## YEAR PLAN

### *Tutoring Coordinator*

### *Andrew T. Chen*

### McMaster Science Society

### 2019-2020

(submitted July 4th*, 2019*)

2019-2020 Year Plan

**Dear McMaster Science,**

 **My name is Andrew Chen and I am this year’s tutoring coordinator. With the hard work from Elias and Jhanahan this past year, the MSS tutoring service has improved in quality and accessibility. They collaborated with the MacPherson Institute to provide a comprehensive training workshop with techniques and advice to the hired tutors. They established trustworthy and productive relationships with professors of several first year courses to create large review sessions that were very popular amongst students. Furthermore, Elias helped to improve the token system to provide financial reimbursement to science students who request for tutors. Nevertheless, while these aspects of the tutoring service are great, there is always room for improvement.**

 **In this role, I will be in charge of the tutoring service offered by the MSS. It will be the 4th year that this service is running. One of my major goals will be to improve financial accessibility and thus, improve total outreach to the faculty of science. Ultimately, there are three major goals I wish to pursue.**

 **First, major improvements can be made to the token system to improve financial accessibility and increase the total number of students tutored. I will try to achieve this by (1) explicitly increasing promotion of the token system (2) creating an online token system and (3) automating the system. Currently, the system requires students to pick up the token in person. However, a closely monitored automated system can improve accessibility.**

 **My second goal is to receive feedback from tutors and tutees mid-year in addition to at the end of the year. In doing so, improvements can be made before the end of the school year and will provide insight to future tutoring coordinators. Moreso, feedback immediately after training training sessions will be more insightful. Tutees will be given the option to explain areas that needed improvements and areas that were strong. In doing so, we can be aware of how tutor recruitment and training should be altered.**

 **My third goal is to continue running free major review sessions, including CHEM 1A03, MATH 1LS3, and to expand to upper year courses including CHEM 2OA3/2OB3. The structure of these will be composed of a primary lecture hall for a large lecture-based session and secondary tutorial rooms for more 1-on-1 help and opportunities to ask questions. I will strive to pre-approve review material and questions with professors. I think this will be a great way to build relationships between students and tutors, make academic support more accessible, lighten the demand for tutors during a high traffic and stressful time, and promote the MSS tutoring service.**

 **As a student myself who has undergone many academic struggles, I am extremely passionate about bringing high quality and accessible tutoring to McMaster Science students. I look forward to an amazing year.**

**Andrew Chen**
Tutoring Coordinator
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**OBJECTIVES:**

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| **Objective 1: Increase financial accessibility and the quality/diversity of tutors** |
| **Description/Current State** | Currently, the tutoring service is well-run. There is a convenient and accessible booking system for both tutors and tutees. The MSS this past year offered up to 3 tokens at a $10 value each for each student per semester. Therefore, rather than a price of $15 per session, three sessions were made available at $5. The past year had roughly 60 tutors, all hired during the first semester. The year previous had two hiring sessions, one per semester.While the tutoring service in general is good, there are some components that can be improved to increase overall accessibility and quality.The token usage was incredibly low the past few years. This could be due to inconvenience, lack of incentives, and more. Furthermore, the diversity and range o f courses being tutored are limited.Tutees have indicated through feedback forms that some tutors are still limited in knowledge, teaching style, and communication skills. This suggests that training should be more streamlined and informative. |
| **Goal** | Automate token service* Create a script so that students can submit a google form and inturn, they will automatically receive an email with a token code
* This will increase the financial accessibility of the service and also help with promoting the service to science students
* Increase token usage
* An initial script is already written, optimizations need to be made

Increase incentives for self-promotion by tutors* Allow each student to have 3 tokens each semester at $12 vouchers each. Tutees will be able to use vouchers + $5 or use $15, however, tutors will get $17 if voucher is present.
* Continuously monitor budget

Improve training* Discuss more explicitly the needs of tutors with MacPherson Institute
* Professional peer support and conflict resolution training
* Re-emphasize the need to understand content prior to tutoring while still promoting flexibility during training sessions to ensure that there are enough tutors to teach
* Subject-specific training by prompting example of content questions for tutors to think about
* Restructure training slides to more distinctly separate training session to (1) logistics (2) tutoring training (3) peer support for organization purposes

Increase number of tutors* Tutors should have a wider diversity of courses they are willing to teach
* Hopefully, by increasing the number (or diversity) of tutors, there is a wider range of courses that are being taught
	+ Advertise and promote applications to wider diversity of tutors

Implement proper feedback forms* Mid-year feedback forms to tutees
* Feedback forms to tutors mid-year and at the end of the school year

All tutors must sign a contract that is adapted from last year* Outlines duration of employment, reimbursement information, scope, etc.

Lastly, we hope to expand the tutoring service to more tutors than previously in order to:* Meet the high demand for historically difficult first-year courses (especially around midterm/exam time)
* Be able to offer tutoring beyond first year courses (CHEM 2OA3/2OB3)
 |
| **Barriers to Success** | * Overall increase in quality will ensure higher satisfaction and usage
* Can lead to greater promotion

Barrier 1: Difficult to monitor whether students requesting for tokens are actually science students* Will require more stringent rules

Barrier 2: Exceeding budget* Budget is set to $3500 for entire service and token system should only be a portion of it

Barrier 3: Differentiating our service from other tutoring services and preventing redundancy in training* Collaborate with the MacPherson Institute and other organizations to provide MSS tutor specific training

Barrier 4: Tutoring service availabilities will fluctuate* Tutors are unavailable because they are students too and will need to study for exams
* Tutoring services are too high in demand
* Tutoring services are too low in demand
 |
| **How?** | Barrier 1:* Emphasize that students must be in science faculty to request for tokens
* Promotion should be explicitly directed toward faculty of science students
* Token system will ask for program/specialization

Barrier 2:* Constant monitoring of # of tokens provided
* Evaluate how many tokens per semester before system shuts off

Barrier 3:* Maintain low costs for tutoring sessions
* Create a thorough tutor contract
* Monitor service for continuous improvements

Barrier 4:* Advertisement for the Tutoring Service will be consistent throughout the year, so that students are always aware of this service should they need it. Tutors will also be able to help with advertising, as they will be more connected with each other and can thus recommend their peers as potential candidates for tutors when they are busy.
* Our goal this year is increasing hiring for high-demand classes, such as CHEM 1A03/1AA3, PHYSICS 1A03, MATH 1LS3, etc. We are also adding more midterm/exam review sessions, so students will be able to attend these as well in lieu of private tutoring sessions. This year, we will push to do a CHEM 2A03/2B03 midterm/exam review.
 |
| **Long Term Implications** | * Greater outreach to science students
* Show that funding for tutoring is necessary and beneficial to the McMaster science community
* Improvement in academics
* Greater collaboration with other institutes (MacPherson Institute, EIO, SHEC, etc.)
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| **Partners** | * MacPherson Institute (see Events&Projects)
* Chen Chen (VP Academic)
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| **Objective 2: To maximize promotion of the MSS tutoring service to all science students** |
| **Description/Current State** | Tutoring service can always be improved to reach a greater diversity and number of students* Identify professors and email about promoting the service
* Number of tutoring sessions stayed relatively the same from previous years

Review sessions have great attendance* Continue with similar promotion techniques to build upon the work of Elias and his review sessions
 |
| **Goal** | In-class advertisements* I will need to have a consistent contact with first year professors such as those teaching CHEM 1A03 and MATH 1LS3. This will encourage professors to advertise on Avenue 2 Learn or allow me to give small spiels at the beginning of lectures. I can also advertise before review sessions are made available. Review sessions are free.

More poster advertisement* Ask VP communication and communication team for more posters to post in MDCL/LRW/BSB, etc

Increase word of mouth* Increase tutoring community (see objective 3)

Overall, this will help increase the outreach to science students. Promotion is a huge necessity for students that do not know that the MSS provides accessible and high-quality tutoring sessions for multiple courses. |
| **Barriers to Success** | Barrier 1: Professors decline consentBarrier 2: Promotion techniques fall short in increasing tutor outreach beyond the population who are already aware |
| **How?** | Barrier 1:* Build upon productive relationships from last year
* Ask to discuss in person to talk about goals and vision for the upcoming year

Barrier 2:* Ask other MSS members to promote the tutoring session, program societies, mentors, Sciclones, Ben O’Connor from Associate Dean’s office
 |
| **Long Term Implications** | Maintain productive relationships with science professors. The aspects that we change or maintain will increase outreach to students and increase credibility. |
| **Partners** | Professors (See “Professors for courses” doc) Chen Chen (VP Academic)Rest of MSS |

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| **Objective 3: To construct a better tutor community**  |
| **Description/Current State** | * The tutor Facebook group is not used often and even if used, there are often no responses to posts
	+ Increase opportunities for tutor engagement with the MSS
 |
| **Goal** | * Increase ability for tutors to intercommunicate and facilitate a better community
* Allow tutors to be able to better advertise themselves in the community (within and outside)
* Create an accessible and organized webpage for the tutors
* Seeing more tutors post about the tutoring system or about themselves on their Facebook profiles, etc.
 |
| **Barriers to Success** | Barrier 1:* Disinterest amongst tutors
* Little incentive to do so
 |
| **How?** | Barrier 1:* Increase socials
* Explicitly state the purpose of the FB group and the benefits of the group
* Mandate
 |
| **Long Term Implications** | * Continuous and greater interest in being a tutor, perhaps having tutors learn from their peers from participating in the service
* Larger pool of tutor knowledge
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| **Partners** | * VP Academic
* Graphic designers
* Webmaster
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| **Objective 4: Offering More Volunteer-Based Review Sessions** |
| **Description/Current State** | Elias planned and facilitated review sessions, one for MATH 1LS3 (both semesters), and for CHEM 1A03/1AA3. These were highly attended (to the point of filling the lecture space) and overall found useful. |
| **Goal** | * Increase the number of midterm review sessions to encompass the biggest first year courses, including CHEM/PHYSICS 1A03/1AA3, and MATH 1LS3 as these are the highest in demand
* Expand to CHEM 2OA3 and CHEM 2OB3 (and other possible upper year courses)
* In addition, hold exam review sessions as allowed by tutor availability
* Work with course instructors to ensure these sessions don’t overlap with anything already organized by the course coordinator
 |
| **Barriers to Success** | Barrier #1: Lack of tutors/volunteers* These sessions will need to be run by 3-4 different tutors with expertise in the subject

Barrier #2: Advertising* Students will need to be notified of these sessions in some way which can be sometimes be difficult given the sheer volume of other advertising/campaigns happening on campus
 |
| **How?** | Barrier #1:* Offer incentive to tutors (free dinner, reference letter, increase in pay, etc.) and have them see it as a learning opportunity (teaching a class rather than a single student)

Barrier #2:* Work with various other members of the MSS on advertising including VP Communications, Webmaster, and class talks/announcements by instructors.
 |
| **Long Term Implications** | We hope that these sessions become a norm, and act as secondary aids for students who may not be able to attend their class review sessions/tutorials, or for courses which do not organize things like these. |
| **Partners** | Chen Chen - MSS VP Academic (vpacademic@mcmastersciencesociety.com)Sam Marchetti - VP CommunicationVraj Shah - WebmasterThe MSS Tutors |

**EVENTS & PROJECTS**

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| **Name of Event/Project: Tutor Training** |
| **DATE** | Saturday, September 14th 9am-4pm |
| **PURPOSE** | To explain the MSS service, ensure comprehensive training, outline responsibilities, sign a contract, and be trained in peer support and conflict resolution |
| **PROCEDURE** | * Fill out EOHSS ASAP and book a room
* Arrange catering
* Collaborate with the MacPherson Institute for training and other mental health/peer support training
* Organize training material and workshops
* Submit communication form to book a photographer for the training session
* Contact webmaster to complete webpage ASAP after pictures are taken
 |
| **DIFFICULTIES** | 1. Scheduling
2. Attendance
3. Lack of interest during training session
 |
| **PARTNERS** | MSS VP Acadamic - Chen ChenMacPherson* MacPherson educational developers in partnership with ISW including: Rebecca Taylor (taylor10@mcmaster.ca), Erin Aspenlieder (aspenled@mcmaster.ca), Lori Goff (Lgoff@mcmaster.ca), Kris Knorr (knorrk@mcmaster.ca)
 |
| **PROJECTED OUTREACH** | All tutors (~70) |
| **BUDGET** | $150 (food)$75 (gifts for collaborators) |

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| **Name of Event/Project: MSS CHEM/MATH Review Session** |
| **DATE** | Early October, Late November, Mid February, Beginning April |
| **PURPOSE** | The purpose of these review sessions is to provide free large review sessions for hundreds of students by teaching major 1st year courses such as CHEM 1A03 and MATH 1LS3. These review sessions will extend to upper year courses including CHEM 2OA3 and CHEM 2OB3. |
| **PROCEDURE** | * Fill out EOHSS and book two lecture halls
* Contact professors immediately to determine midterm and exam dates and course information
* Contact professors before midterm/exam to determine course content and ensure that none of our content and practice questions are in violation or incorrect
	+ Do not want practice questions to be an exact replica of test questions
* Recruit tutors for review sessions 2 weeks prior to midterm/exam session
* Ensure that room has all the equipment needed
* Send form in to communication team for equipment and on-site photographs for advertisement
	+ Microphone
	+ Ensuring that AV system is working
* Arrive at sessions early
 |
| **DIFFICULTIES** | * Tutor availability
* Advertising
* Room size and facilitating productive conversations between tutors and tutees
 |
| **PARTNERS** | ProfessorsTutors (extra pay)MSS VP Academic - Chen Chen |
| **PROJECTED OUTREACH** | * >200 students in each session
 |
| **BUDGET** | * $200 for each session (5 tutors)
	+ $1200 in total (6 sessions)
 |

**GOALS TO STRIVE FOR**

**5 things that you wish to have prepared for the beginning of September:**

1. Lesson plans and organizations to invite for training
2. Recruitment plan and tutors ready to interview
3. Token system set up and ready to run
4. Instructors contacted to promote service
5. Posters, spiels, and promotional items ready

**Things to be completed during the fall term (1st):**

1. Organize and execute training sessions
2. Midterm and exam review sessions
3. Complete setup of website for tutors to personally advertise themselves
4. Provide reimbursements at end of fall term
5. Collect feedback at the end of term

**TIMELINE**

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| **Month** | **Objective/Project/Event/Goals** |
| June | * Complete first draft of training material
* Contact MacPherson Institute to meet and discuss training
* Begin developing promotion material
* Create a list of contacts for training
* Complete hiring tutor materials
 |
| July | * Clarify and complete teaching material with external resources including MacPherson Institute
* Continue building upon training material, promotion material, and hiring logistics
 |
| August | * Advertise, advertise, advertise for tutors
* Contact professors for advertising and partnership
	+ Contact other members of MSS in case I can’t attend these classes to advertise during class
* Contact faculty/staff/sub-societies about running midterm & exam review sessions for first year Chemistry, Math, and Physics courses
* Finalize training session and ensure contacts are solidified
* Open and evaluate applications
	+ Advertise in Facebook groups, send out emails to previous tutors, work with VP comm to include in monthly MSS email, work with sub societies to also communicate to their upper-year students
 |
| September | * Begin and finish hiring process within first week to early 2nd week
* Complete training end of 2nd week of september
* Remind instructors to push for the service to be advertised on A2L
* Begin organizing midterm review sessions
* ADVERTISE!
 |
| October | * Review sessions #1
* Promos
* Monitor token service
 |
| November | * Run midterm review sessions
* Promo
* Start organizing exam review sessions
 |
| December | * Run exam review sessions
* Begin collecting feedback from tutors and tutees
 |
| January | * Tutor social
* Begin planning midterm reviews
 |
| February | * Review sessions
* Promotion for term 2
 |
| March | * Midterm/exam review sessions
* Collect feedback from tutors
* Hire new tutoring coordinator
 |
| April | * Transitioning in 2020-2021 tutoring coordinator
* Final MSS social session
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