

# **Feds Off Campus Community**

Winter 2017

End of Term Report



**Prepared by:**

Chris Salahub, Operations Coordinator

&

Veronique Lemieux, Administrative Coordinator

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Volunteer Management</b>	<b>3</b>
Coordinator & Executive Recruitment and Hiring	3
Volunteer Recruitment and Hiring	3
Training Information	4
Meetings	4
Volunteer Retention and Engagement	5
Volunteer/Executive Recognition	5
Disciplinary Actions	5
Communication	6
<b>Events and Activities</b>	<b>6</b>
General	6
Games & Movies Night and Speed Meeting	7
OCC goes to the Ultimate Escape	7
Karaoke Night	7
Paintballing	7
Snow Day	8
Coffee House	8
St. Patrick's Day BBQ & Board Game Lounge	8
EOT: Games & Movies	9
Casual "OCC goes to..."	9
<b>Partnerships/Collaborations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Inventory</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Operations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Important Contacts</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Director Reports</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Impact Report</b>	<b>14</b>

# Introduction

Winter term was a great end to the academic year for the Off Campus Community. This term saw the involvement of a large number of first years in the service, many of whom were regular attendants of events and the office. Although volunteer retention was low, event planning was executed very well by the dons who remained committed. A number of recurring and new events were planned, which led to an overall delightful term for OCC.

## Volunteer Management

### *Coordinator & Executive Recruitment and Hiring*

The current Off Campus Community coordinators and executives are as followed:

- Operations Coordinator: Christopher Salahub
- Administrative Coordinator: Veronique Lemieux
- Internal Director: Anas Al-Rawi
- Media & Marketing Director: Kristen Augurati
- Advocacy Director: David Harnock

Executives are hired internally on a termly basis, usually at the end of the previous term. This year, applications will open during the winter break and the executives will be hired during the first week of the winter term.

### *Volunteer Recruitment and Hiring*

Volunteer recruitment and hiring this term was carried out by the incoming coordinators of OCC, Tori Garner and Michael Pinnau. They received 58 applications on the Leads application system, twelve more than were received during the application process last year. A team of 34 dons was selected after roughly one month of interviews. Academic checks, while still not perfect, were completed in a much more timely fashion than last year. Ideally these checks should occur early in the

interview process so that any concerns can be brought up to applicants during their interview. This application process may be addressed again in more detail by Michael and Tori in their spring term report.

## ***Training Information***

There was no training this term, as the traditional training weekend occurs at the end of April, and is scheduled to occur at this time again this year.

## ***Meetings***

This term, the don meeting was scheduled for Thursday 5:30 to 6:30pm every week. Meetings addressed the dons' concerns, office cleanliness, past and future events, and other involvements around campus. The following is an example of an agenda:

1. **St. Patrick's Day BBQ + Board Game Lounge:** If you haven't signed up yet for the BBQ, please do! We would appreciate the help of a few more dons - it will run smoothly only with your help! Those who are helping with set-up, please meet us at the office at 10:30am; otherwise, come to the serving table in the Vendor's Alley.
2. **Volunteer Gala:** Don't forget that the Volunteer Gala is on Monday! There's a few tickets left so if you haven't bought yours yet, do so ASAP. Also, dress to impress!
3. **EOT:** Our last event of the term, our famous Games & Movies night, is happening on the 31st, as you should all know. If you have video or board games that you'd like to bring, please do so on Friday and feel free to leave them at the office until 6:30pm when set-up will happen. Don't forget to let your first years know and we hope to see you there!
4. **Bowling:** Our don appreciation of the term is happening on Sunday April 2nd! If you have changed your mind or something came up, please let me know ASAP.
5. **Questions & Concerns**

As addressed in the volunteer engagement section below, these meetings were rather poorly attended compared to last term. As a result, incentives such as pizza and prizes were offered more frequently during these meetings that they had been historically in an attempt to bolster attendance.

### ***Volunteer Retention and Engagement***

Volunteer retention was low this term, due in part to a high number of dons being away for co-op or busy with school work. Unfortunately, a number of the dons were also absent without any communication to the coordinators to explain their absence. In an attempt to improve meeting attendance, pre-paid credit cards were bought as attendance prizes and pizza was ordered. This encouraged a few more dons to come out, but participation remained lower than usual. It was also difficult to encourage the dons to sign up to help with events; many reminders had to be made in order to get a proper amount of help to ensure success of events. This lack of attendance did not seem to have any systematic cause. Instead it seems to have just been a result of bad coordination and perhaps a lack of proper forethought during the hiring process, where a large number of the hired dons were all away on co-op this term. Regardless, the dons that remained were very committed and as a result the planned programming was completed successfully.

### ***Volunteer/Executive Recognition***

As part of don appreciation for this term, we organized an event with Kingpin Bowlounge at Bingemans on Sunday April 2nd which consisted of one hour of bowling and a pizza dinner. Those who could not attend were offered a gift card for the store of their choice.

### ***Disciplinary Actions***

This term, some dons were having a difficult time keeping up with emails. In February, it was brought to our attention that some dons had sent very few, if any, emails to their first year students. The don pairs were given a written warning and told that there was no reason for them not to email their students, as a new section dedicated to emails was added to our website to make sending emails easier. A future

change suggested by the incoming coordinators to streamline and help with oversight in this process is to create one don email address, centralizing the currently fractured email system. This would not only provide less experienced dons with example emails already sent, but would also make ensuring emails are sent far easier and more convenient. One also imagines dons expanding their group of first years in the worst case that some group is unable to send emails for a period of time. Centralizing these emails would make a far more robust system for all parties involved.

## ***Communication***

Dons maintained communication with their first year students through emails, Facebook groups and their office hours. OCC events, campus events and other information were shared with the students. Due to feedback given in the previous years, emails were not required every week: biweekly emails were deemed acceptable by the coordinators. The general OCC Facebook group and page were maintained by the coordinators and executives. OCC events as well as events from other services were shared on a daily basis.

Communication with the dons were maintained using two platforms: our don team Facebook group and the Wix website. Daily reminders and updates were posted on Facebook; this was deemed the quickest way to reach the dons. The website was very well maintained by the internal director, who regularly updated it with “meeting minutes” and other useful information.

## **Events and Activities**

### ***General***

This term was, in general, organized much better than previous terms due to the booking and planning of dates well in advance at the end of the Fall 2016 term. However, despite the planning was being on time, a few events had to be cancelled due to poor interest or weather. For example, the Paintballing event scheduled for the week before reading week was cancelled due to lack of interest, possibly due to

poor timing, and the Snow Day event scheduled for early March was cancelled due to inappropriate weather for this type of event. Aside from these two events, others were planned and executed very successfully.

### ***Games & Movies Night and Speed Meeting***

This event happened on Friday January 13, from 6:30 pm till midnight: it was our first official event of the term. The SLC Multipurpose Room and Great Hall were both booked. Various board and electronic games were brought by the dons. The final cost was higher than anticipated due to pizza cost, but attendance justified it: 50 students came for the speed meeting and 80 came for the games and movies portion. One of the best recurring OCC events, it was well enjoyed by both regular and new participants. For future events like this, it would be perhaps advisable to play a movie in the Great Hall as well, drawing more attention to the MPR.

### ***OCC goes to the Ultimate Escape***

This event was scheduled for Thursday January 26th from 6:30 till 9:30 pm at the Ultimate Escape in Waterloo. A total of 15 tickets were sold through Ticketfi and at the Feds main office. Transportation by bus went smoothly. Students who came enjoyed themselves.

### ***Karaoke Night***

One of our recurring events, Karaoke Night, happened on Thursday February 9th from 7 till 10 pm in QNC 1502. Bubble tea and pizza were ordered for the participants. It was a very successful event as always, but a higher attendance could be achieved by hosting the event in the SLC MPR, for example, where we would attract more people, or perhaps through advertising planned more in advance.

### ***Paintballing***

This event was planned due to high interest in the paintballing event last term. Unfortunately, due to a new rule as per Flag Raiders, reservations had to be made one week in advance which did not give us sufficient time to sell enough tickets, as

many students typically wait until only a day or two before an event to commit to going. Moreover, it was scheduled for the week after reading week, which is typically a busier week for most students; better scheduling should be encouraged next year.

### ***Snow Day***

This event, also unsuccessful, was scheduled for the beginning of March as a last chance for students to get out and enjoy winter. However, the weather had warmed up quite a bit and we were no longer able to execute it due to lack of snow. For the next winter term, an event of this type should be scheduled for late January/early February at the latest.

### ***Coffee House***

One of OCC's termly favourites, this event always generates significant interest from the dons, and typically has a good turn out. It happened on Tuesday March 14th, from 7 till 10pm in DC 1351. The attendance this year was satisfactory, in part due to inviting members of the Music Club to our event. Reaching out to this group in the future for this event is highly encouraged.

### ***St. Patrick's Day BBQ & Board Game Lounge***

This event was entirely new for OCC; the idea was proposed by the services manager at one of the coordinator meetings. The BBQ happened from 11 am till 2 pm and the lounge from 2 till 6 pm (on Friday March 17th). A total of approximately 180 burgers were sold. A booth in the Vendor's Alley was booked to serve the food while the BBQing occurred in the SLC courtyard. Although the set-up was done poorly, the rest of the event went smoothly. In the future, we recommend allocating more time to set-up, as it felt very rushed. This is also likely due to the fact this was the first barbecue of the term, which meant many key pieces of equipment were not prepared or inconvenient to access. The lounge happened in SLC 2143, but the lack of marketing and people on campus during the afternoon limited the number of participants. Regardless, it allowed students who didn't actively celebrate St. Patrick's Day to socialize and enjoy themselves.



## ***EOT: Games & Movies***

Very similar to the beginning of term event in terms of venue, attendance, and content, this event, which happened on Friday March 31st from 7pm till midnight, was quite successful. Unfortunately, the speed meeting event which had been a successful addition to this event in recent terms could not be completed, as the Great Hall was booked by a different group. In the future, it is recommended both the MPR and Great Hall be booked for this event to ensure that speed meeting can occur.

## ***Casual “OCC goes to...”***

A few casual OCC events were hosted this term, one of which was OCC watches Beauty and the Beast. These events were easy to organize and many first year students came out to socialize with the dons. They are a great way to promote OCC without much commitment of resources.

# **Partnerships/Collaborations**

## ***Engineering Society***

We were involved in the Engineering Mental Health Matters event on Tuesday February 7th, hosting an evening of speed meeting and board games in POETS. This event saw a large turnout of engineers and non-engineers alike, and reached a group with which our service has typically had poor engagement.

# **Inventory**

The items that are currently found in the office are as follows:

- Table and coffee maker for events and other services' use
- Sweeper hand vacuum and battery powered sweeper
- Miscellaneous arts and crafts items
- Various office supplies (3 hole punch, stapler, whiteboard markers)
- Miscellaneous utensils (napkins, spoons, plates, cups)
- Three guitars

# Budget

We spent roughly \$2,500 this term, which is almost perfectly aligned with our target under this year's new budget. If we continue to spend at this rate we will use up our budget as specified by the end of spring term. It should be noted that the pizza and prizes offered at meetings in an attempt to entice dons lead to overspending within the meetings and entertainment line. However, the special projects line was underspent, and so the total spending by OCC was not increased by this spending.

# Operations

Regular office operation occurred as before. The office was open most days between roughly 10 am and 8 pm. In this time there were usually 40 to 50 unique visitors to the office, many of them first year students. While in the past there has been a heavy emphasis on enforcing somewhat arbitrary rules and on the power of the dons, much less emphasis was placed in rules and don policing this term. This was done primarily to create a more welcoming environment for students, and the experienced dons and first years seemed very receptive to these changes.

One result of this more relaxed atmosphere was the creation of weekly polls on any number of topics by regulars to the office. These were a fun and interesting way to get individuals in the office engaged, and such interactive and inviting uses of the whiteboard in the office should be encouraged.

# Recommendations

## *Feds*

Feds has done an excellent job of supporting the service this term, and we have no recommendations to Feds beyond continuing their support and activity among students.

## *Services Manager*

The services manager has been incredibly helpful and cooperative this term. His availability and advice has been very helpful in all aspects of running the service. His guidance led us to yet another successful term.

### ***VP Internal***

Deanna has been exceptional this term. Unparalleled in her willingness to cooperate, friendly demeanour, and helpful attitude throughout the entire term, and we have no recommendations for her besides continuing her positive work.

### ***Marketing***

Marketing was very responsive and timely this term, and produced some excellent materials even when given poor timelines. We have no recommendations for changes within marketing.

## **Important Contacts**

- *Services Manager:* Brendan Lowther - services.manager@feds.ca
- *Feds VP Internal:* Deanna Priori - vpin@feds.ca
- *Marketing:* Jenushika Jeyakumaran - marketing.reception@feds.ca

## **Director Reports**

### ***Internal Director (Anas Al-Rawi)***

The winter term, thankfully, did not see any internal issues that required the associated executive (i.e. myself) to step in. Instead, during this term, I focused my energies towards assisting other Dons in the planning and execution of events (eg helping Dons with booking AV equipment, giving suggestions for how to arrange pizza etc). I also performed the tasks of taking meeting minutes, updating the don website, and arranging for snacks/pizza when we wanted it for the meetings.

As for events, in my eyes, they went very smoothly this term with most of

them having a very good turnout. This term OCC has also taken a large step towards more efficient event planning by deciding on all the events before the start of the term and having all the necessary rooms booked by the beginning of the term. However, in my eyes, the other aspects of event planning, especially marketing, could still be done in a more timely fashion.

Furthermore, I have a recommendation for future internal execs and/or coordinators on the matter of ordering pizza for meetings; if you are sure you want pizza at the meeting then order it from bomber at least 48 hours in advance, that way the service can get a discount. The meetings happen at the same time every week so it would not be difficult to undertake this suggestion.

I also have another recommendation, this one regarding the don site and the OCC page on the FEDS website; they both need major updates. I have already spoken with the future coordinators (2017-2018) about the updates that I think need to be made to don site separately, and I will not be including the details here as it would make this document overly long. As for the OCC page on FEDS.ca, I feel that the page is not engaging enough, and it's important to change that because I believe that it is one of the ways incoming students discover some the services on campus. I have spoken to some first-year students about the matter and they attest that before beginning to attend the University of Waterloo they perused both the university website and the FEDS website to gain a better understanding of the university's community, and they (ie the ones I talked to) all said that the OCC page on the FEDS site is very non-representative of the Service and what it does. Now while this might just be the opinion of the few I have spoken with, I think it is very much an issue that should be looked into further.

In conclusion, I believe there are still things that OCC must do to improve as a service but this term was a significant step in the right direction. Other than that, the term went swimmingly thanks to all the work and effort of the coordinators, the execs and the participating dons all together.

### ***Media & Marketing Director (Kristen Augurati)***

My role as the Social Media and Marketing Executive was to promote events happening with OCC and focus on the marketing techniques used to do so. One of my main tasks this term was focusing on the promotion of hiring new dons. I worked with the coordinators and the don team to promote an inclusive environment and fun service to be a part of. I think this initiative worked out well, as there were about 60 applications. Overall, I think the term went well! For next term, I'd like for there to be more involvement with the rest of the don team in terms of promoting events, just so that the one executive isn't over-posting in the OCC groups, and the other dons gain some exposure as well. Thanks for a great term! I look forward to working with OCC in the future.

### ***Advocacy Director (David Harnock)***

The role of fall term was assisting first years or visitor to the office with a variety of questions of the university life which they have partaken/requested such as housing, academics, OCC's purpose and goals in which we stood for. I assisted in collaboration of resources to attain for the fall exam kits with contacts to all faculty rep and student ones applicable, alongside Federation of Students several services. Winter term 2017 provided assistance to fellow dons to internal or external resources that were available in close proximity such as transportation via bus routes to Adventure Rooms. I assisted in a couple of student on mental health strategies to cope or directives on whom to talk to. I communicated with the FED's student rep that works with the GRT of student issues during the process that took place this month/March.

Events were relatively successful depending on the goals and purpose which don teams had in mind. Some attained a greater interest and turnout such as games and movies for the mass goals of increased participation of first and upper year students. While other events, could have been better advertised such as coffee house/Karaoke. Ideas that have worked in the past is creating youtube videos to increase non don turnouts which instills grander marketing of our long history of OCC. One event which worked well for small group collaboration of don/non dons

was Adventure Room. While some fell apart due to lack of interest for round two such as Paintball 2.0. Working early with feds or other services for joint events will the press on don teams to attain/retain interest for events.

The organization was relatively straight forward this term for OCC Dons. Amount from fall to winter dropped in numbers of sign ins, coming to don meetings and such. In the past, coordinators did sit downs with fellow dons to give active/positive criticisms individually to give dons a guide for improvements from fall to winter term to keep them focused on their commitments to the service of OCC. This did help dons to be more active and not drift away. Don emailing from listening for this term, to some negated on such to email first years which spreads the gap and discourse to first years connectivity airwaves. Thus hinders progress of visitation of first years to our open service amenities. Could have a mini review or training sessions at the start of the term to retain and enhance dons advancement to after volunteering applications. Other services do this every term for their volunteers.

Overall, the term was productive to develop participation of non-traditional OCC regulars on the occasion such as Karaoke which gave light to some progress of the service which should do more. It was a blast to assist in the background and see new dons increase in the growth and development from fall term till now.

## **Impact Report**

### ***Office***

- Attendance: ~45 students per day, 4 new students per week
- Timing: ~10 am to 7 pm, Monday to Friday

### ***Events***

- Average Attendance: 45 students
- Minimum: 15 students, maximum: 80 students