

## IMPORTANT:

87% of TAs will go on strike if they do not have their demands upheld by Mac. Your academic semester or entire year could be at risk if McMaster does not fulfill the demand of TAs and they go on strike. What can we do so they do not have to go on strike? WRITE AN EMAIL, appealing to the Board of Governors to uphold the demands that CUPE has put forwards. More info in "Know More".

[boardofgovernors@mcmaster.ca](mailto:boardofgovernors@mcmaster.ca)

Watching what's happening on SASS and the SRA, I'm Adeola, the SRA observer and you're listening to SASSwatch.

Welcome to the October podcast of SASSwatch. To those of you who went to ArtSci Halloween, I hope you had a blast. The information this week is quite interesting, so let's dive right in!

As you know, the timestamp of each part (Need to know, get to know, get in the know and know more) will be listed in the transcript if you want to jump to a specific point. There is also a content warning from 7:24 until 7:48, Re: police brutality

Need To Know - 0:38

Get To Know - 2:36

Get In The Know - 5:31

Know More - 11:46

## NEED TO KNOW

Last time I talked about the MSU quickly, but as I passed by the MSU office a while back I realized I didn't do the Union quite the justice it deserved.

We established that the MSU is like the stud co of McMaster, with the president, VPs and more. What I didn't quite clarify is this: the MSU is a separate entity from the "big U" University. So when we talked about the Senate last month, that's a governing body under the University, as opposed to something like the SRA under the MSU.

The MSU Guidebook from the office says that "the MSU serves in two main areas; political representation and student life enhancement. The MSU runs Welcome Week (not the University) as well as Campus events and all the campus clubs. The MSU also employs about 350 students a year and provides the HSR bus pass.

Back to political representation; this is done by the elected body of the MSU: the SRA (sort of like the House of Commons of campus). There are also standing committees—six to be exact—lead by an AVP (associate vice president) that work with the SRA, MSU and Hamilton community. Fun fact: We have two ArtSci AVPs; Level III Ryan Tse on the Municipal Affairs committee and Level IV Angel Huang on Provincial and Federal Affairs Committee.

In terms of student life enhancement, the MSU has a multitude of services. Speed round: A radio station, an audio visual production, a food collective and a child care centre, a youth conference CLAY, diversity services, EFRT, farmstand, First Year Council, the Grind, Horizons Conference, Macademics and Maccess, a bicycle repair shop, an ombuds office, pride community centre, Spark, SWHAT SHEC, 1280, The Sil, the Underground, Union Market (big breath) and WGEN. Didn't quite catch that? You may have to go by the MSU office on MUSC 2nd floor to get the guide book, then!

## GET TO KNOW

Today I'm pleased to have Elena Wells, a fourth-year ArtSci join us. Elena is one of the two 4th year reps!

So Elena, general thoughts on your role so far?

What's cool about being the fourth-year rep?

What would you say to your first-year self?

Also, you've started this super cool, super brand new event?

Thank you!

## GET IN THE KNOW

Well we've had two more meetings and much has happened.

We had a presentation from OUSA - OUSA is the Ontario University Student Alliance made up of multiple university student unions including QueensU, Ryerson and ours, the MSU! They work quite closely with the provincial government to advocate student needs based on recommendations at General Meetings. They also draft policy papers and - just hold on, this information will be useful soon considering the MSUs currently, let's say, strained relationship with OUSA.

The CSSA was also present to appeal their club deratification. By present, I mean, every single member that could fill up the seats in GH, dressed in all black was there. It was a pretty bold

statement on their part. In a 20 minute presentation (with 10 minutes for questions at the end), the CSSA outlined that the ratification process:

- 1) Was Biased and made prejudicial statements
  - a) Misled with vocabulary
- 2) Was not in compliance with OP
  - a) Section 5.3.1 - clause only be used in cases where all reasonable courses of action have been pursued, and they do not believe this to be so
- 3) Concluded Ask SRA to reexamine the validity of the process

Most interesting part happened during question period where the CSSA responded to any question with the response: "Will not respond to the questions right now, and will provide a written response back." However, according the the SRA Speaker, Due to misinformation, they didn't understand they would be answering questions until one hour before the meeting, when they should have had at least a week's notice.

The CSSA will be making a reappearance at the November 3rd meeting after they consult legal counsel, so we will hopefully have a closed case by the end of the month.

During information period, things only got more interesting. We had a Chinese student, masked and also in all black, Urge to reject the CSSAs appeal in front of the whole assembly. She gave testimony to her own friends who have been the victim of police brutality when protesting in Hong Kong through pistol whipping and physical brutalization. How is this related to Mac?, she asked. This puts anyone opposed to CCP at risk here if there is reporting. If the CSSA is acting like a branch here, this could be disastrous. She chose to wear a mask today because I do not feel safe today, or at Mac or in Hamilton. She concluded by asking the body to Please consider the vote carefully.

An interesting points from the rest of the meeting: Municipal Affairs: Meeting with city councillors to shape Hamilton's 2020 budget to consider student affairs.

The next meeting Catherine gave the ArtSci report to the committee. It outlines past successes like the creation of the SASSex Mental Health and Wellness Committee and highlights future goals like opening LRW basement rooms for ArtSci students. The executive board also talked about a lot of MSU services progress!

- Farmstand has seen a huge boost in revenue
- SHEC has had a huge upboosts in visits and a record number of applicants this year (same with SWHAT)
- Diversity services has been thriving with engagement on facebook

Big WOOP!

VP Ed gave some great news in relation to accessibility and disability: Looking into Restructuring the way we test students, looking at different avenues (anyone who has taken an

exam in the sterile environment of the gym may get that). May also create a guiding document about lecture break policies!

An Artsci, 3-year Rhea Murti was also elected to University Affairs Committee!

We opened committee of the whole (a big discussion) to discuss OUSA. Key points:

- MSU pays \$75k (or \$3.16/MSU Full-time student) to OUSA
  - Mainly goes to office and staff expenses
- Now, OUSA is slacking in their advocacy and SCI budgeting (and I oop!)
- General point: Rethink our position in OUSA
  - Currently: Full member (8 members and presence at steering committee and GA), but we could downgrade to a Class A (two members and presence at GA) or Class B meeting (just two members, low representation at committees and GA)
- If we pull away from OUSA, with the MSUs slightly more left leaning policy, will we be able to advocate still?
  - 1) It could be challenging, but with internal advocacy restructuring we could do it
  - 2) Partnering with on-campus student groups could be effective in advocacy
- Reinstating status? Not really, MSU has a policy that says if we downgrade we can't rejoin for 12 month. Additionally, we'd need to start up a committee discussing if rejoining OUSA would be worth it = be firm on our decision
- Likely we will make an OUSA research committee to guide our decision-making
- Insightful comment from the MSU president, that no matter our status we need to focus more on internal MSU advocacy so that should be something to prioritize when we consider our budget/restore our fee

VP Finance let us know that our current financial plan is unsustainable for the foreseeable future. Opt-out has affected how much we have and this will be in future reports.

Expansion outside of DBAC is going to be an MSU owned building, and students will have the chance to vote on the name in the near future:

- The Hub
- Student Life Center
- Marauder Activity Center

Names have been approved by BOD and University!

KNOW MORE

Elections!!! Essentially where do we go from here.

In case you're wondering about all that coalition chatter that sent political heads spinning in the lead-up to election day, Trudeau has rejected that idea outright, saying there are no plans in the works — formally or informally — for the Liberals to join forces with any other party.

Instead, the PM-elect says he will seek support for passing his policies on a bill-by-bill basis. Put on your bargaining hats!

Monday's election may have spelled an end to campaigning, but now the real work begins.

Trudeau will unveil his new (but still gender-balanced) cabinet on Nov. 20. He will also consult with the governor general in coming weeks on a date to reconvene the House of Commons. At that point, lawmakers will elect a Speaker and proceed with the speech from the throne — to outline the government's priorities and officially open the new session of Parliament.

What's the issue? The speech from the throne requires support from a majority to pass, so it will be the first determinant of how our new legislative government will work. Watch for some random promises to be thrown in to attract some essential, non-Liberal votes.

If you're wondering why minority govs typically don't last more than two years until another election, this is why. This should be fun. This wasn't SRA or SASS related, but hopefully you know more?

## TA Strike

- CUPE 3609 (TA Union) working since Early Sept, negotiating the strike deals
- Three main issues:
  - McMaster will not even provide wage increases that keep up with inflation
  - McMaster provides zero University-wide training to TAs
  - McMaster has tried to eliminate the standard number of hours per TA contract, thus further threatening job security/safety

CUPE has a list of 6 demands they want fulfilled by the Uni (<https://cupe3906.org>) immediately. In preliminary organization, TAs have voted that 87% of them would go to a strike should McMaster not agree to these demands. CUPE can call a strike should Mac not offer a fair agreement that addresses issues that TAs have faced for years.

TAs do not want to strike, but will if McMaster continues to undermine TAs working conditions. What does a TA strike look like? They could strike by December exams putting them in danger, and even impact next semester too.

TAs lead tutorials, labs, grade most undergrad assignments, invigilate exams and do mentoring  
= THEY ARE SO IMPORTANT to Mac working.

What can we do so they do not have to go on strike? WRITE AN EMAIL, appealing to the Board of Governors to uphold the demands that CUPE has put forwards.

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Help CUPE avoid a strike, send an email.

As we say goodbye to the best month of the year, buckle down for the whirlwind of November and make sure you don't miss that podcast!