



university of victoria
students' society

2018-2020 Strategic Plan

Prepared by the

2018-2019 Board of Directors

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Vision

Our strategic vision provides long-term direction, defines organizational activities and development, establishes the capabilities our society plans to develop, and infuses our organization with a sense of purpose. The UVSS vision unifies everyone:

Full student engagement in the core components of advocacy, events, services, businesses, and society governance.

1.2 Mission

A mission statement is a declaration of purpose. It highlights why we exist and how we aim to meet the needs of our members:

To be a leader in providing high-quality and accessible services, advocacy and events that enhance the student experience and build a campus community that embodies the values of the UVSS.

1.3 Values

Our strategic foundation is comprised of enduring, passionate, and distinctive core beliefs – our values. They guide our conduct, activities, and goals. They establish why we do what we do and what we stand for: organizational leadership, advocacy, and total member satisfaction. The values of the UVSS are:

1.3.1 Good Governance

We take our responsibility to ensure the long-term stability and health of our students' society very seriously. To us this means ensuring participatory democracy and transparent decision-making, being prudent and judicious with your student fees, and being accountable for our actions.

1.3.2 Fun

We value fun in everything that we do. To us that means creativity, passion, spirit, lightheartedness, and not being institutional. Campus should be a fun place to be and students should feel excited and engaged about the work their students' society does.

1.3.3 Excellence

We aim to be a leader not just among student societies, but among non-profits - and we pursue this goal through excellence. To us this means fostering creativity, driving innovation, promoting a learning culture, investing in our people, and by taking a compassionate approach to everything that we do.

1.3.4 Service

Service to students is why we exist. Our student-centered approach drives us to provide services that are high-quality, relevant, and meaningful to students. We provide essential services to all members of the UVSS such as the extended health and dental plan, the UPASS, and the Food Bank and Free Store.

1.3.5 Social Justice

Whether we are advocating for student issues or putting the profits from our businesses back into services for students, the UVSS works every day to ensure no person is left behind. We work with campus and community partners to raise awareness and empower students to create change. To support this work, we will create inclusive and supportive spaces for student collaboration.

2 Communications & Marketing

2.1 Background & Areas of Focus

The UVSS is governed by an elected board of 22 undergraduate students (the “Board of Directors” or “Board”) and its operations are managed by a General Manager and Executive Director. The UVSS employs 250 unionized staff and operates 9 unique businesses, all of which are wholly student owned and operated in the Student Union Building (SUB). The social enterprise model reinvests revenue generated by UVSS businesses into services for students. As a result, the work of the Board is inextricably tied to the work of the businesses units.

Department managers for business units and cost centres (non-revenue generating departments) are responsible for their own marketing and communications. Oversight and support are provided by the Graphic Design Department (“Graphics”) and SUB Business Marketing Committee, chaired by the Director of Finance and Operations. The Board manages marketing and communications for campaigns, services, and events separately from the business units. Oversight and support are provided by the Research and Communications Manager (RCM). In 2017, the UVSS created a distinct SUB brand in order to differentiate SUB businesses from the UVSS parent brand. The UVSS and select businesses have separate social media accounts.

Several core brand attributes support and illustrate our key message, “Run by students, for students.”

- Enthusiastic
- Fun
- Quality
- Relevant
- Inclusive
- Community-minded
- Progressive
- Forward-thinking
- Environmentally conscious

Tools for success include:

- Robust and strategic marketing plans with accountability, follow-through, and review.
- Crossover marketing.
- Opening silos (sharing ideas and tactics across departments).
- Training and development of staff and directors.
- Genuine collaboration that excites our staff, directors, and members.
- External expertise where it makes sense.

2.2 Main Challenges

1. **Cutting through the noise**

- a. The Board of Directors, SUB, and business units have complex communications and marketing needs. In addition, outside of the SUB, UVSS members face a barrage of other information from other stakeholders (primarily UVic). This is especially prevalent in September when capturing SUB business loyalty in our members is critical. As a result, reaching members through the sheer volume of information available to students remains a challenge.
- b. The communications categories of the Board include, but are not limited to: The Health and Dental Plan, campaigns, Campus Kick Off, elections, events, general meetings, and other external events and issues (e.g. municipal, provincial, or federal elections). This list fluctuates depending on the capacity and priorities of each Board and communications staff year-to-year.
- c. The communications categories of SUB businesses include: Events, menus, specials, hours of operation, giveaways/contests, and services, with the additional need to reach people outside of the SUB (and broaden our customer base).
- d. As a result, members may not absorb or may miss altogether what the UVSS is and how the organization uses student fees to effectively represent student needs.

2. **Broadcasting our business model**

- a. In the winter 2017 survey, a majority of respondents didn't know that profits from SUB businesses support advocacy, services, and events for students (our social enterprise).
- b. In a constrained financial environment where inflationary pressures are not met by accompanying fee increases, the long-term financial health of the organization is currently dependent on revenue generated by our nine business units.
- c. Marketing (and business planning) is therefore absolutely fundamental to securing the long-term success of the UVSS.

3. **Making the political palatable**

- a. The SUB features the political campaigns of the UVSS alongside its businesses' marketing signage. At certain times of the year, Board members and staff recruit as many students in the building as possible to attend general meetings or vote in elections and referenda. This generates a politicized environment around the whole building. As a result, members often conflate the activities of the Board with those of the business units.
- b. Separating the perceived "political" identity of the UVSS from its social enterprise model is complicated: SUB businesses and the Board are inextricably linked, but business units also have their own unique identities and marketing needs.

4. **Connecting our people**

- a. Directors, permanent staff, and student staff have limited opportunities to interact and collaborate. This inhibits authentic team-building, innovation, the connection of individual business units to the Strategic and Marketing & Communications Plans, and the continuity necessary for staff to feel their input is valued.
- b. Annual Board turnover means that staff often voice suggestions year after year without associated follow-through by the employer.

- c. The diversity of our SUB community means that staff possess creative ideas and feedback related to external businesses and brands that they already engage with, and how they prefer to be contacted by those brands. The UVSS neglects to use this information to drive staff engagement and build creativity into our tried and true methods.

2.3 Major Goal

Develop and execute a proactive, streamlined, on-brand, and cross-platform content management strategy. This includes two nested goals:

- *Systems goal:* Develop a planned, high-functioning, holistic marketing system that supports our mission and our strategic goals and initiatives, and complements an organization-wide communications plan.
- *HR management goal:* All staff who are either responsible for marketing oversight for the organization or for their business(es) shall be empowered to perform this function, given opportunities to connect to the work of others, and provided with professional development to build their capacity for brand and marketing strategy.

2.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Give the members what they want (“give, give, ask”).**
 - a. Adopt a model that provides job and volunteer postings, offers, giveaways, and contests more times than it “asks” for something.
 - b. Avoid contacting members only when we need something (e.g. attendance at our general meetings or during elections and referenda).
 - c. Engage with members on a human level (see “people-powered content,” below) with offers, so that when we do need something, they’re invested in our success just as much as we are.
2. **Clearly define for members what the UVSS is and what it stands for to increase its perceived legitimacy and decrease dissatisfaction with our “political” activities.**
 - a. Model a consistent online presence: Create and stick to agreed-upon channels, tone, best practices, and standard responses for social media and private messages.
 - b. Keep our content cool: Ensure the website is up-to-date, prioritize current content (e.g. events and campaigns), streamline the volume of information presented in our sidebars and menus, and push relevant, people-focused content (e.g. in our slider images and on our main page).
 - c. Convert members: Revision the “haters” as “member service opportunities” - acknowledge their grievance, diffuse the situation, and triage. Refer to another Board member or staff person for follow-up if necessary. Our members deserve our time.
3. **Show our members we’re listening.**
 - a. Own the data: Distribute annual surveys to all members by the end of September to capture members at peak excitement, and to help inform subsequent planning.

- b. Distribute surveys for longer and across more platforms. The Winter 2017 survey saw a huge spike of responses on one day only, seriously limiting the amount and diversity of potential information we could get from members.
- c. Solicit feedback through in-person media (e.g. a giant feedback board labelled “It’s Your SUB”) in more remote areas of campus to reach more members in more accessible ways.
- d. Employ survey segmentation: Reduce the intimidation factor of 30+ questions on one survey, streamline information gathering, and allow respondents to engage with topics they care about.
 - i. Divide surveys by topic: Board activities (e.g. campaigns and events, governance, etc.), the SUB + businesses, communications + marketing, and social media.
 - ii. Examine responses accordingly in appropriate forums (e.g. the SUB and businesses in SUB Business Marketing and SUB Occupants Committees); communications and social media results by the communications team.
 - iii. Offer sweet prizes for each survey to increase response rates.

4. Drive people-powered content.

- a. Present regular and genuine opportunities for staff involvement: Ensure management and staff are aligned and supporting the same goals. Introduce strategy, accountability, collaboration, and motivation to our system of planning, check-ins, and follow-through.
- b. Brand ambassadors are everywhere! Enable directors, student staff, and volunteers to become effective and knowledgeable champions of the UVSS. Over 250 staff are students too! Tap into their creativity, networks, and identities as Board members or SUB employees. Share their content!
- c. Get out there: Capture members doing stuff = increased tags, mentions, interactions. Transition from passive to active outreach and to outside the SUB bubble (e.g. more diverse areas of campus inside Ring Road). Use face-to-face outreach strategies that don’t rely on social media, posters, or passive tabling.
- d. Cross-promote: Ensure SUB businesses are invited and prepared for tabling opportunities at UVic events (e.g. Explore UVic and other orientation activities), and combine forces to highlight our social enterprise model and services.

2.5 Objectives

1. Find out what our members want (and give it to them).

- a. Distribute semi-annual surveys for longer periods of time and to more diverse audiences, with incentives for participation. Distribute the first one in September, with a follow-up in spring to capture students starting in January.
- b. Solicit feedback in-person using creative methods (e.g. interactive boards) in high-traffic areas during peak times of the year. Ensure we reach remote parts of the campus.
- c. Provide information on how to get involved in committees, volunteering, and on our social media channels in the Board and Communications Offices, ready and on display by September.

- d. Feature “It’s Your SUB” and other feedback boards at high-traffic tabling days (e.g. Clubs and Course Union Days, Campus Kick Off, and UVic events).

2. Maintain a consistent (and positive) online presence.

- a. Develop template responses to common queries (and complaints) by the end of the summer, and revisit/update yearly.
- b. Train all incoming Board members and staff on online engagement best practices by the end of the summer.
- c. Update website slider images at least once every semester. Prioritize campaigns, events, and other time-sensitive and creative content that features our members.
- d. Audit our website regularly to determine what’s working and what’s not, and if it’s meeting accessibility requirements.
- e. Consult with the Graphic Design Department for website best practices and to redesign existing components to make them streamlined and useful to our members before the beginning of each semester.
- f. Make the website mobile-friendly!
- g. Move highest-traffic pages and content to top of website (e.g. clubs and Health and Dental Plan info).

3. Tap into UVSS people power.

- a. Provide regular professional development opportunities to build staff capacity for brand and marketing strategy.
- b. Incorporate and follow-through on the communications and marketing components of business plan development.
- c. Ensure staff participation in all stages of annual strategic plan development and review. Involve multiple levels of staff (e.g. chef de parties, managers, and/or student staff).
- d. Hold regular contests dedicated to featuring student-staff art, poetry, and other creative content. Share it!

4. Build a social network.

- a. Dedicate Work Study students’ and Communications and Graphics department staff time to attending and photographing events in order to create a database of high-quality photos that can then be used on social media and on the website.
- b. Dedicate set hours each week to respond to Facebook and other messages, interact with members on Twitter and Facebook, and tag members in posts across all platforms.
- c. Support the communications, outreach, and marketing strategies of all other Directors and staff.

3 Student Engagement

3.1 Background & Areas of Focus

Successful outreach is built on communicating and connecting with UVSS members. In the past, the UVSS has used its annual handbook, UVSS swag, campaigns, and clubs as its main outreach tools.

Occasionally, the organization's political actions or lack of connection with the student body can damage members' perceptions of the UVSS, which is the main barrier to effective student engagement. Student engagement must remain positive, accessible, and innovative.

3.2 Main Challenges

1. **Communication and outreach** – Our members are often unaware of the services the UVSS provides. In the annual survey, 74% of respondents did not feel that they received good value for their fees. This lack of effective communication contributes to the ongoing problem of poor public image.
2. **Poor public image** – The UVSS is often not viewed favourably by students. In the 2016 annual survey, 69% of respondents did not feel the UVSS represented their values. Controversial actions by past Boards and members contributes to its negative perception.
3. **Volunteer retention** – The UVSS cannot operate without volunteers. Volunteering rates spike in September, but quickly drop in subsequent months.
4. **Clubs confusion** – The UVSS supports over 200 unique clubs; however, confusing policy and procedures make it difficult for student leaders to get support from the UVSS.

3.3 Major Goal

Improve communication to increase member outreach and awareness of the UVSS, and the services it provides.

3.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Transparent and effective communication**
 - a. Engage with students face-to-face (e.g. host a coffee and chat tent outside the library).
 - b. Focus social media for more positive online outreach.
 - c. Emphasize the services the UVSS provides.
 - d. Ensure the Board is more accountable and transparent to members.
2. **Retain volunteers**
 - a. Advertise opportunities for leadership and skill development.
 - b. Personalize the recognition of volunteer efforts.
 - c. Coordinate a leadership program to encourage volunteer community.
3. **Streamline clubs and course unions**
 - a. Improve and clarify clubs and course union policies and procedures.

- b. Provide up-to-date lists of clubs and course unions online and in the SUB.
- c. Showcase clubs and course union events and activities to our members and campus community.
- d. Create online resources for clubs.

4. Sub branding

- a. Test SUB swag giveaways in September.
- b. Audit the SUB brand in January to gauge effectiveness.
- c. Include questions about the SUB brand on the annual survey.

3.5 Objectives

1. Increase the effectiveness of communications

- a. Pilot live-streaming Board meetings by the end of October.
- b. Create an updated Google Calendar publicizing committees available online to all students, ready for the beginning of September.
- c. Record and publish a video of the AGM in October.
- d. In conjunction with RCM and Graphics, prepare an integrated social media strategy by the end of August.
- e. Table outside the Quad twice a semester to talk to students, starting in November.
- f. Reach quorum at the AGM in the fall semester.
- g. Start chalking around the University starting in November.
- h. Continue to receive student staff input starting in September.

2. Improve the public image of the UVSS

- a. Reach 1000 followers on the SUB Instagram by the end of the year.
- b. Reach 9000 likes on the UVSS Facebook page, and increase average post reach to 3500 people.
- c. Have at least 60% of survey respondents say that the UVSS represents their values.

3. Increase volunteer retention

- a. Host a volunteer party at the end of December.
- b. Have a volunteer booth at Campus Kick Off and Clubs and Course Union Days.
- c. Develop volunteer incentives by January.
- d. Implement a leadership program with university co-curricular credit options.
- e. Retain 50% of volunteers from September for the entire year.

4. Take steps to improve the experiences of Clubs and Course Unions

- a. Complete policy overhaul and update by September.
- b. Establish online cheque request process by October.
- c. Shorten average Clubs Council meetings by 30-minutes.
- d. Host meet and greet with the Director of Student Affairs after Clubs and Course Union Days.
- e. Develop online website for clubs by January.
- f. Publish online bookings calendar by January.
- g. Continue updating Clubs policy.
- h. Create system to keep club names the same year-to-year by April.

4 Campaigns

4.1 Background & Areas of Focus

Campaigns remain an integral part of the UVSS's mission to provide high-quality advocacy on student issues. Ongoing campaigns include: mental health, harm reduction, affordable education, consent culture, public transit, student housing, and elections participation. Our campaigns have existed over many years and have evolved to represent a spectrum of student voices.

This year's campaigns portfolio priority is to ensure campaign engagement provides added professional or personal value to students.

4.2 Main Challenges

1. **Capacity**

- a. Campaigns and services expand and/or increase each year. The UVSS has seven active campaigns for the 2018-2019 Board term.
- b. As the Campaigns portfolio grows, it becomes more difficult for each incoming Director to learn everything. Campaigns may stall as new directors face an exponential learning curve.
- c. Volunteer support is not consistent enough to include in campaign logistics when planning for the year.
- d. Only one full-time staff member works directly on each campaign, while simultaneously managing multiple other portfolios and responsibilities.

2. **Volunteer engagement**

- a. Students are unaware or uninterested in UVSS volunteering opportunities.
- b. Students lack the time or capacity to dedicate ongoing volunteer support.
- c. Students are bombarded with messaging, inhibiting UVSS efforts to provide information about the value volunteering may provide them and why campaigns need their support.

3. **Effective communications**

- a. Connecting campaigns to other UVSS services would strengthen the perceived value and messaging of both.
- b. Campaign messaging is not tracked internally year-to-year.
- c. Limited capacity prevents the proactive promotion of all campaigns throughout the year.
 - i. Currently, all campaign communication is focused on different campaigns at different times of the year. This weakens student awareness as buy-in fluctuates around messaging.
- d. Some campaigns work is either internal or external (with UVic or government, respectively) and is not seen by students.
 - i. Students deserve to know what we're doing with their money.
 - ii. Demonstrating different tactics allows us to reach a wider range of student audiences.

- iii. A comprehensive view of portfolio progress facilitates long-term member buy-in.

4.3 Major Goal

Provide low-barrier volunteer opportunities to build campaign momentum, add value to the student experience, create social change, and increase student engagement.

4.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. Restructure campaigns

- a. Build capacity, a user-friendly format, and value for students.
- b. Categorize campaigns as either “ongoing” or “periodic” depending on the amount of buy-in from students necessary for campaign success.
 - i. E.g. Let’s Get Consensual (LGC) requires large buy-in to create social change, and is ongoing. A Get Out the Vote campaign or Make Transit Work require lower buy-in and are periodic.
 - ii. This facilitates efficient resource allocation.
- c. Create a document outlining the value provided to students through each campaign. Use this to focus how campaigns interact with students.
 - i. I.e. Rent with Rights features students’ experiences with unaffordable or unsafe housing, and advocates for their rights as renters. LGC encourages dialogue on consent culture and safer sex, provides judgment-free consent education and training, and fights rape culture on campus. In addition, it advocates for the creation and implementation of campus sexualized violence policies.
 - ii. Showcase the value provided by each campaign by creating regular, user-friendly engagement opportunities such as tabling or workshops.

2. Streamline the volunteer process

- a. Outline a volunteer organizational structure that provides leadership positions with defined duties and expectations.
- b. Invest more time and resources into ongoing professional development for volunteers.
- c. Write recommendations and thank you notes to volunteers.
- d. Create a template of volunteer opportunities and responsibilities.
 - i. Publish this information on the UVSS website to differentiate the various opportunities available to students.

3. Strengthen messaging

- a. Connect campaigns with UVSS resources to strengthen the reach and messaging of both.
- b. Create a document outlining messaging used for each campaign to maintain consistency year-to-year. This document should be connected to the “value provided to students” document (see point 1.c. above).
- c. Employ two-tiered call-to-action messaging for each campaign that appeals to both a high buy-in audience and a low buy-in audience.

- d. Collaborate regularly with other students' societies to ensure consistent messaging for collaborative campaigns and lobbying asks.
- e. Present opportunities for regular input to UVSS advocacy and affiliated groups.

4.5 Objectives

1. Increase student engagement with campaigns

- a. Partner with affiliated organizations, UVSS advocacy groups, other students' societies, and university departments to maximize reach.
 - i. E.g. Let's Get Consensual with students' societies across BC.
 - ii. E.g. Safer Use with UVic Health and Counselling.
- b. Address barriers to participation by creating a campaigns targeted messaging document (combines points 3.b. and 1.c.) by August 31st, 2018.
 - i. Include an outline of which campaigns are ongoing or periodic; year-to-year messaging; the value of campaigns to students; and a two-tiered delivery of messaging and value.
- c. Increase the accessibility of campaigns through the implementation of two-tiered call-to-action messaging.
 - i. This ensures campaigns remain accessible, and protects their integrity.

2. Increase volunteer recruitment and engagement

- a. Recruit and train multiple volunteer leaders for each campaign.
- b. Publish a comprehensive list of volunteer jobs and duties to the UVSS website.
- c. Publish a comprehensive list of current volunteer postings. Include position requirements and an interview process to increase the legitimacy and desirability of volunteer positions.

5 Events

5.1 Background & Areas of Focus

The UVSS provides undergraduate students with fun and accessible events that embody student values. Events Committee exists to organize events that are of interest to members and highlight the UVSS and the SUB.

All students pay \$0.50 a semester into the Events Fund. This provides just over \$19,000 a year for Events Committee to organize and host events.

5.2 Main Challenges

1. **Financial constraints** – The frequency and extravagance of events and the selection of artists is constrained by financial limits.
2. **Delayed execution and evaluation** - In the past, the UVSS has failed to plan and execute events. Delayed planning constrains advertising, which produces weak events. Past events have not adequately recorded metrics such as attendance during Campus Kick Off or satisfaction after an event, which limits the UVSS' ability to measure success.
3. **Poor branding** - Students often believe that Campus Kick Off and other major events are organized by UVic. Our branding does not effectively differentiate our events from those organized by external groups or the University.
4. **Student apathy** - Students have voiced their concerns about the Society's events. In the past, events have been unsuccessful and thus harm the UVSS's perceived ability to host fun events.
5. **Brand differentiation** - Students often view the political identity of the Board of Directors as the entire UVSS. As a result, students are generally pessimistic and unwilling to pay for UVSS events because they carry perceived political bias.

5.3 Major Goal

Build campus community by offering fiscally responsible, fun, accessible, and safe events for all students to enjoy.

5.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Effectively manage events**
 - a. Keep events on or under budget.
 - b. When possible, look for external sources of revenue.
2. **Collaborate with other organizations**
 - a. Work with CFUV, Vikes Nation, UVic Student Affairs, Res Life, other students' societies, Professional Development Unions, and event promoters.
 - b. Work with community groups to offer students more options such as workshops and guest speakers.
 - c. Connect with other advocacy-based non-profit societies to host events.

3. Promote events

- a. Have at least one-month of promotion leading up to events and begin social media outreach early.
- b. Analyze social media results and solicit feedback through surveys.
- c. Perform satisfaction analyses after events.
- d. Promote as much as possible through posters.
- e. Table in high traffic areas.

5.5 Objectives

1. Event management

- a. 80% of the events each semester will take place in the Student Union Building.
- b. Events Committee will remain within 5% of its budget.
- c. Over 50% of all events will have financial support from an external organization.

2. Event diversity

- a. Host at least one Felicita's special event each month.
- b. Coordinate at least one event within the SUB each month.
- c. Organize at least one UVSS after-party for every Vikes sport in each fiscal year.
- d. Events Committee will organize at least four parties in Vertigo and Felicita's every fiscal year.
- e. The UVSS will offer at least five academic and community events such as guest speakers, conferences, and workshops per fiscal year.

3. Improved reputation

- a. 70% or more students in the next annual survey will support an increase to the special events fee. This is an increase of 32.5% from the 2017 annual survey.
- b. 85% of students will feel very safe or extremely safe at UVSS events in the next annual survey. This is an increase of 34% from the 2017 annual survey.
- c. Ticket sales will be within 5% of their targets for 80% of events in each semester.

6 Board Governance & Elections

6.1 Background & Areas of Focus

The UVSS Board is an elected body regulated by the BC Societies Act. In BC, a Society is a not-for-profit organization that assembles for any legal aims. All UVic students who pay undergraduate student fees are members of the UVSS and eligible to vote in our annual elections.

The Board is governed by its Constitution and Bylaws, and Board of Directors policy. These are living documents with which the Board actively engages. Depending on the policy, they may be changed either at Board of Directors meetings or UVSS General Meetings.

The Board holds Annual and Semi-Annual General Meetings that are open to all members to attend and vote on amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

In accordance with the BC University Act, fees that the university collects on the UVSS' behalf are determined through referenda, which usually coincide with the annual Board elections.

6.2 Main Challenges

1. **Lack of engagement** - The past two elections featured relatively low voter turnout. Last year, few members ran for each position, which inhibits the ability for candidates to reach more members through campaigning. For example, this was the first time that all 11 Director-at-Large positions were uncontested and thus all 11 were acclaimed (students didn't need to vote for them. As a result, few DALs engaged with members by campaigning).
2. **Information gaps** - A lot of important demographic and other voting data is either missing or incomplete. The UVSS Elections Office website lacks any Electoral Reports from before 2001.
3. **Participation in general meetings** - Participation at our general meetings is inconsistent, delaying important bylaw changes and creating a backlog of necessary changes.
4. **Director-at-Large attrition** – Directors-at-Large feel unempowered and/or become too busy to fulfil their roles.

6.3 Major Goal

Maintain and improve proper governance procedures to ensure member confidence in the UVSS. Board elections are the foundation of proper governance.

6.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Increase engagement in democratic processes**
 - a. Create a set of best practices for measuring member interest and opinion as well as methods for increasing engagement in events or campaigns.
 - b. Offer workshops or networking opportunities throughout the year to encourage participation in elections.

- c. Offer better incentives for participation.
- d. Make committees more appealing to members.
- 2. Provide more timely and accurate information for the UVSS to ensure transparency**
 - a. Publish a monthly blog post that allows members to keep up with the UVSS.
 - b. Ensure that the website is updated in a timely manner.
 - c. Compile UVSS elections analytics on spending, votes, and other relevant info, and post them online.
- 3. Participation in general meetings**
 - a. Offer better incentives for participation.
 - b. Make general meetings more engaging for attendees.
 - c. Ensure that participation is meaningful and consequential.
- 4. Decrease Board attrition**
 - a. Make Board participation more meaningful beyond Board meetings by involving Directors-at-Large in decisions not brought to the Board level.
 - b. Devise non-financial incentives to entice Directors to remain in their roles.
 - c. Implement Director-at-Large by-election bylaw changes to fill vacant seats.

6.5 Objectives

- 1. Increased engagement in the democratic process**
 - a. Host workshops about UVSS elections before nominations open.
 - b. Ensure both the Annual General and the Semi-Annual General Meetings attain quorum.
 - c. Ensure all referenda questions requesting UVSS fee increases achieve quorum.
 - d. The Spring 2019 electoral event will feature twice as many candidates as the Spring 2018 electoral event.
 - e. Increase voter participation over three years, beginning with the Spring 2018 electoral event.
- 2. Provide more timely and accurate information on the UVSS to ensure transparency**
 - a. In the next annual survey, 75% of students will know that the UVSS is separate from UVic.
 - b. Continually update the website to include current, relevant governance information such as minutes and policy.
 - c. Post important elections archival data, including referenda list and participation rates.
 - d. Have 70% of members identify the UVSS as being transparent in the next annual survey.
 - e. Publish monthly blog posts featuring updates from the Board of Directors.
 - f. Ensure that agendas are sent out to committees a minimum of 24-hours in advance.
- 3. Elections management**
 - a. Overhaul electoral policy to meet the principles of accessibility, fiscal responsibility, and member-focus.
 - b. Post the 2018 electoral account finances online.
 - c. Ensure that electoral event(s) in 2019 stay under budget.
 - d. Launch a UVSS elections survey.
- 4. Decrease board attrition**

- a. Ensure no Directors resign until October.
- b. Pass Director-at-Large by-election policy at a general meeting.
- c. Create greater incentives for active participation.
- d. Finish the Board term with a full complement of Directors.

7 Finance & Operations

7.1 Background & Areas of Focus

As a not-for-profit society, the UVSS is exempt from paying income taxes under Section 149 (1)(l) of the Income Tax Act. Financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for not-for-profit organizations.

UVSS operations include the sustainability of the building, changes in our businesses, support, and administrative departments, as well as the many non-revenue generating services that we offer members. These services encompass many aspects of student life, including the UVSS Extended Health and Dental Plans, the U-Pass, and the Food Bank and Free Store.

The elected UVSS Board has a fiduciary duty to act honestly and in good faith for the best interests in the Society. The Director of Finance and Operations, along with the Finance and Operations Committee, oversee the administration of all aspects of the Society's finances and operations.

7.2 Main Challenges

1. **Increased costs and static fees** – The fees that the UVSS levies its members are static, despite the rising costs of businesses and services, such as wages and inflation.
2. **Accumulated debt** – Due to the poor financial management of previous Boards, the UVSS currently carries accumulated debt in the General Operating Fund. The previous two Boards have begun paying down this debt; however, it poses a very serious threat to cash flow and limits the UVSS' ability to be fiscally sustainable in the long-run.
3. **Financial literacy and understanding** – Members often do not understand UVSS financial statements, which contributes to the negative perception of the UVSS.
4. **Perceived value of services** – In the 2017 annual survey, only 35% of respondents said the UVSS provides good value for their student fees, despite the fact that 75% said the UVSS provides important services.

7.3 Major Goal

Provide quality services while maintaining fiscal sustainability.

7.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Stay on budget**
 - a. Track spending at the committee-level.
 - b. Follow finance and operations policy, and update where applicable.
 - c. Develop a new 5-year debt payment plan.
2. **Ensure a smooth Health and Dental (H&D) Plan transition**
 - a. Work closely with Studentcare and the UVic administration to communicate changes effectively.
 - b. Streamline the H&D appeals process.

3. Present accessible financial information

- a. Update the 'How to read a budget' document located on our website to be static so that it can remain useful year-to-year.
- b. Emphasize infographics and the visual representations of finances.
- c. Provide access to financial literacy resources on topics like personal finance, budgeting, student loans, and filing income taxes.

4. Increase the perceived value of UVSS services

- a. Present a comparison of UVSS prices with the private costs of services to demonstrate savings to students.
- b. Work with the Research and Communications Manager and the Graphics department on an informational campaign for members.
- c. Perform an audit of UVSS fees and services.
- d. Survey what new products and services are wanted or needed.
- e. Research ways to expand the capacity of the Food Bank and Free Store.

7.5 Objectives

1. Stay on budget

- a. 90% or more of Board accounts will be on or under budget each fiscal year.
- b. Work with the GM/ED to develop a new 5-year debt repayment plan by the end of April.

2. Ensure a smooth H&D plan transition

- a. Work with RCM/Graphics/Studentcare to develop a communications strategy by August to implement before the start of the new semester.
- b. Write new H&D appeals policy to streamline the process by September.

3. Present accessible financial information

- a. Update the 'How to read a budget' document by September and make it static/generic for each board term.
- b. Develop internally or work with external partners to provide financial literacy resources to members by January.
- c. Incorporate infographics and visuals to explain spending and finances on all documents throughout the year.

4. Increase the perceived value of UVSS services

- a. Work with RCM and Graphics on an information campaign outlining the value of UVSS services/businesses compared to UVic or private providers by January.
- b. In the next annual survey, 50% of students will agree that the UVSS provides good value for their fees.
- c. In the next annual survey, 70% of students will know that the profits from UVSS businesses go to supporting advocacy, services, and events through our social enterprise model.

8 SUB Business Development

8.1 Background & Areas of Focus

The UVSS has nine unique business units, which are owned and operated by students, for students and managed by a department manager. Each SUB business prepares an annual business plan that aligns with the UVSS strategic plan. The UVSS strategic plan allows the Board to support businesses' initiatives, goals, and strategies, and the department managers. Each business establishes their own primary issues, goals, metrics, and strategies with the support of the General Manager.

8.2 Main Challenges

1. **Getting people into the building** - The politicization of the parent UVSS brand has had a spillover effect on our subsidiary business unit brands. This constricts the revenue-earning potential of businesses in the SUB.
2. **Knowledge infrastructure** - The UVSS possesses limited organizational focus and staff expertise on brand and marketing strategy.

8.3 Major Goal

Maintain the profitability of its business units in order to sustain the advocacy, events, and services the UVSS provides.

8.4 Business Units

8.4.1 Catering and Conferences:

Issue: Difficult to attract new clients.

Goal: Improve targeted marketing.

Metric: Increased volume of sales.

Strategies:

- Promote Catering and Conferences inside Ring Road.
- Continue to use Catering and Conferences for Board conferences and events.

8.4.2 Cinecenta

Issue: Low student attendance.

Goal: Get "butts in seats" (increase attendance).

Metric: Ticket sales and space bookings.

Strategies:

- Increase support and partnership with students in residence.
- Assist in promoting and advertising Cinecenta (tabling around campus).
- Advertise Cinecenta at the Campus Kick Off movie in the park and other events.

8.4.3 Felicita's

Issue: Atmosphere.

Goal: Develop a strong campus pub culture combined with excellent service.

Metric: Customer feedback (exit survey).

Strategies:

- Encourage clubs, course unions and student groups to host events at Felicita's.
- Promote Felicita's through Board activities, swag and other businesses.
- Support existing Felicita's events and the creation of new ones.

8.4.4 Food Services (Health Food Bar, the Grill, and Bean There)

Issue: Profitability.

Goal: Improve financial performance without sacrificing quality or accessibility.

Metric: Increase revenue and improve net income.

Strategies:

- Use primary market research for product review and development.
- Assist in marketing and advertising of all operations (including tabling outside of the SUB).
- Develop more comprehensive business plans for each business.

8.4.5 Munchie Bar

Issue: Lack of variety of grab and go items.

Goal: Increase the variety of healthy, fun, and fresh grab and go items.

Metric: Staffing reports.

Strategies:

- Use primary market research for product review and development.
- Promote the success and positive experience of Munchie Bar and continue to improve with more incentives.

8.4.6 SUBtext

Issue: The consignment future of textbooks is unclear.

Goal: Ensure the long-term viability of SUBtext by diversifying revenue and increasing sales.

Metric: Revenue stream diversification and increased gross profit.

Strategies:

- Purchase a new POS system.
- Use primary market research for product review and development.
- Provide students with better information about the textbook consignment process, including getting them to return to resell as soon as they are done with their book(s).
- Support the transition away from textbook consignment to a retail focus.

8.4.7 Zap Copy

Issue: Aging equipment and a lack of awareness of services

Goal: Improve equipment and inform students about Zap services.

Metric: Volume of sales.

Strategies:

- Purchase new self-serve printing equipment and software.
- Use primary market research for product review and development.
- Bring awareness to more affordable printing on campus.
- Reduce associated printing waste.
- Promote Zap as a unionized printing establishment.

9 Human Resources

9.1 Background & Areas of Focus

The UVSS Board of Directors recognizes their responsibility for and the importance of proper human resource (HR) management. The Executive Director and General Manager, along with Personnel Committee, oversee the integration of human resource management strategies and systems to achieve the overall mission, strategies, and success of the Society while meeting the needs of employees.

9.2 Main Challenges

1. **Inconsistent personnel processes** – At times, staff new hire and exit forms remain incomplete or missing, and the seniority list is not up to date.
2. **Uneven staff orientation/training** – This is inextricably tied to the high turnover among both permanent and student staff in the UVSS. Irregular staff orientation/training decreases staff efficacy in their positions and knowledge of their benefits and increases apathy among staff as a whole.
3. **Low staff engagement** – Staff are not engaged or invested in the plans of the Board, which makes operationalizing our mission incredibly difficult. Staff are the backbone of this Society. The success of the UVSS and each Board's term depends on staff engagement.
4. **No position-specific documentation for new staff** - Permanent staff generally stay in their positions for longer periods of time (5-10 years); therefore, there exists little to no documentation, such as position manuals, to help orient new staff.

9.3 Major Goal

Improve UVSS human resources practices.

9.4 Strategies and Tactics

1. **Improve overall personnel processes.**
 - a. Ensure completion and accuracy of current personnel files.
 - b. Establish a consistent process for department managers to ensure proper new hire and exit information is provided to the HR department to be put in individual staff personnel files.
 - c. Ensure the completion and ongoing accuracy of the seniority list.
 - d. Provide an in-person orientation to all permanent staff individually to go through employee benefits as well as provide them the opportunity to meet with a union representative.
2. **Provide consistent and ongoing orientation/reorientation and training opportunities to all staff.**
 - a. Establish an improved and more consistent training practice.

- b. Schedule training/orientation sessions for all staff at peak hiring times (e.g. September and January) including information on benefits, the Collective Agreement, the Employee Handbook, committees, and other relevant information.
- c. Provide training/orientation sessions for staff from different departments separately to increase relevancy of information pertaining to their specific department.
- d. Involve managers in their department's staff orientation.
- e. Increase the accessibility of professional development funds.
- f. Provide at least one management-level training workshop for department managers per semester.
- g. Provide at least one all-staff training workshop per year.

3. Increase employee engagement/buy in.

- a. Establish regular orientation/reorientation opportunities for all staff in different departments (student, advocacy/affiliated, permanent, and management categories).
- b. Encourage all staff to take advantage of professional development funds.
- c. Host in-house training/workshops for staff.
- d. Provide team-building opportunities for staff.
- e. Consult with staff on appropriate in-house training/workshops.
- f. Inform staff - especially student staff - of the benefits of UVSS committee participation.
- g. Conduct comprehensive orientations for all new staff to increase awareness of the mission, vision, and values of the UVSS and staff benefits.
- h. Organize opportunities for staff engagement and input.

4. Develop a position-specific orientation package for permanent positions.

- a. Work with department managers to develop position-specific orientation packages for their department that provide an overview of each permanent position and specific day-to-day responsibilities.
- b. Provide an orientation detailing the location of critical information; daily, monthly, and yearly to do lists; and annual timelines pertinent to individual positions and the UVSS as a whole.

9.5 Objectives

Summer:

1. Update and verify the seniority list by July 31, 2018.
2. Schedule fall orientation/reorientation for different departments by July 31, 2018.
3. Ensure personnel files are up to date and accurate by August 31, 2018.
4. Provide training to department managers on personnel process by August 31, 2018.
5. Schedule a fall department manager training opportunity by August 31, 2018.
6. Roll out new online HR module by October 31, 2018.

Fall:

1. Schedule winter orientation/reorientation for different departments by November 15, 2018.

2. Circulate a reminder email to all staff about professional development funding in the fall semester by November 15, 2018.
3. Schedule an all-staff training opportunity by November 30, 2018.
4. Schedule a staff get-together for the fall semester by November 30, 2018.

Winter:

1. Schedule a department manager winter training opportunity by January 31, 2018.
2. Circulate a reminder email to all staff reminding them of professional development funding in the fall semester by February 15, 2019.
3. Schedule a staff get-together for the winter semester by February 28, 2019.
4. Complete position-specific orientation packages for cost centre managers by April 30, 2019.

10 Major Strategic Priorities

10.1 Negative Public Image

The politically charged image of the UVSS has led to a lack of student engagement with our services and businesses. According to the 2017 annual survey, students feel that the UVSS' image is too "harsh." This isolates many students and contributes to the feeling that we are not working for our members. This leads to voter apathy in elections and referenda, a lack of student attendance at general meetings, and a feeling amongst students that they are not receiving good value for their fees. The Board will work to improve our image so that more members and the broader university community feel that we uphold their values.

10.2 Rising Fiscal Pressure

Currently, UVSS fees do not increase with inflation despite the rising costs of the many services that we offer students. Fee increases require the successful passage of referenda. Historically, the Board has led campaigns directing members to "save the UVSS," with varying degrees of success. During the 2016-2017 Board term, students were asked to tie an annual adjustment in fees to Canada's inflation target of 2%. However, this referendum failed to meet quorum. A UVSS strategic priority is to increase the money available in our General Operating Fund, which is where most student fees and any business profits are held. This will ensure the future success of the UVSS and its ability to provide high-quality, accessible services, advocacy and events to all students at UVic.

11 Conclusion

Each Board develops unique yearly priorities and initiatives. However, they remain intrinsically connected to the strategic plan and the UVSS' vision, mission, and values. Permanent staff provide the guidance and institutional expertise necessary to mitigate challenges and threats.

The UVSS continues to face challenges to its public perception and reputation, unsustainable financial situations, and a deficient administration of human resources and institutional knowledge. In order to overcome these barriers and achieve long term stability, the Board of Directors, excluded managers, and both permanent and student staff must work together to address the current and ongoing issues of the UVSS.

The strategic plan is a living document and must be constantly adapted, revised, and refined to ensure it stays relevant to current student issues and needs. The UVSS can accomplish its goals if all stakeholders work together to execute and realize this plan.

12 Appendix A – Strategic Plan and Budgeting Timeline

July 31st 2018

- The UVSS 2018-2019 Strategic Plan is adopted by the Board of Directors.
- Annual business plans are completed.
- Annual cost centre plans are completed.

August 30th 2018

- The UVSS 2018-2019 Budget is adopted by the Board of Directors.

November 30th 2018

- Reports on business plans, cost centre work plans, and strategic plan implementation by portfolio reported at a department managers meeting.
- Strategic plan implementation reported to the Board of Directors by portfolio leads.

April 30th 2019

- Reports on business plans, cost centre work plans, and strategic plan implementation by portfolio reported at a department managers meeting.
- Strategic plan implementation reported to the Board of Directors by portfolio leads.
- Environmental scan (SWOC) completed with the incoming Board of Directors.

13 Appendix B – Committee Roles

Name	Portfolio	Campaigns	Events	Finance & Operations	Member Outreach	Policy	Advocacy Relations	Clubs	Course Union	PDU Council	SUB Occupants	University Relations	Electoral	Executive	H&D Appeals	SUB Business Marketing	Ombuds	Personnel	U-Pass Appeals	
Ainsley Kerr	Campaigns	EO*	EO	EO	EO	EO														
Noor Chaib	Events	EO	EO*	EO	EO	EO														
Curtis Whittla	Finance	EO	EO	EO*	EO	EO							M	EO	EO*	EO*			EO*	EO*
Pierre-Paul																				
Angelblazer	Outreach	EO	EO	EO	EO*	EO*							EO*	EO*					EO*	M ²
Isabella Lee	Student Affairs	EO	EO	EO	EO	EO	EO*	EO*	EO*	EO*				EO						
Adrienne																				
Graham	International Dal	M	M		M															M
David																				
Stevanovic	Events Dal		M ²	M																M
Eric	Student Affairs																			
Jakubowski	Dal						M ²													M ²
Haichuan																				
Zhang	Finance Dal	M		M ²																M ²
Guiseerat																				
Boprai	Finance Dal			M		M														
Jaasmine																				
Pathak	Events Dal		M																	
Jonathan																				M
Loring			M																	
Jordan Gilson	Outreach Dal		M	M	M	M	M ²													M
Julia Witte	Outreach Dal					M ²														
Mary Wood	Campaigns Dal	M																		M
Tyler Arnold	Campaigns Dal	M ²	M											M						M*
Willia Budz	Pride Rep													M						
Natalie Biecha	SSD Rep						M													
Nathan Ponce	SOCC Rep																			
Bradley Thom	NSU Rep																			
Karna Dhillon	WC Rep																			
Total		10	11	10	9	9	9	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	3	5	2	4	2	3

EO = member ex-officio, M = elected member, * = committee chair, ² = committee second chair