



*Western University
Orientation Planning Committee*

OPC Meeting

Thursday October 15th, 2015

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

In Attendance:

Jared Boland	Doreen Vautour	Folawiyo Laditi
Rich Caccamo	Gwen Lowrie-Dennis	Lesley Munteer
Stef Wisofski	Alana Stevenson	

Regrets:

Hein Ngo	Papy Abdie	Josh Clark
Mike Bartlett	Tolu Kayode	Courtney McDonald
Fabiana Tepedino	Anooshae Janmohammad	Taryn Scripnick
Caitie Cheeseman	Eddy Avila	Cassie Anton
Chris Alleyne	Peggy Wakabayashi	

Location: UCC conference room 373

Chair: Rich Caccamo

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm.

Agenda

- For Information
 - Working Group Updates
 - Fall Meeting Schedule
- For Discussion
 - Head Soph Town Hall

- All-Soph Town Hall

Comments

- Peggy and Taryn are unable to attend today's meeting. Rich will be facilitating.
- Doreen noted she has something to add to new business at the end of the meeting.

Working Group Updates

Selections

- The Selections Working Group has set a weekly meeting time for 10:00 am each Friday.
- Rich noted that it is important to have weekly updates given the volume of work for Selections.
- The job of editing last year's position descriptions has been farmed out to relevant members of the group. Last year's position descriptions are posted on the OPC OWL page.
- Applications for Head Soph positions will go out on October 28th
- Rich noted that the group needs to codify the responsibilities of O-Staff.
 - This stems from the continual revision of Charity's role in Orientation.
- OCO interviews were held on October 15th, and went very well. Four candidates were interviewed and Rich is making reference calls.
- Next week, AOC and ROC interviews will begin.
- Rich would like to address OPC's role in interviews throughout the selections process.
- Tomorrow we will have updated selection guidelines, which will be posted on OWL.
 - This will be discussed during the next OPC meeting.
- Gwen is gathering the availabilities of PA's and Head Sophs. –likely 3-6 interviews.
- We will be reaching out to OPC to garner feedback about the interview process. We ask that everyone at the table helps with at least one interview as an OPC constituency.
- Jared noted that the panel members should share questions amongst one another to be sure that diverse areas of interest are addressed.

OPC Fall Schedule

- There were a few students that could not make the previous meeting time at all – therefore there will be a rotating schedule. The new schedule is posted on the OPC OWL site.
- Lesley mentioned that it is hard to make a schedule change this late into the semester as Engineering sets the time aside early on.
- The new schedule will be circulated post-meeting and OPC will have some time to weigh-in on it.

Programming

- The Programming Working Group will be meeting on October 20th.
- Will be discussing the wrap-up with O-Month and Open House events.
- **ACTION:** Gwen will update the Programming Working Group as to the meeting location.
- Lesley asked the group about a Charity update.
 - Rich noted that Taryn was planning this, and that many stakeholders have something to add about the role of Charity in Orientation Week. Rich noted that Charity was a popular topic at Head Soph Town Hall.
 - Oversight and communication point of view: what are the outcomes of Charity?
 - Lesley noted that opinions are divided as to whether Charity should be reviewed at all.
- **ACTION:** Gwen to reach out to Taryn about the discussion of Charity and add this item to the next OPC agenda.
- **ACTION:** Gwen to investigate adding a Charity focus group to the Orientation Fall focus group schedule.

Orientation Strategic Plan Updates

- The Orientation Strategic Planning Committee will be holding focus groups which are anticipated to begin on November 16th.
- Focus Groups will be composed of various campus stakeholders, including 4-5 Soph focus groups.
- The group has agreed to hold meetings on a biweekly basis beginning Friday October 23rd at 11:00 am.
- A draft facilitator guide has been created, which outline potential focus group questions.
- An online webpage is being created to host information and garner feedback—modeled off of the Indigenous Strategic Plan webpage.
- A summary of the OSP Summit findings will be posted.
- A brief online survey will be posted on the website, which is designed to collect feedback from individuals who have not been included in other initiatives.
- The website is tentatively scheduled to launch on October 26th.
- **ACTION:** the Orientation Strategic Plan website link will be circulated to the group once it is live.

Assessment

- There was a 30% turnout for the post-O-Week survey. This is a great sample size and is a higher turnout from last-year.
- Findings report will be developed over the next few months
- Aggregate findings will be circulated to the group for review and comment.

Head Soph Town Hall

- The Head Soph Town Hall had a high turnout.
- Only a few topics were covered, but Head Sophs were concerned with their connection to OPC and would like there to be more transparency, such as circulated minutes.
 - It was noted that there were issues with that, but redacted minutes may be possible.
- Head Sophs also requested more direction on how to properly budget and finance.
- Charity merchandise and BBQ were discussed. There was also a huge discussion about Shinerama and door-to-door fundraising, as well as Charity programming.
- Jared noted that a large theme was consistency and support. Head Sophs felt they had multiple stakeholders pulling them in multiple directions throughout their terms.
- Stef thought the Head Soph Town Hall was effective, although she noted that many questions were directed at student members of OPC, and it was hard to speak as a representative.
- Folawiyo agreed. He felt he gained perspective from hearing Faculty Head Soph perspectives.
- Q: Jared asked Folawiyo and Stef about their experience sitting on OPC as student leaders.
 - They noted that they felt it had helped them understand the process and committee, and gave them more perspective.
 - Stef noted that she felt unsure of what issues to raise at the OPC table in the capacity of her position.
 - Rich agreed that this was an issue, and recognized that the structure of OPC can be ambiguous. The group often turns to co-chairs as well as Rich and the OCO to be a spokesperson.
 - Rich noted that it was a priority of OPC to insulate members from being criticized by their peers.
 - Doreen noted that this confusion of roles is a common issue, and it may be time to address it.
 - Jared noted that he does not think OPC should have a spokesperson – in order to avoid limiting perspective.
 - Lesley noted that OPC should have a media spokesperson – as speaking to the media is a skill, and can be difficult. Lesley also agreed that everyone on the committee should have the freedom to speak.
- Doreen noted that she felt people outside of OPC did not have an accurate picture of the decision-making model.
 - Doreen clarified that it is more about balancing different values. If OPC only considered one value then decisions would become simpler.

- Stef and Doreen both noted that there is not a militant dichotomy between students and administrators, but that the student body at large feels that administration does not account for student values.
- [REDACTED] Alana suggested publicizing decision-making examples exhibiting administrators standing up for student interest in an effort to improve relations.
 - Alana additionally noted that the feel of mass-emailing may give a more disconnected illusion to students, and that administration should make attempts to reach out in other ways wherever possible.
- Rich noted that mass-mailing is not ideal but that it is needed to give notice quickly.
- Jared noted that Head Sophs asked for more notice prior to changes being sent out by mass-mailing.
- Rich noted that he is grateful that Sophs are involved. If they would like more information, OPC would be happy to make it more available to them – let them be involved!

All-Soph Town Hall

- OPC will be bringing in a third party administrator – Rick Ezekiel will be facilitating.
 - Rich is working with Rick to prepare. Rick is aware that he is there to drive the process.
- Rich noted that he would like to clarify who should be answering questions during the Town Hall.
- It was agreed that OPC members should be at the Town Hall.
- [REDACTED] Stef recommended that OPC members sit with students during the All-Soph Town Hall instead of standing at the front.
- Jared noted having staff and students sit together was a good idea, but that he is concerned about the conversation getting convoluted and turning into a debate.
- **Clarification:** All-Soph Town Hall will be held on October 19th from 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm in UCC 146.
- Doreen noted that we need to promote listening. If someone is repeating info it is because they felt they have not been heard. OPC should step back and let them be heard and then acknowledge and thank them.
- **Q:** Jared asked if the group if they are looking for questions or comments.
- **A:** Alana noted that it should be clarified that OPC will not be answering to critique. Additionally, the group should specify people to answer questions.
- Doreen reminded the group that Rick can steer the flow of the presentation.
- **Q:** Rich asked the Committee about their voice and their role in Town Hall. He requested the group's permission to delegate a spokesperson role to Eddy, Taryn, Peggy and himself.

- Rich noted that if a question was posed in which OPC has an honest answer, they are obligated to prove that information to Sophs.
- **CONSENSUS:** The group agreed that the OPC co-chairs (Peggy and Taryn), along with Rich and Eddy, will be designated to answer questions during All-Soph Town Hall.
- **Clarification:** Rich clarified that this was not designed to limit any voices of the committee, but only to structure responses.
- **ACTION:** Rich to draft the Town Hall agenda and circulate to Rick and the co-chairs.
- **Q:** Is there a particular question to ask students during Town Hall (after a run-through of OPC process)?
- **A:** Jared felt that providing questions at the beginning may help guide the aims of the discussion, and allow Sophs to get their issues on the table upfront.
- **A:** Doreen noted that it would be helpful for Rick to have a list of themes to focus on.
- **CONSENSUS:** A themed structure should be put in place, but Sophs should have the say as to where to start the conversation.

New Business

- King's has starting doing a significant number of January admissions (100-150 students), and King's is looking at what that means for their January Orientation and how those events will be funded. Most of these students are international.
- Doreen noted that programming would not be as extensive as O-Week, but that it will be important to have substantial programming to support these new students.
- Doreen noted that this will need to be further addressed in the future, but that a January Orientation structure, as well as potential funding for the programming, will need to be developed.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Summary of Key Items

- **ACTION:** Gwen will update the Programming Working Group as to the meeting location.
- **ACTION:** Gwen to reach out to Taryn about the discussion of Charity and add this item to the next OPC agenda.
- **ACTION:** Gwen to investigate adding a Charity focus group to the Orientation Fall focus group schedule.
- **ACTION:** the Orientation Strategic Plan website link will be circulated to the group once it is live.
- **ACTION:** Rich to draft the Town Hall agenda and circulate to Rick and the co-chairs.

- [REDACTED] Alana suggested publicizing decision-making examples exhibiting administrators standing up for student interest in an effort to improve relations.
- [REDACTED] Stef recommended that OPC members sit with students during the All-Soph Town Hall instead of standing at the front.
- **CONSENSUS** The group agreed that the OPC co-chairs (Peggy and Taryn), along with Rich and Eddy, will be designated to answer questions during All-Soph Town Hall.
- **CONSENSUS** A themed structure should be put in place, but Sophs should have the say as to where to start the conversation.