

# YEAR PLAN

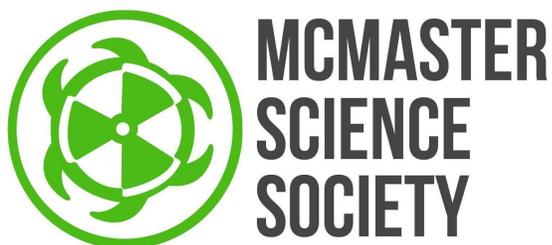
*Third Year Representative*

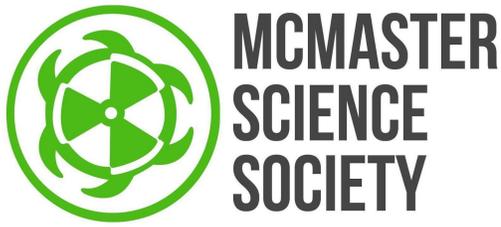
*Ellen Cheng*

McMaster Science Society

2020-2021

(submitted 07/06/2020)





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## 2020-2021 Year Plan

### Letter from the Position

Hello! My name is Ellen and for the duration of the 2020-2021 year, I have the exciting opportunity of being the Third Year Representative on the MSS. I spent my first year in the Life Sciences Gateway program and further specialized into Biology & Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour. Given that this will be my first year on the MSS, I am ready to bring a new outside perspective to the society and I am looking forward to gaining experience by working with everyone involved in the science community. With that being said, my goal for this year is to reach out to science students in Level III, especially those in smaller programs, to bring student needs to the MSS and provide a bidirectional social media platform, where students can receive more MSS-affiliated information and the MSS can receive direct student feedback.

The previous year representative, Brittany, had many goals and initiatives in mind, along with upkeeping annual activities performed by the *Year Representatives*. One of these said goals was to utilize another social media platform for Level III Science students to connect and receive information from the MSS; I found this to be notable and I plan on putting this goal in action throughout the year. Additionally, I hope that this expansion of social media platforms used by the MSS will allow us to gather more feedback from the student body and bridge the gap between the science student voices and the MSS. The functions of this role have been to represent the opinions and needs of all Level III Science students, by bringing them to the MSS; I plan on doing this justly so.

Due to the unprecedented events occurring globally and within the McMaster community, we are entering newfound territory, both socially and academically. I also understand that we are approaching our final year, which will bring more surprises of its own. This year may have many uncertainties and tribulations, but I will continuously strive to advocate on your behalf to the MSS and provide you with as much support as possible. So please feel free to reach out to me at any time!

Ellen Cheng  
Third Year Representative  
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OBJECTIVES

Evaluate, improve, and define the responsibilities of the role of <i>Year Representatives</i>	
Description/ Current State	<p>Year Representatives are part of the Core Executives in the MSS, however, these roles are vastly different from the role of VPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Year Representatives hold a position in the Core Executive in the MSS, but, despite the outline of the role(s), these positions do not hold the same level of responsibilities as the VPs</li> <li>- Year Representatives do not have a periphery executive team under them; this may be due to the Year Representative position itself not being well defined</li> <li>- There are not many long-term plans for Year Representative positions and therefore this position has relatively more freedom than other Core Executive positions</li> </ul> <p>This role is not under a specific portfolio, however, oftentimes it works under the VP Internal and President</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During many portfolio-based activities, the Year Representatives work under the VP Internal or with the President</li> </ul>
Goal	<p>Work with the MSS Core Executives to better define the Year Representative position and create more structure for the position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with the MSS President to look over the Year Representative position outlines</li> <li>- Determine the efficiency of this position and what has previously been done by individuals of this position</li> <li>- Determine what advances should be made to provide more structure for this role (placed under another VP portfolio, etc.)</li> <li>- Policy changes may need to be made</li> </ul> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I do not have a prior background with the MSS so I might have a different viewpoint than other executives that have been with the MSS before</li> <li>- Others have expressed an interest in this topic, and we have already discussed that it needs to be addressed</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This role has been active for a long time without being detrimental to the functions of the MSS and has been beneficial</li> </ul>

	<p>to some aspects, thus it might be seen that there is no need for change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This "issue" may have been brought up previously and it may have been determined that the position functions well enough to function</li> </ul>
Barriers to Success	<p>This role has been an anomaly for quite some time and there may have been previous initiatives to change this position. A review of the position and what has been done under this position, must be made to determine further actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes to this position may have already been made and it may have been already determined that the current functions of this role are sufficient</li> </ul> <p>Policy changes may need to be made and due to my lack of experience with the MSS I will need help in dealing with them</p>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with other Year Representatives, the VP Internal, and President to address this issue</li> <li>- Reach out to other previous Year Representatives to gain insight on how this position has/should/could function</li> </ul>
Long Term Implications	<p>A better-defined role for Year Representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This may include more responsibilities for these positions and annual initiatives to be upheld</li> <li>- Possibility of the role being placed under a VP portfolio</li> <li>- Possibility of the role being phased-out or transitioned from a core executive position to a periphery executive position in the MSS</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSS President</li> <li>- MSS VP Internal</li> <li>- MSS Core Executives</li> <li>- Previous Year Representatives</li> </ul>

Increase student engagement and provide student-demand-based support	
Description/ Current State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From the perspective of an individual that has not been on the MSS before, I hear about many students' criticisms surrounding the operations of the MSS and how the MSS seems to 'miss the target'</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although the MSS has many services and resources available (MSCAF, SIF, SOG, etc.), it seems that a large portion of science students are unaware of them, do not know how to properly utilize them, or cannot attend/use them due to scheduling</li> <li>- With 7000+ undergraduates in the Faculty of Science, there is still only a small turnout rate for students attending MSS and MSS-affiliated events/services</li> <li>- Events and services should have a greater student-input on how they should proceed and better cater for student needs</li> </ul>
<p>Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve the student input in MSS decisions to best cater for their needs and thus improve the turnout rate to MSS and MSS-affiliated events/services</li> </ul> <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have connections to individuals from smaller science programs that are not as well-represented in the science community, thus I hear a lot of input that may help the MSS serve the entire science community better</li> <li>- Since I have not worked with the MSS before, I lack a bias to resist change in the MSS; individuals working in the MSS for many years may have an unconscious bias and view that change is not needed</li> </ul> <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I lack experience with the MSS and may not know about previous initiatives working towards the same goal</li> <li>- Students may find information overbearing and may not respond well to more exposure; exposure of the MSS repeatedly to students may bother them and might induce a negative response to the MSS overall</li> </ul>
<p>Barriers to Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student outreach and engagement may be affected by the global conditions due to COVID-19</li> <li>- Students may be overwhelmed with the 'same' information being presented to them over multiple platforms and become disinterested</li> <li>- Some students may not use forms of social media</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A large amount of student feedback/suggestions may be difficult to compile, and it may be difficult to target students' needs</li> </ul>
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create more platforms for students to be informed about MSS resources/services/events</li> <li>- Increase direct communication/promotion of events through in-class-talks (subject to social-distancing guidelines for 2020-2021; Fall semester is online so there will not be in-class-talks for the Fall semester)</li> <li>- Create a submission form for student suggestions/feedback and bring this information to MSS meetings; feedback form will be made available through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, alternative social media platform (see 'Alternative Social Media Platform' project), and through MSS overview email</li> </ul>
Long Term Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased student engagement and better reputation of the MSS</li> <li>- Students become more informed about MSS services/resources/events</li> <li>- Platforms are created and maintained for the following 2021-2022 term; can be utilized by the 2021-2022 Fourth Year Representative</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSS</li> <li>- Level III program society representatives</li> </ul>

## EVENTS & PROJECTS

Alternative Social Media Platform	
DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Logistics and creation during first semester; use by second semester</li> </ul>
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide an alternative platform (in addition to the 'Science Class of 2022' Facebook page) for students to receive information on general and year-specific science events/opportunities</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect Level III programs and societies, allowing for greater communication between programs</li> <li>- Increase student engagement by helping to get the word out about MSS and MSS-related events (students can hear about other program society events and attend)</li> <li>- Link to 'suggestion box' Google Form to hear students' thoughts</li> </ul>
PROCEDURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of alternative social media account and illustrations (reach out to VP communications to discuss illustrations and proper communication guidelines)</li> <li>- Contact other program society representative and discuss their ideas/concerns about the use of the account (if it should even be created)</li> <li>- Create guidelines for account holders to follow (deadlines for post creation, how to make a good post, proper etiquette of social media accounts, etc.)</li> <li>- Promote the social media account</li> <li>- Introductory post and scheduled posts throughout the year</li> <li>- Monitor and assess the efficacy of the account throughout the year and at end of the 2020-2021 term             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to the 2020 Fall semester being online, attendance of MSS-affiliated events will not be comparable to previous years</li> <li>- Feedback form can be released to gauge students' thoughts on the account</li> <li>- Meet with program society representatives to determine if their events have received higher student engagement compared to previous year's events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
DIFFICULTIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upkeep of account may be challenging for a single person to receive and post about all Level III program societies (open-up control to all Level III program society representatives)</li> <li>- Coordination of receiving and posting may be difficult</li> <li>- May overwhelm students' exposure to MSS and MSS-related information; students may not be interested or dislike this</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring that the incoming 2021-2022 representatives maintain the account and use it properly <u>or</u> deleting the account (consider what will happen to the account once the 2020-2021 term is over)</li> <li>- Inclusivity of all program societies, especially smaller programs</li> </ul>
PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level III program society representatives</li> <li>- MSS President</li> <li>- MSS VP Communications</li> </ul>
PROJECTED OUTREACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Majority of Level III Science students by the end of April 2021</li> <li>- MSS program societies (VP communications &amp; VP Events)</li> </ul>
BUDGET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N/A</li> </ul>

Suggestions & Feedback Google Form	
DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation by first semester; Available throughout the year</li> </ul>
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create a platform for students to anonymously send feedback and suggestions to the MSS (anonymity allows students to feel comfortable with sharing both positive and negative feedback)</li> <li>- Allows students to directly access and affect how the MSS could operate</li> <li>- Use student feedback to better the operations of the MSS to help provide students the support they need and increase student engagement</li> </ul>
PROCEDURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of Google Form with proper sections</li> <li>- Determine amount of monitoring the forms need and determine how many individuals will be able to view/access the submissions</li> <li>- Promote the suggestion &amp; feedback form to the Science Class of 2022 social media platforms</li> <li>- Bring appropriate suggestions/feedback to the MSS</li> <li>- Highlight how student feedback directly affects how the MSS operates (i.e. posts stating "Due to student feedback, the</li> </ul>

	MSS will try to _____. We appreciate and consider your thoughts about the Faculty of Science. Please continue to tell us how we can do better")
DIFFICULTIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring and compiling the submissions (may be challenging for a single person, depending on the amount of submissions)</li> <li>- May be used inappropriately by students due to anonymity</li> <li>- Organizing a large amount of information and bringing it to the MSS in a coordinated fashion</li> </ul>
PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSS</li> <li>- Other Level III program society representatives</li> </ul>
PROJECTED OUTREACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primarily Level III science students</li> <li>- Due to availability, may reach science students of other levels</li> </ul>
BUDGET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N/A</li> </ul>

### GOALS TO STRIVE FOR

5 things that you wish to have prepared for the beginning of September:

1. Creation of alternative social media account and have contacted other program society year representatives
2. Creation of alternative social media account-use and promotions guidelines
3. Feedback survey through Google Forms (ideas and platform)
4. Group chat with program society representatives
5. Discussion with Year Representatives/VP Internal/President about position

5 things to be completed during the fall term (1<sup>st</sup>):

1. Meetings with program society representatives pertaining to use of social media platform
2. Feedback form made available and monitored throughout the semester
3. Promote new MSS social media platform and post MSS-related information
4. Possible policy changes pertaining to Year Representative position
5. Aid other positions in MSS-related activities

5 things to be completed during the winter term (2<sup>nd</sup>):

1. Compile all suggestions/feedback from forms into single document
2. Meetings with program society representatives about efficiency of platform use/check-in
3. Highlight summer opportunities, research, NSERC, etc. on social media platforms
4. Determine efficiency of using other social media platform and further use of it
5. Completion of transition report

### TIMELINE

Month	Objective/Project/Event/Goals
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review previous Third Year Representative's transition report (additionally Second Year Rep's) and formulate 2020-2021-year plan</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finalize year plan and discuss logistics with other MSS executives and program society executives</li> <li>- Start discussion with Year Representatives about changes to position</li> <li>- Monitor 'Science Class of 2022' Facebook page</li> <li>- Monitor MSOB page</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create a guideline for the proper use of the alternative social media account (given that Level III representatives have access to the account)</li> <li>- Reach out to program society executives and/or Level III program society representatives</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consolidate with program society representatives concerning proper use of social media platforms (deadlines to post before an event, when not to post to prevent media overload, how to create a visually pleasing post, etc.)</li> </ul>

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal meeting with program society representatives to create guideline of events for Fall semester</li> <li>- Completion of suggestion/feedback Google Form</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlight MSS financial and academic services on social media platforms</li> <li>- Suggestions and feedback Google Form made available</li> <li>- Monitor social media platforms</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor social media platforms</li> <li>- Formal meeting with program society representatives (check-in)</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue social media outreach</li> <li>- Keep student engagement and social media accounts active throughout the winter break (transition to more social-based than academic-based posts)</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal meeting with program society representatives to create guideline of events for Winter semester</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlight summer opportunities, research, NSERC, etc. on social media platforms</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begin compiling suggestions and feedback from Google Form</li> <li>- Continue to monitor social media platforms</li> <li>- Highlight McMaster and MSS scholarship and bursary deadlines</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete transition report</li> <li>- Compile suggestions and feedback from Google Form</li> <li>- Determine the efficacy of the alternative social media account and whether the account should continue or be deleted</li> </ul>