

# Vice-President of Internal Affairs

## Summer & Weekly Council Report

Presented by: Brian Farnan



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# INTRODUCTION

- **My Name:** Brian James Farnan
- **Born:** Prince George, BC
- **Faculty & Program:** 5<sup>th</sup> Year; Faculty of Arts
  - Major in Political Science & Minor in Communications Studies
- **Experience & Platform:** [www.brianfarnan.com](http://www.brianfarnan.com)



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# ORIENTATION: INTRODUCTION

- Orientation Week is a 9-day period encompassing all the different events for incoming students hosted by a number of groups. Frosh is a 4-day event coordinated by either a club, group, or undergraduate Faculty student association and is primarily comprised of social activities. Frosh is part of the larger Orientation Week.
- Frosh is a completely student-run event, organized by over 90 different “Coordinators” across the Students’ Society of McGill University (SSMU), 12 undergraduate faculty, departmental, or school associations (“Faculty Frosh”), and 5 organizing committees made up of different interest groups (“Non-Faculty Frosh”), with support from staff at Student Service’s Campus Life & Engagement unit (formerly First-Year Office). Close to 700 student volunteers act as Leaders throughout the week and the events are supported logistically by approximately 300 Operations Staff (O-Staff).



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# ORIENTATION: PLANNING

- For this year's Orientation Week, the student executives and volunteers tasked with organizing Frosh events have committed to a variety of goals and initiatives that we believed would help address some of the past issues and incidents surrounding our events
- Working document with Orientation Goals & Initiatives:  
<http://www.mcgill.ca/firstyear/owweekgoals>



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# ORIENTATION: PLANNING

- Planning began in May and extended until the end of August
- **Orientation Week** programming was planned collaboratively by SSMU, Faculties and Student Services
- **Faculty-specific** programming was done by Faculty Frosh Committees (4-15 members)
- **SSMU-specific** programming was done by SSMU Coordinators
- **Goals & Initiatives** were created by **Faculty & SSMU Coordinators** and were enacted by **SSMU, Faculties and Student Services**.
- Orientation Planning was done in two ways:

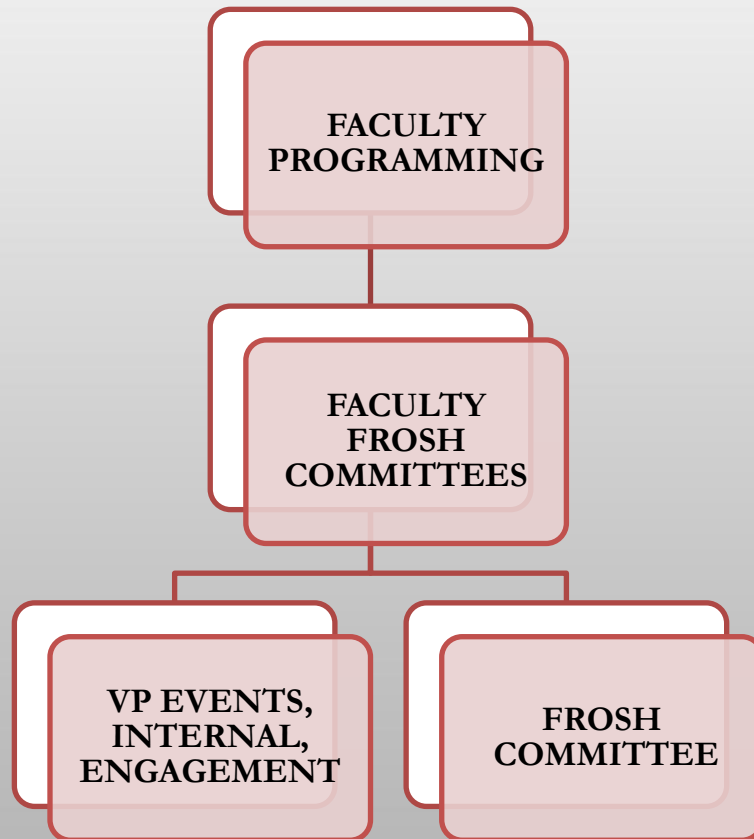


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# ORIENTATION: FACULTY PLANNING



- LOGISTICS
- OPERATIONS
- EXTERNAL COORDINATOR
- NIGHT EVENTS
- CHIEF OF STAFF
- HEAD OF LEADERS
- SPONSORSHIP
- INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING
- SCAVENGER HUNT

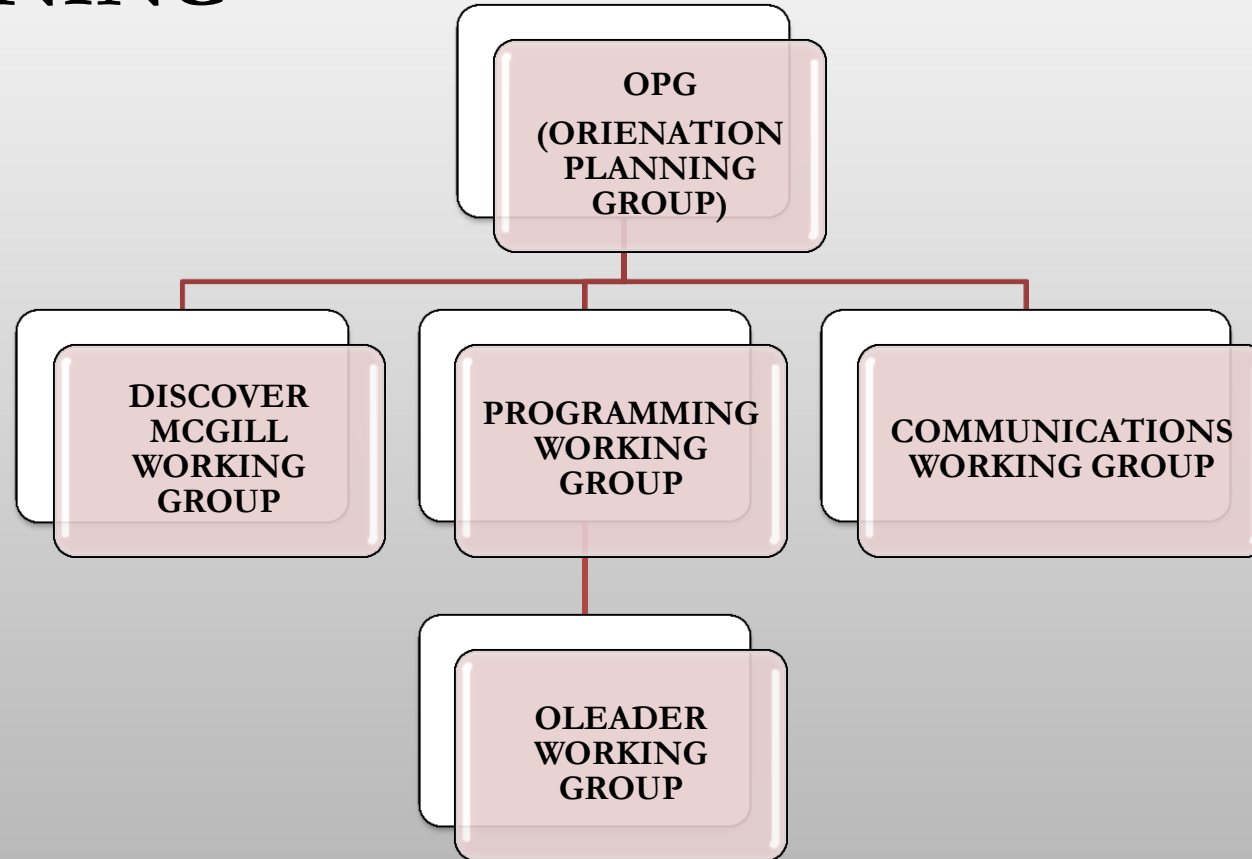


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# ORIENTATION: COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

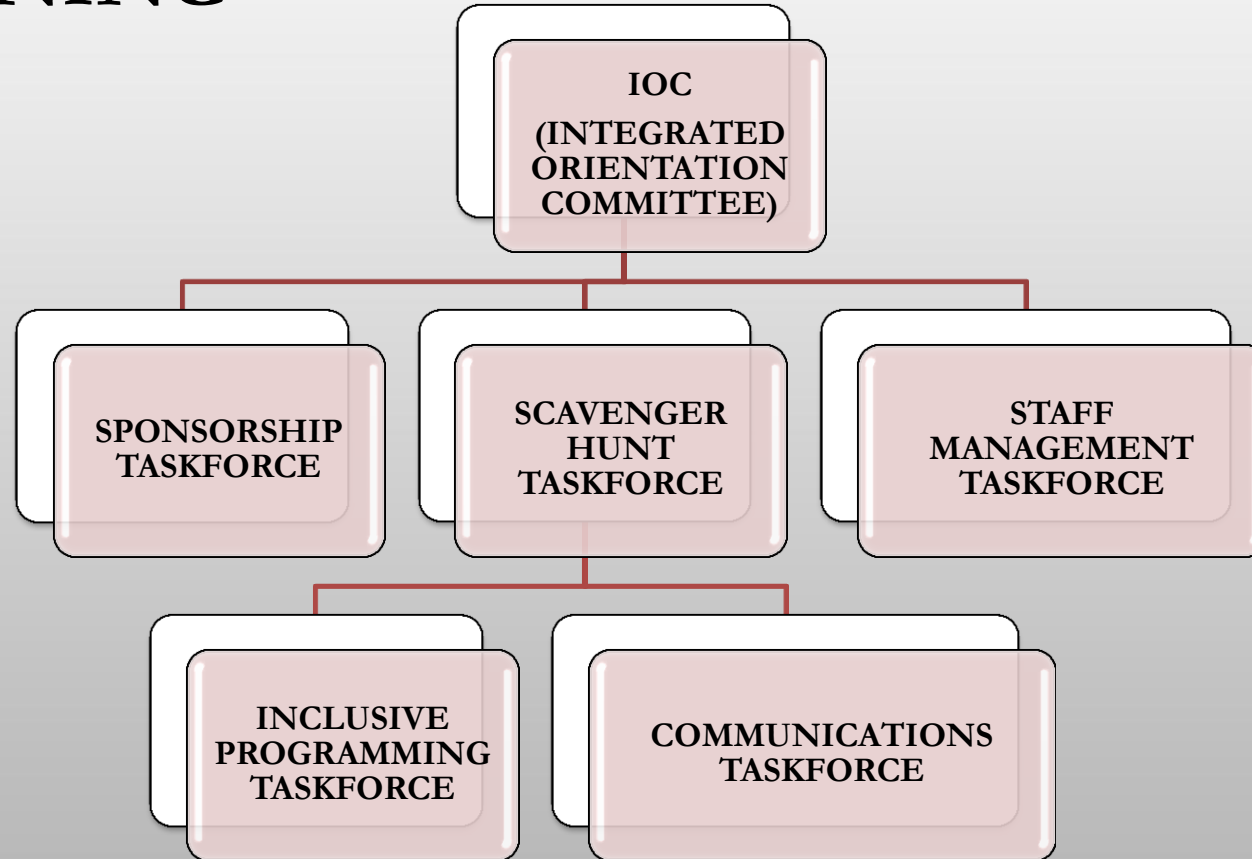


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# ORIENTATION: COLLABORATIVE PLANNING



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# ORIENTATION: GOALS

- Ownership of Culture Change among organizers and volunteers
- Continued development of Inclusive & Innovative Programming
- Collaboration & Integration by Organizers
- Eliminating perpetual incidents
- Lessening impact of Orientation activities to Non-participants (Students, Staff & Community Members)
- Ensuring long-term sustainability of Orientation Week



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# ORIENTATION: INITIATIVES

- More institutionalized system for Collaboration & Integration
- SSMU Communications Team
- *“MyWeek Gateway”*
- Faculty-specific training to reflect Culture Change
- Training for Operations Staff
- Enhanced Contracts to reflect Culture Change
- *“Chill Zone”*



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# ORIENTATION: INITIATIVES CONTINUED

- “Harm Reduction Teams”
- All-Ages & Inter-Faculty Events
- Custom Cloth Bracelets with Aluminum clasp
- Serial-numbered bracelets with Digital Incident Reporting & Recording
- Frosh Training Videos
- Frosh & Community Tips Posters: <http://mcgillorientation.imgur.com/>
- “How to Frosh” Guide: <http://www.mcgill.ca/firstyear/leadertraining/orientation-facilitator/orientation-manual/>
- Frosh Booklets
- COMPOST MONTREAL & compostable plates



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# ORIENTATION: REFLECTIONS- POSITIVE

- **Security Services** claimed this Frosh was the best executed Frosh that they have seen with regards to On-Campus Activities
- **SPVM** said general incidents were lower than previous years
- **Media** have portrayed the event in a positive light and all interviews & comments were done in an attempt to showcase the positivity of this year's Orientation (especially in light of "Frosh Week" in current Canadian context)



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# ORIENTATION: REFLECTIONS- POSITIVE CONTINUED

- **All New Initiatives** were implemented
- Succeeded in removing large majority of obscenities on Frosh Shirts
- New “**Beach Day Buses**” system was implemented and was extremely successful
- Most successful **All-Ages Programming** to date
- **Inter-Faculty Collaboration** perfected



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# ORIENTATION: REFLECTIONS- NEGATIVE

- **Community Relations:** Received negative criticisms from MPCC
  - Loud Cheering in MILPA
  - Crowds gathering on sidewalks
- **MSERT** had difficulty receiving support on the final night of Frosh at SSMU Concert & weren't able to distribute water due to Venue restrictions
- Better planning for certain initiatives RE: **Composting**



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# COMMUNICATIONS: GENERAL

- Seeking to re-vitalize SSMU Communications
- New Permanent Staff position:  
**Ryan Hughes, Communications & IT Director**
- Consultations with ASEQ & their Communications Department concerning Communications Strategy
- Communications & Style Guides
- Social Media & Multi-Media Overhaul



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# COMMUNICATIONS: GUIDES

- Project of VP Internal & Communications and IT Director
- Goal of outlining the Communication standards and best practices of the Society in tangible form
- Goal is to replicate the qualification of Communications Guide to other Executive portfolios and other relevant areas of Society's Operations
- **Style Guide**
- **Communications Guide**
- **Communications Plan**



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# COMMUNICATIONS: GUIDES

- **SSMU Style Guide:**
  - Outlines the Style & Design standards of the Society
  - Describes standards & protocols for digital and print media of SSMU (colors, fonts, graphics etc.)
- **SSMU Communications Guide:**
  - Outlines the digital and print Communications of the Society
  - Describes best practices & protocols for Building, Advertising, Tabling, Marketing, Digital & Print Communications etc.
- **SSMU Communications Plan:**
  - Communications Strategy for the SSMU
  - Outlines all Communication-related goals, benchmarks and strategies for upcoming year
  - Describes Goals and timelines for SSMU Communications
  - Bi-Annual Revision & Annual re-drafting



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# COMMUNICATIONS: WEBSITE

- Website updates completed through “Plank”
- Simple changes to Home Page
- Currently discussing re-organization of Website (External Affairs, Marketplace etc.)
- Ensuring all content is translated



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# COMMUNICATIONS: LISTSERV

- Received updated list of students this week—will be adjusted for next week's Listserv
- Awaiting hard launch of Soapbox software to gauge student opinion on personalization of emails
- To Note:
  - If a student/group wants to submit link is <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/about-us/listserv/>
  - If a student wants to unsubscribe, the “Unsubscribe Button” is located at the bottom of the email



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# COMMUNICATIONS: LISTSERV REFLECTIONS

- Most Recent ListServ was sent out with a term used in an inappropriate manner due to lack of oversight of content
- Working on best practices to ensure this mistake isn't replicated



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# COMMUNICATIONS: MULTI-MEDIA

- Collaboration with TVM on SSMEWS
- Goal of creating a multi-media based project to report Council news to student population
- Adhoc Communications Committee
- Soapbox Software
- SSMU App Development
- Simplify McGill
- Overhaul of Social Media
  - Increased Online visibility
  - Expand SSMU Communications to relevant platforms



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# PUBLICATIONS: HANDBOOK

- Largely under the portfolio of the President
- Very successful from design & logistics standpoint
- Investigating variations of Handbook design for future years



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# PUBLICATIONS: YEARBOOK

- CHANGE.
- Old McGill 2012-2013 was large disappointment from a logistical, design and financial perspective.
- Revamp of the staffing and management of Old McGill outlined in Communication Guide
- Large amount of research done on the design, stylistic and content of Old McGill and publications from other Universities



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# PUBLICATIONS: YEARBOOK CONTINUED

- Best practices researched through consultations and reviewing internal and external publications
- Marketing & Advertising strategy developed and outlined in the Communications Plan
- Commitment to:
  - Higher design standards
  - Photo-centric content
  - Expansion of Yearbook sections
  - Increased Promotions & Marketing of Old McGill
  - Better distribution & sales strategy
  - Balancing low price point with high quality production



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# EVENTS: GENERAL

- Maintenance of typical SSMU Events
- Hope of expansion of Francophone events
- Work with SSPN to expand the scope of SSMU Events
- Presence of Equity & Sustainability on SSPN and in general event planning process
- Collaborate with other Executive Portfolios & groups at McGill to produce multi-faceted events



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# EVENTS: AWARDS NIGHT

- Difficulties with organization last year
- Lack of standards & protocols
- Work with SSPN & stakeholders to concretely define rules & standards surrounding Awards Night and selection process
- Better planned “Ceremony” and Venue



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# EVENTS: FOUR FLOORS

- Work was done over the summer to brainstorm best practices for the event
- Work with Equity & Sustainability Commissioners throughout planning process
  - Event Specific Recommendations
  - Determining more concrete policies surrounding the event, dress & behavior of attendees
- Collaborate with VP University Affairs to launch first ever Costume Awareness campaign
- Ensure promotions & marketing of Four Floors clearly communicate standards of the Event
- Implement “Spare Costume” initiative discussed last year at Council



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# COMMITTEES: SSPN

- Call-outs sent out
- Guest Appearances from various Stakeholders (mimic Orientation Week IOC Meeting)
- Better use SSPN as a resource
- Expand SSMU Events base



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# COMMITTEES: FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS

- Currently in interview stage for Commissioners
- Process will be finalized in 1-2 weeks
- Start Francophone Affairs Committee by end of the month
- Collaborate with SSPN



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# COMMITTEES: COMMUNICATIONS

- Creating AdHoc Committee!  
**AdHoc Committee of Council: SSMU  
Communications Committee**
- Build off success of SSMU Orientation Week  
Communications Team
- Support system for SSMU Communications



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# PROJECTS: EXAM WELLNESS

- Conversations over the summer with VP University Affairs and PGSS
- Continue with Exam Wellness (and hopefully consistent Mental Wellness support through entire semester)
- Collaborate efforts on campus



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# PROJECTS: APP

- Did lots of research over Summer with Communications & IT Director, and IT Manager into SSMU App
- Had proposals presented to us over the summer
- None fit our requirements in time for beginning of year launch
- Continuing to research possibility of leasing software or developing our own
- Work-in-progress



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# PROJECTS: SOAPBOX

- Software purchased over the summer
- Proposal was given in the summer, researched alternatives, sought testimonials from schools using it
- Link: <https://justin.ca/soapbox/>
- Will be used to engage Student Population and garner more feedback



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# PROJECTS: MARKETPLACE

- Series of consultations over the Summer
- Collaborate with similar Student Groups on campus on this project
- Maintain current infrastructure and seek alternative methods of operation
- Goal of increasing it's relevance to student population



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# PROJECTS: TERRY'S CAUSE

- First official collaboration with Terry's Cause
- Was approached by regional director who hoped to start a partnership
- Will be gathering students at the Basin Bonsecours this Sunday 10:00am for the run
- Next year will be more institutionalized and registered online for donation collections
- Will be organizing a collaborative fundraising event in the Winter



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# PROJECTS: SIMPLIFY MCGILL

- Was a project that I worked on over the summer
- Currently stalled due to re-structuring of the initiative
- Collaborating with established Student Groups to find most effective method of solving the issue
  - Potential project for Communications Committee



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