

Community and Inclusivity

Huron is a diverse community with students from various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. I will ensure that inclusivity remains at the core of every HUCSC initiative.

1. Cultural and Social Programming

Huron's diversity is one of its greatest strengths, but without intentional efforts to celebrate it, students may miss the opportunity to engage with and learn from one another. Cultural events provide an avenue for connection and understanding, fostering mutual respect and strengthening the sense of community. These shared experiences also combat feelings of isolation and create an environment where everyone feels they belong.

While Huron has hosted successful cultural events, there is a need for regular, diverse programming that highlights our multiculturalism and invites all students to actively participate. Additionally, we should diversify the locations of these workshops to better accommodate the unique needs of Huron's diverse student population.

Plan of Action:

- a. Build on successful events like the Chinese Night Market and introduce new ones such as a Japanese food walk challenge and White Day celebrations to celebrate our rich diversity.
- b. Organize small-scale initiatives like a "Taste of Huron" week or an International Food Fair, featuring food trucks or local vendors partnering with cultural clubs representing global cuisines. These frequent, accessible events will integrate cultural celebration into everyday campus life.
- c. Host events in underutilized spaces across campus, such as residence halls or outdoor areas, to help engage first-year and off-campus students who may use locations like the Beaver Dam as often.
- d. Strengthen cross-campus connections by expanding the affiliate presence beyond governance, fostering greater student interaction and unity.

2. Support for All

Huron values diversity, but there is currently a lack of centralized resources specifically designed for marginalized groups, including LGBTQ+ and BIPOC students. Given London and Western's abundance of resources, Huron has an opportunity to bridge this gap by forming partnerships and improving accessibility to these services for all groups. Creating targeted resources is essential to ensure equity and make every student feel seen and supported.

Plan of Action:

- a. Develop a resource bank featuring safe spaces, services, and educational materials for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities. Partner with organizations like Open Closet, PFLAG, and BIPOC-owned and operated organizations, such as the W.E.A.N. Community Center, to increase the accessibility and visibility of their resources.

- b. Create an Accessible Event Planning Checklist to ensure all HUCSC events accommodate mobility, sensory, and participation needs. This checklist will serve as a standard for creating inclusive events.
- c. Advocate for lecture recording systems and adaptive technologies to support students who require accommodations.

3. Transparency

HUCSC's operations and decision-making processes are not always visible to the wider student body, which can create a sense of detachment, especially among first-year and off-campus students. Maintaining a strong presence on campus is essential to ensure that students recognize HUCSC as a central part of their university life. Engaging more students in the HUCSC's activities requires creating opportunities for them to interact with the council and its initiatives. By making the HUCSC's presence known and encouraging involvement, the council can build a stronger, more inclusive community where all students feel empowered to contribute to their university's development.

Plan of Action:

- a. Launch a campaign to increase awareness about the Council and its operations in a fun way, featuring initiatives such as MyUpdates and MyReps.
- b. Ensure greater representation within the HUCSC and enhance team cohesiveness, enabling council members to better understand each other's roles and effectively guide the student body to the appropriate resources and support.
- c. Implement a social media polling system to engage students with quick and fun questions, fostering interaction and capturing instant feedback.
- d. Strengthen the HUCSC's presence during Orientation Week and International Week with a structured approach to interactions, increasing first-year awareness and helping international students connect with council members.
- e. Include the names of Club Presidents on the HUCSC website to enhance transparency and improve the accessibility of campus clubs.
- f. Update all policies to align with the current state and operations of the HUCSC.

Innovation and Sustainability

As a forward-thinking institution, Huron has a responsibility to lead by example in sustainability and innovation. These efforts not only benefit the environment but also prepare students to tackle global challenges creatively and responsibly.

1. Sustainability Initiatives

While Huron has taken some steps toward sustainability, there is room to expand these efforts and embed them more deeply into campus culture. Incorporating sustainable practices into campus life reduces our environmental impact, fosters a sense of responsibility, and improves the overall quality of life for students. Green spaces and eco-friendly events also promote mental wellness and community engagement.

Plan of Action:

- a. Implement Green Event Guidelines to minimize waste and promote eco-friendly practices at HUCSC events, setting a standard for responsible planning.
- b. Reduce single-use plastic at the Beaver Dam by serving coffee in glasses for students studying there.
- c. Launch a promotion offering discounts to students who bring their own cups to the Beaver Dam.

2. Strategic Partnerships

Huron has yet to fully leverage the potential of local partnerships to enrich campus life. This year, we hosted an event in collaboration with the London Bicycle Cafe to show Huron students the routes they can use to be sustainable and bike to campus. Collaborating with local businesses and organizations in a similar way brings valuable resources, opportunities, and expertise to campus. By fostering these collaborations, we can provide students with unique learning experiences and practical tools for success.

Plan of Action:

- a. Partner with businesses and organisations in the London community to offer workshops on various topics including financial literacy, affordable cooking, sustainability in the workplace, and more.
- b. Collaborate with local cafes and restaurants to offer discounts on products and services, encouraging students to explore and connect with the broader London community.
- c. Continue to work with student clubs and organisations to deliver diverse programming to create a more dynamic campus environment.
- d. Continue to leverage the HUCSC Advisory Board for strategic insights and support.

3. Enhance Training

To more effectively support HUCSC members in serving the Huron community, it is essential to provide comprehensive training for portfolio members. This training will help them gain a deeper understanding of their responsibilities and seamlessly continue the work of their predecessors, allowing for better overall efficiency.

Plan of Action:

- a. Implement a structured training program for incoming portfolio members, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate their roles confidently.
- b. Organise training for Club Presidents and Executives to ensure they fully understand HUCSC policies and procedures to keep operations efficient and on track.
- c. Set a clear deadline for finalizing incoming club presidents and organize a joint training session with outgoing and incoming leaders to streamline the transition.

Affordability and Financial Support

Many students struggle with the rising cost of textbooks, materials, and tuition. Financial strain impacts not only academic performance but also overall well-being. Addressing affordability ensures that every student has access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. Ensuring affordability promotes a more inclusive learning environment, where students from diverse backgrounds can thrive without the constant pressure of financial insecurity.

Plan of Action:

- a. Introduce more awards recognizing leadership, community involvement, and academic excellence to celebrate and support student achievements.
- b. Collaborate with the library to create a textbook lending program, allowing students to access required materials at no cost.
- c. Revise compensation structures to better reflect the workload and responsibilities of each position.
- d. Launch seasonal merchandise drops to boost revenue while keeping the offerings fresh and engaging for students.

Academic and Career Support

Supporting academic growth and career development is essential to creating opportunities for all students.

1. Enhancing Academic Resources

Accessible and comprehensive academic resources are critical for helping students excel in their studies. Without these, students may struggle to reach their full potential. Enhancing access to study spaces, tutoring, and collaborative learning opportunities will better support students' academic journeys. Making these resources both accessible and engaging empowers students to overcome challenges, maximize their potential, and achieve their academic goals.

Plan of Action:

- a. Create a peer-to-peer matching system where students can connect based on courses or subjects they're studying to form study groups or find tutors.
- b. Expand Writing and Learning Services to offer more subject-specific tutoring and advocate for extended hours.
- c. Expand study space availability during peak times and advocate for extended library hours.
- d. Host lectures or discussions with "mystery" guests to encourage curiosity and attendance.
- e. Host a Tech Fair where students can explore innovative ways to leverage technology for academic success, personal growth, and professional development.

2. Career Development

Preparing students for life after graduation is a key responsibility of any university. Expanding career development services will help students build stronger connections and gain practical experience, particularly in specialized fields or underrepresented industries.

Plan of Action:

- a. Develop a volunteering and networking newsletter listing opportunities in Western's clubs and throughout London to help students expand their networks.
- b. Dedicate a section of the HUCSC website to showcase and promote student-run businesses.

- c. Allocate more responsibility, in conjunction with the Career Development Team, to the Student Opportunities Commissioner in order to better utilize the resources we have at hand.
- d. Prioritize creating student jobs over hiring external firms to support campus operations.
- e. Collaborate with career development services to offer more opportunities to different programs and in more locations globally.

Wellness and Mental Health

Mental health is the foundation of a thriving student body. When wellness is prioritized, students are better equipped to manage stress and maintain focus. This goes beyond addressing mental health issues as they arise but fostering a compassionate and supportive environment where students feel comfortable seeking help. A proactive approach to mental health involves integrating wellness into the campus culture, ensuring that resources and support systems are readily accessible and tailored to meet the diverse needs of the Huron community.

Plan of Action:

- a. Advocate for the creation of a neurodivergent-friendly “stress buster” room where students can relax and recharge in a sensory-sensitive environment. This space will feature calming resources such as noise-canceling headphones, tactile fidget tools, and weighted blanket ensuring all students have a safe and supportive place to unwind.
- b. Continue to collaborate with local mental health organizations such as the Canadian Mental Health Organisation and London Health Sciences Center to offer workshops and guest lectures on campus.
- c. Diversify the locations of the pop-up wellness booths to target different student groups on campus to increase awareness of the available resources and foster a culture of well-being across campus.
- d. Offer more wellness workshops during Orientation Week and International Week to help destigmatize mental health for first-year students.

Closing Statement

This platform represents my commitment to creating a Huron experience that is inclusive, sustainable, innovative, and supportive for all. Together, we can build a campus community that celebrates diversity, champions student success, and fosters meaningful change. I humbly ask for your support in this election — let’s make Huron a place where every student feels empowered to inspire change.

Thank you for considering my candidacy. Let’s work together to turn our shared vision into reality.

Best,
Manika Bansal