

My name is Aimee McGrath, I am currently a 3rd year English major, and I hope to be your VP Academic for the 2022-2023 school year! If elected as your VPA, I will work to make sure students have access to the resources and support they need to make life in the Faculty of Arts a worthwhile experience.

My goals for the upcoming year are as follows:

1. Showcasing student excellence

Students across the Faculty of Arts exhibit great innovation, passion, dedication, and discipline. As such, I believe our students deserve opportunities to showcase their work.

To this end, I have three areas of focus:

A. Organizing AURS and making improvements using feedback from this year's judges as well as my own experiences on the committee

A key focus I plan to take in terms of AURS is better organization and communication. From what I have seen this year, many students are not aware of what AURS is. I believe that getting information out earlier, advertising more heavily, and informing potential participants and judges earlier on in the school year are crucial for improving the success and reach of AURS. Advertising when 500 level courses and honours seminars are just beginning in the Fall would be an excellent way to make students more aware of AURS earlier.

I hope to have AURS in-person next year and make it more explicitly open to the public so that more students are able to appreciate the work of their peers.

B. Reviving the AURS Journal

Several years ago, a previous VPA worked on curating an AURS journal. While AURS is an excellent opportunity to showcase student research, its focus on professor-supervised research also means that certain types of student work go underrepresented.

I plan to revive this AURS journal. Doing so will expand the horizon of AURS to showcase student excellence beyond research alone – especially in areas like creative writing and fine arts, as well as critical writing and research that may not be strictly professor supervised, but nonetheless reflect a high degree of effort.

C. Utilizing the Arts Lounge as a space to showcase student excellence.

The Arts Lounge receives high daily student traffic, and I feel it could be used to showcase student talent to a wider audience outside just events. I intend to work with the School of Creative and Performing Arts to find a way to showcase artwork students have made within the Arts Lounge in order to further maximize the potential of this space.

## 2. Providing resources that reflect student needs

Students often feel lost in how to approach coursework, especially when starting their degree or taking courses that are outside of their discipline. I feel it is important to provide students with academic resources tailored to their needs.

In order to achieve this goal, I plan to:

- A. Work with the Student Success Centre to plan specific workshops based on concerns I hear from fellow students. Such workshops may include, but are not limited to: essay writing, study strategies, final exams, and workshops relating to specific classes or disciplines.
- B. Work with FASA department representatives who are interested in creating student guide books for areas such as essay writing or research projects, which we could provide access to through FASA. These student-led guides would contain advice made by students for students, and would thus be a valuable resource that reflects the topics students need support in.

## 3. Student academic advocacy

Academic advocacy is a key part of the VPA position, and it is important to provide students with an avenue to make sure their concerns are heard.

To better help advocate for students' needs, I intend to:

- A. Work with FASA department representatives who have connections to department clubs to provide access to support

Networking through department clubs is a strong way to provide students with support. Even if students are not aware of FASA initially, if they can pass their concerns along through their department clubs and representatives and through to me, I will be able to reach a wider group of students and better understand their needs.

- B. Utilize a range of platforms to make sure I am available to connect with students and take action to address their needs

Platforms in which I hope to connect with students include but are not limited to: email, Instagram, Discord, and an open Google Forms page. Upon hearing concerns from students in these various platforms, I intend to liaise with faculty, the Dean, and department heads as necessary for each situation.