

PRESIDENT CANDIDATES

Caroline Seiler



Hi everyone! Thank you for a great term as President for 2021-2022. We have shown our resilience during all the challenges and changes in learning due to COVID this year. I'm excited to prepare for in-person research and work again!

This past year has been busy for the GSA - we focused on supporting students affected by COVID delays and improving your virtual experience. We reduced our fees by reducing the capital build fee from \$30 to \$0 this year. Further, I worked on a COVID relief fund of up to \$3000 for overtime graduate students with insufficient departmental or faculty support. To allow similar initiatives to continue in the future, I would

introduce a special student projects fund where students can submit a proposal to work on projects that benefit the grad student community, such as sustainability or student need initiatives.

Despite the needs of students to come to campus for their research and to stay socially connected, many students have benefited from online learning. As President, I will continue to advocate for the ongoing use of online platforms, like Zoom, even after the pandemic to allow greater accessibility and flexibility to grad students. With online work becoming more common, I will also renegotiate our GSA bus pass contract with Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) as the fees continue to increase but usership is low. I would propose a referendum where students can vote on keeping the bus pass or not.

During the pandemic, many students dealt with limited access to medical care and the Student Wellness Centre. To provide additional health care options to students, we worked with our health care broker Studentcare to provide a free trial of the Dialogue healthcare app which provides virtual access to healthcare professionals for faster access to medical advice, prescription renewals, and referrals for medical specialists & lab tests. Students will have the opportunity to vote in a referendum from March 1 st to March 3rd, 2022 on whether to keep this service.

Last year, I worked with the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to build groups for students with disabilities to connect. We contacted local grocery stores to support local businesses and provide discounts to students that we advertise in our weekly email. Next year, I would work with SGS to better advertise our existing international student clubs so that newcomers to Canada can build their community at McMaster.

As in-person activities become possible again, I will work with the GSA team to safely reintroduce more opportunities for students to meet, including trivia nights at the Phoenix, our annual ski trip, campus scavenger hunts, and more. I would also work with our GSA team to provide career-building workshops and advocate for greater career supports, including a career counsellor, to help grad students search for jobs.

If elected, I plan to build on these previous efforts and focus on improving your academic experience in 2022-2023. Thank you for considering my application to be GSA President this year!

VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL CANDIDATE

Mengshu Yuan



Hi, everyone!

Whether you are having trouble finding available resources on campus or you are looking forward to fascinating social activities, here comes the problem solver. My name is Mengshu Yuan, a first-year graduate student from the Engineering Design program. Before pursuing the Master's degree, I have worked as Landscape Designer for four years and co-founded a tourism development company and brand promoting glamorous camping culture in China. The desire to bring about a more colorful university life for students energizes me to run for the GSA VP external position. The marriage of my passion for innovation and work experience

in external communication would make me an ideal candidate.

Currently, many graduate students find it hard to keep informed about updates of available resources and events on campus. That might lead them to the loss of some valuable opportunities. They know nothing about the official accounts of the association on social media platforms, like Twitter and Facebook, let alone follow and get information from them. Furthermore, as the COVID-19 has broken out, there are few opportunities for us to socialize with students from other universities and external bodies. It makes campus life monotonous. My ambition is to provide graduate students with varied and accessible services to solve these problems.

The first step in my plan is to make official communication platforms of the association such as website, social media, newsletters in emails, and visual promotion accessible and attractive. An organized structure and succinct design of the user interface would make contents on it easier to read, favorable to both accessibility and promotion. My design thinking and technical skills would help me oversee and improve official communications and promotions of the association to enable students to access to information and resources they are seeking for. During the period of start-up, I have designed the visual identity system for our brand, including LOGO, posters, pamphlets, and visual products. Besides, I led the team to expand market channels through social media and business collaboration, scaling user growth by 60%. Last year, my team won 1st place at the 2021 UI/UX Designation held by McMaster Design League.

Apart from interacting with others on campus, contacting students from different universities and associations face to face also plays a role in our social life. For example, individuals with diverse backgrounds are able to exchange their experience and information, which is advantageous to broaden their horizons. I would be committed to setting up a series of in-person external events and social activities for graduate students. Not only does it help students expand their social networking, but also it relieves the high pressure from overwhelming academic studies. My previously successful experience in both relationship managements with student associations and event planning would prepare me exceptionally well for achieving this goal.

I am eager to bring a brighter university life to you. Your kind consideration would be highly appreciated.

VICE PRESIDENT EXTERNAL CANDIDATES

Sarah Elshahat

Hello Everyone!

It has been an honor serving you as the GSA VP External for the 2021-2022 academic year! My name is Sarah Elshahat, and I am PhD candidate at the Faculty of Social Sciences. It would be my pleasure to continue serving you as VP External this year, making sure your voice is heard, completing the programs I have started and creating new initiatives to improve your experiences at McMaster and beyond.

Since my election last year, I have been working to develop different measures and initiatives that serve you in different ways. I have advocated for your needs and raised your concerns regarding more support/funding options to the university. Together with the GSA executive team, we successfully secured funding to support students whose studies were negatively impacted by the pandemic. Moreover, I have worked with different external advocacy groups to push the government to provide more financial support, including guaranteed 5-year funding, to all graduate students. I have also developed the urgent statement policy to help the GSA respond to any well-being-threatening incidents and appropriately and promptly support students.

I have organized various wellness-promoting programs and events in response to the raised needs in prior GSA surveys. For instance, I developed the "Gardening for Wellness Program" in collaboration with Hamilton Victory Gardens to provide fun activities to students while allowing them to grab some fresh produce for free. Moreover, to serve the needs of our beautiful multicultural McMaster and support students in these challenging times with inflation, I have secured different discounts from ethnic supermarkets and restaurants in the region to help students obtain the food they love at lower prices.

In addition, I have made significant improvements in communication to help you be informed about the initiatives and support provided by the GSA. For example, I have created Linktree of all GSA platforms and launched Instagram and LinkedIn pages to maximize the number of channels where you can learn about available events and internal and external opportunities (e.g., jobs and internships). As well, I have launched the "Places to Fall in Love with" initiative to make the weekly newsletter more enjoyable, while allowing you to learn about different unique places from across the globe. Additionally, I have recently created a social media contest on all GSA platforms and secured two exciting prizes (Grill & Coffee Maker) to winners to promote engagement while providing some fun.

If elected for this position, I will build on the ongoing work to improve your experience at McMaster and beyond. I will continue representing your interests and raising your voices inside and outside McMaster to maximize support measures and help you All continue your studies and work in an inclusive, supportive and safe environment. I will expand and run more programs that address your needs. I would appreciate your support by voting for me to continue serving you All!

VICE PRESIDENT INTERNAL CANDIDATE

Shuwen Qian

Hello everyone, I am Shuwen Qian, a fourth-year PhD candidate in Biochemistry program. I serve as VP internal for 2021-2022 in McMaster Graduate Student Association (GSA) and I am running for the position of GSA VP internal for 2022-2023.

This year's involvement in GSA has gained me more experience and insights for the VP internal role. In the past service term, I have organized GSA welcome week events, GSA academic related workshops and lead the GSA award adjudication with Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) members. I hope the GSA welcome week event series can help students know more about their GSA insurance benefits and how GSA can support their graduate life. The monthly GSA workshops aim to pave students' way to a successful future career. This year, the GSA award adjudication responsibility has moved from SGS to GSA, I tried my best to provide a fair result for all candidates with our AAC members. As a VP internal, I am responsible for all academic-related affairs. I also involved in GSA COVID relief fund to financially support our graduate students who are delayed by COVID. Moreover, when I received the email from students from Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour (PNB) against campus sexual assault, my empathy and angry stands firmly with them. As the host of AAC, after discussing this case with my members, we chose to distribute the petition by GSA newsletter to support our graduate students' request for a "sexual assault free" campus environment. I also served as a communication bridge between GSA and SGS, speaking for our graduate students. The transition from Gmail to Outlook, from online to in-person had caused much confusion and concerns, it was a great honour for me to help our McMaster graduate student community transit smoothly from online to in-person under the unprecedented COVID situation.

There are a few things that weren't able to conduct due to the pandemic, but if I got elected again this year, I would like to push it forward more. First, more diverse in-person events would be included into the welcome week activities. Due to the uncertain health guide policy for gathering in September, the welcome week activities were widely limited in both size and range. Many students were not able to register our in-person events due to the participants limitation and unfortunately, lost a chance to meet new friends as well as GSA. Secondly, I would like to collaborate more with our GSA phoenix to host in-person academic/social events, such as 3-minute thesis introduction, trivia night, board game night, which would let graduate students have some fun. I also want to invite instructors from student wellness center to provide in-person work our lessons, which would benefit our grad student physically and mentally. Thirdly, I would reach out to more hosts for post-grad career workshops and networking.

Thank you everyone for reading here and supporting me all the way. I would really appreciate it if you can vote me for VP internal this year!

VICE PRESIDENT SERVICE CANDIDATE

Wei Zhao



Hello everyone! My name is Wei Zhao, a level V Ph.D. student in the department of Computing & Software. My current research is about target localization and recognition by using millimetre-wave radar. This is my 8th year in the McMaster University, and I am excited to announce that I am running for the GSA VP Services again!

Eight-years' study in McMaster is a very long time, but I am lucky to witness how our campus becomes better and better. Eight-years' study in McMaster goes by in the blink of an eye, but everything I experienced makes me grow up a lot and I am not longer that shy boy when I first came here. Meanwhile, I have been the GSA VP Services for three years. Three-years' life in GSA gave me a good opportunity to promote myself and allow me to realize many great ideas: a new graduate student handbook has been created, which serves numerous students especially international students; the new GSA website has been established on our own server; new students who cannot come to McMaster due to the COVID-19 have been helped to adjust their study plan; a clearer procedure has been created for all the GSA clubs while preparing and holding their events. Besides, we have seen a big increase of the number of GSA clubs. In terms of Health and Dental Insurance Plan, its eligibility has been extended to more students, e.g., visiting students, MBA students, and divinity students will enjoy such benefit soon. Other ordinary contributions will not be listed one by one, but all of them gives our member much help and convenience.

Now, I can say that I have already got enough experience for my role, and I will continue polishing my work in the next term. My first goal is to introduce McMaster to the graduate students. Although the students can come to campus, they have missed too many chances to feel the friendliness of our people and know about the beauty of our campus after 2 years' lockdown. Thus, a series of workshops and events must be held to make up for the lost. Next, I am going to bring up a new way to help new international students. As we know, international students may encounter several challenges when getting to McMaster, e.g., plane ticket, transportation from the airport, how to find a place to live, what must bring from their origin countries. It is too late to help them after the registration around July. My plan is to connect them with our GSA cultural clubs, where they can find people with the same background. Third, throughout the next year, I will go through all the items of our GSA Insurance, remove outdated ones and have new coverages which people need most.

I am looking forward to providing you even better services for the next term! Thank you very much for your consideration!



ELECTION 2022

FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL -BUSINESS

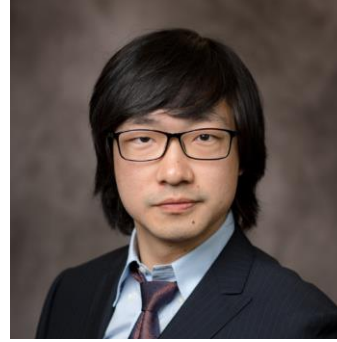
Ankit Ranjan

Hello! I'm an MBA candidate at DeGroot with a focus on Strategic Marketing. Being a part of the flagship business program at Mac, I have noticed the stark disconnect between the MBA student body and the larger Mac graduate student body. Having witnessed the brilliant minds solving today's toughest business problems at the Ron Joyce Center, I hope to drive more involvement from the MBA program in the Mac graduate student body through events participation, workshops, and cross-collaboration.

For this, I'm running for the Faculty Representative Candidate to represent the Business faculty at the GSA, and I hope to hear more from you

FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL -BUSINESS

Si Liu



My name is Si Liu, a 3rd year Ph.D. candidate in Management Science at the DeGroot School of Business, McMaster University. I am also a research assistant affiliated with the Smart Freight Center and the City Logistics Urban Economics Center.

I have been committed to serving the graduate students' community based on my expertise since I joined McMaster University in 2019. I served the Graduate Students Association as the Financial Committee Member in 2020. I also acted as the Communication Director at the DeGroot Doctoral Students' Association in 2021. Now I am the president of the DeGroot Doctoral Students' Association and actively coordinating with the DeGroot leaders as well as the Ph.D. program office at DeGroot to create a safer environment for DeGroot Ph.D. students after the on-campus policy. I am also leading a core team of Computational Science and Engineering, and DeGroot graduate students to establish the Hamilton Student Chapter of the Canadian Operational Research Society, the largest academic organization in the research of operation management nationwide.

I believe my experience serving the Mac community will enable me as a qualified Business Faculty representative to the GSA, and being a member of the FRC will also enable me to continuously support the business graduate students.