YEAR PLAN

MSU *Associate Vice President University Affairs*
Stephanie Henry
2024-2025

(submitted September 03, 2024)

OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT: UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS
INTRODUCTION

Dear SRA,

I am Stephanie Henry, entering the role as AVP University Affairs (UA) for the MSU for the 2024-2025 academic year. As a member of the Education Team in the 2023-2024 academic year I'm looking forward to returning to the team and expanding on the UA portfolio.

During my time at McMaster, I have held been involved in numerous activities. As a Kinesiology student I'm involved in EIO (Equity and Inclusion Office) with SVPRO (Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office), SHEC (Student Health and Education Centre), alongside my involvements in the Education Team at the MSU. These positions have allowed me to build a unique skillset that I'm looking forward to bringing to the role this year.

As AVP University Affairs I am looking forward to increasing the presence of student advocacy at McMaster an in the MSU to ensure that we are working towards increasing the quality of our education and resources. I'd love to hear back from members in regards to feedback, ideas and possible collaborations.

I'm looking forward to working with such as strong and dedicated team this year!

Thank you, I look forward to meeting with you all soon.

Stephanie Henry

GOALS

Objective 1	Inclusion and Accessibility in Campus Infrastructure and Online Platforms
Description	As a campus that strives to foster values around inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility it is imperative to ensure that we have physical and online infrastructure that is inclusive and accessible. Previous UA initiatives have worked towards expanding newer infrastructure such as all-gender bathrooms (as implemented in Innis Library) throughout campus. This ensures that students can utilize facilities that best represent them and can be incorporated into policies for future building designs (proposals). It is important to recognize that accessibility and inclusion go beyond physical spaces and should be implemented in online platforms. As a collaboration with SRA members, caucuses and SVPRO (EIO) to address deadnaming on campus, more specifically on online platforms and in university documentation. It is crucial to ensure the longevity of these efforts we have these incorporated in policies. This will continue to foster routes for advocacy efforts beyond campus.
Benefits	- Fosters a more inclusive campus environment - Respects and represents students gender identity
Difficulties	- Implementation into older building infrastructure - Having to keep old records of dead names for documentation-related reasons (or to match legal identification).
Long-term implications	- Policy implementation will set forth an expectation for accessibility and inclusion in future building designs - Designs for buildings on McMaster's campus will remain both inclusive and accessible - Students will feel respected regarding their gender identity and expression
How?	- Collaborate with EIO, SVPRO to work through the implications and implementation of this project - Consult with Urban Design and Planners affiliated with McMaster to review policy proposal for McMaster University - Consult with University Admin for policy implementation

Partners	• Inclusion and Equity Office • Facility Services • Internal and/or external Urban Designers and Planners • Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office • VP Education • SRA members

Objective 2	Increase Communication and Collaboration between the MSU and Senate
Description	Currently between student leaders in the Senate (University Secretariat), University Admin and the MSU there exists a disconnect in regard to lobbying and advocacy efforts. Due to this, it can be proven difficult for students to push for student-facing change at the University level. To ensure that communication can be leveraged while working alongside administration.
Benefits	• Leverage communication through working in collaboration with administration
Difficulties	• May not have similar advocacy priorities • Requires increased amount of lobbying, advocacy and communication for all involved parties
Long-term implications	• Increases and enhances overall student experience • Ensures that student voices in the senate are heard
How?	• Hold meetings with university administration and student senators on an ongoing basis to streamline lines of communication • Use feedback from administration to fortify student advocacy in the senate and MSU
Partners	• MSU President • VP Education • Student Senators • University Administration (University Secretariat)

Objective 3	*Increase Visibility of Student Facing Services to Students on Residence*
Description	The transition to university can often be overwhelming for incoming students due to the vast amount of new information at their disposal. Navigating and utilizing these resources can prove to aid and enhance their

	experience at McMaster, alongside supporting and encouraging growth and learning opportunities in various facets. Ensuring that students are aware of existing University resources that serve them (i.e. SSC, SWC, EIO) is crucial in supporting students alongside building community. Additional efforts to increase visibility and students accessing these spaces and resources willin turn enhance their university experience. representatives.
Benefits	• Students will be able to have tools at their disposal to navigate what resources they require at different times in their academic career and how they can benefit/ai them
Difficulties	• Ensuring continuous visibility of resources over long-term will require efforts on behalf of UA and student facing services • Creating and maintaining communication throughout the academic year that is accessible and inclusive
Long-term implications	• Enhanced student experience • Aids in resource navigation
How?	• Collaborate with VP Education and AVP Services to increase visibility of internal (MSU) student facing services and university services that exist to aid students • Create and streamline lines of communication with CA's, and services to ensure first-year students feel supported
Partners	• VP Education • AVP Services • International Student Services • Student Success Center • Student Wellness Centre • Indigenous Student Services • Black Student Success Centre • Equity and Inclusion Office • MSU Services

Objective 4	Open Education Resources
Description	McMaster's dedication to fostering an environment around equity, inclusion and accessibility should be translated to course and content creation. OERs are Open Educational Resources in which should be funded

	an available to students to enhance their learning both inside and outside of the classroom. With an increased amount of resources at student's disposal, OERs should be a priority for the University to ensure students are able to have access to multifaceted resources at no cost.
Benefits	• Reduces costs on behalf of students for educational resources • May increase academic outcomes due to course content being tailored for teaching and enhances overall learning
Difficulties	• Implementation into all courses at the University is reliant on the professors/instructors creating these resources • Requires increased amounts of advocacy over a prolonged period of time
Long-term implications	• Reduces financial burden • Equitable access to resources
How?	• Lobby with the MSU for continuous funding and implementation of OERs to the University • Continue to collaborate with McMaster Libraries to understand how to leverage existing OERs and encourage more faculty/professors/instructors to create unique resources for their teaching
Partners	• MSU President • VP Education • Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning • University Affairs Committee • McMaster Library Services

Objective 5	Indigenous and Black Presence in Policy
Description	Indigenous peoples have a history of marginalization and face disproportionate rates of discrimination. The effects impact students' quality of education, and access to resources. It is integral that the MSU supports Indigenous students and safeguard their education (access to resources) concerning the location of MSU and McMaster University being situated on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people, the MSU should continue to uplift and enable educational and awareness strategies to reflect specific needs and identities. The McMaster Black Student-Athlete Experience Systemic Review demonstrated a need for a community space for Black Students identified in the five-point action plan in October 2020. The BSSC builds on generations of advocacy work which should be expanded into the student

	body to encourage a culture of accountability, alongside investing in advocacy role(s) and mechanisms to engage students in meaningful ways. In recognition of the unique experiences of Indigenous and Black peoples and students on campus, ensuring that the promotion and visibility in policy and government is seen through existing figures in a daylong event hosted at McMaster University.
Benefits	• Increase presence of Indigenous and Black faces in Policy and encourage students to explore various avenues of advocacy in government
Difficulties	• To ensure that this process is carried out in a manner that prioritizes Indigenous peoples, the Education team must collaborate and consult with Indigenous voices on campus and in the community, including but not limited to the Indigenous Student Services
Long-term implications	• Critical for MSU to conduct resources and collaborate with campus and community Indigenous partners to prioritize Indigenous ways of knowledge and how we can incorporate them into advocacy • Ensure the MSU uses its presence on campus to decolonize and work with Indigenous voice
How?	• The MSU will aid in the promotion of resources, events, and collaborations with the Indigenous Student Services • Ensure the MSU works in collaboration with the Indigenous Student Services • Collaborate with OUSA to connect with indigenous and Black peoples in policy and government
Partners	• ISS • BSSC • OUSA (Executive Director) • MSU President • VP Education • AVP MA • AVP PFA • Municipal Affairs Committee • Provincial and Federal Affairs Committee • University Affairs Committee

Objective 6	Strategy for Outreach to Students

Description	In the past academic year, both SHEC and the MSU have been successful in prioritizing students' mental health through increasing outreach and engagement. The need for increasing mental health resources continues to be exacerbated by the current climate experienced by students on campuses following the pandemic. McMaster's mental health support for students through the Student Wellness Centre and the Student Assistance Program through the MSU, resources such as these are not sufficient to serve the student population. Students face long wait times for accessing services such as counseling. Long wait times for students continue to exacerbate their current condition and ignore the issue regarding lack of resources. The MSU should push for increased support and coverage of mental health services for all domestic and international students.
Benefits	• Counselors from culturally diverse backgrounds and experiences will be able to provide students with improved support • Allows for students to have safe spaces to discuss pertinent issues • Students will not have to be bordering/in crisis to receive support • Expanded resources and reach of the Student Assistance Program
Difficulties	• The MSU does not have jurisdiction over the hiring and implementation of counselors/support services in the Student Wellness Centre
Long-term implications	• Increased support and resources for mental health for students which can be easily accessible through student services such as SHEC and EFRT on campus and serviced through the Student Wellness Centre • Counselling can become a preventative measure to safeguard student's mental health as opposed to a response measure
How?	• Work with the Student Wellness Center to advocate for the hiring of counsellors from diverse lived experiences • Gather feedback through reporting, and surveys conducted by students who access services on-campus through SWC • Striking a task force between the MSU and SWC to oversee mental health and advocacy priorities • The Promotion of resources, campaigns, events and support through SWC on MSU pages and collaboration with the Student Wellness Centre to increase the reach of Student Wellness Campaigns • Advocating for increased funding in mental health support through OUSA • Advocating for increased funding in mental health support through OHIP • ● Advocating for international students to have increased access to services
Partners	• MSU President

	- VP Administration - VP Education - Student Wellness Centre Director - Dean of Students - Director of Student Success - AVP Provincial and Federal Affairs - Provincial and Federal Affairs Committee - AVP University Affairs - University Affairs Committee