



MAYA HOBBS

FOR

VICE PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)

2024-2025



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Relevant Experience

Education

- **McMaster University**
 - Honours Bachelor of Arts - Political Science Specialization in Public Law & Judicial Studies with an Interdisciplinary minor in Inclusive Communities and Social Justice

McMaster Students Union

- **Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance General Assembly Delegate**
- **McMaster Pre-Law Society**
 - President; Vice President; Vice President of Student Affairs

McMaster University

- **Research Assistant**
 - McMaster Political Science Department
- **Welcome Week Social Science Faculty Representative**
- **McMaster Political Science Student Association**
 - Vice President of Administration; Second-Year Representative

External Experiences

- **St. Michael's Hospital**
 - Administrative Resident
- **Downtown Milton BIA**
 - Special Events Coordinator Intern
- **St. Michael's Hospital Foundation**
 - Seasonal Support Contractor; Intern

Federal & Provincial Priorities

OUSA President

OUSA is a valuable partner in our provincial advocacy efforts. As such, I will support the continued engagement and partnership with OUSA. Further, I announce my intention to run for OUSA President. The position has not been filled by an MSU member since 2015-2016. With a strong Education team and the MSU president returning, we are in the best position to take on more leadership in OUSA.

CASA Membership Status

As you may know, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) is one of our main partners for federal-level advocacy. The MSU's current observership status ends this summer and the MSU will have to decide whether or not to become a voting member. I will work closely with the Board of Directors, SRA, and student community to assess if there is an interest in the MSU joining CASA. This would potentially require running a referendum to increase MSU fees in order to be able to join as a voting member. If it is found that the study body is not in favor of joining CASA as a voting member, I will push to continue our observership status with CASA for the following year.

Federal & Provincial Priorities

Educational Funding

Post-secondary educational funding is becoming an increasing concern for universities in Ontario due to the fact that the province has not increased post-secondary funding in 12 years, there is a cap on domestic student tuition, and a newly introduced cap on international students. Universities are struggling financially, and the burden of supporting these institutions should not be placed on students, particularly in the midst of an affordability crisis. Therefore, I will advocate for the government to increase funding to the post-secondary educational sector. The government has recently increased funding to post-secondary institutions by \$1.3 billion. However, McMaster will receive less than \$10 million dollars of this fund. Universities need more funding to be able to operate and deliver quality education to students and current government funds are not sufficient. Thus, I will continue to advocate and lobby the provincial government for increased educational funding.

Student Housing

Student housing is a prominent issue that students are facing. In order to address the student housing crisis, I plan to work with our advocacy partners to push forward the need for student-proposed housing. In doing so, I intend to advocate for McMaster to receive grants to create student purposed housing, specifically residences. In addition, I intend to work with the MSU President in their goal to convince the university to publicly agree to cap student enrollment where it currently is (approximately 36,000 students). The cap should remain in place until there is sufficient housing available at McMaster for first-year students, domestic out-of-province students, and international students.

Municipal Priorities

Sustainability in Hamilton

The previous Education team began a project to promote sustainability in our community. The goal of this project is to collaborate with neighbouring Hamilton Business Improvement Areas (BIA) and campus partners to convince and assist food businesses in offering their products on the Too Good To Go app. The intention of this app is to reduce food waste by offering food products at the end of the day for a reduced price. I intend to see this project through and ensure that the MSU is doing its part to promote sustainability in the community.

Hamilton LRT Project

The Hamilton LRT project is a transit development project currently in progress. There are many components of this project that impact McMaster students. I want to ensure that the MSU will have a voice in the project to advocate on behalf of students. In particular, I will push for the Hamilton LRT to be a publically operated system.

Our City Survey Hamilton

The Our City Survey is a survey conducted by the City of Hamilton directed towards understanding the perspective of Hamilton residents. I intend to work with the City of Hamilton to update the questions within the survey and ensure McMaster students are a target audience for this survey. I will also advise the City of Hamilton on how to best engage students to complete the survey.

University Priorities

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence has become an increasing concern for students with the evolution of new technology and the creation of AI policies. As a result, I am committed to reflecting student voices in my advocacy efforts towards AI, particularly at the University level. I have submitted my self-nomination, with the condition of election to Vice President (Education), to sit on McMaster's new Artificial Intelligence Advisory Committee. This committee will be instrumental in shaping the University's AI guidelines. By participating in the Advisory Committee, I intend to bring student perspectives and concerns to the forefront of AI policy. These concerns include AI implementation in the classroom, protecting students within the academic integrity policy, and keeping the Turn It In AI detector turned off.

Inclusivity With Hospitality Services

Currently, hospitality services offer limited working hours for many of the food service locations on campus. This may present challenges for students who are fasting and living on campus who need access to food services outside the currently posted hours. I will work with hospitality services to expand the hours and food services available, specifically during Ramadan. By successfully implementing this, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive campus environment.

University Priorities

Enhancing Education: Microcredentials

The recently introduced Microcredentials Program in the Continuing Education Department presents many benefits for students. However, the cost of receiving a Microcredential puts a greater financial burden on students wishing to supplement their education. Currently, McMaster does not have a scholarship fund tailored to the Microcredentials program and OSAP coverage is limited for this program. Thus, I intend to create a proposal for McMaster's Scholarships and Bursaries Committee to create a new scholarship fund for this opportunity.

Return to Campus: Homecoming

In recent discussions with the University, the MSU has been advocating for Homecoming (HOCO) to return to campus. I intend to create a strong partnership with the University and municipal stakeholders, such as municipal councillors, to garner increased support for the return of Homecoming to campus. I will work with the MSU to facilitate a successful first HOCO back on campus with the intention of reducing street parties and prioritizing student safety.

MSU Priorities

Strengthening Education Team

I recognize and value the importance of having a strong team to lead. I also understand and will take on the necessary management abilities crucial to this role. With that, I intend to optimize the available student positions in order to allow for more voices within the Education team and support our advocacy priorities effectively. In this role, I will foster a supportive and professional organizational culture that delivers results for students. I will do so by hiring a full Education team and set out a detailed strategic year plan. I will also work with the team to ensure all of our goals set-out in the year plan are met.

Diversity + Equity Network Indigenous Liason

The MSU Diversity + Equity Network has an Indigenous Affairs Executive position outlined in their operating policy. This role is designed to foster communication with Indigenous students and act as a liaison. I intend to support DEN and their efforts to promote this position and their relationship with the Indigenous community at McMaster.

Supporting SRA

The role of Vice President (Education) is a robust position that is able to provide support in multiple areas within the MSU. One of my focuses is to support the SRA and individual caucuses wherever possible. An integral component that I would like to support is promoting the various committees that the SRA is involved with. These committees provide an opportunity for the student body to become more involved. To support the committees, I will work towards increasing interest and awareness of the committees and their accomplishments.

MSU Priorities

MSU Engagement

Student engagement on campus has not reached its full potential. In my consultations, it became clear that improving student engagement is a common concern amongst the student body. To improve student engagement with the MSU on campus, I will work in collaboration with the Advocacy & Policy Research Assistants to create an MSU Community Engagement Survey. The purpose of this survey is to gauge an understanding of the state of student engagement on campus and how to increase this engagement with the MSU. Following the implementation of the survey, I will put together an ad hoc committee within the SRA to evaluate the survey results and explore student engagement within the MSU further. Taking the findings from the survey and committee, the MSU and Education team will be able to incorporate these findings to improve student engagement and provide suggestions for future years.

MSU Political Network

In order to facilitate successful advocacy, having a strong network is key. That is why I will commit to creating a strong MSU political network. I intend to accomplish this by fostering relationships with politicians on every level of government. These relationships will be formed through advocacy efforts with our lobbying partners, but I will also connect with politicians outside of this. I will work to maintain these relationships by continuously following up with politicians and acting on the connections made to further our goals. I also intend to document our contact with politicians so that future Education teams may benefit from our connections.

Student Engagement Priorities

Educational Campaigns

An underappreciated component of the Vice President (Education) portfolio is promoting the work of the Education team to the student body. It is important for students to be aware of the advocacy work being done. To emphasize the work of the Education team, the AVPs and I will put together a variety of educational campaigns catered to our advocacy priorities. These campaigns will include a speaker series, informational events, and social media campaigns.

Supporting Early Networking

Networking is a crucial component of an individual's education and career development. In my consultations it was evident that there is a lack of opportunities to support the career development of first-years. In order to address this gap, I intend to partner with Spark to facilitate a networking event to engage first-years and support their career journey.

Increasing Board of Director Presence

The board of directors plays a pivotal role in the campus community and it is important that BOD is present on campus. I will commit to encouraging opportunities for the board to engage with the student body. This includes utilizing Welcome Week to spread awareness of the Board of Directors and the work that is accomplished. This may also involve events on campus with board members present to have conversations with students.

Consultations

Thank you to everyone I was able to consult with during this process.

Below is a list of individuals and groups I have consulted:

- **Abby Samuels** - Vice President (Education)
- **Jazzlyn Abbot** - AVP Provincial & Federal Affairs
- **Kerry Yang** - AVP Municipal Affairs
- **Jovan Popovic** - MSU President
- **Adam El-Kadi** - Vice President (Administration)
- **Michael Wooder** - MSU Communications Director
- **John McGowen** - MSU General Manager
- **Kim Dej** - Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning
- **Arelene Dosen** - Executive Director and Assistant Dean, Student Success
- **Erin Aspenlieder** - Special Advisor to the Provost on Generative AI
- **Tiffany Li Wu** - OUSA Operations & Communications Coordinator
- **Aidan Thompson** - UTSU Vice-President, Public & University Affairs
- **SRA Humanities Caucus**
- **SRA Science Caucus**
- **SRA Kinesiology Caucus**
- **SRA Health Sciences Caucus**

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read my platform. I hope to be able to advocate on behalf of McMaster students and continue the wonderful work that the previous team has done. I look forward to the upcoming year and seeing what more we will accomplish!

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