

Executive Reports

May 2020

Mitra Yakubi

President



Executive Summary

This year started differently than I had expected, with the reality of Covid-19 UTMSU saw their first set of virtual executives. Conducting interviews and meetings online was rather new to me but I had to adapt as quickly as possible because with the current circumstance the virtual platforms will be our go to. The first month is already coming to an end, time does really fly by when you enjoy what you're doing. This month has been extremely busy for me as I'm transitioning into my role, attending back to back meetings and figuring out how to navigate through this pandemic. During this month we also had the opportunity to meet with Campus Groups and administration.

The meetings consisted of introductions, Covid-19 updates, discussions around priorities for the 2020-2021 academic year and future collaborations. Our priority as a team is to ensure that we continue to provide support for our students and represent their best interests during this tough time. This is why it is really important to meet other Campus Groups and discuss where possible we can collaborate to better the experiences of our students. As UTMSU, we



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will continue to provide programmings through our online platforms for our students and in the next month will be working in preparing care packages for our students. I do look forward to the day we'll be allowed for a safe return on our campus and can't wait to engage with our membership. We hope to create a safe space for our students and make UTMSU the home of our students and the student centre the hub of student life this year.

Executive Retreat

The Executive Retreat that was planned by our Executive Director Mary went extremely well and it gave the new executives the opportunity to receive the necessary trainings' to be successful in their current role. This full week of programming contained workshops on UTMSU, Student Movement, Union Structure, UofT Governance & Human Resources/Management. During this retreat we also did team building activities and icebreakers every morning which allowed me to get to know my team better. On the last day of our retreat we were given the opportunity to meet some past UTMSU executives, this was so exciting because hearing about their experiences as executives made me even more excited for my role. An important takeaway from that meeting was the importance of balancing our academics with our full time job.

Hiring

It's May and you know what that means? It's time to start preparing for Orientation 2020. This process began by the hiring of the two Orientation Coordinators. The next step is to hire our Orientation Committee which consists of 2 Sponsorship Coordinators, 2 Marketing Coordinators & 4 Logistics Coordinators. The Sponsorship Coordinator job postings were posted earlier as we decided that it was important for them to start as early as possible since the process of finding sponsors for Orientation is quite difficult and is even more challenging due to Covid-19. The interviews were conducted in the third week of May, the successful candidates will be contacted shortly to start their term.

Orientation

The Orientation preparation has now officially begun as mentioned earlier our Orientation Coordinators are now settling in their position. To ensure that our staff members are well equipped to perform to the best of their ability we prepared an Orientation Coordinator Transition Training. In this training, I had



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the opportunity as the previous Orientation Coordinator to share all necessary information related to the logistics of Orientation planning and execution. Our Orientation Coordinators also received an Anti-O Training alongside the executives. They are now beginning the first stage of their planning! The orientation team is not quite complete yet as we still have our Orientation Committee Members and Orientation Leaders to hire. The applications for all Orientation positions were posted on our website and advertised through our social media platforms. The applications have started to come in much earlier than we expected, which is quite exciting for us. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining our Orientation team, please visit our website utmsu.ca/employment/ and of course don't forget to give our Orientation instagram account (@utmsuorientation) a follow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mitra Yakubi' in a cursive, flowing script.

Mitra Yakubi (she/her)
President

Fahad Dayala

Vice President Internal



Executive Summary

Can't believe I'm through my first month as a UTMSU Executive. The position is a lot of work work and responsibility, I won't sugarcoat it, but with the right direction, strong goals and objectives, and help and support from literally everyone involved in the student movement, things have been very smooth so far. Adjusting into a completely new role has been an interesting challenge. However, with the help of a detailed transition report from my predecessor it has been fairly simplified, for which I'll be forever grateful. This past month I spent a considerable amount of time understanding the union's bylaws

and policies and being familiar with the financial procedures. In only a month, I have learned so much, which makes me nothing but excited for the remaining 11 months! As my good friend says, every year in the student movement is entirely unique, with new challenges and new hurdles to jump, this year we battle COVID-19, along with other existing student needs, and work our way around to ensure the safety of our members, and community at large.

Executive Retreat

Executive Retreat was a fun, bonding experience where we discussed our expectations and goals for the coming year, and set ahead a direction on how



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to benefit our membership. We set out tentative timelines for what we plan to do for our students, so stay tuned in for an amazing year! The pandemic affected our retreat significantly as we shifted to an online platform, but nonetheless it was a good foundation for us to build understanding, and set our priorities.

Hirings

The hiring process has begun! The Orientation Coordinators have been hired, and are now busy planning Orientation 2020. The Orientation Committee applications are up on our website, with the exception of Sponsorship Coordinators. The interview process for the Sponsorship Coordinators has already been completed so they can start beforehand, as reaching out to potential sponsors is a lengthy process. UTMSU Executives also get to hire associates and other part time staff. These job postings are posted on our website too, so if you know anyone who's interested, tell them to apply!!!

Services

One of the first things we did as a team was to go over the services we provide, and to discuss potential services from which our membership can benefit from. We also came up with a variety of strategies to keep our members engaged with UTMSU, and to promote existing services in a better way, so maximum students can benefit from them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fahad Dayala', written over a light blue dotted grid background.

Fahad Dayala (he/him)
Vice President Internal



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Lily Pan

Vice President External



Executive Summary

The past few weeks have been mostly about transition and the retreat. I was excited to start getting in touch and work with staff in the UTMSU and the rest of the executive team. Though we are working under very special conditions, I am gradually adapting to the new normal and this new position. I also believe in my team that we will always trust and understand each other, making our vision to the year possible.

Executive Retreat

The executive retreat was held on May 4 - 8. During the week, we were able to talk in depth about our roles and responsibilities together as a team, as well as learning more about the operation of the union. In addition, we were able to plan and map out the year based on our expectations. After the week, I have



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also learned more about my team. Overall, it was a full agenda, which made me feel enriched.

External Relationship Building

Building connections with stakeholders is an important part of the role. I have drafted and sent out introductory emails to some government officials, which have been partnering with us for years, to continue our relationship. Iqra Khalid, Member of Parliament has replied indicating willingness to discuss initiatives that can better support students.

WeChat Committee

I have discussed with active volunteers from the WeChat Committee about some plans for the summer. This includes making a series of posts through our official account on WeChat introducing the UTMSU and services on campus as a potential online version of the Student Handbook. A new section has also been developed allowing students to ask questions; some frequently asked questions will be set as automatic reply. In addition, I have started the conversation with our graphic designer of issuing a Chinese version of the UTMSU newsletter through the account.



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Noha Farawi

Vice President Equity

Transition

I was transitioned by the previous VP Equity, Habon. :) I was introduced to Martina, Tee and Nythalah from the Equity and Diversity Office and Henna from the UofT Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre.

Executive Retreat

A week of a lot of information. From the SWOT analyses with the team, UTMSU and Student Movement History Lessons, Union Structure, UofT Governance, Campaign Points Review, Anti-Oppression Training, Roberts' Rules of Order....and much more, this week expanded my brain (not complaining).

Winter and Summer Bursaries

Although winter bursaries were supposed to be done a few weeks ago, the pandemic came around and forced us to have to mail them out to every student, which took some time. Summer bursaries are also going to be online and I'm working on an easy way for students to submit their documents to us, since it's not in person anymore. Summer bursaries should be live on June 1st.

Interviews

It's the Orientation Committee hiring time. I sat in the interviews for the Orientation Coordinator and the Sponsorship Coordinator.

Virtual Pride Planning

Unfortunately, Pride month, which usually takes place in June, will not be taking place in-person this year at UTM. However, that does not mean we can't celebrate virtually :)

Anushka Sokhi

Vice President University Affairs



Transitioning

I began my role at UTMSU on the 1st of May, it's been a busy time since then, I spent the first couple of weeks, trying to understand this role and making a timeline for myself, fortunately enough my predecessor my made transition super easy and has been there since to support me if I have questions. I spent the first week reading the UTMSU Constitution, Bylaws and Policies.

Executive Retreat

The Executive Retreat took place over Zoom from the 4th of May to the 8th of May. Over the retreat we as the executive team learnt everything from the history of the UTMSU to how UofT governance works. We also met with past executives to learn from their experiences, as well as the Former President, Atif Abdullah, who explained to us how the UofT governance works with respect to the Union. We also spoke to about UofT Policies and Procedures. The team



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also spent a good part of the retreat talking about goals and expectations for the upcoming year!

Academic Offenses

Recently the number of Academic Offenses that Zayd (our academic coordinator) and I have seen has been an increase from the previous years, a big reason for this has been the uncertainties due to the pandemic. I spent the first couple of weeks learning the procedures surrounding academic offense cases from Zayd and have been lending him a hand ever since. We have been going through cases, setting up meetings with students, accommodating for the fact that a lot of students are in a different time-zone right now.

Societies

One of the things that is my priority this year is to start building a relationship with our societies. I am fortunate to say that societies have been responding with regards to setting up meetings about the upcoming year, their goals and expectations and how the union plays a role in the same. There has only been open communication between the campus groups and the union regarding how the re-recognition process for clubs looks like as well as what expectations to keep for the next year.

Tarwah Afrah

Vice President Campus Life



Executive Summary

On April 30th the Board of Directors voted me as the new Vice President Campus Life, and on the very next day I stepped into my role as the new VP Campus Life. Ever since my world has been a whirlwind of experiences, being the direct point of contact for all 110+ campus groups has been a tricky yet intriguing experience, I also have the opportunity of figuring out how orientation will be tackled in the midst of a pandemic. Vice President Campus Life is a dream I am now living and ever so grateful for, the role allows for immense growth in the realms of communication and organization, and without a formal transition is a role I am getting quite

accustomed too.

Executive Retreat

The executive retreat was a virtual training that all executives took part of, its purpose was to learn about the history and the structure of the UTMSU, as well as how governance looks like at the University of Toronto. During the retreat we also took part in a 365 day plan that would map out how our executive year would look like, and figure out some form of programming for our members to take part while we are social distancing. The retreat was on a virtual platform



however through icebreakers we were really able to learn each other on a better level. The executive retreat also connected us with previous executives who were monumental in our community's student movement and made UTMSU the forefront organization that it is.

Campus Groups

A large part of the Campus Life portfolio is supporting our campus groups. Campus groups provide safe and accessible spaces for our students, therefore one of my main priorities in this past month was to open up clean lines of communication with our campus groups and assist them in election doubts. I was also given the opportunity to chair several meetings where we were able to figure out how to make club elections more efficient via training for CRO as well as working on a clubs election handbook.

Hiring

With Orientation comes a whole bunch of hirings, first of which were our orientation coordinators Simran and Mev! In the past week we conducted Sponsorship Interviews, and in the coming weeks the executives will be interviewing potential marketing and logistics coordinators as well as associate and year round coordinator positions. I am really excited to expand our team!

Orientation

A lot of my work in the last few weeks has been centered around orientation, and how orientation will look like in the midst of a pandemic. The team hopes to deliver an orientation that is engaging, and fun while keeping the safety of our members in mind. During this time period there was also a good portion of the time that was focused on efficiently onboarding our orientation coordinators, to give them space to be as successful as possible.

Covid-19

Transitioning into the executive role during a pandemic was very challenging at first, figuring out how to have a work school balance as well as not being able to work collaboratively with fellow executives. Also as a VP Campus Life

figuring out how to keep members engaged with virtual events such as movie nights, Instagram lives, virtual shows.