



UNIVERSITY STUDENTS'
COUNCIL

June 19, 2015

EXECUTIVE REPORT



our first team picture

PRESIDENT

Maintaining a responsible health and dental plan

This week Sophie attended training sessions in order to fill her role on the Campus Trust Board of Trustees. This trust administers and designates the USC's health and dental plan for students. On the board Sophie acts as the fiduciary – ensuring proper decision making and good governance.

Improved affiliate student access to services

After hearing from several Huron, Brescia and King's students Sophie has identified a need for staff members of the USC to start providing better cross-campus service. This will begin by arranging for Bus Pass distribution stations to be created on each affiliate campus.



Better Homecoming programming

Continuing from earlier this month, Sophie – along with the Homecoming Planning Committee – has successfully secured talent for the event, compiled a sponsorship package for external firms and developed a social media campaign focused to on-campus programming (#HOCOonthehill)

Improved alumni relationships

Sophie produced the first "Report to the Alumni Association" on behalf of the USC – a document detailing what the executive's initiatives and priorities are for the year. This report was submitted with the goal of improving alumni relations for the USC's upcoming 50th anniversary celebration. Sophie also met with David Simmonds, the newly elected Alumni Association President, to promote programs that may require alumni support (such as the Experiential Learning Fund).

OTHER PROGRESS:

- Sophie has been working to develop the Advocacy Group's terms of reference.
- Met with Amit Chakma, President and Vice-Chancellor of Western, to discuss the universities relationship with the USC and the future of experiential learning.
- Reviewing the structure of Propel – the campus business accelerator.



Improved mental health services on campus

Alex, as a member of the Mental Health Working Group, has put forward a number of changes to increase the productivity of the group. This includes adding more perspectives to the table and putting a greater emphasis on student voices. Alex has also been tasking the group to develop more creative approaches to mental health on campus.

Revitalizing the Peer Support Centre

Alex has been working with a research and evaluation specialist from Western to conduct an assessment on the Peer Support Centre. Data will be collected on the spaces' traffic, the most common issues faced and user satisfaction. This intelligence will have a formative effect on the way the USC approaches developing the space. Additionally, Alex has been gathering support documents which, for the first time, will be in languages other than English.

Reimagining Peer Support Network's visual identity

With the promotions department, Alex has created a video spotlighting the variety of services in the Peer Support Network. This video is being played for every incoming student who attends Summer Academic Orientation programming. Similarly, Alex has been collaborating with the USC's Graphic Services to design a consistent aesthetic for all of our peer support-oriented services.



Improved instructor evaluation process

Alex has been meeting with the Student Questionnaires Working Group to devise methods of development for that process. As of now, the Group has put forward eight recommendations for improvement. Though these recommendations must remain confidential for now, significant progress is being made to overhaul the way the university conducts instructor evaluation surveys.

OTHER PROGRESS:

- Alex has been able to successfully receive funding for O-Week support programming, such as the One Love Rally and the late night shuttle service.
- As Food Support Services prepares for another year, Alex and the students who run the service are sorting through our storage inventory and gearing up to replenish.

VP EXTERNAL

Introduce a restorative justice program to London

Lindsee has been assembling a working group for a restorative justice program with members including police, representatives from the provincial court, by-law enforcement officers and city councillors. Lindsee hopes that this group will examine the logistics of what a program like this will look like in London.

More mental health resources off-campus

At the most recent OUSA meeting, Lindsee learned about what other schools are doing to overcome the obstacle of long wait times for students seeking counselling. Some schools are advocating to the city, rather than university administration, to fund such support. As such, Lindsee has begun working with MPP Peggy Sattler to push for a permanent mental health crisis centre in London.



Making buses more accessible to students

Lindsee has been convening with Jon Ford, the Director of Transportation and Planning for the London Transit Commission, to reallocate bus hours so that more buses are on popular student routes. To ensure students are aware of these changes, Lindsee is also working with the LTC to create a communications strategy to inform students of such changes.

OTHER PROGRESS:

- Lindsee is preparing a Project LEARN newsletter to be disseminated to students in order to make them more cognisant of the program and what it entails.
- Developing an action plan for the federal voting campaign during September and October, including a series of meetings with Elections Canada.
- Along with her OUSA peers Lindsee is planning the organization's strategy conference to be held in July.

VP STUDENT EVENTS

More organized campus programming

Taryn attended the Canadian Organization of Campus Activities – or COCA – conference in Alberta. At the conference, Taryn had the opportunity to meet and collaborate with student events portfolio representatives from postsecondary institutions across Canada. The conference also included a series of workshops to prepare students and staff for the demands and challenges of campus programming.

More diverse campus programming

Another opportunity the conference offered was “block booking” – when schools close in geographic location can book the same act or performance and save funds. Not only can this help alleviate pressure on the USC’s budget, but this also means that campus is exposed to acts it may not have otherwise been aware of.



Revamped clubs governance structure

Certain workshops at the conference had an emphasis on the clubs system, so Taryn was able to learn about how other postsecondary schools – both larger and smaller than Western – are addressing their clubs system. Some of these methods will be integrated into the clubs reform Taryn has been facilitating since coming into office.

OTHER PROGRESS:

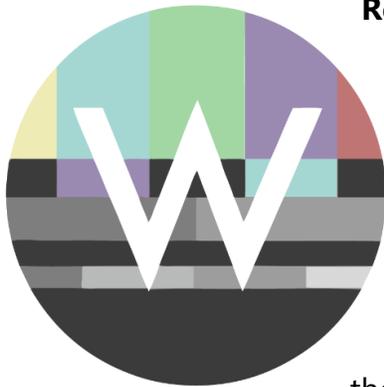
- Met with Grocery Checkout to plan Soph meals during training, as well as discuss the potential for Soph discounts or benefits with healthy food during O-Week.
- Interviewing web-design companies interested in designing a new involvement interface meant to replace Western Link for 2016. Due to the difficulty in navigating Western Link, Taryn is working to find a medium both accessible and appealing to students.



COMMUNICATIONS

Improved event marketing and promotions

With Taryn, Kevin attended the Canadian Organization of Campus Activities (COCA) conference in Alberta. Where Taryn's sessions focused on clubs governance and event planning, Kevin attended the workshops on event marketing and promotion. These included new social media strategies, organizational communication and unconventional marketing – all of which Kevin is preparing to relay to the USC promotions department.



Reorganizing Western TV

The state of Western TV within the USC is currently in flux, so Kevin has been corresponding with the relevant parties to find the most productive and effective structure. To prepare, Kevin has been interviewing members of student-run broadcasting organizations in other Canadian postsecondary schools to learn about what might work. Additionally, Kevin has been communing with the Canadian Student Television Alliance to see what support they have to offer.

USC awareness during Summer Academic Orientation

Kevin has been able to make a number of adjustments to the SAO program to better integrate the USC for incoming students. So far, this includes scheduling Sophie to speak at some of the morning session, screening videos during afternoon receptions and updating USC information in the SAO presentations and tours.

More accurate USC website

Now with access to the USC website, Kevin has been making a series of edits to information and links in an attempt to keep the website up-to-date and straight-forward.

OTHER PROGRESS:

- After other Canadian schools expressed interest in some of the USC's programming at the COCA conference, Kevin has been preparing and disseminating information packages to these schools.
- Kevin continues to write the executive reports given to the senior operations committee – hoping to make them as valuable as possible.



SECRETARY TREASURER

Improving the Board of Directors' performance

Since the Board of Directors had its inaugural year this past school term, Jonathan has been identifying areas of growth. Specifically, Jon has created a "vice-chair" position which will allow for progression within the institution. This new position will not only provide more nuanced opportunities for students to get involved with the board but also afford the Board's chair more support.

Creating a more fluid, comprehensive governance structure

Recognizing how difficult it is for an individual or organization to operate without an understanding of their duties and responsibilities, Jonathan has created a terms of reference document for the Board of Directors.

Updating the organization's external relationship documentation

Currently within By-law 3 the USC's relationship with external partners is focused solely on OUSA and CASA. Now that the USC has left CASA, Jon has worked to update this By-law and make it a policy. The newly written "External Relationships and Strategies Policy" now outlines our relationship with not only OUSA but also the city of London, LTC and Police Commission.

Improved USC elections

Jon has created an "elections survey," a questionnaire being sent out to council members that will solicit feedback on the elections process. This accumulated data will inform the arms-length review on elections being conducted and will provide council with an opportunity to voice their concerns or ideas about the process.



OTHER PROGRESS:

- Jon continues to work on a new policy template – one that will reformat policies and by-laws into documents that are easier to read.
- With *The Gazette's* approved budget increase, Jon has been working with the front office staff to create multi-year projections and provide their operations with a clearer vision.