



ams
student society

SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT

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Alma Mater Society

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 4

THE SERVICES..... 5

 Advocacy 5

 Food Bank..... 6

 Minischool..... 8

 Safewalk 8

 Sexual Assault Support Centre 9

 Speakeasy..... 11

 Tutoring 12

 Volunteer Connect 14

 Shinerama 2009..... 16

COMMITTEES..... 19

 Hiring Committees..... 19

 Sexual Assault Support Initiatives Fund Committee 19

 Suicide Awareness Committee..... 19

 Learning Enhancement Academic Partnership (LEAP)..... 20

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS 21

 New/Updated Materials..... 21

 Orientations..... 21

 Social Media and Interactive Advertising..... 21

CONFERENCES/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 23

 Canadian Association of College and University Student Services Conference 2009..... 23

 BC Healthy Minds-Healthy Campuses Summer Conference 2009..... 26

Professional Development (Coordinators)..... 27

SERVICES REVIEW 28

The Need for Review 28

Raising the Bar, Daring to Be Extraordinary..... 29

The AMS Strategic Framework..... 30

Past Reviews in Perspective 32

Important Considerations 36



INTRODUCTION

Dear All,

The second quarter of my term has flown by nearly twice as fast as the first. Hundreds of resumes, cover letters, interviews and meetings later, I am as enthusiastic about the AMS Services as I was on my first day. The ECSS position certainly comes with tremendous, never-ending learning curve, but I can definitely see the light!



I would like to welcome the following new additions to our AMS Services team:

Jenny Zhou (Assistant Minischool Coordinator)
Annie Tai (Assistant Connect Coordinator)
Joshabelle Josephson (Internship Coordinator)
Dominic Yeo (Assistant Safewalk Coordinator)
Vivian Lam (Assistant Speakeasy Coordinator)

We are also very excited that Jane Barry is transitioning over from her position as the AMS Human Resources Manager to AMS Services Manager. Jane has been with the AMS for many years and her superior management skills, wealth of institutional knowledge and vibrant personality will be a tremendous asset to the Services. The Services Manager is a permanent position and will provide much-needed continuity within the Services which the yearly turnover of the Coordinator and ECSS positions always makes such a challenge.

This report contains a very detailed summary of the activities of each Service over the last quarter, a few updates on Committees that I have a high degree of involvement in, thoughts on professional development opportunities and conferences, our ongoing marketing and promotions campaign for the Services, and finally, my number one goal for the Services this year; a Services Review.

If you are ever in the Services area, please stop by any of our offices. It is a very warm and welcoming environment and we enjoy having visitors! As always, if you have any questions, comments or input about any of our services, programs and initiatives, please do not hesitate to contact me at services@ams.ubc.ca or 604-822-9949.

All the best with your studies this coming semester!

Sincerely,

Pavani Gunadasa

THE SERVICES

The following are individual reports from the Coordinator of each respective Service and Shinerama. They contain updates on the progress and activities of each Service or campaign as well as a summary of the challenges they are facing or faced in the preceding quarter. I have supplemented the reports with my personal comments as needed.

ADVOCACY

Coordinator: Hillson Tse

E-mail: advocate@ams.ubc.ca

Overview

In the period of July-August, the AMS Advocacy Office was involved in 25 documented cases and met with 14 of those individuals personally to further discuss their situation and provide advice. Issues that were encountered in this quarter were primarily cases involving failed standing given the end of the summer semester and cases involving plagiarism/cheating as is the norm. The Advocacy Office made its first appearance in student hearings in this quarter and represented 2 students at a PACSD hearing and Faculty hearing. Two more hearings have been scheduled for the month of September. Given the time lag between the initiation of the appeal and scheduling of hearings, there is usually a 1-3 month delay between when a student approaches the Advocacy Office and when an Advocate is required to represent them in a hearing. For the next quarter, the Advocacy Office predicts a drop in caseload as new academic standing/discipline cases are unlikely at the start of a new academic year. We hope that such free time can be focused on Advocacy projects. It is expected however, that there will be an increased presence of the Advocate in hearings as many cases initiated in the summer are now having their hearings scheduled. The Assistant Coordinator position is in the process of being filled and we have had over 20 applicants for the position.

Project Updates

Office Digitization and Database: This initiative is on hold until the Assistant Coordinator is hired as a large component of the project involves the creation of the database (which is the primary directive of the Assistant Coordinator). The project will attempt to aggregate all appeal procedures from each Faculty and program, maintain a database of all Advocacy clients and digitize all future documents and case files.

Rights and Responsibilities Handbook: No progress has been made. I did not put much attention into this project during the previous quarter.

Revision of Advocacy Code of Procedures: A rough draft of changes to the Advocacy code of procedures (or the absence of) has been created. This will be sent to Policy Advisor for review and comments.

Issues of Concern

UBC-O and UBCSUO Advocacy: There have been several requests for Advocacy assistance from students attending UBC-O. UBC-O does not have an advocacy office and instead relies on designated “Advocacy Representatives” from their student union. AMS Advocacy does not assist UBC-O students as they are not AMS members. When I was looking into a Senate appeal from a UBC-O student, I contacted the UBCSUO regarding available student advocacy resources that I could refer the student to. The individual that I spoke to indicated that their procedure was to allow student appellants to meet with student senators before the hearing to discuss the case. Such an act is a serious breach of procedural fairness and undermines the impartiality of the Senate appeal process. It is ridiculous to have student appellants meet with Senators before the hearing as it taints their judgment and does not provide the Faculty with an equal opportunity to respond. I would suggest the either the AMS or the Advocacy Office contact the UBC-O Senate to notify them of this tampering with the appeal process so that such actions do not continue in the future.

GSS Advocacy: The former GSS Advocacy Coordinator resigned during the summer and there is currently no one staffing the GSS Advocacy service. The AMS Advocacy Office is not equipped nor trained to deal with issues involving graduate students specifically in regards to supervisory committees, research disputes and academic standing determinations. The Advocacy Office has been approached by approximately 3 graduate students in this quarter and has attempted to assist. However, this Office’s ability to assist is severely limited given our current training and resources. The quality of assistance will further deteriorate in term two when graduate students become involved in research work rather than course work. I would suggest that either the GSS find a temporary replacement for the position immediately or that GSS Advocacy support materials and funding be transferred to AMS Advocacy so that we can begin training for graduate appeals and take over such cases for the year.

UBC/AMS Ombudsman: With the establishment of the UBC Ombudsman, Advocacy is not sure if students should be referred to the UBC or AMS Ombudsman. There is also a crossing of roles as the AMS Ombudsman is supposed to address Faculty level appeals (which AMS Advocacy has been taking on for the past summer) and the Advocacy Office is not sure if such (supposed) overlap will also occur with the UBC Ombudsman. The Advocacy Office will contact the UBC Ombudsman for clarification into their differences with AMS Ombuds.

FOOD BANK

Coordinator: Joanna Yang

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Over the summer months, the Food Bank has provided assistance to around 25 clients (May-August). It was challenging running the service as a single coordinator; therefore, most of July and August was spent recruiting an executive team. Over 20 resumes were received and I was able to create a successful team that is dedicated and works well together.

Since the first week of the academic year, we have met twice to organize volunteers, self-promotion, upcoming events, and inventory control.

Volunteer Organization

We have approximately 240 people signed up on our volunteer list! This list was compiled throughout Imagine Day and during the course of our first week on the North concourse of the SUB. We have already sent out a mass email informing students what their volunteer options are with the Food Bank.

Volunteers can either a) staff the office during our extended office hours this year; b) sign up for individual events throughout the year; or c) do both.

Promoting the Service

As mentioned, the Food Bank's Executive team worked to staff the Food Bank table during the first week of classes. We also had a great amount of students interested in the service during Imagine! We are working with AMS Communications and Design Services Manager Seepaul to determine if a Food Bank Facebook account can be created and properly maintained. She also suggested sending our Twitter updates to the UBC AMS Executive account.

We have booked SUB concourse times for the beginning of October to promote our main event in October: Trick or Eat. I will also be contacting the webmaster to change our office hour times, event list, and have more content on our site for people to better understand how our service functions.

Luckily, I have several people on my team that are Residence Advisors. With their connections, I've contacted Kate Ferguson of Rez Life and she is happy to provide us with ongoing support (volunteers, tables, chairs, etc) during the course of this year.

We have found that most clients and students have difficulties finding our office location. As a result, we are compiling a frame-by-frame tutorial (to be put on the website) to teach students how to get to the office by locating a distinct landmark in the SUB (for example, Copyright).

Events

Currently, we are focusing on promoting "Food for Fines." The UBC library has been kind enough to extend this campaign from one week to two weeks (Sept. 21st-Oct. 4th) this year and our role is to promote this yearly event. Students are able to waive a maximum of \$20 in library fines within these two weeks by bringing in food donations to any UBC Library location.

We are also holding a volunteer training session sometime in late September for interested volunteers.

Inventory Control

Currently, we have over 10 boxes of expired food at the Food Bank. The executive team is looking to organize a “Dump-a-thon” where we open the cans, compost the food inside, and recycle the leftover tins. This will be finished either this coming week or the next.

MINISCHOOL

Coordinator: Justin Yang

Assistant Coordinator: Jenny Zhou

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AMS Minischool is currently in the very busy process of processing registrations for our Fall 2009 repertoire, with many classes nearing capacity through the use of the new online registration system in conjunction with our usual in-person registration system. Since the Summer 2009 session, AMS Minischool has been fortunate to welcome Jenny Zhou as the AMS Minischool Assistant Coordinator who has been transitioning into her role comfortably.

In addition to Fall session administration, AMS Minischool is currently taking steps to secure instructors for our Winter repertoire, which will include a much more diverse range of courses than has been previously offered, expanding our course offerings from 37 distinct courses to possibly 52. Job postings have been placed on the AMS website as well as the new UBC Career Services Symplicity system; interviews are pending the close of the application period on September 25th.

One incident of note should be discussed. In the past, AMS Minischool has maintained a working relationship with the RCMP in order to procure Special Occasion Licenses for our Beer and Wine Tasting and Education courses. For the Fall session, the RCMP has requested that AMS Minischool request formal exemption from Victoria in order to hold all four classes in the same month, a requirement previously glossed due to an understanding between AMS Minischool coordinators and the RCMP detachment. This extra step has been tortuous and significantly risks the cancellation of both Beer and Wine Tasting and Education courses due to time constraints.

SAFEWALK

Coordinator: Ben Cappellacci

Assistant Coordinator: Dominic Yeo

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Tel: 604-822

Safewalk is in active service and engaging the campus community. The past few months has seen the hiring of 30 staff for summer operation and the development of new service standards and walking protocols. Many of the goals and initiatives that were planned in the last report have been engaged and have seen positive adoption or progress made towards developing them. There have been developments in various sections of Safewalk’s operations as well as a whole new promotional campaign called “add it to your phone” which is encouraging increased use of the service. In the first

week of classes the service has seen its use increase and has received dozens of job applications from students all over campus. The efforts made to improve Safewalk are starting to yield results and in the next coming weeks as new hiring occurs to bring the workforce up to its full capacity and promotions go into full swing it is hoped that the full potential of these efforts will be realized.

The most significant changes within Safewalk have been in its operational management. Using walking data collected from the previous 5 years, usage patterns have been analyzed and walking hours and shift schedules developed to ensure that there is adequate coverage when it is needed most and cost models have been created so that that projected salary expenses will fall under budget. With the help of Safewalk Team Leaders the campus has been divided into specific coverage zones whereby teams patrol particular areas ensuring that there is adequate coverage in all parts of campus. The zone system also keeps better track of teams on duty allowing for a faster response time for when a walk is called in. The zone system is the result of inspiration from campus security which has regular meetings that Safewalk now attends in order to contribute to and be aware of broader campus safety issues and initiatives. In addition to these meetings there have also been meetings to discuss the Olympics and Safewalk's role in the campus community during that time. Safewalk coordinators have thoroughly reviewed the complete hiring and training process at Safewalk and have developed a standardized model by which to hire and train new employees.

Safewalk has been explosive in its new promotional campaign "add it to your phone". With a completely redesigned set of rack cards, a zap banner, as well as a new promotional booth and promotions talk Safewalk has already distributed over 2000 whistles to the campus community. Safewalk has had walkers present at events such as Gala, Firstweek, Imagine day and commerce frosh, giving out hundreds of safety cards and other promotional items. Hundreds of students have added the Safewalk number to their phone but future marketing efforts hope to make Safewalk even more widespread.

Safewalk has some exciting plans for the first semester of the school year. These plans include the purchase and repair of radios and buying new flashlights to replace the heavily aging fleet. There will also be a considerable number of new employees hired on to ensure there are adequate numbers of employees available to work shifts. The Team Leader position will undergo an intensive review and role redesign to keep in line with the upcoming promotional strategy and goal of improved service. This promotional strategy involves Safewalkers actively engaging the campus community by approaching students in residences informing them about Safewalk and encouraging them to add the Safewalk number to their phone with safety cards and whistles as incentives. There is also a series of posters that is soon to be released that will promote Safewalk in public spaces all over campus including libraries, labs and classrooms. With the school year in full swing Safewalk is looking out for the safety of students, staff and visitors all over campus.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE

Program Coordinator: Gina Eisenhaur

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Support Services Coordinator: Nicky Brighid

E-mail: sasc@ams.ubc.ca

The Sexual Assault Support Centre of the AMS has been providing survivors of violence with free and confidential support since 2003. We provide students, faculty and staff access to sexual assault support services on campus. SASC continues to provide programs and services to survivors of sexual assault, as well as to their families, friends.

The services that we offer include individual support for female, male and trans survivors of sexual assault, a resource area, campus-related advocacy, police, court and hospital accompaniments, assistance with Third Party Reports (anonymous police reports), referrals to on and off campus resources, public education, workshops, community and volunteer training, and a volunteer program.

SASC's goal over the next year is to continue to provide quality, professional sexual assault services on campus through the provision of support for survivors and through public education activities. We plan to reproduce materials from two of our previous campaigns, the 'Drink Spiking' campaign, and the "got consent?" campaign and to distribute the materials, such as, coasters, posters, stickers, t-shirts, underwear and temporary tattoos throughout campus in places such as the Pit Pub and in the Residences.

One special project that we have planned for this year is to support the work of the Liu Institute for Global Issues, at UBC, on the Gender Security Project. The Gender Security project aims to engage community based groups in the process of collecting evidence based information on sexual and gender based violence in the conflict affected region of the Kivu provinces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We are also planning events and activities for December 6th, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women; a day that marks the anniversary of the Montreal massacre at l'Ecole Polytechnique.

We plan to put a great deal of energy towards sexual assault education on campus by providing workshops, trainings and outreach initiatives. We hope to create a new student position for a part-time outreach worker in the next year. The goal is to raise awareness of sexual assault issues, and to raise the profile of the SASC on campus. Thus we will continue to promote and facilitate workshops to on-campus groups and classes at UBC.

Pavani's Comments: It is with great sadness that we bid farewell to Nicky Brighid, the SASC Support Services Coordinator, who is leaving to further her education in England. Nicky has been with SASC for the past 3 years and together with Gina Eisenhaur, Program Coordinator, her immense dedication and unrelenting drive has helped build the Service to what is today. Her invaluable contributions to the Service, the AMS, UBC and the community at large will never be forgotten. We wish her all the best with her studies.

We have received over a dozen applications for the Support Services Coordinator position, which is a permanent position. The Outreach Coordinator position has also been posted and we will be commencing with interviews shortly.

SPEAKEASY

Coordinator: Nick Nagy

Assistant Coordinator: Vivian Lam

E-mail: speak@ams.ubc.ca

Volunteer Recruitment

As discussed in our previous quarterly report, AMS Speakeasy had a fantastic retention rate this year. More than ¾ of our volunteers this year will have had previous experience with Speakeasy allowing us to provide more consistent and practiced service.

In order to fill the few remaining spots we have, Speakeasy started to actively solicit new volunteers in June and we have been conducting interviews consistently since July. Acceptance of new applications for the year ended September 11th, at which time we had a total of ~60 viable applicants and were sorting through them to find the most suitable candidates for the remaining 9 spaces within the program.

Volunteer Training

The Speakeasy training retreat is set to happen the weekend of September 18-20 at the AMS Whistler Lodge. All arrangements have been made and our volunteers are very excited to participate in this event.

The training has been broken down into 4 sections; information on Speakeasy/AMS policies and procedures and presentations from AMS Speakeasy Team Leaders, counseling and peer support skills (provided by UBC Counseling Services), suicide intervention and crisis management (provided by SAFER community services), and a presentation on minority groups and LGBTQ issues (presented by Qmunity).

The designing of this year's training manual was done in conjunction with the TL's, UBC Counseling Services, SAFER resources and Qmunity. We are hoping that the manual will be comprehensive enough to use in future years.

Desk Operations

AMS Speakeasy is proud to state that because of the high number of returning volunteers we were able begin full operations of the Speakeasy desk on September 3rd. Since then, the desk has been open and serving students during the critical 2 first weeks of school.

This year Speakeasy has made some operational changes to better serve the needs of the students, our volunteers and our budget. Some of these changes include; the implementation of a Speakeasy designed and developed time management and tracking program used to ensure that our desk is opened and operational (this program was designed in house by Vivian Lam at no cost to the AMS), we have changed the hours of operations to 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, desk shifts are now operation off a staged system, providing some overlap between shift changes, and finally, we are implementing a new electronic tracking mechanism for the collection of service data.

Internships

We have been very fortunate to have several past Speakeasy members express interest in taking on specific projects within the Speakeasy programme. We are expecting projects in the area of, advertising and marketing, policy development, social organization, training, and resource development. We are excited about the opportunities that these volunteers are providing us and look forward to seeing the results of their work.

Policy Development

As identified as a priority early in the year, we have been working towards the creation of a policies and procedures manual for AMS Speakeasy, at this time we are compiling a list of policies, procedures and best practices and are in the initial planning stages of the development of these documents.

Community Partnerships

As is common for this time of year, Speakeasy has been attending numerous events to promote its services and foster community and partnerships between itself and other university organizations. We have attended events such as; Graduate Student Orientation, Imagine Day, First Week, International House orientations (GALA), the Suicide Awareness Committee, and the Wellness Week Committee. We are also working hard to partner ourselves with Counseling Services, PrideUBC, SASC, and a variety of non-UBC based groups.

Overview

In review, Speakeasy is on track at this point in regards to its schedule of planned events and key time markers. The program is operating within budget and is in a position to offer better and more consistent services than last year. I feel Speakeasy is going to be a continuous success this year and its value as a service will only increase.

TUTORING

Coordinator: Yalda Ebrahimi
Assistant Coordinator: Mike Brown
Assistant Coordinator: Emily Lam
E-mail: tutoring@ams.ubc.ca

This summer AMS Tutoring was busy planning how the year will unfold. The following are some of the events that took place in June – September:

LEAP Meetings and “Jam Sessions”

- Developed material to be put on the tutoring portions of the LEAP website.
- Aided with the migration of the OLD leap site to the new Leap site.
- Participated in strategic planning for LEAP in the upcoming year.

Promotion

- Updated schedule and services on our website to make it more accessible for students
- Participated at the AMS Services booth during Imagine day. This year we tried a new approach, which was to have students ask us questions about the service before handing out promotional items. By doing so, students were more informed about what our service does, and received a promotional item to remember us by.

Hiring

- This year we had mass emails sent out by the Math, Chemistry, Physics, Economics, and Engineering departments to both graduate and undergraduate students. The email was used to inform students of our service, and the job opportunity. By having these emails sent out, we were able to have many great applicants.
- Applicants were short-listed based on their grades, availabilities, and subjects they could tutor. Applicants were required to have an average of at least 85% in the subjects they wished to tutor. After being short-listed, applicants went through a one-on-one interview with a coordinator or assistant coordinator and were also required to write a diagnostic exam for the subject they wished to tutor.
- Some of our returning tutors were asked to make the diagnostic exams for the testing portion of our interviews. This was very helpful as these tutors saw what questions students struggled with the most and thus made their exams to test the tutors’ ability to answer such questions.

Training

- AMS Tutoring Orientation (September 3rd, 2009)
 - This year our orientation covered topics such as AMS tutoring mission statement, tutoring partnerships, services offered, subjects provided by AMS tutoring, time management, tutor expectations, policies and procedures, and ethical tutoring. Tutors were given policies and procedures manual, as well as a Health and Safety guide, which was put together by Jane Barry (AMS Services Manager).
 - As suggested by the LEAP committee, AMS Tutors attended the info session that was put together by Julie Mitchell for the Chapman Learning Commons’ Assistants from 1pm – 2pm. This was very helpful as our tutors learned about other academic services that are offered to students at the Chapman Learning Commons in case they need to refer students to any services. It also allowed for the CLCA’s and AMS Tutors to have a meet and greet session, as they will be working very closely with one another throughout the year.

- Last year we noticed that much of the topics that we covered in our training regarding academic integrity and ethical tutoring were also covered in the Strategic Content Learning training program that is put together by DRC. Therefore, this year we decided to have the DRC training as part of our training to reduce the overlap. For the second part of our training session, we had Ruth Warrick come in and run the SCL program.
- OLT Training (September 10th, 2009)
 - Similar to last year, we had all tutors who indicated interest in online tutoring to attend this training session that is put together by the Office of Learning Technology. The session was run by Cindy Underhill, and covered the basics of how the online portion of our service works, and challenges online tutors would face as opposed to face-to-face tutors.

Exam Database

- As discussed last year at the LEAP meetings, AMS Tutoring will be uploading exams that were on the old exam database, onto cIRcle. To do so, we would need permission from all departments to put up past exams. This could become a problem for us, as not everyone is willing to give such permission.
- However, so far we have received permission from the Math Department to upload all math exams that we had access to before (~450) and all math exams that are on their website. We have already uploaded ~100 of these exams, and are on our way to upload more.
- We also received permission from the Physics Department to upload previous Physics exams that were on our database.

VOLUNTEER CONNECT

Coordinator: Daniel Chow

Assistant Coordinator: Annie Tsao

E-mail: volunteers@ams.ubc.ca

Internship Coordinator: Joshabelle Josephson

E-mail: internship@ams.ubc.ca

Partnering with CareersOnline (Simplicity) Website

Early in this quarter, an opportunity came up to partner with UBC Career Services on their new Careers Online website which would make use of *Simplicity*, a new and innovative information and communication technology. In August, Jane Barry (AMS Services Manager), Kelli Seepaul (AMS Communications and Design Services Manager) and I met with Milad Maymay (On-Campus Work Programs Manager) and Jenny Au (On-Campus Recruiting Consultant) from UBC Career Services. We really liked the idea of using this system to post and approve our member organizations' volunteer opportunities and advertise our volunteer fairs. We were given access to the testing website during August and the new CareersOnline website was launched on September 8th, 2009. We are waiting to hear back from UBC Career Services on student perspectives of the new site and the progress on the event registration system which we would like to use for the upcoming volunteer fair.

Premium Membership Package

One issue of concern from the beginning is that posting volunteer opportunities on the CareersOnline website is free to employers, but posting volunteer opportunities on the AMS Volunteer Connect website requires a membership fee. We were worried that transferring these postings to the CareersOnline website would result in a loss of revenue for our program which would affect our operations. Therefore, we came up with a Premium Membership Package that we could offer to both the organizations who continuously renew their memberships with us every year and to other employers who post on the CareersOnline website but are not familiar with Volunteer Connect. This Premium Membership Package (which will be shortly be uploaded to the website) includes incentives such as active support from Volunteer Connect to find volunteers for the employer, a 50% discount on and priority bookings at the Volunteer Fairs in October and March, extended application deadlines and access to student feedback on internship positions.

Problems with the Website

In August, we ran in to unexpected problems with the Volunteer Connect website: all of our contacts, the postings and information about internship and volunteer fairs and international opportunities were deleted. Thanks to the help of Sheldon Goldfarb (AMS Archivist/Researcher and Privacy Officer) and Kelli Seepaul (AMS Communications and Design Services Manager), we were able to view an old version of the site in the Archives and restore some of the basic information. In the meantime, we have asked employers who had employer profiles on our website, which could not be retrieved, to send us new/updated profiles and we are updating the website as we go. The link to the website is no longer <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/vex> or <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/internship>; it is http://www2.ams.ubc.ca/index.php/services/category/ams_volunteer_connect.

October Volunteer Fair

We are currently very busy preparing for this fair and have confirmed the dates as October 26 to October 29, 2009. We have discussed equipment rental fees (for VCRs, TVs etc.) with Kathryn Will (AMS Booking Representative) and have created an application form for the fair. The fair will be \$20/day for registered organizations, \$30/day for early bird non-registered organizations and \$40/day for regular non-registered organizations. Additional fees may apply if they request special equipment and/or a corner booth. We will be working with the Communications Department on the brochure design.

Internship Office

Joshabelle Josephson (Internship Coordinator) has been working hard to get the program up and running smoothly. She met with potential employers to promote the Internship program and we have approximately 30 postings for the upcoming Fall placement. On Friday, September 11th, 2009, we held an information session in room 260 at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre from 12-1pm. A student who

had completed an internship placement over the summer, did a presentation about her experience. The session was well-attended and a number of students expressed much regret that they could not attend due to conflict with their class schedule. The deadline to apply for placements was September 14th, 2009. Joshabelle is in the process of interviewing all the applications (the majority of whom were from the information session!) and the students should start their placements around late September. Once these placements are completed, Joshabelle will conduct a series of on-site visits and will continue to search for internship opportunities for students.

In regards to the 2009 summer placements, certificates were printed out for each of the students and they were invited to come to the office to pick them out. The interns also filled out a student survey evaluating their internship experience.

SHINERAMA

Coordinator: Wendy Zhou

E-mail: shinerama@ams.ubc.ca

Tel: 604-822

Committee Structure

After returning from the National Shinerama Conference in London, Ontario in early May, I assembled my own Shinerama 2009 team through interviewing and selecting qualified candidates to take on the lead volunteer positions. There are 5 members on the Executive Committee, namely, the Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator, the Sponsorship Coordinator, the Marketing and Communications Coordinator and two Event Planners. The Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator, the Sponsorship Coordinator and the Marketing and Communications Coordinator have their own sub-committees (each sub-committee consisting of 3 to 5 people).

We hold regularly scheduled (weekly or bi-weekly depending on the work at hand) committee meetings to discuss and delegate tasks and share updates. The other three Coordinators also hold bi-weekly sub-committee meetings.

Secondary Fundraisers

Carwash: In July, we had our first fundraiser which was a car wash at the parking lot of the Grandview Hwy Superstore. As the first fundraiser, the car wash was as successful as we could have expected it to be and we were able to collect almost 300 dollars. However, we ran in to some problems to due to the fact that we ordered too many pizzas and had too few volunteers. We learned that volunteer recruitment is a very important factor for our campaign and that there is much room for development in terms of our volunteer recruitment strategy.

Bottle Drive: Our second fundraiser was a Bottle Drive on Robson Street in downtown Vancouver. We spent a lot of time planning this event but we encountered a serious problem when we carried the

fundraiser out. On the event day, we found out that most restaurants on Robson had already had their bottles and cans collected on the previous day, and thus, when we asked them for a donation of bottles and cans, the restaurants barely had any to donate. We really learn an important lesson from this experience that when planning a fundraiser, we should not miss out on any single detail.

Club Night: After the Bottle Drive, we successfully held a Club Night at The Cellar in downtown Vancouver where we able to raise funds by selling the tickets and holding a 50/50 draw inside the club on the event night. In only a couple of hours, we made almost 500 dollars which was very uplifting for the committee members, after the last two fundraising events.

Firstweek Dance Party: As in previous years, we partnered with AMS Firstweek for their Dance Party which was held on September 10th. We sent out volunteers to sell glow sticks as well as water, and collected more than 200 dollars.

Krispy Kreme Donut Sale: On the same day as the Dance Party, we also had a Donut Sale Booth at Gage in the morning and at the SUB in the afternoon. We made around 200 dollars selling 25 dozens of donuts.

Loonie Mile: Outside of SUB, on the North Plaza, we asked passengers-by to donate their spare changes to make a Shiny Shinerama logo on the ground. We also invited UBC Vice President of Students, Brian Sullivan to join us for this fundraiser. Quite a number of student volunteers came to help out and we successfully enhanced public awareness of Shinerama and Cystic Fibrosis.

Shine Day: This year's Shine Day was on September 12th, which was a Saturday. More than 200 volunteers showed up for this event. These volunteers came from to us from many different channels, including students from fraternities and residences and students who read about Shinerama in the UBC FYI E-newsletter. After a rally describing what Shinerama and Cystic Fibrosis is, we had Rachel, a UBC student with CF to talk about her story onstage. Later, we divided all the volunteers into several groups and sent them out to various locations in Vancouver, i.e. downtown, Kerrisdale, Granville Island etc. to hand out daisy pins for donations. Compared to last year, we had a more successful Shine Day due to the fact that we had almost doubled the number of volunteers and we planned more sites to send the volunteers to. We are still in the process of counting the total of coins that we collected.

Ongoing/Future Events

UBC Bookstore Round-Up: This started on August 31st and will finish on September 18th. The Bookstore Manager complained that last year's Shinerama Team relied too much on the cashiers to fundraise and barely sent out enough people to take charge of The Round-Up. As a result, we have been sending volunteers to Bookstore twice per day to give out water bottles and snacks to the cashiers, as well as to say thank-you and keep the cashiers cheerful. This has worked out very well so far and the Bookstore Manager has been quite satisfied with what we have done.

Residence Bling Bling: This is a coin collection competition among different houses in residence. Residence Life complained about a problem they had with previous Shinerama Campaigns and were reluctant to allow the event to take place in the residences again this year. We were informed that the Shinerama 2008 Team did not keep the promise of awarding a coffee table to the winning house of Vanier and Totem for Bling Bling. After speaking to them several times, we were able to persuade them to give us another chance and were subsequently directed to the presidents of both Totem and Vanier residences. We have promised to throw a Dessert Party at the winning house of Vanier and Totem after Bling Bling finishes the week of September 21st.

Club Night: On September 18th, we will have a Wrap-Up Party at Caprice Club. We have been selling tickets for the event, but the main purpose of the Club Night is to thank all of the volunteers who have helped out on Shine Day and at the previous fundraisers.

Pavani's Comments: As was mentioned in my First Quarterly Report, the responsibility for the Shinerama campaign was taken off of AMS Volunteer Connect and made a separate component of the ECSS portfolio. It is important to recognize that Wendy Zhou, who is paid for 10 hours of work weekly, single-handedly took on this mammoth of a campaign, the execution of which was shared between the Shinerama Coordinator (10 hours of work weekly and the Volunteer Connect Coordinator (20 hours of work weekly) the previous year. Much credit should also be given to her outstanding team of volunteers.

COMMITTEES

HIRING COMMITTEES

The Committee system has not worked very well for the Coordinator Appointment and the Assistant Coordinator Appointment Committees this year. Although attendance was good very early in the year, it dwindled quickly and the majority of interviews were conducted by myself and, once they were hired, a coordinator. However, this worked just fine and it might be advisable that the Code and Policy Committee review the feasibility of using a committee for these particular appointments.

The summer hiring was completed in a timely manner, and as can be expected, there was a great deal of competition for positions posted closer towards the beginning of the academic year. There are two main positions left to hire: the Assistant Advocacy Coordinator and a new Support Services Coordinator for the Sexual Assault Support Centre. The application deadline just passed and there have been quite a few applicants for both of those positions. We will be conducting interviews over the next two weeks and hiring two new staff members very shortly.

I am happy to say that we have a great team this year and I am very pleased with all of the appointments!

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT INITIATIVES FUND COMMITTEE

The Committee has been unable to meet as of yet (a meeting arranged in July fell through due to lack of attendance). However, there is no request for funding at the moment that needs to be dealt with. A couple of items I have in mind to discuss at the next meeting:

- Reviewing and updating the application form.
- Creating a budget.
- Coming up with an effective strategy for advertising the fund.
- Identifying existing projects which we could help fund.
- Giving the AMS Equity Coordinator a seat on the Committee.

SUICIDE AWARENESS COMMITTEE

I have continued to work with the Suicide Awareness Day sub-committee in organizing events for that day (November 3rd, 2009). At the moment, we are working on the details of the kick-off event with a guest speaker and the screening of a documentary film from the National Film Board of Canada entitled *Drawing From Life*, which follows a 6-week group therapy workshop for individuals who have attempted suicide more than once, as they move away from suicide and towards life. The promotional items and

information cards designed by the Suicide Awareness Committee arrived in time for the orientation events at the start of the academic year and the posters are currently being printed (and will be distributed to various groups/departments/locations on campus shortly).

LEARNING ENHANCEMENT ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP (LEAP)

The LEAPers worked hard on the site migration this summer, and the site has now been launched! You can find it here: <http://leap.ubc.ca/>. AMS Tutoring decided to trim the content on their page, narrowing it down to the most important information to students. Due to conflicting commitments and my time away, I have not been able to be as involved with the LEAP project as I would have liked to have been. Yalda Ebrahimi (AMS Tutoring Coordinator), Mike Brown and Emily Lam (AMS Tutoring Assistant Coordinators) have continued to work closely with the LEAP team who have provided us with valuable feedback on the Service and support in organizing and conducting the AMS tutor training this year.

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS

NEW/UPDATED MATERIALS

This year we gave each Service a decent Advertising and Promotions budget and made some major, long overdue updates to our informational and advertising material, and thanks to Kelli Seepaul (AMS Communications and Design Services Manager) and Bill Matthews (Graphic Designer), everything looks fantastic! We created new rack cards to not only match the rebranding of the Services that took place last year but to replace inaccurate and unattractive brochures and information cards that have not been updated in many years. We also purchased zap banners for each service that are durable, easy to transport and easy to set up and take down. They are consistent with each other in terms of design and really stand out in a crowd. They were an extremely worthwhile investment. I also purchased a general “AMS Services” zap banner to be taken to events where there is only one table available for all the Services in general. We have been placing this banner just outside the glass doors to the Services area when it is not being used at an event. We also purchased a general Services banner to hang off the side of the balcony.

For promotional items, we went with similar items to last year: highlighters, lip balm and post-it notes. We also doubled last year’s order of Services notebooks. All made from eco-friendly materials as part of the AMS Lighter Footprint strategy. All the items have been hugely popular with students. Other forms of printed advertising we will be using include Zoom media ads in the SUB, posters and big board advertising on campus (in the Aquatic Centre, the SRC, etc.). It is important that the Services have a very visible presence throughout the campus and that students are constantly reminded that their Student Society provides unique, free or affordable services to support them during their time at UBC.

ORIENTATIONS

This year, the Services were present at a number of Orientation events: GALA (international student orientation), Graduate Student Orientation, First Nations House of Learning Welcome Back BBQ, Commuter Students’ Parents’ Orientation, Imagine UBC and First Week. We will also be present on the main concourse during Clubs Days. All the coordinators and assistant coordinators, with the help of volunteers and staff, made a tremendous effort to promote the Services during the first week of the academic year and we are already seeing a significant jump in the number of students using our Services and in individuals contacting us for more information on the Services.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERACTIVE ADVERTISING

Everyone is jumping on the “social media bandwagon” these days and the Services are not going to ignore this opportunity either. We will be experimenting with Twitter updates and Facebook ads this year; however, I am very keen to pursue interactive (general) advertising opportunities in the form of group presentations and information sessions. Posters and rack cards are impersonal, and I feel that

speaking specifically to targeted groups of students would not only give them an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns but be able to put a face to a name and in turn, increase their comfort level with approaching our Services. The information session/presentation approach proved very successful for AMS Volunteer Connect's Internship program. Almost all the individuals who attended the information session subsequently applied for internship positions.

We are making a determined effort to be a strong, visible presence on campus consistently throughout the year and as such, will be holding booths in the SUB and in the residences on a regular basis and attending events on campus where it would be valuable to have representation from the Services. The coordinators have come up with or are in the process of coming up with interactive and dynamic forms of advertising and promotion; you can read more about some of the promotional strategies they are using or plan to use, in their individual updates.

CONFERENCES/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES CONFERENCE 2009**

In June 2009, I attended the national conference of the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services in Waterloo, Ontario. The Conference took place from June 14th to June 17th and was hosted by the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga Collage. It is an annual professional development opportunity that allows individuals working in the field of student services to discuss, debate, plan, explore, share innovative ideas and present new research. This year's theme was The Power of Three: Innovation, Integration and Intelligence; fostering Innovation, encouraging Integration and building Intelligence within and across the various divisions of the national organization. The Conference is mainly attended by service professionals and I did not meet any other student staff. I think this speaks clearly to the expanse of the services that the AMS offers, which I believe are unparalleled by any other student union in Canada. My attendance to the conference was jointly funded by the AMS and the VP Students Office and I was joined by two other students, Equity Ambassadors, from UBC. The following are a few highlights from the conference:

Healthy Campus: The Pivotal Role of Student Services in Student Successes

I chose to attend the Healthy Campuses pre-conference workshop because of the targeted efforts being made at UBC this year to work towards the idea of a "healthy campus." Data from the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) and other surveys to chief student affairs officers and students identified mental health, stress and fatigue as being the greatest (and increasing) of health problems for students. Students also identified a "domino effect" in the way health issues affect academic performance. The presenters pointed out that currently, there is disconnect between academics and services. The idea of a "healthy campus" must be an institutional goal that in turn affects its setting and environment (from the ecological perspective, behaviour is influenced by the interaction between a person and their environment). Therefore, a broad focus, community-based health promotion model is needed as opposed to a strict focus on health services that support students when they are ill.

I think there is tremendous opportunity to integrate the AMS Services in to this larger institutional plan; both in terms of being a part of a network that acts as a solid support system for students and by participating in various projects and initiatives geared towards this goal.

"Why Innovation is Becoming Urgent for Educational Institutions" (Key Note)

Larry Smith – University of Waterloo

On the first day of the conference, I attended a key note address by Larry Smith, an Adjunct Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Waterloo. Smith spoke to the challenges that the increasing demand for student services provides, which he described as an "urgent need that is different from the

past.” According to Smith, the economical recession, from which recovery will be slow, will mean that the job market will also be slow to recover. He identified this as having the following impacts:

- Students become more anxious than they already are.
- Competitive pressures increase significantly.
- Employers want a new type of worker (the numbers of contract, contingent, temporary workers are rising).
- A world of continued evaluation.

He identified the following as adding further to students’ anxiety:

- Expanding academic program choices.
- Anxious parents and students = panicked decisions on academic programs they may not like.
- Innovative programs: the skill you learn may not be employable four years down the road.
- Competitiveness of the global market.

Smith followed this explanation of the increasing demand for student services from an economic perspective with several recommendations on how to meet this rising need with limited resources. While the majority of recommendations were more suited to services offered by the University, there were a few that I took away from his talk that I felt were relevant to our services:

- Think of a new way to *deliver* a service.
- Experiment with new programs and initiatives; give staff the opportunity to fail.
- Draw out the talent of your service.
- Do not stifle innovation.

This has given me a new perspective on how we manage our resources within the Services and I look forward to implementing some of these ideas.

Community Outreach: Assessment and Program Planning for Off-Campus Students

Karla Gouthro, Jennifer Massey – Queens University

At this presentation, staff from Queens University spoke about an assessment they did of a community centre they set up for off-campus students. I attended this presentation to get a better understanding of the assessment process they used, the challenges they faced in carrying out the assessment and the results of the assessment. Coincidentally, I found that there were a number of parallels between our

services and the services that the Centre offers, such as volunteer fairs, sexual health workshops, and a service similar to a food bank. Although this was a small-scale assessment, I felt that that being privy to this first-hand experience would be valuable in performing a review of our Services (discussed later in this report).

Their objectives (which I feel would be very relevant to a review of our services) included: understand the level of awareness (of the Centre), gain a sense of the perceived role of the Centre on campus, determine what programs and services have students participated in to date, learn about what programs and services students would like to see, understand what role the Centre *could* play in the community. The consultant who assisted the staff with the review described the merits of the methodology they used to obtain this information (focus groups) as being ideal in that it allowed for a broad understanding of perceptions and contributed greatly to the richness of the data.

Their first attempt at soliciting participants, in which they e-mailed an invitation to a focus group to a random sample of 250 students, where they would offer them a catered meal and a chance to win \$50, drew no responses. In their next attempt, they offered each potential participant a \$20 gift card and a catered meal and 72 hours later, they had 39 participants. The consultant also spoke about the importance of having trained and experienced note takers and focus group facilitators in order to obtain high-quality data. The note taker roles were filled by individuals who had been through a training program for Graduate Research Assistants and staff. In addition, they mentioned the following important considerations: warming up the group before collecting data, ensuring that the participants trust the facilitators, the participants feel comfortable talking to one another, and timing the focus group adequately. Clearly, gathering accurate and substantial data from focus groups is not an easy task and I strongly feel that we would need experienced individuals to perform this component of a review of our Services.

The feedback they received from the students was that many felt that it was “a place that other people need,” the name was misleading (they felt it was a Centre for individuals struggling with addictions), the Centre’s purpose was unclear, some of the services are offered elsewhere on campus and that it had no unique programs that would encourage students to come. This feedback raised many questions for me in regards to the AMS Services: Do some people avoid them because they feel that a particular Service is something that only “other people need?” Are any of the names misleading? Note: this year we changed AMS Connect to AMS Volunteer Connect as simply “Connect” did not give any indication of its purpose. Do students understand the purpose of each of our Services? Is there overlap with the University Student Services? These are all important questions that should be addressed in a Services review.

Raising the Bar: Bringing a Quality Assurance Review Process to the Student Services

Dr. Janet Miller, Kandi McElary, Dr. Sonya Flessati, Dr. Dave Murphy – Mount Royal College

This presentation detailed a review process conducted in the Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life at Mount Royal College (for their Counselling Services). The review was initiated in preparation for the

College's transition in to a University; with the purpose of identifying what they are doing now and what they need to be doing when moving to a University position. They were also eager to create greater consistency between the goals of the institution and what the Service is doing. Student Affairs identified the link between the "business plan" and the "advancement plan" as the student experience which became the "hook" for going ahead with this review.

The model used for this review consisted of a self-study conducted by the staff, an external review and a "best practices" review. A Quality Assurance Steering Committee oversaw the entire process. All of the distinct components of the evaluation process allowed for a thorough and effective assessment. It resulted in 110 recommendations which outlined, in summary, what they could afford to do, what they could afford not to do and what they will have to give up.

As you will see in the Services Review section, I have drawn from many of the ideas mentioned here in establishing what I see as the goals of a review of our Services.

BC HEALTHY MINDS-HEALTHY CAMPUSES SUMMER CONFERENCE 2009

This two-day conference took place at the University of Victoria from July 22nd to 23rd. I attended this conference along with AMS Speakeasy Coordinator Nick Nagy. It was an opportunity to learn about the student services-driven programs and initiatives taking place on university and college campuses in BC to promote mental wellness, suicide prevention and reduction of substance abuse. A major highlight was a performance by Stand Up for Mental Health; a stand-up comedy show that serves as a form of therapy for those taking part (ordinary individuals who are dealing with mental health issues) while helping to battle the stigma and public prejudice around mental illness. The conference was attended by students, faculty, staff, administrators and community members from across BC and covered a wide range of topics ranging from student-led peer support initiatives to creating a safer environment on campus to providing international students with culturally responsive services.

Building Capacities for Providing Culturally Responsive Services to International Students: Sharing Experiences and Creating Vision across University Campuses

Dr. Ai-Lan Chia (University of Victoria), Brian Herron (Camosun College), Dr. Natalee Popadiuk (Simon Fraser University), Tia Robertson (University of Victoria), Yukari Tanji (University of Victoria), Iris Thomson-Glen (Camosun College)

I found this session particularly interesting as it spoke directly to one of my goals this year: to identify barriers that affect the accessibility of our Services. An international student gave a presentation in which she identified some of the challenges that international students face in adapting to a campus environment in Canada. She first discussed the issue of language; the assumption from the system that international students have a certain degree of fluency in English, and the discomfort some international students feel in communicating with others due to their lack of fluency in English or their accent. She then addressed the issues of race and culture. Race and culture are not usually an issues for

international students in their home country (homogenous culture), but Canada is a new experience. The cultural norms are different and not only do international students have to learn and adapt to the norms of the new culture, they are forced to put aside their own cultural expectations. The Services we offer, our policies and practices are based on Canadian culture and are often not sensitive to the cultural expectations and needs of international students, which in turn may dissuade those students from using our services. A few suggestions for building culturally responsive services offered at the session included increasing services' capacities, providing continuing education to staff and participating in an ongoing review process to ensure that we are offering culturally responsive services.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COORDINATORS

In July, I organized the first professional development opportunity of the year for the Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators. We covered a wide array of topics: budgets and accounts, forms, guidelines for coordinators, good leadership and management skills, avoiding chronic stress/burn-out, and balancing work, school and life. Jane Barry (AMS Services Manager) did a presentation on the Health and Safety Guide and an Introduction to the AMS. Kelli Seepaul (AMS Communications and Design Services Manager) and Kathryn Will (AMS Booking Representative) stopped by to speak about their respective departments, and Sheldon Goldfarb (Archivist-Researcher/Privacy Officer) did a presentation on the History of the AMS and administered the "AMS Quiz." The Executives all stopped by towards the end of the day to introduce themselves and meet the Coordinators.

The following are some of the professional development opportunities I am planning for within the next two months (some of the coordinators have also been seeking out their own professional development opportunities):

- Positive Space Training
- QPR Training
- Equity Training

SERVICES REVIEW

THE NEED FOR REVIEW

In 1994, the Student Council of AMS initiated a review process of its entire organizational structure and every aspect of its operations. A Special Committee of the Student Council, the Committee for Organizational Review and Planning oversaw this nine-month long process which resulted in the CORP Report, consisting of “ninety-seven recommendations to put the Society in a better position to serve its members.” Why was this process initiated? An excerpt from the CORP Report:

“The Society, like many governments today, is losing touch with its constituents. The Society’s achievements include over forty programs and services, almost two hundred clubs, financial security, and proprietorship over its own building. Even so, the AMS Student Council realized that it must ensure the membership’s ability to manage this growing Society in coming years. To this end, efficient administration and organizational structures must be set in place.”

“This is not to say that the Society was unable to function at an adequate level before the Committee began its review; rather, while examining every aspect of the Society, the Committee was inspired by the opportunity to alter the Society such that the needs of students could be better served.”

The CORP Report (1994; page 4)

In reviewing the AMS Service Organizations (as they were then called) in 1994, the Committee recognized that the “Student Services [were] a visible and important way of serving the membership.” As such, they felt that it was important to identify the services “that students want and can use.” The CORP Report led to significant changes and improvements within the Services which are still in effect today, including most notably, the creation of Student Service Directors (today they are called Coordinators) positions to oversee the operations of each individual service. Some “summer projects/programs” such as Safewalk, Tutoring, Joblink and Rentsline, became Services, some Services became Resource Groups and procedures were put in place for budget approval, ongoing information collection, evaluation, hiring employees and provisions were put in place for the creation of new Student Services.

15 years later, the University has grown significantly and our student population has expanded and diversified. I think it is fair to say that the needs of the student population in 1994 were different from what they are today. The Services have also gone through many transformations. Programs/summer

projects such as Safewalk and Tutoring have expanded tremendously. Today, AMS Safewalk is a well-established service and a proactive approach to campus safety that provides part-time employment to 80-100 students annually. Also thousands of students take advantage of the online tutoring, drop-in tutoring, exam review sessions, appointment tutoring and residential tutoring services that AMS Tutoring offers. New Services, such as the Food Bank, have been established, or acquired by the AMS, such as the Sexual Assault Support Centre and we have parted ways with Services such as Joblink and Orientations. Procedures have changed, policies have changed, positions have changed, programs have changed and even Code, as it relates to the Services, has changed.

In my opinion, an all-encompassing, formal, well-structured and thorough review of our Services is long overdue.

RAISING THE BAR, DARING TO BE EXTRAORDINARY

Are we ready to raise the bar on our Student Services? The following is what I envision as the objectives of such a review:

1. Measure the level of awareness of our Services.

Which Services do students know about? How much do they know about each Service? Where did they find out about the Services?

2. Assess the quality of our Services.

3. Determine the level of student satisfaction with our Services.

4. Identify overlap with University Student Services and find ways to better coordinate all Services.

What are the gaps and overlaps? How can we coordinate our Services to fill these gaps while making the best use of all resources by limiting overlaps?

5. Investigate the relevancy of our Services to the current student population.

Why isn't there a higher demand for some of our Services? Is it due to lack of need, lack of awareness, misconceptions or stigma around using the Service?

6. Rearrange our priorities based on what it means to the student experience.

How can we better align our Services with the goals of the AMS? How can we further enhance the student experience through our Services?

7. Identify new programs, initiatives and services that students desire and need.

8. Identify the best allocation of financial and other resources within the Services.

9. Identify ways we can better accommodate the needs of our diverse student population.

Are we offering culturally responsive services? Are we doing all that we can to accommodate students with disabilities?

10. Restructure our Services to run more effectively and efficiently.

THE AMS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

A review of our Services is nothing new or unusual. It is in fact, built in to the AMS Strategic Framework/Plan:

2002

AMS Strategic Plan – Vision for the Future

This document that I came across was put together circa 2002. It outlines a number of recommendations, as it relates to the AMS Services, based on the AMS' overall strategic plan at the time. The following are a few of the recommendations from the document. I am presently unaware that any of the recommendations were followed up on.

Recommendation 2.1

An annual survey be conducted to determine what AMS Services are needed and wanted. The AMS must be prepared to act on the results of the survey and allocate appropriate resources to meet the needs and wants of the students of UBC. This survey may be in conjunction with the comprehensive survey as itemized in Recommendation #1.1, above.

Time Frame: To commence in March of 2002, with follow up surveys on an annual basis in March, 2003; March, 2004; March, 2005.

AMS Strategic Plan – Vision for the Future (2002; page 1)

Recommendation 4.4

The AMS establish a Best Practices Criteria to reduce duplication and inefficiencies inherent in a complex and dynamic organization. This criteria shall be established through an annual review of promotional plans, controls, and system processes for the AMS Student Services, AMS Business operations, the AMS Administration Office, and all other AMS departments and operations and will be self-managing.

Time Frame: To be completed by June, 2002, (to allow for incorporation into the budget considerations for fiscal year 2002 / 03) and then annually in June of 2003, 2004, and 2005.

AMS Strategic Plan – Vision for the Future (2002; page 3)

Recommendation 4.6

That the AMS review its services, programs, and events for partnership opportunities with the University through the production of a comprehensive proposal, and that the AMS work with the University to assess and establish partnership opportunities that will help to financially support and sustain appropriate AMS services, programs, and events while maintaining our independence as a student society that is run “for students, by students.”

Time Frame: Review shall commence July 2002 after completion of and with information from this year’s budget process with a target completions date of December 2002 for the proposal, to allow for discussion the University and incorporation into budget considerations for fiscal year 2003 / 04. Components of the proposal to be reviewed annually in 2003, 2004 and 2005, by the respective departments during the annual budget process for changes.

AMS Strategic Plan – Vision for the Future (2002; page 3)

2006

Our Alma Mater: The AMS Strategic Framework

This document, which clearly outlines the AMS Strategic Framework was passed by Council on February 22nd, 2006. The AMS website describes it as:

Passed by AMS Council on Feb. 22, 2006, the Strategic Framework establishes four key priorities for growth of AMS activities, resources, and relationships. It is a bold document that commits the AMS to a singular purpose: that the Alma Mater Society exists to serve the aspirations of UBC students. We are proud to make that commitment.

*Our Alma Mater: The AMS Strategic Framework
(http://www2.ams.ubc.ca/index.php/student_government/subpage/category/ams_strategic_framework/)*

The following are excerpts from the document passed by Council:

Measuring Outcomes: Constituents

2. The Society will not rely solely upon priorities generated by student leaders but will actively consult the student collective to determine what is important to all its constituents. It will measure its success in establishing these constituent priorities by:

- c. assessing constituent satisfaction with the AMS's contribution to their lives.*

Our Alma Mater: The AMS Strategic Framework (2005; page 3)

Measuring Outcomes: Resources

3. The Society will utilize its resources to serve the aspirations of students, measuring its success through:

- a. the percentage of utilization of and opt-out from AMS services;*
- b. monitoring the frequency of usage, and number of unique clients, of AMS services, programs and businesses, including the initial establishment of a baseline for their analysis;*
- c. conducting regular qualitative satisfaction surveys and consultations.*

Our Alma Mater: The AMS Strategic Framework (2005; page 4)

PAST REVIEWS IN PERSPECTIVE

Although I have had difficulty finding any formal record of reviews conducted of the Services since the CORP Report in 1994, in going through past ECSS transition reports and electronic and paper documents, I uncovered a number of reviews or attempts at reviews. It is obvious that many of the former Executive Coordinators understood the importance of quality assurance and ongoing evaluation. These documents have greatly reaffirmed my belief that an extensive review is urgently needed.

2000

Student Services Organizational Review: Report on Synergy between AMS Student Services and the Student Services of the University of British Columbia

Tom Booth, Executive Coordinator of Student Services 2000/2001

This report identified areas of synergy between AMS and UBC Student Services and opportunities for growth and coordination. However, as evidenced by the following excerpt, the report is very outdated; the Services that are referred to have changed immensely or no longer exist. It clearly reflects the need for ongoing evaluation:

Improvement must be made in centralizing the University Safety services and collective promotion of AMS and University safety services, including: Security Bus, Campus Security, Blue Light Program, and Safewalk. As evidenced by the massive growth and popularity of Safewalk (due to a referendum), this is clearly a very important issue to students.

Student Services Organizational Review: Report on Synergy between AMS Student Services and the Student Services of the University of British Columbia (2000; page1)

2004

Market Research Study Report: The perceived level of satisfaction with overall service of AMS Services among students at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada

Charmaine Ng, AMS Market Research Consultant

This was an ambitious survey study that was conducted by UBC student Charmaine Ng, who was hired by the AMS as a Market Research Consultant for the project. The Executive Coordinator of Student Services at the time was Dani Bryant. The following are excerpts from the final report and the Executive Summary of that report:

Need for Information

Based on the meeting minutes received immediately after my appointment as AMS Market Research Consultant for this study, various problems of AMS services were identified. Ms. Bryant expressed her concern with the level of apathy among students and their level of awareness of the services available to them.

Furthermore, it was very difficult to assess if students were satisfied given the nature of some of the services. Some services were either entirely electronic in nature or had significant components of their services online, for example, Joblink and Volunteer Connections both post jobs online.

Without any feedback or evaluation, it is difficult to assess whether student needs are being met. *There are only a few services that involve one-on-one direct interaction, allowing the service itself to be evaluated immediately. Students have the opportunity to fill out evaluation forms after taking a Mini-School course or*

after using AMS Tutoring services. **Up until this point [the ECSS] and AMS Services Coordinators have had to rely simply on anecdotal evidence as a measure of success.**

While an AMS official strategic plan stated the intention of conducting an evaluation of AMS services at some point, no action has been taken in the interim. More specifically, no research or evaluations have been conducted since AMS Services were first created to fit under the same umbrella four years ago. Prior to this time, all the offices were disjointed and were located all over the Student Union Building (SUB). An area on the second floor of the SUB had only been created three years ago to centrally locate all of the services in one location. The only survey the AMS has conducted in the past is a Safety Audit to assess the level of safety students felt within the SUB- the results are currently being evaluated.

Without evaluation procedures in place, it is difficult for the AMS to assess whether it is doing the right things and in the best way possible. For example, it took a number of years for the AMS to terminate the AMS Internship program once it realized how unsuccessful it was. It is hoped that the following market research proposal will help AMS services implement a plan to evaluate its services.

Market Research Study Report: The perceived level of satisfaction with overall service of AMS Services among students at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada (2004; page 1-2)

Objectives

This report investigates the level of satisfaction with AMS Services, and its relation to a proposed research model which is a function of the following categories of independent variables: Demographics, Consumer Behaviour, and Attributes of AMS Services, based on a survey distributed to 97 students between the ages of 17 and 30. The study assesses students' perceived benefit of the AMS Services and identifies factors that influence students' decision in using AMS Services. It also assesses students' awareness and knowledge of AMS Services and profiles UBC students and investigates usage experiences of AMS Services.

Executive Summary of the "Market Research Study Report: The perceived level of satisfaction with overall service of AMS Services among students at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada" (2004; page 1)

Recommendation/Conclusion

*Because of the small sample size obtained, **further research must be conducted** to investigate the needs and concerns of UBC students about AMS Services, in order to produce more conclusive and consistent results.*

Executive Summary of the "Market Research Study Report: The perceived level of satisfaction with overall service of AMS Services among students at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada" (2004; page 1)

2006/2007

Executive Coordinator of Student Services Transition Report 2006-2007

Mariana Payet, Executive Coordinator of Student Services 2006/2007

These were the last traces I was able to find of reviews. Mariana Payet, Executive Coordinator of Student Services 2006/2007, stated the following in her transition report to her successor:

Ad-Hoc Survey Review Committee

Last April the AMS conducted an extensive survey of its services. The survey was poorly constructed, was too long, and the questions were really biased.

Transition Report of the Executive Coordinator Student Services 2006/2007 (2007; page 19)

Ad-Hoc Safewalk Review Committee:

Last year Council struck an ad-hoc committee to review the Service, its efficiency, funding, etc. I voluntarily placed myself on the committee. The committee never met and a review was never conducted.

Transition Report of the Executive Coordinator Student Services 2006/2007 (2007; page 23)

Failed Projects: Staff Survey

*Probably one of the best things I could have done and didn't. The idea was to conduct a survey of the Safewalk walkers, the Tutoring tutors and the Speakeasy volunteers to evaluate their services and their experiences working with the AMS. **Such a survey has never been conducted. If you can, please do!***

Transition Report of the Executive Coordinator Student Services 2006/2007 (2007; page 26)

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

The Budget/Oversight Committee is already conducting a society-wide financial audit; couldn't they be tasked with this as well?

This will certainly be a valuable component and addition to a Services Review but it is an internal review from a financial perspective and only a small component of the extensive review I envision. It would also not be practical for this joint Committee to take on such a time-consuming, arduous, in-depth investigation and review process in addition to the society-wide audit they are tackling at the moment and all the responsibilities they have been tasked with by Council.

There is no doubt that a self-study will be important to the review, but is there a need for an external review component to this process?

To turn a microscope on yourself is difficult and it is even more difficult to do this objectively. There must be an objective component to this review processes. As we have seen from the Services review performed in 2006, objectivity was difficult to maintain. Why would this time around be any different? The Councillors at the time were just as intelligent and dedicated as the current group. An external review would also enable us to collect accurate and substantial data on which to base our recommendations. As we have seen from a survey of 97 students in 2004, the results were inconclusive and insufficient; a weak basis for serious recommendations.

Is there a need for an external consultant to aid in this process?

The scope of this review is massive; the assistance of an external consultant who is an industry professional well-experienced in conducting reviews of university services would be greatly beneficial to the process, especially in providing objectivity, structure and direction.

In conclusion, I hope to make a presentation to Council on the need for a Services Review, within the next few weeks. I would like to leave you with this thought: Why settle for the status quo when we have the ability, opportunity and resources to build something extraordinary?