

YEAR PLAN

MSU President & CEO
Jovan Popovic
2024-2025



OFFICE OF THE *PRESIDENT*

Objective	Soup & Bread Initiative: Implement a program to provide complimentary soup and bread for lunch several days a week.
Description	Propose a referendum for a \$5 increase in the student union fee to fund the initiative, inspired by the Loaded Ladle program at Dalhousie University. The program will offer free soup and bread during lunch hours, several days a week, potentially serving as many as 75,000 to 90,000 portions annually.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addresses food insecurity and affordability issues. - Provides a reliable food source for students in need. - Served out of TwelvEighty, increasing awareness of the restaurant.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resistance to fee increases from students, despite being very minimal. - Hitting Quorum during the referendum. - Logistical challenges in food preparation and distribution.
Long Term	Establish a sustainable program that becomes a staple of student support services, reducing food insecurity and promoting community well-being.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All of the preparatory work is already done given that this referendum already ran in the spring (and failed to hit quorum). - For the referendum to run again, it would require SRA approval.
Partners	<p>Internal: Food and Beverage team.</p> <p>External: Student Campaign Team.</p>

Objective	Return of Homecoming: Reintroduce an on-campus homecoming event this fall.
Description	Plan and execute a homecoming event with pre-game activities, food trucks, live performances, a late-night concert and more to re-establish a sense of campus community while providing students with a safer, and more appealing alternative to street parties.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revitalizes student life and campus community. - Provides a memorable and safer on campus experience for students. - Strengthens traditions and student engagement.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Execution. Planning is completed already, as this is an event that requires planning to start several months in advance.
Long Term	Re-establish homecoming as an annual tradition, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging among students.
How	<p>With most steps already completed, the below points will be the priorities from here on out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and execute promotional initiatives to ensure high student participation and engagement. - Complete onboarding with Bounce event software. - Gameday execution.
Partners	<p>Internal: VP Finance, VP Education, GM, Director of Marketing & Advertising, Campus Events team, Avtek team.</p> <p>External: Presidents Office*, Student Affairs*, Security Services*, Parking Services*, Hospitality Services*, Facility Services*, Housing & Conference Services*, Athletics & Recreation*, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Police, Bounce, various vendors, various other student unions.</p> <p><small>*Signifies McMaster department</small></p>

Objective	Continuing to Empower Athletics: Enhance the prominence and support for athletics at McMaster.
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Description	Create robust feedback advocacy mechanisms for student athletes, establish dedicated funding for athletic events, and enhance the entertainment aspect of varsity games to continuing improving student life for all students.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides better support and resources for student athletes; student athletes are students too, and require MSU support and advocacy, especially having been a neglected group by the MSU in recent years. - Increases student participation and engagement in athletics by creating an entertainment-based atmosphere for students beyond just sports fans. - Fosters a sense of community on campus.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial constraints and budget limitations. - Coordination with the Athletics and Recreation Department. - Potential service creation processes.
Long Term	Develop a thriving athletic community that enhances the overall student experience and promotes school spirit and campus culture.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Propose a new two faceted, athletic based service that would appeal to both athletes, and non-athletes. - First facet: Service would function as an advocacy group with direct access to the BoD. Funding and space resources would also be available to aid teams in fundraising processes, given that many teams are self funded. - Second facet: Using athletics resources, and potentially athlete staff to aid in promoting overall fitness to the general student body – fitness is the one aspect our services really don’t cover when considering student wellbeing. - Lastly, unrelated to the service but still under the athletics umbrella, collaborate with the Clubs Departments and the Campus Events Department to enhance game day experiences.

Partners	Internal: VP Finance, VP Admin, AVP Internal Governance, AVP Services, Campus Events, Clubs. External: Athletics & Recreation, Varsity Leadership Committee.
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Objective	Transparency: Enhance transparency and communication between the MSU and students.
Description	Restructure the MSU's social media approach by incorporating student-driven media positions, drawing inspiration from successful models like BUSU.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases student awareness of MSU initiatives and achievements. - Fosters a sense of connection and involvement among students. - Promotes a more interactive and engaging communication platform.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restructuring and budget allocation for the media team. - Ensuring consistent and impactful content creation. - Engaging a diverse student audience.
Long Term	Create a transparent and engaging communication platform that effectively informs and connects with the student body, raising overall engagement and awareness of the MSU.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement a student-driven media team with rotational positions. - Provide robust support and resources for the media team. - Regularly evaluate and adjust the social media strategy to ensure effectiveness.
Partners	Internal: VP Finance, Director of Marketing & Advertising. External: N/a.

Objective	TwelvEighty: Transform TwelvEighty into a vibrant student hub.
Description	Redefine the business concept to operate as a restaurant by day and a bar by night, integrate gameday promotions, and enhance the ambiance through renovations.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides a well liked and highly used social and dining space for students. - Encourages students to stay on campus for social activities. - Contributes to a vibrant campus life.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Logistical challenges with staffing in extending operating hours. - Coordinating promotions and events in house. - Ensuring consistent quality and service.
Long Term	Establish TwelvEighty as a central and thriving destination on campus, contributing significantly to student life and food accessibility.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend operating hours and adjust business operations accordingly. - Implement gameday promotions and coordinate regular events. - Invest in renovations and ambiance improvements to create an inviting atmosphere.
Partners	<p>Internal: VP Finance, GM, Food & Beverage Team.</p> <p>External: Facility Services.</p>

Objective	Housing Advocacy: Address housing affordability and availability issues for McMaster students.
Description	Advocate for a cap on student population growth and lobby for federal support to alleviate housing strain in Hamilton.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mitigates housing affordability issues for students. - Ensures better housing availability. - Promotes sustainable growth of the university.

Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing commitments from the university administration on something that is necessary, but generally unappealing to them. - Coordinating lobbying efforts with various stakeholders. - Navigating political and bureaucratic challenges.
Long Term	Achieve a sustainable housing environment for students, ensuring affordability and availability.
How	Engage in discussions with university administration to advocate for a cap on student population growth. Collaborate with the VP Education, CASA, and McMaster administration to lobby for federal support.
Partners	<p>Internal: VP Education, ed team, General Manager.</p> <p>External: Office of the President, Student Affairs, Municipal, Provincial and Federal Government Stakeholders, OUSA, CASA.</p>

Objective	Commuting: Improve transportation accessibility and affordability for McMaster students.
Description	Continue collaboration with parking services and Metrolinx, and execute the bike pass referendum results.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhances transportation options for students. - Reduces commuting costs and challenges. - Promotes sustainable transportation solutions.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination with multiple transportation providers. - Ensuring the feasibility and affordability of proposed initiatives. - Execution through third parties on tight timelines.
Long Term	Develop a comprehensive and sustainable transportation system that meets the diverse needs of McMaster students.

How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue collaboration with parking services and Metrolinx to improve transportation options (better parking solutions, improved bus route frequency). - Continue working with Bike Share to ensure a smooth roll out of the program come September by collaborating on student authentication methods, opt out execution strategies, improved bike location management, securing more bikes with increased usage rates, etc.
Partners	<p>Internal: General Manager.</p> <p>External: Facility Services, Hamilton Bike Share, Metrolinx, HSR.</p>

Objective	Artificial Intelligence: Protect student rights and advance learning techniques in the context of AI.
Description	Advocate for balanced AI guidelines that safeguard academic integrity while promoting educational use of AI technologies.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensures students are well-equipped for the evolving professional landscape. - Protects student rights within academic integrity. - Promotes innovative and effective learning techniques.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Navigating the complexities of AI policy and guidelines. - Balancing the interests of students, faculty, and administration. - Ensuring effective communication and advocacy.
Long Term	Position McMaster students at the forefront of technological innovation, ensuring they are prepared for future challenges.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for balanced guidelines through the university's Generative AI expert panel, which Maya and I are a part of. - Make AI the priority in regular 1:1 meetings with the Vice Provost T&L.

Partners	VP Education, Generative AI Expert Panel, Vice Provost Teaching & Learning
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Objective	Childcare Centre Future Proofing: Shifting to a for profit/student service model.
Description	Currently, the childcare centre is underutilized and incurs significant financial losses, with less than 20% of children being those of MSU members. The goal is to evaluate opting out of the federal government's \$10-a-day daycare program and transition to charging market rates for community members while continuing to offer subsidized rates for MSU members.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduces financial losses and potentially turns the childcare centre into a profitable entity. - Maintains affordable childcare options for MSU members. - Addresses the high demand for childcare services in the community, generating additional revenue.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative and logistical challenges in transitioning to a new business model. - Ensuring continued high-quality care and service during and after the transition. - Potentially lengthy timeline for transition.
Long Term	Establish a sustainable and financially viable childcare centre that continues to support MSU members while effectively serving the broader community.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a thorough financial and operational analysis to assess the feasibility of opting out of the federal program while developing a detailed business plan outlining the transition to a profit-motivated model, including new pricing structures for community members and subsidized rates for MSU members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradually transition out of the \$10-a-day daycare program and introduce the new pricing structures while continuing to regularly review financial performance to ensure the centre remains both profitable, and accessible for MSU members.
Partners	<p>Internal: VP Finance, GM, Childcare Centre Staff, Director of Finance.</p> <p>External: Federal Government.</p>

Objective	SLEF Courts Project: Executing a vision to give students more to do on campus.
Description	Following the submission and subsequent approval of the outdoor sports courts project during the SLEF applications, the goal is to execute the plan efficiently. This initiative aims to provide students with more recreational opportunities and promote a healthy, active lifestyle.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhances student life by providing additional recreational facilities. - Promotes physical fitness and well-being among students. - Creates a vibrant and engaging campus environment.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing necessary approvals from facility services for quality locations. - Coordinating with external vendors and managing project timelines. - Ensuring the project stays within the allocated budget.
Long Term	Establish well-maintained, high-quality outdoor sports facilities that become integral parts of campus life, encouraging ongoing student engagement in sports and fitness activities.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain quotes from external vendors for the construction of the basketball and tennis/pickleball courts, and secure land approval from facility services and ensure all necessary permissions are in place. - Coordinate with the SLEF committee to finalize funding and project details.

Partners	Internal: Assistant to Presidential Affairs. External: Third party vendors, Facility Services, SLEF Committee.
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Objective	Club Sponsorship Training: Teaching clubs to do more with what they have.
Description	Despite improved clubs funding from last year, clubs can still always use more funding. To make sure they can reach new lengths and aren't as dependent on the minimal MSU provided funding, we need to offer training on how to acquire private sector sponsorships.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides access to greater funding to better support club events without depending fully on MSU resources. - Allows for a greater student experience through improved offerings to club members. - Students are better trained/educated on how to secure sponsorships.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We don't currently have a Director of Communications and Advertising to create this training package (hiring in progress). - Clubs training is already packed with information and may need to be adjusted and reduced to fit this in and make it meaningful. - More potential work and stress on the MSU accounting department, who is already in need of support.
Long Term	If clubs can learn to operate in this manner, they will be able to move away from a complete dependency, instead leaning on the MSU more for facilities and coordination rather than monetary benefit, which is extremely ideal. It's important for clubs to use us as a support rather than to completely rely on us.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a clubs training handbook detailing best practices for securing private sector sponsorship.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teach these methods at clubs training, while providing support throughout the year for clubs taking initiative.
Partners	<p>Internal: Director of Communications and Advertising, VP Finance, Clubs Administrator.</p> <p>External: N/a</p>

Objective	WW & A&R Parking: Cheap summer rates.
Description	Athletes return to campus in mid-August for training camps, and welcome week volunteers return in the final week of August. These groups currently face limited and expensive parking options. Last year after working with Parking Services, a new option was introduced - a \$51 transponder for the entire month August with access to a lot closest to their facilities. This year, the goal is to work with parking services to offer even cheaper and more reasonable parking solutions for these student groups.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduces financial burden on athletes and welcome week volunteers. - Ensures more convenient and accessible parking options close to their facilities. - Ensures that students representing our school for free have minimal additional stressors.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negotiating lower parking fees with parking services. - Ensuring there are enough available parking spots in the lots most convenient to these groups respective facilities to meet the demand. - Proper promotion to these groups to raise awareness of this special offering.

Long Term	Establish fair and affordable parking solutions that cater to the unique needs of athletes and welcome week volunteers, ensuring they have a positive experience returning to campus.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Propose and negotiate alternative pricing structures, such as daily or weekly rates, specifically for athletes and welcome week volunteers. - Ensure that these offers are communicated effectively to athletes and welcome week volunteers well in advance of their return to campus.
Partners	<p>Internal: Campus Events team.</p> <p>External: Parking Services, Athletics & Recreation.</p>

Objective	Campus Transit System: Improving the way students navigate campus.
Description	Building on the progress made last year with the expanded Lot M shuttle bus route, the goal is to establish a multi-route transit system on and around campus. This system will offer convenient transportation to various campus locations and extend to major off-campus hubs like Westdale, making commutes faster, easier, and safer for students.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases convenience and accessibility for students traveling around campus. - Enhances safety by providing transportation to and from major off-campus locations. - Reduces walking times and makes campus life more manageable for students with busy schedules.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securing sufficient resources to implement the multi-route transit system within campus (finance, labor, etc.).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating with Parking Services and other campus departments for route planning and execution. - Ensuring high utilization rates to justify the investment and operational costs.
Long Term	Establish a reliable, efficient, and well-utilized campus transit system that becomes an integral part of student life, improving overall accessibility and safety.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with Parking Services to launch a pilot phase with a few key routes to gauge usage and address any operational challenges. - Monitor the system's performance, gather student feedback, and adjust as needed to optimize routes and schedules before working to make the new transportation system a permanent fixture.
Partners	<p>Internal: N/a.</p> <p>External: Parking Services.</p>

Objective	Organizational Restructure: Improving efficiency, capacity, and culture.
Description	With the appointment of a new General Manager, there is a unique opportunity to update the organization's structure. The current flat model is outdated, and restructuring is necessary to better align with modern operational needs. Some proposed new full-time roles include a Student Life Director, Director of Communications and Advertising, and Government Relations Director, among others.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhances organizational efficiency and effectiveness by implementing structures inspired by several other similar student unions. - Addresses gaps in current operations with specialized roles, improving overall performance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Position the organization for long-term success through strategic planning and execution.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying and defining the specific roles and responsibilities needed. - Managing the transition process, including policy changes and new hiring practices. - Ensuring the new structure aligns with the organization's goals and values.
Long Term	Create a more dynamic and effective organizational structure that supports growth and adaptation, enabling the organization to meet future challenges and opportunities successfully.
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the VPs and GM to define and evaluate the need for new full-time roles and organizational changes before developing a detailed restructuring plan, including role definitions, policy updates, and hiring practices. - Monitor the effectiveness of the new structure and make necessary adjustments to ensure optimal performance and alignment with organizational goals.
Partners	<p>Internal: BoD, GM, Director of HR</p> <p>External: N/a</p>

Objective	Presidential Election Turnout: 20% or better proves successful engagement.
Description	Aiming to significantly boost voter turnout, this initiative builds on the progress made in the past year, which saw an increase from 10.2% to 16.4%. This will be achieved through continuous student engagement efforts, including various events, public appearances, and improved campus activities.

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher voter turnout signifies increased student engagement and satisfaction. - Strengthens the democratic process within the student body. - Enhances our ability to best represent students by better understanding student interests and priorities.
Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Succeeding with a “big boom” effect, since this is our peak budgetary year; it’s now or never and we can’t get it wrong. - Ensuring that new initiatives align with student interests and preferences. - Using new partnership channels for co-promotion without having a relationship recently (ie. Working with A&R)
Long Term	<p>Establish a highly engaged student community where voter turnout consistently exceeds 20%, reflecting strong participation in campus activities and a vibrant campus life while leading to a stronger MSU through more interested students, stronger elections, and clear value from the student union to students.</p>
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the Campus Events budget to support key events such as Light Up The Night, the Winter Marketplace, and the reintroduction of Homecoming. - Overhaul the TwelvEighty menu to include more culturally diverse options and introduce additional programming within TwelvEighty. - Build on successful cultural club nights with Athletics and Recreation to grow attendance at varsity sports games and MSU functions. - Implement targeted outreach campaigns to inform and encourage students about upcoming events and the importance of voting. - Run strengthened promotional campaigns surrounding the Presidential election.
Partners	<p>Internal: Entire MSU contribution.</p>

	External: Athletics and Recreation, Facility Services, Security Services, Student Affairs, and various others on a one-off basis depending on each promotional effort.
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