



YEAR PLAN

MSU SRA Arts & Science Caucus

Rushan Jeyakumar

2024-2025
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OFFICE OF THE ARTS & SCIENCE CAUCUS

CAUCUS LEADER INTRODUCTION

Dear Arts & Science students,

Firstly, thank you for taking the time to read our year plan! My name is Rushan Jeyakumar and I am a second-year uncombined Arts & Science student. I am excited to work alongside our SRA Observer, Emily Yang, to fulfil the goals outlined in this year plan. Emily is also a second-year uncombined Arts & Science student. This year plan reflects a series of community consultations and reflections on how our caucus can best serve the Arts & Science community, as well as the broader McMaster and Hamilton communities.

Our program is so uniquely diverse, with students engaged in different interests and passions, while making significant contributions across the community. This year plan is dedicated to fostering a spirit of giving back and encouraging greater involvement among Arts & Science students.

The Arts & Science program holds a unique role in the SRA, as one of its smallest represented student groups. In an ArtSci manner of promoting our small community, this year plan should also be seen as a collective effort, where we all can contribute our voices, aspirations, and insights. If you happen to be reading this throughout the 2024-2025 term, feel free to reach out to provide any of your insights as to how our caucus should direct ourselves this year.

Lastly, this year plan seeks to increase engagement between Arts & Science students and the SRA, as well as strengthen our collaboration with the Student Arts & Science Society (SASS). As the two primary student government groups on campus dedicated to serving Arts & Science students, we hope we can open more opportunities for your involvement and input.

Yours sincerely,
Rushan Jeyakumar
SRA Arts & Science Caucus Leader 2024-2025
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GOALS

Objective 1	MSU Divestment from Major Canadian Banks
Description	The MSU currently handles a multi-million-dollar budget, collected from students (among other revenue sources). This amount is handled by CIBC bank, one of Canada's largest financial institutions. CIBC currently invests in a variety of fossil fuel projects and is one of the largest Canadian contributors to climate change. This goal aims to divest from CIBC, and to channel our funds through other financial institutions. One identified financial institutions is First Ontario Credit Union, located in Hamilton.
Benefits	Credit Unions are a form of banking which funnels money back into communities. In redirecting our banking needs to First Ontario Credit Union, the MSU can better understand where our money goes and give back to our local Hamilton community. Additionally, as members of the credit union the MSU becomes a shareholder, meaning that we will be able to vote in the selection of the credit union's directors.
Difficulties	Determining the work required to transition our current financial systems to a credit union.
Long-Term Implications	McMaster Students having more say in where their MSU funds are going, and reassurance that their money is also in part, servicing the Hamilton community instead of funding pollution and fossil fuel emissions.
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations with MSU VP Finance, AVP Finance, and other MSU staff. • Drafting a motion to be passed by the SRA.
Partners	VP Finance, AVP Finance, SRA

Objective 2	SASSEx x SRA Arts & Science Collaborations
Description	The Society for Arts & Science Students (SASS) is the student group which represents Arts & Science students on campus. Both the SRA Representative and SRA Observer hold positions on the SASS Executive Team (SASSEx). We aim to further collaborate with SASS to increase Arts & Science students' engagement with the SRA and MSU. This collaboration can take form through joint events, information sessions, Milk & Cookies, and more. We further aim to work with SASSEx to address prominent issues identified by Arts & Science students.
Benefits	Arts & Science students will have increased engagement with the SRA and MSU. This engagement can take the form of greater understanding of the SRA's work, more Arts & Science involvement in MSU Services and SRA Standing Committees, and help to break the "MSU Bubble" which often exists.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing student engagement and keeping high numbers. • Acquiring funding for larger joint events.
Long-Term Implications	A greater Arts & Science presence in MSU Services, SRA Standing Committees, and other MSU environments.
How?	The SRA Representative and SRA Observer will use our positions on SASSEx to establish an SRA presence at SASS events and hold more joint events. For example, an SRA Milk & Cookies session can be held to provide students with more information on the SRA. We will also work with SASSEx to promote the Arts & Science SRA office hours.
Partners	SASS

Objective 3	Expansion of Retailers Accepting Retail Operations funds
Description	A select number of retailers and restaurants on and outside campus (Off-Campus Restaurant Partner locations) accept Retail Operations funds, which are a way in which students in residence pay for food and beverages. We hope to expand the number of retailers which accept these amounts, which can help students save costs and expand their food options.
Benefits	Students can have access to more food and beverage options. Additionally, students can save money by using Retail Operations funds on their residence cards, rather than spending their own cash, debit or credit cards.
Difficulties	Convincing retailers to accept Retail Operations funds and setting up the infrastructure to accept student cards.
Long-Term Implications	Future students on residence will be able to save costs by using their students cards at a wider variety of retailers. This could also help students discover more retailers, as they know that their student cards will be accepted.
How?	Consulting with Hospitality and Food Services to assess the process of expanding the number of retailers which accept FlexDollars. Contacting management of local restaurants and eateries. Consulting with the relevant MSU VP's to discuss how this can be implemented at MUSC retailers (Chatime, TwelvEighty, and the Grind).
Partners	MUSC, Hospitality and Food Services, other interested SRA caucuses.



Objective 4	MUSC Extension Cord Project
Description	The Arts & Science caucus began this project in 2022 and it has been continued since. Many study spaces in MUSC are not being thoroughly utilized due to a lack of electrical outlets.
Benefits	This project hopes to increase the amount of study spaces on campus and utilize current campus spaces more effectively.
Difficulties	Cost of replacing old and malfunctioning circuits.
Long-Term Implications	Existing spaces that students currently don't use will now be more available. This will create more study spaces, which is especially helpful during particularly busy times, like exam season.
How?	Utilizing the SRA Special Projects Fund to invest in electrical upgrades and extension cords in MUSC. Working with the MUSC maintenance management team to provide student input on where outlets are most needed.
Partners	MUSC Maintenance Management



Objective 5	Addressing Deadnaming on Campus
Description	According to the MSU's PCC 2SLGBTQIA+ Handbook, a deadname is a name no longer used by a transgender person (often, but not always, a birth name). Deadnaming is the action of using, intentionally or not, a trans person's deadname. Deadnaming can be painful and harmful for a trans person on the receiving end, and it is a form of harassment when intentional. Many trans students on campus report being deadnamed. This goal aims to address deadnaming across campus, by campus administration, faculty, and students.
Benefits	By addressing deadnaming on campus, trans and gender queer students, and other students who have preferred names, can feel safer on campus.
Difficulties	Identifying McMaster organizations and services where deadnaming is prevalent and implementing change in systems where necessary.
Long-Term Implications	By eradicating deadnaming on campus, McMaster can make significant strides towards reducing transphobia in their communications to students. This is an essential step in recognizing the identities of various gender queer students at McMaster, and reducing one aspect of anti-trans discrimination by various McMaster institutions.
How?	Through consultations, we will begin by identifying McMaster departments, faculties, and spaces where deadnaming is prevalent. Next, we will be contacting these identified spaces to change their policies and communications systems to end deadnaming.
Partners	PCC, other interested SRA caucuses.



Objective 6	Improving the Arts & Science Office
Description	The Arts & Science programme office is in L.R. Wilson 3038, which also provides a study space to Arts & Science students. Through a feedback form, we aim to collect information from staff and students on how LRW 3038 can better serve students.
Benefits	More inclusive study space.
Difficulties	Engagement with the feedback form, room usage restrictions (limited hours, no food).
Long-Term Implications	This is a unique space on campus for Arts & Science students. Through this objective, we aim to make this space as enjoyable and productive as possible for students to use.
How?	Send out a feedback form to Arts & Science students. Work with SASSEx to collect student feedback with them as well. Create a detailed plan in collaboration with the Arts & Science program office and SASSEx to implement the feedback.
Partners	SASSEx, Arts & Science program office.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

Overarching Vision 1	Promoting the Arts & Science programme to a diverse student groups and across socio-economic statuses
Description	The Arts & Science program is a limited enrolment program of approximately 70 students per year. Students have brought up how the program attracts certain demographics of students, according to ethnicity and socio-economic class. This long-term goal aims to combat this issue by promoting career paths possible from an Arts & Science degree. This goal also includes consultation which the Arts & Science programme office regarding our current admission processes.
Benefits	An Arts & Science degree can lead to a wide variety of career paths; however, many prospective students and their parents feel concerned by the of a clear career path. This is especially true for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and for students of colour. Therefore, by highlighting the successes of former students, prospective students will feel more confident in finding careers after ArtSci, and we will attract a more diverse applicant pool.
Year 1	Consultations with the Arts & Science Program Office and McMaster Admissions to identify opportunities to better promote the program to a wider range of student demographics, as well as reflecting on current admission practices.
Year 2	Publishing content and promoting different Arts & Science career paths. If applicable, modifying admission practices where it is fit.
Year 3	Assessing the impacts of the actions taken in year 2 on the Class of 2030's demographic profile.
Partners	McMaster Admissions, Arts & Science Program Office, UGC Curriculum and Admissions Committee



Overarching Vision 2	Increasing Arts & Science students' engagement with the SRA
Description	The SRA Arts & Science Instagram (@sraartsci) is one of the main ways in which our caucus relays information to Arts & Science students. This goal aims to assess how to increase our Instagram engagement, as well as discovering other possible formats of relaying information to students.
Benefits	Increased Arts & Science student engagement with the SRA and MSU.
Year 1	Consultations to see if other forms of communication may be more impactful or accessible. Other formats may include email newsletters, X, video updates, and more. Increase followers on the SRA account and gradually increase the number of people attending Arts & Science SRA office hours and feedback forms.
Year 2	Increasing engagement with the media format chosen in Year 1.
Year 3	Reflecting on engagement in Years 1 and 2 and seeing if another method should be used, or if we should continue as normal.
Partners	SASS, Arts & Science Program Office

GOALS to strive for

List 5 things that you would like to have prepared for the beginning of September

1. Speak with MUSC Maintenance Management to identify spots for electrical improvement in MUSC.
2. Utilize the SRA Special Projects Fund to cover current electrical upgrades in MUSC.
3. Prepare Instagram posts to introduce the SRA Arts & Science team and year plan.
4. Reach out to SASSEx to plan a meeting to establish joint goals for the year.
5. Reach out to the VP and AVP Finance to discuss divestment from CIBC and other major financial institutions.

List 5 things you would like to have completed during the fall term (1st) List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2nd)

1. 10% increase in followers on the SRA Arts & Science Instagram account.
2. Establish contact with First Ontario Credit Union to see how they are able to meet our banking goals.
3. Hold a joint event with SASS.
4. Receive feedback from students about McMaster departments, offices, and faculty, which have deadnamed them.
5. Contact Hospitality and Food services to see how we can expand the number of retailers which accept Retail Operations funds.



List 5 things you would like to have completed during the winter term (2nd)

1. 25% increase in followers on the SRA Arts & Science Instagram account.
2. Bring a motion to the SRA which proposes divesting from CIBC and moving to First Ontario Credit Union.
3. Host a second event with SASS.
4. Connect with identified McMaster departments, offices, and faculty and implement changes to end deadnaming.
5. Collect feedback from students for improvements to the Arts & Science program office (LRW 3038).

MASTER SUMMARY

June	
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit MUSC to assess current electrical circuits and availability of plugs.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the SRA Special Projects Fund to cover current electrical upgrades in MUSC. • Speak with VP and AVP Finance about divestment from CIBC. • Promote the SRA to incoming first year students during Welcome Week.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive feedback from students about McMaster departments, offices, and faculty, which have deadnamed them.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with First Ontario Credit Union. • Speak with Hospitality and Food services to see how we can expand the network of retailers which accept Retail Operations funds.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a joint event with SASS.
December	
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with identified McMaster departments, offices, and faculty and implement changes to end deadnaming. • Collect feedback from students for improvements to the Arts & Science program office (LRW 3038).
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a motion to the SRA which proposes divesting from CIBC.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with targeted retailers to see if they can accept Retail Operations funds.