, while the Vice-President is responsible for keeping the big picture in mind and ensuring the overall success of the portfolio. There are several ways for the USC to expand and define the roles of Commissioners to achieve desirable results.

Proposal:

I will meet with the members of the Communications Portfolio on a monthly basis and create a plan of action with each member of my team as soon as they are hired. My leadership style and vision for the organization will enable me to bring value to the portfolio. I will continue the process of making sure that these roles are properly defined. I will also ensure that our elected councillors are acquainted with each member of my team. Finally, I will look into the possibility of reconfiguring the portfolio by expanding the roles of a Marketing and Advertising Commissioner, a Public Affairs Coordinator, and an Associate Vice-President Communications who will oversee the portfolio and streamline communications.

SOC Standing Committee

Principle:

The Student Outreach and Communications Standing Committee (SOC) provides Western's elected representatives with the opportunity to bring the ideas and concerns of their constituents directly to the USC as they strive to improve our communications strategy. In general, Standing Committees allow our representatives to tackle specific issues related to their area of expertise and work in small groups to implement policy. These Standing Committees can benefit from the expertise and support of the individuals that work for the USC on a day-to-day basis. It is difficult for these councillors to create policies without a clear understanding of what the organization needs.

Proposal:

I will work closely with SOC to help them identify and fill policy gaps. They will be encouraged to operate as a promotional network that can share information with constituents that the administrative branch of the USC can't always connect with. I will ensure that the new chair is adequately equipped to educate and engage the members of their committee and facilitate discussion. I will also provide communications training and a tour that includes a visit to each of our major campus media outlets for the entire committee. As this year's chair, I had the opportunity to learn about the communications issues that the organization faces. We made changes to a variety of policies and are still looking into redefining our mandate. If elected, I will attend every meeting and respect SOC's mandate to hold me accountable while also ensuring that they have the means to bring policy to Council.

Councillor Training

Principle:

The leaders of the USC are responsible for ensuring that our elected councillors are adequately trained and prepared to be visible representatives. We need to recognize that professional development is one of the USC's strengths. Providing professional development opportunities while developing consistent internal training frameworks will equip councillors with the skills and knowledge that will help them succeed during their terms and prepare them to take on future roles, should they choose to do so. This will give our councillors the means to support their students, legitimize our organization in a way that mitigates the challenges associated with a short institutional memory, make Council opportunities more desirable, and foster a competitive elections environment that is appealing to students. We can't keep encouraging our councillors to contribute to our public relations initiatives without properly training them.

Proposal:

I am committed to providing communications training for councillors and supporting our overall training initiatives by working closely with USC Governance. There are several simple steps that we can take to provide better councillor training. The USC's Councillor Manual will be updated and used as an informational tool. Training can also come in the form of communications guidelines. Through community building initiatives, such as the summer meeting, councillors will be encouraged to engage with individuals in similar roles across Western and share best practices. This will give our councillors a better understanding of their roles and the intricacies of our organization as we strive to develop a powerful professional network of student leaders. Finally, I'm down to look into getting some Council merchandise! During my time on the USC we've received mugs, stress balls and t-shirts!

Commercialization on Campus

Principle:

The USC must understand the necessary distinction between not compromising our values as a student government and taking advantage of the opportunities provided by corporations. On the one hand, we must ensure that the level of commercialization is within the expectations of students. The influence of advertising is a major concern for many that needs to be addressed. This is especially true in an educational atmosphere, where students come to learn about themselves and the world around them without being fettered by corporate influences. On the other hand, the USC must also be able to understand the financial implications of commercial activity while being cognisant of the products, services and opportunities that corporations can provide. We must ensure that corporations aren't restricting our ability to support students or unnecessarily profiting off our space.

Proposal:

I will work with SOC to implement a Commercial Vendors Policy and Procedure that will demonstrate our values, outline a selection process for vendors, and determine which spaces are viable for commercial activity. It is important to recognize that students have pre-paid for an open, unobstructed UCC. If we are going to sell this space to external marketers, we must ensure

that students have access to what they have paid for while still allowing them to benefit from commercial activity. This will ensure that we are maximizing our earnings without compromising our values as an institution. This will be a difficult process because the negotiations can be complex and our preferences related to commercial activity are not uniform. To successfully implement this policy, we will work closely with the University and as a Council to determine how commercial activity is likely to impact our constituents and our budget.

Online Presence

Principle:

Having a strong online presence will allow students to participate and contribute from where they live and work. Our elected representatives need an online platform that will give students a chance to see their faces and become familiar with who they are. Personal relationships are more important than we often acknowledge, and having visible representatives will give students a reason to check out our website. Internally, councillors need to be in-tune with our online content. In the short-run, we must leverage our social media metrics to identify trends and improvements without renouncing other forms of communication. We must also ensure that technical mishaps, such as the elections error three-peat, are remedied. This issue hinders the democratic process and discourages students from voting. In the long-run, we need to ensure that our Council has a searchable online history and an identifiable record-keeping process.

Proposal:

If elected, I will ensure that the information on our website is accurate, accessible and recordable. There are several ways to do this. For example, instead of printing so many USC Ultimate Guides, we could easily make them available online. We've changed the design several times, but we've failed to address the issue of updating the actual content and ensuring that the information is organized in a manner that is accessible to students. I will also work with our operations to ensure that they can achieve their desired online presence. Another online initiative that I would like to look into is the development of our USC alumni network. Connecting with them through LinkedIn and other social media networks would be a great way to collaborate and bring value to future councils. Finally, I will diligently continue our quest to ensure that the elections are error-free and clean-up/eliminate all irrelevant social media (@FinancialLiteracyDay2013).

Promotional Excellence

Principle:

We need to do more than just raise awareness of our programming. We need to give students a reason to participate and ensure that we are utilizing the necessary promotional avenues. For example, there is a lot of potential for creative promotions through Western Film, Creative Services, and The Gazette Marketing Department. We should never assume that students will be inclined to participate in our programming just because we are. Our promotions must be organized and planned well in advance to ensure their success. We can't bombard students with content. For example, we don't need a different brand for every individual event during an awareness week. That being said, we can't be afraid to share our message. We also need to ensure that the

promotional load is lightened by ensuring that USC outlets are in a position to successfully promote their own events.

Proposal:

I will work with Council to maximize our potential as an influential promotional network. Our elected representatives have a considerable campus presence. Therefore, we must ensure that they are in tune with, and able to regularly share, our promotional content. I will continue the USC's relationship with the Western Photography Club and ensure that our photos are promptly uploaded to our website, make the Mustang Monthly more visually appealing, and determine where we need to make capital purchases to compliment our promotional activities. While maximizing the Western media landscape, I will also continue to develop our relationships with external media outlets such as Fanshawe's student-run radio (XMX), the London Free Press, Metro etc. This will expand our reach and encourage students to participate in our programming.

Advertising Standards

Principle:

The Advertising Oversight Committee (AOC) is designed to mitigate any advertisements that may damage the USC's brand. The AOC may review advertisements from ratified clubs, companies seeking to buy banner space in The Wave, advertising space in The Gazette etc. The policy surrounding this committee is extremely vague and decision-making is primarily based on personal judgement. This makes the decision-making process volatile. This inconsistency inherently hinders business units such as The Gazette who supplement their student fee funding with ad sales. While it is important for us to appreciate the human element of decision-making, we must compliment the current process with appropriate advertising standards. The 2012-2013 Vice-President Communications Final Report recommends that we adopt the standards put forth by the Advertising Standards Council of Canada. This will allow for consistency in terms of the types of advertisements that we authorize and forbid.

Proposal:

I will work closely with SOC to identify and implement the appropriate standards. SOC refrained from looking into the policies pertaining to the AOC this year because we saw the potential for a policy overhaul. Once we formalize these standards, it will be easier for the USC to create a more comprehensive long-term marketing plan. In the meantime, I will work responsibly in the current structure, and appreciate the importance placed on maintaining the USC's brand image when making decisions pertaining to advertisement approval. Revising any brand tool kits, advertising submission protocols, and promotional packages that we may have will also go a long way in allowing us to operate more effectively.

Versatile Executive

Principle:

A strong executive is someone who is able to execute their responsibilities while going above and beyond their mandate. There is a lot of information that cannot be shared in a platform. We will accomplish things that we never expected and face challenges that we can't prepare for.

There are several avenues of success that exist through cross-collaboration if we are willing to move beyond our specific roles for the greater good. Those who can execute their duties in a short time frame while empowering others to do the same will put the USC in a position to succeed.

Proposal:

I will bring value to the USC through my expertise, my ability to execute in a short time frame, and my passion for empowering the members of Council. I want to develop strong relationships with the new executive and work closely with them to ensure the successful functioning of our student government. Communications impacts each and every portfolio. The Internal Portfolio will require promotional support for awareness weeks. Governance will orchestrate a successful elections period with our help. The Student Events Portfolio will use campus media to advertise diverse aspects of our programming. The External Portfolio will need to ensure that they are sharing student feedback with the government. The Finance Portfolio must work to make students aware of how their money is being spent. Finally, the President will require support as the chief spokesperson for the organization. A strong communications strategy can bring it all together and prepare the USC to exceed expectations and ensure long-term success.