



Report of the Vice-President (Finance)

Fall 2021 General Assembly

Summary

1. What does the Finance Portfolio do day-to-day?
 - a. Clubs
 - b. Services
 - c. General Finance/Accounting/Audit
 - d. Funding
 - e. Health Insurance Plan
2. 2021-2022 projects
 - a. Evaluation and Expansion of Operational Needs
 - b. Services and Funds COVID Surpluses
 - c. Re-examining our investment portfolio
 - d. Health Insurance Expansion for Trans Students
 - e. Other Goals/Projects
3. Involvement Opportunities!
4. Questions

What do I do?

SSMU Constitution

The Vice-President (Finance) shall exercise the following powers and perform the following duties: to ensure the long-term financial stability of the Society; to provide the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors with regular reports on the financial status of the Society; to develop the annual budget of the Society in a manner consistent with the governing documents of the Society and the priorities set out by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors; to ensure that no individual or group disburses the Society's funds without authorization; to manage any Society group insurance plan duly approved by the Members, in a manner consistent with the governing documents of the Society; to authorize all agreements that bind the Society and to act as the representative of the SSMU to the SSMU Daycare Inc.

Clubs

- Responsible for the creation, upkeep and management of all SSMU club bank accounts
 - Currently over 230 open accounts, with up to 460 individual signing officers
 - Complete reset of credit cards and user profiles once every September
- Troubleshooting issues with club's banking access
 - Faulty tokens, lost credentials etc.
- General support/resources
 - How to make certain types of payments, work with vendors, use RBC Express
 - Contract review

Services

- Budget review and variance analysis
- Purchasing approval and recording
 - Purchase orders + Capital Purchases
 - Overview of Credit Card use
- Contract review/approval
 - Like Clubs, Services are not legal entities
- Honorarium Payments
- Long term planning, growth, fee referenda
 - Service fees cannot be run longer than 5 years without returning to Referendum



General Finance

- Ensuring the long-term Financial Sustainability of the Society
 - Creation of the Annual Budget (December-March)
 - Long-term Financial Plan
 - Short-term Investments and Financial efficiency
 - Staffing and Operations Expansion
 - COVID Surplus management
 - Managing the SSMU's cashflows
 - Semesterly fee reviews/variances
 - Investment Portfolio
 - Annual Audit (August-October)
 - Day-to-day Financial Controls
 - Credit Card approvals
 - Cheque Request approvals

Funding

- Overseeing the disbursement of over \$350,000 in funds every academic year
 - Funds for every type of initiative, and available to **all** groups on campus, not just SSMU Clubs and Services
 - First Year Fund
 - Environment Fund
 - Charity Fund
 - Ambassador Fund
 - Club Fund
 - Campus Life Fund
 - Mental Health Fund
 - Equity Fund
 - Space Fund
 - Underutilized Funds
 - All of them!
 - COVID Surpluses led to significant roll-over

Health Insurance Plans

- All SSMU members are automatically enrolled in either the Health and Dental plans or Dental Plan only depending on residency status
 - Health Plan
 - Full prescription drug coverage
 - \$1000 Psychology Coverage
 - Tuition Insurance
 - Travel Insurance (Covers students on exchange too!)
 - Telemedicine Service
 - Dental Plan
 - \$750 per year covered
 - Full details can be found at Stuentcare.ca

Health Insurance Plans Cont.

- Current Work
 - Reviewing and managing plan reserves, and possible expansion due to surpluses
 - Reviewing e-counselling options and cost and whether Telemedicine is to be continued
 - Expanding the Insurance plan to increase coverage and address issues relevant to marginalized students.
- Looking for Members at Large for the Health and Dental Committee
 - Unique opportunity to do good and minimal commitment.

2021-2022 Projects and Progress

Expansion of Operational Needs

- As mentioned in the 5-year plan, our staffing and operational resources are much smaller than comparable student societies
 - This leads to difficulty in providing required services and causes overwork for current staff
- In the process of expanding our staffing operation and evaluate what specific departments require additional support
- Using the October Budget Revision as an opportunity to begin this process
 - Looking to spend most of the 300k surplus on expanding our staff.

Services' and Fund's COVID Surpluses

- Last year, a report was published detailing the large surpluses found within Funds and Service Budgets
 - This outlined important issues relevant to the Society's ability to properly use student fees
 - However, a lack of consultation led to a lack of input from Services, and the COVID-19 pandemic was not sufficiently outlined as a factor that had exacerbated certain surpluses.
 - As such, Fee Consolidation, the solution outlined by the report, will be implemented only after significant consultations are made.
- Alternative proposal: **Fee Consolidations (Currently being worked on by the Finance Commissioner)**
 - **Currently there are 17 Fund and Service fees that appear on e-bills (ranging from 0.10 - 3.97)**
 - These fees are hard to understand, the amounts are often very variable and difficult to accurately plan (no Service ever nets to 0 comfortably and restricted five-figure surpluses are not uncommon), and are not indexed which prompts large and often unnecessary increases every 5 years
 - Consolidating Funds and Services' fees into a single fee **or** into the base fee has a number of benefits
 - Can be indexed to inflation - so fewer referenda needed and fewer long term fee increases
 - Easier to understand E-Bills
 - Service fee amounts can be adjusted internally as necessary between fiscal years rather than levying new fees or fee increases.
 - No need for deficit spending, and large projects can still be planned in advance
 - Rewards Services with efficient finances through access to surplus fees for new projects

Re-examining our investment portfolio

- Current short-term investments are locked up in GICs
 - These have very low interest, and could be safely replaced with high-yield short-term corporate bonds.
 - This would likely double our net gain from interest.
 - These bonds would still be restricted by our ethical investment policies
- Long-term investment re-evaluation
 - Adding the Awards of Distinction Fund into long-term investments would allow us to have many more Awards of Distinction to award to students.
 - Risk would also be incredibly low
- In consultation with our investment firm and our comptroller, will hopefully be fully done by the end of this semester.

Health Insurance Expansion

- Consultations with groups, experts, and services on campus on how to best improve the insurance system
 - Currently focused on increasing services for Trans students, specifically looking at subsidizing voice training, brand-name prescriptions, and increasing access to trained medical professionals
 - Looking at other issues that will affect students, like a continuation of telemedicine with Dialogue, and an expansion of our coverage for therapy and mental health services.
 - Lacking Members-at-Large for the Health and Dental committee: please apply!

Other Goals/Projects

- Finishing banking access for clubs
 - Many clubs delayed their submission of the Banking Services Contract
 - All september applications have been filed, working on the October ones this week
 - Currently in contact with RBC to create bank accounts for clubs without them
- Working on securing tenants for the UC and 3501 Peel
 - In contact with a few prospective tenants, hoping to move forward on these as soon as possible.
- Making changes to the IRs of finance and Student Groups
 - Some loopholes with regards to our ethical investment policy
 - Changing the timeline on the Budget Revisions for services as they do not accurately reflect reality
 - Clarifying what is/isn't allowed when operating as a student group
- Expanding Bilingualism in the Portfolio
- Giving students the opportunity to learn more about the Finance portfolio

How can I get involved!

Committees in need of Members at Large and opportunities to participate in Governance:

- Health and Dental Review
 - Members-at-Large
- Attend Public Sessions of the Legislative Council and Board of Directors
- Run for office!

Questions?

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