

# The Students' Union

Everything you wanted to know  
(even if you didn't)  
in 30 minutes.

# What is the Students' Union?

## The Four Pillars

- ⊗ Advocacy and Representation
- ⊗ Services and Programming
- ⊗ Student Space and SUB
- ⊗ Businesses that expand resources

# Mission and Mandate

The Students' Union has just redeveloped its Strategic Plan.

## Old Mission

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The Students' Union is an organization that serves students in ways that meet student needs.

## New Mission

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The Students' Union exists to serve and represent University of Alberta undergraduate students in order to support their pursuit of knowledge and enhance their university experience.

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The Post Secondary Learning Act mandates that the SU:

... shall provide for the administration of student affairs..., including the development and management of student committees, the development and enforcement of rules relating to student affairs and the promotion of the general welfare of the students consistent with the purposes of the public post-secondary institution.

# Size and Scale

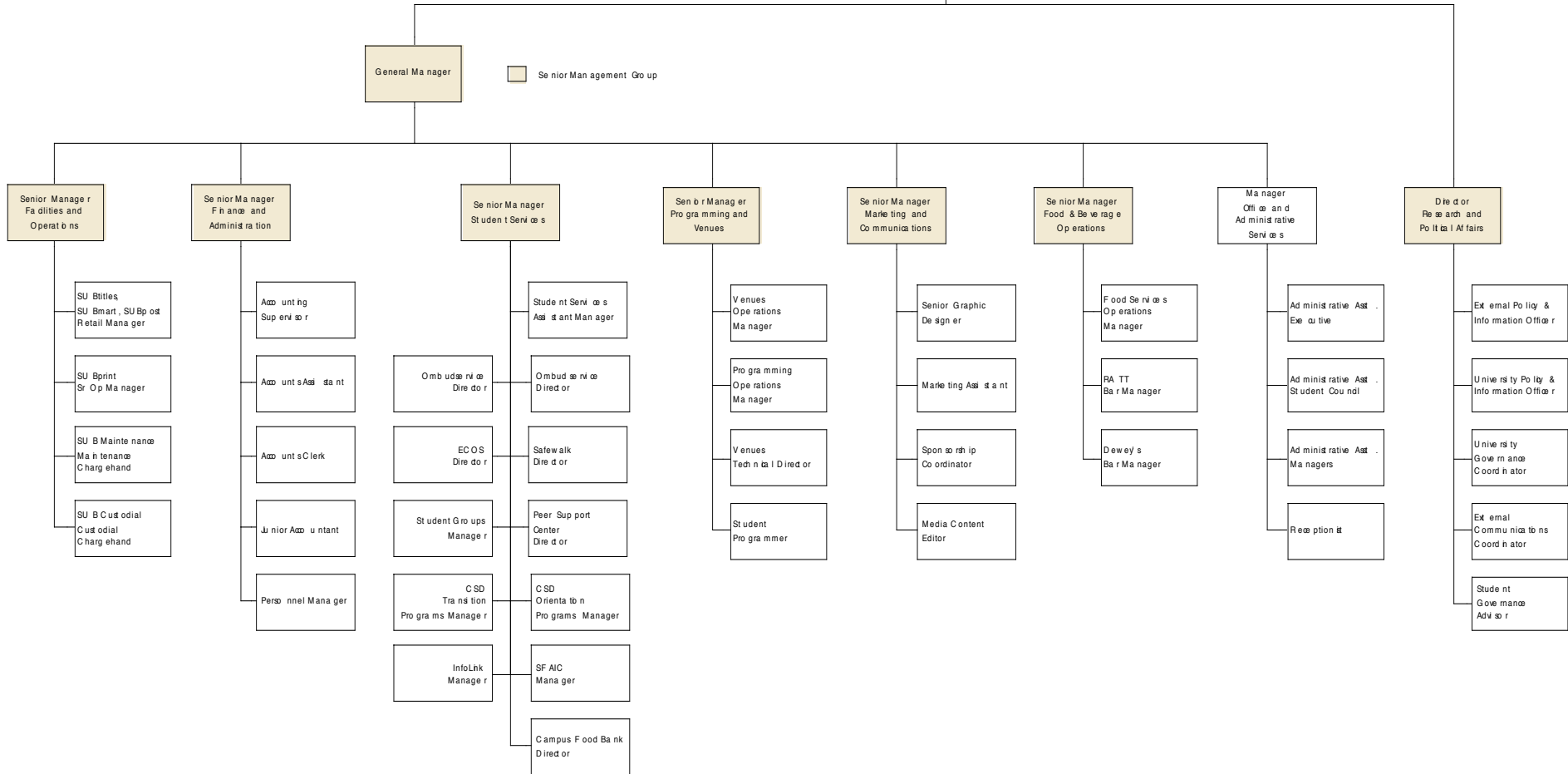
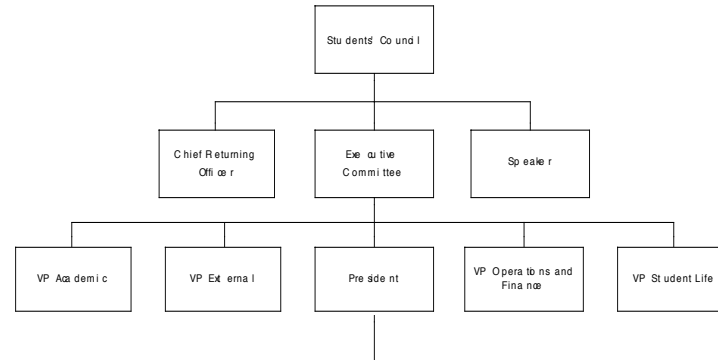
- ⦿ Operating budget of \$10 million.
- ⦿ Staff: 170 hourly (mostly p/t); 95 salaried (f/t and term); up to 750 volunteers
  - ⦿ Most hourly and all term employees are students
  - ⦿ Numbers of hourly and volunteer staff vary through the year
- ⦿ Operates 10 service units, 9 businesses, and 3 venues, as well as the Students' Union building
- ⦿ Administers a further \$5.5 million in student-approved dedicated fees
  - ⦿ Health and Dental Plan, Access Fund, etc.



# Student Union Organizational Chart

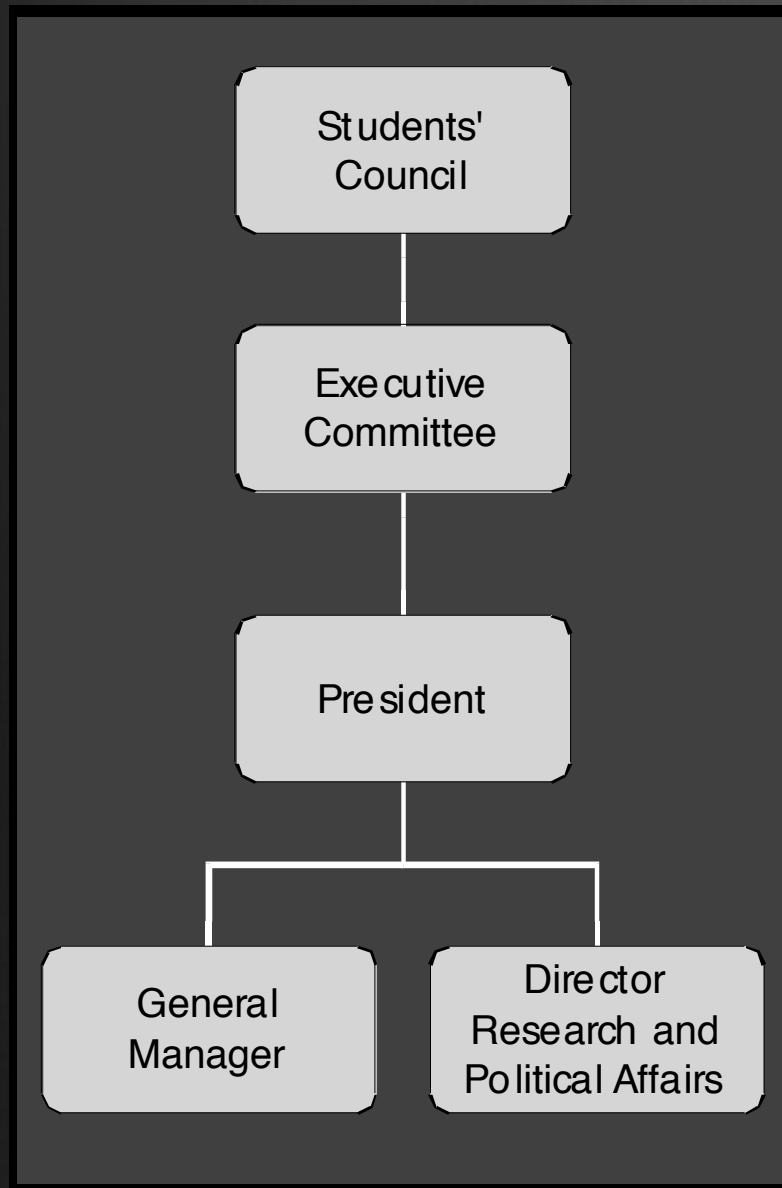
June 2010

Coverage of this chart is senior management and direct reports.  
 Divisional and departmental organizational charts not included in this overview.  
 Divisional staff and budgets are approximated based on 2010-2011 budget.



That looks a little complicated.

Break it down for me, Rory!



## Students' Council: the ultimate authority

Students' Council sets overall operational priorities for the year via the annual budget. The budget proposal is the result of a multi-month planning process by Executive and management.

## The President: the chief executive

In May, the new Executive determines its priorities.

The budget and the Executive priorities guide how the President (and the Executive) direct the General Manager and Director of Research and Political Affairs.



# General Manager

- Reports to the President
- The most senior management member and a non-voting Executive/Students' Council member
- Advises on operational matters and strategy and is the pivot between the governance side and the operational side
- Reports to the President and works closely with entire Executive, esp. the VPOF and VPSL
- 7 direct reports, each with multiple staff or departments reporting to them

Senior Manager  
Facilities and  
Operations

SUBtitles,  
SUBmart, SUBpost  
Retail Manager

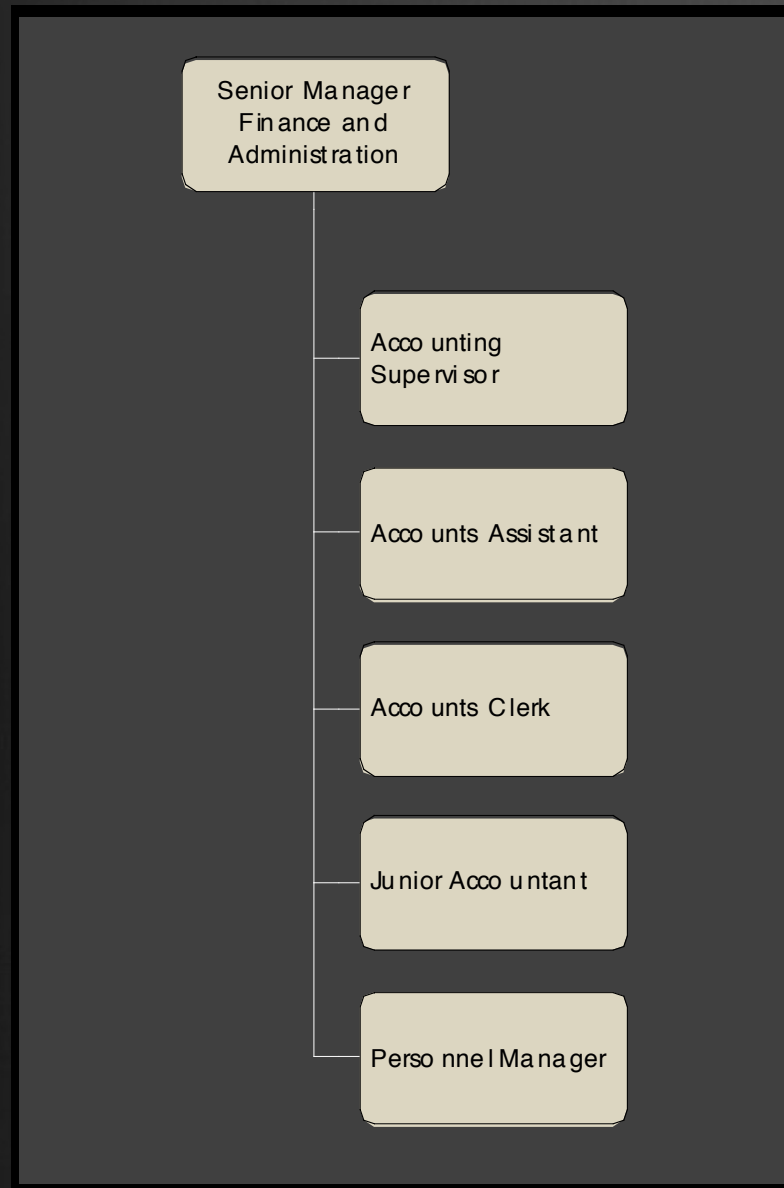
SUBprint  
Sr Op Manager

SUB Maintenance  
Maintenance  
Chargehand

SUB Custodial  
Custodial  
Chargehand

## Senior Manager Facilities and Operations

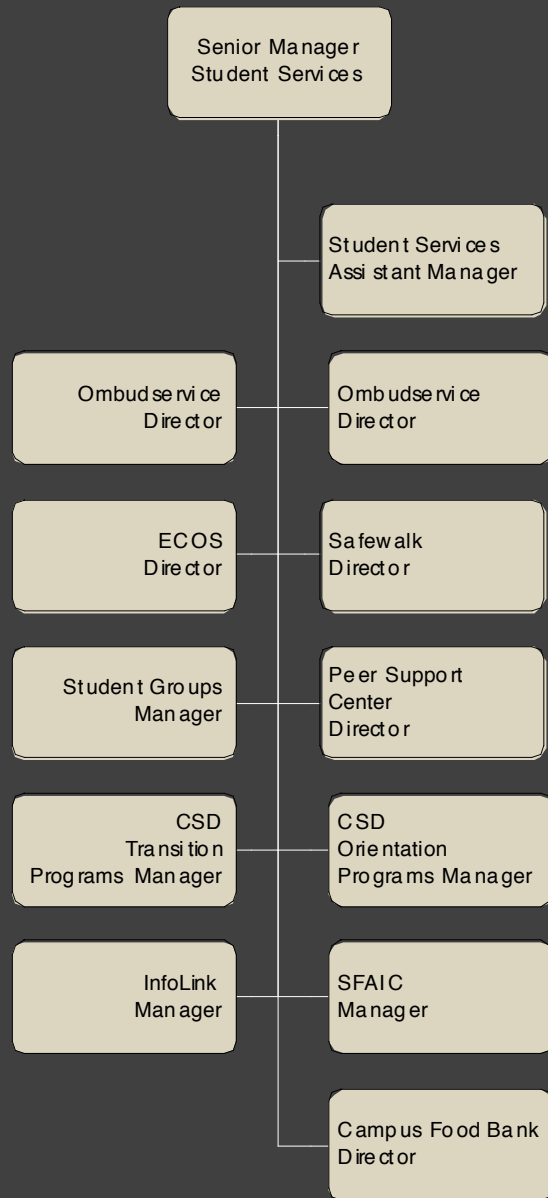
- Responsible for
  - Students' Union Building
  - SUBtitles
  - SUBmart and Post Office
  - SUBprint
- Staff are unionized (CUPE)
- 28 f/t and 27-35 p/t
- Revenue: \$3.65M
- Expenditures: \$3M
- SUB was built in 1967 and renovated in stages - 1992, 1996, and 2002. SUB was featured in TIME Magazine when it was built; originally had an art gallery, curling rink, and bowling lanes!



## Senior Manager Finance and Administration

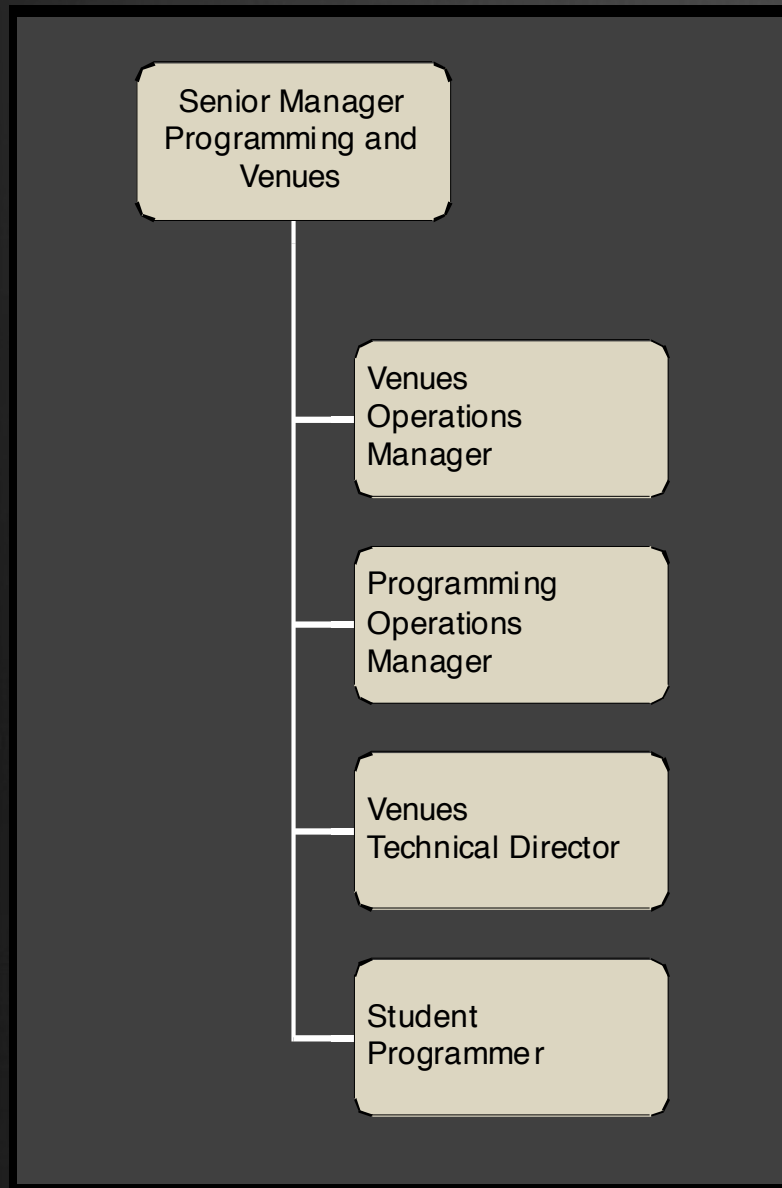
- Accounting, personnel administration, insurance, and fee management
- 4 f/t, 1-2 p/t staff, partially unionized
- Revenue: \$2.3M (inc. general student fees)
- Expenses: \$1.2M (inc. many organization-wide expenses, such as insurance and mortgage expenses)
- Also administers distribution of \$5.5M in dedicated fee revenue





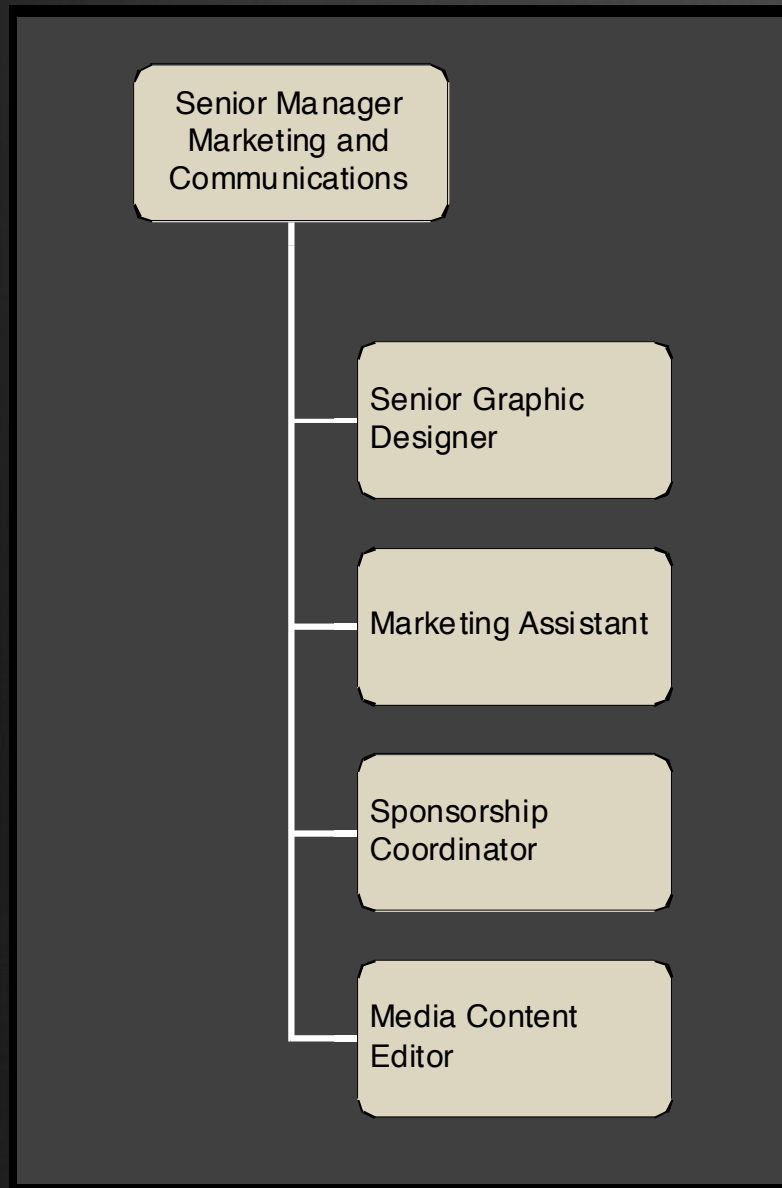
## Senior Manager Student Services

- Ombudservice, Peer Support Centre, Safewalk, ECOS, InfoLink, Student Financial Aid and Information Centre, Student Group Services, Centre for Student Development
- Campus Food Bank is separate, but the SU provides infrastructure support
- 11 f/t, 45-57 p/t and term staff; 750+ volunteers; not unionized
- Revenues: \$0.58M – largest portion is University grants
- Expenditures: \$1.28M
- Unique: only SU in Canada to run Orientation and the Financial Aid Centre
- Strong working relationship with the Dean of Students to reduce duplication of service



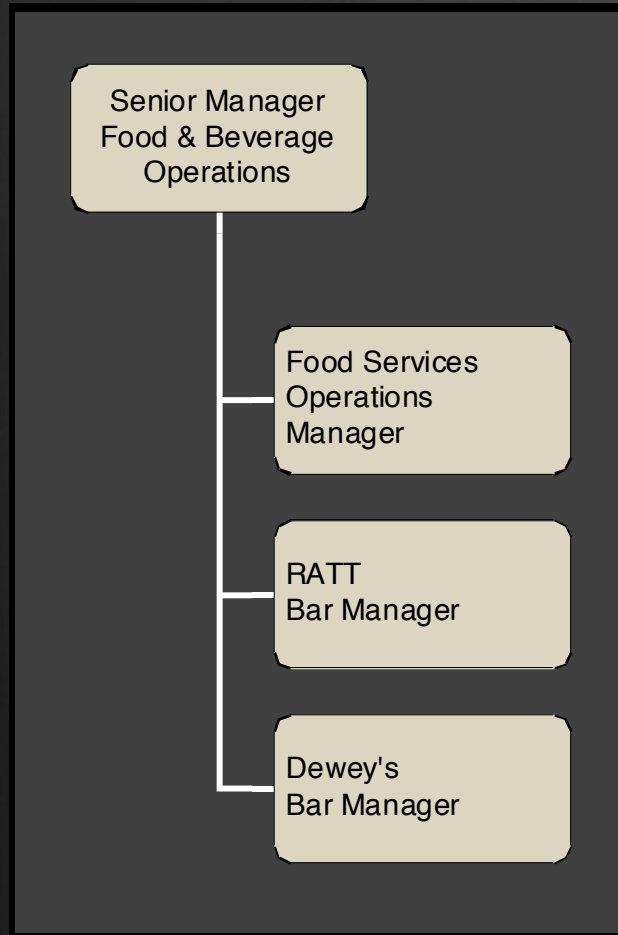
## Senior Manager Programming and Venues

- Myer Horowitz Theatre, Dinwoodie Lounge, SUBstage
- External clients make up a large part of Theatre business; student groups are big users of Dinwoodie
- Event programming: WoW, AntiFreeze, Campus Cup, etc.
- Mixed union and non-union components
- 4-7 f/t, 30-50 p/t and term staff, 50-100 volunteers
- Revenue: \$500K
- Expenses: \$575K



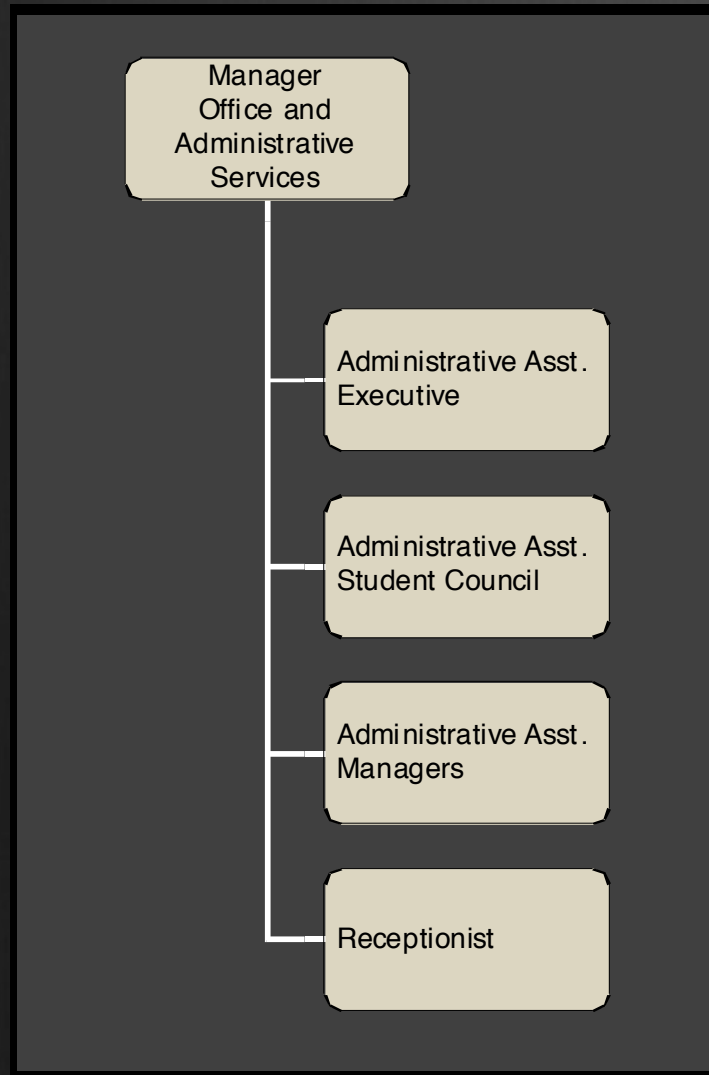
## Senior Manager Marketing and Communications

- Responsible for providing marketing and design services to all units of the SU
- Coordinates sponsorships and commercial marketing relationships
- Handbook, SUtv, online services
- Non-union
- 5-6 f/t, 1-2 p/t staff
- Revenue: \$150K
- Expenses: \$310K



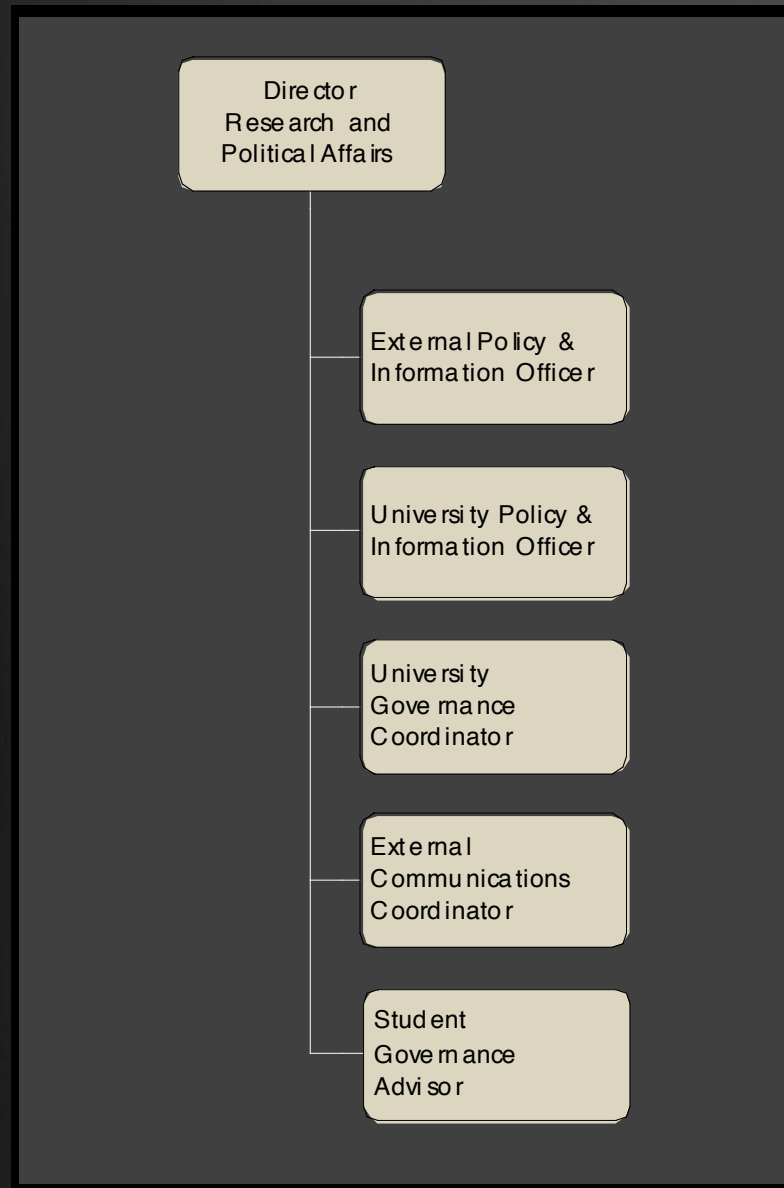
## Senior Manager Food and Beverage

- L'express, catering services, CramDunk, Juicy, RATT, Dewey's
- Catering is a growth area
- Over the coming year, working to improve consistency of customer service, menus (special needs; healthier), and sustainability
- Unionized
- 100+ f/t and p/t staff
- Revenue: \$2.6M
- Expenses: \$2.3M



## Manager Office and Administrative Systems

- Provides administrative support to Executive and Senior Managers
- Unionized
- 5 f/t, 1-5 p/t
- Revenue: 135K
- Expenses: 715K
- Budget includes governance activities – the cost of Students' Council, committees, special projects, and salaries for Executives, etc.



## Director Research and Political Affairs

- Works with the entire Executive on advocacy and political communications; provides issue research and tracking services
- U of A SU's department generally regarded as the best in the country



# What is Advocacy?

- Also known as Research & Political Affairs
- Areas of specific influence:
  - Students' Union Internal Governance
  - University Governance
  - Municipal Government
  - Provincial Government
  - Federal Government

# Running for Office

- Before you do anything, you have to run for office
  - Talk to the electorate
  - Let them know what your priorities are
  - Tell them how you will be accountable to them
- If you win, you begin the process of carefully implementing the mandate you have been given

# Students' Union Internal Governance

- Students' Council
  - Main body and subcommittees deal with all major business of the organization
    - Including political policies and bylaws the organization must follow
    - Provides all major direction to the organization
- Executive Committee
  - Deals with the day-to-day business of the organization
    - Acts as a forum for discussion between the members of the Executive Committee
  - Composition:
    - President
    - Vice-President (Operations & Finance)
    - Vice-President (External)
    - Vice-President (Academic)
    - Vice-President (Student Life)
    - General Manager (non-voting)

## Students' Union Internal Governance (cont.)

- Council of Faculty Associations
  - Advisory group to the Vice-President (Academic) (VPA)
  - Composed of all student faculty associations across campus
    - Sometimes are themselves composed of departmental associations

# University Governance

- University has dozens of committees that deal with every aspect of academic life at the University of Alberta
  - Main bodies
    - Board of Governors (3 student seats out of 21)
    - General Faculties Council (~42 student seats out of ~145)
  - SU has a seat on virtually every committee within this system
    - The President and VPSL also sit on select committees
    - Some examples: General Faculties Council Executive Committee, Campus Law Review Committee, Academic Planning Committee
  - Last Years Major issues in this area:
    - The Academic Plan
    - Student and Professor Mental Health
    - Grading and Assessment
    - Residence Behavioral Standards

# University Governance (cont.)

- The Students' Union also runs several University-level committees. An example of a few are:
  - Health Centre Advisory Group
  - Bookstore Advisory Group
  - Athletics & Rec Advisory Group
  - ONEcard Advisory Group
- As well, last year, the Students' Union started the "Discovering Governance" program
  - This is designed to allow all the hundreds of students sitting on any University-level body access to support in their role as a committee member
    - Support is designed to be impartial
    - Dedicated staff support for this comes from the Student Governance Advisor



# Municipal Government

- Any initiatives that involve housing and transportation are worked on here
- This order of government is primarily the responsibility of the Vice-President (External) (VPX) and the Vice-President (Student Life) (VPSL)
  - Traditionally, the order of government we work with the least, but have the most success with
  - We are often invited to speak to individual city councilors and to city council as a whole
- Major Issues at this order of government:
  - Developing Secondary Suite Legislation
  - U-Pass

# Provincial Government

- This is the order of government that is constitutionally tasked with dealing with Post-Secondary Education
- We deal with the Provincial gov't primarily through the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), an alliance we have with the U of C SU and the U of L SU
  - We develop our priorities in conjunction with these two groups and present them jointly to the government
- The VPX and the President spend a great deal of their time on this, meeting with ministers, bureaucrats and other stakeholders (ASEC, AGC)
- Major Issues at this order of government:
  - Tying maximum tuition increases to CPI
  - Developing regulations around non-instructional mandatory fees
  - Increasing student aid for university students

# Federal Government

- The Federal government is not as directly tied into the funding of post-secondary education, but they have responsibility over many areas that directly affect students
- The Students' Union, particularly the President and the VPX, work on these initiatives by lobbying MP's at home and by working through our federal lobby group, CASA.
  - CASA is a lobby group made up of 23 schools all across Canada, representing 300,000 students
- Our ability to help U of A students on a federal level has increased dramatically since joining CASA
- Major Issues at this order of government:
  - Copyright legislation and book importation regulations
  - Student loan interest rates
  - Visas for international students
  - Provincial transfer grants

# Last Years Agenda - Operations

- ⊗ Building renewal planning
  - ⊗ Reorganize use of space
  - ⊗ Renovate selected areas
- ⊗ Planning
  - ⊗ Strategic Plan
  - ⊗ Engagement Plan
  - ⊗ Services Review
- ⊗ Physical Activity and Wellness Centre
  - ⊗ Participating in facility planning
  - ⊗ Negotiating Agreement

# Last Years Agenda - Advocacy

- ⊗ Mental Health Initiatives
  - ⊗ Reorganizing services
  - ⊗ Fall Reading Week
- ⊗ Undergraduate Research Office
- ⊗ Academic Plan
- ⊗ Student Grading and Assessment
- ⊗ Provincial and Federal Lobbying Priorities
  - ⊗ Copyright and Book Importation Tax
  - ⊗ Mandatory Non-Instructional Fee Regulation
  - ⊗ Conversion of tax credits to grants

Questions