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## ANNUAL REPORT

### Student Senate

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# Foreword

In contrast to most student governments across the country, Redeemer's Student Senate was blessed to have been highly operational in 2020-21. Instead of using COVID-19 as an excuse for inaction, the Student Senate adapted to the novel circumstances by grasping novel opportunities.

Student advocacy was conducted increasingly through online means. As such, it was possible to work closely with other post-secondary institutions to advance Redeemer student interests to an extent that was previously unimaginable. Especially through the McMaster-Mohawk-Redeemer Student Advocacy Group (MRSAG), the Student Senate was able to effectively advocate for Redeemer on a municipal, provincial, and federal level. Internal student advocacy, too, was enhanced this year through multiple student surveys, a resolution, and the establishment of the student centre planning committee.

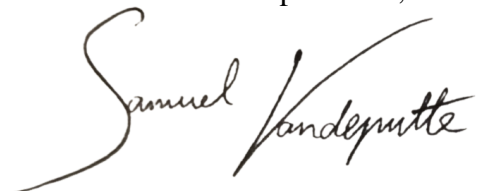
Our activities coordinators quickly adapted to the new surroundings and were able to host a range of successful events. Regular events such as Redeemer's Got Talent, Coffee House, Discipleship Week Hobbies for Hope, and Faculty Testimony Night attracted high participation rates through shifting virtually. In addition, new activities such as Faculty Feud, prayer walks, and Mobile Hotspot were created to serve students as well as possible.

Thankfully, a significant portion of the many student-run clubs were able to continue their operations in at least some capacity. The Student Senate assisted its clubs through transparent communication, forward-looking budgeting, and the approval and evaluation of multiple clubs. Clubs were informed quickly and adequately about changes in restrictions. In addition, clubs' budgets were drafted in a way that successfully accounted for contingencies. The Student Senate structurally evaluated many of the existing clubs through its first Club Review process, resulting in increased professionalism and functionality. Finally, the Student Senate has been delighted to be able to approve a number of new clubs in addition to the already exceptional and vibrant plethora of clubs in existence.

Some other achievements of the year were a historic fee reduction, Constitution and By-Laws amendments, professionalization of our social media, and the implementation of a BikeShare system. After a year-long evaluation process, the Student Senate—upon advice from the Finance Committee—voted to reduce its fee from \$18 per course to \$15, amounting to a 17% reduction. Another year-long process was the evaluation of the Student Senate's Constitution and By-Laws, resulting in extensive amendments. Student Senate's presence on social media was enhanced through a higher norm of professionalism, especially on Instagram. At the end of a multi-year project, Redeemer's BikeShare system has been implemented and will be fully operational in the coming school year.

Extraordinary is a word that accurately describes everything that happened in the world around us. But even more, it is descriptive of the Student Senate's operations in the past year. I am extremely proud to look back at the Student Senate's 2020-21 accomplishments and hope you are as well.

Your Student Senate president,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Samuel Vandeputte". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping underline.

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# Vision Statement

The Student Senate plays a key role in enhancing student experience at one of the most thriving Christian universities in Canada. Deeply committed to liberal arts education from a Reformed perspective, the Student Senate's mission can be summarized in three points.

1. **Glorifying** God in all that we do.
2. **Representing** and being accountable to the Redeemer student body.
3. **Seeking** mutual cooperation with the University.

This year's vision specifically, centered around three key terms: accountability, professionalism, and sustainability. The emphasis on *accountability* reminded us of the responsibility that we bear towards students, the University, and the wider community as we conduct ourselves towards the furthering of God's Kingdom. Second, *professionalism* is essential to the functioning and effectiveness of the Student Senate in maintaining and strengthening relationships. *Sustainability* is a third crucial element to maintain the organization financially and organizationally stable, with a particular emphasis on continuity.



# 1

## Student Affairs



**Membership:** Alison Nirula (VPSA), Melissa Goossen (AVPSA), Daniel Neven (AS), Micah Oosterhof (AS), Blessing Oluloto (ISA), Shanelle Postma (CA), Ruth Van Vliet (CA), Kyra Schat, Michelle Wright, Emma Hill, Isabelle Siemens, Averie Cheel, Joseph Nanda, Lucy Brinkman, Nathan Visser.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Student Affairs Committee met a total of four times. Three of these meetings occurred during the first semester of the year, and one was held during second semester. The committee membership consisted of 14 students, including the Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA), the Assistant to the VPSA, the student Academic Senators, the International Students Advisor, the Commuter Advisors, and other members representing a diversity of years, disciplines, and engagements.

The goal of the Student Affairs Committee was to ensure that student concerns are heard and addressed in a timely manner with the least amount of disruption to student life. The committee sought to address concerns through the following method, GATE. The first stage is gathering. Gather concerns or ideas through Student Affairs Committee members. Secondly, these concerns were assessed. This included acknowledging the person who brought up the issue and thank them for bringing it to our attention, letting them know we are looking into the issue. Informing this student of the steps we are taking toward ensuring that their concerns are addressed. This also includes investigating the scale of the problem by asking around, developing surveys, or asking committee members. An action plan is formed for the VPSA or others to take. The final step in this strategy was execution. In this step, action is taken now that the concern has been gathered, assessed and has a tactic. This ranges from alerting administration to spending further resources on the issue.

The Student Affairs Committee tackled concerns surrounding bus passes, laundry machines, construction information, recreational space, the reading break cancellation, and race relations. In addition, the Student Affairs Committee was involved with the hiring process of two Academic Senators.

# 2

## Finance



**Membership:** Abigail Hoogstra (VPF), Emma Van Hoffen (AVPF), Erica Van Hoffen (FA), Jordan Pauls (CC).

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to maintain accountability between the Student Senate, Vice President of Finance, and the business office by discussing the financial position of Student Senate. The following report states what the finance committee discussed in the 2020-21 school year.

The committee met for the first time on October 26, 2020 to discuss the possibility of running a Lion's Den event as a solution to the issue of having an excess amount of funds in the Student Senate account. This Lion's Den would run similar to "Dragon's Den," allowing students to propose ideas for capital projects to the Senators. These proposals would be analyzed and determined whether to be implemented or not. At this meeting, we accomplished creating a rubric to be used to evaluate the student's proposals. Though this event never took place due to lack of interest from the student body, the Finance Committee has established a structure for this event to take place in the future.

The second meeting of the year was held on November 30, 2020, where the committee reviewed the honoraria of senators and officers of the senate. While this meeting was successful in discussing all the honoraria, because Covid-19 has impacted the amount of work that was done this year in some roles, as well as the fact that there is potential for increase of students in the future years causing the weight of work to change, it was decided that 2020-21 was not the best year to effectively evaluate the honoraria and suggest changes that would be sustainable in the coming years. Yet, it was recognized that there is a problem of inequality in honoraria payments across the whole and for this reason it was decided to review the honoraria again in the coming year with the new Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee worked to have meaningful discussions this year on Student Senate's financial related topics but there were no significant accomplishments that came about. Looking to next year, the Finance Committee will be able to work off the foundation laid this year of creating a rubric for the proposals for the Lion's Den event and re-evaluating the honoraria.

# 3

## Activities



**Membership:** Janalyn Arnold (AC), Luke VanRooyen, Alison Nirula, Melissa Goossen, Michelle Wright, Jessica Wattel, Jordyn Sutherland, Raymond Stearns, Courtney Wren, Julia Thaut.

The Student Senate Activities Committee, under leadership of the Student Senate Activities Coordinator sought to organize, for the benefit of the student body, events and activities that provided healthy and enjoyable outlets for students' creative energy. The events that ran aimed to foster a sense of community and growth in pride for Redeemer University. More specifically for this year, the committee focused on providing spaces of entertainment and community amongst a turbulent and very different year.

This year, the Activities Committee successfully facilitated six events. In the first semester the committee was able to facilitate a Colour Run, Redeemer's Got Talent, and Faculty Feud. Each of these events ran, at least partially, in person. In the second semester of the year, the committee was able to run a Photo Contest, Coffee House and Faculty Jackbox. Each of these events were fully online.

The six events that were run were able to run on time and efficiently and held an adequate involvement of students. The event that stands out the most in terms of success is Redeemers Got Talent. On the Student Senate YouTube page that event has a current total of close to eight-hundred views.

In terms of the nature of this school year, regarding COVID-19, it is a success in and of itself that the committee was able to run events, especially one fully in person event and two partially in person events. As well, it is a success to be able to say that we were able to run three events fully online in creative ways.

In conclusion, the Activities committee of the 2020-2021 academic school year ran efficiently and effectively to provide six events and activities through the course of the year for the student body to participate and interact with.

# 4

## Spiritual Events



**Membership:** Matthew Lewis (SEC), Mayita Caiza, Timothy Bruer, Kyla Clarke, Mercel Bautista, Jordi Stewart.

The Student Senate Spiritual Events Committee, under the supervision of the Spiritual Events Coordinator, sought to plan and implement events that engaged the student body spiritually and to foster spiritual growth and awareness among students. This year, the committee implemented events that would address and work within the turbulent and often changing school environment and be meaningful and significant for the students.

This year, the Spiritual Events Committee successfully ran six events. In the fall semester the committee designed and implemented a Prayer Walk and hosted a Mobile HotSpot and an online Hobbies for Hope Silent Auction. In the winter semester, the committee hosted a Faculty Testimony Night, designed and implemented the Stations of the Cross Walk, and organized a Discipleship Week with workshops and group sessions.

The event that stands out most is the Discipleship Week as the committee was able to bring in Andy Groen as a guest speaker to guide us through the week. Students that signed up also reported that the event was meaningful, well-organized, and informative for their spiritual life. Other major successes were the continuity of events like HotSpot, Faculty Testimony Night, and Hobbies for Hope in new and creative ways.

The committee thus successfully ran six events in order to provide spiritual growth opportunities for students in the Redeemer community.



# 5

## Student Centre

**Membership:** Samuel Vandeputte (P), Alison Nirula (VPSA), Abigail Hoogstra (VPF), David Zietsma (Provost and Vice President, Academic), Kevin Johnson (Dean of Students), Aren Plante (Alumni Council Member at Large), Danica Thomsen-Harnick (Alumni Council Member at Large).

In continuation of the Student/Recreation Facility Agreement (Revised April 2003), the Student Centre Planning Committee (SCPC), comprised of representation of the Student Senate, Alumni Council, and Administration, has been established with the purpose of planning a student centre.

The Student Recreational Facility Fund (SRFF) holds about half a million dollars. In addition, the University is committed to deposit an amount equivalent to the 1989-94 LIFT redirection \$206,800 into the SRFF Fund on the day before the student centre breaks ground. The University is also committed to providing an additional \$100,000 to the SRFF Fund when the student centre breaks ground. In sum, there is about \$800,000 currently available for the creation of a student centre.

Based on a shared commitment to establish a student centre, the SCPC has established space priorities for the student centre based on the Student Senate Recreational Space Proposal and the Student Senate Winter 2021 survey.

1. Community Space
2. Event Space
3. Club Meeting Space

Survey results have confirmed that the student need for increased community is most prevalent. A current lack of space for students to gather would particularly be well-served with lounge areas. The student centre would also be essential in establishing sustainable student event and club space. Along with the three outlined priorities, the SCPC has established that food services and commuter areas are important considerations in relation to the student centre.

The existing needs for recreational space, paired with the available funds relating to the SRFF Agreement and Fund, warrant further investigation into the establishment of a student centre. To this end, the SCPC will continue to meet in the 2021-22 school year as deemed necessary. The upcoming meeting will be initiated by the Student Senate.

# 6

## Financial Summary

At the start of this 2020-21 school year, Student Senate had \$246,750.41 in funds. Taking into account the 20% Reserve Fund, we were left with \$197,400.33 to be spent. Out of this amount to be budgeted, our expenses amounted to \$98,372.13, and we have spent \$57,475.01 of this, for a total 58% of what we budgeted. An additional \$39,000 has been budgeted for Rec Centre renovations to take place over the 2021 summer.

Revenues	Budgeted	Received	Remaining
Activities	\$3,750.00	\$100.00	\$3,650.00
Common Ground	\$88.00	\$0.00	\$88.00
Deedz	\$291.40	\$0.00	\$291.40
Hockey Club	\$525.00	\$278.00	\$525.00
Identify	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00
Improv	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00
Rooted Worship	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
SASC	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$750.00
SOAPS	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00
The Crown	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$0.00
Yoga	\$270.00	\$0.00	\$270.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$6,634.40</b>	<b>\$738.00</b>	<b>\$5,896.40</b>

Expenses	Budgeted	Spent	Remaining
Honorariums	\$35,775.00	\$35,775.00	\$0.00
Activities	\$14,550.00	\$1,620.44	\$12,929.56
Best Buddies	\$480.00	\$203.95	\$480.00
Bike Share	\$6,328.00	\$4,809.41	\$1,518.59
Chess Club	\$150.00	\$129.67	\$20.33
Clubs Coordinator	\$155.00	\$27.99	\$127.01
Common Ground	\$934.00	\$100.00	\$934.00
Conservative Club	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Deedz	\$757.63	\$238.47	\$757.63

Disc Golf	\$1,147.00	\$676.99	\$470.01
First Year Senators	\$500.00	\$200.96	\$500.00
Hiking Club	\$895.50	\$421.25	\$474.25
Hockey Club	\$3,077.32	\$3,118.80	-\$41.48
Identify	\$975.00	\$0.00	\$975.00
Improv Club	\$941.40	\$0.00	\$941.40
Media Team	3,966.30	\$0.00	3,966.30
President	\$1,628.69	\$560.94	\$1,067.75
Quest	\$1,065.00	\$621.50	\$1,065.00
Rec Centre	\$744.38	\$475.27	\$744.38
Redeemer for Life	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Rooted Worship	\$2,590.00	\$991.39	\$1,598.61
SASC	\$5,562.00	\$621.46	\$5,463.22
SMIF	\$450.00	\$0.00	\$450.00
Seeds	\$12.00	\$0.00	\$12.00
SOAPS	\$932.20	\$450.00	\$482.20
The Academy	\$600.00	\$300.00	\$0.00
The Crown	\$7,373.17	\$1,559.59	\$5,813.58
VP Comm	\$1,060.00	\$322.21	\$737.79
VP SA	\$481.87	\$375.61	\$350.00
VP Finance	\$99.62	\$99.62	\$0.00
Yearbook	\$10,475.45	\$4,032.49	\$6,442.96
Yoga	\$1,000.00	\$480.00	\$520.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$105,006.53</b>	<b>\$58,213.01</b>	<b>\$46,793.52</b>
<b>Less Revenues</b>	<b>\$6,634.40</b>	<b>\$738.00</b>	<b>\$5,896.40</b>
<b>Total Budgeted</b>	<b>\$98,372.13</b>	<b>\$57,475.01</b>	<b>\$40,897.12</b>