



EXECUTIVE COMPOSITION REVIEW

PRESENTED BY THE
2015/2016
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS'
COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT

Represent the interests of the University Students' Council and the undergraduate student body of Western University, providing strategic direction for the organization.



ELECTED

VICE-PRESIDENT

Advocate to relevant stakeholders. Oversee the provision of USC advocacy resources to ensure effective lobbying for improving the educational experience and quality of life for undergraduate students.



ELECTED

STUDENT PROGRAMS OFFICER

Coordinate, facilitate and engage students in all services and programming that improves or enhances the undergraduate student experience. Acts as both a resource and strategic leader in the development in these services and programs.



COMMUNITY
HIRING

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Ensure effective management of corporate resources and endeavours, including allocations and strategic planning. Also ensure good governance of through the organization, transparency and consistency of our guiding documents.



HIRING
PANEL

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Facilitate communication and issue management on behalf of the organization and develop communications strategies that further the USC mandate and supports the political priorities of the Executive Body.



HIRING
PANEL

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the past five years, the University Students' Council has seen a number of changes to its composition, its governance and its priorities. Just in these short years the organization's Executives have been removed from the Board of Directors, put together as a slate and assigned Associate Vice-Presidents. With each change, the Executive became a little bit better at fulfilling the mandate of the USC, to improve the educational experience and quality of life for all undergraduate students.

With these proposed changes, we hope to continue that critical spirit and have an Executive council that better reflects what the USC is and what it needs. Entering the review of Executive composition the following principles have been honoured:

1. Identifying and prioritizing core work of the USC by making advocacy and program or service-delivery functions more effective and efficient.
2. Empowering Executives to exercise broad strategic vision over the work they do for the organization.
3. Ensuring that Executive selection is comprised of both of elected representatives and hiring experts so that each member is set up for success in their job.
4. Supporting the leadership of the President to coordinate amongst his or her Executive in a centralized and empowered way.

The greatest strength of the USC is its ability to make decisions that reflect a balance between current student needs and the reality of organizational demands. It is believed that the changes recommended in this report for both the composition and selection of Executive positions will allow the USC's priorities to flourish by centralizing advocacy alongside program and service delivery in positions that can exercise leadership and strategic decision-making better. The following changes will also increase opportunities for student development, allot more resources to good governance and emphasize a need for strategic vision in order for the USC to best serve its students.

Sophie Helpard
President, 2015/16

Lindsee Perkins
Vice-President External, 2015/16

Alex Benac
Vice-President Internal, 2015/16

Taryn Scripnick
Vice-President Student Events, 2015/16

Kevin Hurren
Communications Officer, 2015/16

Jonathan English
Secretary-Treasurer, 2015/16

PRESIDENT

The President's role, as chief advocate and CEO of the organization, remains crucial and therefore largely unchanged. With a more consolidated Executive, the President will be able to better plan and implement his or her priorities – having a team of empowered, skilled workers in their relevant fields. Additionally, the Executive Council Terms of Reference will clarify the Executives roles in relation to each other. After separating from the Board, the Executive lacked a formal avenue to debate issues and decide on potentially controversial projects. Now, the Terms of Reference for the Executive Council dictate the parameters of responsible decision-making.

POSITION TITLE: PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1.00 POSITION OVERVIEW

Represent the interests of the University Students' Council and the undergraduate student body of Western University, providing strategic direction for the organization.

2.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Act as Chairperson of the Executive Council and oversee all Executive resources.
2. Act as the chief advocate and representative for undergraduate student of Western University to all relevant stakeholder. These include, but are not limited to, Western University, the City of London, the provincial and federal governments, USC alumni, community partners and other external groups.
3. Respond to daily issues that affect the student population.
4. Collaborate with the Vice-President on advocacy and relations pertinent to the organizations advocacy goals.
5. Facilitate and oversee priorities that are set out by Executive Officers.
6. Act as the primary spokesperson for the Corporation.
7. Facilitate and coordinate the strategic vision for the Corporation.
8. Provide support and collaborate with all other student groups and constituent councils on campus.
9. Sit as a Voting Director on the USC Board of Directors.
10. Oversee the day-to-day operations of the USC General Manager.

VICE-PRESIDENT

The consolidation of the organization’s advocacy operations into a new portfolio — that of the USC Vice-President — is a deliberate centralization of our advocacy efforts to allow for a more evidenced and researched approach. With interacting with major partners, it is important to keep the organization nimble, lean and able to appropriately respond to new developments. This change will allow us to more effectively advocate on behalf of our constituents and ultimately support our missions.

Previously when the Campus Issues portfolio belonged to the Vice-President Internal, there was a shaky and awkward amalgamation of work that ended up competing for the Vice-President Internal’s time and attention. The demands of service and personnel management, and the concentration of resources in that part of the portfolio, inevitably resulted in a disparity. The day-to-day managerial requirements of the Internal portfolio didn’t allow for the Vice-President Internal to function primarily as a student advocate.

When the Vice-President Internal’s managerial responsibilities are shifted to a portfolio that will concern itself chiefly with service delivery, led by a professional with demonstrable managerial capabilities, what’s left is an opportunity to network, to research, to write and revise policy, and to focus singularly on the complexity of student issues in all their forms. Once divided along geographic lines, the Internal and External portfolios had jurisdiction in distinct spheres – but conversations about campus safety don’t end at the gates, nor do conversations about post-secondary affordability take place at Queen’s Park alone. These issues don’t exist in isolation and neither should the advocacy efforts intended to solve them.

Supporting the Vice-President will come from two key areas. The USC’s Advocacy Services Manager and his team will continue to provide high-level support to the organization’s advocacy machinery. On the student side, an Associate Vice-President will lead a team of two Research and Policy Analysts. These students, paid hourly, can focus on compiling and analyzing data relevant to student concerns and then assist the Vice-President into thoroughly researched advocacy priorities, new policies, and recommendations to our partners. Combined with existing staff infrastructure and new investments in the Advocacy Services Department, the portfolio’s lean structure finds the Vice-President well equipped to focus on leading the organization’s administration, community, and government relations efforts.

POSITION TITLE: VICE-PRESIDENT

1.00 POSITION OVERVIEW

Represent the interests of all undergraduate students at Western University by serving alongside the President as the USC’s chief officer to advocating any relevant stakeholders. Oversee the provision of the USC’s advocacy resources to ensure

effective lobbying for improving the educational experience and quality of life for undergraduate students.

2.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Serve, alongside the President, as the chief advocate of undergraduate students to university administration and external bodies by serving as an ambassador of the USC.
2. Serve on joint committees, including committees, sub-committees and working groups, requiring undergraduate student representation.
3. Sit as a member of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) Steering Committee, attending monthly meetings and writing or advising on policy papers used to advocate to the province.
4. Maintain positive relationships with all relevant stakeholders by liaising frequently with not only university staff and faculty, but also with municipal, provincial and federal bodies that play a role in directing the student experience.
5. Act alongside the President as a project manager of and provide strategic direction to all undergraduate student advocacy initiatives. This includes but is not limited to issues or priorities related to; academic policy; provision of student services; student health, wellbeing and safety; inclusivity, diversity and equity; post-secondary accessibility, affordability, and quality; student behaviour and Western's Code of Conduct.
6. Serve as the President's chief resource and advisor on advocacy initiatives by maintaining a comprehensive understanding of existing policies and student-centric issues.
7. Work with university administration to oversee the responsible stewardship of student and ancillary fees. This includes serving on Western's Student Services Committee alongside the President.
8. Recruit, supervise and direct the portfolio's associate vice-presidents and coordinators.
9. Maintain direct links to the undergraduate student experience by liaising with student leaders, including faculty council members, senators and students-at-large.
10. Respond to inquiries from community members pertaining to USC policy positions, advocacy initiatives and internal services.
11. If wishing to take a leadership role in an external organization the Vice-President is required to request a non-binding majority endorsement of this intention from Council in an in-camera session of Council before running for or accepting the position.

STUDENT PROGRAMS OFFICER

Reviewing the Vice-President Student Events stems from the understanding that campus advocacy and extensive service management should not be housed under the same roof. The focus of Student Events is to deliver a front-end product — be it a club membership, a concert an event, a charity initiative — to students. Similarly, the focus of the Internal portfolio's services was to provide front-end peer-to-peer support. The realignment of work outlined in this composition review allows for the newly-named Student Programs Officer (SPO) to focus on the operational requirements of delivering front-end programs and services to our constituents, allowing the Vice-President to focus explicitly on student advocacy. This portfolio restructuring will consolidate the SPO's key qualifications in a handful of heavily intertwined roles: a senior project manager, executive director of services and a personnel manager. The SPO will oversee four high-level and empowered associates, each with the responsibility to manage key programs of the portfolio on a day-to-day basis. The SPO will provide strategic direction to all programs by establishing goals for programming and service delivery, monitoring metrics to ensure that results are achieved.

Peer Programs

The USC's peer programs build community on campus through the maintenance of peer-to-peer events predicated on shared lived experience. This essential work deserves to continue, but under an Associate Officer, Peer Programs who is responsible for supervising each of the USC's support services by helping the coordinators manage their projects, execute their tasks and set their personal development goals. These coordinators, who have always been responsible for community-specific programming, will now have a natural and intuitive home within a portfolio focused on delivering programming to students.

Orientation Program

While the SPO will continue serving as Co-Chair of the Orientation Planning Committee (OPC) and act as a manager of the Orientation Program, the Associate Officer, Orientation will be the day-to-day supervisory duties. This may include liaising with the Orientation Coordinator and Orientation Staff in the planning of O-Week; attending all working group meetings in the SPO's stead; and assisting the SPO in the implementation and oversight of Orientation finances.

Clubs System

Very small adjustments will be made to the Clubs System in order to create a balanced workload for the Associate Officer, Clubs. The Associate Officer, Clubs will oversee large-scale events such as Clubs Week and Clubs Gala, while also ensuring that Clubs Program finance, policy and other initiatives are managed holistically with other aspects of the program.

Events

The Vice-President Student Events portfolio oversaw student programming centered on a variety of themes including culture, interests, music or arts. The previously known Associate Vice-President Campus Events will be adjusted marginally to form the Associate Officer, Events. The primary function of this role will be to oversee the development and execution of campus-wide programming. This new portfolio will include large events like Theatre Western performances, Charity events, the Early Outreach Conference, the Income Tax Clinic and more.

POSITION TITLE: STUDENT PROGRAMS OFFICER

1.00 POSITION OVERVIEW

Coordinate, facilitate and engage students in all services and programming that improves or enhances the undergraduate student experience. Acts as both a resource and strategic leader in the development in these services and programs.

2.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Oversee and support student programming and events, offering guidance and resources.
2. Recruit, supervise and direct the student events portfolio's associate vice-presidents and coordinators.
3. Provide direction and vision to staff members relevant to the events portfolio.
4. Advise the university on the direction and allocation of resources for student-facing services and programming.
5. Be a resource to club members, faculty council members and students-at-large who intend on planning or coordinating events.
6. Give strategic vision and programming direction to Western's orientation program. This includes co-chairing the Orientation Planning Committee (OPC) and sitting on the Orientation Governance Board (OGB).
7. Provide support to USC clubs on their governance, finance and programming. Direct Clubs Governance Committee (CGC) rulings and policy changes.
8. Provide support and direction to the USC's Peer Support Program – overseeing the selection, training and performance of both the Peer Support Centre volunteers and Peer Support Program coordinators.
9. Sit on Western's Homecoming Planning Committee ensuring that Homecoming remains accessible and relevant to undergraduate student interests.
10. If wishing to take a leadership role in an external organization the Vice-President Student Events is required to request a non-binding majority endorsement of this intention from Council in an in-camera session of Council, before running for or accepting the position.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

After undergoing a comprehensive review last year, the USC Communications Officer's duties and responsibilities will remain largely unchanged. With the introduction of the USC's Promotions Department, the Communications Officer has shifted to place greater emphasis on public relations and community outreach. This has meant an organizational capacity to undergo a greater number of feedback initiatives, issues management and media relations projects.

Moving forward, the Communications Portfolio in the USC will be designated a greater amount of resources – specifically coordinators – to these efforts. Additionally, the Communications Portfolio will improve its involvement in other portfolio campaigns, offering support in consultations and implementations to ensure quality and consistency amongst USC campaigns.

POSITION TITLE: COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

1.00 POSITION OVERVIEW

Facilitate communication and issue management on behalf of the organization and develop communications strategies that further the USC mandate and supports the political priorities of the Executive Body.

2.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Oversee USC public relations efforts. This includes corresponding with on and off-campus media, arranging interviews, creating press releases and briefing Executive or other USC members. Collect and analyze this media coverage.
2. Act as the primary steward of the USC's brand. Collaborate with the USC's Promotions department to oversee graphic, video, photo and social media campaigns. Consult on the promotion of USC services, events and other operations.
3. Manage communications to support the political implementation of the Executive Body's platforms and policies.
4. Enable the Executive to manifest a shared political will, and become the advocate for such ambitions.
5. Serve as the President and Executive's public liaison with internal and external stakeholders, at the discretion of the President.
6. Ensure open lines of communication with students and support Council in their efforts to garner opinion and feedback, specifically in the form of surveys, focus groups or other outreach initiatives.
7. Act as a direct support to the President in periods of crisis management.
8. Manage ongoing or developing issues relevant to the President and Executive Body.

9. Write, review, edit or consult on all publications, reports or public addresses relevant to the Executive Body.
10. Respond to all general inquiries and questions concerning the organization. Also manage the organization's mass-emailing capacities.
11. Directly assist the President in developing the organization's strategic priorities.
12. Consult on - and assist in planning, implementation, and evaluation of - the President's initiatives and projects as needed.
13. If wishing to take a leadership role in an external organization the Communications Officer is required to request a non-binding majority endorsement of this intention from Council in an in-camera session of Council before running for or accepting the position.

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Similarly to the Communications Officer, the Secretary-Treasurer's portfolio underwent a substantial review last year and the position's scope will not dramatically change. Previously the Vice-President Finance focuses solely on the budgetary concerns of the USC. After last year's change, the Secretary-Treasurer has been providing substantive and ongoing support in the sphere of legislative affairs by facilitating Council's operations and advising student leaders on best governance practices.

This oversight has proved significantly productive, and such work will continue with further support. Furthermore, the Secretary-Treasurer will act as an internal specialist on all USC bylaws, policies, and procedures, and will provide high-level governance support to the Executive.

POSITION TITLE: SECRETARY-TREASURER

1.00 POSITION OVERVIEW

Ensure effective management of corporate resources and endeavours, including oversight on allocations and strategic planning. Also ensure good governance of the University Students' Council through the organization, transparency and consistency of our guiding documents.

2.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Have stewardship of the Annual Budget as a key strategic document for the organization, and provide regular updates and advice to Council regarding the financial position of the corporation.
2. Explore and develop responsible sponsorship and fund development opportunities that are in line with the USC's Strategic Vision.
3. In conjunction with the General Manager and relevant Senior Manager, communicate directives of the Executive Council to operational managers.
4. Maintain comprehensive oversight over the management of corporate resources.
5. Oversee and administer grants and clubs finances.
6. Be responsible for the good governance of the organization, ensuring By-Laws, policies and procedures of the organization are followed correctly.
7. If the Secretary-Treasurer wishes to take a leadership role in an external organization they will be required to request a non-binding majority endorsement of this intention from Council in an in-camera session of Council, before running for or accepting the position.
8. Be a resource to students attempting to understand and work within the organization's By-Laws, policies, procedures or budget.

9. Oversee USC elections staff to ensure the proper execution of all administered elections.
10. Support the functions of Council and oversee the orientation, training and development of its members.
11. Sit as a non-voting member of the USC Board of Directors and report to them regularly on governance and finance matters. Support the functions of the Board and assist in the execution of the orientation, training and development of Directors.

SELECTION PROCESSES

President & Vice-President

Selection:

Elected on a slate by students at-large.

Outcome:

To allow the central advocates and organizational leadership to be directly elected by all students on campus that the USC represents.

Process:

The slate election will look very similar to slate elections that previously existed. As articulated by several council and community members, the slate system was valuable for ensuring that the platform of central advocates is formed cohesively and stands united. However, it was more challenging for candidates to find two students to run with – each supposedly having a distinct skill set fitting Internal and External. With the President and Vice-President running together, a unified vision can be created based on mutual respect and ideation rather than perceived areas to cover. The two members will run together under one campaign, and the ballot will reflect this partnership.

Student Programs Officer

Selection:

Community hiring process with panel decision.

Outcome:

To ensure that the executive responsible for student facing services and programs is selected with input from Council and student leaders, specifically ones interacting the most with such operations. Another outcome of this process is to make the general university community aware of this role and the applicant's potential plans.

Process:

After a written application, resume and proposal package is submitted to panel for review, a short-listing process will take place. This panel will consist of the following:

Voting: Incoming President, a Council member (who sits on the Nominating Committee), a Board member (also from Nominating Committee).

Non-Voting: Outgoing President, outgoing Student Programs Officer (selection for 2016-2017 year will be done by either the VP Student Events or VP Internal), USC Human Resources staff.

An initial meeting between each candidate and the panel will take place to present the written application and proposal package. Shortlisting by panel for candidates that will participate in community hiring process.

Community hiring process: Town halls will be held for each finalist candidate with a focus on the following stakeholders: one for Council, one for students-at-large and potentially more if need be. Town halls will consist of presentations by the candidates on their application and a question/answer period with the attendees. The hiring panel will be encouraged to attend all town halls. Written recommendations by any attendees of town halls will be accepted by the hiring panel for consideration with the recognition that some students, having been involved in different programs, will have valuable insight. At the end of this process, there will be a final interview between the hiring panel and each candidate to produce decision.

Secretary-Treasurer & Communications Officer

Selection:

Hired by panel.

Outcome:

To include multiple stakeholder voices in the process of hiring, but ultimately allow the selection of an expert in the field to be selected. Since this position is not political, hiring is preferred over electing to reflect the expectations of the individual once in the role.

Process:

Written application, resume and proposal package submitted to panel for review.

Panel will consist of the following:

Voting: Incoming President, one Council member (from Nominating Committee), one Board member (also from Nominating Committee).

Non-Voting: Outgoing President, outgoing Secretary-Treasurer/Communications Officer, USC Human Resources staff.

Initial meeting between each candidate and panel to present written application and proposal package. Shortlisting by panel for candidates if necessary. Final interviews between the hiring panel and each candidate to produce decision.

FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENTS

The restructuring of the Executive Council in the aforementioned ways centralizes responsibilities within the overall organization. Advocacy and student programming are no longer separated in multiple portfolios – a realignment of duties which alleviates resource costs both in certain duplications of resources and in a sixth Executive member. Now that these resources are freed up, there is opportunity for growth in the organization.

The Associate Program

The Associate Vice-President program was introduced in the 2013/2014 academic year by the USC Executive of the time. The program's purpose was two-fold – to allow for a rewarding extracurricular experience within the organization while also paying students fairly for the amount of work they were tasked with. Since then, the AVP Program has become a cornerstone of student development and has created alternative routes of leadership beyond sitting on Council. AVPs have become leaders and experts in certain areas of the organization, which has allowed the Executive Council to refocus on high-level initiatives and priorities.

With the now available resources, the USC can now expand the AVP Program into a more robust and accurate "Associate Program." The Associate Program is not only more accurate in language, but will also pass more oversight and program execution from the Executive Council to current students.

Currently, the Associate Vice-President program capped the working hours of AVPs at 500 hours in one academic year, at the rate of \$14.00/hour. The new Associate Program will allow for some roles to be elevated to 750 hours of work over the academic year at the same rate. The hope is that as the Executive Council becomes smaller and more focused, Associate Officers will ensure that important work in the organization is not only continued but expands to unprecedented level.

CONCLUSIONS

The aforementioned changes to Executive composition and selection will be voted on by Council at the special Wednesday, November 11th meeting. Further questions about this report or the review process can be directed to Kevin Hurren, USC Communications Officer (communications@westernusc.ca).