

ALEX WILSON

for VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION



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WELCOME

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY,

I would like to congratulate all of you on your seats this year! Whether you ran in an election or were acclaimed, you will be sitting in Council Chambers this weekend because of your passion for supporting students and interest working for change. It is beliefs like these that have sparked my interest in every position I have pursued during my time at McMaster; ultimately these ideals are why I'm writing this letter to you.

I'm running for the position of the McMaster Student Union Vice President Education because I want to work towards positive changes for students that actually include students in their approaches. I'm so passionate about working towards a campus that both includes and incorporates student voices and I want to start by using existing advocacy channels to better connect students to the advocacy they want to see.

This year as the Maccess Coordinator, I had the opportunity to provide feedback on the revised McMaster University Policy on Academic Accommodations, run an (In)Accessibility Week Campaign in November and have issues raised present directly to Patrick Deane this March, as well as play a role in the repositioning of two separate university working groups to have a larger advocacy focus via the President's Advisory Council for Building an Inclusive Community. Throughout this year, I built upon and applied my experiences in policy writing, working in teams, and working on the University and External Affairs Committees of the SRA to pursue student advocacy. From this, I've honed my skills in team management, communications strategy, and campaign planning with the purpose of creating strategic and intentional advocacy initiatives this year.

I hope to carry forward both my passion and acquired skills, experiences and ideals to the position of Vice President Education as I believe they not only qualify me, but differentiate me for this position.

SINCERELY YOURS,

ALEX WILSON

Vice President (Education) Candidate

EXPERIENCE

POSITION

YEAR

Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance Spring General Assembly MSU Representative	2017
MSU Food Security Policy Paper Author	PRESENT
MSU Sexual and Gender Diversity Policy Paper Author	2016
MSU University Accessibility Policy Author	2016
MSU Queer Students Community Centre Volunteer	2016 - PRESENT
MSU Maccess Coordinator	2016 - PRESENT
Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance Spring General Assembly MSU Representative	2016
SRA Standing Committee on External Affairs	2016 - PRESENT
SRA Standing Committee on University Affairs Member	2015 - PRESENT
SRA Standing Committee on Services Volunteer	2015 - 2016
MSU Teaching Awards Committee Coordinator	2015 - 2016
MSU Student Health Education Centre Sexual Health Executive	2015 - 2016
MSU Student Health Education Centre Volunteer	2014-2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTERNAL

SUPPORTING STUDENT ADVOCACY

- Social Political Advocacy Executive Training
- SRA Project Clustering
- Academic Affairs Council

LONG TERM ADVOCACY

- Advocacy Reports
- Long Term Advocacy Plan

ANCILLARY FEES

- compulsory ancillary fees agreement

STRATEGIC MANDATE AGREEMENT

- Student engagement
- McMaster specific data

SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY

- Gender Neutral washrooms
- Inclusive Residence

SUSTAINABILITY

- Fossil Fuel Divestment
- Waste Management
- Composting
 - Coffee Cups
 - In Residence

FOOD SECURITY

- Accessibility
- Late Night options
- Reducing student fees
- Paradise Catering Monopoly

POLICY

- Policy Con Changes
- Fall Term
 - Sexual Violence Prevention and Response
 - Transit
 - Deferred Maintenance
- Winter Term
 - Student Health and Wellness
 - Course Registration and Management
 - Sustainability

SUPPORTING PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

- Supporting student Athletes
- first generation students
- international students
- students who are caretakers
- Offcampus students

UNIVERSITY BUDGET SUBMISSION

- Fixing Lifts on Campus
- Podcasted courses
- Plastic Bottle Free Campus
- Merit based scholarships to needs based
- Cut unfair tuition fees
- University funding for EFRT
- Student Affairs funding
- Teaching stream faculty
- Cutting funding to Learning Portfolio

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

- Podcasted Courses
- Notetaking
- Midterm Course Evaluations
- Indigenous course requirement
- Disability Studies Minor

MUNICIPAL

AINSLE WOOD WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

- MSU Seat(s)
- Student Membership

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community Engagement Training for clubs
- Neighborhood specific change camp

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

- Transition Conference
- Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
- Work Integrated Learning

MUNICIPAL ADVOCACY

- No Municipal Advocacy Week
- Regular meetings with Ward one Councilor
- Municipal Budget Submission
- Municipal HPSAG

SAFE STUDENT HOUSING

- Licensing bylaw
- Registry
- OCRC Support

COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS

- Short term wins
- Long term strategy

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL

OUSA PRIORITIES

- International Students
- Funding for Student Services
- Work Integrated Learning
- Tuition
- Sexual Violence Response

OUSA GA DELEGATE SELECTION

- Updated Job Descriptions
- Revised selection Policy
- Elected by the SRA

OUSA POLICIES

- Indigenous Students (McMaster Authour)
- System Vision
- Health and Wellness (Author)

FEDERAL ADVOCACY

- Federal Advocacy Week
- ADVOCAN and WLUSU

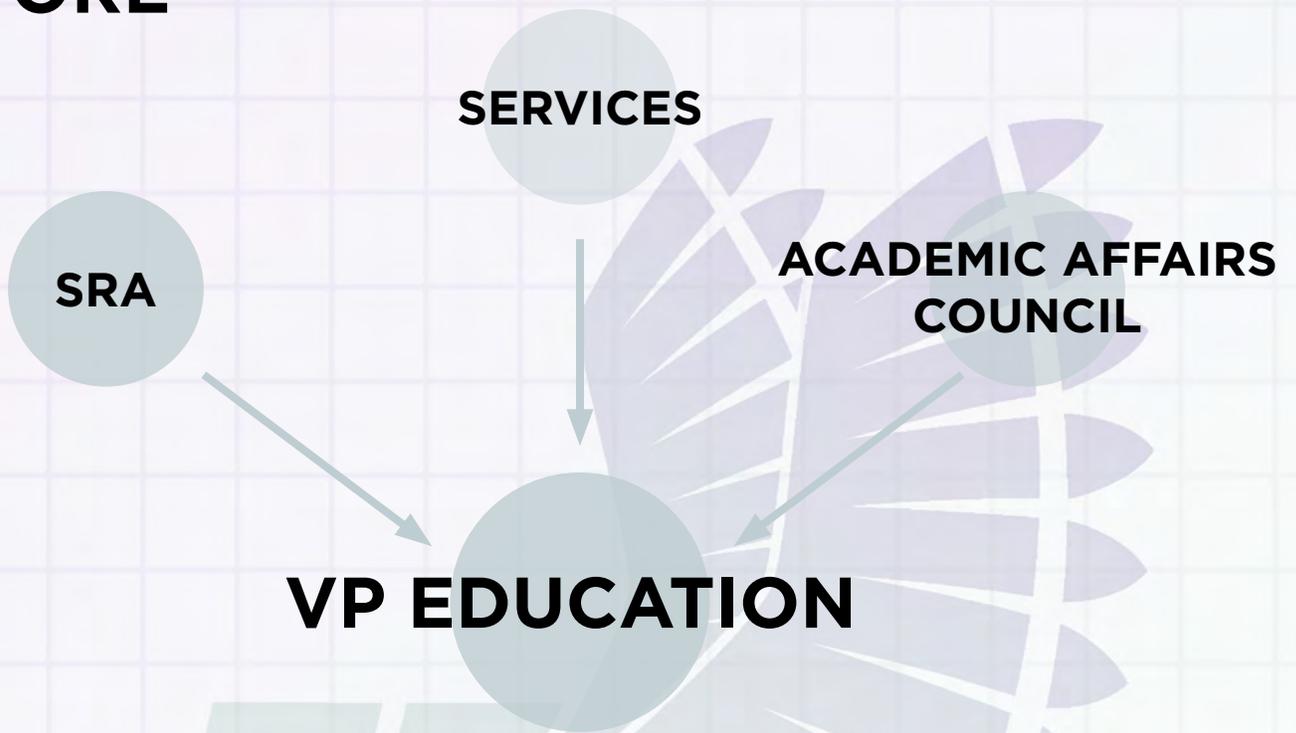
SUPPORTING STUDENT ADVOCACY

Supporting student advocacy is my first platform point not because it is the most tangible or measurable, in fact the opposite is true. It is my first point because I think is what defines and differentiates me as a candidate. Every point on this platform relates back to it because advocacy is not something that works in silos. To me, advocacy is a collaborative, strategic, and intentional process with the intent of improving student life and meeting student needs. While I will be supervising student advocacy in this role, in order to be effective I can't be the only one doing it.

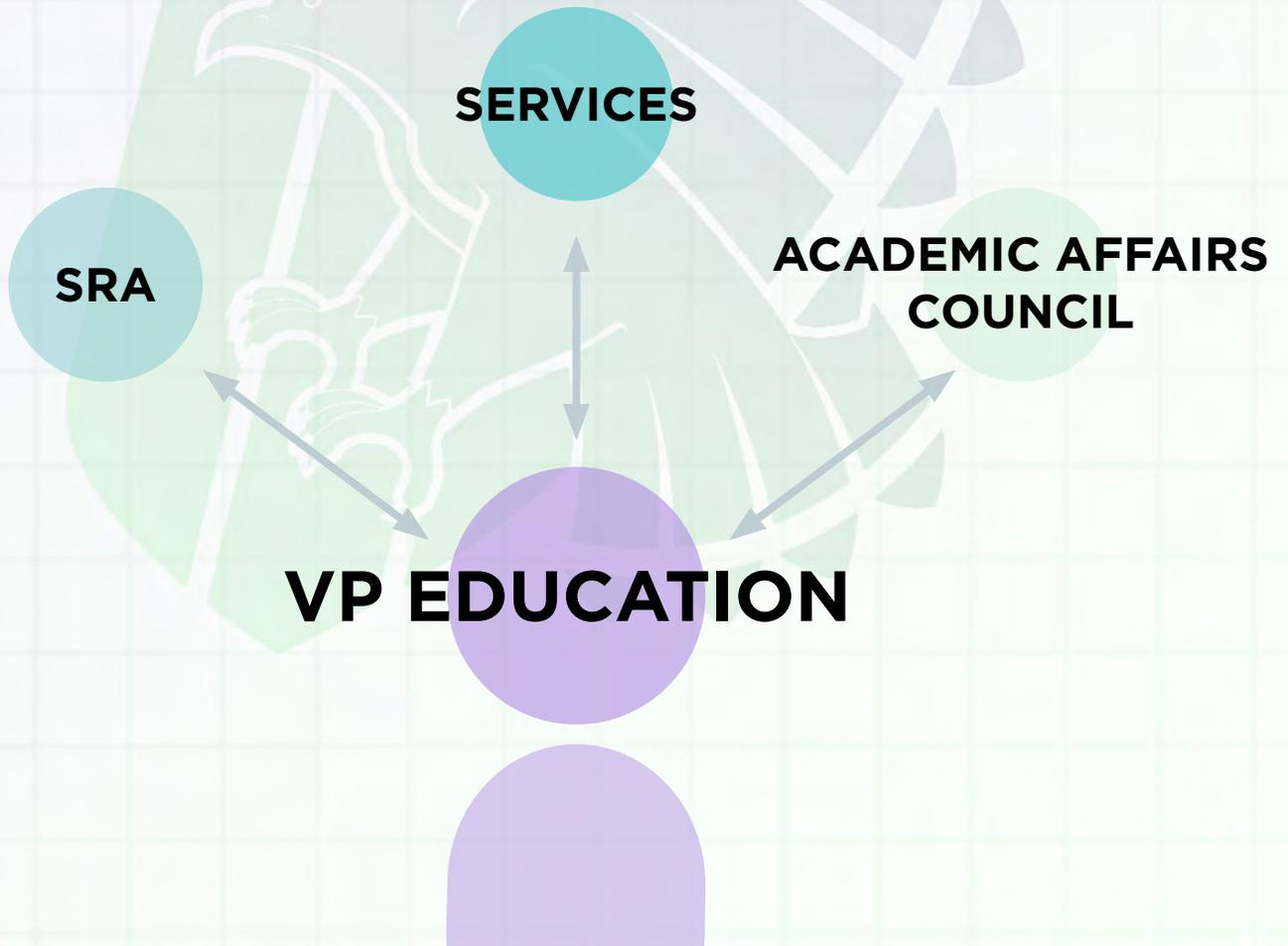
Supporting student advocacy means working with our existing structures such as MSU Services, the Student Representative Assembly (SRA), and Faculty Societies to create and achieve project based and collaborative advocacy this year.

This entails informally working with relevant service Part Time Managers (PTMs) and their Social and Political Advocacy Executives over the summer to plan and support advocacy campaigns in their year plans. While services do incredible advocacy, and I think Maccess's (In)Accessibility Week Campaign speaks to that, more collaborative and better supported campaigns will result in achieving advocacy, not just raising awareness. Additionally, implementing more project based collaboration on the SRA and Academic Affairs Council (AAC) will increase the success of these organizations, while simultaneously better connecting them when projects overlap. Project based clustering on the SRA allows you as assembly members to connect with other like-minded SRA members to implement projects at a larger scale and not just within one faculty. In this manner, I can better support your advocacy initiatives, like increasing experiential education opportunities, promoting McMaster student art in the city, podcasted courses, etc. Furthermore, increasing the project based function of currently under-utilized groups like the AAC will increase the efficacy of these groups and work to empower the student leaders that make them up.

BEFORE



AFTER



INTERNAL

POLICY

As of the last SRA meeting of the 2016-2017, SRA members will be expected to attend MSU Policy Con both terms. I believe that overall this will engage more students in our advocacy and policy writing, however with this change I want to make sure Policy Con does not become a conference for SRA members and still has a large MSU Member attendance rate. To do this I want to be more intentional in the dates of Policy Con this next year. I want to host Policy Con on the weekend before the proposed SRA Meeting the policies will be discussed as opposed to the day before. This allows authors and editors more time in research the suggestions brought forward and allows for a expansion of the capacity of Policy Con to retain seats for MSU Members under this new bylaw. Beyond a bigger and better Policy Con, I want to focus on the following six policies this year.

FALL TERM

SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (NEW)

This policy would be written in collaboration with the MSU's Women and Gender Equity Network (WGEN), The Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) and the Violence Against Women/Gender Based Violence President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) Working Group. Through conversations with the outgoing WGEN Coordinator, Lainey Stirling, it is clear that there are fundamental gaps in the University's newly passed Sexual Violence Policy. These gaps include the lack of ability for a survivor to appeal a decision of no action against the complainant, and when actions are taken a lack of transparency in what actions were taken, as they can vary significantly in degree and scope. Additionally, the focus on the Survivor-Perpetrator's relationship at University (Student-Professor, Peer-peer, etc.) ignores nuances in power dynamic associated with sexual violence. Moving forward, the MSU needs to introduce a policy on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response to address these concerns regarding disclosure procedures, but also to advocate on improving and creating survivor supports, education, and training with the goal of sexual violence prevention. If this policy had already been created the current McMaster Policy would likely look very different due to the Provincial interest in this issue. Looking ahead, we need to take strong action in supporting survivors and preventing sexual violence to ensure we do not miss future advocacy opportunities.

MSU POLICY ON PUBLIC AND ON CAMPUS TRANSIT (EXPIRING)

Our current form of this policy concerning transit advocacy priorities in Hamilton has recently expired and needs to be updated this year. With Light Rail Transit being introduced, it is important that our asks are up to date and reflective on current student priorities. Additionally, with the recent passing of OUSA's Housing Transit and Community Development Policy we need to explore how our municipal asks can integrate with our provincial ones regarding transit within and between municipalities.

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH (EXPIRED)

Deferred maintenance is defined as maintenance that has been “deferred on a planned or unplanned basis to a future budget cycle, or postponed until funds are available”. We need to refresh our currently expired policy to better address the role physical accessibility plays in deferred maintenance as well as to better advocate to the University on this issue.

WINTER TERM

HEALTH AND WELLNESS (NEW)

Again I believe this is an issue the MSU lacks a dedicated stance on. Despite frequent advocacy to improve services at the Student Wellness Centre and campaigns run through the Student Wellness Education Lower Lounge, we lack large scale student feedback on these services and what changes students want to see. Advocacy should always be student centered and working in collaboration with services like Diversity Services, Breadbin, Maccess, QSCC, WGEN, SHEC, and PSL I want to collect student input on these services throughout the Fall Term. Moving forward into the Winter Term, I would like to translate this research into policy concerning the training of staff, the services available, and the educational campaigns being run relating to physical, mental, and sexual health respectively. Additionally, I would like to better define the relationship between the University and our Peer support Services within this policy. As a result of the scope of this paper it would encompass the current asks set out in our Mental Health and Peer Support Policy Papers.

UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY (EXPIRING)

We need to update our current policy on sustainability to better reflect the advocacy of the past three years as well as other conversations ongoing on campus such as waste management, composting, and fossil fuel divestment. The existing sustainability policy is comparatively strong to other similarly dated policies and would likely involve more additions rather than changes to existing asks.

COURSE MANAGEMENT AND REGISTRATION (EXPIRED)

Currently these exist as two separate policies: Course Registration and Course Management. Due to the similar and overlapping scope of these papers I would like to combine them into one paper and include asks relating to a final exam schedule being available with course enrolment, investing in an open syllabus project, and extending the Drop/Add Date.

TRANSITIONS AND LONG TERM ADVOCACY

This year all of the Board of Directors reported three times throughout the year to the SRA. Each report was met with few or no question. As an assembly it is your job to hold the board of directors accountable and engage your constituents in what the MSU is doing, however if we are not communicating in ways that are accessible to you it's difficult for you to accomplish this. I would like to introduce a **project based reporting structure** to allow for briefs to better engage students on advocacy updates and better communicate advocacy as it is ongoing. Additionally, I want to **introduce long term advocacy plans** for all of our multi year asks to ease and improve transition.

SUPPORTING PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

In conversation with Chukky Ibe, the newly elected MSU President, he indicated several student groups that he thinks need to be better supported here at McMaster. Student athletes, off campus students, first generation students, international students, and students who also have a caretaker role. With the new Student Activity Building referendum passing I want to work with the Vice President (Finance) and the rest of the Board of Directors to ensure **Student Athletes are consulted** in the athletics expansion. Additionally, I would like to work with the Society of Off Campus Students to explore the creation of a **Commuter Students Lounge** within the proposed building plans. Furthermore, I want to work with the Student Success Centre and International Student Services in doing more **program evaluation and consultation** regarding the services offered to International and First Generation Students. Lastly, I want to discuss with the Board of Directors how we can be making the **MSU Childcare Centre more student friendly** during exam hours and long term advocating the University take a larger role in child care services.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Enhancing the quality of education is something I am so excited about working towards because I know it will be one of the most collaborative projects I work on throughout the year. This year, I look forward to working with the SRA and the Academic Affairs Council on ensuring all general first year **courses are podcasted** and ensuring students registered with the Student Accessibility Services NoteTaking program actually have **access to notes**. In consultation with the McMaster Teaching and Evaluation committee I want to introduce **midterm course evaluations**. Additionally, I want to continue our advocacy on an **Indigenous course requirement** working with indigenous groups on campus to develop best practices. Lastly I want to work with the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) Working Groups on the creation of an **interdisciplinary minor in disability studies**. This is an ongoing project that could see implementation with MSU support.

UNIVERSITY BUDGET SUBMISSION

The University Budget Submission acts as a mechanism to achieve some of the more financially facing advocacy goals of the MSU. This year, eight priorities were decided for the budget submission. However, the final document itself was never created. Moving forward, I would like to carry on some of these priorities (listed below) while adding **increasing podcasted course software availability** and **replacing all key operated lifts on campus**.

1. For the University to become a plastic water-bottle free campus (see Plastic Water-Bottle Free above)
2. For the University to reallocate merit-based scholarships to needs-based
 - a. Second year Hooker and Senate scholarships (250k)
 - b. Some entrance scholarships
3. Cut unfair tuition fees - for instance, the “flex plan” fee which charges students \$35 to split up their payment into two terms
4. For the University to fund half of the costs of MSU EFRT
5. Increase funding to the Student Affairs department (Student Success, Student Wellness, Athletics and Recreation, and Student Accessibility Services)
6. Increase the amount of teaching-stream faculty appointments
7. Cut funding to the Learning Portfolio project

ANCILLARY FEES

I would like to continue the work of this year’s Board of Directors, in working with Student Affairs to develop an **new Compulsory Ancillary Fees (CAF) Agreement** with the University. This agreement is what outlines the terms and process by which the University consults students on ancillary fees (for instance, the Student Services fee, the Athletics and Recreation fee, the Student Wellness fee, etc.). This agreement will cover funding of the Student Life Enhancement Fund versus student services, as well as how much fees can be raised without going to referendum.

STRATEGIC MANDATE AGREEMENT

In 2014, the provincial government signed Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) with all publicly assisted universities in the province with the intended purpose of connecting institutions to various levels of Ontario’s economy. The SMAs are designed as a measure to guide growth, differentiation, and focus on strengths without limiting expansion. The MSU believes that SMAs should clearly outline institutionally specific priorities for increasing access for underrepresented groups. The timeline of McMaster University’s Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) with the Province has been delayed and will likely carry on into my term as Vice President (Education). Working with Blake, I want to continue the push for **student engagement and the incorporating McMaster specific information in the SMA**.

SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY

In the Fall Term of this Year I had the opportunity to co-author the recently passed Sexual and Gender Diversity Policy Paper. Moving into this year, I would like to advocate on some of the specific asks in the policy relating to sexual health testing, residence inclusivity, and gender neutral washrooms. I want to work with the Equity and Inclusion Office in collaborating on their existing **Gender Neutral Washroom** advocacy. Additionally, I want to work with the Student Wellness Centre to introduce rapid HIV testing on site at the SWC. Finally, I want to work with Residence Life to better address the **inclusivity of residence**. This involves allowing students to opt in to a multi gender apartment living arrangement, should they choose, and working in collaboration with the VP (Administration) to ensure Welcome Week Reps are effectively trained and Welcome Week programming is inclusive.

FOOD SECURITY

In Winter Term of this year I had the opportunity to co-author the recently passed Food Security Policy Paper. Moving into this year, I would like to advocate on some of the specific asks in the policy relating to late night food options, accessible food, affordable food, and paradise catering. As this policy is new I will be working on developing an advocacy plan to work towards the **late night hour** extension of one centralized food option. As well as, increasing the availability and quality of **vegetarian, vegan, halal and kosher foods** in collaboration with the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community and student clubs. Additionally I want to work on improving the meal plan and **reducing related student fees**, and **eliminating the Paradise Catering Monopoly** for students and student groups. To begin to work towards these goals I will be advocating for Hospitality Services to hire a **Food Security Analyst** to improve transparency, affordability, and administer a climate survey.

SUSTAINABILITY

In addition to updating our University Sustainability Policy this Winter Term, I want to work towards continuing existing initiatives regarding sustainability. Working with Blake, I want to continue to build upon the MSU's efforts in achieving a **plastic water bottle free campus**. Additionally, I believe the MSU should research and formulate a stance regarding McMaster University **divesting from fossil fuels** and more broadly natural resource extraction. I want to work closely with Fossil Free McMaster, a group that has previously mobilized thousands of students on this issue, as well as with Deidre Henne (AVP Administration and CFO), while exploring this issue to ensure asks are intentional and achievable. Lastly, I want to work on **improving and expanding composting** at McMaster to focus on specific strategies for composting in Residence and composting coffee cups across campus.

**STRATEGIC MANDATE
AGREEMENT**

ANCILLARY FEES

**SUPPORTING STUDENT
ADVOCACY**

**SEXUAL AND
GENDER DIVERSITY**

**LONG TERM
ADVOCACY**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

SUSTAINABILITY

**SUPPORTING PRESIDENTIAL
INITIATIVES**

**UNIVERSITY BUDGET
SUBMISSION**

INTERNAL

POLICY

FOOD SECURITY

MUNICIPAL

The Municipal portfolio is the one I am most excited about, it's certainly an area where the MSU has not been as effective as we could have been in the past, and I'm ready to help change that. Working with the newly created Municipal Affairs Assistant Vice President (AVP) and Committee, I hope to improve on what has traditionally been an area of weakness in our advocacy initiatives. Another reason I am so excited about this portfolio is because it is the most interconnected. Municipal advocacy can broadly see as improving community relations, increasing student friendly transit, ensuring safer student housing, and increasing student employment. Success in one area propels success in the others, as a result the MSU needs a holistic and community engaged approach to municipal affairs in order to be effective in our advocacy.

AINSLIE WOOD WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (AWWCA)

The AWWCA is the largest community association in Ward 1 and acts as a representative voice of its members to the municipality. This past year I regularly attended the AWWCA's Board Meetings and am the **only student to have ever done so** in recent years. While on this board I have worked to change perceptions of issues that are seen to be a result of bad students and more accurately reframing them in terms of **absentee landlords**. I hope to build upon my existing connections on this board to create a stronger and more formalized relationship with this board and the communities of Ainslie Wood and Westdale through a formalized **MSU observer seat** on the AWWCA board. This position would cement students as engaged members of the community, work on addressing student-community relations, and building connections for comprehensive municipal advocacy. At the Municipal level the MSU is just one voice we have to collaborate with other advocacy organizations to effectively achieve our students' priorities. Specifically, there is a huge opportunity to work together on safer student housing and transit as we have **common goals**. A stronger student presence in the community is something the AWWCA is excited about working together on.

MUNICIPAL ADVOCACY

Currently, the MSU does the majority of its municipal advocacy through Municipal Advocacy Week. Through conversations with both of the Community Engagement Coordinators and several students who participated in the week, it was **largely ineffective this year**. Advocacy should be strategic and intentional and the current format of municipal advocacy week is not. Moving forward, we need to pursue advocacy conversations with relevant stakeholders **all year round** and better utilize connections on existing channels to achieve our goals. Via the newly implemented Municipal Affairs Committee and Associate Vice President I want to pursue more **regular meetings with our Ward 1 councillor Aidan Johnson**. This not only includes more dedicated and productive meetings between the MSU and Councillor Johnson but also means fostering a more strategic presence on existing feedback bodies like the AWWCA, the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations (PACCR), and the Participatory Budgeting Advisory Committee (PBAC).

Building advocacy connections goes beyond Ward 1 as well. In my role as Vice-President (Education) I want to work with Student Government at Mohawk and Redeemer Colleges to form a Municipal Hamilton Post Secondary Advocacy Group (HPSAG). The MSU is already involved in similar advocacy structures at the provincial and federal level which advocate to relevant government officials based on hamilton specific post secondary advocacy asks. We know that groups like these are effective and at the last HPSAG meeting Deb Matthews the Associate Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Skill Development was in attendance. From this I am confident that the creation of this proposed HPSAG would allow us to more effectively pursue advocacy at the Municipal level.

Finally, I want to use the newly created Municipal Affairs Committee and Associate Vice President to work on the creation of a Municipal budget submission. Just like the University Budget Submission the MSU does, this would focus on our financially facing advocacy asks such as increasing experiential education opportunities, investing in improving transit, and moving forward with a landlord registry and licensing bylaw.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Currently, all support systems relating to transition out of University are decentralized and Faculty Specific. Working with the **Student Success Centre and Local Corporate Partners** I want to create a **transition conference** in the Fall Term for 3rd, 4th, and 5th year students. Whether continuing their education or entering the workforce, students will have the opportunity to connect with local businesses and develop **transferable skills** in preparing for their postgraduate careers. To address this lack of support, this conference would include workshops addressing a variety of transition topics including networking, finances, building rapport, and how to climb the corporate ladder. Additionally, staff and student volunteers will be present to help students identify soft skills they have gained throughout their undergraduate career and how they are transferable to a postgraduate environment. Additionally, I want to work with interested SRA members and the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce to create and better promote **experiential education** opportunities and increase students **access to work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities**. I believe this project can be further supported by attending the **Bay Area Economic Summit** again this year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As the Vice President (Education) I want to work with the Engaged Education Working Group of the Network for Community Campus Partnerships (NCCP). Strong interest arose this past year surrounding the creation of **Community Engagement Training for our relevant MSU Clubs**. I would like to continue to work with Dave Heidebrecht (Manager, Office of Community Engagement) from the NCCP, in collaboration with the MSU Clubs Department, to organize a workshop inviting executives from clubs that actively engage with the community to gather feedback on what tools or supports student groups would like to see implemented to improve their outreach efforts and the development of their community outreach programs. This would better inform the development of clubs community engagement training and allow for its implementation in the **Fall of 2018**.

Moreover, I would like to work with these partners to develop a **certificate training program** that would recognize student groups that have actively been involved in community engagement for a longer period of time, and would formally acknowledge the acquisition of certain skills and knowledge of community engagement principles for community partners to recognize.

Additionally, I want to work with the NCCP to ensure that the MSU's role in **change camp** is maintained as it moves into it's new **neighbourhood specific structure**. I believe we can more effectively hear student voices and work towards student advocacy in our neighbourhood and across the city of Hamilton.

COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS

I want to work with Dave Heidebrecht (Manager, Office of Community Engagement) and the NCCP on lobbying to have McMaster University collaborate with community associations like the Hamilton Community Foundation and many of its initiative to improve comprehensive access to McMaster University. Advocacy goals highlighted by the NCCP that I want to work together towards include:

SHORT TERM

- Developing recruitment material that is targeted towards the Xperience Annex audience and the issues they would be most interested in (e.g. support services, points of entry, financial services).
- Creating a list of entry points that are available to non-traditional students.
- Identifying existing McMaster programs and initiatives that could align with an access strategy
- Connecting with Xperience Annex partners interacting with youth interested in post-secondary to gather insights on what information would be most useful and how that information might be shared
- Develop a customized campus tour specifically for Xperience Annex youth and/or for primary school youth who may aspire to Post Secondary Education.

LONG TERM

- Partners with the aim of supporting youth in achieving their goals by connecting and collaborating with education, healthcare and employment providers.
- Reviewing access strategies at other universities in Canada and beyond. Based on this review, and working with our community partners, identify a possible access framework and timeline.
- Identifying barriers to the application process to determine what supports might be necessary.
- Aligning with Hamilton Community Foundation's ABACUS Program to develop a pathway of supports from middle school to Post Secondary Education.

SAFER STUDENT HOUSING

Access to safe student housing is something that impacts the majority of our student body and is fundamentally a priority within municipal advocacy. As a result it needs both immediate and long term solutions to ensure current and future students are better supported but we also need to be proactive in addressing the factors that result in unsafe student housing. To me this comes in the form of dedicated support and collaboration with the Off Campus Resource Centre (OCRC), supporting and creating a landlord registry, and advocating for a landlord licensing bylaw.

By the end of my term, in collaboration with Chukky Ibe, the incoming President, we will have formalized a connection between the MSU and the Off Campus Resource Centre through the MSU's Student Community Support Network (SCSN). I hope to support Chukky's existing plan of working with SCSN's community connector program and McMaster's new Off-Campus CA program to introduce his **Neighbourhood Assistance Program**. Additionally, together we have discussed exploring the creation of MSU staff to better support some of the services such as **bylaw education and lease reviews** that are offered through the OCRC and make these services more accessible to students. On top of this, I want to introduce a **landlord rating system** to empower tenant advocacy, support students in their struggle to find safer housing, and promote relevant information related to **bylaws and tenant rights**. The city of Hamilton just voted to move forward with a **Voluntary Landlord Registry Report Working Group** and it will report on April 25th 2017, giving insight into potential Municipal collaboration on this initiative.

Long term, the MSU needs to be advocating for a **landlord licensing bylaw**. This would mean in order to be a landlord in the city of hamilton you would need to acquire a license. Similar bylaws already exist in the Municipalities of Waterloo and London. The purpose of this system is to address the reality that the provincial body of the Landlord Tenant Board (LTB) is ineffective and untimely in addressing tenant complaints. While there is existing **support from the Ward 1 counsellor, Aidan Johnson**, we need to continue to explore concerns coming from other Wards and ensure we are proposing an initiative that prioritizes tenant autonomy and needs and not just giving more power to the municipality.

PROVINCIAL ONTARIO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ALLIANCE ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR OUSA

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Students at McMaster are just as much a part of the MSU as any other student. However, these students face unique barriers and marginalization that have led to a **systemic deprioritization** of this student body thus far. That being said, this past year had a lot of progress in terms of policy relating to international students with the passing of both an MSU and OUSA Policy Papers. With the passing of the MSU's International Students Paper, myself and the rest of the McMaster Delegation lobbied hard at Spring OUSA GA regarding stances on cost of tuition and health care coverage. Moving forward into next year, we need to advocate on the asks outlined in these policies such as, increasing the efficacy of the **student services** for International Students, **lowering the cost of tuition**, and providing **access to Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)**.

FUNDING FOR STUDENT SERVICES

Both Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and the Student Wellness Centre (SWC) are chronically underfunded and in the case of SWC, disproportionately funded by students. Through our Compulsory Ancillary Fees Agreement with the University, we attempt to advocate for fair cost sharing. However, without **dedicated provincial funding** these services will remain insufficient in meeting student need. Thus far, our advocacy framework has been focused on increasing funding for student health centres (i.e. the SWC), moving forward, in conversation with the outgoing VP (Education), Blake Oliver, I would like to explore switching focus to advocacy to **funding for Offices for Students with Disabilities** (i.e. SAS). This suggested change is based on recommendations from Blake to more effectively achieve our advocacy goals.

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

The Province of Ontario has committed to ensure every student has access to one work integrated learning opportunity throughout their Post Secondary Education. Work integrated learning refers to systematic training (learning in the workplace), structured work experience (field experience, professional practice, co-op, internships), and institutional partnerships. I want to prioritize working with the Province to ensure **all students are exposed to work integrated learning opportunities**. Moreover, there needs to be more **dedicated funding** to develop and enhance these experiences to ensure they are effective and intentional in their design.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

At the Provincial level, much more needs to be done in supporting survivors. I would like to work with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAEDS) and OUSA to expand OHIP and UHIP to fully cover the costs associated with a response to sexual violence, as well as other recommendations outlined in the OUSA Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Policy.

TUITION

The rising cost of tuition is a growing concern that we are all intimately familiar with. Working with OUSA I would like to prioritize advocacy on the MSU's and OUSA's priorities regarding tuition, such as a **fully funded tuition freeze** and an increase in the amount that institutions have to set aside from their tuition revenue to put towards **student financial aid**. Additionally, The Provincial Government's Student Assistance Grant is being implemented this year and evaluation of this grant is a necessary priority this coming year.

Provincial Government facing Recommendations in the MSU Tuition Policy Paper currently include:

- The government should create a strategy to adopt a publicly funded no upfront tuition model
- The federal and provincial government should increase operating grants to institutions annually to cover inflationary cost increases
- The provincial government should implement a tuition freeze in all future tuition frameworks until federal and provincial governments each contribute one dollar for each dollar of student contribution
- If tuition must increase, the maximum increase should be no more than inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- To flatten the escalating disparities that exist between programs and to provide clarity on year-to-year increases, any and all tuition increases should be consistent across program and year

OUSA POLICIES

At OUSA Fall General Assembly this year three policies: Indigenous Students, System Vision, and Accountability will be discussed and hopefully passed.

This past year the MSU's External Affairs Committee in collaboration with multiple indigenous students and indigenous groups like the McMaster Indigenous Student Community Alliance (MISCA) authored our Indigenous Students Policy Paper. Similarly to the International Students policy this year I believe the existence of a recent MSU policy paper will translate into very strong advocacy at General Assembly. Additionally, I would like to connect with the authors and consulted students of our MSU paper to ensure there is an **MSU Author** on the **Indigenous Students Policy Paper**.

System Vision addresses six topics in particular that influence the shape and direction of the sector: differentiation, satellite campuses, instructional quality and capacity, campus infrastructure, cost inflation, and funding. I would **tentatively like to pursue authorship** of this paper however this is relatively a lower priority than an MSU author on the Indigenous Students Policy.

Looking to Spring General Assembly, OUSA's Health and Wellness Policy Paper will likely be updated. I am **strongly committed to pursuing authorship** on this paper. I feel strongly about reworking many of the existing recommendations specifically around educational initiatives regarding mental health as I believe they can better reflect evidenced based practices and academic literature on the topic.

OUSA GENERAL ASSEMBLY DELEGATE SELECTION

Twice a year the MSU sends ten students (8 voting) to represent the MSU at OUSA in the passing and and revision of provincial lobbying Policy. Currently these members are selected by the Vice President (Education) under our Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance Operating Policy. Moving forward, I would like to **revise the current job description** for OUSA GA delegate and additionally revise the selection procedures to allow for **election by the SRA** for some of the McMaster Delegation.

FEDERAL

This past year the MSU intended to advocate with the informal lobbying organization known as ADVOCAN. Due to dissimilarity in advocacy goals, the decision was instead made to advocate the the Wilfrid Laurier University Student Union WLUSU on shared advocacy goals. Moving forward I would like to **engage in conversations with ADVOCAN** to see if consensus in advocacy goals that align with our MSU asks can be achieved. Additionally, I have already reached out to the incoming VP Education equivalent at WLUSU Stephanie Bellotto and we have a shared interest in continuing and **expanding WLUSU and the MSU's partnership** this year by reaching out to other like minded student unions and planning a **Federal Advocacy Week** together.

This year the MSU and WLUSU advocated on:

- The federal government must remove the funding cap from the Post-Secondary Student Support Program.
- The federal government should widen eligibility criteria for the Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities, as well as the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities, to include students with temporary disabilities.
- The loan forgiveness benefits and repayment assistance plans offered for students should be extended to include students with temporary disabilities.
- The federal government should reimburse the full cost of the mandatory diagnostic assessment for students with disabilities over the age of 18.
- The federal government should amend the Express Entry program and separate international student applications from other applications.

I would like to carry forward these asks as well as work on additional advocacy priorities for Indigenous Students, Students with Disabilities, and International Students such as Mandatory Indigenous Course Requirements, Indigenizing curriculum, extending the post graduate work permit duration cap to facilitate immigration into Canada.

MUNICIPAL

AWWCA

MUNICIPAL ADVOCACY

STUDENT
EMPLOYMENT

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

SAFER STUDENT
HOUSING

COMPREHENSIVE
ACCESS

OUSAs
PRIORITIES

GA DELEGATE
SELECTION

PROVINCIAL

INDIGENOUS STUDENTS
POLICY

HEALTH & WELLNESS
POLICY

STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES

FEDERAL

INDIGENOUS
STUDENTS

INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

CLOSING LETTER

DEAR ASSEMBLY,

I want to thank all of you for sticking with me through this platform and critically engaging with the ideas presented within it. I want to acknowledge how much of this platform did not come from unique ideas to me but rather engaged and passionate students committed to having their voices heard and raising the voices of others. In turn, I hope to not only raise some of these discussions to the level of the Board of Directors, but also work to engage students already passionate about these issues in the advocacy frameworks I pursue.

In my meetings with each of you, many commented that I had a passion for this position, this is where that passion comes from. I am constantly inspired, moved, and awed by the dedication, commitment, and spirit of McMaster Students. I want to be Vice President Education to continue to work with you all and for this incredible student body and I hope that comes across throughout this platform.

ALEX WILSON

Vice President (Education) Candidate



the MCMaster STUDENTS UNION 2017-2018