

ASUS

Arts & Science



Undergraduate Society

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2023-2024

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**OPENING REMARKS**

As we embark on ASUS' 133<sup>rd</sup> year, we are excited to serve arts and science students and continues to improve the reach and impact of the Society. The three executive structure has allowed for us to take on more projects oversee and support more initiatives. Our campus is rapidly changing and we as a Society must change and adapt alongside students. In this challenge

we find excitement, energy, and optimism that together we will be able to forge new horizons for ASUS and the larger Queen's community.

This strategic plan mirrors our commitment to students, the classroom, and the broader university experience. Over the next eight months, it will be the blueprint for tangible and actionable initiatives that will shape the course of our term. Not only is it a plan, but it is a way to hold us accountable to the commitments we have made to students.

We invite all of you to join us as we create positive and sustainable changes and continue to shape ASUS into a Society that serves all students. This does not mean operating as though all students have the same needs, but listening to the needs of individual students and ensuring that we are flexible in our approach and our services.

## **MANDATE**

ASUS provides opportunities for students to learn, grow, and pursue their passions. We strive to foster meaningful connections and create a sense of community both on and off Queen's campus. ASUS also sees the importance in uplifting student voices, advocating for our peers, and increasing representation across our commissions/offices to enrich the Arts & Science student experience.

The Arts and Science Undergraduate Society shall strive to:

1. Represent the diverse interests of Arts and Science students to external bodies;
2. Provide opportunities and experiences to students in both academic and nonacademic endeavors;
3. Provide services relevant to the varied needs of the Society;
4. Make social contributions to the Queen's and Kingston Communities.
5. Oversee the gifting and presentation of ASUS Awards and Grants
6. Provide support to sibling societies: COMPSA, CESA, and PHEKSA

The Executive shall strive to provide leadership and guidance for the Society. They shall endeavor to adhere to and follow official ASUS policy as found in this manual and as interpreted by Council and the Assembly. The Executive is responsible to the Assembly and thereby the students in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

### Professional Development Opportunities

One of our goals this year is to provide opportunities for students within arts and science to gain professional experience and to foster opportunities for professional development. The executive has met with members of faculty to discuss how we can work together to ensure students feel supported in this front. This year Life After Artsci, led by the Professional

Development Director, will be running twice: once in the fall and once in the winter. Additionally, we have been discussing how ASUS can work together with sibling societies to create an event that better represents all student work experience interests. Furthermore, the Arts and Science Undergraduate Research Fund will be providing students with funding in the fall and winter semester – this provides students with the opportunity to have their research supported financially. We are continuing our partnership with the Faculty of Arts and Science, and they are matching the amount we receive through the optional fund.

### Liaison Positions

This year, ASUS is striving to strengthen our relationship with the Indigenous student community, and the Queen's Native Students Association. The Indigenous Student Liaison position provides an opportunity for the executive to better understand the needs of these students and work to create an ASUS that they feel represents them and their needs. Additionally, the Black Student Liaison Position will provide a similar opportunity to strengthen our relationship with Black students and Black student groups. For this role, we will be working with the Black Clubs Caucus to connect with a Black student once a month in a paid capacity.

### OnQ and Marketing

This year, we plan on utilizing the ASUS OnQ page as a way to market ASUS events, services, and programs to Arts and Science students. It will also act as a means of spreading information that the faculty wishes students to be aware of. Similarly, ATP will be writing a newsletter a few times a semester to inform students on ASUS events and resources. One of our overarching goals is to have better communication with our students and better student engagement. By disseminating information in different ways, we hope more students feel as though ASUS represents them.

### Reflection Room

The Reflection Room currently serves as a space for students to gather on campus, with priority being given to Indigenous students and student groups, however, we have noticed that it is not being utilized as much or to the capacity it was intended to be. The executive will be re-evaluating the purpose of the room and is planning on offering programming in the space to bring students in and inform them of what the space is for.

### Black Student Room

The executive has worked together with Dean Crow to create a room for Black students. This room is in Robert Sutherland Hall and is in partnership with the Black Studies and Gender Studies Department as well as the Faculty of Arts and Science. This space will provide a place for self-identifying Black Students to seek community, have meetings, and host events and discussions. The room has not officially opened, however, we are working with the Black

Studies Department to bring furniture and other resources into the space and we are hoping it is ready for an official opening in the winter semester.

### ArtSci Cup

The ArtSci Cup is running for its second year and this year we have hired two co-chairs and a team of four coordinators have been hired to work on the team. ATP strives to support the Kingston community, and as such, we will be donating the proceeds of the ArtSci Cup to a local charity. The Faculty of Arts and Science will be supporting us again this year in funding, so that we can focus on raising money and working to increase student engagement in the event.

### Student Engagement

- **Camps:** Camps are held over eight weeks throughout the summer. With the increased engagement, we increased the number of campers accepted to the center from 40 campers to 60. Leaders in Training (LIT) program was introduced to offer students more leadership experience along with proper teamwork practices. The camp has allowed High school students to volunteer, plan and present a lesson plan they will have the chance to create with the support from the camp directors. In addition to getting first-hand experience in a class with many children, they can complete their total high school hours within a week. ASUS plans on keeping the LIT program with the possibility of expanding its roles.
- **Garden:** A community vegetable garden holds immense importance in fostering a sustainable and thriving local environment. It promotes food security by providing a readily accessible source of fresh, nutritious produce, especially vital for individuals and families facing economic hardships. It strengthens community bonds by bringing people together to work towards a common goal, nurturing a sense of belonging and cooperation. Community gardens contribute to environmental sustainability by reducing the need for long-distance transportation of food and promoting organic farming practices, which can improve soil health and biodiversity. They also serve as educational hubs, teaching valuable skills about agriculture and nutrition. Overall, a community vegetable garden enhances the physical and emotional well-being of its participants and embodies the principles of self-sufficiency, community resilience, and environmental stewardship, making it a cornerstone of healthy and resilient neighbourhoods. With the raised food insecurity issues, we are strategizing to expand our garden to offer fresh food to more students.
- **Student Athlete relations:** This new initiative will allow student-athletes to be more integrated within ASUS. Student-athletes stick within their realm of other athletes and tend to miss out on events and initiatives they might be interested in participating in. Creating this relation with the possible help of PHEKSA hopes to show support and provide ways that they can involved within their faculties.

### Internal Affairs

- **CPI index:** Matching pay to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) ensures fair and equitable compensation in an evolving economic landscape. CPI measures changes in the average prices of a basket of goods and services over time, reflecting the cost of living. When employers align pay increases with CPI, they help employees maintain their purchasing power in the face of inflation. This practice promotes employee satisfaction, reduces turnover, and fosters economic stability by enabling workers to keep up with rising living costs. Furthermore, it aids in attracting and retaining top talent, as employees are more likely to stay with organizations that provide for their financial well-being. Thus, linking pay to CPI benefits individuals and contributes to a healthier and more sustainable workforce and economy overall.
- **Physical Space:** The physical space operated by ASUS had a thorough revamp by cleaning and reorganizing the space. The garbage from the basement was sent to the dump, providing ASUS with more storage space. The house itself has been reorganized and cleaned with the assistance of Therese to make the place more welcoming and appealing to the student population.
- **Scheduling for receptionist:** Scheduling for the receptionist is being handled through the sling application, allowing me to input their class schedules while enabling them to request time off. Sling is easy to operate, with many features that make scheduling easier to manage.
- **HR Policy updates:** Incorporating inclusive language in policy work is paramount as it reflects a commitment to fairness, diversity, and equal opportunity. Policies serve as a framework for governing societies, organizations, and institutions, and the words used within them profoundly impact the experiences and rights of individuals and groups. Inclusive language acknowledges the diverse perspectives and identities of stakeholders and ensures that policies are accessible and understandable to all, irrespective of their background or characteristics. It helps prevent unintentional discrimination and bias, fostering a more just and equitable environment. Moreover, inclusive words signal a genuine willingness to engage with underrepresented communities and create a more inclusive and welcoming space where diverse voices can be heard and respected. Ultimately, including inclusive language in policy work is not merely a matter of linguistic choice; it reflects an ethical commitment to social justice and creating policies that genuinely serve the needs and rights of all members of society. Additionally, paid hours for executive and council have increased to match as closely to the work they are completing.
- **Sponsorship:** ASUS hopes to build sponsorship relations this year to provide financial support to ASUS so funds could be allocated elsewhere. It assists in covering various expenses, including costs, purchasing equipment and facilitating club activities. By acquiring sponsors, clubs can diminish their dependence on membership fees and fundraising efforts. Sponsors bring monetary aid and provide valuable resources such as products, services and expertise. This support significantly enhances the overall quality and performance of the ASUS. Moreover, sponsors can assist in organizing events that might otherwise be challenging to arrange due to limitations or constraints. They often create networking opportunities and establish industry connections that benefit the club members and pave the way for potential partnerships. Ultimately, securing sponsors contributes to ensuring the ASUS long-term sustainability by establishing a reliable source of income and support.

## ACADEMIC ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

With another year back on campus since moving from a remote/hybrid learning environment, students at Queen's have faced several significant changes in their student experiences these past few years. As we continue to uphold our aim to advocate and amplify the voices of students following such changes, we further recognize the importance of being able to provide a sense of community to all Arts and Science students throughout the course of their studies at Queen's, and work to focus our goals on enriching the academic experience through student engagement and education in areas grounded on equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigeneity; while maintaining strong relations between students and the student government. Our continued aim is to lend academic support to students in areas that directly impact the overall student experience.

- **Sibling Societies:** We've made active efforts to maintain and build on our current relationships with ASUS sibling societies and strategize ways in which we can work collaboratively with them to benefit Arts and Science Undergraduate students. This year, we've met with the executives of each sibling society to assess areas where ASUS may offer help, and we will continue to meet with COMPSA, CESA and PHEKSA throughout the year to review areas where we can bring students together for such as events, community outreach incentives, etc. For the greater benefit of students. Additionally, ASUS will continue to advocate for our sibling societies wherever they make efforts to enhance the experience of students within their respective departments.
- **COMPSA Rebate:** ASUS made the executive decision this year to offer a one time, conditional, rebate of \$10,000 to COMPSA with prospective changes to enhance the experience of COMPSA students this year and those moving forward. These conditions include such as to provide sponsorships to their students, and further promote the financial transparency of their society. As the year progresses, we will continue to meet with COMPSA regarding the status of their rebate and review how the allocation of their funds has offered enhanced resources to their students. We also hope this initiative will further encourage ASUS and COMPSA to work on more projects together throughout the year--- lending support to one another and bringing students within the faculty together.
- **IPO/Exchange:** Our society has strategized how we can improve the student experience of International and Exchange students at Queen's. We have made the effort to reach out to diverse student clubs and directly hear student concern to better address areas where program improvements should be made. With the help of the International Programs Office and Exchange Buddies program (under the services commission) we have discussed several ways we can work together to benefit these student groups. With our large outreach, we both encourage and invite all students, including international and exchange students, to attend ASUS events. We hope our feedback will help us to later adequately plan events or lend support that specifically enhances international and exchange student on campus and learn how work in IPO and EB can better advocate for those they represent.

• **Technology Lending Library:** After careful review of financial assistance requests over the years, ASUS also recognizes a common barrier of technological resources in addition to the financial barriers students may also face. This year, we will introduce a new, technology lending library where students can borrow technology when such is not readily available to them. We hope for this initiative to provide all students with an effective solution to barriers that directly impact their education. The Tech Library will be set up by our IT Director upon announcement of this new student resource.

### **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

Financial accountability and the transparent financial operations are important to the structure of ASUS and all undergraduate Arts and Science students. Our values to serve students useful resources through financial assistance plans, grants, and accurate financial reports is crucial to how we operate as a society. We will continue to uphold the traditions that publicize ASUS budget and spendings to hold our society accountable and ensure the responsible use of student funds.

• **GOB:** The General Operating Budget (GOB) prepared by the Vice President of Operations/CFO, Camps, and Orientation Head Gael, acts as a foundation and reference of the society's financial matters each year. The GOB, which ensures that students understand the use and allocation of their fees is to be presented and passed at assembly on Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup>. Following this motion, we will continue to encourage financial transparency for both internal and external parties of ASUS, a copy of the GOB and its live spending updates will be available as an active link on the ASUS website. The GOB will follow the same structure as its previous years (organized by each Office/Commission within ASUS). Our plans to make active updates to the live budget throughout the year, rather than closing totals the following year will provide more clarity to students on society spending and to keep better track of how we can either improve on or allocate funds elsewhere earlier in the year.

• **Financial Aid:** Each year, ASUS budgets thousands of dollars for both individual students and student groups. We have made greater efforts to increase the amount of funding put towards financial assistance/student grants and we will continue to encourage our students to make use of these resources that are readily available to them. Additionally, we will work on providing students with more transparency regarding the assessments of financial assistance and develop new structures that address common financial concerns to improve on the variety of financial barriers that one may face at Queen's.

• **Reimbursements:** We are currently working on making several changes in the process of fulfilling reimbursement requests that come on a consistent basis throughout the academic year. ASUS has made efforts to organize our financial requests and update relevant forms with a new form link for the specific academic year. The time invested in replacing links yearly and dating old ones, will allow the operations team to accurately categorize and fulfill



reimbursement requests based on the date they were submitted. Such will also aid future executives to make clear distinctions between what submissions have already been reviewed and avoid confusion when different parties (VPOPS, General Managers, Accounting Directors) work on requests of large quantities collaboratively. Our new plan to create a separate form for the Department Student Council (DSCs) will also provide further support in ASUS' efforts to give accurate financial reports on the GOB, given the large proportion of budgeting put towards the Academics Commission. With our plans to have academic deputies and the ASUS operations review this form, we can ensure practicing regular budget updates will reduce the common misinterpretations of DSC leaders regarding the ASUS GOB and with a clearer track record of their spending over the year.

- **Compensations/Appreciation:** We value the hard work of all students involved with our society internally. ASUS has made several appropriate policy changes to compensate our volunteers in accordance with CPI index this year and will continue to share great appreciation for the various roles within ASUS through student awards, volunteer appreciation, and credit initiatives. Our changes to the relevant policies will help provide a basis for the fair and equal compensation of work presently and years to come.

- **Financial Training:** We have made sincere efforts to deliver and extend Budget, HR Policy, and Visual Identity training to all our DSC Co-Presidents, Deputies, Co-Chairs, Directors and other volunteers. While we recognize that everyone involved within ASUS plays large roles in helping run our society, these trainings are set in place to provide everyone with equal expectations and more clarity of their positions within the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society. Moreover, the goal of these trainings is to offer direct support to everyone who takes part in contributing to ASUS; by meeting with our volunteers regularly and understanding areas where executive can lend knowledge or provide any additional resources. While we recognize that a bulk of ASUS roles involve financial procedures or a shared responsibility of student funds, we hope detailed training will provide students with an opportunity to develop their skills and avoid financial inconsistencies with a better understanding of operational processes.

- **General Manager:** We aim to make continued efforts to hold weekly meetings with our General Manager for to benefit communication within the society and transparency between internal parties regarding the financial standing operations of the Arts and Science Undergraduate Society. This will work to ensure stability of ASUS long term and ensure that student fees are being managed appropriately but ASUS Council and those alike

- **Services Funding:** ASUS proudly offers a variety of services to the student body that provide many resources and job/volunteer opportunities for students within the Undergraduate Arts and Science community. This year, we have budgeted a greater amount of our funding towards ASUS Services and bursaries to ensure student fees are given back to students in several forms. Within ASUS Services, we also offer large amounts of financial relief for students to attend such as formal, or purchase jackets. We plan for our investments in the services of ASUS to pose as a direct exchange of student funding and enhancement of their

overall experience. Success of ASUS Services will directly reflect our success as a society and investments in our services will hopefully carryover in the years to come.

## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

Thank you for taking the time to review our strategic plan and follow our goals set for the 2023/24 academic year. As each of us proudly present our previous work in the Queen's community, we all grounded shared values in providing students with an equitable and diverse space as we took on these roles within ASUS. Thus far, ASUS has prompted us to share stronger appreciation for community and those we work with.

We are honoured to have the opportunity to represent Arts and Science undergraduate students and recognize our impact as this year's executive team. While we expect to face many new challenges and opportunities this year, our goal is to support the student body wherever possible, and readily face the unique obstacles we are met with.

If you have any questions regarding the information in our strategi plan, please do not hesitate to reach out to us or come with new ideas or suggestions. Our doors are always open. You may also contact us over email at [president@asus.queensu.ca](mailto:president@asus.queensu.ca), [vpops@asus.queensu.ca](mailto:vpops@asus.queensu.ca), and [vpsa@asus.queensu.ca](mailto:vpsa@asus.queensu.ca)

We look forward to all this year has to offer, and we are excited for an even greater future with ASUS.

Respectfully submitted,

Amaiya Walters, Therese de Rivera, and Preston Harrison

ASUS Executive 2023/24

