



TEAM TOBI







## Team Tobi

Team Tobi is made up of students just like yourself, that want to improve our student experience. Through our collective experience and ongoing consultation, we have created a platform we feel best represents students at large. Focusing on everything from the small issues that are overlooked, to the big issues that create our vision as a council, with your help these ideas will make your time at Western the best that it can be. However, this document is just the start. There are more ideas to be explored, more conversations to be had, and more students to hear from. We are ready to get to work listening, collaborating, and reaching out to every student in the Western community.

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# Student Engagement

A large talking point every year around campaign time is the large disconnect between the USC and the students. Team Tobi plans to make a tangible effort to bridge that gap and ensure the motivation behind decisions being made are always student's best interest. As well, team Tobi will empower students currently in leadership roles to better represent and serve their peers.



## USC Accessibility

We are going to prioritize improving the USC's accessibility efforts with a greater emphasis on student town halls, more interactive social media, and mandating that USC executives spend 1 to 2 hours a week in the foyer of different buildings on campus, including the UCC. We must be actively engaging with all students and focus on ensuring the USC executive is accessible to everyone.

## Increased Funding and Support to the USC Street Team

Our USC Street Team is a new initiative aimed at increasing student engagement with USC events. Our student-run events need to be more effectively promoted so all students are aware of upcoming events. We will look to increase support of the USC Street Team's efforts to strengthen their ability to increase promotional efforts for the upcoming school calendar.

## Inter-Faculty Council Roundtables

Faculty Councils possess similar goals and many of the same positions. By bringing these members of their respective councils together and pushing for collaboration and the sharing of ideas, each faculty will be able to implement better programming for their students as well as individually receive more support from the USC.

## First Year Town Halls

Ensuring students are interested in the USC from the beginning of their time at Western is key in growing engagement over the long term. We will commit to holding first year student town halls both in residences and the UCC to collect feedback and better address first year concerns. These will be organized in collaboration with residence faculty councils.

## Post-USC Meeting Coverage

We are going to make it easier for students to keep up-to-date with what is going on around campus. Team Tobi will be publishing a one page summary of USC meeting highlights with a 2-minute video about what was discussed after each council meeting. Students are busy, however it's important that keeping them informed is a priority allowing them to keep us accountable.





# Student Life

We will not only focus on the major issues that affect all students, but will also pay more attention to day-to-day issues that are often overlooked, but can be . Western University is known for offering one of the best student experiences in Canada and with continued attention to detail and constant improvement we plan on maintaining this reputation.



## Advocate to Western Housing for greater support for Residence Advisors

Western's Residence Advisors receive some of the lowest financial support among Ontario post-secondary institutions. Currently, RA's lose money by choosing to be what is inarguably one of the most vital resources for first year students. To recognize these individuals and their work to better the student experience, Team Tobi is committed to advocating and working with Western Housing to provide increased financial and scholarship support for our residence advisors.

## More Microwaves on campus

Team Tobi is committed to listening to every student about what their concerns on our campus. It was brought to our attention that there just aren't enough microwaves on campus, causing students to wait up to 25 minutes to heat up a lunch. Many students use meal preparation as a means of fiscal responsibility, and the fact they must wait that long is a major deterrent. We are going to work with Western's Facilities Management to increase the amount of microwaves on campus for student use.

## Expand Clubs Week

Last year a decision was made to shorten our annual 'Clubs Week' event. This played a role in many clubs falling below the 25-member threshold to still be considered a USC 'club', with many others experiencing a decrease in membership numbers. We need to do something about this and that is why Team Tobi will work with the Student Organizations' Union to allocate a bigger space and return the 5 much-needed days for clubs to promote themselves during our 'clubs week'.



## Spoke & Wave

The Spoke and The Wave are two great restaurants widely visited by students. We have a tremendous opportunity to build up these two student outlets. Team Tobi plans to achieve this with a variety of initiatives:

1. We will explore bringing in a mobile app to expedite the process of ordering food at both The Spoke and The Wave. Students have raised concerns that they do not have enough time to wait in such long lines to get food. A mobile app will increase the efficiency in The Spoke, while help to drive more student traffic through the USC-operated restaurant.
3. Greater Emphasis on Kosher and Halal food at both The Spoke and The Wave: We will work with The Spoke & Wave management team to find ways to include an increased number of Halal and Kosher menu options. We're a diverse campus and students simply deserve more options on the menu!

2. \$5.99 Breakfast Buffet at The Wave on Weekdays: Campus is a busy place in the morning with students often in a rush to grab breakfast and get to class. Team Tobi will look to pilot a 'weekday breakfast buffet' at The Wave to get more students eating breakfast and increase traffic at The Wave. Opening The Wave earlier for a breakfast buffet will give students another outlet to enjoy a morning meal, another opportunity to connect with friends, and [along with increased employment opportunities for students] an additional employment opportunity at The Wave for more students.

## Airport shuttles to Pearson Airport and London Airport during Finals

We are proud of our growing diverse community here at Western, and we believe that we can do a better job in supporting our international and out-of-province students. During the busy December and April exam periods, we will take some of the travel stress off students by offering chartered airport shuttle service buses to both Pearson International Airport and and London International Airport on different dates.

## Off-Campus Housing Fair

Finding upper year housing options after residence can be a daunting task. At the moment, there are few resources offered to students when looking for off-campus housing. By inviting landlords and property management companies to show their listings, the housing fair will give students a better idea about what is available to them and allow property owners to better connect with students. It's a win-win! By hosting the event once in first and once in second semester, if you're shopping early or shopping around late you will still find great houses at the prices you are looking for.





## Alternative night time 0-Week planning

We have a diverse student body with different interests and hobbies, and our incoming first years are the same way. During our orientation week we need to show that all students are enjoying their first week and feel welcomed at Western university.

## Towel service at the Western Student Recreation Centre

At other Canadian post-secondary institutions, towel service at their recreation centres is either inexpensive or free. With the increasing cost of living for students, we would like to advocate for a reduced cost for monthly towel service.

## Raise an LGBTQ Flag on Western Campus

We take pride in our inclusive community here at Western. It's about time that our University administration raises a flag during Western's diversity week embracing our school's inclusivity.

## Music Faculty Showcase

Our campus is full of talent that needs to be celebrated, with none more obvious than students in the Don Wright Faculty of Music. Partnering with the faculty to show off these talents to students at large will be a great way to show what Western has to offer.

## Increase Promotion of the Mustang Express

The service offered by the Mustang Express is crucial and with some more attention to it, it will continue to thrive. By improving promotion, we will be able to raise students' awareness levels of the service which in turn will help to increase usage levels. We would like to more frequently publish the routes, schedules, and make reminders of it only common nights of downtown festivities!





# Community Outlook

Team Tobi is looking forward to building on USC relationships with the City of London, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada. We want to ensure that we are listening to all students throughout the entirety of the year and bringing your concerns forward to the various governments. Team Tobi is committed to expanding relationships in the City of London and working with community partners to offer more opportunities to students outside the classroom.



## Establish a 'Council on Campus' Event

Spending eight months of the year here, students are a major part of the London community, and both the City and the Western community will benefit from better understanding one another. Team Tobi will set up an event in the beginning of the academic year to welcome London City Councillors, including the mayor, to attend a 'meet and greet' with students on campus.

## Increase Pedestrian Safety efforts

We will work with the London city council to improve traffic congestion and increase campus safety through initiatives such as bicycles lanes and better lighting to improve visibility. We will work towards improved pedestrian safety at the Philip Aziz and Western Road intersection and explore the idea of a scramble intersection here.

## Extend Bus Passes into September

Increasing the quality of the service that the London Transit Commission provides is vital to the lives of students. Students are often stuck at the end of each summer with an expired bus pass and still need to commute around the City of London. We are going to advocate alongside the Society of Graduate Students and Fanshawe Students' Union to see the London Transit Commission extend student bus passes by an additional week into September.

## Advocate for the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT)

The City of London is currently waiting on both Queen's Park and Ottawa to make a decision regarding funding the newly proposed BRT system here in London. Team Tobi is going to focus on ensuring both the federal and provincial governments understand our transit needs in this city, with an attempt to expedite the delivery of funding.



## Increasing Civic Engagement

The City of London and the USC are working towards providing more opportunities for student engagement in the city. We will continue to strengthen and develop this working relationship. We will focus on promoting community-engaged learning opportunities and increasing the awareness of city council activities. We will work with our student programming officer to promote different civic engagement initiatives and work with community partners like the London Economic Development Corporation to find short and long-term local employment for students.

## Increase Community Partnership Efforts

In addition to working with the city, we would like to build on relationships and establish new ones with different community organizations in London, such as the Pillar Non-Profit Organization and Innovation Works. With increased partnership activity, we would like to grow student involvement in the London community and help provide more extra-curricular opportunities to students.

# 2 Major Themes of External Advocacy:

## Affordability

Post-Secondary education is a large investment into each of our futures. The role of the government is to make it easier for students to succeed, not to create roadblocks. Team Tobi is going to work with the provincial and federal governments to address the concerns of students in the Western community. In particular, we will focus on climbing tuition rates, the rising costs of hydro bills students are paying, and the increasing costs of textbooks. We are looking forward to engaging with students individually, through online forums, and through Western community events to discuss what more we can advocate for in the interest of our students. Working with our university partners in the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) and through the annual AdvoCan conference in Ottawa, with your help we are going to be addressing the needs of students with both the provincial and federal governments.

## Possibility

Team Tobi is looking to build on the work of OUSA to advocate to the provincial government to do more to help students as they near graduation to find a job, pay down their student loans and start planning for the future. We will ensure that the government is recognizing the need to better prepare students for the workplace by focusing on creating better post-secondary work integrated learning (WIL) policies. Students in all fields of study, including the liberal arts, should be prepared for careers based on a vast academic experience including a co-op placement, a clinical placement, and/or through an internship opportunity. In addition, Team Tobi is looking to work with our local Members of Parliament to discuss potential technological infrastructure grants. Students in all faculties should start benefitting from greater integrative technology inside their classrooms. As it stands, Western has less than five classrooms fitted with modern technology to assist with student learning, and we feel this can be improved.





# Mental Health & Wellness

Mental Health continues to be of paramount importance to students. We recognize that much time and effort has been put into improving the mental health climate on campus and plan on continuing to prioritize it. We will focus on further improving an environment of wellness on campus, as well as ensuring that the resources needed are accessible and fully equipped to serve students.

## Soph Support

Western University has one of the only student-run orientation programs in Canada and also the best. Sophs are on the front-line engaging with the newest members in the Western Community. Team Tobi is committed to working with the Orientation Committee and Sophing community to provide greater overall support for them. Through more scenario-based mental health training, they will feel better prepared when put in these situations during the school year. In addition, Team Tobi would like to provide sleeping arrangements for sophs travelling far distances during Orientation Week. We are also committed to working with the Orientation Committee to allot an amount of funds each year to assist with soph fees for Sophs who can demonstrate financial need (in confidentiality).

## Consolidation of mental health resources, promoting the 'Triage' (Wellness Education Centre)

With so much discussion and energy going into mental health and wellness on campus, we need to be sure that students are not confused or overwhelmed with where to go to address their concerns. Team Tobi would like to start consolidating our promotional efforts through Western's Wellness Education Centre where students can seek whichever help they need and be directed towards the most appropriate resources.

## Continuing to develop 'De-stressor programming' year round

Being a student can be stressful, not just during exams, but rather all year round. By increasing wellness initiatives, Team Tobi aims to make students mental health a priority at all times. Encouraging greater student collaboration and promoting various faculties different wellness activities will help grow the strength of our diverse student wellness programming.

## Explore a USC partnership with FEMAP, the First Episode Mood and Anxiety Program operated by the London Health Sciences Centre

Since wait times for students to access psychiatric health care professionals are not decreasing, we are going to prioritize exploring the creation of a partnership between the USC and FEMAP to increase the services we can offer students. The USC was successful in establishing a partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association to get mental health crisis counsellors onto campus, and we hope to set up a similar structure with FEMAP.





# Student Academics

Team Tobi has heard about a variety of issues that are affecting students' learning. We are committed to advocating to the administration, in collaboration with various faculties, for the necessary changes that need to be addressed. In addition, we would like to increase our outreach efforts to support the Western student senators that are actively advocating on academic issues.

## Release Exam Timetables Earlier

We are going to work with the Student Senators and university administration to continue to drive the final push for the release of earlier exam timetables. Western University releases their preliminary exam schedules far later than other Canadian universities. We will advocate to the administration to increase support in the Registrar's office to assist with an earlier exam timetable creation.

## Advocating for greater lenience for the '3 exams in 23 hours' rule

This is an outdated rule that needs to be changed. We are going to continue to address this growing concern to the administration and emphasize the need to avoid at all costs students ending up in this situation with exams. Exams are enough stress already, nevermind 3 of them within 23 hours. We need to ensure that students are being graded based on their knowledge of the course, not based off their exam schedule.

## Advocate for an October Reading week

Currently there is an Ad-Hoc Committee in place working on establishing an October reading week. Team Tobi will prioritize working with the committee to follow through on the implementation of a fall reading break for October 2017. Implementing a fall reading week is long overdue and the momentum is building to give students the much-needed time in the fall.



## Advocating for the addition of a Course Outline Database

Choosing courses can be difficult. We will prioritize having course syllabus included in the academic course guide. When students are considering their class selection, we want to ensure they can review a past syllabus to have a better understanding of classes.

## Personal Interest Credit

We understand the need to keep up our GPAs. This can sometimes dissuade us from taking certain courses just out of pure interest. The implementation of a personal interest credit system would allow students to take certain courses, and the result will count as pass fail, allowing students to take courses to learn new skills and build new experiences. We are going to collaborate with the university to move towards implementing personal interest credits, as has been done at other Canadian universities.

## Increase Student Study Space

Team Tobi is looking forward to addressing the growing issues of crowded study space during exam seasons. The university has several spaces on campus that make perfect study spots and we need to explore more options. In the meantime, we will facilitate the opening up of classrooms during exam seasons for students to use. It's crucial that students have a comfortable space to study on campus during the stressful exam periods. Exams are stressful - finding a space to study for them should not be.

## Advocate for a more Efficient Academic Accommodations Process

At the moment, students must jump through hoops to ensure they receive the academic accommodations they are looking for. Team Tobi would like to collaborate with faculty councils to identify a more streamlined process of receiving academic accommodations to ensure students are getting the help they need more efficiently.

## Advocate for Updates to Online Applications used for Instruction

As students, we take courses in the hope that they better prepare us for the workplace and beyond. Using up-to-date online applications, such as applications such as Adobe Photoshop, will better prepare us for the industries we plan to join. Ensuring that the tools being used in class for instruction are consistently being evaluated is an effective way maintain quality in Western academics. That is why Team Tobi will work with faculty councils to advocate for improving online application subscriptions for different programs.

## Advocating for Academic Diversity Courses

With issues being raised over inclusivity and acceptance on campus, Team Tobi is pushing for a more proactive solution to these issues. We will work with the Student Senators and the university administration for the creation of courses educating Western students about the history of ethnic, religious and LGBTQ groups as well as courses studying current world trends towards defining a progressive society.

## Advocating for Increased Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Opportunities

Western University needs to recognize the importance of a high-quality system of post-secondary education in meeting the demands of Canada's knowledge-based economy and focus on facilitating efficient transitions of students to the labour market. Team Tobi is going to prioritize exploring more work integrated learning (WIL) programs – which include co-op, clinical placements and internships – as a means of improving student's employment prospects and labour market outcomes. We are going to work with students, faculty councils, and the administration to establish more WIL opportunities, specifically internships, for all students.





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