



## REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**MEETING DATE: January 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**

Item:	President's Report on Executive Composition
Presenters:	Matthew Helfand, President & CEO
Purpose of Report:	For Information
Item #:	7c) i

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### **Recommendation:**

That the Board of Directors receive this report for information.

### **Background:**

One of the most significant human resource investments made by the Board is in the USC Executive. I believe it is imperative to ensure that the workload of the USC Executive is scrutinized and rebalanced, so as to ensure appropriate investment, accountability to students, and to ensure that the learning outcomes of the executive roles remain relevant. There are several changes that are occurring on the Executive side of the corporation that merit a substantial review of the USC Executive composition.

### **Slate Review**

In 2012, a significant change was made to the way in which the executive group was elected. While council is mandated to conduct a review as to the effectiveness of this change, there are a few notes that I think are particularly relevant to the board. In the first year after adoption, only three slates ran for executive positions. The following year only two slates. Two years following, it again appears that only two slates will be running. I believe that non-competitive elections pose a potential threat to the organization, as a diversity of ideas and the accessibility of these positions to students are important elements in ensuring a close connection to our constituents. I believe that while this still falls within the realm of council, the board should closely monitor this situation and be prepared to provide recommendations on the importance of competitive elections on the long-term viability of the organization.

### **Peer Support Center Evolutions**

A very significant change has been made to the way the USC interacts with the peer support center. Following a space reallocation in Dec 2014, the Peer Support Center has adopted a new location and has

received funding from an external donor to help kick-start a new training and program module. Our present belief is that this donor might be willing to fund the program indefinitely, provided that it is successful. Most importantly, efforts have been made in collaboration with Western to establish a new governance framework for Peer Support. Provided that we are able to establish a joint governance structure and long-term funding, the role that the VP internal will play in the PSC will be drastically reduced. I recommend that this board closely monitor the progression of this project, as there may be a contractual relationship that develops. For the purposes of this resource report, however, I suggest that the board closely monitor how this will affect the workload of the VP Internal.

### **External Board Implementation**

I believe that the implementation of an external board has a significant impact on the VP Finance, and VP Communications.

Regarding the former, this position now has two very distinct roles that it must play. Not only as a member of the PVP team as VP Finance, but also as secretary-treasurer of the board. An effective ST requires a unique skillset, and future recruitment for this position must take that fact into consideration. While I am not recommending any significant changes at this time, I believe that it ought to be made a matter of record that the role of ST will, from my perspective, take up a significant amount of this Vice President's time. This should be monitored closely by the Board of Directors.

Regarding the latter position, the role of the VP Communications stands out among the PVP as being primarily reactive to the programming needs of the rest of the USC Executive. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the elevation of the role from a hired position to a full VP elected by council occurred as a result of 'awkward' power dynamics between this individual role and the rest of the executive, which also served as the board. This consideration is no longer relevant given a fully external board

### **Development of Promotional Capacity**

An important investment has been made this year pertaining to the promotional capacity of the USC. Additional staff resources will be allocated to establish a promotional department that will act as a support function across all USC operations and activities. Previously, the VP communication has been tasked with this role. With a new promotional department, the VP communication will no longer be directly tasked with promotion, but will have new resources at their disposal. However, much like the VP Events has the production departments as a resource but not a direct report, the VP communication will not directly manage the promotional department. This will have a direct impact on the workload of this VP. I recommend that the Board closely monitor the work within this portfolio.

### **Potential to leave the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations**

As of this date, the USC Executive will be recommending to Council that the organization leave CASA, for reasons discussed in other reports. This change will have an effect on the workload of the VP External. The Board should carefully consider the role of external advocacy and how it relates to the mission statement of our organization. More specifically, this board should consider how leaving this

organization will impact the workload of the VP External and what this position should look like in the long run.

**Summary:**

This report does not provide any direct recommendations regarding future workloads and structures, but has two purposes. The first is to highlight some changes on the PVP side of the organization that I believe merit a careful consideration as to how they might affect the workload of the PVP group. Second, it is imperative that the Board carefully monitor these changes over time and conduct or contract a full and thorough audit of the work that exists at the PVP level with the goal of rendering a recommendation regarding the composition and job descriptions of the USC Executive.

**Sign-Offs:**

President & CEO	Matthew Helfand	
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