

The McMaster Students Union

# PRESIDENT'S PAGE



VP (Education)

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This year, the McMaster Students Union (MSU) has engaged with the Ontario provincial government in many capacities. Various Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), including the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Reza Moridi, as well the Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne, have visited the MSU over this this past year. Through the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA), we also participated in OUSA's Advocacy Week. Held in early December, we collectively met with over 50 MPPs throughout the course of the week. In all of these meetings, though differing in structure, we lobbied for changes to

## MSU will Host OUSA Spring General Assembly

60+ student delegates to meet at McMaster, March 20-22, 2015

Ontario's post-secondary education system, substantiated from the student feedback and research that resides in OUSA's policy papers.

OUSA's highest governing body is its General Assembly, which is comprised of delegates from all seven member student associations. General Assembly takes place twice per year, and it is during this conference that OUSA's policy papers are approved. **The MSU looks forward to hosting OUSA's 2015 Spring General Assembly, March 20 - 22.** We will be welcoming over 60 student leaders from across the province, to discuss educated solutions to issues faced by Ontario students.

This General Assembly is sure to be an exciting one, as we will be discussing three important topics, including: *LGBTQ+ students, mature students, and tuition.*

For the first time ever, OUSA will address issues exclusively related to Ontario's LGBTQ+ students. The forthcoming policy paper recommends many changes for universities to implement, such as the creation of gender-neutral washrooms. The goal of this policy paper is to ensure every institution is safe, inclusive, and addresses the needs of all students.

The diversity of students attending university has drastically changed over the last decade, which has included an increasing enrollment of mature students. Mature students are those who do not enroll in university immediately following high school graduation. They, too, face many barriers in the PSE system, including difficulty accessing on-campus services. OUSA will address numerous concerns regarding mature students at the Spring General Assembly.

Finally, the cost of tuition is an omnipresent factor in the lives of all students. Tuition has long been on the advocacy radar of OUSA. During the Spring General Assembly, delegates will update past recommendations to reflect the current economic climate. We will be asking for a tuition freeze, as well as provincial contributions to university operating budgets.

For three days, students will discuss, debate, and recommend changes to these three policy papers to ensure they truly address the needs of Ontario students. On March 22, OUSA Plenary will take place, and the General Assembly will then decide whether or not to approve these policy papers. If approved, the content of these papers will add to our ever-growing repository of provincial lobbying initiatives. This process allows OUSA, as well as the MSU, to ensure that all of our advocacy efforts are grounded in student-centred perspectives.

If you are interested in seeing how OUSA Plenary works, attendance is open to everyone on Sunday March 22, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in Council Chambers (Gilmour Hall 111). Additionally, if you would like to find out more about OUSA, the General Assembly, or provincial advocacy, do not hesitate to contact me anytime at [vped@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:vped@msu.mcmaster.ca).

**OUSA**  
Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance

**SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**MATURE STUDENTS**

- Flexible service hours for easier accessibility
- Restructuring of OSAP to better meet the needs of mature students

**LGBTQ+ ISSUES**

- Establish gender-neutral washrooms
- Ensure instructors and TAs participate in training to broaden understanding of LGBTQ+ identities and issues

**UNIVERSITY TUITION**

- Enact a tuition freeze for the duration of a new tuition framework
- Increase provincial contributions to the operating budgets of post-secondary institutions



The President's Page is a space sponsored and used by the McMaster Students Union (MSU) Board of Directors (BoD) to communicate with the student body. It functions to highlight the Board's projects, goals, and agenda for the year, as well as the general happenings of the MSU.



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