

# **YEAR PLAN**

President & Chief Executive Officer

Simranjeet Singh

2022-2023



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# OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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## INTRODUCTION

To the Members of the Student Representative Assembly and the greater student body,

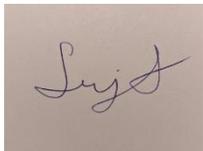
The role of the Presidency of the McMaster Students' Union is one of unique opportunity and novel insight, but also one of evident obligation. From what I have learned, the MSU is an organization with a splendid history of leadership, innovation, and collaboration, but one that can continue to improve to further its goals of student betterment. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented change in how we all communicate with loved ones, navigate the World, and live our lives. Inevitably, a time of such profound disruption did not leave the MSU, - or the greater community at McMaster, untouched. As we return to what is more or less a sense of normalcy, the MSU has an obligation to repair what has been lost, to reinvigorate a sense of belonging which has withered, and recreate the experiences so integral to the maturation and development of students at McMaster.

My goals and initiatives were inspired by the situation that presents the MSU. How does it as an organization reinvigorate itself, and simultaneously, how can this be done in a manner most pertinent to what students need? My year plan presents what I feel is the solution to this predicament. I am hopeful, that my approach, - divided into five themes as well as a few ancillary items, will help recreate the enthusiasm, engagement, and prominence of the student voice which we all hope returns. These goals will continue to evolve and develop as the year progresses. In addition, as I am presented with new challenges, questions, answers, and solutions, I will update my goals and ensure the student body is kept informed of changing priorities. I am hopeful that with the combined efforts of the diverse, multi-faceted community at McMaster, these goals, - and the resulting positive impact on the student body, can be realized.

My introduction to this role has been an experience like none other. The wonderful individuals I have met, have had the pleasure of becoming close to, and who have given me their wisdom are all key to my growth thus far. I hope that as the year progresses, I continue to have similar interactions which allow me to leave a lasting, positive mark on the student body. I would like to thank VP Administration Mitchell German, VP Education Elizabeth Wong, VP Finance Sarphina Chui, General Manager John McGowan, Administrative Services Coordinator Victoria Scott, Director of Information Technology Pauline Taggart, Human Resources Generalist Renee McIntosh, Executive Assistant Daniela Stajcer, Clubs Administrator Nardos Tedros, and Director of Marketing and Communications Michael Wooder, as well as all the other full-time, part-time, and

volunteer staff of the MSU for their support. In addition, I would like to thank all McMaster University, Hamilton community, and other more wide-ranging partners for their willingness to collaborate and assist in my initiatives. Thank you for reading my Year Plan! I am more than happy to answer questions via email, in SRA meetings, or via one-on-one conversations. Feel free to reach out if you need anything.

Sincerely,

A square image containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read "Simranjeet Singh".

**Simranjeet Singh**

President & Chief Executive Office (CEO)

McMaster Students' Union

[president@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:president@msu.mcmaster.ca)

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## MONTHLY TIMELINE

Below is a very general and crude summary of a monthly timeline I have planned for my term. This is subject to change as circumstances develop.

May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition in the role</li> <li>• Introductions with various MSU partners</li> <li>• Advocacy and Promotional campaign regarding the Ontario Provincial Election</li> <li>• Discovery of novel MSU initiatives which I will be undertaking</li> <li>• Introductions to various McMaster partners</li> <li>• Research regarding lab sustainability initiative</li> <li>• Beginning of OER-related conversations</li> <li>• Initial collaborations beginning with Student Affairs Department of McMaster</li> <li>• Introduction to Campus Master Plan</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year Plan Completion</li> <li>• Initial conversations with Metrolinx</li> <li>• Continued introductions and conversations with McMaster partners</li> <li>• Development of collaborations with Okanagan Committee</li> <li>• Initial conversations with external partners regarding lab sustainability initiative.</li> <li>• Review of OER applications</li> <li>• Introductions with other McMaster Student Society Presidents.</li> <li>• Introduction to role regarding McMaster EDI Strategy and SVPR Policy Review</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning of UN SDG/Teaching and Learning Strategy Pilot</li> <li>• Continuation of Lab Sustainability Review</li> <li>• Development of OER related proposals</li> <li>• Investigation of funding sources for OER, LinkedIn Learning, and other Equitable Education-associated goals.</li> <li>• Initiation of IRA-related goals</li> <li>• Ramp-up of goals regarding discounts with local Hamilton businesses and reusable containers.</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of Lab Sustainability Review</li> <li>• Supporting Welcome Week Planning and Administration</li> <li>• Continued development of OER-related proposal</li> <li>• Continued development of LinkedIn Learning-related proposals.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of collaborations with The Forge</li> <li>• Planning of events in collaboration with the Education Department of the MSU throughout the school year.</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting University budget submission</li> <li>• Supporting Municipal budget submission consultations</li> <li>• Completion of OER-related proposal</li> <li>• Completion of LinkedIn Learning-related proposal</li> <li>• Initiating steps to have widespread communication with the greater student body</li> <li>• Initiation of Municipal Election Awareness and Education</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Municipal budget submission draft</li> <li>• Continued Municipal Election Awareness and Education Campaign</li> <li>• Supporting development of greater networking opportunities with SSC</li> <li>• Initial conversations regarding Thrive Week with SWC</li> <li>• Supporting Housing Market and Demand Study</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Municipal budget submission</li> <li>• Conversations with other McMaster student societies regarding multiple year plan topics.</li> <li>• Supporting development of Campus Master Plan</li> <li>• Completion of Housing Market and Demand Study</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued collaboration with IRA on research/general data collection goals.</li> <li>• Supporting SVPR Policy Review</li> <li>• Completion of Campus Master Plan</li> <li>• Review of Waste Management Survey/Study results</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued OER promotion, including conference</li> <li>• Continued support of TLS development, including with potential UN SDG incorporation</li> <li>• Supporting launch of OER, LinkedIn Learning, and other Education-related initiatives.</li> <li>• Thrive Week</li> <li>• Beginning of information campaign informed by Waste Management Survey/Study.</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning transition with newly elected 2023-2024 MSU</li> </ul>

	<p>President.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning Transition report for successor</li> <li>• Reviewing preliminary results of implementation of reusable container program</li> <li>• Continued support for development of more networking opportunities for students</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSU Policy Conference</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with Education Department</li> <li>• Completing majority of remaining tasks</li> <li>• Ideally, deliverables regarding full year projects have all been achieved.</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition incoming MSU President</li> <li>• Complete final report and transition report</li> <li>• Finish remaining projects</li> </ul>

## GOALS

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### **THEME 1: STUDENT WELLNESS**

Wellness refers to holistic practises used by individuals or groups to maintain both their physical and mental health. It is integral as a means of preventative care and to give us the skills we need to succeed in our pursuits. The last few decades have seen remarkable improvements in the ability for people to candidly discuss both mental and physical health, though this has allowed us to understand how large of an issue exists. The pandemic has greatly exacerbated mental health struggles faced by students, with about 20% saying it has had a significant negative impact. As a result, I felt it imperative to pursue Wellness as a theme so we as a community can be united in our work to improve the lives of students by providing greater mental and physical health supports. My list of proposals includes various avenues of collaboration, new initiatives, and projects which I will pursue to help bolster student wellness needs.

<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Increasing collaboration between SWC and student groups</b>
Description	The expansion of existing collaborations with the Student Wellness Centre is vital. SWC relies upon student groups such as the MSU and clubs to help inform them of student needs. Ensuring this relationship remains strong, collaborative, and frequent will allow for the creation of new programming that can be targeted to the needs of students and allow student voices are heard through all steps. I will achieve this through the creation of the Student Wellness Centre Advisory Committee, a group which will serve as a regular and formal communication link between university and student leaders. With the existing of such regular contact, progress and objectives of all parties will be shared more efficiently and objectives can be set while better taking account the needs of all stakeholders.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Will allow greater collaboration between different stakeholders on projects</li><li>- Will allow for ease of communication regarding specific items of interest, inquiries, or areas of disagreement</li><li>- Will increase the amount of student insight on Student Wellness Centre activities</li><li>- Greater dissemination of information from bodies which</li></ul>

	organize events and services to the greater student body.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many moving parts are involved, and a lot of coordination is needed across the MSU, University and our campus partners</li> <li>- Process of developing representative and appropriately diverse body (in regards to identity, but also thought) is cumbersome.</li> <li>- Heavy buy in needed from partners</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Much closer collaboration between university, student, and other parties regarding mental health and student wellness.</li> <li>- More combined events which are more strongly promoted and can directly impact more students.</li> <li>- Greater access to mental health, physical health, sexual health, and other healthcare resources.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conversations with Student Affairs and the Student Wellness Centre.</li> <li>- Consultation with relevant MSU Services.</li> <li>- Request for insights and collaborations from student clubs and the general student body.</li> <li>- Using of survey data where possible</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Board of Directors (VP Administration most directly)</li> <li>- MSU General Manager</li> <li>- MSU Clubs Administrator</li> <li>- MSU Director of Marketing and Communications</li> <li>- Relevant MSU Services (such as Maccess, SHEC, Diversity + Equity Network, WGEN, and PCC)</li> <li>- Director of Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- Associate Director of Counselling at the Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- Vice- Provost (Teaching and Learning)</li> <li>- Associate Vice President (Students and Learning) and Dean of Students</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Advocating for increased SWC counselling and group session hours</b>
Description	When combining all counsellors, family doctors, psychiatrists, and other medical professionals, more than 25 individuals work to deliver healthcare services to students at SWC. Yet the Student Wellness Centre regularly functions at near peak capacity throughout the year, despite major expansions which have taken place over the last decade. Thus, it is imperative that there be advocacy done to increase the number of group counselling programs, number of counsellors, healthcare professionals, and other supports to allow students to receive the care they need. In addition, these sessions and supports are rarely available outside of working hours, and thus often conflict with class, work, and extracurricular obligations of students. Therefore, I hope to advocate for broadening of these existing services to a greater variety of times of the day to make them more accessible to students.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will allow for greater healthcare support to be given to students.</li> <li>- Reduction in wait times to receive a consultative appointment.</li> <li>- Reduction in time period between counselling or other support sessions between students and SWC staff.</li> <li>- Greater understanding of needs of student body can be gained from fulfilling the demand which exists.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little intrinsic support from McMaster University due to increased funds which would need to be allocated by the University and the Government of Ontario.</li> <li>- Lack of clarity on the topic of whether or not the Student Wellness Centre's physical space has sufficient capacity for such an expansion.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater healthcare support will be afforded to students, something that is insufficient in its current form.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocacy work directly to McMaster staff as well as relevant government bodies for increased investment and support.</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSU General Manager</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- Director of Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- Associate Director of Counselling at the Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- Vice- Provost (Teaching and Learning)</li> <li>- Associate Vice President (Students and Learning) and Dean</li> </ul>

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<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>Unified marketing campaigns and expansion of Thrive Week</b>
Description	<p>Thrive Week is a series of events spearheaded by the Student Wellness Centre. It is a period of one week planned generally early every year. Thrive Week aims to offer students, staff, and faculty opportunities to learn useful skills to manage stress, anxiety, support their mental health, and engage in community support strategies. However, this unique opportunity has been underutilized. Thus, I hope to pursue a strong campaign led in conjunction with student societies, clubs, and other student groups to both better inform of the types of programming offered and ensure that students are made able to utilize the opportunity to receive support.</p>
Benefits	<p>Prominent time period across campus to focus on mental health and wellness.</p> <p>Offers collaborative opportunities between students, student groups, MSU Services, and McMaster.</p> <p>Will create an environment for frank discussion regarding student wellness across different backgrounds of individuals and between faculty, staff, and students.</p>
Difficulties	<p>Difficult to organize due to the widespread, diverse nature of the groups involved.</p> <p>As with many initiatives, despite significant investment in communication and promotion to the McMaster community, there may be relatively little engagement due to the rigors and obligations of life.</p>
Long-term implications	<p>Greater, more frank discussion regarding mental health and wellness across the McMaster community.</p> <p>Greater knowledge of and usage of mental health and wellness resources, as well as mindfulness techniques/activities.</p>
How?	<p>Collaborative events will be held with the Student Wellness Centre, MSU Services, student clubs, student societies, and other groups which can contribute to the planning and holding of events, while also helping promote them. To ensure the greatest impact possible, a goal for maximum possible top-down involvement from faculties will also be pursued.</p>
Partners	<p>MSU Board of Directors  MSU Marketing &amp; Communications Department  Relevant MSU Services  Interested Student Clubs  Faculty Student Societies  Director of Student Wellness Centre  Associate Director of Counselling at the Student Wellness Centre</p>

<b>Objective 4</b>	<b>Prominent Addition of Student Assistance Plan to SWC website</b>
Description	<p>The Student Assistance Plan is a prominent mental health support service offered by the MSU to students. It gives access to students, their friends, and family via phone call, text, online chat, or the iConnectYou app to vital techniques, skills, and counselling services to support their wellbeing. However, there is a lack of student knowledge about the existence of this service, and often students only become aware of it after receiving referral from the Student Wellness Centre in a personal counselling referral meeting. While it is referred to on the SWC website, SAP is buried in various tabs and difficult to find. Thus, to ensure SAP is better communicated to students, I will work with SWC and McMaster Media Production Services (MPS) to display SAP more prominently on the SWC website and use it as a tool to direct students to the affirming support they need.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved accessibility to resources offered by the MSU</li> <li>- Reduced utilization and demand for Student Wellness Centre, thereby reducing wait times and likely increasing quality of care.</li> <li>- Very low-cost initiative which could have a large associated impact on the student body.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Likely requires information campaign in addition to increase student traffic and awareness. Without this, changes may take longer to have a perceivable impact on the student body.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater usage of MSU supports by the student body, thereby allowing for better use of student fees.</li> <li>- Increased knowledge of mental health supports by students.</li> <li>- Likely will give incentive for further enhancements to MSU Mental Health resources as greater student usage will give forth insights to what specific supports students need.</li> </ul>
How?	<p>I will collaborate with the Student Wellness Centre’s Communications Coordinator and upper leadership to discuss scope and nature of changes to the SWC website. This will be paired with internal conversations with the MSU’s Marketing &amp; Communications Director to ensure changes are appropriate and most impactful.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communications Coordinator of the Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Wellness Centre</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Associate Director of Counselling at the Student Wellness Centre</li> <li>- MSU Marketing &amp; Communications Director</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 5</b>	<b>Working with insurance provider ClaimSecure to broaden services offered under the MSU Health and Dental Plan</b>
Description	The MSU provides a Health & Dental Plan for students, a vital tool which helps thousands of members of our community receive the healthcare they need. However, there are areas in which this plan is lacking and must be improved. Currently, the plan covers 80% of drug and minor dental care costs though only 50% of costs regarding minor restorative dental work, 50% of costs relating to extractions, and only 10% of costs regarding major restorative dental surgeries. I will work with our insurance provider ClaimSecure to advocate for increased coverage to give students better access to the healthcare resources they deserve.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased scope of healthcare services offered to students under insurance policy</li> <li>- Better efficiency of funds spent by student body via the MSU as compared to coverage received.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In large part would be based on whether or not the MSU has sufficient financial leverage when looking at insurance policy to negotiate a more cohesive and cost-effective plan.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A greater scope of health and dental coverage can be offered to the student body at a more cost-efficient rate, thereby alleviating gaps in coverage experienced by the student community.</li> </ul>
How?	Would require review of current usage statistics, cost to the student body, amount of funds paid by ClaimSecure, and a determination of needs of the student body regarding specific aspects of the Health & Dental Plan. Likely a campaign to receive student insights would be key to this as well.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Finance</li> <li>- Director of Finance of the MSU</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> <li>- Administrative Services Coordinator</li> <li>- ClaimSecure</li> </ul>

## **THEME 2: BUILDING A STRONGER HAMILTON COMMUNITY**

After enrolling at McMaster, students join a diverse and vibrant community of people with a huge array of knowledge, experiences, and skills. In Hamilton there exists a culturally rich mosaic of people who have helped build a community with phenomenal potential. However, many students often view themselves as outsiders, as temporary residents whose role in the Hamilton community is fleeting. The pandemic has vastly exacerbated this alienation, as almost half of the student body is experiencing what it is like to live, work, and study in Hamilton for the first time. In this theme, I outline the steps I will pursue to not only better support students in their transition into the Hamilton community, but also provide the tools to help students feel at home, as an integral part of Hamilton itself.

<b>Objective 6</b>	<b>Working with Metrolinx to expand busing during Welcome Week, make bus times more appropriate, and re-introduce express busses</b>
Description	<p>Metrolinx offers vital transportation services to students who commute as well as those who wish to travel for work, leisure, and to visit family and friends. Due to the impacts of the pandemic, frequency of buses has been reduced with express bus routes from high demand stops mostly eliminated. I will work directly with Metrolinx to ensure expanded frequency during peak travel periods and to adapt to student needs. A notable example will be during Welcome Week, when I will ensure greater bus frequency to help ensure Welcome Week reps have the necessary transit resources to help them safely travel. In addition, under my leadership, the MSU will work directly with Metrolinx to re-introduce express bus services which have been suspended. Overall, this initiative will help supply students with more robust transit options for travel across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More equitable, affordable access to transportation for student volunteers during welcome week.</li> <li>- Usage of Metrolinx resources in a more efficient manner to fulfill the transportation needs of the student body for transport throughout the year.</li> <li>- Return of transportation offerings which can give more direct, rapid connections between high traffic locations.</li> </ul> <p>Access to more granular data about transportation preferences of the student body which can better inform advocacy efforts</p>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Metrolinx, which has many other stakeholder and obligations, is inherently unable to adapt to all needs of the student body.</li> </ul> <p>Largely dependent on general return of demand across the province.</p>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater access to fast, affordable, and easily accessible transportation offerings for students.</li> </ul> <p>Ability for the MSU to enhance its advocacy efforts to various levels of government, while also forming a long-term relationship with Metrolinx.</p>
How?	<p>We will work Metrolinx to share current information about most common time periods of student demand on the GO Transit network. This, - combined with their determinations of when buses can be made available for transportation and the economic feasibility of this on a long-term scale, will be used in determining the increase and redistribution of Metrolinx resources so as to increase transportation links for students.</p>

Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- Director of Campus Events for the MSU</li> </ul> Director of Marketing & Communications for the MSU
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<b>Objective 7</b>	<b>Conducting a study to determine average rental prices, availability, and demand in vicinity of McMaster</b>
Description	<p>Housing is another topic at the forefront of student concerns. Rental prices in Hamilton have risen precipitously, with a rise of 5.4% from 2019 to 2020, compared to 2.2% for the provincial average. In addition, vacancies of rental units also fell, from 3.9% in 2019 to only 3.5% in 2020. This paints a picture of a rental market in need of reform to better support rights of renters. However, a major piece has been lacking, and that is data specific to the regions of Hamilton. McMaster University is located in Ward 1 of Hamilton, an electoral division currently represented by Hamilton City Councilor Maureen Wilson. Most students who rent also live in this area, but there is a lack of data pertaining to the rental market specifically in this region. Luckily, to address this, Housing &amp; Conference Services is leading a study to help determine more information about the housing market in areas of Hamilton most relevant to the university. As there can be massive variances across a municipality, I will advocate that Ward 1 (and potentially Ward 2, 8, 13, and 14) will be focused on to collect information most relevant to undergraduate students. With the results, we hope to gain specific, granular information which can be used to conduct advocacy to the University, City of Hamilton, and province regarding renter rights. This advocacy will likely include calls for construction of new housing units to meet unfilled demand, expansion of the Hamilton rental licensing pilot, and greater restrictions to prevent exploitation of the market by some landlords.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will give information to the availability of housing, a piece of information which will be vital to determining new legislation regarding zoning, development of new housing, and overall prosperity of the region.</li> <li>- Will give clear, solid foundation to advocacy efforts of the MSU to the City of Hamilton and Ontario Provincial government regarding zoning, funding of development, and other related topics.</li> </ul>

Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is an endeavor of large magnitude, thereby requiring strong support from McMaster University to ensure a sufficiently broad scope for the study. This must be done while ensuring there is statistical validity over the topic of interest to be covered.</li> <li>- A degree of survey design and data analysis capacity may be needed internally within the MSU, something which is currently lacking.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	With the implementation of solutions to the study's findings, we will be able to help advocate for the creation of more affordable, safe, and accessible housing market for students and those in the greater Hamilton community.
How?	We will directly collaborate with Housing & Conference Services current project, give forth insights regarding study design, ensure the scope is broad to allow for a wide range of topics to be covered, and work closely in review and analysis of results.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Office of Community Engagement</li> <li>- Director of Housing and Conference Services</li> <li>- Manager of Special Projects within the Office of the Director of Housing and Conference Services.</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- AVP Municipal Affairs</li> <li>- Education Team Research Assistants of the MSU</li> <li>- City of Hamilton partners</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 8</b>	<b>Conducting advocacy campaign to inform students of upcoming provincial and municipal elections</b>
Description	Ensuring students are informed of their rights and obligations as is key, as it will provide them with the agency needed to receive the supports, resources, and tools they deserve. Thus, concurrent to my planned study, I also hope to lead an information campaign that will help inform students as to the rights they hold, protect them from unsavoury actors such as rogue landlords, and allow them to be more aware of Hamilton City bylaws to reduce fines administered. This will go hand-in-hand with promotion of the upcoming Ontario provincial election and Hamilton City Council elections, thus giving the knowledge they need to make informed electoral decisions.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students will have more awareness of their rights, privileges, and obligations.</li> <li>- Students will have more knowledge of electoral platforms and candidates.</li> <li>- More informed political decisions can be made by the student body with greater engagement</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low engagement is likely in the summer as the Provincial Election took place when most students are not in Hamilton. This likely hampered impact of promotions regarding the now completed Provincial election.</li> <li>- Municipal politics are less notable events in the media and public eye, which will make it more difficult for the MSU to help increase interest, as the basal level of engagement in greater society is less.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students are able to make more informed political decisions. Ideally this will expand student engagement in politics as a whole, and cause individuals to remain involved in their own political representation after a foundational level of interest is sparked.</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will collaborate with stakeholders to lead initiatives on social media and via other public statements to inform students of all relevant information. This will be coordinated with noteworthy partners in McMaster and the City of Hamilton to ensure efforts can be more impactful.</li> </ul>

Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- McMaster’s Public Affairs Department</li> <li>- Government Relations Department of McMaster</li> <li>- City of Hamilton</li> <li>- Elections Ontario</li> <li>- Marketing &amp; Communications Department of the MSU</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP Municipal Affairs</li> <li>- AVP Provincial and Federal Affairs</li> <li>- Education Team Research Assistants</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 9</b>	<b>Working with local Hamilton Businesses to introduce increased rebates and discounts for students</b>
Description	<p>Engaging with local businesses is a prime method by which we can build a sense of community. If students are given the opportunity to engage with businesses and local organizations more directly and regularly, they will be able to form the necessary connections and relationships to feel at home. This is of course reciprocal, as businesses and other local organizations also stand to benefit from the diverse array of experiences, knowledge, and skills on offer from the McMaster student body. To help support the integration of students within the Hamilton community, I hope to work with local businesses to introduce a greater array of student discounts. The end result will be that students will spend more of their time connecting with and purchasing the valuable, unique, and innovative goods and services offered by local Hamilton businesses and organizations. Simultaneously, businesses still reeling from the effects of the pandemic will be able to benefit from the increased engagement offered by the McMaster student body. The result will be an environment where students will be able to benefit from not only a more cohesive sense of community, but also more affordable goods and services.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increases opportunities for students to receive discounts</li> <li>- Increased value for students at local businesses likely due to increased foot traffic.</li> <li>- Greater opportunities for collaboration between student groups and the local businesses and organizations</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conveying economic value of discounts to local businesses and organizations</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overcoming negative or lukewarm opinions of the value of students to the greater Hamilton community.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	Will create a more inviting environment for students where they can feel as integral parts of the Hamilton community. Will ideally allow for more economic activity as a result of students within the Hamilton community.
How?	Will work to reach out to businesses to essentially form sponsorship agreements that would facilitate the creation of discounts or other offers in exchange for promotion of the business by the MSU. Process will involve having meetings to form relationships and negotiate sponsorships.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marketing and Communications Department of the MSU</li> <li>- Director of Marketing and Communications of the MSU</li> <li>- VP Finance</li> <li>- AVP Finance</li> <li>- Office Clerks</li> <li>- Executive Assistant</li> </ul>

**THEME 3: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

While the Earth's climate changes over millennia, it is undeniable that humans are the primary cause of the rapid changes in Earth's climate which have taken place over the last several decades. Society as a whole must transition to a carbon neutral state in the next couple decades, with a need for future technology to repair the harm done the planet's ecosphere. In this section, I outline some of the steps I hope to pursue to help the McMaster Community achieve sustainability. I take a strong focus on waste production and management, as I believe this is a particularly notable area of focus due to the capacity for rapid change. With these steps in place, I hope to put McMaster University on a path to carbon neutrality by 2030.

<b>Objective 10</b>	<b>Waste Management Initiative to better understand and reduce waste production at McMaster facilities</b>
Description	Waste management is an often overlooked issue regarding sustainability, as end-of-life disposal of products is sometimes deprioritized, with focus kept to selection/purchase of more environmentally friendly products. In addition, while the university has completed audits of its waste production in the past, there are significant areas in which more specific information is needed to

	<p>better understand McMaster’s Waste Production. For example, information pertaining to how accurately waste is disposed of into the correct disposal bin by individuals, is limited. In addition, as of 2019 when the most recent waste audit was completed, McMaster missed the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation &amp; Parks target that 60% of waste must be recycled or composted by a proportion of about 15%. As the return to campus takes place, it is very important that more data is collected to understand pandemic-specific changes which must be taken into account in any future Waste Management Strategy. I will work directly with Facility Services, the management of MUSC, and the Office of Sustainability to help create a more comprehensive audit to better understand McMaster’s waste production and develop strategies for mitigation.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will give a clear understanding of the nature of waste generation at McMaster.</li> <li>- Student insight can be taken into account when designing information collection and analysis.</li> <li>- Will directly inform the MSU, university, and other partners of the success or failure of existing initiatives.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult logistics in organizing sufficient students to take part.</li> <li>- Will involve close collaboration with multiple partners within Facility Services, which will introduce significant complexities.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Will give forth valuable insights which can be used to design an information campaign to inform students of how to be more mindful when disposing of waste. The McMaster community will be able to use this to chart a more sustainable path moving forward.</p>
How?	<p>A more comprehensive audit will be completed mainly through more direct surveying and data collection of waste generation. Thus, students will at the core be involved in assessing and monitoring how waste is disposed by individuals within public environments. Simultaneously, opportunities will exist to survey waste which has been collected to assess how appropriately items have been sorted by individuals when disposing of waste. This information will then be collated and analyzed in collaboration with Facility Services.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- University Affairs Committee</li> <li>- Facility Services</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability Office</li> <li>- McMaster Sustainability Activity Committee (MSAC)</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 11</b>	<b>Information campaign to help promote sustainable waste disposal and management in student housing</b>
Description	<p>Waste management however is not simply an issue specific to McMaster’s campus. A plurality of students live off-campus and also must dispose of their recyclable compost and garbage waste. Informing students how to accurately divide their waste In keeping with Hamilton city guidelines will ensure that the greatest proportion of waste is in fact recycled and composted instead of being sent to landfills. I work with the City of Hamilton as well as local partners to lead an information campaign that will help inform students of accurate, at home waste management methods. With this strategy, I hope to create a cleaner and greener community with a reduced environmental impact.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allow students to be informed of appropriate waste disposal</li> <li>- Reduction in waste generation and environmental impact caused by inappropriate waste disposal.</li> <li>- Will increase the efficiency of composting and recycling initiatives</li> <li>- Will improve relationships with the local Hamilton community which sometimes feels negatively about cleanliness of waste disposal by some students.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dissemination of relevant information is difficult.</li> <li>- Differences in City of Hamilton and McMaster policies regarding waste disposal are unlikely to be removed by the end of my term, thus initiative will likely have to highlight differences in waste disposal practices. This aspect will most likely reduce its efficacy, as some may be confused by the differences in policies.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>The creation of a more informed, knowledgeable student body that is able to more effectively and accurately sort waste, thereby reducing environmental impact. Furthermore, this may also come with the added benefit of improved relations with Hamilton community members.</p>
How?	<p>An information campaign, making use of speeches, presentations, distribution of pamphlets and brochures, as well as use of social media will likely be used to complete this objective.</p>

Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP Municipal Affairs</li> <li>- Municipal Affairs Committee</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- University Affairs Committee</li> <li>- Marketing &amp; Communications Department of the MSU</li> <li>- MSAC</li> <li>- Office of Sustainability</li> <li>- Facility Services</li> <li>- Office of Community Relations of McMaster University</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 12</b>	<b>Work with Faculty to develop more sustainable lab practices</b>
Description	<p>McMaster Is it leader in research and is defined by its many innovative research labs who have made breakthroughs throughout the university's history. However, research is a often a long, complex process that requires significant resources to accomplish and may also produce significant amounts of waste. With modern technologies and resources available, significant portion of this waste is unavoidable as there are strict guidelines to follow to maintain scientific rigor. Nonetheless, this is not to say there aren't areas for improvement. I hope to work to create pilot project that can be used to help better catalogue waste production in labs, mainly focused on single-use, disposable plastics. With the knowledge gained from this pilot project we will be able to devise methods by which waste production can be reduced through the creation of a list of best practises. In the future, students will be able to experience the benefits of more sustainable and equitable lab practises in research opportunities.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of more environmentally friendly laboratory practices.</li> <li>- Greater mindfulness in what the ancillary impacts of research are, and how byproducts of experimentation impact the greater world.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large, diverse nature of laboratory practices will make adoption difficult.</li> <li>- Decentralized nature of research lab administration across the university will mean there is less uptake of new initiatives unless willingness exists within researchers themselves.</li> </ul>

Long-term implications	More equitable as research at McMaster University, a development which will directly benefit the education of the student body. Reduced waste consumption by labs at McMaster, with opportunities for students to more directly be aware of how their work relates to the greater world.
How?	I will lead a pilot project to catalogue waste production in one lab and present it. Techniques and methods discovered through consultations, research, and interviews will be used to give best practices and recommendations. This will ideally give greater resources to allow researchers to be able to reduce waste production or environmental harm where possible.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vice President of Research at McMaster University</li> <li>- Office of Sustainability</li> <li>- Facility Services</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 13</b>	<b>Work with Hospitality Services to reduce food waste and ensure excess food supports those experiencing food insecurity</b>
Description	Waste management is also an issue specific to the production of food at McMaster. Hospitality services provides a wide array of different dietary options for those in the McMaster community. Despite the scale of Hospitality Services, there has not been a specific audit of waste production or food waste regarding the department. I hope to support the creation of an audit to understand how much food waste is produced by Hospitality Services and then implement mitigation strategies in collaboration with the department as well as Facility Services. These mitigation strategies will be two-fold: Firstly, they will aim to reduce food waste production and thus environmental impact. Secondly, we will propose alternate applications of excess food supplies, so they may be used to support students and other a part of the Hamilton community experiencing food insecurity.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced waste production by Hospitality Services, thereby reducing environmental impact</li> <li>- Greater support for those who are food insecure</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitality Services has already committed to particular initiatives, such as the McMaster Community Fridge. While their support here has been phenomenal, it may make the</li> </ul>

	organization less inclined to collaborate in a similar, if slightly different capacity.
Long-term implications	More equitable distribution of food resources to those in need while simultaneously preventing food waste.
How?	As described in the description, an audit combined with conversations with Hospitality Services leadership will be key.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- Hospitality Services</li> <li>- MSAC</li> <li>- Office of Sustainability</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 14</b>	<b>Choose to Reuse Reusable Container Program</b>
Description	<p>Visiting restaurants and spending one’s hard earned time and money at local businesses is an important social activity. It is also a great way to spend time with friends and family, an activity that we have been deprived off during the pandemic. As students return to the McMaster community, I hope to support this important social activity not only through discounts (as discussed in the Building a Stronger Hamilton Community section) but also by making the activity more environmentally friendly. I hope to spearhead the Choose to Reuse Program. This was a program introduced before the pandemic as a way for students to use reusable containers. First year students in residence were given a card which they could give to select eateries on McMaster’s campus, after which they then would receive food in a reusable container. Then, at any point in the future, when the student returned the container (unwashed is fine!) to any of the select eateries, they could either receive the card back or more food in the container. This is a great way to incentivize the use of reusable container, by having it as an option at multiple commonly visited food spots. I hope to expand this to local Hamilton business as well, in collaboration with Hospitality Services and companies specializing in distribution of reusable containers to restaurants, such as Friendlier. With this program in place and available to all students, we can greatly reduce generation of waste and create a more sustainable community.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will allow easy access to reusable food containers, thereby reducing environmental impact</li> <li>- Will build goodwill within the community and connections</li> </ul>

	<p>between students and Hamilton as a whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External vendor of food containers will take up cleaning and distribution</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating collaboration and discussions with potential vendors</li> <li>- The question of which body (McMaster, the MSU, or another party) will compensate the food container company is still present. I will strongly advocate for this to be done by McMaster.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Creation of a more cohesive, and truly unique experience where students are able to purchase food in a reusable container both on and off-campus in Hamilton, thereby reducing environmental impact while giving a strong sense of community.</p>
How?	<p>As mentioned, will work directly with an external company which will manage the production, cleaning, distribution, and other logistics of the food containers. There will then be collaborations with local businesses which can take part as they see fit.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Finance</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP Municipal Affairs</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- MSAC</li> <li>- Office of Sustainability</li> <li>- Facility Services</li> <li>- Hospitality Services</li> <li>- Okanagan Committee</li> <li>- Student Success Advisory Council (SSAC)</li> <li>- Local Hamilton businesses</li> <li>- External reusable container vendors</li> </ul>

**THEME 4: EQUITABLE EDUCATION**

Arguably, education is the unifying tenet which brings together everyone in the McMaster community. As a group, all members are united by a shared interest in teaching and learning, conducting inquiry, and a desire to better understand our world. As a result, it is imperative that education be equitable, accessible, and reflective of both the needs and future prospects of our community. My proposals outline the means by which I hope to better unite McMaster's goal's for education with real-world application and how I hope to

make education more accessible through greater access to free or lower cost textbooks, research methods, and skill development.

<b>Objective 15</b>	<b>Work with Libraries to promote Information Literacy</b>
Description	<p>The Association of College and Research Libraries defines information literacy as, "a set of integrated abilities encompassing...discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced...and the use of information in creating new knowledge...". Information literacy as a concept is vital to students to further their education and professional growth. However, services are often underutilized due to insufficient promotion and exposure. To help remedy this, I hope to work directly with McMaster Libraries as well as faculty to directly integrate services which improve information literacy and student skills, such as LinkedIn Learning, into courses. The result will be a more cohesive and equitable educational experience which will give students the necessary skills to achieve not only academic but also professional success.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More cohesive and thoroughly educational experience which teaches students about appropriate research methods and inquiry tools</li> <li>- Existing resources which are underused by the student body (such as LinkedIn Learning) can be more thoroughly used.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires wide array of collaborations with professors and instructors across faculties and programs to have large impact, which is infeasible.</li> <li>- In terms of faculty, it may only attract those already engaged with the topic.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>More cohesive educational experience which teaches inquiry, research methods, and other useful academic tools. Increased efficiency of student ancillary fees are LinkedIn Learning, - which all students pay for, can be more effectively utilized.</p>
How?	<p>A pilot project would have to be attempted to serve as an example. This would involve the incorporation of LinkedIn Learning and information literacy tools more deeply within course curricula. Likely if it can be trialed in multiple courses of diverse faculty backgrounds, the initiative can be more impactful. This, combined with a large-scale information campaign by both the University and MSU is key.</p>

Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OER Committee</li> <li>- Ron Joyce Centre Research Services Librarian (has LinkedIn Learning focus)</li> <li>- SSAC</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 16</b>	<b>Increased adoption of OERs to reduce or often eliminate textbook costs</b>
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Description	<p>Textbook costs represent one of the largest and most restrictive factors preventing academic success for students. On average, post-secondary students in Ontario spend more than \$500 on textbooks every semester, an amount which can also vary wildly. For all students, but especially those of lower socioeconomic backgrounds, this can be a major detriment to their economic security and thus wellbeing. Open educational resources refer to freely accessible, text, audio, video, or other types of media which can be utilized by researchers for collaboration, teaching, and learning. This allows for the creation of course specific media which can be used to replace textbooks as a point of reference in courses. Essentially, they offer the opportunity for classes to no longer require textbooks but instead make use of specifically designed materials which can be provided to students without additional charge. Currently there exists an annual grant of \$16,000 to support creation of more OERs, while other institutions offer more than \$200,000. I will advocate for greatly increased OER funding and push for inclusion of OER production to be a part of the professor tenure process in keeping with DOERS3 guidelines. I look forward to directly collaborating with the Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning, OER Committee, and McMaster Libraries among others to achieve this goal. Being a strong champion for the greater adoption of OERs at McMaster, I hope to set the institution on a path to create a future with reduced or potentially no excess textbook costs.</p>
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| Benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced textbook and supplementary materials costs for students.</li> <li>- More course-specific information contained in course materials</li> <li>- Ease of updating and correcting of errors or when new research unveils new findings</li> <li>- Opportunity for more equitable education</li> </ul> |
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Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stigma against scholastic rigor of OERs</li> <li>- Insufficient funds or knowledge to promote large-scale OER development</li> <li>- Question of source of funds</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	If OERs are widely adopted, students will have access to lower cost education that is of higher quality, more specific to their needs, more equitable, and can be delivered in a manner that allows professors and McMaster as an institution to better separate themselves as leaders in education.
How?	Conducting an expansion of the current OER pilot project, but significantly increasing the scope of the promotion campaign as well as funds available.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- University Affairs Committee</li> <li>- Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)</li> <li>- OER Committee</li> <li>- MacPherson Institute</li> <li>- McMaster Libraries</li> <li>- SSAC</li> <li>- Student Affairs</li> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- McMaster Faculties</li> <li>- MUFA</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 17</b>	<b>Introduce research assistant opportunities in which students may work to develop OERs in collaboration with professors</b>
Description	It is important as well that within the production process of OERs, students be directly involved. This will ensure we create educational resources which are accessible and equitable to those within the McMaster community while fulfilling the needs of students more accurately. As a part of McMaster University's recently adopted Teaching and Learning Strategy, there exists the Student Partners Program. SPP is an initiative which aims to highlight and promote collaboration with and leadership by students in future academic developments. I hope to use this framework to create research assistant opportunities for students to help assist professors in the creation of OERs. This would allow for some of the burden in production of OERs to be removed from professors and instructors,

	<p>further incentivizing their production, while at the same time creating unique, interesting and skill-developing work opportunities for students. Students can then benefit from diversified attributes, opening new horizons for future work. With the implementation of this strategy, students can directly be involved in helping make their own education more accessible, less expensive and more equitable for the future.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student educational and work opportunities which are paid</li> <li>- Mentoring of students by professor</li> <li>- Student insights shared in education development</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential lack of qualification of students</li> <li>- Professor apprehension</li> <li>- Question of source of funds</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Development of more equitable education that takes into account student insights, is of higher quality, and allows for mentoring opportunities for undergraduate students that simultaneously reduce time/work burden on professors.</p>
How?	<p>Would be done in direct collaboration of previously mentioned objective. Conduct an expansion of the current OER pilot project, but significantly increasing the scope of the promotion campaign as well as funds available. Give preferential treatment to proposals which have student research assistant positions, and have singularly allocated funding specifically for initiatives with student research assistant positions.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- University Affairs Committee</li> <li>- Marketing &amp; Communications Department of the MSU</li> <li>- Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)</li> <li>- OER Committee</li> <li>- MacPherson Institute</li> <li>- McMaster Libraries</li> <li>- SSAC</li> <li>- Student Affairs</li> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- McMaster Faculties</li> <li>- MUFA</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 18</b>	<b>Promotion of UN SDG integration within courses</b>
Description	<p>The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are prominent sustainability and societal development landmarks which exist as targets which will create a fairer, more environmentally friendly, more just World for all. They are aimed to be achieved by 2030, and have been very strongly endorsed by McMaster University as organizational goals. While McMaster has made significant progress regarding the topic, there still exists a wide gap between targets and execution. There is inadequate incorporation of SDGs within courses in a manner specific to course content. Furthermore, the lack of a unified, organization-wide approach dampens greater incorporation of SDGs. The inclusion of SDG-topics in courses is highly important to pursue, as it will create curricula that is more inclusive of topics vital to the future professional success of students. To help achieve this, I will pursue the creation of a university-wide SDG strategy with a focus on greater incorporation of SDGs in courses. By communicating to students via platforms such as Mosaic and the Academic Calendar what UN SDGs may be discussed/reflected within the content of courses, I hope to give individuals the agency to chart an academic path more in-line with knowledge relevant to their growth and success.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will make education more equitable</li> <li>- May be relatively straightforward to incorporate as UN SDGs already are endorsed by the institution.</li> <li>- Teaching and Learning Strategy (TLS) has many overlaps, which may make incorporation straightforward</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presence of TLS may make this initiative redundant</li> <li>- Professors/instructors would likely be unsure of how to incorporate this initiative, thus would need support</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Creation of more mindful, equitable education that gives students the necessary insight to help them succeed in future pursuits.</p>
How?	<p>Will be run via a pilot project in the Biochemistry Department. It will be presented to MUFA, the TLS Steering Committee, and other groups to determine next steps.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vice Provost Teaching and Learning</li> <li>- TLS Steering Committee</li> <li>- MacPherson Institute</li> <li>- MUFA</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 19</b>	<b>Increasing Experiential Learning Opportunities</b>
Description	Experiential learning is often defined as “learning by doing”. It allows those to partake in opportunities to reflect on a particular task that is completed and gain real-world skills associated with it. The insights which may be gained from having such granular, first-hand interaction with concepts, ideas or real world applications has been shown to be one of the most successful ways of allowing individuals to gain the skills they need for professional success. The impacts of the pandemic has greatly reduced the breadth of services offered to students. I will advocate for the reintroduction of previously cancelled experiential learning opportunities as well as greater expansion of new opportunities.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More impactful educational opportunities that give students a more visceral experience</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Requires collaboration and coordination across many different partners in McMaster as well community groups</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	Create more well-rounded and informed students with a deeper understanding of the topics they have learned.
How?	With collaborations with the Office Community Engagement, the Student Success Centre, and programs such as MacChangers, I hope to ensure a greater proportion of the student body has access to community-based experiential opportunities that will expand their insights and bolster future professional opportunities.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vice Provost Teaching and Learning</li> <li>- MacPherson Institute</li> <li>- MacChangers</li> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- The Forge</li> <li>- Office of Community Engagement</li> <li>- McMaster Faculties</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 20</b>	<b>Advocating for a freeze in tuition</b>
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Description	<p>Tuition has almost without exception been an ever-growing factor contributing to inaccessibility of higher. Since the year 2000, McMaster tuition has increased from less than \$4000 on average to approximately \$7000 on average, faster than inflation and has become particularly inaccessible because of the pandemic. International students have even more burdensome tuition expenses which generally are four to seven times that of their domestic peers. I will advocate for a moratorium on increase in tuition for the next 3 years to help ensure financial security of the student body, especially as the pandemic has continued to significantly dampen career prospects. Through collaborations with the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, I will advocate for a province-wide initiative that will bolster university funding through avenues outside of the pockets of students themselves. Through the implementation of this strategy, we can create a more accessible and affordable educational path for us all.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduces financial burden on the student body, thereby increasing financial security</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- McMaster would have to reallocate million of dollars of funding and find other sources, an action they are unlikely to pursue.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Increased financial accessibility of post-secondary education. Reduced impact of one's economic class on outcomes in post-secondary educational outcomes.</p>
How?	<p>Advocacy to core McMaster leadership through sharing of student testimonials, relevant statistics, and other student perspectives.</p>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- McMaster President and Vice Provosts</li> <li>- McMaster Board of Governor</li> <li>- Vice Provost Teaching and Learning</li> </ul>

**Theme 5: Career Development**

For most students, their time at McMaster is one step in a complex, individual journey through their career. It is a time to learn the necessary knowledge and skills which will help a person succeed in their pursuits later in life. However, a twofold problem exists. Firstly, there is a lack of supports in some avenues. Secondly, while other arenas contain many support systems, often students have not been given sufficient opportunity to seek them out or fully utilize those resources. I outline the steps through which I will bolster the career development of students to ensure that after graduation, they possess a

breadth of skills which will ensure their success.

<b>Objective 21</b>	<b>Increasing career development supports for students</b>
Description	The Student Success Centre offers a myriad of different supports to students to bolster the development of career and professional skills. There must be increased promotion of existing services to ensure that students can receive the necessary bolstering of their professional skills. In addition there must be adoption of more individualized career plans so to allow students to chart a path unique to them and their future careers. I will work directly with SSC to expand their online chat hours to give students in greater access to relevant supports and pursue more direct promotion of their services during Welcome Week so students can embark upon an individualized professional development journey. With these steps in place, both incoming and existing students in McMaster will be given greater resources to understand what skills they must develop, where their interests lie, and different competencies or attributes they must develop to help achieve their goals.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater accessibility of services for students</li> <li>- Greater success for students when applying for professional opportunities</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The question of where to access additional funding for these increased services remains.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	Ideally, this initiative can help to create a more informed, capable student demographic that is able to apply for gainful employment more effectively.
How?	Conducting advocacy, researching cost-effective solutions, and sharing student insights, testimonials, and relevant data with University partners
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Success Centre</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 22</b>	<b>Supporting greater promotion of existing services and forming a united front between McMaster and the MSU</b>
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Description	Guidance and recommendations regarding cover letters, resumes/CVs, personal statements, and application writing is often cumbersome to access. In addition, students are sometimes exposed to disparate, contradictory recommendations beyond general rules such as conciseness and use of methods such as STAR (Skill, Task, Action, Result). Thus, I will work with Student Success Centre and the faculties to help standardize protocols and recommendations, as well as better pointing students to services which will ensure resumes/CVs, cover letters, personal statements, and applications can be completed with success.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased usage of existing services</li> <li>- Greater success for students when applying for professional opportunities</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May have to use novel methods of promotion, as existing are likely repetitive and not necessarily going to cause large student engagement if similar to existing promotions.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	Ideally, this initiative can help to create a more informed, capable student demographic that is able to apply for gainful employment more effectively.
How?	Conducting advocacy, researching cost-effective solutions, and sharing student insights, testimonials, and relevant data with University partners. Furthermore, collaborating on investigating unique promotional techniques.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Marketing &amp; Communications of the MSU</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 23</b>	<b>Helping foster a greater number of networking and occupational education opportunities</b>
Description	The Student Success Centre has access to a wide range of different employers, resources and specific programs which can give students the resources they need for their professional success. I will work with SSC, the Alumni Office, McMaster Industry Liaison Office, as well as the Forge to create bi-weekly networking opportunities to allow student to directly engage with those working within the huge variety of different fields students can pursue after their education at McMaster. In addition, in collaboration with SSC, the various faculties, and student societies, I will pursue a strategy to centralize information about existing career supports including networking opportunities.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased usage of existing services</li> <li>- Greater success for students when applying for professional opportunities</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many unrelated and diverse groups currently offer networking opportunities. These range from faculty student societies, student clubs, faculties, program departments, SSC, third parties, and other groups. Coordinating all of these groups may be very difficult.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	With these steps in place there will be better dissemination of information regarding what networking and career support opportunities exist. This will give students the knowledge to better pursue topics which motivate them, as they will have a more accurate understanding of what tools which exist and be able to form stronger connections to those already within their field interest.
How?	Conducting consultations, discussions, and showing of relevant statistics to persuade faculty. Furthermore, collaborating on investigating unique promotional techniques.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Success Centre</li> <li>- McMaster Faculties and Program Departments</li> <li>- Director of Marketing &amp; Communications of the MSU</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 24</b>	<b>Increasing internship and work term opportunities</b>
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Description	Employment opportunities often represent defining aspects of an individual's career path. They represent opportunities to learn vital, real-world skills which can separate one candidate from another in future applications and can also serve as important avenues of personal growth. In the COVID-19 impacted economy, opportunities for all, but especially students have been severely reduced. I will work directly with faculties as well as Student Success Centre to expand the existing number of work and internship opportunities which exist, especially into programs and faculties traditionally less associated with such opportunities.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuable experiential learning opportunities which can give students high quality, real-world experiences which will help them develop as individuals and allow them to ensure their personal resumes are more noteworthy.</li> <li>- Greater success for students when applying for professional opportunities</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forming these opportunities will be difficult, as it will require faculties, program societies, and other groups to form more direct relationships with external partners to accept students.</li> <li>- Question of where increased funding will come from is still apparent.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	With this initiative, I hope to create a future where students have more capacity to expand their tangible skills and pursue their occupational interests.
How?	Conducting advocacy, researching cost-effective solutions, and sharing student insights, testimonials, and relevant data with University partners.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Success Centre</li> <li>- McMaster Faculties, specifically their divisions focusing on experiential learning</li> <li>- Office of Community Engagement</li> <li>- Director of Marketing &amp; Communications of the MSU</li> <li>- VP Education</li> <li>- AVP University Affairs</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 25</b>	<b>Working with The Forge and Student Success Centre to increase entrepreneurial supports and opportunities for</b>
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	<b>students</b>
Description	The Forge is a leading incubator and support system which bolsters start-up companies founded in the Hamilton community. With the support of The Forge, these transformative institutions hope to commercialize breakthrough products. The services offered by The Forge are available to students, but work has to be done to ensure that they can actually be more accessible, and students have the support they need when transitioning from simply having an idea to actually creating a nascent business. In addition, I hope to work with Student Success Centre to fill the gap that exists between businesses which qualify for support through The Forge, and students who's ideas would not if they are in the nascent stage of start-up creation. To accomplish these goals, I will lead a public information campaign event so students possess necessary knowledge about The Forge and Student Success Centre's services. This will be done via interviews/networking opportunities with business leaders who launched their ideas with the help of The Forge and collaboration with SSC. Welcome Week will be a prime aspect of this campaign, as it is an opportunity to help give first year students the tools they need en masse. Filling this gap will not only support the entrepreneurial spirit of students at large, but also help identify and reduce systemic inequalities which disadvantage marginalized groups.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater support for students in a middle ground where they otherwise would not qualify for The Forge's services. This would give them the opportunity to achieve greater likelihood of success moving forward.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May result in excessive burden on The Forge of groups with insufficiently developed ideas. The Forge likely has insufficient financial or human capital to manage this burden at this time, thus more would have to be found.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	With the implementation of these supports, I hope to give students the tools they need to enhance their entrepreneurial potential and create innovative, value-producing ideas.
How?	Conducting advocacy, researching cost-effective solutions, and sharing student insights, testimonials, and relevant data with University partners. Furthermore, collaborating on investigating unique promotional techniques.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Success Centre</li> <li>- Director of Student Success Centre</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Forge</li> <li>- Director of Marketing &amp; Communications of the MSU</li> </ul>
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**Miscellaneous Priorities**

<b>Objective 26</b>	<b>Gathering of greater knowledge about the McMaster community</b>
Description	This proposal aims to give all stakeholders a much more developed and solid information base about life at McMaster. By having a series of reoccurring studies that investigate a huge variety of topics (rental prices, food insecurity, financial security, quality of education, extracurricular opportunities, sustainability, mental health, physical health, job attainment in relevant fields of expertise...) to allow all stakeholders (MSU, McMaster, City of Hamilton...) to have granular, and re-occurring information about what life is like for students, faculty members, staff, and other community members within the McMaster sphere. Some of this information collection could also be a continuation of some of the initiatives stated in this year plan, while others may be continuations of existing initiatives, and still others could be new.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will provide a wide array of high quality, statistically rigorous information that can be used to understand student perspectives on a large breadth of topics.</li> <li>- Will allow new initiatives and projects to be much more directly informed by student views.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scope of research unclear</li> <li>- MSU currently lacks any internal data analysis or statistical research position. Developing such a position may be necessary if we want continued collaboration with IRA. This would be needed to ensure the MSU has the capacity to understand what is being shared with the organization and how to apply it to advocacy, services, or other applications.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	This initiative will hopefully allow for much more long-term and rich understanding of life at Mac, and hopefully allow more informed planning in all areas.
How?	I will work directly with Institutional Research Analysis (IRA) to implement this initiative. Collaboration with other relevant partners, such as Okanagan Committee or SSAC may also take place.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional Research Analysis (IRA)</li> <li>- Student Affairs</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SSAC</li> <li>- SWC</li> <li>- University Libraries</li> <li>- General Manager of the MSU</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 27</b>	<b>Re-orientation and expansion of First Year Council purview</b>
Description	<p>The purpose of First-Year Council is to be representative body serving to give first year students an avenue to become involved in student governance. Akin to the SRA, FYC representatives can lead a variety of initiatives and serve as leadership figures for their constituents. This year, the FYC Coordinator was hired much earlier than is tradition, so we saw an opportunity to transform the role and understand how FYC can evolve to have greater impact. FYC Coordinator (Fayth Frank) and I are investigating what this re-organization will look like. Currently, we hope to introduce a series of volunteer executive positions to be occupied by upper year students. These positions would support not only the elected first year students, but another new addition, a group of first year volunteers. With this much larger group, FYC will be able to plan more large-scale initiatives, have greater impact on the student body, and collaborate with other clubs in services with a greater scope.</p>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased international student representation for the MSU</li> <li>- Increased opportunities for upper year students to mentor first years.</li> <li>- More opportunities for first year students to be involved in FYC and more generally student life events</li> <li>- Greater breadth of impact of FYC on the McMaster community.</li> </ul>
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No experience for FYC to have more than one upper year student.</li> <li>- No experience for FYC to have volunteers separate from elected representatives.</li> <li>- Exact type/scope of FYC-led events has to be better defined.</li> </ul>
Long-term implications	<p>Increased first year student advocacy. Greater capacity for FYC to operate larger-scale events. Finally, a more prominent role of mentorship in FYC's mandate.</p>

How?	Outlined mainly in the description. A review of relevant job descriptions, creation of new job descriptions, review of Bylaw 12 (which outlines the purpose, organization, and scope of FYC), and consultations with the FYC Coordinator are the main methods.
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- FYC Coordinator</li><li>- Director of Human Resources</li><li>- VP Administration</li></ul>