



*The University of Western Ontario
Orientation Planning Committee*

Meeting

*Wednesday, May 27th, 2015
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

In Attendance:

Papy Abdie, Cassie Anton, Lesley Munteer, Eddy Avila, Taryn Scripnick, Sam Kilgour, Frank Inglis, Jared Boland, Alana Stevens, Caitie Cheeseman, Courtney McDonald, Hien Ngo, Fabiana Tepedino, Doreen Vautour, Folawiyo Laditi, Rich Caccamo, Carrie Passi, Ryan Ilines

Location: UCC Conference Room 369

1) Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order.

2) Request to make additions to the agenda

- none

3) Comments from the Co-Chairs:

- welcome to Taryn as incoming VP SE
- Rich Caccamo stepping in as co-chair role on behalf of Peggy
- Eddy, thanks to Sam for his work on the committee as this is his last meeting
- Introduction of Ryan, representing Charity Orientation team, one of the programming assistants
- Rich notifies members that an Orientation Intern is still required
- Thanks to Robin Kirk for sitting in to take minutes
- Individual introductions

4) Charity Presentation: Values

- Ryan presenting:

- Three main values of charity
 - i) Expose first year students to as many diverse experiences as possible
 - Lots of social and academic opportunities
 - Want to offer them a co-curricular opportunity
 - Important for them to start out early
 - Understand that getting involved is really important
 - ii) Get to know who their floors are so they can establish that relationship early on
 - During orientation week make sure people are comfortable going out and/ or staying in
 - Programming allows them to all go out together without the pressure of drinking
 - iii) Promoting volunteerism, passion and empowerment
 - Programming lets students get to know charity and getting involved on a level that's local and a national level
 - get to be involved with London community but a bigger level as well
 - get to see impact they are having is empowering in one setting lets the students move with the momentum later
 - getting involved is a huge opportunity
 - spark and maintain interest
 - send out updates via emails to encourage students (leadership team)
 - students are shown what is available and the opportunities moving forward
- Wrap up:

- Although we are a charity committee our priority is not to raise funds.
- We are part of Owk because we want to influence and engage with first year students and make sure they have a good experience later on. We are there to support the first year students. First and foremost we are there for them even though we are the charity team.

4) OPC Charity Values Discussion

- Q: Maintenance idea of sending updates is that something that we have been doing or something we need to do?
- A: We have collected emails in the past and sent out some information, but should be more emphasized in the future.
- Q: How did your team come up with those three values? Did you participate in an exercise?
- A: The groups did have a discussion what the team all wanted and how they felt and then the Head SOPHS extrapolated what main values the team should be focusing on in the future.
- Q: What is the local impact of the charity team?
- A: Students get out in the London Community and get to know surroundings instead of staying in the Western bubble.

5) Charity Presentation: Shinerama

- Ryan presenting
- Shinerama provides an opportunity for the students to get involved, get to know London community; to show the people of London that Western students are not just a bunch bratty kids ruining London. Students are going out and talking to Londoners and seeing parts of London important.

6) OPC Shinerama Discussion

- Q: Do you have any numbers of how many people participated with Shinerama in the past?
- A: Not sure; depends on the weather; last year a little less than 4500
- Q: Years ago students were on roads, street corners and interfering with traffic. Do we have policies to keep the students off the roads and intersections?
- A: Don't think we have policies but we do know it is an issue. We have expressed this issue to SOPHS that are going out with the students and have provided them with ground

rules – do's and do not's when they go out; putting more emphasis on walking groups or going to neighbourhoods. This is definitely something that we acknowledge.

- Q: Students being at pre-arranged locations – has this been happening more than in the past?
- [REDACTED] we should do more of this as students located at these stores are greatly accepted by the public much more than running out to the cars give a negative impression.
- A: Students are being placed at store fronts and major intersections but are directed not to run out into traffic. We look into every opportunity possible.
- Q: Can you walk the committee through the logistical stuff such as trying to get them out into the city. Do we have a place for 4000 students? Is this something that has been an issue?
- A: We have had some issues with owners of stores where the owner agrees to let the students be there, but then no longer wants them there the day of the event, or does not tell the weekend managers they have approved the students to be there.
- This year we are going to send reminders that to the store managers of the date of the event and to expect the students.
- Q: Is there restricted neighbourhoods students can go to? Is there enough room in the city for 4000 students?
- A: Don't remember hearing that we were stuck with not having places for students to go.
- Q: Are you still hoping to do a car wash as well as the walking groups/door to door/ store fronts?
- A: Yes, we are trying to do something more centralized in a parking lot where we can do more than just a car wash – like bring in a radio station. Want to focus on car washes, door to door and stores. We need to make sure to explore all the store fronts and the opportunities and locations suitable for students to go to.
- Q: How is student experience received in London?
- A: Some places it is not well received. Students are welcomed in other areas as people give the students money and be a part of the upbeat atmosphere. It gives the city the idea the students are not here just for school. It shows the students can be part of the city.
- Q: How are you able to get feedback from the students? What kinds? Do you have anyway of growing from the feedback?
- A: Feedback questionnaire would be a valuable tool to give to the students as part of their pack. Collect this to create a better experience for everyone.
- Q: Shinerama and issues with mental health: First year students might be anxious or first time away from home, not want to approach people for money or go out in the city; students are operating outside of their comfort zone; how is this being dealt with?

- A: There are various opportunities that allows them not to be directly involved with people or asking for money (making signs, washing cars, etc)
- CASSIE: It would be helpful to put together some kind of etiquette guidelines how to appropriately reach out to people; steps on how to approach people and ask for money so it is consistent and appropriate so students are not harassing people. It may partially help boost students comfort.
- In front of stores, some students come up with a cheer or song which has been effective in the past rather than students just stand there. Provide them with suggestions what they could do.
- Be aware of what neighborhoods were good for Shinerama.
- RYAN: [REDACTED] making a video of 'how to' for shine day. Survey should be a key thing that is encouraged for all. Communication with SOPHS and getting their feedback is also important. Asking how was the route? Was the day well planned out? How was the overall day? What would you improve? Include what to do and what not to do.
- Q: Where did Shine come from in general and Western?
- A: Started at Laurier as shining shoes to raise funds for charity. Western adopted the charity approx. 45 years ago to raise funds for the charity but now also a way to get involved in the community.
- Q: Is it still a competition between schools?
- A: I don't think Western markets it as a competition. Western has been the winner for years. It has been very public that it was a competition between the schools.
- Q: Reflecting on values, can see a directly relations to the program it aligns well. You noted one of the priorities is not necessarily to raise funds. One of the three likely experiences that a student would have in participating is the car washes, door to door and store fronts, I see the value in a store front or a car wash I see that as an experience that they are giving something back, a type of service or an exchange for a donation. Door to door experience is less than the other two, and perhaps just soliciting cash. What are your thoughts? Is there still value in that experience? It doesn't necessarily meet the values of promoting volunteerism to the same degree as the other two.
- A: Agrees. The other two may be superior, but hoping to make the students passionate about the charity that you are making a difference and raising money for the charity.
- Q: What can we do to help students make the connection between the charity and the activity of going door to door? How can it be made more beneficial than just going door to door and asking for a donation? This may not be a rewarding experience.
- Shinerama began with people shining shoes. Some people gave a donation and other not. It was about doing something not about going door to door.
- Store fronts and car washes are more engaging and involvement. Need to try and reach out to more store fronts and have more activities such as car washes, contact radio stations to make it a bigger event so fewer students are going door to door.

- A: Don't know how much more we can expand on store fronts. Currently have a large list to contact. The team may have to look at other opportunities whether it is volunteering somewhere.
- [REDACTED] Maybe early on, you should engage someone in the city of London to help you identify places that you can approach. Perhaps contact the city Hall to get suggestions. Are we looking at city limits or just around Western? There would be plenty of places to do other activities if the committee chooses not to do the door to door campaign.
- [REDACTED] Perhaps consult with Dave Cano at the Students Success Centre. He is leading the 'Days of Service' at Western. Dave can provide tips and suggestions or best practices as he has conducted larger scale events. May be CCR approved.

7) Charity Presentation: Subsidies

- Ryan presents
- SAM: In the past, the way things have run, the Charity team has had to purchase a number of items to fulfil their goals (shuttle buses, golf carts, training, etc.). Recently, the USC has come across some University policies that were passed by the Board of Governors which states we cannot use student fees for anything other than its intended purpose. We cannot collect funds and send it off to a place that is not part of the Western community. Shinerama and TFox are not an extension of the Western Community.
- Where this affects funding for Charity, there are a number of things that come out of charity donation – roughly \$13000 spent on administration costs.
- Approximately \$12000 is paid for through Owk budget or USC programming/initiative lines.
- This year we have a student fee for the OPass we are trying to figure out how we should be billing for SOPH training, golf carts, buses. Last year the charity paid for the buses to get out to the location and the Owk budget paid for the buses back to campus.
- If we were to try and support the charity initiative the same way as in previous years it would mean:
 - i) Policy change at the level of the Board of Governors
 - ii) Systemic changes to the way we have charity involved in orientation week
- Ryan will be presenting that charity contributes to the student experience. A lot of what they do during orientation week is primarily about the student experience and secondary is supporting CCFE.

- RYAN: The goal is not necessarily to raise funds for the charities.
- The funds used is not going to increase the donation at all. We are using the funds to bring students back to campus instead of taking public transit to create less stress and frustration to find their own way back.
- If golf carts are taken away, it would feel like the team is not truly orientation volunteers and not of use as other orientation teams. Our teams do offer a lot of support to the students and talk to students. The training we do is to better our interaction with the students, so why should we be asking the donations to fund our training; the training isn't to help to raise funds. If the training was how to solicit funds for charity, then the funds should be taken out of the donations. But the training is to help interact better with first years and to have a better transition and be diverse and promote equality, the funds should not be taken from their donations.

8) OPC Charity Subsidies Discussion

- Q: Is this training for the SOPH retreat and team?
- SAM: Funds for charity team training came out of USC VPSE program lines (\$1200); USC Team fees came out of VP Communication initiative lines (\$1500) (allocated student fees). This is mostly the meals. The training itself is covered by the SOPH fees.
- Q: Why is charity part of Owk if the Board of Governors does not want funds going anywhere other than Western? I thought the purpose of Charity during Owk was to provide them with a community experience and to teach them about philanthropy and good. You would be showing them various charities.
- SAM: The Board doesn't want student fees going to directly to charity
- Q: but if it is part of Owk, for Owk activities, then then Owk fee should be able to cover it.
- Suggest that charity be taken out of Owk and done at another time. If the University holds it as a priority, then what we are saying is that we want student to raise funds for organization that are priorities and important. Western has chosen United Way as its charity of choice and does quite well. Orientation week has chosen Shinerama.
- **Statement:** There could be an issue if orientation fee dollars are moving on to a charity but that is not what is happening. Student fees are going to support the activity that takes the students into the community. It's supporting in terms of training for the students who are facilitating an activity, its transportation to provide student's safety who are participating. Not sure it is a direct line.
- RYAN: The actual dollars is going to the student experience to go out into the community to raise funds for the charity. Part of the experience is going as a large group to perform these activities. The students are not paying a fee as a donation; they are paying to get there.

- Example: If you have a student fee, there is a purpose for the fee. The students who are giving the fee is giving it for a particular expense. We can't take the funds to use elsewhere. But this is an Owk fee and the student experience for Owk is to get them into the community.
- Buses are part of the participation, but supplies for the car wash normally do come out of the donation.
- DOREEN: Have we been given a directive that we are not in compliance or are we just concerned that we might not be?
- SAM: we are concerned now that it is a student fee and they can opt out
- The Owl fee goes to support a lot of different things. We can support the argument this program has value.
- LESLEY: I think we are looking for trouble where there isn't any. I don't think that is the intent of the Board of Governors ruling. The intent is taking the student fees and diverting them to something off campus instead of what they are meant for.
- RICH: not convinced Shinerama is truly a community service. For the majority it is getting on a bus and going to ask for money. This is how the program has evolved. Would like to see the program continue to evolve to a point that it becomes much more of a learning experience. Maybe the students should be doing other things while in the community such as picking up garbage and not necessarily asking for funds.
- [REDACTED] Ryan is excused.
- SAM: addresses the members and invites them to bring up concerns
- PAPY: Feel the buses should be covered if it contributes to the student experience. Papy has had discussions with many students and SOPHS and they noted that Shinerama does not contribute to the student experience the way we would like it to.
 - Feel it is very guilt driven, feel forced to participate in
 - it is the most prominent thing and the students feel they should participate
 - talked about fundraising and volunteering at a local level felt it might be beneficial to invest time into locally based initiatives – be physically and presently involved
 - what does the student get out of it? At least at car washes and in front of stores students get to engage with people
 - SUGGEST: perhaps switching up charities every year (plant trees, YWCA) or dispersed throughout the London community for 1 afternoon might be more rewarding and get more community members involved. Would make a big impact on London and a better connection with the city and people who live here.
 - values of charity is important but think we need to revamp the role

- need to make sure everyone is engaged to get the maximum amount of growing and learning out of charity and getting what the values have outlined
- JARED:
 - agree with community service learning
 - feel about Shinerama and T-Fox: we do it because we have always done it
 - previously, funds for buses has come from all student fees, not just first years
 - sometimes funding is provided to charity team to support SOPHS &/or volunteers not first years
- EDDY:
 - in training we asked for identification of values
 - each team has included something about charity
 - why aren't we critically analyzing charity? Why aren't we thinking about how effective it is? Why aren't we using our critical lens like we do every other aspect of orientation?
 - Not just from a few members around the table, but the SOPHS as well
 - Should have reviewed this aspect several years ago
- FOLAWIYO:
 - pressure/competition between SOPH teams to participate and raise the most funds, which we do not feel is the best thing
 - charity team doesn't play the same role as the other SOPHS do; other than Owk are they getting involved in the lives of the first years?
- CAITIE:
 - idea of supporting a local non-profit where you can really make a difference
 - contributing to London on a larger scale, feel it would be more supported
- SAM:
 - commitment that everything regarding Owk be discussed by OPC
 - asked Charity Team who do they volunteer for? Answer: Shine/TFox - reality USC
 - Charity Team had preferential treatment in past years. They have had oversight.
 - Shine/TFox charities do not get along
 - Shine is more – do whatever to raise money; TFox – more strict

- If the USC is going to continue providing a subsidy in the amount of \$12000 we need to get clarification from the Board of Governors we can ask for significant oversight. This committee has control over the Owk budget. If we want the student experience to be top priority we are going to have to set up that program, because it's not where it is right now.
- Charity Ball contributes to a large part of the student experience. It is one of the largest attended event other than orientation week. All funds raised pay for the expenses. No USC funds are allocated to this project.
- Wanted to bring this issue to the table last year but felt the people in the program did not want that to happen. VP SE didn't want this committee to get caught in a trap of the people at the top making the decisions and the students involved get feeling left out. Want this change to come from within – need buy in.
- TARYN:
 - Ryan hinted at the possibility of a full year commitment
 - we have charity committee which is different from the charity orientation team
 - Charity committee does a lot more local charity initiatives
 - Would not want charity orientation taking this on as we already have something in place
- LESLEY:
 - Feel many people didn't know the background of Shine/TFox
 - Why are we calling it charity? If what we are trying to do is provide first year students with community outreach or community service learning lets call it that.
 - If it is called charity – then you are raising funds for a cause.
 - If this can all be changed then it is a totally different discussion. We should begin at the root what does Owk want? Do we want charity or outreach for first year students?
- DOREEN:
 - Discussion has been focused on Shinerama
 - this committee has had multiple discussions in the past why first year students keep getting shaken down for spare change during orientation week (part of charity)
 - need to look at the whole deal

- arm twisting SOPHS and first year students being the primary donors to charity
- After 40+ years of supporting Shine & TFox, there is a publicity aspect here that will need to be managed with whatever comes along.
- The committee is going to have to have an explanation that is going to fly in the face of public opinion. Don't want to see "Western gives up charity for themselves". Needs to be carefully challenged.
- in favour of service activities over panhandling; does not mean the students will like it better
- If we are committee to that then let's move forward with it. Better than rotating charities.
- LESLEY:
 - we don't want to be critical of CCF
- PAPY:
 - people may be reluctant to hop on board since we have been doing it for so long
 - think students would get much more out of the student learning
 - if we are encouraging students to get involved in charity that it has to be for the right reasons – not for who raises the most money
 - need to discuss orientation cups
- CASSIE:
 - past couple of years seeing a shift from charity focusing less on dollar donations to awareness
 - values the charity team has outlined are in line with what we are talking about: co-curricular experiences, diversity of opportunities, united in a cause, first years and floors have an identity, getting involved in the community
 - having different service options instead Shine day is similar to Western Serves. Chance for students to sign up to volunteer in a local organization (at the end of September)
 - should we create the possibility to continue – have part 1 during Owk and part 2
- CAITIE:

- important to get the feedback from the students and SOPHS
- FRANK:
 - scrapping the charities entirely may not get the turn out we normally do
- SAM:
 - From CAS - Domain: humanitarianism and civic engagement
 - Dimension: understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences, social responsibility, global perspective and sense of civic responsibility
 - there is going to be a summit to get more feedback from others
 - make sure what we talk about here gets voiced in the strategic planning process as they are all about numbers. They are going to take the program where it needs to go.
 - This Owk not making any significant changes
 - Maybe try new initiatives with a small group of students
 - The capacity is a real issues; ruled out a lot of neighbourhoods
 - Suggest we have a small group from this committee to hammer out what the pilot project will look like
 - Charity Team was wondering if it was OPC's place to tell them what to do - Yes
- JARED:
 - every time there is a drastic change there needs to be a buy in to the change
 - if we have good evidence to suggest this is an appropriate change we should community it
 - don't want to halt progress by tradition
 - is the amount of support we get because of the charity name?
- LESLEY:
 - it's a philosophical issue whether we want charity to be part of Owk – if yes what charities do we support?

- If it was that Shinerama wasn't working, doesn't mean we stop doing charity.
- if not charity, what are we doing?
- CAITIE:
 - Ryerson cut Shinerama and it was in the news, but now it is forgotten
 - but the University continues to do other charity work
- DOREEN:
 - do we need to offer an alternative
 - are we doing charity, and if so, are we really clear about why
 - we could do community service that wouldn't involve charity at all
 - if we want to do community service – why
 - the 'whys' need to be grounded in first year experience
 - what are the foundational pieces around this?
- LESLEY:
 - The US schools teach students that they should give back money.
 - are we doing it to make students learn that being philanthropic is good?
 - need to know why we are doing what we do
- EDDY:
 - shouldn't be afraid of change as long as we can back it up with the whys
 - as long as we are ground and have a rationale
 - Owk program is changed from 5 years ago, but students don't know any different as they change every 4 years
- PAPY:
 - When taking feedback don't just ask would you rather do this or this, but ask what was your experience with Shinerama
 - ask all stake holders involved not just first years but SOPH, Faculty, those in the city and all the stakeholders involved

- RICH: SUMMARY
 - recognize that we need to much more before change can happen
 - will do our best to inform our constituents about the nature of this discussion
 - we don't want to upset the status quo
 - until we get to the point where we can say this is the change that we and the campus wants we need to respect what they are doing
 - we may see some change this year : reflection component, steer away from door to door, do more service type projects around store fronts

9) Fees Update

- CARRIE:
 - continue to work with registrars office
 - still some logistical things to be figured out
 - Fee bills going out soon but still a lot of information needed
 - Affiliates to transfer all fees to Western which is transferred to USC
 - USC then makes calculations and divvies out fees back to affiliates
 - Opt outs are also being managed by USC (mid-July – mid-Aug possibly)
- DOREEN: The affiliates will not be getting their fees back until January. So either the Affiliate or the Students' Council will be financing Orientation until then.
- A: the USC receives 80% collected by beginning of August; second remittance in October
- Can the affiliates keep their fee and only transfer over to Western the remainder?
- Carrie: The USC will need to receive the full amount of the fee to account for it.
- Q: How are we communication the opt out? What are the dates of the opt out?
- A: opt out to be done prior to students arriving on campus
 - wristbands to be delivered to residences
 - intention that the opt out will be on the orientation page
 - we will get final lists second last week of Aug of the numbers
- CASSIE: Summer Academic Orientation beginning June 18th; good place for sending out these messages.

- RICH: **ACTION:** going to be striking a committee to start planning out the distribution centers in residences, colleges and off campus

10) Working group updates? No

11) SOPH Appeals

- Rich made request yesterday to registrars for 64.5% eligibility requirement
- guideline packages for SOPHS and Orientation committees has been updated

12) Correction in minutes

- Minutes read that Rich be responsible for notifying students who were unsuccessful in being granted their appeal
- Correction: **ACTION:** The chairs of each of the 5 committees would send notices of the decision
- Q: Do students know the process to appeal?
- A: information was expressed at first training session for Head SOPHS
- Formal package is being released on June 5th, now available on OWL
- ok to forward document now to students
- those below 64.5% will get an official notice from Rich stating they have not met the eligibility requirements

13) Adjourn