



Sustainability Management Student Association (SUMASA)

Columbia University's Master of Science in Sustainability Management Program

Elections for the 2016/2017 Academic Year

The SUMA student community is an important and unique aspect of the SUMA experience. The Student Association plays an integral role in the development of this community. If you are interested in taking an active role in student life, please consider running for a position on the Executive Board.

Important Dates

Call for Candidates: March 7th to March 16th

Deadline for Letter of Interest: March 16th

Candidate Night: Tuesday March 22nd

Elections (online): March 23rd to March 25th

Results Announced: April 1st

About the Election

The Executive Board positions and responsibilities are listed below. If you are interested in running, please submit your candidacy by the deadline noted above. Candidates must be enrolled for both the fall and spring semesters in the coming academic year (2016-2017) in order to be eligible to run for a position.

To submit your candidacy, please send an email to sumasaboard@sumasa.org with the position of interest in the subject line. Include a concise one-paragraph (250 words) pitch explaining why you are qualified, why you want the position, and your expected graduation date.

Candidate Night will be held on March 22nd, location TBD. All candidates will have the opportunity to give a 2-5 minute pitch to their classmates. Depending on the number of candidates, there may be time for questions from voters in the audience.

After the newly elected board members are announced, a comprehensive transition process will begin and will continue through the remainder of the Spring semester and, pending everyone's schedules, through the Summer where there will be joint-leadership by the incoming and outgoing boards. This is to ensure that the new board will be able to organize programming and hit the ground running in September with a great start.

Details about the Executive Board

Responsibilities for each Executive Board position are provided below. All board members are expected to attend and participate in weekly meetings, strategy sessions and other extra-curricular activities, and as such, the positions require their active engagement and leadership. No board member will have to shoulder the responsibility alone; students are encouraged to participate and assist as committee chairs or team members under the direction of the Executive Board members.



President

The President manages the administration of the executive board, works to set strategy and objectives of SUMASA, serves as the liaison between SUMASA and the University, and acts as the face of the MSSM program to the campus and community. More detailed responsibilities include:

Administration and Management

- Work with VPs to execute the mission and vision of the student association.
- Schedule SUMASA board meetings to conduct regular SUMASA business.
- Provide support, direction and guidance to the VPs in order for them to succeed.
- Ensure all VPs remain on track completing projects agreed upon by the board in a timely manner.
- Set meeting agendas and prioritize action items with VP input. Facilitate meetings and keep them running smoothly. Communicate promptly by email with the board on decisions that cannot wait for a meeting to be scheduled.

Involvement and Campus Leadership

- Attend SUMASA, EI, SPS and other functions regularly and consistently.
- Participate actively and represent SUMASA in inter-school, inter-program groups on campus and in NYC at large to promote networking, collaboration and brand profiling for the program.
- Meet regularly with EI and SPS administration: keep them abreast of SUMASA initiatives, ask for support when needed, identify and pursue opportunities for collaboration, provide feedback coming from the student body.
- Listen to student concerns and suggestions, bring back to the board where appropriate and act quickly to address issues of serious concern.

Relevant skills: strong leadership, interpersonal, networking, conflict resolution and other managerial skills are necessary.

Vice President of Academic Affairs

The VP of Academic Affairs acts as a liaison between students and faculty and focuses on helping the administration develop the program curriculum. They also act as a primary conduit for feedback from students to collect and share with program administrators. More detailed responsibilities include:

- Organize opportunities for students to provide input and facilitate constructive dialogue.
- Solicit, record and aggregate curriculum feedback from students and present to program administration.
- Identify trends amidst the professional needs and wants of the students and works with administration to establish additional professional development opportunities to enhance learning opportunities and skill development.

Relevant skills: good communication, facilitation and adult education experience are an asset.



Co-Vice Presidents of Communications

Given the importance of this role, there will be **TWO** co-chairs elected to fulfill the position. The two VP's will determine how best to divide the responsibilities, but will both be responsible for the SUMASA website (including keeping an up-to date calendar), providing internal SUMA updates such as newsletters, and developing SUMASA's external communications, such as creating an online presence and profile, messaging and marketing. More detailed responsibilities include:

Internal Communication

- Collect and disseminate relevant resources weekly through the SUMASA newsletter (e.g. events on campus/in NYC, sustainability news, networking opportunities and extra-curricular opportunities).
- Market all SUMASA (and partner) events to students, including the creation of coherent and consistent messaging.
- Author an interim and final report to the student community.
- Screen and triage emails addressed to the SUMASA email account
- Take meeting minutes.

External Communication

- Maintain and update the SUMASA website on an ongoing basis.
- Manage and update the online calendar of events on an ongoing basis.
- Post relevant content regularly on the SUMASA Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn accounts and other social media outlets.
- Market all SUMASA events to relevant student organizations outside of the MSSM program (GreenGrads, SIPA Eco, Net Impact, W&S, Consilience, etc.)
- Create a strong and consistent brand for the SUMASA in collaboration with program administrators.
- Maximize social networking opportunities that help the student body to connect and share resources and information.

Relevant skills: familiarity with Wordpress and MailChimp, strong command of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and other social media applications. Writing and communications, branding, web design and/or public relations experience an asset.

Vice President of Community Outreach

The VP of Community Outreach seeks to ensure that SUMASA builds a strong presence on and off campus. More detailed responsibilities include:

- Cultivate lasting relationships with other groups on campus and develop meaningful partnerships to bolster SUMASA's mission/vision.
- Organize networking events in collaboration with other relevant programs.
- Research and explore relevant regional sustainability events and identify opportunities for SUMASA involvement.
- Organize sustainability-related volunteer opportunities at events across NYC.
- Constantly seek opportunities outside of Columbia to promote the program and form strategic relationships with potential partners and collaborators.
- Coordinate, motivate and support the continued development of SUMASA's clubs, including helping to bolster their outreach and partnership efforts both on campus and off.

Relevant skills: strong relationship building, networking, leadership, communication and interpersonal skills are required. Must have or develop a good sense of NYC and Columbia's sustainability culture.



Vice President of Events

The VP of Events leads the planning of all SUMASA events. They work closely with other VPs on conceiving, scheduling, promoting, facilitating and communicating events. The VP of Events is supported by an active committee of volunteer members from the program who help with the planning of ongoing social events, so the VP can focus on cornerstone events like the Symposium.

- Solicit interest and mobilize a team of volunteers to form the Events Committee.
- Plan social events for SUMA students to socialize with fellow classmates. Examples:
 - Weekly mixers
 - General assemblies
 - Winter holiday party
 - Spring graduation party
 - Family days
 - Field trips
- Organize event logistics, including event location, special student discounts, promotion via newsletter/website, photography/videography, follow up communication, etc.
- Plan, oversee and execute the annual SUMASA sponsored Sustainability symposium.
- Coordinate with VP Communications to promote events to the student body.
- Coordinate with Treasurer to budget for SUMASA events.
- Coordinate with program administration on planning speaker and networking events.

Relevant skills: experience in event planning is essential. Highly developed interpersonal, organizational, communication and teamwork skills are necessary.

Treasurer & Board Secretary

This position is both strategic (i.e., participating in setting the SUMASA agenda for the year in terms of objectives, programs, engagement with administration, etc.) and tactical.

The role of the Treasurer is to:

- Manage and oversee budget allocated SUMASA from Earth Institute funds.
- Assist other VPs on budgeting for activities and events.
- Approve expenditures and expedite reimbursement for SUMASA expenditures.

The role of the Board Secretary is to support the President in ensuring the smooth functioning of the SUMASA Board. In summary, the Secretary is responsible for:

- Ensuring meetings are effectively organized (agenda) and memorialized (minutes)
- Maintaining effective records and administration
- Upholding the legal requirements of governing documents and Columbia University policies.
- Communication and correspondence on behalf of the Board when requested.

Given these responsibilities, the Secretary often acts as an information and reference point for the Chair and other VPs: clarifying past practice and decisions; confirming Columbia University requirements; and retrieving relevant documentation.

Relevant skills: organization, teamwork, leadership and event planning experience skills are recommended. Previous experience with budgeting and basic financial reporting is an asset.