Alcohol & Substance Use Education / Harm Reduction

Post-Secondary Educational Partnership on Alcohol Harms (PEP-AH) Symposium

I am currently working with the PEP-AH team to survey our stakeholders and develop programming and a theme for the upcoming annual symposium on substance and alcohol use. So far, key areas that have been identified are sexual violence and mental health as it relates to alcohol and substance use. The purpose of this symposium is to educate and raise awareness around this topic and to focus on harm reduction strategies that institutions across the country can undertake to help reduce risks associated with alcohol and other substances.

Harm Reduction Strategies/ FROSH Safer Spaces

This year FROSH was held off-campus at BellMTS Place where we partnered with a wide variety of groups to help ensure the safety of students attending the event. The intent of the partnership was to create a safe and welcoming environment for all those who attended FROSH and to help reduce risk of incidents related to alcohol and/or drugs. We partnered with Justice for Women, Project Safe Audience, Redfrogs and First-Aid. There were no reported incidents at this event.

Municipal, Provincial & Federal Election Lobbying/ Get out the Vote (GOTV)

UPASS Negotiations –Municipal

This past spring and summer, President Jakob Sanderson and I met with City Councillors to discuss UPASS Negotiations and garner support for UMSU’s summer UPASS proposal. Overall we received a positive response and hope to see support moving forward as we continue negotiations with Winnipeg Transit –especially in light of their recent recommendations to increase cost of UPASS program. Moving forward, we will continue to advocate for a fair and affordable UPASS for students.

Provincial Election Student Priorities Lobbying

Coming into the provincial election myself, UMSU President and our Governance and Research Advisor created a briefing package of five recommendations based on key student issues identified through consultation in spring 2019. These recommendations were intended for all political parties to consider in order to ensure that that postsecondary education in Manitoba remains affordable and accessible for all those that wish to pursue their studies here in Manitoba.

- Recommendations included the following:
  1- Reinstatement of Healthcare for International Students;
  2- Reinstatement of funding for the province’s postsecondary institution operating grants to pre 2017-2018 level;
  3- Reinstatement of funding and bursaries for Access programs at Manitoba postsecondary educations to pre 2018-2019 levels to enable more eligible Northern, Indigenous and low-income students to overcome systemic barriers to postsecondary education;
TO: UMSU Fall AGM  
FROM: VP Advocacy, Sarah Bonner-Proulx  
DATE: Wednesday, November 6th, 2019  
RE: Report to the Membership, November 2019

4- The Government of Manitoba to maintain its policy of offering zero-interest student loans in recognition of how they help fulfill Manitoba’s Post-Secondary Education Strategy (2015) and;
5- The Government of Manitoba provide a 50% increase in funding grants for Campus Manitoba to enhance its use of Open Education Resources (OERs) in Manitoba curriculums, and to implement an online credit transfer database.

An invite was extended to all parties and we successfully met with the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party.

- **Students for Consent Culture Provincial Election Partnership**
  UMSU partnered with Students for Consent Culture (SFCC) to lobby for and adopt the recommendations SFCC developed for the provincial election. Specifically with respect to the ask relating to the commitment to calls for justice put forward by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the mandate to update relevant provincial privacy legislation to allow for survivors to have access to the outcome of workplace and institutional investigations relating to sexual violence.

*Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) Get Out the Vote Campaign (GOTV) – Provincial & Federal*

This summer UMSU joined CASA’s National GOTV campaign and as team lead I created a work plan to mobilize students to vote in the provincial and federal election. Over two months, we collected voting pledges from students, both online and on paper as a way to help educate students on party policy and encourage students to exercise their right to vote. For the provincial election on September 10th, we released information to educate students on pressing student issues such as international health care, Access program funding, and more. For the federal election, UMSU took a strictly neutral stance and instead encouraged students to learn more about all parties and make an informed vote. We achieved this through pledge drives, student association pledge competition, mass email correspondence, a social media campaign, “I will vote” videos, contests and more! To wrap up the elections we hosted a results viewing party at the HUB with free food and “party” themed drink specials.

*100 Debates for the Environment*

UMSU alongside 100 Debates for the Environment hosted a debate in IQ’ s with candidates from the Liberal, Green and NDP party (PC’s not present) to bring to the forefront environmental issues and other student issues such as sexual violence, mental health, financial aid, Post-secondary funding etc.
Anti-Sexual Violence Initiatives

Consent Culture/Bringing in the Bystander Training for UMSU HUB Staff

Earlier this fall I worked with our Human Resources manager alongside Justice for Women and the University’s Health and Wellness Coordinator to facilitate consent culture training and bringing in the bystander training for UMSU full and part time staff at the our businesses. The purpose of these workshops/training sessions was to act as a prevention mechanism by helping equip our staff with the tools needed to spot suspicious behaviour when it occurs and teaches bystanders how to safely intervene in situations where an incident may be occurring or where there may be risk. The intent of the consent culture training will be to focus more specifically on debunking myths and stereotypes surrounding consent and educating staff on the impact that factors such as alcohol and drugs can have on the rate of occurrence of sexual violence.

Moving forward, management and I will be devising a plan to mitigate risk of potential incidents occurring and to help ensure that both Hub staff and patrons feel safe while in the space. The goal will be to continue to expand this training to all full and part time staff in the future.

UMSU Healthy Sexuality Campaign Week

From September 23–27, UMSU hosted programing on anti-sexual violence education and awareness as well as healthy relationships and safe sex. During this week, external not-for-profit’s and internal organizations such as Klinic, Sexual Education Resource Centre, Health and Wellness Office, Sunshine House and DivaCup all took part in educating students and connecting them with on and off campus resources. During this week, UMSU ran a social media contest to encourage students to share what Healthy Sex means to them as a way to get folks talking about consent and healthy relationships. To top off the week, as part of UMSU speaker series, we hosted ex-Nurse, Researcher and HIV specialist, Margaret Ormond, to speak about Healthy Sex and Consent through a holistic and intersectional lens.

National Day of Violence Against Women

This year we will be partnering with the Faculty of Engineering, Spiritual Care and the Health & Wellness Office at the university to hold a commemoration service for the National Day of Remembrance of Violence Against Women on the afternoon of December 6th in the Engineering atrium. More details to come as the planning develops.

Please see below for history behind this day:

‘In 1989, 13 female students and a female administrator at l’École Polytechnique de Montréal were murdered because they were women. The s impact of their deaths led Parliament to designate December 6 as a national day of remembrance and November 25th as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Even today, the effects of this tragedy continue to be felt and women remain targets because of their gender. The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women is about remembering victims; it is also a time to take action. We each have the opportunity and
the responsibility to stand up against misogyny, sexism, and hate — and it starts with creating a culture of respect.’

**UM Sexual Violence “Together” Campaign**

This September the University launched their anti-sexual violence campaign, “Together”. Which focuses on addressing sexual violence on campus, establishing a culture of consent and raising awareness about the supports and resources available to students (i.e where/how to disclose, where/how to report, where to seek support, how to give support, etc). The goal is to educate faculty, staff and students on the topic of sexual violence and to work together towards building a stronger community. UMSU has been assisting in raising awareness of this campaign through our Healthy Sexuality Campaign, advertising on TV screens and communications to Board Members.

**UM Sexual Violence Resource Centre – Hiring Panel & Working Group**

The establishment of a stand-alone Sexual Violence Resource Centre has been a lobbying priority for UMSU for quite some time and was included as part of our 15 official recommendations to the university this past spring 2019. In the last budget, the university allocated $250,000 towards sexual violence initiatives, specifically for the creating of a SV Resource Centre (big win for UMSU). Currently I sit on the hiring panel for the coordinator and triage specialist position to staff the SVRC. As of right now the timeline is to complete the hiring by mid-month and open the centre by early 2020.

**Respectful Work & Learning Environment (RWLE)/Sexual Violence (SV) Policy Consultation**

RWLE/SV Policy Committee: After President Barnard’s release of the University’s 43 recommendations to address sexual violence, discrimination and harassment on campus, the university is starting to work on implementation specifically with respect to recommendations related to the RWLE/SV policy and procedure. Moving forward, UMSU will be hosting a special consultation meeting for UMSU members, BOD members, community groups, and student groups included, in late November to discuss the proposed policy changes and get feedback/input from the student body on these key issues.

**Mental Health & Wellness**

**Mental Health Training Partnership**

I have worked with a couple different groups of students and the Student Counselling Centre to develop Mental Health and Wellness training. The training is specific to the needs of the individual groups with an emphasis on peer support, stress management, how to seek help (resources and supports) and identifying signs and symptoms of mental illness.

**Student Counselling Centre Counsellor Search Committee & Triage Model Feedback**

Over the summer I had the opportunity of sit on the Student Counselling Centre search committee to hire a new student councillors for fall 2019 and to give feedback on the new triage-model for intake with the goal to reduce wait-times for students and create a better intake system.
Mental Health Working Group 2019/2020

The Mental Health Working Group (MHWG) has been re-struck for the upcoming year! Vice-President Student Life, Jelynn, and I co-chair this committee. The purpose of this working group is to examine current mental health services/resources on campus and compare them with those of other universities, and explore ways to improve campaigns and programming. The working group also aims to increase outreach to various communities across campus and identify strategic priorities for UMSU in upcoming years.

We are in the process of planning a Success through Wellness 2.0 Consultation (the university’s Mental Health and Wellness Plan) with UMSU’s Mental Health Working Group. This strategy examines the promotion and support of mental health as the university’s collective responsibility. The strategy focuses on students, staff and faculty and identifies ways in which the UM can be more committed to overall health and wellness. This next strategy will be created in part by contribution from stakeholders in a cross-campus consultation including the feedback from UMSU’s mental health working group.

Here is the link to Implementation Report:


Conferences Attended

Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) AGM: This past June myself and the rest of the UMSU Executive, alongside 3 student delegates, attended the CFS AGM in Ottawa, Ontario. During this time, the budget was passed at a projected deficit and Local 103 submitted motions – all of which were defeated at the committee or plenary level.

PEP-AH: In June, I attended PEP-AH (Post-Secondary Partnership for Alcohol Harms) national AGM in Calgary as the incoming Western Region Representative. At PEP-AH, myself and the rest of the Western Team (Calgary and BC) presented on the initiatives we had undertaken this past year, including the Western Regional Symposium that was held this past January, and our future objectives as a region. Many innovative ideas were discussed such as Calgary’s new Post-Alcohol Support Room, Harm Reduction Strategy implementation, campaign concepts, social and educational programming ideas, etc. Afterwards, a variety of sessions took place including an overview of the PEP-AH Guide, Assessment and strategic planning, Community Indicators and Action, Alcohol Brief Intervention Toolkit, and all delegates had the opportunity to participate in a Health Canada Consultation on Youth Interaction with Alcohol as part of the ongoing review of Best Practices from the Office of Alcohol Policy.

SUDS (Student Union Development Summit): In August, with the rest of the executive team in Vancouver I attended SUDS. During this three day conference, I attended a variety of
workshops and talks including one on addressing sexual violence on campus, Utilizing the Media, Goals and Management and Public Relations. I also had the opportunity to hear David Suzuki give a keynote on Student Unions & Climate Action and engage in a variety of networking opportunities with student leaders from across the country.

**CASA GOTV (Get Out the Vote):** In August, Jakob and I had the opportunity to attend CASA’s Get Out The Vote Conference in Ottawa. During this conference we solidified out GOTV work plan and learned ways to best to mobilize students to vote in the upcoming federal election (focus on messaging, engagement and branding). We also had the chance to engage in media training and network with other CASA schools hosting the GOTV campaign at their institutions. Overall, this was an incredibly valuable conference that allowed us to run a successful GOTV campaign on our campus and get students out to the polls on September 10th and October 21st!

**Other Advocacy Initiatives**

*International Student Health Care (Rally, Letter-Signing, Poster Making)*

In collaboration with various stakeholder, UMSU helped host a rally, letter signing and poster making to demand the provincial government to immediately reinstate international student health coverage.

*Individual Advocacy Cases*

Over the course of the past six months, I have helped a number of students who have presented with a wide variety of advocacy needs including, but not limited to: Tuition Fee Appeals, Academic and non-academic related Appeals and Academic accommodations (exam deferrals, accessibility needs, AW’s).
Committee Appointments

- Sexual Violence Steering Committee
- RWLE/SV Policy Oversight Committee
- Sexual Violence Resource Centre Working Group
- Sexual Violence Student Sub-Committee
- Senate Committee on Instruction and Evaluation
- Senate Exec committee
- Board of Governors Governance and Nominating Committee
- Academic Integrity Policy Committee
- OSHA Health and Safety Committee
- Champions for Mental Health
- Academic Integrity Committee
- Champions of Mental Health Committee
- AMA Steering Committee
- UMSU Mental Health Working Group –Co-Chair
- Childcare Working Group
- Family Friendly Policies Working Group
- Arthur V. Mauro Student Awards Selections Committee
- Alcohol & Substance Use Committee
- Student Experience Committee