



**ZIYANA
KOTADIA**

PRESIDENTIAL

PLATFORM



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HELLO!

Thank you for visiting my platform! I have worked hard to understand the student experience from as many different angles as possible, and as a result I have spent a great deal of time talking to members of the student body from various years and programs who have differing levels of involvement in the Huron community. This platform was created in consultation with these students as well as administrators and other stakeholders at Huron, and is formed around three pillars: connectivity, inclusivity, and advocacy. By pursuing these three key priorities, I truly believe I can enhance the student experience at Huron.



CONNECTIVITY.

HUCSC APP

Because Council exists to represent the will of students, it's important that students feel heard by and connected to Council. Making sure Council is communicating with students as effectively as possible, therefore, is a priority of mine. I want to make Council as accessible and transparent to the student body as possible, and this involves thinking of new ways to communicate with the student body.

Using social media and our HUCSC website has been important for outreach, but these mediums could be supplemented in order to better access students. A MyHuron app was attempted by Council once before several years ago but due to some design issues, its implementation was unsuccessful. Having this understanding of where Council went wrong last time, I plan to **create a working Huron Council app** that keeps students in the loop about what Council is doing and offers a direct line to contact Council Representatives. This will not only be an easy and convenient way for the student body to stay informed about what Council is working on and what opportunities are available, but it will also keep Council accountable to students by highlighting contact information and office hours in a convenient place.

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEW BUILDING

The student lounge in the new building provides us with new opportunities to reach students. Having a physical central communications board in the SAC has provided the student body with an in-person one-stop-shop for all Council-related information. In keeping with the success of this board, I would like to **recreate a physical communications board in the new student lounge**. This will continue to allow students who are on campus easy access to relevant information.

In addition, I plan to **hold office hours in the new student lounge** so that student representatives can better get to know and access their constituents. Holding office hours in a public space rather than just in the Council offices encourages councillors to actively engage with their constituents and makes them more accessible for the student body.



CONNECTIVITY.

HUCSC BLOGGING

Council is a large body with a vast variety of engagements. A lot of amazing work is being done across the portfolios and by the General Assembly. Council also oversees many incredible student-led initiatives through the clubs system. This means there is often a lot that Council is working on at once, and it can be difficult to communicate what each of these pieces is and how they function in relation to one another.

In the Communications portfolio, I plan to **put together a team of writers to manage a regularly updated blog**, to be run through the MyHuron website and accessible through the new app. These blog posts will describe what Council has been up to, and can include updates about what each Executive is working on, Council member features, GA meeting recaps, and more. This will be an effective way to keep the student body better informed about the more detailed goings-on of Council and help promote transparency.

MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF MAIN CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES

One of the amazing advantages of being a Huron student getting to experience the accessible opportunities and tight-knit community of our own small campus while still being able to access the resources available to us through Western. That said, many Huron students are unaware of what these opportunities and resources available through main campus are.

In the role of Huron President, I would also sit on the main campus Students' Council. I will use this position to **push for main campus initiatives and services to be better promoted to Huron students**, such as the main campus clubs system and off-campus housing services. As well, Huron can use its own promotional resources to make sure our student body knows what is available to us through main campus. I would like to **create a resource page on the MyHuron website specifically for main campus opportunities** so Huron students have an online 'resource stand' in addition to the physical brochures and resources that are available in the council office.



INCLUSIVITY.

EQUITY STANDING COMMITTEE

This year's Council has done a beautiful job of making equity on campus and within Council a priority. Within the Presidential portfolio, the new positions of Equity Officer and Womxn in Leadership Commissioner have examined issues of inclusivity and have come up with initiatives to address them. In the Events portfolio, our Pride Commissioner has been working to put on LGBTQ+ programming. Meanwhile, our Student Affairs portfolio has made Truth and Reconciliation a priority and has highlighted the incredible importance of being aware of our personal and Huron's colonial pasts.

I want to continue this work and build on it to make equity a priority for next year's Council. In order to do this, I plan to **create a standing committee within Council to handle equity-related advocacy and concerns.** Each of the different areas of equity Council engages with right now is incredibly important, but the work they each do is also intricately interconnected. Creating a space where those in equity-oriented positions can collaborate with each other as well as with elected representatives will allow Council to come up with more holistic programming, develop strategies to better reach marginalized or isolated groups on campus, and establish equity as a more permanent priority moving forward.

ARTS MANAGEMENT THROUGH COUNCIL

We have so much creative talent at Huron, and it's been amazing to witness how art is becoming increasingly relevant in the Huron community. I plan to support this development by making the promotion and effective management of arts projects a priority of Council. Particularly with the addition of a theatre space in the new building, the time is right for Council to work more effectively with artists and arts-based groups in the Huron community. As a mechanism for doing this, I plan to **create an Arts Management position on Council.** This individual would work in the Student Affairs portfolio to oversee arts-oriented programming run through Council, spearhead arts-based advocacy, as well as consult with and support existing bodies that provide creative opportunities for students at Huron. Having an individual on Council dedicated to the arts will help artistic projects to flourish at Huron and provide students with more opportunities to be creative.



INCLUSIVITY.

REPRESENTATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The HUCSC General Assembly is an important body of Student Council, designed to make decisions on behalf of the student body. Representatives for different programs (ie: BMOS, History) and different student populations (ie: mature students, international students) are elected to represent the voices of these groups to the GA. However, due to the way the GA is currently structured, there are some key groups who are missing fair representation or representation altogether. I would like to take up the structure of the GA and **ensure each program is given representation and that student groups are fairly represented**. For example, 30% of this year's incoming class was comprised of international students, coming from 22 different countries of origin. I plan to **incorporate additional international student representation into Council** in order to reflect the incredible value added to the Huron community and to better represent these voices. Similarly, the Economics and Governance, Leadership, and Ethics (GLE) programs at Huron have significant enrollment and are expected to see increased interest next year, yet both currently lack representation on Council. Therefore, **I plan to add representation for both the Economics and GLE programs in the General Assembly**.

SOPH, DON, AND SEO LIAISONS TO COUNCIL

Sophs, Dons, and SEOs are three student leader groups that work incredibly hard to improve the student experience on campus. Each of these groups engages with students intimately and has differential and detailed understandings of student needs. I believe in the importance of collaborating with these groups so that Council can have a better sense of what the student body is experiencing on a day-to-day basis. In order to do this, I would like to **create three positions for Soph, Don, and SEO Liaisons** to sit on the General Assembly and provide consultation input on issues that are important to the student body. This would allow these important student leader groups to be kept informed about what Council is working on as much as it would allow Council to develop a more nuanced understanding of student concerns.



ADVOCACY.

LEADERSHIP WITH HEART REARTICULATION

“Leadership with Heart” is an important phrase for Huron - we see it everywhere. It’s how Huron students are identified to the broader community and for many of us, it’s what drew us to Huron in the first place. It’s a beautiful sentiment; creating leaders who have a conscience and move through the world thoughtfully is important and meaningful. But there is a missing piece: in speaking with Huron students, it had become clear to me that we don’t feel Leadership with Heart is being enacted in tangible ways.

As the first presidential candidate to be recruited under Leadership with Heart, this is something I came to Huron believing in wholeheartedly. I believe it is important to make this slogan into a reality as much as possible so it better resonates with the lived student experience at Huron. We need to enter into open discussions with administration about how to better facilitate the implementation of Leadership with Heart. One way in which I plan to do this is to **advocate for new forms of recognition for our leaders**. I believe there is a lot of unique talent and hard work at Huron that goes unacknowledged because awards are often tied to academic standings - which are not always reflective of a person’s capacities. One way I plan to do this is to by **pushing for the creation of a scholarship for students who do not typically get recognition in the Huron community** but act as leaders in their day-to-day lives. For example, students who are also parents work hard to balance family and academics in ways that go unacknowledged by current recognition systems. I think it’s important to push for alternative forms of recognition because leadership and heart are ambiguous qualities that can look different for different people. I want Huron students to have the freedom to define Leadership with Heart for *ourselves* and think about new ways to understand what this means to us.



ADVOCACY.

NEW BUILDING ADVOCACY

With Huron's new building coming, the opportunity is prime to advocate on behalf of student needs. One thing that has become apparent to me in speaking with students is that there is interest in having more student input on how the hallways in the new building will be decorated. In order to do this, I plan to generate student feedback – both from within Council and from the student body as a whole – in order to **advocate for what students would like to see hanging on the walls** to best reflect a *student* vision and experience of Huron.

Moving forward, I plan to continue to **advocate for autonomous, student-run spaces**. As the new building will include a student lounge next year, it will be important to take advantage of this space so it can best serve students. This year's Council has been working on these plans, but as these plans translate into reality for next year's students, the new Council leadership will need to work to make this student space functional and comfortable. With the new Beaver Dam, I plan to continue working on **diversifying the snack options available** to students, as well as collaborating with Council's MyEnviro Commissioner to **continue work on sustainable options**, such as compostable straws.

CAFETERIA ADVOCACY

Making sure that the food available through the cafeteria is of consistent quality is important, especially for first-years. I want to build on the strong advocacy work that Council has been doing with the cafeteria so we can continue to diversify food options and be as accommodating and inclusive as possible of different personal, cultural, medical, and religious dietary restrictions.

A particular change I will push for is for **an ingredients list to be included alongside all meals** that are served to students so that there is no ambiguity about what has gone into making each dish. This will increase transparency so students know exactly what they are consuming, and it will help prevent people with dietary restrictions from being put in positions where they accidentally consume foods they cannot eat. Cafeteria advocacy is not a venture that will ever be finished, but I believe it is important to make it a continuous priority on Council because it such a huge part of the student experience at Huron, particularly for first-years.



ADVOCACY.

WELLNESS ADVOCACY

Wellness programming at Huron has come a long way; our dedicated wellness team has robust programming, and the Wellness Centre itself is an incredible resource for Huron students. That said, much like cafeteria advocacy, I believe wellness advocacy should be an ongoing priority for Council. First of all, this means continuing to hold the wellness team to account to ensure students feel they have access to mental health resources and advocating for what students feel is important when it comes to wellness support.

I also plan to advocate for the Wellness Centre to **hold vicarious trauma workshops for student leaders**. Particularly in the case of Sophs, Dons, and SEOs - who do a lot of emotionally challenging work when interacting with other students - it is important to make sure student leaders have access to resources specifically designed to address exhaustion and stress that results from empathetic engagement with others. Another initiative I will push for is **the provision of creative tools and supplies through the Wellness Centre** - such as visual arts materials - so students have the opportunity to access art therapeutically and as a way of relieving stress. Having access to these resources can be not only a creative but also a cathartic outlet for students.

THANK YOU!

I appreciate you taking the time to read my platform! This is my vision for Huron next year, but I am always open to adding new ideas and I love getting input from others. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time through social media, email (zkotadia@uwo.ca), or in person.