

ASUS

Arts & Science



Undergraduate Society

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ACADEMICS COMMISSION  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2023-2024

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## **Mandate**

The Academics Commission shall consider matters of an academic or educational nature within the Society affecting members of the Society. The Commission shall strive to enhance the academic experience of members of the Society. The Commission shall recommend policy concerning programs of an academic or educational nature to be provided by the Society.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, one of the purposes and functions of the Academics Commission shall be to administer the Departmental Student Council (DSC) system and the Academic Council comprised of academic representatives, to improve the quality of formal education, to preserve and develop academic freedom, and to expand the learning environment to include the society outside the institutions of formal education, through both co- curricular and extra-curricular programs. The Commission should also take an active role in the planning and conduct of educational research and the development of the Society academics and education policy.

## **Opening Statement**

The Academics Commission has an ongoing dedication to the student experience within the classroom of Arts and Science students at Queen's University. It is a commission that harnesses student advocacy for academic excellence and pride and allows for positive change to be seen in the classrooms on campus. The commission deals with all ends of the academic spectrum from Department Student Counsels that cater to social and group focused peer bonding, to more the more complex ASUS Appeals Resource Centre, where highly trained students develop plans with fellow students to navigate academic appeal regulations and academic integrity violations. The commission is an essential part of supporting Arts and Science students in areas that feel vast and unpersonal, like a classroom where they don't know their peers, or their first university exam, and provide them resources to guide them to success and overall positive academic environment.

The most essential part of this, though, is making these resources known and accessible to every Arts and Science student. I hope to improve outreach in order to successfully target and nourish student needs. All programs and events in the commission are available to, and are intended for, every Arts and Science student, and increasing the visibility of them on campus to students would make for a more equipped, supported, and comforting undergraduate experience. This increase in outreach must extend past increased marketing and further development of programs and go into addressing students whose identities are not always

thought of. Students such as international students, and mature students lack access of the knowledge to the resources provided by the commission, and they could enhance their experiences as Arts and Science students. Consideration of both how to increase visibility to all students along with actively expanding that audience is an essential part of my work this year. The Academics Commission is sitting on solid foundations that with earnest work and a critical lens has endless room to become stronger. Strengthening the already flushed out projects and programs, by continuing to apply EDII principles, by listening to, and seeking meaningful change, from the voices of the Arts and Science students, and by being unafraid of reform, the commission is able to see the programs they have improve and adapt to student needs.

I am beyond excited and honoured to take on this project and hope to see that meaningful change within our commission. The Academics Commission has been my home for 2 years and I am eager to advance and expand wider using the stable foundation that ACS was built upon, the one that I knew. I would be no where without the team that taught me and inspired me to this point of leadership and I think of them as I continue to dedicate so much into the classrooms of Arts and Science Students.

#### **Academics Commission Goals:**

- **Increasing Visibility:** The vast scope of the Commission often leaves many students unaware of all its functions and the available opportunities. Numerous students have expressed their lack of knowledge regarding the Commission's activities, their potential involvement, and the contributions they can make to support the Commissioner and the Society as a whole. This issue is significant because it's essential for student leaders, both within and outside ASUS, to have the chance to engage with the Commission's work. The programs are intended to support and encourage the Arts and Science community and that cannot happen without an increase in outreach and visibility.
- **Improving social media presence:** The Academics Instagram is the main presence of the Academics Commission on social media. We do not currently post with any particular regularity or extreme cohesion. With the help from my core team, we will post regular content that shares how the commission is involved in every aspect of academic life. We will use Instagram stories as reminders for upcoming events, Academics job openings, DSC updates, important academic dates and news, academic rescues and much more. As a more creative approach, leaning in to other forms of social media like TikTok may be a lighter way to improve visibility. Making "a day in the life of a DSC Co-President" video, or a "get ready with me to host a journal launch party" video, can make the Academics committee present less intimidating, showcase the realities of our work and gain more traction on social media.
- **Events:** Queen's University surely has no shortage of clubs or organizations that are dedicated to the student experience. With such a renowned reputation of clubs, the Academics Commission will strive to host more events with a variety of academic-oriented clubs. By making meaningful collaborations with clubs outside ASUS, we can

increase the variety and number of students that interact with Academics. Examples of clubs would be the Queen's Pre-Law society and WISE to collab with Gender and Life.

### **DSC Cohesion:**

Historically, the Department Student Councils have always felt disconnected or isolated from ASUS as a whole. In particular, DSCs experience this level of solitude within the Commission, DSC Assembly, or even within their cluster. Such fragmentation and allowance of disassociation can encourage some departments to leave the Society or feel disengaged with their advocacy efforts. This year, the Commission hopes to revitalize and promote a stronger sense of community within all DSCs and PSCs to ensure that they will strengthen the connection between their operations and ASUS. The Commission strives to offer all Presidents a meaningful experience and showcase the resources that are readily available and discourage hesitation to access the various supports being offered.

- **Cluster Connections:** The four Academic Representatives (Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural & Physical Sciences, and Arts & Languages) will be required to host one cluster event and one cluster social during the academic year. It is not a requirement that each DSC in the cluster participates, but they must be (at the minimum) offered the opportunity to be a part of the cluster event. The cluster social will be open to all DSC Presidents within their respective category. At DSC Assembly every month, the DSC Deputies and I will propose the question: how have you contributed to fostering better cluster cohesion and communications this month? During DSC Assembly we will also have times where we will encourage cluster socializing and provide the opportunity to plan potential cluster events.
- **DSC Topic collaboration:** Although it may seem that there are more differences than similarities when it comes to Department Student Councils, but at the heart of them all are Arts and Science students. Each DSC President could attest to the academic stress that the students in their program feel, or the nuances of mental health while in school. Having these discussion topics brought up at DSC Assembly and giving the Presidents the opportunity to speak about how things like burnout, for example, impacts the students in their program, and what advice they would offer. As discussion topics become more spoken through and important issues/subjects within the student body of Arts and Science are revealed, the DSC presidents and Academics team address these situations directly. This topic collaboration will not only promote further DSC cohesion, but will be ultimately bring to light important aspects of all Arts and Science student academic life.
- **UGX-DSC:** This is an event that brings together the DSC/PSC Co-Presidents (or their proxies) with their respective Undergraduate Chairs/Department Heads. In the past couple years, it has been a successful part of DSC mingling and socializing and to foster a healthy working relationship with faculty. In the Fall Semester the event should be in-person and mingling based in order to build relationships, and then the winter semester

one could be on Zoom and have notetakers in order to come up with more action items to report one. Last year, although successful at the social aspect, there lacked an avenue to gather data to create any meaningful change. This is why a second one would be offered in order to reform and expand the relationship of DSC and faculty.

### **Advocacy and Accessibility:**

Helping improve the learning experience of Arts and Science students is the heart of the Academics Commission's mandate and continues to be the main goal this year. Continuing this mandate, the Commission will strive to reach as many Arts and Science students possible and listen, learn, and assist them with all their academic concerns or issues.

- **Strengthening, Fixing and Promoting the Academic Assistance Program:** The creation of the AAP was an incredible step for advocacy from the last few years of the Academics Commission. This year, strengthening and advancing the AAP would allow it to live up to its fullest potential. The Manual alone, without hyperlinks and other interactive aspects, can do little on its own. The Academic Assistance Program is offered on the ASUS website, but lacks a working portal or any place to reach out for direct assistance. The first order of business is editing and updating the Manual itself, then making it more accessible to work with, and lastly, working on opening the portal up and ensuring ease to it from the ASUS website. Also, the promotion of the program is critical, as many students are still unaware of where to air their grievances about academic concerns. Internally, the Commission will be heavily promoting this service to the DSCs to ensure that student leaders are comfortable with what resources currently exist and can distribute this information to any student who is looking to discuss their grievances. The Commission will be working closely with the Marketing office to ensure that effective strategies will be utilized on social media platforms and the information is reaching as many students as possible.
- **Networking to improve accommodations:** One of the privileges of working so closely with faculty is being able to advocate on behalf of the student body directly to those with the power to create meaningful change. Hearing personally from students from all departments about difficulties with getting proper accommodations and feeling unsatisfied with the accommodations office at Queen's, I have hope that communications from the academics commission with faculty can be an additional space for change.

- **Surveys, Thought-Exchanges, and Student Consultation:** Direct consultation with Arts and Science students is absolutely critical to inform the advocacy topics and conversations that the Commissioner will have with the Faculty or other Queen’s University representatives. Through administering surveys or thought-exchanges, the Commission hopes to gain a better understanding of what concerns many students have. Each DSC and Special Project committee will receive an invitation to these opportunities and highly be encouraged to promote it to their networks. Specific areas that the Commissioner would like to cover for this year are: how the in-person transition has impacted student’s academics, what areas of concern do students have about the classroom, and how can ASUS best support them moving forward. Additionally, one of the largest benefits of moving back to an on-campus year is the accessibility and ease of collecting student concerns. The Commission is looking to booth at various campus “hotspots” throughout the year or even at events hosted by the Academics Commission to gain a greater understanding about student experiences and what their pressing concerns are.

### **Committee Teams Description & Goals**

#### **Department Student Councils:**

The Department Student Councils and 2 Program Specific Councils are dedicated to the advocacy and representation of their respective departments. They bring the voices of their student body to the Commission and express concerns for trends within academics or general issues that the Commission can address. Additionally, they often host academic events dedicated to students within their department to encourage a stronger sense of community, awareness about certain topics, or informative sessions on common interests. As student representatives, they also sit on faculty board, where they are able to contribute their community’s voices and advocate for changes in the faculty that they would like to see.

- **Community Building:** Many DSCs are currently on track and very eager to host in-person events and re-foster that full university. After years of being primarily online, there are still elements of being part of student government that are foreign and exciting, and having frequent and unrestricted events captures this. Having these events and reaching out to students in programs is essential to community building. DSCs have also chosen to start selling department merchandise as an avenue to achieve this goal as well. Finally, this community building also means the visibility of student councils within the student body. Many Arts and Science students may be unaware that all departments have student representatives, therefore, many of them are looking to branch out through fundraisers, social media engagement, and form groups to directly disseminate information.
- **Departmental Connections:** Many DSCs have often highlighted that there is a strong disconnect between faculty and the students, which have also played a critical role in motivating these phenomenal leaders to be elected as student representatives. Many Co-Presidents have taken it upon themselves to host a variety of versions of “Meet the

Profs!”. This type of event fosters a great environment that is both relaxed and informative. Many students will be able to attend these events and discuss ideas, gain valuable insight, or even just listen to the conversations taking place. Specific department events and also larger events like UGX-DSC will be instrumental in making meaningful departmental connections.

- **Decolonization and EDII:** The past few years has truly been a journey of learning and calls for action on a global scale for racial injustices. It is with great pride and joy that the Academics Commission will be supporting countless DSCs in their goal to decolonize existing practices and implement EDII measures. For many, this will look like creating an EDII Director position or consulting with various minority groups to ensure that their events adhere to their commitment to diversifying their projects. Additionally, the Co-Presidents are also working with faculty members to help facilitate this process throughout the year and make suggestions on how to exhibit anti-racist behavior. Additionally, there will be time set aside throughout various DSC Assemblies during the year to discuss the progress and efficiency of these projects to ensure that they are being implemented and actively utilized within their team.

### **Queen’s Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies (QJERS):**

QJERS will be committed to highlighting racial injustices and the layered intersectionality that is offered within the topic as well. More than anything, this journal provides a safe and welcoming space for BIPOC students and individuals to publish their lived experiences, academic papers relating to the journal, and avenues of allyship. Academic institutions often push aside or diminish voices of color. As a part of ASUS’ continuous journey in decolonizing our Society and empowering BIPOC students, this journal serves as another way to achieve the goal of always practicing anti-racist perspectives.

- **Print and distribute Volume 1:** Our team worked tirelessly last year to create an artful and moving journal filled with inspiring pieces and important works from silenced voices. To begin this year we want to print more physical copies and distribute them around campus.
- **Publish Volume 2:** Publishing the first volume of the journal was an impressive feat of last year’s Editing team, and making sure that momentum continues is essential in making this newer project successful. Hiring a strong, dedicated creative team will lead the journal to a successful publish and hopefully a celebration.
- **Branding and Establishment:** The identity and overall presence of the journal on campus is in its infancy because of its status as a newer journal. This upcoming year will be spent engaging with other organizations on campus, marketing through social media platforms, and collaborating with different groups to reach a large number of students and begin building a strong foundation for a community behind this journal. Editors are also interested in introducing more collaborations with both other student clubs and within relevant departments such as QASA, ACSA, QBAS, Hilliel, REESS and Black Studies, Gender Studies, Indigenous studies, History, etc.

### **Queen’s Science Undergraduate Research Journal (QSURJ):**

Queen’s Science Undergraduate Research Journal publishes their editions with a focus on scientific research and pieces. They allow students to experience the publication process at the undergraduate level and continue to harness their writing skills through workshops,



competitions, and contests. Their events also help Arts and Science students critically engage within the field and explore various career paths beyond Queen's. They aim to prepare undergraduate students for the realm of research and foster an enthusiasm for the field.

- **Student Engagement:** One way that QSURJ will be actively keeping in touch with their student community is through a series called Monthly Journal Club where students will gather to analyze and discuss innovative publications from peer-reviewed research journals, which will all be related to a chosen theme for each month. Some potential themes could pertain to infectious diseases, healthcare disparities, or even articles released by Queen's. A guest professor will also be invited to attend each month and their area of expertise will overlap with the theme as well, which significantly contributes to the potential for quality dialogue on the topic at hand and give student a chance to engage with this field beyond the classroom setting.

### **Politicus:**

Politicus publishes their bi-yearly journal editions on topics related to politics and international relations. They also host an array of different events that engage with the Queen's community that are interested in these two fields, often inviting these students for a lively debate or academic exploration of a variety of topics. Like other journals, they hope to encourage a wider appreciation and understanding of politics on many levels and also offer an environment for critical engagement in the realm of political academia.

- **Cross department cooperation:** With the special edition volume, the team hopes to team up with the DEVS department for the topic of "sustainability", therefore discussing the political and developmental sides of things like climate change, politics of urban planning, legislation/law of sustainability, clean-earth plans, etc. We plan to reach out to the DEVS department for marketing and reaching more students outside of politics, including hiring some for our Politicus team. When we receive articles about sustainability, we may also reach out to DEVS professors for professor review (stage 4 of editing) alongside POLS professors.
- **Consistency of learned skills:** It is important to ensure that everyone on the editorial board teams is properly taught to the standard of POLITICUS early on. We plan to host a social/workshop at the beginning of the year for the editorial board, where we will go over citations, professional language, necessary context for articles, and how to properly decide whether an article should be accepted for submissions. In addition, checklists and an introductory PowerPoint will be sent out so anyone can refer to it if they forget/have to miss the workshop for any reason. For copyeditors specifically, we will be extra available around the time of their first assignment to ensure we can quickly answer questions and look over anything necessary.
- **Expand Audience:** We'd love to extend the audience of our journal. Through targeted outreach, we want to aim to reach a broader and more diverse readership. We hope to do this by updating our digital platforms, social media, and partnerships. We are dedicated to enhancing the quality and relevance of our content to attract new readers while retaining existing ones.

## **Undergraduate Review (UR):**

The Undergraduate Review is the oldest journal to date within ASUS and is committed to publishing editions which appeal the artistic and creative industry. Their events often bring in a refreshing perspective that dwells on a variety of mediums. They do not limit themselves and encourage collaboration across all vicinities and indulge in all art forms such as poetry, sculptures, visual arts, music, dance, and many more.

- **Increased Presence:** We wish to expand our social media presence through various promotional methods, including on campus promotion. Through increasing the volume of social media posts and the variety of them, engagement from a wider and/or more loyal audience will grow. By connecting with other student clubs on social media and asking them to share UR content, hopefully we will foster great relationships with more student clubs and further increase our presence.
- **Sustainable Foundation:** We wish to create a foundation that will carry the Undergraduate Review's success through several years. There's a hope to emphasize mentorship opportunities for students in 1st and 2nd year. We intend to hire a first-year representative to encourage this; this allows for the voices of newer students to be heard and have a place at the table when larger discussions are being had. This can look like creating an extensive and detailed transition manual that will fully prepare the next Editor-In-Chiefs when they take over, come up with traditions that the journal can carry through the years. For example, we are thinking of having an event, our larger launch event, in the Agnes Etherington Centre on campus.

## **ASUS Review:**

The goal of their service is to break down cram culture at Queen's and encourage healthy study habits through an affordable and accessible means to academic resources. Additionally, they work very closely with the professors who teach the courses to fulfill the spirit of academic integrity and good relations between ASUS and faculty members.

- **Expansion of Courses:** As ASUS Review continues to solidify their programming, offering more courses in various field will make the service much more accessible and helpful for a larger number of Arts and Science students. In particular, highlighting courses in first-year economics or mandatory second-year courses. Expanding into more classes, and a more diverse range of courses, ASUS Review will expand its reach to more students.
- **Innovative Learning:** This year, alternative sources of information and different teaching style swill be delivered to students to ensure that a wide variety of learning methods are covered. Some examples of what this will look like include: booklets with questions formatted to what course evaluations look like, course developers will complete practice problems with the students, and questions will be answered promptly throughout the session.
- **Sustainability:** Previously, ASUS Review would physically print every booklet for each session. We are transitioning to an opt-in approach, whereby users will be able to select if they wish to receive a print booklet prior to the session. This initiative will not only result in a reduction in costs but will also have a positive impact on our sustainability efforts.
- **Inclusion of Diverse Students:** The committee is looking to include a variety of different students. Specifically, those identified as distance or mature students may have specific

needs that are different than the average student body. Ensuring that this service stays accessible is of the utmost priority and will be completed through working with faculty coordinators specialized in this area.

### Teaching Awards:

The highest teaching awards that can be given by the Society include the W.J. Barnes Award and the Teaching Assistant Excellence Award. Both aim to encourage professors and teaching assistants to continuously commit themselves to best practices within teaching and also commemorate the exemplary work that they are doing within academia. The first award is for a professor who has truly gone above and beyond in fostering a wonderful learning environment for students and the latter award is similarly formed, but targeted towards teaching assistants. Any Arts and Science student is eligible to nominate a staff member and the process of selecting a winner is determined by a committee comprised of various student representatives within ASUS. These winners will be celebrated at the Honours Reception at the end of the year.

- **Publishing Exemplary Practices:** Through the Academics Commission social media and ASUS Marketing, further efforts will be made to promote some of the best work put forth by the winners. This is a strong attempt to showcase to other faculty members and students what standards of excellence staff members are portraying within the classroom, which will hopefully inspire others to foster similar behaviors or practices. Specifically, this may include some quotes from students on how the faculty members made an impact on their experience at Queen's or even what makes their class so engaging. Displaying these behaviors and highlighting certain pedagogies is both a way to celebrate current faculty members and to help define standards of excellence.
- **Creating defined standards:** Last year the commission worked with certain members of faculty to define the "best practices" of teaching at Queen's. They sought out a formulaic ideal of a classroom and pedagogies uses by professors. Unfortunately "best standards" has yet to be defined and there is ambiguity in what classifies as excellence/ meets and even goes beyond the best standards of teaching. This year, working with Bill Nelson and other members of faculty, defining standards of teaching will be at the forefront of our work and will be used in part to help select a winner of various awards.
- **Student Engagement:** In this upcoming year, a goal of 130 overall student submissions for teaching awards will be set to ensure that a diverse range of student voices and opinions will be heard. Additionally, extra efforts to reach out to the sibling societies (ie. PHEKSA, CESA, etc.) will be made to foster better relationships with those communities of students and ensure that they also feel valued within ASUS' operations. All courses under the Faculty of Arts and Science and sibling societies are valid and should have the opportunity to be represented.

### SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths:

1. Vast and diverse commission: Being one of the larger commissions and having such a large number of programs and volunteers, Academics is able to provide endless support for Arts and Science students in many different arenas of academic life. The commission offers support by creating a community with a dedicated leader through the DSC program, can provide free advice on academic appeals and petitions, and also provides

opportunities of writing and reaching academic literature. There is a place for a diverse range of student volunteers within the commission and supports a diverse population of the student body.

2. Larger core ACS team (4 deputies): Another strength of having a large committee is having a larger core team. The ACS core team grew even more this year with the addition of a second DSC Deputy, and having a new organizational structure offers better separation and delegation of tasks. This ensures that everyone is focusing on smaller tasks and are able to do them to the best of their abilities avoiding burn out.
3. Strong foundation: The current structure and programs that exist in the Academics commission proves to be strong and immensely beneficial for Arts and Science students already. Having the supports from executive and faculty, having preexisting relationships with other commissions and student clubs, having student trust and a solid presence on campus allows me as the commissioner to see my visions come to fruition as I am starting with a strong foundation.

#### **Weaknesses:**

1. Vast and diverse commission: Having a vast and diverse commission is both one of the best elements of the Academics commission, but also means that there is more places for error and miscommunication. With having many direct reports and an even larger number of volunteers, keeping organized and having strong communication becomes a larger feat. The diverse nature of the commission, with many different services being offered, means that there is a lack of cohesivity and makes it difficult for a commissioner to switch hats quickly between projects.
2. Lack of follow through: Having grand plans and being optimistic is a great quality in a leader. Commissioners past, and I, have extremely high expectations and visions of the work of the commission. Going above and beyond the typical perimeters of the commission, and wanting to reform certain elements, can be difficult to get out of the notebook and into reality. I foresee that when times are significantly busy, creative projects get put on the back burner and neglected, making follow through with passion projects low.

#### **Opportunities:**

1. Collaborations: Making meaningful connections with other student groups on campus that are academically based would be an effective and exciting opportunity for the commission. Exhanging followers on social media and advertising to two sets of students from the student population could create a large turn out and foster high interaction.
2. Gathering feedback: Gathering feedback from the student body on current issues or services being offered is an important part of having a platform. Being able to collect data about what needs improvement or what is helping students thrive is essential for ASUS, Arts and Science students and incoming students as well.

#### **Threats:**

- 1. Student Engagement:** Many would argue that even before the pandemic, student engagement was rather low. The evidence stemming from attendance of events or general interest in running for DSC (Co) President. One of the largest threats that pose success to events that will be hosted or even general interest from Arts and Science students is the lack of enthusiasm for such opportunities. It is imperative to plan for such low turn out and anticipate the awkward reality of it sometimes.

**Timeline:**

September

- **Pass New and Updated Policy:** Update policy on DSC President eligibility, journal EIC responsibilities, and DSC taskforces. Additionally, revise AARC policy to reflect its current structure and operation.
- **DSC Training:** Host financial, administrative, and any additional training required for DSCs.
- **Initiate Taskforces:** The taskforce ideas will be discussed at the first DSC assembly in order
- **Major's Night Planning:** Meet with Major's Night committee to begin determining and planning for the event in the second semester.
- **Ratify Teaching Award Committees:** Ask Assembly to strike a committee for Teaching Awards.
- **Open Nominations for Teaching Awards:** Officially open nominations for Teaching Awards.
- **ASUS Review Training:** Support ASUS Review Director in any training that the Course Facilitators/Developers require.
- **Outreach and Planning for the Med/Law School Event:** The Journals & Scholarship Deputy will confirm admissions officers and students to attend the event
- **Kickoff Meetings:** The first of many regular meetings for DSC Assembly, Academics Committee, Faculty Board, and many more!
- **AAP Website (& onQ) Updates:** Kickstart AAP promotions
- **APT Restart:** APT will return to full operation and begin verifying new tutors
- **Journal Submissions:** Submissions open for QJERS, Politicus (Special Issue), QSURJ, and UR.
- **Politicus Pool and Politics:** Team social for Politicus team.
- **AARC Training:** Support Directors in their collaboration with campus partners (SASS, QUIC,

	<p>Ombudsperson) in order to schedule training for volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Medical/Law School Event:</b> The Academics Core Team will host a Medical and Law school event dedicated to helping Arts and Science students understand the various schools available to them and provide a chance to network with current Medical and Law students</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Publish Reformatted AAP Portal:</b> Work closely with Marketing &amp; Communication Office to release the AAP portal on the ASUS website &amp; onQ pages</li> <li>• <b>Thought-Exchange is Released:</b> Promote Thought Exchange to Arts and Science students</li> <li>• <b>Begin Procedure for Teaching Awards:</b> Meet with committee to assess which submissions will move on to the next round and begin interviewing students.</li> <li>• <b>Politicus Workshop:</b> Editing workshop teaching team how to edit effectively, format citations, explain general roles and organize editorial board.</li> <li>• <b>Politicus Panel:</b> Panel on Academia with the Professors</li> <li>• <b>QJERS Panel:</b> A panel on prison and carceral justice in Kingston with Professor Lisa Gunther.</li> <li>• <b>UGXDSC Meeting:</b> This is a chance for all DSC Co-Presidents and Undergraduate Chairs to meet and discuss their ideas for the year, reflect on how the transition to in-person learning has been going so far, and air any concerns.</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Politicus Special Issue Launch event</b></li> <li>• <b>Open Sales for ASUS Review:</b> Remind ASUS Review Director to fill in a submission for a product request on the ASUS Store</li> <li>• <b>Academics Commission Wide Survey:</b> Working closely with HR to release a satisfaction survey within</li> </ul>

	<p>the Commission and assessing the data collected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Close Thought-Exchange Survey and Compile Data:</b> After compiling the Thought-Exchange's data, a report will be produced and delivered to Faculty Board to ensure that there is an awareness of what students want and that there is active action being taken to support them.</li> <li>• <b>Last Meeting of the Semester for Teaching Awards:</b> The committee will meet to decide the finalist for the Fall semester and note it down to be revisited in the Winter</li> <li>• <b>Dean's x DSCs:</b> An opportunity for DSCs to discuss their questions and ideas with the Associate Dean's of Arts &amp; Science.</li> <li>• <b>UR Fall Launch:</b> collaboration with Collective Reflections</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ASUS Review Sessions:</b> Will be hosted near exams through online means.</li> <li>• <b>Politicus Submissions:</b> Call for Submissions to annual volume publication.</li> <li>• <b>AARC Workshop:</b> Appeals 101: Introduction to the Academic Appeals Process, Regulations, and Appeal Letters</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open Nominations for Teaching Awards:</b> Officially open nominations for Teaching Awards.</li> <li>• <b>DSC Major's Night Training:</b> The Faculty trains DSC Co-Presidents on their role at Major's Night</li> <li>• <b>APT:</b> Meet the Tutors event</li> <li>• <b>QJERS Submission Deadline</b></li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Major's Night:</b> Ensure that all DSCs attend the training provided</li> </ul>



	<p>and understand their tasks at the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transition Manual Creation &amp; Collection:</b> Begin the process of collecting all transition manuals from committees under the Academics Commission in addition to creating the Academics Commissioner Transition manual.</li> <li>• <b>Begin Assessment of Second Semester Teaching Awards:</b> Meet with committee to assess which submissions will move on to the next round and begin interviewing students.</li> <li>• <b>Run DSC Elections:</b> Help the Governance Officer, Election Team, and any other individuals involved with the process to run a successful election season for DSCs.</li> <li>• <b>Outreach and Recruitment for the MCAT/LSAT event:</b> The Journals and Scholarship Deputy will begin reaching out to panelists for the event</li> <li>• <b>Politicus, QSURJ, and UR Journal Submissions Close</b></li> <li>• <b>QJERS Panel:</b> A panel on labour rights from a racial lens.</li> </ul>
<p>March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MCAT/LSAT event:</b> The Academics Core Team will be hosting a panel event about the MCAT and LSAT.</li> <li>• <b>Politicus Journal Launch:</b> Congratulate the Politicus team on a successful launch of their 8<sup>th</sup> volume.</li> <li>• <b>QSURJ Volume 6 Launch:</b> Attend, support, and congratulate the QSURJ team on a successful launch of their 6<sup>th</sup> volume.</li> <li>• <b>UR Artfest/Journal Launch Party:</b> Attend, support, and congratulate the UR team on a successful launch.</li> <li>• <b>Spring DSC Training:</b> Administer and deliver training for the new DSC</li> </ul>

	<p>Co-Presidents of the 2022-2023 academic year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open Sales for ASUS Review:</b> Remind ASUS Review Director to fill in a submission for a product request on the ASUS Store</li> <li>• <b>Finalize Teaching Award Winners and Order Trophies:</b> Have one final meeting with the committee to determine a winner, then order all trophies to ensure ample time before Honours Reception</li> <li>• <b>Journal Copy-Editing (QSURJ, Politicus, UR)</b></li> <li>• <b>QJERS Launch</b></li> </ul>
<p>April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transition Meetings:</b> Meet regularly with the incoming Academics Commissioner to help transition them into the role.</li> <li>• <b>ASUS Review Sessions:</b> Support the ASUS Review Direction in delivering the final review sessions of the year.</li> <li>• <b>Academics Commission Wide Survey:</b> Working closely with HR to release a satisfaction survey within the Commission and assessing the data collected that will be handed over to the incoming Academics Commissioner.</li> <li>• <b>Honours Reception &amp; Announcing Teaching Award Winners:</b> Attending the Honours Reception and also delivering all trophies to the winners</li> <li>• <b>Publish journals</b></li> <li>• <b>UR Launch party</b></li> </ul>

**Closing Statement**

This opportunity is both such an honour and a feat to take on. There are so many exciting moving parts and responsibilities that seem rather daunting. It is the reality that the academics commission is able to reform the Queen’s classroom and create positive change in academic life

that makes the risk easier to manage. The projects highlighted are already underway and my wonderful team has begun dedicating their time to show excellence in their roles on the ACS committee. The commission would be no where without the belief from executive, the core ACS team and the support of the rest of ASUS and the student body for instilling trust in us to create meaningful change.

Additionally, academics may be at the heart of our commission, but we know that this is not an isolated aspect of students' lives. Mental health, EDII, and many other social issues are not mutually exclusive with academics, losing out on one would mean the detriment of the other and that is why our commission will actively work with students in all departments to support each other's causes on the advocacy front. Whether it be internal cross-commission collaboration or externally working with campus faculty and staff, ASUS' Academics Commission is prepared to serve and support students.

As always, I am readily available for a meeting, inquiries, questions, ideas, or any discussions related to the Academics Commission. Please do not hesitate to reach out at [academics@asus.queensu.ca](mailto:academics@asus.queensu.ca) and I would be more than happy to address anything.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Eklove  
Academics Commissioner 2023/2024