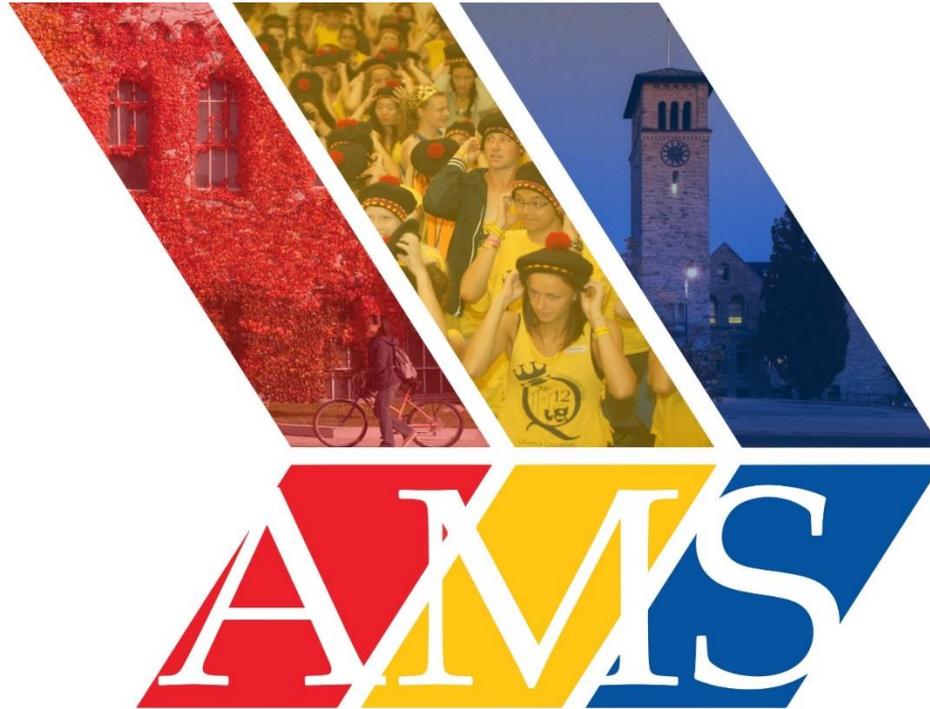


STATE OF THE SOCIETY 2015-2016



KANIVANAN CHINNIAH

KYLE BEAUDRY

SARAH LETERSKY

Since the Alma Mater Society's establishment over 150 years ago, it has adapted, endured, and grown. It has had numerous big achievements, all of which it should be proud of. From building Grant Hall, which students were at the forefront of, to creating the Oil Thigh and the Tricolour, the AMS has always been about enhancing the student experience.

One of the pitfalls of the AMS is that we chase those moments. We want those moments to be replicated year over year, and our Executive believe that is wrong. At the beginning of our term, we emphasized the need for continuity with past leaders' objectives and visions, while continuing to adapt to a changing University environment and student needs. For us, it was of the utmost importance to recognize our place in a long history of student leadership. Our modus operandi was that we were just one chapter in the long book that is the AMS.

We wanted to re-engage with students, and we felt that it was important to not begin the year with a laundry list of things. In our view, it was important to acknowledge that first, we don't have a monopoly on student leadership, second, we can't be everything to everyone and third, we can't try to chase these big moments year over year. With this in mind, we recognized that our work this year was two-fold: we wanted the AMS to be more accessible to the student body, and to advocate for the sustained quality of our education and support services. We took many opportunities to do things differently; we took the chance to re-define the traditions of the AMS by making it more open to the students we are here to serve.

Our platform was never meant to be exhaustive, and it was not our only guiding document for the year. The following document outlines the projects we pursued this year, as well as our long-term advocacy initiatives. From Day 1, we were committed to building and shaping the future of a different AMS; an AMS that pushed for input from 17,000 students, not just from the 55 students working within.

We look forward to sharing our accomplishments and challenges at the upcoming Annual General Meeting, and we welcome any questions or comments.

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Kanivanan, Kyle, and Sarah

PLATFORM REVIEW

PILLAR 1: SERVICES & SUPPORT		
Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Bus Service Evaluation	The AMS met with the City of Kingston to discuss what modifications could be made to the current contract. After several meetings, it was decided that the best modifications for students would be with Routes 17 and 18. Next year, the City of Kingston will offer bus service through the University District, quicker service to and from West Campus and Main Campus, and longer hours on Sundays so students can get home from the bus station without needing a cab.	While the contract does not expire until 2017, we encourage the new team to remain in constant communication with the City of Kingston. The City collects ridership data on all the bus routes, and they are open to making modifications that fill within the scope of the agreement. Therefore, there is room to consistently review the routes and seek feedback.
ARC People Counter	This initiative has been modified since its original vision. After extensive consultation with Athletics & Recreation, and feedback collected from students who were unhappy with the operating hours in the fall, the AMS pushed Athletics & Recreation to publicize graphics that showcase peak times and volumes. These graphics showcased the peak times and volumes, and were published on the AMS Facebook Page. The intent of these graphics was to provide the same information as the People Counter.	The AMS must follow-up and seek student feedback on the graphics, and pass this on to Athletics & Recreation. Depending on the feedback received, the graphics should be adjusted, or cancelled in favour of pursuing a different method of communication. While only a few graphics have gone out since the fall, each of which had a high level of student engagement, and the AMS must ensure that Athletics & Recreation continues to make the data available.
Customer Service Audit	A customer service audit of all corporate services is ongoing. Roughly 15 AMS interns are rotating	The results of the Customer Service Audit should be used for next year's goal planning process. The

	<p>through the services to evaluate the level of service they receive. The evaluation criteria were carefully selected with the help of the Marketing Research Coordinator. The results are being collected anonymously and will be available for next year's management teams.</p>	<p>intent of the audit was to ensure consistent customer service across all AMS services, and any poor results should be addressed by next year's management teams. Concrete action items for improving the student (customer) experience should be listed in the goal plan.</p>
<p>Expanded Seating at Common Ground</p>	<p>Alterations to the seating layout at Common Ground were planned during the summer months, and the new seating was implemented in the fall. Three large powered tables were installed and all large furniture was replaced with coffee tables and chairs. We added over 50 additional seats and the total number of seats available now equals the space's maximum capacity.</p>	<p>While no immediate changes should be made to the seating design, it is important that the management team of the Student Life Centre stay focused on other areas of improvement for increasing capacity. The diminishing amount of available space on campus must be addressed at multiple angles, and focusing on what spaces the Student Life Centre can improve is a good start.</p>
<p>Enhancing Student Card Value</p>	<p>We have had several discussions with Housing & Ancillary Services throughout the year. While more uses for the student card will not be available in 2016-2017, the University recognizes that this is a student need, and will work to implement this in the coming years. There are significant costs that arise from adding external vendors to the current system.</p>	<p>We advise the incoming AMS leadership to make this a priority so long as it does not create a large cost burden. While there is value to pushing this point, the AMS should not pursue it if the financial impact would negatively affect the AMS, and by extension, the student body.</p>
<p>Resource Briefs for Faculty Societies</p>	<p>We created a customized Faculty Society Agreement for each Faculty Society Executive to review and sign before the start of the academic year. This agreement was focused on insurance coverage, liability, and AMS resources. It served as an exceptional tool to incoming student leaders, as they were able to understand how they interacted with the AMS in</p>	<p>In recognition of the fact that all student leadership positions turn over annually, these agreements must be renewed every April/May. The incoming AMS Executive should review the previous agreements in conjunction with the new Faculty Society Executives and make the necessary adjustments.</p>

	<p>crucial areas such as student activity fees and insurance. Developing these agreements also helped the AMS form positive working relationships with Faculty Society Executives before the school year began.</p>	
<p>Insurance Information Packages for AMS Clubs</p>	<p>In addition to increased communications with Faculty Societies, we created an informational brochure on the event sanctioning process. This was distributed by the Clubs Manager to over 270 club leaders, and discussed with student leaders in Faculty Society Assemblies. This was the first of many steps towards making all AMS clubs aware of the event sanctioning process.</p>	<p>This brochure should be modified and re-distributed by the Clubs Office during the Summer and Fall of 2016. The brochure cannot be the be-all and end-all of our communications with Clubs. The incoming Executive has addressed this in their platform, and the information about sanctioning must continue to be top of mind in their conversations next year.</p>

PILLAR 2: BROADER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
<p>More Study Space on Campus</p>	<p>With the finalization of the Library and Archives Master Plan (LAMP), the University has committed to increasing the amount of available study space on campus in the coming years. Space on campus is at the top of the administration’s priority list this year, and this is proven by their plan to reopen and revitalize the PEC and our libraries. On a smaller scale, the additional seats at Common Ground are a practical example of the AMS working within their means to enhance the amount of available study space on campus.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing, university-wide issue, and as our campus continues to grow it will not be dissipating anytime soon. As a result, incoming AMS leaders must continue to keep study space in mind. They should reflect internally to determine what opportunities lie within the AMS’ control, and externally to prioritize which areas would best benefit students. For example, examining study spaces at The Brew or increasing openings at Wallace Hall.</p>
<p>Increased Support for First to Second Year Transition</p>	<p>This year, alongside of our first year interns, we are hosting our very first transition workshop for first years. The workshops will take place mid-March and focus on study tips, housing, summer job opportunities, educational opportunities and major planning.</p>	<p>Support for students is fragmented; the AMS, Faculty Societies, community groups and the University all run a variety of initiatives throughout the year. Therefore, the AMS must ensure that these initiatives are not best served elsewhere. The success of this year’s workshops will be measured and future series of this kind will be determined following the collection of feedback from attendees. It has proven invaluable to include first years in the planning process thus far, and should the workshops continue, it is recommended that first years are at the forefront of the planning process.</p>

<p>Collaborative and Supportive Student-Run Orientation</p>	<p>In our platform we stated that oversight over all logistical details and events during Faculty Orientation Week should reside with respective Faculty Societies. Orientation Week ran smoothly this past September, despite a later than anticipated start. It was once again a highlight of the year, thanks to the hard work of the Orientation Roundtable and Faculty Society leaders. Specifically, student leaders worked to change various aspects of their respective weeks to ensure that all incoming students felt comfortable.</p>	<p>It would be naive to state that there are no areas for improvement with Orientation Week, however, change should not be made without evidence from students. While we recognize the need for the Senate Orientation Activities Review Board to have a level of oversight, we strongly believe that a culture shift will not come from over-reaching enforcement from administration. Productive change must come from students, and all decisions must be rooted in student-focused evidence in order to positively impact the Orientation Week experience.</p>
<p>Experiential Credit</p>	<p>The AMS has worked alongside the Arts & Science Undergraduate Society and the Faculty of Arts & Science to implement an experiential credit, with a proposal set to go forward to Faculty Board before the end of the year. If successful, students within the Faculty of Arts & Science will have the opportunity to take a course that does not count towards their GPA. This will positively impact the student experience on campus, as students will be able to explore new areas of interest without worrying about their marks. The implementation of the Experiential Credit will enhance the broader learning environment at Queen's.</p>	<p>This initiative must be monitored closely by the Executive and the Commissioner of Academic Affairs in the coming year. The Experiential Credit is a project that requires the support and cooperation of the University Administration, as the AMS must continue to hold a seat at this table. Following the first year of implementation in Arts and Science, it would be valuable to conduct a survey of students and professors who participated in the courses.</p>
<p>Clear Credit Mobility</p>	<p>Our advocacy work with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) has allowed us to ensure students have stronger credit mobility at Queen's. Having a seat on the Ontario Council of Articulation</p>	<p>The AMS should continue to have a seat through OUSA on ONCAT, so they can advocate for students in the Ontario post-secondary education system. The AMS should also work with Queen's</p>

	and Transfer (ONCAT) allows us to support projects aimed at creating clearer pathways for students when it comes to credit mobility. The system of student mobility should be transparent, consistent and supported.	and other Universities to develop a common framework for credit transfer policies. A mobile post-secondary system gives students the opportunity to complete their education at the institution that best meets their needs.
Richardson Stadium Development	The University administration has been very clear that there were several donor requirements to starting this capital project. In late 2015, the outgoing Executive affirmed disappointment with a design element of the stadium that appeared to neglect student safety: the 6-foot drop between the bleachers and the field. Since this time, the position of the AMS has been made clear to the University administration.	The construction is scheduled to be complete by fall 2016. At this time, AMS leadership must reaffirm our concerns that were brought forward during the construction process. If the Queen's Student Constables do not feel comfortable working at this venue the AMS Executive must stand by students and hold the University accountable.
ReUnion Street Festival	With the onset of the ReUnion Street Festival this year, the previous administration added an element of student programming to Orientation Week that was well received by the student body and alumni alike. In addition to a signature event put on by the AMS, the Festival also ensured that students and alumni celebrated homecoming respectfully in a safe and controlled environment. This year, with assistance from the University and led by the ReUnion Street Festival Coordinator and Advancement Officer, the Festival operated without major issues.	Our platform outlined a desire to ensure that future iterations of the Festival gradually weaned off student money. However, due to the reputational issues with Queen's homecoming, the Festival was not able to obtain any stable source of external funding this year and continues to depend on a mandatory \$12.50 student activity fee to operate. In the coming years, the Festival will increasingly become a fixture of Queen's homecoming. In light of this, future AMS Executives should seriously evaluate the AMS's continued financial involvement in the endeavor.

PILLAR 3: ACCESSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Enhanced AMS Recruitment	<p>Our platform identified the pitfalls of AMS recruitment practices and we sought to improve pan-Society recruitment efforts. The AMS this year pursued several initiatives to increase applicant numbers and applicant quality. Upon hiring our team, the Human Resources Office identified the specific barriers faced by our more external hires. This resulted in us identifying the proposal writing process contributed to the decline of external representation in the AMS. Therefore, the AMS eliminated the use of proposals for the 2016-17 recruitment period, resulting in a 40% increase in Executive report applicants, a 60% increase in corporate service manager applicants, and a 20% increase in government manager applicants.</p>	<p>The AMS thrives when it can attract the best and brightest students to serve in leadership roles. All AMS staff must therefore have as enriching an experience for themselves as it is for the students they serve. The AMS must always ensure that this value proposition is at the forefront of all recruitment efforts. Future administrations should be cautious in increasing salaries for AMS staff as a solution to boost recruitment. The AMS has to remain, first and foremost, a student government where students serve their fellow students. While salaries should always remain competitive, they should not increase to the point of over-professionalizing AMS roles.</p>
Financial Accountability through Controlled Spending	<p>When we were creating our platform, we noticed that there was a staggering increase in the amount of government-side funding that was difficult to trace back to an equivalent increase in programming. Our original position was to cap the commission and office budget year-over-year increases to the inflation rate. However, the more practical solution was to keep this topic top of mind during the budgeting process. This problem was also mitigated by the creation of Commission Review Boards in the</p>	<p>Moving forward, it is important that the AMS keep controlled spending in mind. An increase in spending must be commensurate with an increased level of programming, and this programming must be identified as an area of student need or opportunity. While it may not be prudent to restrict each commission or budget to a specific rate, it is important to curb the trend of year-over-year increases for the sake of “doing more.” The Vice-</p>

	<p>spring of 2015, which gave Assembly members the opportunity to critically review the Commission's budget outside of the regular meeting.</p>	<p>President (Operations) should consider this throughout the summer budgeting process.</p>
<p>Budget Transparency</p>	<p>The Consolidated Budget was completed in August of 2015, and released for review to the student body in mid-fall. This is the first time the budget was released online and on social media for public review. We believed that this was an important step to making the AMS a more transparent organization.</p>	<p>The financial transparency must continue, and the AMS should seek to publicly promote the release of the budget. The AMS must strive to make the student body aware of the Consolidated Budget. This must continue to be the responsibility of the Vice-President (Operations).</p>

PILLAR 4: STUDENT ADVOCACY

Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Peer Support Centre (PSC) Reform	<p>This year, the PSC has been able to offer SafeTALK Suicide Alertness training free of charge to approximately 90 students. Partnerships with Queen’s Jack.org, Mental Health Awareness Committee (MHAC) and Elephant in the Room has made this possible. Our support services work best when they partner with other campus groups to offer the best possible services.</p> <p>In addition to offering SafeTALK sessions to students, the Academic Grievance Centre (AGC) was amalgamated with the PSC beginning in the 2016-2017 year. This expansion of the PSC allows a wider range of support services to be offered to students, including information regarding Queen’s academic policies and procedures. This merger also provides the PSC with an additional support space, to be shared with the Housing Resource Centre.</p>	<p>The PSC should continue to partner with student groups on campus to ensure training programs such as SafeTALK remain accessible to students.</p> <p>The progress of the PSC/AGC merger should be monitored closely by this year’s PSC Director alongside of the Commissioner of Social Issues and Commissioner of Academic Affairs. If the merger proves successful, by monitoring student input, volunteer feedback and survey data, the PSC should continue to offer academic support.</p>
Sexual Assault on Campus	Queen’s interim protocol fits well with the recommendations in the Ontario government’s Bill 132. With a strong focus on student input into the development of a sexual assault policy and its triennial review, students are sure to be at the forefront of discussions for years to come. The implementation of a Sexual Violence Prevention and	With the upcoming hiring of a Queen’s Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator position, the AMS should work alongside of the University to ensure educational programming is collaborative and consistent. Student groups on campus should continue to play a large role in advocating and educating students about sexual

	<p>Response Coordinator will serve as a liaison between pre-existing student groups on campus, including the AMS, and the University on educational programming and campaigns. The University's final draft was passed at the Board of Trustees on March 4th.</p>	<p>assault prevention and response. However, this Coordinator should work alongside of them to ensure all messaging is consistent. The AMS should monitor the success of the position under the guidance of the Student Affairs office, and focus on cementing a more permanent location for the Coordinator, either through a Sexual Assault Centre or Student Wellness Services.</p>
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PILLAR 5: HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY

Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
<p>Communicating the Health and Dental Plan</p>	<p>It does not take too much research to uncover that Queen's students have an exceptional Health and Dental Plan. It offers medical, dental, vision and travel coverage at a very affordable price. However, each year students claim that they were not aware of the plan and its benefits. Even more, students have stated that they were not aware of the opt-out period dates. This year, we worked towards eliminating issue. First, we streamlined the opt-out period to occur solely during the month of September. In the past, the dates to opt-out of the Health and Dental plan were separate from the opt-out date for optional student fees. Second, we increased communications during the summer months in the Journal Summer Edition and SOAR, to educate students and parents before they arrived at Queen's.</p>	<p>We believe that the AMS must do everything in its power to communicate the benefits of the Health and Dental plan, as well as the opt-out period to the student body. While the onus to opt-out ultimately rests with the student themselves, we must do our part. We recommend continued efforts be made by the AMS Marketing and Communications Office to educate students and parents during the summer months leading up to Orientation Week.</p>

	<p>Lastly, we used all digital signage in the Student Life Centre.</p>	
<p>Advocacy on the Health and Wellness Centre</p>	<p>During our term it became clear that the University's vision for a revitalized Health and Wellness Centre in the Physical Education Centre (PEC) was more than just an idea. The University is well underway to re-developing the building, which will be focused on three areas: innovation, health and wellness, and student life space. We anticipate that construction will begin in less than 2 years. As such, we are advocating for connectivity to our vision for a renovated JDUC, student feedback on the design of health and wellness services, and increased study and group work spaces.</p>	<p>In recognition of the fact that this project is developing rapidly, it is paramount that AMS leadership continue to prioritize student feedback in the design of health and wellness services, as well connectivity to the new JDUC. In the coming months, the AMS must receive a seat at the table to discuss the layout of the space, and student input must be received before the designs are finalized. This should be done through the AMS' position on the Campus Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC), and the Executive's relationship with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Facilities).</p>

NON-PLATFORM PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

INTERNAL REFORMS		
Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Institutionalizing Student Input	The previous administration laid a groundwork for the AMS to conduct thorough marketing research of our student body. Our administration have actively used marketing research methods to be aware of different student priorities, from our development of the John Deutsch University Centre to our stance on a fall reading break at Queen’s. This has ensured that AMS advocacy stances are in touch with the broad temperament of students, which preserves the legitimacy of the AMS as an advocate for student interests.	Marketing research delivers a broad approximation of the temperament of students. That information is valuable to the AMS as it ponders its public stances. At the end of the day, the AMS has the responsibility to advocate for the best interests of students, not simply for what students want. The ability to understand student temperament allows the AMS to advocate for the best interests of students while being mindful of the sensitivities involved. While we wholeheartedly recommend the continuation of marketing research initiatives, we also implore future Executives to engage with students from all facets of student life, by attending events, listening to input at Assembly, and others.
Fairer Student Fee Reforms	Discussion surrounding the AMS’ approach to student activity fees dominated the majority of the fall Assembly meetings. After several discussions and debates, we proposed several changes to the student activity fee policies. First and foremost, the definition of groups who could receive a mandatory student fee was tightened. For groups to receive a mandatory student fee, Assembly now must deem	These discussions at Assembly were a great example of how engaged voting members can be when the topic is relatable and focused. It is recommended that next year’s AMS leadership and Assembly reflect on these changes to determine if any adjustments are necessary.

	<p>them essential for student life; in other words, Assembly must be able to confidently say that a mandatory student fee is being used to sustain a primary facility, program, or service for students. The requirement for external groups receiving student dollars was also tightened. Moreover, it was established that all organizations seeking a fee, or looking for an increase, must publicize their budget alongside the ballot during voting. This was made in an effort to inform the student body. Lastly, policy was changed to reduce the number of times a group can return to referendum within the same year.</p>	
<p>More Inclusive and Financially Accountable Staff Appreciation</p>	<p>In the past, the AMS has condoned wasteful and expensive off-site retreats paid by student money for all student staff. Beginning in 2013-14, these retreats were programmed with leadership and teamwork activities, resulting in the excluding of junior staff. Our administration cancelled the senior staff retreat in the summer, reformed the corporate service manager summer weekend, and strengthened the programming of the transition weekend. We also introduced social events that included all AMS staff at lower cost than before.</p>	<p>The AMS should take a critical and hard look at the expensive off-site retreats that necessarily exclude segments of AMS staff. While we acknowledge that there may be some value in retreats for the senior team, the AMS has a duty to use student money conscientiously and responsibly. We therefore believe that the best use of staff appreciation is an approach that is pan-AMS in nature and includes all staff in pan-AMS team events, which can be more cost-effective than off-site retreats for a select few.</p>
<p>Departmental Reviews</p>	<p>In response to the expansion of the AMS's role on campus, our administration announced that we would conduct thorough reviews of the senior departments within the AMS on the relevance, meaningfulness, and financial sustainability of</p>	<p>The AMS should continue to review all its functions with a critical lens, with the involvement of clubs and faculty societies, to ensure that any program run by the AMS is best delivered by the AMS. Future AMS Executives should work</p>

	those programs. This resulted in several restructures, including the Commission of Internal Affairs restructuring into three separate offices.	alongside of their team to critically engage with all portfolios in an effort to represent student needs. Tradition should never be an excuse for a hesitancy to reform, and this expectation should be set at all levels of the AMS.
Creating Clear Internal Policies	Many sections of the Board of Directors Policy Manual were overhauled this year, along with many substantive changes to Policy Manual 1. Specifically, we made changes to the definitions of our corporate services, our budgeting philosophy, and student fee requirements. Many operational changes were also made with respect to our Front Desk, to ensure that students were able to receive the information they needed.	While it may not be the most glamorous work, clearing up language in policy helps ensure that the AMS can operate efficiently. Given that our organization has a yearly turnover, our policies must continue to be easy to interpret and follow.
LONG-TERM ADVOCACY		
Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Extended hours for Student Wellness Services	In response to student comments and concerns, and an external review of Student Wellness Services conducted in 2014, the AMS commissioned a student satisfaction survey of the three pillars of Student Wellness Services: health, counselling, and disability services. The AMS chose the extension of the walk-in clinic service as the primary advocacy objective. The AMS received over 600 responses from the student body, and used the data to lobby the University for extended hours. The AMS	We have received a very positive response from the University, but must continue to work with them until the clinic is open later on Fridays and at least one weekend day. The results of the survey and report must remain as the reference point for future discussions due to the vast amounts of student feedback that were collected. The AMS should also work to create advocacy stances on the two remaining pillars of Student Wellness Services: counselling and disability services.

	received commitments to create walk-in appointments on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, as well as the possibility to add Friday afternoons and either a Saturday or Sunday beginning in September 2016.	
Collective Bargaining Process at Queen's	The AMS produced a position paper on collective bargaining in May, and the University quickly concluded its collective agreement process in July.	The CBA struck with the Queen's University Faculty Association created committees to review the USAT and facilities and support for students. The Commissioner of Academic Affairs and Executive should advocate for changes to the USAT that improve transparency of the teaching assessment process and quality of the data received from student feedback.
Fall Reading Break	The Senate Committee on Academic Procedures, the body that controls sessional dates, was tasked by the Senate to look at sessional dates with the possibility of adding a Fall Reading Break. In November, the committee tabled a report that received widespread criticism from students. This February, a new report was presented to Senate that would implement a Fall Reading Week corresponding with Thanksgiving. Students are split on the idea, with many dissenting due to the impact on Orientation Week.	On March 3rd, AMS Assembly directed the Speaker to write a letter to SCAP expressing concern and dismay with the consultation process. Going forward, the AMS will continue to collect student feedback on the proposal to reinforce its advocacy efforts.
Modernizing Non-Academic Misconduct at Queen's	In June, the Board of Trustees asked the AMS to review the Lewis Report and provide a response. The Lewis Report identified several legal issues with the current system that had to be mitigated,	After the full implications of the new system are clear, the AMS should critically look at the Judicial Affairs Office, its functions, and its capacity. There is room for the Judicial Office to function as an

	<p>and the Board of Trustees subsequently convened an advisory committee to revamp the system. The Advisory Committee has invited the incoming Executive to sit on the committee and will be producing a final report to the Board of Trustees by May.</p>	<p>advocacy branch to procedurally assist students. The AMS should also push for a comprehensive review of the new system three years after the onset of the new protocol. It is critical for the AMS to keep good records and documents of any structural shortcoming, so it may be fixed in a review process.</p>
<p>Charting a Future for the John Deutsch University Centre</p>	<p>The development of high quality student life space is not only something that our students want, it is in the best interest of one of our University's comparative advantages, which is a unique student experience. However, the AMS's last foray into infrastructure developments was an abject failure, on both the student government and University sides. In that vein, we have begun conversations with the University to ask for certain commitments towards revitalizing the JDUC as a functional student life space for all students. We will begin by obtaining a commitment from the University to provide several institutional supports for the AMS as we continue towards the project.</p>	<p>The AMS needs to ensure that the project adheres to the needs of students and that any infrastructure development increases functional space for the highest number of students possible.</p>
<p>Federal Government Advocacy on Student Interests</p>	<p>The Trudeau government, elected in October with relatively favorable federal financial statistics, had indicated its willingness to expand current programs by going into deficit spending. Therefore, the AMS saw an opportunity to lobby the federal government on several federal programs that directly affected students, including the Canada Student Loan Program, the Canada Jobs Grant and</p>	<p>We believe that the opportunities presented by the current government and plans for the Federal budget, provided an unprecedented opportunity for PSE students which we needed to take advantage of. However, this may not be the case in the future. Therefore, if the AMS is interested in continuing student advocacy at a Federal level in the future, they should conduct further research</p>

	other student employment programs, as well as the rules surrounding international students.	and garner student input, beyond AMS Assembly, on the matter.
Reforms to Athletics & Recreation Student Fees	The AMS pushed for details and answers with respect to the Athletics & Recreation student activity fee. We are in the midst of a multi-year agreement with Athletics & Recreation, and we must be ready to propose a new solution when it comes to an end. The AMS has spent time investigating the possibility of a split student activity fee: one for Athletics and one for Recreation.	Future AMS leaders must continue this work. The Athletics & Recreation student fee is the largest amount on the student activity fee slate, and it is the job of the AMS to ensure that it is being spent responsibly. Moving forward, two AMS representatives must continue to use their seats on the University Council on Athletics & Recreation (UCAR) budget committee as opportunities to critically review the budget and chart a plan for the future.

EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Initiative	Progress to date	Moving forward
Empowering President's Caucus	The AMS Executive holds substantial Executive powers that can be exercised at will. We recognized that, and constitutionally instituted President's Caucus — a body with representatives from all Faculty Societies — to limit Executive power by codifying President's Caucus as the Executive-arm of the Assembly, a role previously held by AMS Council.	President's Caucus should also be the body where the Executive seeks more guidance on executive-level projects. As the AMS Council are appointees of the current Executive, and run their own departments with their own interests, we believe that the President's Caucus has a role to play in advising the Executive on issues of the day.
Empowering Assembly and the Board	The AMS Executive holds a lot of power, and crucially, controls the flow of information coming out of the AMS into its oversight bodies. We have	For the future, successive AMS Executives must be forthcoming with the Assembly and the Board, who in turn must demand better from the

	<p>provided and complied with all requests from the Board and Assembly, in addition to providing detailed presentations on complex issues to the Assembly.</p>	<p>Executive of the day. The Secretariat should examine ways to ensure that the flow of information is indeed forthcoming, and as an officer responsible to the Assembly, they must endeavor to notify Assembly and Board whenever this does not happen.</p>
<p>Reforming Our Representational Policy</p>	<p>From Day 1, our team recognized the importance of advocating for student interests while recognizing the diversity of student personal beliefs. In the past, the AMS has engaged in lobbying on issues that are not contained within Policy Manual 3, e.g. the Blue Dot Campaign of 2015. We therefore started a project to reform Policy Manual 3, the AMS's representational policy of all issues that the AMS has authorization to advocate on. Commissioner of Academic Affairs will publish a reformed Policy Manual 3 that will include recourse mechanisms to ensure that future Executives do not move beyond the scope of their power.</p>	<p>For the future, it is important that Executives obtain express authorization for lobbying from Assembly, or codify permanent positions of the AMS into Policy Manual 3.</p>

COMMISSION REVIEWS

Commission of Campus Activities

The events that the Commission of Campus Activities put on this year, received positive feedback from the student body. This past year, the office focused on diversifying their activities with the addition of the Queen's Live Music Committee and the Art Council's expansion of an on-campus Speaker's Series. The office also worked to increase efficiency within the Commission by working towards completing one of the Goal Plan BHAG initiatives to build a new online event approval system for Orientation Week. Lastly, the Commission has focused on reviewing its current activities and processes to determine how the Commission can evolve to better serve students. Through this review, it was determined that a restructure of the internal workings of the commission is necessary to further develop how the Commission can directly be a resource to the entire student body. This can be done by reviewing the events and activities put on by the internal committees, ensuring they provide opportunities for all students to get involved, as well as reviewing the resources provided to faculty societies with regard to event planning.

Commission of Environmental Affairs

The Commission of the Environment and Sustainability, recently renamed the Commission of Environmental Affairs, has focused on a variety of issues related to both advocacy and physical infrastructural changes this year. This marked the first year that the Earth Centre has been under the AMS, and much of the year was spent ensuring a smooth transition and adoption of standard AMS practices, as well as ensuring proper financial accountability. The Queen's Sustainability Conference, which ran for the first time this year, has also decided to join the AMS and will be operated out of the CEA in future years. Finally, the Commission underwent an internal restructure this year, creating, removing, and refining various positions within in order to ensure that we are providing meaningful student opportunities.

Commission of Academic Affairs

This year, the Academic Affairs Commission has been focused on evidence-based research and pragmatic advocacy to improve the undergraduate academic experience here at Queen's. This year, the office focused on three main pillars: OUSA Advocacy, Internal Advocacy and Policy Development. Through OUSA, the AMS participated in a tuition freeze campaign and the construction of multiple papers on Teaching and Assessment, Students with Disabilities and Online Learning. Internally, the office worked with the Administration to develop a restorative, non-confrontational approach to academic integrity, review the feasibility of the fall Reading Week file, and pursue further development for the long-awaited Syllabus Bank. Within the office itself, the creation of a policy committee was used to develop policy papers and research that supported AMS academic advocacy goals. Next year, the office should pay close attention to the AGC/PSC merger to ensure it is offering students the services they require.

Commission of Municipal Affairs

The Municipal Affairs Commission focused its efforts on improving the quality of life of students in a variety of ways. Specifically, the commission collaborated with City Staff and Council to upgrade the priority of sidewalk snow clearing in the University District, install a pedestrian 'scrambler' at University & Union, and develop a unique proactive property standards program. The commission also concentrated on further developing the University District brand through the creation of the University District Housing Fair, the rebranding of the Housing Resource Centre, the installation of new University District street signs, and the substantial growth of the Student Maintenance and Resource Team (SMART). Internally, the MAC focused on providing a more enriched and interconnected experience for its ~400 volunteers. The office should continue to work with the AMS Director of Communications to ensure messaging is consistent and relations are positive between the student body and the City.

Commission of Social Issues

The Social Issues Commission focused its efforts on three main pillars over the year: internal commission cohesion to encourage intersectional activism, accessible avenues of communication between students-at-large and the commission, and continued institutional advocacy at university-level issues. To improve internal commission cohesion, committee chairs, deputies, and directors were asked to attend regular "senior team" meetings and bi-monthly professional development days. Through cultivating an internal culture of a unified team dynamic, the office has seen an unprecedented number of collaborations. In order to establish accessible avenues of communication with students-at-large, Equitable Queen's was developed as a forum that gives students a "first point of entry" to conversations about social justice in the context of our campus. Some priorities for institutional advocacy were; the implementation of the Sexual Assault Report and Recommendations, improvements to our student wellness services, and accessibility of our built environment. The office played an integral role in providing Bystander Intervention Training for campus leaders, worked with Health Services to extended walk-in clinic hours, and prioritized the accessibility of our built environment.

Commission of Internal Affairs

Reflecting upon this past year the commission set a few milestones, from the launch of the Clubs Bursary program to the highest voter turnout in 25 years. This year also marks a year of great change within the commission – from the review of non-academic discipline to the ultimate decision to restructure the commission into three constituent parts. It is the hope that, through this restructuring, the constituent parts of the office are poised for a great deal of growth and success in the coming years. Next year will mark a new year for the office in many ways. With the modernization of the Non-Academic Misconduct system and merging of the AMS and SGPS Clubs Office, the restructuring of the Internal Affairs commission is timely. With greater autonomy between the three offices, these portfolios have the opportunity to expand.

LOOKING AHEAD: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Renewing the legendary Queen’s experience starts with an AMS that delivers focused services, determined advocacy and better student life. It ends with the Queen’s community that is the best place in Canada to go to school. However, within the last 10 months it has become clear to us that we are operating in an environment of constrained resources and bureaucratic complexity: whether it be limited time with the annual turnover of our positions, the financial pressures the University is facing, the lack of student life space on campus, or the heightened focus on perceived risk.

We wanted to end our reflection on the year by identifying important areas of focus within the AMS, and the University for the year ahead.

GOVERNMENT & OFFICES	
Area of Focus	Moving forward
Information and research	In order for the AMS to truly advocate for students, it must bolster its record retention and research capabilities. This year, large steps were taken by the Chair of the Board of Directors to move all past minutes, motions, and reports online. Moving forward, the same must be done so for all research reports and survey data collected. We have come to learn that, when used correctly, information can be our best tool to develop thorough advocacy positions. The individuals responsible for future advocacy cannot be the ones who are solely responsible for conducting research and maintaining records as well.
AMS Secretariat	With the restructure of the Commission of Internal Affairs, the Secretariat will be responsible for many of the Administrative tasks, such as striking governance committees, administering elections and referendum, being an AMS policy guru and coordinating Assembly. With a narrowed focus, this office should strive to engage students at large to participate in the AMS governance structure and all levels of the AMS. They should also conduct an internal review of AMS governance policies and procedures on an annual basis to encourage proactive measures instead of reactive. We also recommend that the Secretariat work with the Executive to seek feedback on the AGM in order to increase its utility and turnout.

CORPORATE SERVICES & PROJECTS

Area of Focus	Moving forward
Decline of Course Pack sales at the P&CC	Over the past three years, the P&CC has experienced a decline in course pack sales. This lost revenue has adversely affected the services financial performance. Moving forward, the management team must continue the strong efforts of this year's team to engage professors who are unaware of the P&CC's offerings. This must be done through direct marketing, with the use of testimonials from satisfied customers, and through continued focus on product quality to ensure all current customers have a positive experience.
Financial sustainability of the Queen's Journal	The Editors-in-Chief of the Queen's Journal took steps to address the service's financial sustainability by issuing a re-structuring report. Honorariums are one of the services largest expenses, and the conversations that this report sparked must continue. Specifically, it is the view of the AMS that future Editors-in-Chief must work to implement the recommendations in order to reduce costs.
Lack of adequate operating space	The Long-Term Strategic Planning Committee, a subcommittee of the AMS Board of Directors, met with each of the Head Managers this year to discuss the space needs of their respective services. This was a valuable exercise to document what resources our services need to adapt and grow. Moving forward, these recommendations must be taken into consideration when forming the programmatic outline of a renovated JDUC. These recommendations should be provided to the architect that the AMS will commission to undertake the task of designing the future space.

<p>Fall hiring period</p>	<p>In the fall the Vice-President (Operations) and Service Directors led a discussion at AMS Assembly on the removal of the fall hiring period for revenue-generating services such as TAPS, Common Ground and the P&CC. The fall hiring period has historically been a large burden for the management teams, who are balancing school, running a large service, and new staff who are unfamiliar with their tasks. It has also led to poor customer service. Moving forward, the AMS should seriously consider the benefits and costs that come from the Fall hiring period and make a decision about removing, or modifying it.</p>
<p>Service staff evaluations</p>	<p>The AMS should remove the evaluation period for the corporate service staff, as it has proven to be an inefficient method of delivering feedback and a cumbersome process for the management teams. However, feedback for many of these students cannot go undelivered. We believe that a stronger culture of on-shift critiquing must take place within the services. This way, students can learn on-the job and work to improve, rather than waiting for feedback.</p>
<p>Ongoing capital projects in the JDUC</p>	<p>As the \$1.2 million revitalization project and bathroom renovations continue, it is important that the AMS remain involved. Specifically, there was a significant surplus from both projects which can be re-allocated to additional projects. Once the two projects are completed, the AMS should review the finalized amount of available funds and revisit the student feedback that was collected in the Fall of 2014. This feedback, and further consultation with students, should drive the decision making process for determining the remaining projects to complete.</p>

Re-negotiated Management & Operations Agreement	Following two years of work, the management and operations agreement has been split into two separate documents: a tri-party agreement between Queen's, the SGPS, and a management agreement between Queen's and the AMS. The new agreement is focused on a new budget model which was implemented this year, and it was focused on separating the types of space that exist within the Student Life Centre. Both agreements will be signed by the end of March 2016, and the execution will fall on the Managing Director of the Student Life Centre and AMS leadership.
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UNIVERSITY	
Area of Focus	Moving forward
67 Union Project and Student Life Space	The 67 Union project is one that the University is absolutely committed to. Its development has been long recommended by a plethora of University standing committees and it will likely obtain the funding to be built. This development may result in the JDUC losing some University holdings, which subsequently would place those holdings under the tutelage of the AMS and SGPS. The AMS cannot be left behind with this development, and we must continue to take action to improve the John Deutsch University Centre as a functional student life space. We have set the groundwork for this project, and it will be incumbent on the new Executive to see it through a financial authorization.
Queen's pension problem	Queen's still has several issues with its pension plan, including solvency and growing concern deficits that were fortunately largely relieved by the Government of Ontario. The latest round of the collective bargaining process also reaffirmed QUFA's commitment to the University Pension Project that will bring the plan closer to a jointly-sponsored plan in line with the benefits provided across the university sector.

Teaching— Research Balance	Even in a balanced academy, there are pressures between teaching and research. As the University intensifies its research capacity, it is important that undergraduate students are not left out of the distribution of research dollars. The intensification of research capacity should also never come at the expense of teaching excellence, which it has the capacity to take away from.
Deferred maintenance	The John Deutsch University Centre will always have a long bill for deferred maintenance, as with every building on campus. There is no permanent solution to issues such as these, as there is no funding for non-academic infrastructure provided by any level of government. The future of non-academic infrastructure maintenance deficits may have to be covered by business revenue through external vendors, and the AMS should examine ways in which this can be the case.
Non-Academic Misconduct	At the conclusion of this review, we will end up with a better system for non-academic misconduct at all levels. Most notably, the University-level system will have defined procedures and policies, something that is not the case at this time. For the AMS system, the AMS should continue to improve training for the administrators of the system as there can be no room for error. The AMS system should also continue to have dialogue with the University, in addition to the oversight bodies. It should also not hesitate to refer students at risk to the University-level system, so they may obtain professional assistance when the AMS cannot act as a vehicle of cultural change.