

# *From of Office of the President*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



## Executive Summary

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Coming into this year I was expecting the President portfolio to be heavy and very challenging, but I never fully understand how difficult this job is. We often talk about how the president is a leader on campus and how the portfolio requires you to make hard decisions at times and having been in it for just a month, I couldn't agree more. This year is particularly challenging with the Student "Choice" Initiative, but the union will always hold strong, regardless of any petty attacks by those that serve to serve themselves.

The job comes with a level of sacrifice, but in my opinion, it's all worth it. When we see the results of the hard work and long hours, it feels amazing. From just a month in the job, I have never felt so happy with all the achievements and great events we have had. It is very gratifying when you see people attend initiatives that we put so much thought and care into. I must say my life became the UTMSU, which is completely ok, because this job brings me the gratefulness and appreciation, I need to stay motivated. I have also grown so much as a person in the last year and moving into this year. I have learned so many things and I have met so many people. I have also found a voice for myself and I am much more grounded than I was previously. That makes every sacrifice worth it.

Finally, our goal as a team for this year was to create an inclusive and accessible community on campus, and so far, I must say we have had a great start. We have made way for folks to come in and we saw that many people and groups have recognized our efforts. We have also stood up for our values, we have voiced concerns when needed. We have stood for those who are more marginalized, we have fought systems of power and systematic forms of oppression. So far, I believe we are moving towards the right direction, and there remains a lot of housekeeping to

complete, and we're well on our way to that. Creating a United Student community is no easy task; we live in silos, however, a united student community has so much potential and must always be worked towards.

## Agenda

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1. Executive Retreat
2. Hiring
3. Student "Choice" Initiative
4. Communications

## Executive Retreat

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The first task I had as the UTMSU president was to plan the executive retreat with Munib Sajjad, the Executive Director. Finding what was needed for an exec to know was easy due to my previous experiences being an exec at the union; however, finding how to teach everyone in an interactive way with such a short period of time was extremely challenging. I decided to focus on bonding over information, thus we had less informational sessions about Union operations and UofT & UTM Governance, and we focused more on team building and visioning.

We got to learn about the Student Movement, we brainstormed our vision and how Equity could be implemented into our daily routine, we defined the culture we want the Union to follow for this upcoming year and finally we became a family. We shared our experiences and our personal stories, and I am happy to say I became a lot closer to the 6 people I will be working with this coming year.

## Hiring

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Executives have a lot of work, and we rely on part-time staff to help us. One of the first actions taken by all of us was the hiring of the Part-Time staff that will be working with us to make sure our collective vision is properly done.

To start, we sat together as a team and decided the number of Associates and Coordinators we needed for the year. Then we out up job postings on our website, and we started the promotional portion of the work. We plan on having interviews over the course of the next few weeks.

## Student "Choice" Initiative

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As I mentioned previously this initiative has been implemented by our provincial government in an effort depoliticize organizations that have historically challenged systems of power. We take great pride in the work we do at the union, our academic policy work in unparalleled.

However, a wrench in our operations is not the end of the world, we will still continue to speak out against those that serve to hurt the most marginalized. We've been working with our administration to investigate portions of work the union does that is considered essential under this policy.

However, we will see our Student Refugee program gutted, our bursaries gutted, student jobs removed, and those decisions do not come lightly. We take pride in our work and making these decisions was really not left to choose. When we have our riding representative, Sheref Sabawy not even know what the SCI was impacting, it really is shameful.

## Communications

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Part of the work has also been improving our communications with our members. I am currently developing a social media and guerilla marketing strategy to create effective means of engaging members. Video posts, live stream are just a few of the changes.

A new website is also under works. Our current website is dated and does not provide ease of accessibility when navigating or trying to locate something. It is important for a transparent union to have their information easily accessible.

# *From the Office of the Vice President Internal and Services*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



## Executive Summary

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The first month has been a fun rollercoaster with transitioning into the role and grasping the complex yet exciting nature of the tasks. Most of the time has been spent transitioning and brainstorming initiatives to establish our year-plan. I've almost transitioned completely with just a few hiccups here and there! My goal for this month was to reorganize files, establish a ledger for recording accounts, updating confidentiality contracts and hiring part-time staff. We've revamped the structure of part-time jobs to account for the budgetary constraints created by the Student Choice Initiative. Time has also been spent on reviewing the details and benefits required by the new Health and Dental plan that UTMSU would be moving towards. Lastly, orientation plans are underway, and our team is dedicatedly working to ensure maximum enjoyment irrespective of budgetary constraints.

## Agenda:

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1. Executive Retreat
2. Part-time Staff Hiring

3. Health and Dental
4. Orientation

## 1. Executive Retreat

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The executive retreat was held to connect all the members of the executive team. It was a great learning experience and helped strengthen our understanding of the UTMSU structure as well as the structure of governance at University of Toronto. The evening time bonfires helped the executives share personal stories with one another which cultivated a pool of trust and allowed the team to connect on a deeper level. It also allowed us to have the space to think about and establish our year plan.

## 2. Part-Time Staff Hiring

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This year UTMSU executives and the executive director together decided to re-envision the roles of part-time staff-associates and coordinators given the financial constraints the Student Choice Initiatives puts on our operating budget. The part-time associate positions had to be cut from 12 to 7 roles to account for this financial change. Part-Time coordinator positions have also been reduced.

While evaluating these roles, we decided to harness the potential of commissions as outlined in our by-laws and restructure our associates to fit into those roles. As a result, we came up with general associates; associate operations, associate campaigns and advocacy, associate communications, associate events, associate policy and governance and associate volunteer management respectively. These associates are not specially under executive's portfolio but will be reporting to the executive team as a whole. The associate positions are limited to one candidate per role with the exception of two candidates for associate volunteer management.

In addition to these roles, we have the postings for coordinators for WeChat Team and Food center and Sustainability also up. The deadline for applications is June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019, The interviews will be held when the applications close.

## 3. Health and Dental

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Greenshield was chosen as the new Health and Dental Partner for UTMSU. We have had meetings with the company to review benefits and establish a plan design that would be most suitable for students. Opt- in and Opt-out process and deadlines are also being worked on under this plan

design. We will also require a Health and Dental Coordinator who will be hired by late June to help administer the services effectively. Marketing pieces which are in both English and Mandarin are also in the works. The next meeting with Greenshield will be fine tuning all these details.

## 4. Orientation

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Orientation planning is underway and making wonderful progress! The tentative schedule has been made and the orientation coordinators are working at an incredibly glazing pace. Interviews for Orientation committee are underway and is being conducted in a professional format. The coordinators are working under budget while trying to accommodate all the events given the new 3-day orientation schedule.

# *From the Office of the Vice President External*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



## Executive Summary

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It has already been a month since I started working with the rest of the executive team in UTMSU. There are so many words I can use to describe the past month, but I think the word adventurous will do it the best. It was an adventurous journey to learn this position. My predecessor, Atif said, “The position of VP-External is something that you have to define it yourself”. I am getting more comfortable to make decisions on matters that I was not sure before after my team has given me trust and confidence. With all the challenges that were posted to UTMSU, I know for a fact that this year will not be a boring year!

## Agenda

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1. Orientation Sponsors
2. Ace Orientation in UTM
3. Chinese orientation in China
4. Food Services in UTM

## Orientation sponsors

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For the past 3 weeks, I have been building relationships with a few gymnastic companies. With the help of VP-Campus Life and the two OCs, we have proposed a sponsor package to them with detailed prices and features. Out of the companies we have talked to, one of them offered a particularly good price. We have decided to close the contract with this company once the terms of the contract are finished.

Also, I have worked closely with the VP-Campus Life to design a Frosh orientation that provides the most excitement to students, while keeping the sponsors' interest in mind. This requires sponsors' contribution to the events not just financially, but with actual involvement and respect for our events.

This year, we will continue to execute our exclusive sponsor policy, meaning that clubs cannot bring direct competitors of our exclusive sponsor in during club-week. The coordination between UTMSU and UTM clubs has been ongoing all clubs have been cooperating. Therefore, I will continue to contact with companies of bigger business size to convince them to sign an exclusive contract with us.

## Ace orientation in UTM:

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The ACE program will start very soon in July. Since most of the population of the program are Chinese students, it is crucial to have a Chinese based orientation designed specifically for them. This year, the UTMSU WeChat team have agreed to a collaboration with the two most dominant Chinese club CSSA and CUA in UTM for the ACE orientation. The details of the event are still being discussed. The WeChat team, on the other hand, representing the UTMSU's effort to help UTM Chinese population, will host a Chinese based school tour, focusing on the needs of Chinese international students. However, the UTMSU will host a special night independently for the ACE program. Many communications still has to be done with clubs to make sure our event does not conflict with theirs. As a draft, the event will happen in the REC Room square one.

## Chinese orientation in China

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As the budget cut to student unions in Canada has impact UTMSU and the WeChat team, the WeChat team has decided that it will not host an independent orientation in China. Instead, the WeChat team, CSSA, and CUA have agreed on doing a collaboration orientation in China for the upcoming year one Chinese student. With the help of WeChat team members, a video is being filmed at the moment to introduce the purpose of UTMSU, WeChat team, and the student choice initiative. We are very glad to have invited professor Lee Bailey from the UTM Economics department to be a part of the video, as he will welcome the incoming students and discuss the issue that UTMSU is facing, in a different point of view from us.

## Foodservice in UTM:

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Foodservice in school has always been a controversial topic among UTM students. Many students have expressed openly about their anger towards UTM food services including problems of the catering service, food quality, and OPH meal plan. As the end of UTM food supplier, Chartwells' contract is approaching, UTM will have to review its options to the contract. This year, my goal is to start the transition of moving food service in house for UTM, because this is the best solution to all food services issues. I am currently designing a survey for September, to consult UTM students' opinion on moving food service in house. This will be a year-long project, and I will need assistance from different interest groups in order to make an impact. But the survey will be a start to show the university that the need for moving food service to in house is in UTM students' interest.

# *From the Office of the Vice President Equity*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



## Executive summary

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The first month in office has been extremely insightful and I am learning so much about our wonderful community on campus. As I get adjusted to my new role, I am becoming comfortable with processes and procedures of the UTMSU and of the campus. I am looking forward to learning more in the next coming months.

## Agenda

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1. Executive Retreat
2. Transition Period
3. Pride Month Planning

## Executive Retreat

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The first couple of days in office were spent on a retreat. This retreat allowed for us to learn about the UTMSU and it was also a great brainstorming opportunity on ways to operationalize our mandate and vision as a team. I found this experience to be a valuable learning opportunity.

## Transition Period

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The transition period was a major part of the first month in office. The transition period consisted of meetings with Leena (outgoing VP Equity) both in person and through online means, reading transition reports, familiarizing myself with bylaws and policies and main partners on campus (EDO, Out at UTM, WGEC, WSA, Caribbean Connections etc.). This was a critical time period for year planning and aligning my visions and goals for the year with community wants and needs.

## Pride Month Planning

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The last two weeks of May were primarily spent planning for Pride Month alongside university administrations. The UTMSU will be hosting the second annual Pride flag unfurling, a Pride BBQ with the Equity and Diversity Office and Campus Police, as well as a movie night (“Call Me by Your Name”) with Out @ UTM. We will also be creating a banner from June 6 to June 13. The banner will be finalized following the BBQ on June 13 which will allow UTMSU to showcase our campus pride for the rest of the school year. There will be a t-shirt making session at the Pride BBQ on June 13. I hope you all have time to stop by our events. I am looking forward to seeing you all.

# *From the Office of the Vice President University*

## *Affairs*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



### Executive summary

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The very first month of my term has already come and gone! I am very excited about all the work that we have started and will continue working towards our goals. Transitioning to the University Affairs Portfolio was a big part of this month for me as I learned a lot and received a lot of great help from many people. The first two weeks were chaotic, but it will definitely pay off in the long run!

### Agenda

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1. Transition
2. Executive Retreat
3. CFS and Ontario Executive Committee Meeting
4. Multi-Faith Space and Accessible Prayer Spaces
5. Academic Offenses
6. UTMSU X MSA X MESA Iftar

## Transition

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Starting on May 1<sup>st</sup> I began with the role as VP University Affairs. Having some basic knowledge of the role I spent the first couple of weeks transitioning and learning what the role does and what I can contribute to it. I spent some time going through and understanding The UTMSU Policy Manual, Clubs and Societies Handbooks, the Code of Behavior on Academic Matters, and the Constitution and Bylaws. I did further research in understanding the Academic Discipline Process and its overall structure. I also met with Jihan and Anita (Former Student Rights Coordinators) to gain further knowledge of how to deal with academic offences when they are directed towards me. I have also worked with Ramzi learning about Societies and what my role as university affairs are in regard to societies and how we work together.

## Executive Retreat

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The executive retreat took place on May 7th, 8th, and 9th. Informative presentations outlining the UTMSU, how governance at UofT works, the student movement, conflict resolution and many other important topics were discussed. On the retreat I got an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of our team members and how we can best work together for the upcoming year. We began preliminary planning of the year.

## CFS and Ontario Executive Committee Meeting

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After returning from the retreat the following day I headed to Scarborough to take part in the Ontario Executive Committee Meeting with The Canadian Federation of Students. Here I was informed of what the CFS is, its role in the student movement and the resources it provides to Student Unions across the country. Further planning was done on what they year ahead will look like and how our student union (UTMSU) will be

working together with CFS including working towards a possible skills symposium hosted here at UTM. A suggested time would be in mid-July however it has not been finalized as of this moment.

## Multi-Faith Space and Accessible Prayer Spaces

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Following up with one of our campaign processes Habon and I started working on the multi-faith space. We began with going into the current space to clean and organize it. It became evident that the space has been neglected for years and there needed to be some changes. We also came up with a strategy on what we can do to improve the current space that exists. We scheduled a meeting with all faith-based clubs on campus to discuss what they require from a multi-faith space and what they would like to see improve from it. Except for 2 clubs we received responses with feedback from all of them. This information was collected and planned modifications to the inside are currently being planned. I also began a preliminary proposal for a reflection/prayer and meditation space in north.

## Academic Offences

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Approximately three academic offences have been brought up to me each week in the month of May. Each academic offence typically deals with back and forth communication with the student, then a sit-down meeting together discussing the student's situation and assistance on how to navigate the system and come up with possible solutions for their situations.

## UTMSU X MSA X MESA Iftar

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During May, which is also the holy month of Ramadan for Muslims, the UTMSU, MSA, and MESA collaborated on the annual iftar dinner. Planning of the iftar consisted of weekly meetings with the collaborating groups and Ramzi. The event took place May 22<sup>nd</sup> in the evening in the presentation room and in the pub. Overall the event was a great success with a turnout of over 210 people. The food was catered by Al Mustafa Catering.

# *From the Office of the Vice President Campus Life*

**Executive Report #1 – May 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019**



## Executive summary

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The first week in office was a new way to view how the university operates. Learning how I directly impact students and their everyday lives. I am slowly adjusting to feeling comfortable about the role I was awarded. I am excited to see where this role takes me and how it challenges me as a person as well as a student.

## Agenda

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1. Executive Retreat
2. Transition Period
3. Pride Month Planning
4. Orientation

## Executive Retreat

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The second week in office were spent on a retreat. The retreat gave us insight on learning what the UTMSU gives and the origins of where we began as an organization. It was a opportunity to give us folks an idea of how we want to elevate ourselves as a student union. It was a valuable experience in seeing how we fit into the machine that is the student union. Not only on a personal scale on a national scale as well.

## Transition Period

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The transitioning period for me was rather hard. Unlike my counterparts, I did not get the opportunity to shadow my previous executive. So being in the office I felt a bit disadvantaged by not having that personal one on one mentorship. But with things like having the transition report and being able to find helpful contacts and opportunities through going through past VP Campus Life emails and compiling useful information. With the help of Ramzi (Clubs Coordinator) and Lilin (Graphic Designer), I am slowly feeling more at home in the office and able to properly gear myself and find where my vision for this position is going to. I have fulfilled getting my year plan honed into a more realistic goal for myself.

## Pride Month Planning

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For the past two weeks of May, I have been in collaboration with Habon (VP Equity) in Pride planning, alongside university administrations. UTMSU will have the honour of orchestrating the second annual Pride Flag unfurling, a Pride Barbeque with the Equity and Diversity Office and Campus Police, and well as a movie night (featuring the film “CALL Me by Your Name”) with OUT@UTM. We will be creating a banner from June 6th to June 13th. The finalized ballner will be displayed in the Student Centre on June 13th for #DispalyYourPride Day on all three University of Toronto campus’ and kept up for the rest of the school year. There will be a T-shirt decorating/ making session taking place in the 13th for folks to wearing at the Pride Parade with the UofT contingence on June 23rd.

## Orientation

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Starting from the 13th of May, the Orientation coordinators (Mitra and Tamer) and I have been working tirelessly on getting a head start of what UTMSU Orientation is going to look like for 2019. We are reaching out to sponsors and we have most of our orientation days confirmed and finalized on how it will look for September. I have been to working- groups and communicating with other Campus Life’s across the province to make sure our Orientation is a sustainable and as fun as possible. We are going through the process of interviewing Orientation committee members so we can fully maximize the work being done during orientation. We started off a bit

rough in terms of not having a full OC team ready for the start of my term, but we are now ahead of the game in terms of planning and getting organized and I am very happy for that.