



Operating Policy – Education & Advocacy Department

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To assist in furthering the advocacy and policy efforts within the MSU and to assist in the development and implementation strategies for the MSU. The department shall be consulted on the creation and implementation of academic and external advocacy and lobbying strategies.

2. Operating Parameters

- 2.1. The Education & Advocacy Department shall:

- 2.1.1. Assist in the creation, implementation and advancement the advocacy efforts of the MSU;
- 2.1.2. Assist in gathering student feedback regarding their university experience here at McMaster;
- 2.1.3. Assist in addressing the academic concerns of students by formulating solutions and policies, and addressing them to the appropriate university, local, provincial and federal stakeholders;

3. Personnel

- 3.1. The Education & Advocacy Department shall consist of but not be limited to:

- 3.1.1. The Vice-President (Education), who shall:

- 3.1.1.1. Perform duties as outlined in **Bylaw 4 – Officers**;
- 3.1.1.2. Perform duties as outlined in the Vice-President (Education) Job Description.

- 3.1.2. The President, who shall:

- 3.1.2.1. Perform duties as outlined in **Bylaw 4 – Officers**;
- 3.1.2.2. Perform duties as outlined in the President Job Description.

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- 3.1.3. The Associate Vice-President (University Affairs), who shall:
 - 3.1.3.1. Advocate measures that will advance the academic and non-academic interests of the MSU membership;
 - 3.1.3.2. Advise and assist the Vice-President (Education), other MSU officials (including the President) on matters related to the MSU's interactions with McMaster University administration;
 - 3.1.3.3. Gather student opinion on the quality of academic life at McMaster University;
 - 3.1.3.4. Identify and formulate possible solutions to academic and student life problems within the McMaster University community;
 - 3.1.3.5. Chair meetings of the SRA University Affairs Standing Committee;
 - 3.1.3.6. Perform other duties as outlined in **Bylaw 3/B – Standing Committees of the SRA** and the Associate Vice-President (University Affairs) Job Description.

- 3.1.4. The Associate Vice-President (Municipal Affairs), who shall:
 - 3.1.4.1. Participate and create municipal lobbying efforts that further the interests of the MSU and its members;
 - 3.1.4.2. Shall advise and assist the Vice-President (Education), other MSU officials (including the President) on matters related to the MSU's municipal interactions;
 - 3.1.4.3. In conjunction with the Vice-President (Education) and Advocacy Project Assistant shall promote all municipal elections as outlined in Operating Policy - Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections;
 - 3.1.4.4. Chair meetings of the SRA Municipal Affairs Standing Committee;
 - 3.1.4.5. Perform other duties as outlined in **Bylaw 3/B – Standing Committees of the SRA** and the Associate Vice-President (Municipal Affairs) Job Description.

- 3.1.5. The Associate Vice-President (Provincial & Federal Affairs), who shall:
 - 3.1.5.1. Assist the Vice-President (Education) in participating in and creating provincial and federal lobbying efforts that further the interests of the MSU and its members;
 - 3.1.5.2. Shall advise and assist the Vice-President (Education), other MSU officials (including the President) on matters related
 - 3.1.5.3. Promote the work of OUSA to the McMaster community;
 - 3.1.5.4. In conjunction with the Project and Campaign Coordinator shall coordinate OUSA campus activities
 - 3.1.5.5. In conjunction with the Vice-President (Education) and Project and Campaign Coordinator shall promote all provincial and federal elections as outlined in Operating Policy – Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections;
 - 3.1.5.6. Chair meetings of the SRA Provincial & Federal Affairs Standing Committee;

- 3.1.5.7. Perform other duties as outlined in **Bylaw 3/B – Standing Committees of the SRA** and the Associate Vice-President (Provincial & Federal Affairs) Job Description.
- 3.1.6. The Project and Campaign Coordinator; who shall:
 - 3.1.6.1. Be hired by a hiring committee which shall consist of:
 - 3.1.6.1.1. The outgoing Project and Campaign Coordinator;
 - 3.1.6.1.2. The Vice-President (Education);
 - 3.1.6.1.3. One (1) member from the Administrative Team, which includes the Executive Assistant, Operations Coordinator and Administrative Services Coordinator.
 - 3.1.6.2. Assist the Vice-President (Education), the Associate Vice-President (University Affairs), the Associate Vice-President (Municipal Affairs), and the Associate Vice-President (Provincial & Federal Affairs) in the creation and implementation of campaigns;
 - 3.1.6.3. Coordinate and supervise the activities of the MSU's Advocacy Ambassadors, as necessary;
 - 3.1.6.4. Assist the Vice-President (Education) with logistics and event-planning including but not limited to:
 - 3.1.6.4.1. The MSU Policy Conference;
 - 3.1.6.4.2. Campaigns;
 - 3.1.6.4.3. Forums and Focus Groups;
 - 3.1.6.5. In collaboration with the Marketing & Communications Director, promote all MSU advocacy efforts;
 - 3.1.6.6. Assist the Associate Vice-President (Provincial & Federal Affairs) with coordinating OUSA campus activities;
 - 3.1.6.7. Perform other duties as outlined in the Project and Campaign Coordinator job description.
- 3.1.7. The Advocacy & Policy Research Assistants (3) who shall:
 - 3.1.7.1. Assist the Vice-President (Education), the Associate Vice-President (University Affairs), the Associate Vice-President (Municipal Affairs), and the Associate Vice-President (Provincial & Federal Affairs) in primary and secondary research efforts as required;
 - 3.1.7.2. Coordinate and provide research support for General Policy;
 - 3.1.7.3. Prepare reports and briefs as assigned by the Vice-President (Education);
 - 3.1.7.4. Perform other duties as outlined in the Advocacy & Policy Research Assistant job description.
 - 3.1.7.5. Be hired by a hiring committee which shall consist of:
 - 3.1.7.5.1. One (1) outgoing Advocacy & Policy Research Assistant;

- 3.1.7.5.2. The Vice-President (Education);
- 3.1.7.5.3. One (1) member from the Administrative Team, which includes the Executive Assistant, Operations Coordinator and Administrative Services Coordinator.

3.1.8. The Community Education Coordinator who shall:

- 3.1.8.1. Be hired by a hiring committee which shall consist of:
 - 3.1.8.1.1. The Vice-President (Education)
 - 3.1.8.1.2. One (1) member from the Administrative Team, which includes the Executive Assistant, Operations Coordinator and Administrative Services Coordinator.
 - 3.1.8.1.3. The outgoing Community Education Coordinator
- 3.1.8.2. Facilitate events related to off-campus community education (by-law education tenant rights, house hunting, etc.).
- 3.1.8.3. Develop and conduct surveys and focus groups for data collection as required.
- 3.1.8.4. Support projects and initiatives related to student life and community engagement at the direction of the Vice-President (Education).
- 3.1.8.5. Work with the McMaster and Hamilton community to generate ideas for off-campus community educational events and campaigns.

4. Advocacy Ambassadors

4.1. The Advocacy Ambassadors shall:

- 4.1.1. Be hired as needed by the Project and Campaign Coordinator;
- 4.1.2. Assist the Education & Advocacy Department in promoting and implementing all campaigns and events related to post-secondary education and the undergraduate experience;
- 4.1.3. Be managed by the Project and Campaign Coordinator;
- 4.1.4. Have volunteer executives that assist in the coordination of logistics and promotion of the Advocacy Ambassador Team.

5. Policy Process

- 5.1. The General Policies of the McMaster Students Union represent the official stances of the MSU on post-secondary education issues at university and governmental levels. All university and external advocacy of the MSU shall be, when possible, guided by the principles and recommendations outlined in the General Policies of the MSU or other formally approved stances of the MSU.

- 5.2. The Education & Advocacy Department shall ensure that no more than six (6) General Policies and at minimum two (2) General Policies are presented to the SRA for approval each academic year;
 - 5.2.1. In the first semester, any policies written shall be presented no later than the SRA meeting penultimate to the winter break;
 - 5.2.2. In the second semester, any policies written shall be presented no later than the SRA meeting penultimate to the assembly's term concluding.
- 5.3. Policy topics shall be selected according to the following procedure:
 - 5.3.1. Policy topics shall be shortlisted by the Education & Advocacy Department and reported to the SRA according to the following principles:
 - 5.3.1.1. Existing General Policies that are approaching expiry should be considered for renewal;
 - 5.3.1.2. Politically salient topics which the MSU does not have approved stances on should be formalized;
 - 5.3.1.3. Significant student interest for topics which the MSU does not have approved stances on should be considered for approval;
 - 5.3.2. For the policies approved before the winter break, the SRA shall receive notice the policy topics by August 1.
 - 5.3.3. For the policies approved before the conclusion of the assembly's term, the SRA shall receive notice the policy topics by November 1.
- 5.4. Policies shall be prepared via committee with the following roles:
 - 5.4.1. One (1) Advocacy & Policy Research Assistant, who shall:
 - 5.4.1.1. Conduct any primary and secondary research as requested by the committee;
 - 5.4.1.2. Provide administrative support to the committee;
 - 5.4.1.3. Act as the chair of the committee.
 - 5.4.2. At least one (1) representative from each of the following standing committees, who shall act as authors and participate in the writing of the policy:
 - 5.4.2.1. The SRA University Affairs Standing Committee;
 - 5.4.2.2. The SRA Municipal Affairs Standing Committee;
 - 5.4.2.3. The SRA Provincial & Federal Affairs Standing Committee.
- 5.5. Prior to the presentation of policies for approval to the SRA, the Education & Advocacy Department shall host the MSU Policy Conference to gather feedback and solicit general student opinion on policy drafts.

- 5.5.1. The logistics, promotion, and coordination of said event shall be conducted by the Project and Campaign Coordinator.
- 5.5.2. Prior to the MSU Policy Conference, the SRA should consult with their faculty societies and relevant interest groups.