

WUSA Impact Report

2021 - 2022



Message to Members

The 2021-2022 governing year began in the midst of a lockdown in the third wave of the pandemic. Operating in a fully remote environment required a certain level of adaptiveness and flexibility from our team as we navigated concerns around COVID-19 while continuing to provide students with a high-quality university experience. Our team quickly recognized the importance of preparing for the inevitable return to campus, both for students and our staff who serve them.

Our efforts on this issue culminated in the Return to Campus Report, a document which exemplifies how WUSA strives to serve students. This process began with student leaders identifying specific problem areas including housing, quality of campus services, and international student issues. Our professional staff then consulted the student body to generate recommendations for UW and WUSA alike; finally, we advocated these action items to relevant stakeholders and campus partners. This is an ideal instance of WUSA advocacy at work and is just one example of the ways in which we continue to develop how we consult with students, collect quality data and create actionable recommendations as a result.

Our association does more than advocacy, however. Addressing longstanding deficiencies in our governance was a significant focus this year. Acting on the commitment of our 2020-2025 strategic plan, we retained the advice of consultants with experience in the student association sector in Fall 2021. After a 10-month governance review process, WUSA members ratified new bylaws which merged our Student Council and Board of Directors into a single governing body. The traditional executive team has been changed as well: reduced by half in size and restyled as officers. At the time of writing in August 2022, the new Board has been elected and we are preparing for their term to start on September 1.

The past 16 months have seen tremendous change at WUSA. Yet, our team has continued to do what we do best: advocating student interests and providing them the services they need to have a high-quality university experience. I hope this report will demonstrate how our activities, big and small, have impacted the campus community at the University of Waterloo.

Best regards,

Benjamin Easton (he/him)
WUSA President

Executive Summary

This report outlines major projects that have contributed to the completion of the commitments set out in the WUSA 2020-2025 Long Range Plan. As a not-for-profit organization which serves as the official collective voice and legal representative of undergraduate students at the University of Waterloo, we are dedicated to engaging with and supporting students. Our impact can be seen not only with students but the university community as a whole.

A lot of our impact is rooted particularly in our six main advocacy priorities: Housing, COVID-19, Equity and Accessibility of Education, Educational Quality, International Students and Affordability. From consultations, reports, working groups and meetings with campus partners, we've made significant progress on these priorities in the past year. In particular, we wrapped up the Accessibility Report in May 2021 as well as the report on Transgender and Racialized Student Experience with Campus Wellness initiated by previous executive teams. We continued to advocate for better quality and more affordable housing for students in Waterloo through the WUSA Housing Report and Return to Campus Housing Survey.

An important part of supporting and advocating for students is engaging and building relationships with other areas on campus – such as academic advisors – to collaborate, lean on their expertise and also ensure that student concerns are represented amongst these various audiences on campus.

Beyond the walls of the University of Waterloo, we continued to build relationships with local stakeholders, such as Wilfrid Laurier University Students Union and various municipal leaders. Provincially, we continued to build a stronger relationship with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) and were involved in consultations for their policy papers on topic such as technology enabled learning, mature students and student mobility and credit transfer.

Aside from advocacy work, we continued to involve students in all areas of our organization and provide our student part-time staff and co-op students with professional development opportunities throughout the duration of their roles and appreciation events to recognize their contribution to the organization. In addition to providing students with opportunities, we strive to build a community for and with them through special offerings such as our WUSA Welcome Box as well as our Student-Run Services, Clubs, Peer Support, Events and an engaging social media presence. The services we provide to students such as such as FedBus, GRT UPass, Health and Dental Plan, Legal Services, International News and Used Bookstore are impactful too, as they are instrumental in providing students with affordable supports and services.

Overall, this report should serve as an extensive and comprehensive summary of the continued success of WUSA and our vision for the future.

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Who We Are

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) is a not-for-profit organization which serves as the official collective voice and legal representative of undergraduate students at the University of Waterloo. Since 1967, our student-led organization has provided undergrads with the services and support they need to reach their academic goals and make the most of their university experience.

We advocate for our members to ensure that they receive an accessible, affordable, accountable and high quality post-secondary experience. By bringing recommendations to the university and all levels of government, we ensure students' voices are prioritized among decision makers.

“

Working with WUSA has rewarded me with a lifetime of lessons and a team that truly empathizes and accommodates the needs of its staff.

WUSA Part-time Staff, Winter 2022

”

WUSA at a glance



Official collective voice for undergrads



Made up of an elected Board of Directors & 50+ full-time staff

Advocate for

- accessible
- affordable
- accountable
- high-quality

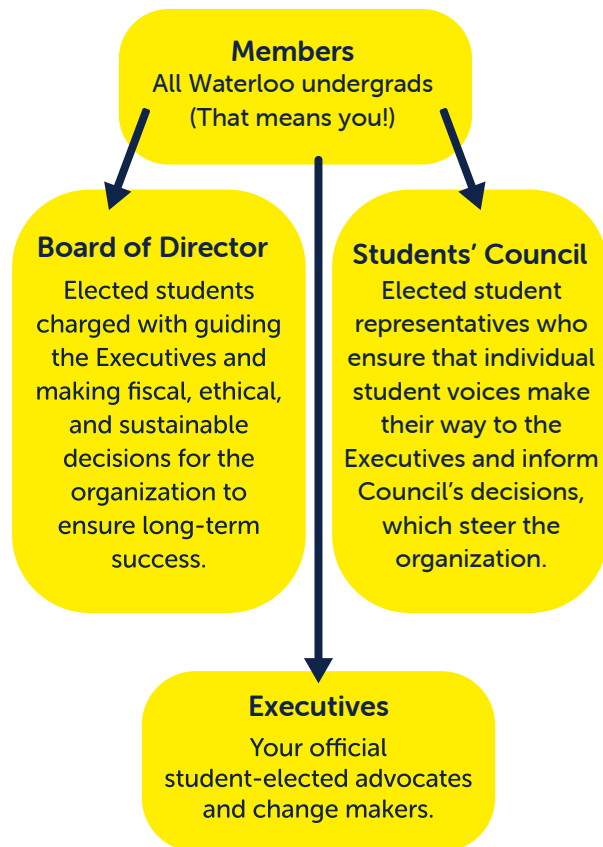
Post-secondary experience



Bring recommendations to the university & all levels of government

Until the 2022/23 academic year, WUSA has had a Students' Council, Board of Directors, and Executive team which worked together to steer the direction of WUSA and make sure the collective voice of undergrads is heard. Starting in September 2022, the governance model will be shifting away from a bicameral model to a single elected Board of Directors which will guide the organization's strategic and advocacy goals. As always, our team of over 50 full-time staff are committed to supporting the ambitions of these student leaders and change-makers.

Old governance model



A promise to our members

You can rely on your Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association to bring you services that support your needs, platforms that amplify your voice, and experiences that create lasting memories. Committed to improving the lives of UWaterloo undergrads both in and outside the classroom, we empower you to effect the change you want to see, while working on your behalf to build a stronger campus community.

New governance model



Our 2021-2022 Executive Team

Benjamin Easton (he/him)

President



Our President of the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association is the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation. The President represents undergraduates to University administration, Senate, and Board of Governors, and is responsible for all aspects of student government. The President also provides leadership and oversight to WUSA. The President chairs several WUSA committees and sits on high-level university committees like the President's Advisory Committee on Mental Health.

- ☑ Represent undergrads to stakeholders
- ☑ Chairs WUSA committees & high-level university committees

Matthew Schwarze (he/him)

VP Operations and Finance



Our VP Operations and Finance oversees the financial and administrative aspects of the corporation. This pertains mainly to the annual budgets, financial management, human resources, secretarial duties, administered and group benefits programs, insurance policies and business operations. The VP Operations and Finance also serves as Executive Director of the WUSA-administered endowment funds.

- ☑ Oversees financial & administrative aspects
- ☑ Executive Director of WUSA endowment funds

Catherine Dong (she/they)

VP Student Life



Our VP Student Life works with UW student services, such as Campus Wellness and the Student Success Office, to maintain and improve campus resources, as well as represents students on wellness-related committees within the university. The VP Student Life provides guidance to WUSA's campus life offerings, including the clubs system, student-run services, first-year Orientation, and student transition.

- ☑ **Maintain & improve campus resources**
- ☑ **Represent students on wellness related committees**
- ☑ **Guide clubs, student-run services, orientation, and more**

Stephanie Ye-Mowe (she/they)

VP Education



Our VP Education supports students with academic and co-op issues, navigates the co-op process, and lobbies university administration and staff to improve academic services on campus. The VP Education represents students to various UW Senate and administrative committees, oversees the Centre for Academic Policy Support, and supervises a number of commissions dedicated to government affairs (municipal, provincial, and federal governments). The VP Education lobbies to various levels of government on matters of importance to students related to post-secondary education.

- ☑ **Support students with academic and co-op issues**
- ☑ **Supervise commissions related to government affairs**

What We Accomplished

Our promise to students and the overall values that guide our work are admittedly broad in many ways. This is why we have our [2020-2025 Long Range Plan](#) to help turn our values into more actionable goals. Below are the five commitments that we pledged to prioritize over this five-year period and the initiatives we have taken on to work towards them so far:

Our Five Commitments



1. Accessible engagement for students



2. Build belonging and engagement



3. Support personal & professional growth



4. Efficiently serve students through commercial services & operations



5. Increase student supports

1 We will make it easier and more accessible for students to engage with WUSA and our constituency societies

a) Create a member management system to improve our connection with students, and allow members to document their experiences with WUSA

- Stay tuned for more progress on this commitment in the 2022-2023 governing year.

b) Review and implement recommendations from equity and governance audits to ensure WUSA is a place where every student can safely engage

- We initiated a **governance review** by working with consultants with expertise in student association governance to help us address the issues inherent in our current governing model.
- Part of our team attended the **executive governance retreat** to support the development of how advocacy will be prioritized in the new governance structure.
- We began an RFP process to initiate an **equity audit** to evaluate our organization in its current condition and guide operational changes moving forward.

c) Continue to engage and partner with our constituency societies and satellite campuses to support student-run programming

- We updated processes for submitting **Society Event Forms** which has increased support and decreased liability for WUSA, and the students involved.
- We successfully advocated to the University Board of Governors a return to a **refund-based model of society fees**, based on existing practices prior to the Student Choice Initiative of 2019.
- Our Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations Manager and President **met with staff from UW's satellite campuses** to learn more about the needs of these students in particular.
- We put out a **Faculty Society Survey** to learn more about the experience that student societies have engaging with WUSA and how this can be

d) Implement a Student Research Program to provide meaningful roles for students and increase capacity for data collection to better understand our membership base.

- We continued developing the **Representative Survey Platform** which will increase our ability to collect quality data from students about their needs.
- The **Return to Campus Intercept** we conducted in March 2022 was a trial of a new method that will contribute to understanding our members better and, in the future, provide PTS job opportunities for students.



2 We will continue our commitment from our last strategic plan to build belonging and campus engagement

- In Fall 2021, we conducted a **Return to Campus Survey** to understand how WUSA members experienced returning to campus and learn how we can continue to provide students with a quality on-campus experience.
- We met with **Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union** rep to discuss collaboration for the provincial election and student engagement.
- We continued reaching out to **local stakeholders** to inform, engage, and build an awareness and relationship with WUSA.
- We met with Marlee Spafford to discuss the **Student Experience Framework** being developed for UW Campus.

a) Identify and address barriers to democratic participation and employment for marginalized students and staff to ensure greater accessibility of full-time, part-time, and volunteer roles

- We completed a **Low-Income Student Bursary** environmental scan which explored options for providing low-income students with additional financial support and opportunities to participate in more unpaid volunteer and extra-curricular activities.
- We **met with Karen Vecchio**, MP for Elgin—Middlesex—London, to discuss issues related to youth and undergraduate students at UW as well as provincially and nationally.
- We implemented **paid coordinator roles** for our WUSA Student-Run Services.



b) Continue to expand and improve our Clubs Administration System by adjusting to the ongoing and changing needs of student clubs

- Our Accounting Department worked with the Campus Life and Operation teams to implement a more streamlined system for **Clubs cash boxes**.
- We increased locker space and reformatted **Clubs Community Centre**.
- Our IT Department continued to offer Clubs free office 365 email, Teams calls for video meetings, email, and online office apps and web hosting



c) Continue to expand WUSA services and operations beyond the Student Life Centre to meet students where they are, whether online or on campus

- Campus Life Department increased communication with **all three satellite campuses** regarding activities their student groups are running.
- We visited **Cambridge and Stratford campuses** to meet with staff and students.
- Our Advocacy Team presented at the **academic advisor conference** to ensure student concerns were represented to that audience.
- We implemented a **Turnkey Live Chat feature** to help students virtually.

“

WUSA is an organization that many students look up to. Being able to be part of such a respected organization brings me a lot of pride.

WUSA Part-time Staff, Winter 2021

”

3 We will support the continued personal and professional growth of our students and staff by offering worthwhile roles and opportunities

a) Engage full-time staff to support student initiatives and student professional development, including through mentorship and training

- Our Campus Life team opened WUSA Thrift, creating more part-time opportunities for students, and created a **Special Events Assistant Co-op position**.
- All WUSA Staff completed **Social Media Policy Training**.
- Our Advocacy Team delivered **Personality Dimensions Training** to the O-Team group.
- All WUSA Full-time Staff participated in a **team-building Enneagram Workshop**.
- Our Commercial Operations team **improved their onboarding and training process** to better serve our membership. This has helped support our staff becoming more knowledgeable about different areas in WUSA, store products, and customer service recovery.

b) Invest in genuine and frequent volunteer/staff appreciation and recognition

- All Departments at WUSA continue to host **termly appreciation events** for part-time staff and co-op students to recognize their hard work throughout the term.
- We continue to host a **termly volunteer appreciation event** for student volunteers in clubs, services, societies and governance, and invite feedback to improve future events.
- The Advocacy team planned and executed an **appreciation event for all the Associate Vice Presidents**.
- Our social committee continues to offer **social events for full-time staff and co-op students** on a monthly basis to recognize all the important work completed by staff.

- c) Recognize our staff as a limited but valuable resource in serving students; uphold their health and wellbeing by committing to reasonable workloads, and offering support from leadership when needed
- We continue to put out our termly **Part-Time Staff Survey**, which helps us understand the experiences of our PTS and ensure that they can voice their feedback.
 - We have instituted a **living wage mandate** for any hourly ongoing staff within our team.
- d) Commit to organization-wide anti-racism efforts and training to ensure equity relationships with staff and students and overall within our culture
- All WUSA team members have been encouraged to attend workshops presented by the **Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism** here at the University of Waterloo.
 - Marketing and Communications team has continued to participate in **anti-racism training and workshops** specifically focused on communications to ensure that this is reflected in everything we share at WUSA.

“

The WUSA culture is fun, its meetings where you don't need to worry about getting spooked by something coming up out of the blue. The culture is something that I may have honestly taken for granted, it was relaxed and understanding, while still pushing you to create something wonderful and creative. It was engaging and simulating, always keeping you at rapt attention.

WUSA Part-time Staff, Winter 2022

”

4 We will continue to serve students with efficiency through our commercial services and operation of the Student Life Centre

a) Prioritize the Lounge Plan

- The **drawings for the Lounge Plan** have been completed as well as approvals with student bodies. We are now working on financing and gaining university approval.

b) Provide quality, student-funded spaces by reviewing space agreements with a student focus

- In Fall 2021, we officially re-opened the SLC and the new **SLC expansion** for students.
- We **increased our study rooms** in the SLC from 5 to 21 and added a **new multi-faith room**.
- We installed **new doors and new automatic door openers** for the SLC entrances.

c) Build infrastructure that supports successful student papers on campus and online

- In April 2022, we completed the **Student Publications Survey**, the results of which will help inform changes to our student-run Newspaper, Imprint, to make it more engaging for undergrads.

d) Maintain a sustainable financial position through improved Board oversight

- Our Accounting Department continues to ensure **ongoing fiscal stewardship** through appropriate approval levels, internal controls, budget vs. actuals monitoring and cash position.
- Our Commercial Operations Team is working at **building operations back up** since COVID-19. Our revenues and guests served are trending in the right direction and we have continued to see financial success in the Spring 2022 term.



5 We will continue to increase student supports

a) Continue to support constituency societies and student-run services organizing events and supports for students in their communities

- Our **Food Support Student-Run Service** implemented a beginning and end of term survey to learn how they can better serve their student users.
- Our Advocacy team supported CAPS when needed through a variety of student inquiries.
- We continued building a **stronger connection between OUSA home office** and WUSA staff.
- We ran eight **COVID-19 vaccine clinics** in the SLC.
- Our Marketing and Communications team engaged in **greater collaboration with Clubs and Services** to broaden their messages through @yourwusa channels.
- Our Advocacy and Campus Life teams worked together to brainstorm pathways for interacting with **services and their advocacy efforts.**

b) Evaluate services and programs to best support the needs of the student population, emphasizing supports for racialized, marginalized and international students

- In June 2021, our research team published the **Services Review Report**, which explored student experiences with our advocacy-focused Student-Run Services and provided recommendations for future improvement.
- Our Advocacy Team supported the development of a **Glow Feedback Survey** to help improve their service on an ongoing basis.
- We supported the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) with **consultations for their Mature Student Policy Paper** which helped us understand the unique needs of this group of students and what supports they need.

c) Engage alumni to support student-run funds and projects, and contribute to our community

- Our student-run service, MATES, continued their **partnership with Alumni** that provides MATES with a portion of the fun run box proceeds from Alumni Black and Gold Day.

Advocacy Priorities

Housing

We continued advocacy work stemming from the [Housing Report](#) that was finalized in May 2021. This work was highlighted by CBC Kitchener-Waterloo with [an interview in May 2021 with then Student Research and Policy Assistant, Amelia Cammy](#) and again in [June 2022 with VP Education, Stephanie Ye-Mowe](#). The report continues to be referenced by the Mayors of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge during conversations related to housing concerns in the region.

Our Research Team also completed an environmental scan to explore the opportunity for **WUSA to invest in student-owned housing** within the City of Waterloo as a direct means to help solve the student housing crisis in Waterloo.

In response to anecdotal reports from students expressing their difficulties finding housing for the Winter 2022 term, WUSA developed a **Return to Campus Housing Survey** to understand the extent of these issues. This resulted in the creation of practical, impactful, and actionable recommendations to alleviate stress and burden on students, and advocate to the University of Waterloo administration on these recommendations. The [Winter 2022 Housing Brief](#) was created to summarize these concerns.



Continued advocacy work highlighted by CBC KW



Explored opportunity for investing in student-owned housing



Developed Return to Campus Housing Survey with actionable recommendations

COVID-19

For students, a major implication of COVID-19 was switching to fully remote and online learning for the majority of 2020 and 2021. When the time came to transition back to in-person operations on campus, we wanted to ensure that students had the best experience possible. We conducted a **Student Return to Campus Survey** in Fall 2021 to learn more about how students had experienced this transition ([you can view the full report here](#)). We asked students about topics such as COVID safety, dining space, study space, and student concerns for Winter 2022. The report ends with recommendations arising from common student concerns. We used this information to inform a letter to UW Administration, [you can read more about this here](#).



Conducted Return to Campus Survey



Made recommendations based on student concerns

Equity and Accessibility of Education

We also wanted to ensure that a return to campus was accessible to all students. We wrote this [open letter entitled "Flexible and Remote Options for Winter 2022 Courses"](#) to address concerns from students about the ableism inherent in a "return to normal" that was insufficient prior to the pandemic and continues to fail learners' accessibility needs. This letter was shared with UW administration and stakeholders to ensure these concerns were being considered in the process of returning to campus. This also had implications for educational quality, specifically for students with accessibility needs.



Wrote an open letter addressing return to campus



Published accessibility report addressing student issues

In addition, [The Accessibility Report](#) was published by WUSA in May 2021 and its purpose was to understand both accessibility on campus and issues students may face related to their disabilities in general. The recommendations included in this report resulted in the **formation of the WUSA Committee on Access and Disability (CAD)**.

Educational Quality

One major project we were involved in this year related to educational quality was the **Digital Learning Strategy Working Group**. The Provost created a committee to support the development of a university-wide [Digital Learning Strategy \(DLS\)](#). The DLS will provide the University of Waterloo with a high-level strategy to guide and influence decision-making surrounding all aspects of digital learning and teaching. Of course, there is a lot at stake for students when it comes to digital learning, which is why WUSA Vice-President Education was appointed to represent the voice of undergraduate students on this committee. WUSA conducted **consultation focus groups with undergraduate students** to ensure their perspectives were considered in the establishment of this strategy.

In addition, we continued to facilitate the **WUSA Teaching Awards** which aims to incentivize and reward quality teaching. We also promoted updates to Course Evaluations (now Student Course Perception Surveys) to ensure student feedback is taken into account in tenureship and promotion decisions.



Involved with Digital Learning Strategy Group



Facilitate WUSA Teaching Award to incentivize quality teaching

“WUSA’s biggest strength is listening to student needs and providing students with accurate information and updates about important concerning student life.

WUSA Part-time Staff, Winter 2021

”

International Students

Most of our advocacy work related to international students has focused on barriers and challenges they have faced in the process of returning to campus. Our VP Education met with a staffer from the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship to discuss our **concerns with international students' return to campus for the fall**. We also worked with UCRU on a letter that emphasized the need for clear and timely communication for international students scheduled to return to campus for Fall 2021.



Discussed concerns with Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship



Advocated for various asks to provincial and federal government

Additionally, we have advocated to the provincial and/or federal government for international students with the following asks:

- **Adjust the tuition fee framework** so that international students can have a guaranteed rate of tuition throughout their studies
- **Increase access to the labour market** by developing specialized categories for international students within the framework of the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy and the Canada Summer Jobs program.
- Reform the Post-Graduate Work Permit Program to **create more accessible paths to permanent residency for international students**
- **Address barriers to enrollment in OHIP post-graduation** when on the PGWPP.

Affordability

One of our major focuses related to affordability this year was course materials. In the Fall 2021 term, WUSA developed a survey that asked both students and instructors about their **experience with course materials and Open Educational Resources (OERs)** at the University of Waterloo. This project was developed with other colleagues and stakeholders on campus, such as the Centre for Teaching Excellence and the Library, who were and continue to be involved in similar efforts to explore Open Educational Resources at the University of Waterloo. The results of this survey demonstrate that students experience significant negative impacts in their learning, financial status, and sense of belonging from the costs of current course materials.

Moreover, our VP Education worked along with OUSA to advocate against **OSAP Clawbacks for students**. Despite federal government spending more to support students during the pandemic, Ontario students are not receiving more OSAP since the provincial government is clawing back the provincial portion of OSAP. This means students aren't feeling the full benefits of the federal government's investments into financial aid. The province is using these clawbacks as a cost-savings mechanism instead of continuing normal levels of OSAP spending to support students. WUSA engaged in advocacy campaigns to make this known to students.



Surveyed students and instructors about experience with Open Educational Resources



Worked with OUSA to advocate against OSAP Clawback



Year at a Glance

The work we do at WUSA is not all advocacy, big projects, reports, and new flashy services, our impact is seen in the daily tasks we complete and opportunities we provide to students.

Student Involvement

Promo team

Now that we are back to on campus classes, our Marketing and Communications team has rehired a promo team and look forward to diversifying our promotions to re-introduce on campus signage, digital screens, booths and more, to minimize the digital fatigue we know many are feeling. The team currently includes **four student part-time staff**.



WUSA employs a total of

121 part-time staff

across all departments each term.



WUSA employs a total of

10 co-op students

across all departments each term.



Our Campus Life Department offered volunteer opportunities for

2,950 students

this year.



WUSA supported **51** elections

between May 1st, 2021, and April 30th, 2022; these included student societies elections, club elections and WUSA general elections.

Building Community

WUSA Welcome Box

We offered WUSA Welcome Boxes to incoming first year students this year with the hope of making them feel welcome at their new institution. These boxes were filled with swag items and information about WUSA.

78% (6130/7898) **6,244**
 incoming students boxes
 signed up to receive one in advance were distributed

Clubs

As of Winter 2022, WUSA:



Facilitates
160 active clubs



Supported over
500 club events



Engaged with over
5,000 students
 throughout the year

Food Support Service

The following demonstrates the continued importance of providing our students with affordable food options:

120 hampers given out in Spring 2021
271 hampers given out in Fall 2021
505 hampers given out in Winter 2022



Peer Support

Our student-run services, Glow and MATES, engaged with



150 students

through peer support meetings.

Events

We hosted

18 virtual events

13 in-person events



In total, we engaged with

8,239 students

through our events

Student Life Centre (SLC)

With a return to on-campus activities, we saw



800,000 visitors

to the SLC in the month of April 2022.

“

The SLC is great! I love how it is open 24/7, that way I know there is somewhere I can go no matter the time if I don't feel like being in my room. You can buy food, study, or just catch up with your friends and it doesn't feel weird being there late because it is meant to be a place for students to go at any time.

First Year Faculty of Health Student

”

@yourWUSA Social Media

Through effective digital communication, our goals are to raise awareness of WUSA, our advocacy efforts and how we support students as well as cultivate community through events as well as job and volunteer opportunities.

Twitter

You'll find: WUSA advocacy, governance, entertainment and services updates, #onpse and #cndpse content, local news, updates from UWaterloo and UWaterloo Life, retweets from groups across campus with info we think members would like to know.



11,551
total followers

Instagram

You'll find: Visual storytelling on the grid, daily stories, photo-heavy content, real-time sharing all focused on student needs and enhancing their experience.



9,931
total followers
as of May 2022



+ 1,765
followers
in the last year (21.61%)



53,580
total interactions
from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022
(51.41% increase from the year prior)

TikTok

You'll find: Current, funny, informative, student-focused content about student life.

The focus of the WUSA TikTok will be to build community and provide fun and uplifting content in exciting, interesting and trendy ways.

Pre-launch goal: for the first year, gain 200 followers and benchmark our efforts to determine realistic KPIs for 2023.

We hit that goal as May 18, 2022!

First Year Diaries/Undergrad Stories Campaign

First Year Diaries looks to showcase stories of our UWaterloo student community through WUSA’s social platforms. By means of First Year Diaries, we want students to understand that they are not alone in their journey, and many others may be going through similar experiences. Simultaneously, this initiative also looks to bring awareness of the various resources and opportunities offered by WUSA that first year students can utilize.

In March 2022, First Year Diaries we rebranded to Undergraduate Stories to open up the campaign to all current UWaterloo undergrads.

First Year Diaries:

25 posts
4,619 engagements



Showcase stories of UWaterloo student community

Undergraduate Stories:

7 posts
1,170 engagements



Spotlight WUSA resources/ opportunities



Providing Services

We sold



5,201 FedBus tickets

providing students with an affordable and convenient form of transportation.

We provided students over



\$125,000
in savings

based on our products provided being 10% more affordable than the competition.



We serviced over

155,000 transactions

through the Service kitchen, International News, Dispensary, and Used Bookstore. In September 2021 to April 2022 alone, we saw revenues exceeding 1.2 million dollars. This money goes back to students to provide them with the services they need.

We continue to operate shop.wusa.ca which includes event ticketing, product sales, donations, and sponsorship.

Between May 1, 2021 and May 1, 2022, we received \$178,449.78 of ticket sales, donations and product sales on shop.wusa.ca.

This helped students save over

\$20,000

in additional 3rd party processing fees.

Listening to Students

The advocacy work that we engage in and the services that we provide students are always based on the needs and wants of current undergraduate students. This means that it is important for us to always be listening to feedback from students. One of the main ways we do so is through consultation activities such as surveys and focus groups.

From May 2021 to April 2022, we received a total of

10,540 survey responses

across 10 surveys.

- WUSA Part Time Staff Survey (May 2021)
- Services Review (May 2021)
- Student Return to Campus Survey (October 2021)
- Open Educational Resources Survey (November 2021)
- Return to Campus Housing Survey (December 2021)
- Student Publication Survey (March 2022)
- Intercept Survey – Return to Campus (March 2022)
- WUSA Part Time Staff Feedback Survey (April 2022)
- Societies Survey (April 2022)
- MathSoc Work Term Report Survey (April 2022)

Another avenue for students to have their voices heard by WUSA is through our General Meetings. This year, we had one in January 2022 and one in March 2022. These general meetings are open to all students, who can request items of importance to them to be added to the agenda and voted on at the meeting.



Financial Transparency

We recognize the financial burden that post-secondary education places on students and want to make sure you understand how your student association fees are being spent to provide you with the best support and experiences during your time as an undergrad at UW.

Budget and Fees

The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association Fee is a non-refundable amount that is paid by every undergraduate student. The fee is allocated to various departments to support the organization. [Follow this link for more details about WUSA's operational budget, including the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Report.](#)

In addition, the WUSA Membership Fees go toward enhancing your student experience or representing your voice in University and Governmental decision-making during your time at Waterloo. This includes fun events, clubs, equity and social services, advocacy efforts, and health and wellness initiatives that provide student supports when and where you need them. With these fees WUSA can also provide students with part-time jobs, cover regular maintenance of the Student Life Centre, and legally required costs such as insurance for student spaces. [Visit our website to learn more about the breakdown of these fees.](#)

WUSA Membership Fee goes towards:



Fun Events



Equity &
Social Services



Advocacy Efforts



Health &
Wellness Initiatives



Providing Part-time
Jobs for Students



SLC Maintenance

Fiscal Stewardship



\$6,135,354
2021 Revenue



\$671,549
2021 Investments



\$5,402,794
2021 Expenses



\$1,404,109
2021 Excess Review
over expenses

(2811% increase compared to 2020)

With such a large annual budget, it is important for the longevity of our organization that our VPOF and Accounting Department remain committed to efficient and responsible financial decision-making and use of organizational resources. This fiscal stewardship is maintained through appropriate approval levels and internal controls.

Every year, WUSA contracts an independent auditor to perform an audit on its financial statements to ensure that they are free from material misstatement. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. [You can find the most recent 2021 Independent Auditor Report by following this link to our website.](#)

Fiscal stewardship allows WUSA to provide **more than \$1M in Ancillary Operations Revenue back to student services** which further enhances the impact we have on students and the UW community alike.

Challenges & Looking Forward

As noted throughout this report, COVID-19 unsurprisingly continued to present challenges for WUSA over the 2021-2022 governing year. The silver lining to these challenges was the opportunity for WUSA to adapt and pursue diverse and innovative ways to engage and serve our student members. Moreover, the governance review process was also particularly challenging as we were faced not only with the logistical elements of such a monumental change but also with the need to raise awareness about this transition to students, staff and the university community. As we move into a new governing year, the transition to a new governance model presents more unique challenges to WUSA, specifically to senior management who will take on a greater degree of autonomy and responsibility under the guidance of the Board of Directors. New processes must be established as elected student leaders determine how they wish to be supported in advocacy operations, and our policies and procedures need to be revised to reflect our new governance structure.



Given the challenges of the year, everyone at WUSA is looking forward to a return to in-person operations so we can finally support students again on campus. This means increased “back to normal” attendance to events on campus, especially during Fall Welcome Week. We’re also excited to introduce WUSA to incoming students (as well as those who have not experienced campus) at our First Year Fair and to engage students in person this year after primarily virtual engagements for the past two. In terms of the governance transition, we look forward to onboarding our new Board of Directors and leaning on their experiences, knowledge and connection to the UW student population to guide our next year of impact.



COVID-19 continues to present challenges



Transitioning to a new governance model



Looking forward to a return to in-person operation

How to Connect with Us

Stay up to date and connected with WUSA throughout the year by checking out wusa.ca and our @yourwusa social media for information on important events, updates and opportunities to provide feedback.

@yourwusa



Instagram



TikTok



Twitter



LinkedIn

wusa.ca



Stop by the Turnkey Desk in the Student Life Centre



Feel free to email recept@wusa.ca for general inquiries, and they will point you in the right direction.



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I think it's amazing to see how much WUSA does for students, and their employees, and how much they truly care.

WUSA Part-time Staff, Winter 2021

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