

McMaster Engineering SELECT Program Monthly Report

SELECT is a unique undergraduate leadership development program within the Faculty of Engineering at McMaster University. The SELECT program teaches students the fundamentals of leadership in an engaging team setting which encourages learning without the limitations of a classroom. SELECT's prime focus is to teach self-awareness to students, making them aware of their potential to be a leader in their own way, and how their leadership can benefit other students at McMaster University and their local community.

SELECT History

Over the past 2 years, the SELECT program has shown great success and accomplishment. In the pilot year, 42% of the students who participated in the SELECT program were enrolled in level I. The large enrollment and commitment from students at the beginning of their university career demonstrates the dedication and commitment for striving to become both individuals and leaders who make a positive impact on society to the best of their ability.

The growth experienced by participating in the SELECT program is unique to each individual and their success is important to the university and the future community. Of the engineering students participating in SELECT, 65% have/are involved in extracurricular activities at McMaster University. From the 65%, a total of 73% of the extracurricular activities are engineering focused clubs.

SELECT is modelled around group interaction to promote self-development and self-awareness. Many of the SELECT students gained a deeper understanding of the lessons in the workshop through means of group activities. However, additional time for independent activities to further promote self-development through reflection of goals and skills was encouraged by the students of SELECT as well.

The goal of the SELECT program was achieved through the successful achievements of each individual student. Students enjoyed the knowledge and skill set SELECT had taught them throughout their workshops in the 2011-2012 year as many had stated, 'The activities brought out our leadership skills'. It is important to recognize that all people have the ability to become leaders, and through the SELECT program, students gain the confidence and experience necessary to allow their leadership skills to blossom. Overall the response of the students on the SELECT program over the last two years has been phenomenal and SELECT has continued to grow and make improvements to better help the students become strong leaders.

Pilot Year 2

One of the newest additions to the SELECT program was the addition of the Tier II Program. The purpose of the Tier II program was to allow students to continue their experiential learning from Tier I by gaining experience in various team projects and in their student organizations at McMaster University. The Tier II program consisted of 4 modules with a minimum of 1 guest speaker who elaborated on the teachings of the monthly module. Each SELECT student within the Tier II program utilized the leadership skills developed within Tier I of the SELECT program in addition to the knowledge and techniques acquired from Tier II coaching. Each Tier II member was required to develop lesson plans to further support and train the members of their projects, clubs and organizations to influence them in a positive and meaningful way.

Furthermore, in the 2012-2013 year the SELECT program also incorporated both Ambassador training and Mentorship training. Ambassador training was developed to create competent and effective SELECT Ambassadors who exhibited strong leadership standards and promoted diverse leadership culture. The Ambassador training included 4 sessions allowing the individuals to focus on their role in SELECT as an Ambassador: the importance of branding and networking for an organization, as well as, proper team development. The lack of concrete documentation for the students who participated in the Ambassador training was a key feature which the students recommended as the information would be useful for future reference. The Mentorship training was added to enable students to further grow in their leadership as mentors. The Mentorship training posed questions to the students and challenged them to reflect on their personal leadership journey. In the 2012-2013 year, the SELECT program attempted a different approach to the Mentor Training as the focus was shifted from peer group collaborative setting to more intimate 1-on-1 approach between the Mentor and the student. The change was made to enable the students to see their progression over the year and to build a stronger relationship and a more intimate environment. Although positive changes were made to promote student success, documentation for reference purposes was still lacking, leaving it difficult for students to track their progression during the term in addition to reflecting on their achievements at the end of the term. Students suggested that referable documentation would benefit them both during the program and in the future.

SELECT Feedback Information

Feedback is essential in order to build a strong foundation and to provide the necessary support and resources for the students of the SELECT program. Over the past two years, each SELECT Administrative Assistant has provided feedback based on their journey as a member of the SELECT team.

2011 - 2012

In 2011-2012, Brian Jamieson was a member of the SELECT team as the Administrative Assistant. Brian assisted Ms. Minha Ha in various tasks including the development of Tier II. The main focus of Tier II for the SELECT program was to co-exist with Tier I and continue to emphasize experiential learning. The contents of Tier II provide methods and ideas to support various means of extra-curricular activities especially clubs and teams.

At the end of his term, Brian had highlighted some of SELECT's key values and components which make the SELECT program truly unique. To begin, Brian stated that SELECT is a student centred program focused on the development of knowledge of student leadership. He believes this characteristic should continue to be focused on as it brings awareness of self-growth and empowerment. SELECT had completed its first year in 2011 -2012 therefore Brian suggested that SELECT be given the opportunity to fully grow and prove itself in order to obtain the desired results and reach the expectations of the faculty. Brian's final recommendation was to increase the number of permanent staff for the SELECT team. The SELECT Leadership Development Program takes pride in the personal relationship they create with the students by providing support, guidance and assistance throughout the program. Brian explained that through this personal level of care and compassion, SELECT will be a program which stands out to current students and faculty, as well as, future recruits. Without the addition of another full-time member, it will be difficult to maintain this individualized experience.

2012 - 2013

Anton Gallego was the SELECT Administrative Assistant for the 2012-2013 year and posed some suggestions for the SELECT program moving forward; below are a few of his suggestions:

- Leadership Portfolio Showcase during recognition night
 - This allows the students to share their leadership journey with fellow students, faculty, staff and alumni.
- SELECT Program Booklet
 - Provide all the necessary documentation for each workshop and the associated activity within the specific SELECT program.
 - Students will be able to use this booklet as a reference throughout the year and in the future as a valuable resource.

- SELECT Graduate Involvement
 - Two groups were suggested:
 - Leadership development and experiential learning research group
 - SELECT graduates can document their experiences and challenges, in addition to assisting in the re-structure of modules and information used within the SELECT program.
 - SELECT Community Engagement
 - Create additional time for SELECT participants and SELECT graduates to engage and develop relationships outside of the program workshops

What's New in 2013 – 2014

Peer Mentors

The SELECT Peer Mentors are a group of student leaders who mentor McMaster Engineering undergraduate students with focus on first year students. Peer Mentors assist in creating relationships between faculty and with other students, aid to improve professional communication and social skills, as well as assist in the development of a variety of study skills, life skills, and habits. Peer Mentors of the SELECT program undergo 4 session workshops to develop their mentorship and facilitation skills, implement student-driven learning portfolios and create training methods which are necessary for strong peer mentorship teams. The knowledge and skills gained in each workshop gives them the confidence to be student leaders within their McMaster Engineering community. Each Peer Mentor is involved in the ENG 1P03 week 1 tutorial session which is used to welcome new students into the faculty and make each individual feel comfortable in their new environment. In addition, throughout the fall and winter terms the peer mentors continue to build their relationships with the students through classroom presentations and other public communication methods such as videos, event gatherings, and social media. Peer Mentors continue to grow as leaders as they learn from professional development seminars/luncheons with industry members and sessions with the Engineering Faculty, staff and alumni.

As the fall term approaches the Peer Mentors will be travelling to Toronto to come together and share their experiences and involvement in their community in addition to discussing the implementation of the Peer Mentoring program for the upcoming year with the SELECT team and the new Peer Mentors on Saturday May 18, 2013.

Summer Notices

Hello faculty members, staff, alumni and fellow students:

My name is Rachelle Szymkiewicz and I will be assisting Minha for the summer of 2013 with the McMaster Engineering SELECT program. My role as an administrative assistant is to help further develop the SELECT program by assisting Minha in three particular categories, communication and outreach, program delivery and implementation, as well as, resource development and dissemination. This opportunity will enable me to develop fundamental relationships between faculty members, staff, alumni, students and SELECT members and to provide the necessary support and resources for all aspects of McMaster's engineering leadership development, specifically the SELECT program. Each day is a new experience with multiple possibilities and this summer I hope to use these experiences to help me continue to grow as an individual by further strengthening my professional and leadership skills. As a member of the SELECT team, I will be able to learn from numerous people with various talents and skills within the engineering faculty, as well as, within the engineering industry and use their knowledge and skills not only to become a better individual, but to become a better leader within my community. I look forward to the remainder of my time this summer with the SELECT team and I hope to make a positive contribution to the SELECT program for the upcoming 2013-2014 SELECT students.

All the best to everyone this summer,

Sincerely,

Rachelle Szymkiewicz