



*The University of Western Ontario
Orientation Planning Committee*

OPC Meeting

Monday November 2nd, 2015

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Eddy Avila	Rich Caccamo	Fabiana Tepedino
Jared Boland	Jonathan English	Cassie Anton
Doreen Vautour	Taryn Scripnick	Caitie Cheeseman
Mike Bartlett	Harrison Arnold	Josh Clark
Tolu Kayode	Alana Stevenson	Stef Wisofschi
Chris Alleyne	Papy Abdie	Folawiyo Laditi

Regrets Sent:

Carmen Sleewa	Anooshae Janmohammad	Peggy Wakabayashi
Courtney McDonald	Gwen Lowrie-Dennis	

Co-Chairs: Peggy Wakabayashi and Taryn Scripnick

Location: UCC conference room 371

Council Finances

Presented by: Jonathan English, the USC Students' Council Secretary Treasurer

- Faculty councils have been having problems financing their programming, specifically FIMS, Science and Social Science.
- 2 variations on the issue: could not pay for all of the budgeted programming or could fund the budgeted but would then not have enough for other costs.
- Jonathan noted that this budgeting has been an issue in the past but it has never resulted in faculty councils being unable to fund their faculty team programming.

- In 2014, the majority of faculty student councils went over budget, and these funds were absorbed by the main faculty account, as opposed to the O-Week account.
 - In 2015, the issue of a genuine lack of funding came up.
- Main issue: the budget was built around projected funds and teams were also charging some items to personal credit cards. Therefore, it was difficult to plan budgets as there was not enough facilitation throughout the budgeting approval process.
- [REDACTED] Plan budgets with the reasonable expectation of having projected funds on hand, this could be done through more budget facilitation.
- Difficult to have one group planning the budget and another group executing it.
- Residence council just works between Housing and the Soph team, and Housing facilitates the process. The USC hopes to do this as well to circumvent the current process.
- This year the USC introduced a bridge financing program to lend faculty teams 80% of their projected financing. They could not lend the last 20%, as that money is not typically made available to the USC until April.
- There were still some issues but this finance program helped significantly. The USC is now considering extending this program to all councils.
- [REDACTED] Jonathan recommended reaching out to vendors such as Costco, Walmart and Dollarama to arrange for materials to be ordered in bulk.
- **Clarification:** now that we are using an Opt-out model for O-Week participation, money is collected by the Registrar's office and remitted to the USC in two installments.
 - Due to council shortages, the USC agreed to provide 80% of those funds to council, leaving the last 20% to be covered through the council budget.
- [REDACTED] strike an ad hoc committee to address O-Week financing.
- Q: Is this a problem because of the new Opt-out process or is that just circumstance?
- A: Councils just happened to be in poor financial standing this year and needed the extra support.
- Doreen noted that we should make it an expectation for councils to have at least 20% of their budget readily available.
- Jonathan noted that the financial issues this year let council oversee more of the process.
- It was noted that Head Sophs and council presidents would benefit from more training in financial planning and budgeting in the future.
- Doreen noted that student experience should not differ from council to council because of previous budget concerns.
- [REDACTED] look to Western for council bridge loans as the USC is generally relying on receiving money from the university in order to reconcile their lending to council.
- **CONSENSUS:** create a working group to address council financing. The USC can continue to look into bridge financing.

- Rich noted that Housing is able to buy from local businesses using speed codes, and small purchases are done in advance through corporate credit cards.
 - Rich noted that we need to replicate this process and that we may no longer be able to rely on council bridge financing to cover that 20%.
- The USC is financing the majority of O-Week expenses, yet faculty councils are the ones approving budgets.
 - Jonathan explains that this is in place because faculty councils are responsible for the money in April; the USC just oversees, which is a relatively new role.
- Taryn introduced Harrison Arnold as the new Orientation Coordinator.

Programming Working Group Update

- Programing had a debrief meeting, and there is a second one scheduled.
- After the second meeting has taken place the group will be updated on suggestions moving forward.

Assessment Working Group Update

- The O-Week survey findings have been posted onto OWL.
- A report will be created to summarize and analyze the findings with the help of the assessment working group.

Selections Working Group Update

- OCO has been selected; AOC and ROC selections are underway.
- Head Soph and Staff applications are live.
- Rich, Eddy and Taryn have reached out to Charity to discuss their role in O-Week.
- Charity will be hired in the same cycle as Head Soph and O-Staff, and will act as an extra member of O-Staff.
- Taryn noted that Charity used to be a coordinator position and that in the coming weeks she will be sitting down with the Charity leadership team to discuss Shinerama.
- Rich reminded the group that Head Soph interviews are coming up, and that he has updated the guidelines.
- OPC members are asked to facilitate Head Soph interviews as an unbiased decision-maker; this will be decided through panel availability.

Soph Town Hall Update

- OPC has hosted a Soph Town Hall, and generally there was constructive feedback from students.
- Eddy noted that there was a lot of repetition and frustration but that it was good for the students to express themselves in a structured environment.

- Common theme: utilizing multiple perspectives in decision-making through incorporating the Head Sophs.
- Jared noted that Head Sophs felt that it was hard for the OPC designate to represent their needs, and that representation was largely symbolic.
- Taryn noted that Sophs requested access to meeting agenda and minutes.
- [REDACTED] Have OPC release a document outlining their decision-making process and the values involved.
- Eddy noted that providing details that have not been fleshed out may not be beneficial, but that some steps can be taken towards transparency.
- Dr. Bartlett noted that as an associate dean he receives meeting agendas and that this helps him track the big topics that are being discussed. In addition, faculty council meetings are open for partial amounts of time for transparency.
- [REDACTED] Hold an open OPC meeting for Head Sophs to attend in the future.
- [REDACTED] send out a monthly OPC update targeted to the Sophs instead of redacted minutes.
- Rich believes that we have inconsistently applied the uniform policy in spite of doing their best to
- [REDACTED] recruit a committee to further revise the uniform policy.
- Rich noted that sending out a newsletter may be too one-sided, and that he would like to facilitate a dialogue with Sophs.
- Cassie noted that the timelines have been a sensitive issue in regards to getting student input before decisions are made. This could be aided by having agenda items confirmed further in advance.
- [REDACTED] Rich recommended reaching out to outgoing Head Sophs to ask how OPC can better work with them in order to benefit from their perspective.
- Taryn suggested outlining the student roles at the OPC table.
- Rich noted that this was done last year but that we need to give out more guidance.
- **CONSENSUS!** The group agreed to set up a meeting with Head Sophs to discuss and redefine their role.
- Cassie noted that since the Orientation Strategic Plan has been engaging feedback, OPC should continue these connections.
- The group noted that the Soph Town Hall was helpful, and it really highlighted what information students were missing about OPC.

Orientation Strategic Plan Focus Group

- The Strategic Plan is working to organize an upwards of 20 focus groups for various campus stakeholders.
- OPC members will be asked to facilitate one focus group.

- A new OSP website has been released and it was suggested that O-Week survey results were published online.
- Q: Rich asked the group about sharing aggregate O-Week survey feedback data.
- A: The group expressed concern over posting the results as they need to be screened for any inappropriate or irrelevant content.
- **CONSENSUS** The O-Week survey results will not be posted before student comments are screened.

Next Meeting:

Friday November 13th from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in UCC conference room 373 (*cancelled*).

Summary of Key Items

- [REDACTED] Plan budgets with the reasonable expectation of having projected funds on hand, this could be done through more budget facilitation.
- [REDACTED] Jonathan recommended reaching out to vendors such as Costco, Walmart and Dollarama to arrange for materials to be ordered in bulk.
- [REDACTED] strike an ad hoc committee to address O-Week financing.
- [REDACTED] look to Western for council bridge loans as the USC is generally relying on receiving money from the university in order to reconcile their lending to council.
- **CONSENSUS** create a working group to address council financing. The USC can continue to look into bridge financing.
- [REDACTED] Have OPC release a document outlining their decision-making process and the values involved.
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- **CONSENSUS** The O-Week survey results will not be posted to the OSP website before student comments are screened.