MSA Retreat Minutes October 25th, 2014

Discussion Items:

1.) Executive Reform; VP Education, VP Communication (President – Samantha Lam)
2.) VP Community Engagement (VPCE – Charissa Ho)
3.) PARA rep (Past VP External – Madura Sundareswaran)
4.) Hosting CFMS in Edmonton (VP External – Ashlee Yang)
5.) MSA Financial Statements (VP Finances – Rohan Mittal)

1.) Executive Reform; Creating VP Education; Creating VP Communication, presented by MSA President Samantha Lam

Part I Executive Reform

Purpose: Reforming current executive structure, filling in missing pieces on MSA (priority is VP Education)

Goal: Discussion and recommendations from council members during the MSA retreat and November council meeting before voting for possible changes

- Currently, VP Internal is responsible for MD Ambassadors and Risk Management. VP Finance is responsible for all financial aspects of the council. VP Administration is responsible for the nitty gritty stuff of MSA, such as elections and procedures.
- However, there is nothing regards to education portfolio, and there is no point person for communication. Student Initiatives doesn’t fall under any portfolio, as well as administrative portfolios.
- Faculty gets confused with VP Internals’ job. Jocelyn is responsible for MD Ambassadors and Risk Management, but it is recommended to give some responsibilities to other positions, such as student initiatives. Currently there are three people responsible for student affairs, and it is suggested that VP Internal assumes responsibilities for all of them.
- These changes would be in effect for 2015-2016.
- VP Finance should have a lead on Joint Fund in addition to anything dollar related.
- It is also recommended for VP Administration to transfer management of clubs to VPI and formally add communications.

Discussion

- There is some concern that there may be too much workload to VP Internal.
- VP Internal’s position is heavily involved communicating with the faculty.
- Student Affairs and Academic Affairs may need to be considered separate, and currently they are under VP Internal. Maybe they are separate responsibilities.
- VP Education maybe should take on Academic Affairs, if the position is to be created.
• In other medical schools, LAW office is called Student Affairs, and possibly LAW office should be helping out with these responsibilities.
• It may be helpful to differentiate programs by including the word ‘student’ so that it is more clear on who should be responsible for them
• VP Admin has a lot of behind the scene work, so adding responsibilities to their portfolio may be too much.
• Often times, other universities have a paid position that is responsible for student administrative responsibilities. There is concern that the portfolios for VP positions may become too large.
• The president meets with VP Administration for a lot of smaller responsibilities. It would be nice to increase support for the VP Administration position.

Part 2 Communications - VP Administration and VP Communications

Duties of VP Administration include overseeing the Steth and MSA communications officers. We may include IT officers in order to have more effective emails. VP Administration also updates the MSA website and social mediate. They also edit the TV bulletin and they are the point person for communication reception and dissemination. VP Administration has a large portfolio, and creating VP Communications may help reduce their workload

There is concern that there are 6 VP Executive positions and that adding additional positions may be too much. However, other schools they tend to have more executive positions.

Communications officers are responsible for taking care of the Steth, MSA minutes, and Survival Guide.

Discussion

• It might be better to add responsibilities for the MSA Communication Reps to do.
• Although it would be cool for existing Communications Rep to do these additional jobs, they may have a lot currently.
• VP Communication may help facilitate communication between VP Administration and Communication Reps.
• VP External is currently helping facilitate communication between these positions.
• The issue is that there is no integration for communications. There is no centralized point person and it would make sense to have a communications team.
• There is concern that adding more positions may make things more bureaucratic.
• There are 4 Communication Officers and there is a potential team to be formed.
• Class Council Communication Reps is responsible for sending out minutes, but not disseminating them like MSA Communication Reps.
• University of Alberta MSA Facebook page is active, whereas other schools have inactive pages.
• Having a Communications team may help with transition between different years.
• Possibly combine Communications Rep and IT Officer since previously there were issue with communication between the two parties
In many organizations, VP Communications and Administration are two separate entities. Possibly a Communications Committee should be created so that they can report to VP Administration. It may be too much for VP Admin to do all of these functions. It may be better for VP Communications to overseas communication responsibilities and have Communications Reps help them out.

Part 3 VP Education

There is no curriculum component in MSA. There is also an issue regarding transfer of duties and knowledge from years 2015-2016. Even though curriculum reps are not MSA members, they often meet with Faculty and do a lot of administrative work. Second year reps also act as liaisons for CFMS.

Proposed change include having the curriculum reps advocate for all other classes and not just their own. Curriculum Reps were often asked about MSA topics such as Absence Policy even though they are not exposed to them as much during class council meetings.

Potential plan of action – this year curriculum reps will attend faculty and higher-level meetings, but next year we may elect VP Education. This person will act as liaison between student curriculum committee and Faculty/CFMS.

MSA Education Portfolio Proposal by Chris Novak

Created by Irfan Kherani, class of 2015 Co-Curriculum Representative, the plan to create an additional position in the VP Committee. The proposition to introduce this position last year failed but we will attempt to re-introduce it.

Year 2 Curriculum Reps are very busy with attending many meetings and are not recognized well by MSA. There is an increase role of course representatives that represent each block in the year. They also help summarize information from focus groups.

Discussion

- We may just need to have one curriculum representative from each class because VP Education would take on some of their roles. The committees would help divvy up the roles.
- It has not discussed yet whether professionalism portfolio would go under VP Education responsibilities.
- If changes are made, the changes will need to be unilateral, otherwise there will be holes and some responsibilities will not be covered.
- Possibly re-assess whether it is feasible for VP Education to include professionalism. Currently, professionalism reps sit in several MSA meetings and it may be feasible for VP Education to take part in these meeting as well.
2.) VP Community Engagement, presented by VPCE Charissa Ho

This position has been recently created for this year. If the position does stay on, we should propose a constitutional change where the position would be 2 years long, in order for the senior to help out with the junior. The senior would assist by supporting the current VP Community Engagement.

**Discussion**

- Is this consistent with other VP positions? Currently other positions have this written in the constitution.
- The current VP Community Engagement will continue to assess her roles and responsibilities

3.) PARA Rep, presented by past VP External Madura Sundareswaran

There have been suggestions to create a clerkship position where the person would take part in PARA meetings, rather than second year students. Currently, VP External is going to these meetings but it is difficult due to their busy schedules. In addition, VP External feels sometimes uncomfortable to comment on issues faced by clerks, and a position specific filled by clerks may be more beneficial.

**Discussion**

- Would second year rep go to the meetings in PARA? Most likely no; it would be more valuable to have this position going to these PARA meetings. This position can then report to the VP External, which should be sufficient.
- Clerks are in constant contact with residents, and may have a better understanding of their issues. Pre-clerks are not interested in PARA at the moment.
- How would they be transported to these PARA meetings? PARA provides transportation. If this clerkship position becomes official, the faculty will give them excused absence.

4.) Hosting CFMS in Edmonton, presented by VP External Ashlee

There are two main CFMS meetings, one in fall and one in spring. Next annual fall meeting could be in Edmonton. In Ontario, there are seven medical schools and they are easily able to meet with each other. It is very valuable to meet with other students.

This would be a three-day conference. CFMS hires a person for conference management. We would have to form a team, find sponsors, think of wellness and social activities and location

13 medical schools are part of CFMS and each school sends about 10 people, such as class president and global health representatives. If the meeting would be here, there would be much more participation from University of Alberta.
Discussion

• Where would the money come from? We would need a sponsorship team to find money for it, though CFMS contributes to it as well.
• We have money send people to fall and spring CFMS meetings. If we were to host it here, we can split the money to have more delegates sent to other meetings in the future. This includes hotel and flights.
• Proposal is due December 5th. This hasn’t been held at the University of Alberta for at least the four years.
• In the past meeting, Vancouver had 20 people in their delegate. There would have to be a cap on the number of students due to funding.

5.) MSA Financial Statements, presented by VP Finances Rohan

The total revenue from Faculty is 39 000 dollars. There one thousand dollars less due to SHINE, though SHINE is no longer part of the Faculty and Rohan will look into getting the money back. The total revenue is 129 200.

Nothing has changed dramatically in the proposed MSA budget. One big change is the deduction of money some organization receives, such as Community Health and PAC, because they did not utilize all of their funding in the previous years. In addition, the Interview Committee had their funding lowered.

The amount of money that MD Ambassadors will receive did not change. The same is for membership committees. FUME fractions have been combined, and Facilities receive the same amount of funding to keep the Fishbowl intact and provide supplies.

Rohan initially proposed to give to all clubs 150 dollars, though Chris Novak suggested that new clubs should only get 50 dollars in order to prove themselves before they receive more funding.

Discussion

• It is up to class council on how the treasurers want to spend their money; usually they leave the money for graduation.
• Net income is 734 dollars, which is minimal. However, many clubs don’t take all of their money that they receive, and thus net income will be higher
• It is not known on how to access Ledger money or how it is used
• MSA runs on surplus for many years. Last year the forecast deficit was 30 000 dollars, but then it turned out there was almost no deficit, despite installing the sink and buying a fridge.
• It would be good to have additional spending because if we don’t run into a deficit, money allocated to MSA will be reduced
• There needs to be a financial cushion since there is potential for imbalance due to unforeseen events
• There might be a possibility to switch banks in order to maximize benefits for students, though the same bank has been used by MSA for many years.
• Travel expenses are increasing every year, and there is concern that there may not be enough to cover the costs
• The 40 000 dollar revenue from the Faculty is set
• It is not a bad idea to have some money saved, because future budget cuts may occur and it may be difficult to send students to conferences
• Suggestion to increase FUME budget for future investments in student spaces
• We should find things to invest in for students, not just accrue savings over time, though it is important to have savings
• We need to find a way to deal with situations where flights will have variable costs depending on the geographical area. For example in the last conference, it was cheaper to go to Kingston by taking the train from Ottawa rather than flying directly to Kingston. We have no control regarding how much money we get from CFMS
• 2000 dollars for Facilities covers day-to-day expenses, but any large investments in student spaces would require speaking with MSA directly. Future investments may include buying new shelves and tuning the piano.
• There might need to be a separate budget just for textbooks in anatomy, because they will need to be replaced with newer editions and also from continual use
• One solution may be to buy books for the library and students can have access to them

Motion passes to adjourn meeting