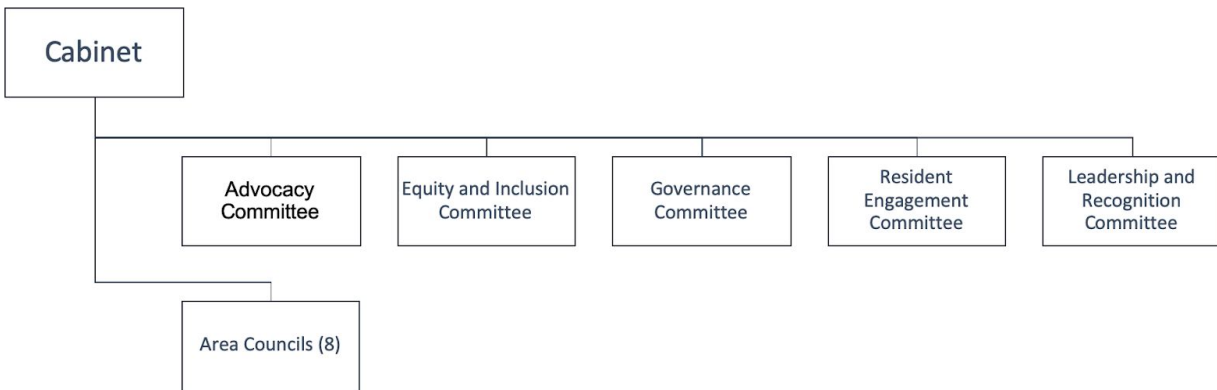


To: Dr. Erika Patterson  
From: Mitchell Prost  
Date: November 15, 2020  
Subject: Revised Proposal for Determining Feasibility of Altered Marketing Strategies and Executive Restructure for the UBC Residence Hall Association

**Introduction**

The University of British Columbia (UBC) is host to a plethora of student-run groups, one of which is the UBC Residence Hall Association (RHA). This organization regularly has over 100 student-members and represents over 12,000 students living on campus. Each year, the RHA works to support students by providing engaging programming, advocacy support, and leadership opportunities. The RHA structure is depicted in figure 1. There are six RHA Executives: the President, the Vice President Administration and Finance, the Vice President Internal and Advocacy, the Vice President External and Marketing, the National Communications Coordinator, and the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) President. The RHA is made up of eight Residence Area Councils, each with their own Presidents, Vice President(s), and other members. The presidents of each council sit on the RHA Cabinet alongside the RHA Executives and make up the highest body of the organization.



**Figure 1.** The UBC Residence Hall Association’s organizational structure as of October 2020.

**Statement of Problem**

The RHA is limited by its structure and current operations. There is a distinct lack of engagement with students living in on-campus housing, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and with those living in

upper-year housing. Additionally, the RHA's organizational structure is outdated and does not allow for an effective flow of work, often leading to a lack of progress and growth in the organization year after year. A lack of engagement has profound effects on student success and their sense of belongingness within the university. The RHA exists to meet these needs, but its ability to reach and engage students is limited by its structure and current operations. This is especially true in relation to students living in on-campus housing during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in upper-year housing. Currently, the RHA's organizational structure is outdated and does not allow for an effective flow of work, often leading to a lack of progress and growth in the organization year after year. There are several contributing structural factors. Firstly, marketing is a large consideration. How the RHA markets events and initiatives will directly impact how the RHA is engaging with students. From this, the organizational structure becomes more important when the question "who does the work?" is asked. These two issues, how the RHA engages with students and who does it, are the topics that this research proposal will explore.

### **Proposed Solution**

One possible solution to increase engagement is to complete a systematic review of the methods that the RHA is currently using to engage students. Following this review, recommendations could be made that are backed up by data indicating which methods are most successful and which are not. The RHA could then devise plans to revamp its marketing and potentially increase engagement.

Additionally, this proposal will explore how the RHA's current executive structure, that being the six RHA Executives, can be modified to better service students and the RHA's goals. Potential suggestions may include the following, depending on the data collected: addition of Associate Vice President roles for the executives to expand their ability to complete projects and introduction of a centralized marketing team to ensure consistency within the organization.

### **Scope**

To evaluate the feasibility of conducting an engagement review and expanding the RHA Executive I will investigate the following questions:

1. How does the RHA currently market to students?
2. How successful are the various marketing strategies the RHA uses?
3. Are there projects that the RHA Executives are interested in pursuing but cannot due to limitations in their positions?
4. Would the RHA benefit from a centralized marketing team?
5. What are similar executive structures in similarly sized student-run organizations?
6. What areas that new positions could be created to improve the ability of the RHA to effectively engage and serve students.

### **Methods**

My data will primarily come from surveys that I will distribute to students who are both currently living in residence and who have previously lived in residence. I will most likely use the UBC Survey Tool, Qualtrics, to construct my surveys and collect my data. This survey will be distributed through social

media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. I will additionally set up interviews with my peers who are involved in RHA and other student-run organizations in order to assess key characteristics of the organizations.

I will additionally be reviewing RHA archives that I currently have access to as an RHA Executive. This will allow me to have a historical context of the structure of the RHA Executive and prior marketing strategies. Furthermore, I will utilize the National Residence Hall Honorary's "Of the Month" Award database at [otm.nrhh.org](http://otm.nrhh.org) to review program submissions of successful programs. I will be able to identify successful marketing strategies from this database that were applied not only at the UBC Vancouver Campus, but at campuses across North America.

### **My Qualifications**

I have been a member of the RHA for the past four-and-a-half years in a variety of positions. In these years, I have gained valuable insights into how the organization works and areas in which it can be improved. As a current RHA Executive (the NRHH President), I have a particular interest in how the RHA can be improved to better support students. Furthermore, I have extensive knowledge in student-engagement and student leadership from prior experiences. Lastly, I am experienced in formal report writing, as just three weeks ago I completed a 21-page feasibility report for the creation of a new service for the UBC Alma Mater Society

### **Conclusion**

The RHA has the potential to engage so many more students and achieve much more. It is only limited by its outdated methods and structure. Through addressing the six questions mentioned in the scope section, I will be able to determine courses of action for increasing student engagement with RHA and increasing the organization's executive ability to achieve its goals. The feasibility report that is generated will be presented to the RHA Cabinet for consideration. Following this, any action taken based on the report will be carried out by the RHA Cabinet and Executives.