MEMO

. **Office of the MSU President**

*From the…*

# TO: Student Representative Assembly

FROM: Giancarlo Da-Ré, President

SUBJECT: SRA 20J – Changes to Ombuds Terms of Reference

DATE: November 15th 2020

Dear Members of the SRA,

Overseeing Ombuds is a part of the portfolio of the President that is often overlooked before an MSU President begins their term. This year I have put a great deal of effort and time into ensuring that I would continue the Ombuds work of MSU President Josh Marando and set up the MSU President for the 21/22 year as best I can. I am very pleased to present this memo which represents years of work in the President portfolio.

An Ombuds report in 2018 identified many challenges with the office that we feel are addressed in this new terms of reference. The main challenges that were identified in the report were that the scope of the office was too large and should only be for McMaster students or staff members presenting a student- facing problem, as well as a lack of an advisory team. When I started in May, I met with 8 Ombudspersons from across the country to learn about their Advisory Committees. After compiling information of what was working and not working at those institutions, I compared that information with what gap currently exists at McMaster. In collaboration with our Ombudsperson and McMaster Secretary, the terms of reference I present to you today include many changes, including but not limited to: a revision to the scope of the office, changing all the gendered terms to gender-neutral, and a new section on the new Ombuds Advisory Committee. This Advisory Committee will benefit the Ombuds in numerous ways, and I cannoy be more thrilled to hit this milestone in my term.

These changes were also passed at Senate Executive Committee two weeks ago and submitted for approval at the November 11th Senate meeting, and will be presented for approval at the December Board of Governors meeting. Since Ombuds is jointly supervised by the McMaster President and MSU President, the terms of reference are also coming forward here for your approval. Once these terms are approved by SRA, Senate and Board of Governors, the Advisory Committee will be able to be formed in the new year to begin operating as soon as possible. Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions.

Warm regards,

Giancarlo Da-Ré President & CEO