

Student Success Centre: **2021-22** in Review



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Student Success
Centre



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MESSAGE FROM



Arlene Fajutrao Dosen '94

B.Arts Sc., B.A., M.A.

Director, Student Success | Student Affairs

This year, we were proud to welcome new divisions to enhance our Student Success Centre model: Access Strategy; First-Year Transition and Student Experience (including Orientation, Archway and Welcome Week); the Spiritual Care and Learning Centre; and the Wilson Leadership Scholar Award (WLSA). The addition of these new areas in Student Success along with our pre-existing services and programs, helps to create a more integrated and inclusive approach in which students can explore, develop and enhance the skills needed throughout their learning journey and beyond their time at McMaster.

One of President David Farrar's key priorities is advancing and supporting innovation in teaching and learning. Student Affairs undertakes a lead role in the development of a holistic student experience, beginning with the Access Strategy and extending beyond the classroom, which fundamentally supports the transformative learning of students.

Our newly envisioned Centre includes new physical spaces, with a focus on transformative and hybrid technology, and creating a warm and welcoming environment. Our Career and Experiential Lounge (MUSC B118) opened its doors in September 2021 and our renovated Student Success Centre space (GH 110) re-opened in November 2021. The Spiritual Care and Learning Centre now has a designated space in MUSC 212. We are also completing the renovations on a new Writing and Academic Skills Hub (Mills Library L215). We are beyond excited to be able meet students where they are on-campus and foster a sense of belonging.

THE DIRECTOR ►

**Our vision at the
Student Success Centre
is for all students to
thrive and succeed.**

The Student Success Centre relies on strong collaboration with our Student Affairs partners, Equity and Inclusion Office, Office of the Registrar, School of Graduate Studies, Office of International Affairs, Alumni Association, and Faculty and Program colleagues (Faculty Experiential/Career Services Offices and Offices of the Associate Deans) to deliver a wraparound, holistic approach to student success. This strategic integration of our services, programs and specialized events has enabled multiple pathways and possibilities for students beyond the classroom. Alongside other Student Affairs divisions and countless champions, we are delighted to collaborate across our McMaster community to support student success, locally and globally.

We could not achieve this work alone. To all of you who have worked alongside us to support student success, you have our gratitude. As you read through this report, we hope you recognize your contributions and feel connected to our larger SSC community.

With thanks,



Arlene Fajutrao Dosen

B.Arts Sc., B.A., M.A.

Director, Student Success | Student Affairs

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STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES ►



Integration: Operational Excellence

Build and foster community, strategic purpose, and cohesion within the SSC team to support a holistic, transformational, and personalized student experience for all students at McMaster University.



Inclusivity: Inclusive Excellence

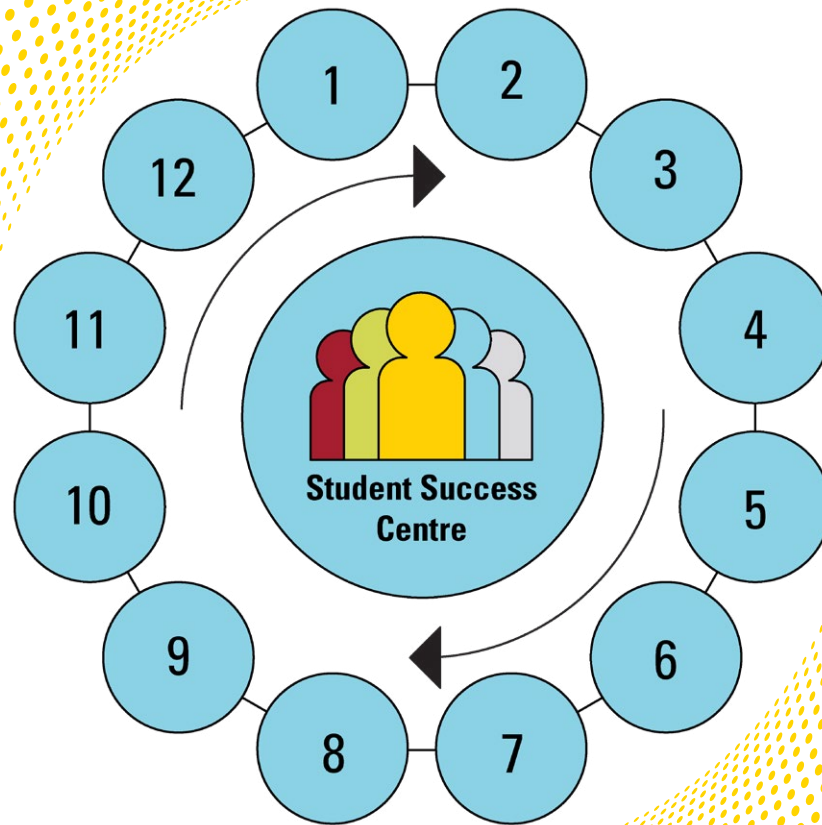
Support the recruitment and retention of historically underrepresented students through targeted initiatives, such as the McMaster Access Strategy and Career Access Professional Services (CAPS), and leverage on the expertise and lived experience of SSC staff, and colleagues in Student Affairs and the Equity and Inclusion Office.



Impact: Teaching and Learning

Explore expanded ways to support students as they prepare to transition to careers and post-graduate study, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and competencies to succeed.

THE STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE MODEL ►



SSC support areas include: Access Strategy; First-Year Transition and Student Experience (orientation, Mac101, Welcome Week and Archway); Experiential Learning (co-curricular and extra-curricular); International Student Services; Career Counselling and Employment Services; Academic Skills Development and Writing Centre; Spiritual Care and Learning Centre; Wilson Leadership Scholar Award and Leadership Skills Development; Global Experience and International Exchange Program; The Forge; Alumni Career Services; and Marketing, Communications and Special Events.

The Student Success Model champions a holistic approach to student support that respects the positionality and intersectionality of our

students, leverages their unique strengths, and customizes the type and intensity of support offered to best enable their development and learning.

The model focus on integration of services and programs internally and through our strategic partnerships with the McMaster Students Union (MSU), the Graduate Students Association (GSA), Student Affairs colleagues, and Faculty/Program stakeholders (Faculty Experiential Learning/Career Services offices; Offices of the Associate Dean) to co-create, with each student, a foundational action plan to support their success throughout their McMaster journey.

Key Student Engagement Touchpoints

Learn more about each portfolio in our digital publication.

1

Access Strategy

McMaster's Access Strategy focuses on the engagement of students from historically underrepresented groups in the Greater Hamilton and Golden Horseshoe Region and is designed to educate, inform and familiarize students and families with the benefits and possibilities of a post-secondary education at McMaster University.

2

First-Year Transition and Experience

Hosted 11,987 attendees across 425 events during Welcome Week 2021, with 161 events in-person. Through Archway, the team held 8,000+ one-on-one interactions between first years and their mentors.

3

International Student Services

Held 2,189 one-on-one appointments with international students. 3,679 students attended event and information sessions.

4

Writing and Academic Skills

Held 766 one-on-one student appointments and 1,026 tutoring appointments. 5,735 students attended academic skills-related events and workshops.

5

Spiritual Care and Learning Centre

The Spiritual Care and Learning Centre (SCLC) announced its launch in October 2021 after years of consultation with campus and community partners, including the Interfaith Working Group (IFWG), part of the McMaster President's Advisory Committee for Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC).

6

Wilson Leadership Scholar Award (WLSA)

The Student Success Centre's leadership programming is expanding to multiple open-program streams. Along with the flagship Wilson Leadership Scholar Award (WLSA) program, these streams contribute to McMaster's priorities in teaching and learning by creating more opportunities for students to make transformative impacts on challenging issues, reducing barriers to learning and connecting students with diverse expertise.

7

Mac's Money Centre

Mac's Money Centre provides financial literacy education to McMaster students through tools, resources and information to help support their financial knowledge and planning in the age of e-finance.

8

Experiential Learning: Co-curricular and Extra-curricular

In collaboration with the Faculty career centres, the Student Success Centre partnered with the Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) to provide employer wage subsidy funding, securing 350 work-integrated learning placements for students.

9

Career Counselling and Employment Services

The career counselling and employment team held 3,221 one-on-one appointments, facilitated 6,854 employment and volunteer opportunities, and hosted 5,826 students through career events and information sessions, such as the Fall Career Fair. In partnership with the Alumni Association, increased the number of alumni accessing services by 20%. Of these clients, 60% graduated within the last two years.

10

The Forge: Student-Focused Programs

The Student Success Centre and The Forge partnered to develop a web page for Global Entrepreneurial Week. The page acted as a hub for the campaign, encouraging students to foster an entrepreneurial mindset by participating in the related activities and discovering recommended resources. Through events, workshops and campaigns this year, the Forge reached 2,327 participants.

11

Global Experience: Study, Work and Volunteer Abroad

The McMaster Exchange Program within the Student Success Centre began an equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) project for study abroad opportunities. This project included research on social and systemic barriers and a five-part survey to collate EDI services for students studying at international exchange partner institutions. A comprehensive fact sheet of related support for McMaster's incoming exchange students is currently in progress.

12

Marketing, Communications and Special Events

Organized and implemented signature student experience events throughout the year, with key events including: Second-Year Welcome, Online Fall Career Fair, Online Volunteer and Community Engagement Fair, Online Part-Time and Volunteer Job Fair, and the Connect to Careers Job Fair. The Connect to Careers Job Fair, delivered in partnership with Mohawk College, Redeemer University, Hamilton Economic Development and Workforce Planning Hamilton, was awarded the Conversation Starter Award (Silver) by the vFairs platform.

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR FACULTY, INSTRUCTORS, STAFF AND STUDENTS ►



[Watch Now](#)

CRITICAL THINKING

The Student Success Centre noticed a trend with educational videos on the topic of critical thinking. None of them were actually about critical thinking. Often the content focuses more on the issue of problem solving, which is not reflective of intentional ways of looking at things. To address this challenge, the Student Success Centre developed an Open Educational Resource (OER) available through eCampus Ontario on the topic of critical thinking to share with students and support their skills development.

NAVIGATING UNIVERSITY

The shift from high school student to university student is a known transition across all higher education institutions. But there are few multimedia resources available that address this topic from a beyond the classroom, student affairs lens. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted what beyond the classroom may look like for the current student, such as increased adoption of technology, masking, new ways of socializing and other environmental shifts.

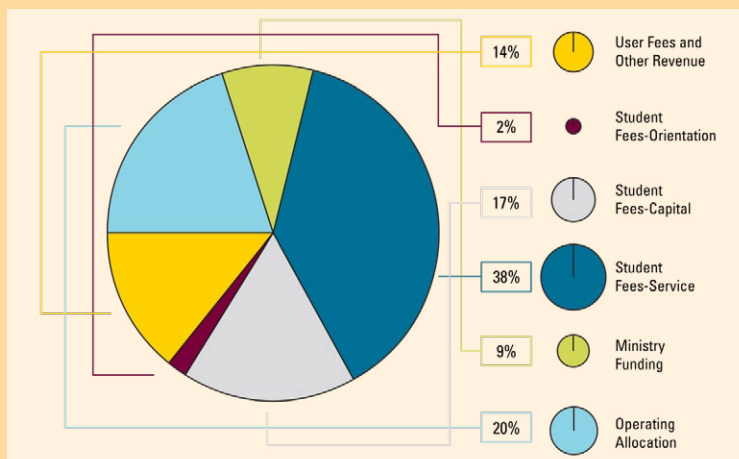
To address this topic, the Student Success Centre developed an Open Educational Resource (OER) available through eCampus Ontario, strongly supporting first-year students and international students, who may be interested in learning what success beyond the classroom might look like in a Canadian context.

Facilitated by MacPherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and supported by eCampus Ontario's Central Virtual Learning Platform (CVLP) funding in 2021-2022, the Student Success Centre and Sandbox Inc. have developed open educational resource (OER) videos for faculty, staff and students.



[Watch Now](#)

SOURCES OF FUNDING ►



Total Sources of Funding for Student Affairs 2021-2022 Budget (\$34.9 Million)

The Student Success Centre's services and programs are funded through student fees, ministry grants, user fees and sponsorships, socializing and other environmental shifts.

RETURN TO MCMASTER ►

As one of the student-facing departments providing in-person support during the Fall 2021 return to McMaster, the Student Success Centre wanted to create a sense of community for students accessing campus. Student-facing initiatives included the following.



Launch of the iCent app to support international students with their COVID-19 immigration readiness requirements and transition into campus community life.



Hybrid Welcome Week, delivered in partnership with the McMaster Students Union (MSU), Faculties, and Housing & Conference Services. Hybrid Welcome Week featured 450 events and programs, with 30% being in-person.



Addressed pandemic job search and occupational wellness through the career counselling, experiential and employment team with events, career planning and information sessions.



Second-Year Welcome, focused on building a community and introducing campus to level two students. The 6,000 available time slots filled within the first 48 hours of launching registration. This event was in partnership with the MSU, H&CS and the Faculties.



Despite global recession, SSC secured \$200,000 in wage subsidies and employer funding, developed work opportunities in all sectors and placed close to 500 students through programs such as Career Treks and Experience Ventures.



International student socials, including Heart-to-Hearts and Buddy Events, to help students make connections on-campus with their peers and with our international student services team.

WELCOME HOME (video series)



A three-part Welcome Home video project, delivered by the SSC Stories Team. This documentary-style video project was conceptualized, written, produced, filmed and implemented by upper-year students, and involved the partnership of various areas on campus for film permissions.

WELCOME HOME (Part 1)

It is the first day of classes and things might feel a little different, still. We know it has been a hard year and a half for most of us, but your story matters.

[Watch Now](#)

WELCOME HOME (Part 2)

New year, new possibilities in the second part of our Welcome Home video series from the SSC Stories Team. Welcome Home, Marauders!

[Watch Now](#)

WELCOME HOME (Part 3)

How do we find our place at McMaster and feel like we belong? Make an impact? It starts with the little things.

[Watch Now](#)

WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TO MCMASTER

[Watch Now](#)

We welcomed international students to Canada through our programming and events. In-person offerings began in August 2021.



Heart-to-hearts to help students feel more connected to campus and McMaster's international community.



Social events, including bonfires, pumpkin decorating, and game nights, all on-campus.



Targeted sessions to support transition to Canada and the Canadian workforce, with topics including SIN, UHIP and work permits.

WINTER 2022 WAS ANOTHER TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS AND THE MCMASTER COMMUNITY.

Working with partners in Student Affairs, we conducted a focus-group project to learn from students what we could do to support their transition, ease anxiety, and create a warm welcome experience upon their return or first introductions to a vibrant campus community. The following initiatives were the resulting impact of this focus-group work.



A Warm Winter Wishes campaign in February 2022, driven by social media and in-person activations. The campaign generated excitement and conversation online, with 96% of students sharing that the care package made them feel welcome.



New hybrid customer service model, delivered by student peers. Students visiting the website or Gilmour Hall 110 space could get their questions answered, with McMaster peers as their first point of contact.



The Student Affairs Showcase, led by the Student Success Centre and Student Wellness Centre and delivered in partnership with Student Affairs after Reading Week. 3,300+ students participated in events and activations that connected them to student services.

AN EXAM READINESS CAMPAIGN



In-Person Exams: Navigating Campus

Getting to know the physical exam environments can help reduce your anxiety on exam day. Plus, getting more comfortable navigating campus is always a good thing.

[Watch Now](#)



Exam Readiness Campaign - Yasmine's Advice

Is it your first time writing in-person exams? Yasmine, an upper-year student, shares her experience and advice.

[Watch Now](#)



Exam Coffee Needed

Did you know that we do an exam coffee pop-up for students every April? This year, we hosted our biggest one yet, featuring Fleets Coffee Truck, plus some encouragement and support from our Archway and SSC team.

[Watch Now](#)



EXAM PREP AND SELF-CARE WEBPAGE

[Learn More](#)

TRANSFORMATIVE AND HYBRID SPACES ►

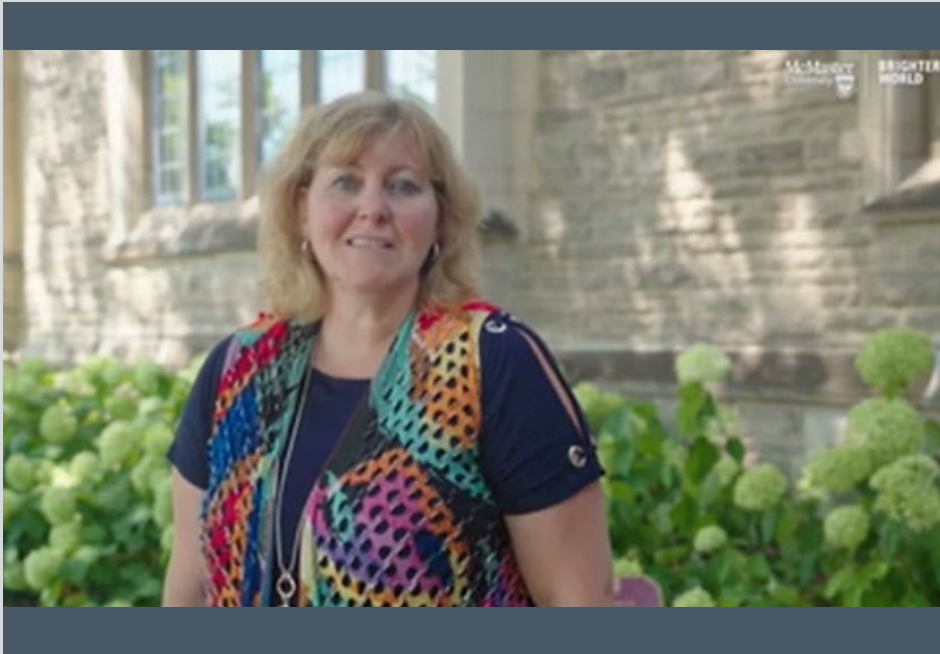


The Student Success Centre re-opened its doors in 2021-22 with a newly renovated space in Gilmour Hall and two new hub spaces in the McMaster University Student Centre. We were thrilled to welcome students, staff, faculty and community to our spaces and provide functional, accessible and a welcoming environment that promotes and supports student learning beyond the classroom.

Here are some highlights:

- Space was renovated to be warm and inviting for students, and to maximize the utilization of space for student and staff needs within a multi-functional office area
- Gilmour Hall and MUSC B118 office renovations were completed in Fall 2021; MUSC B112, MUSC 212 and Mills Memorial Library (Writing and Academic Skills Hub) renovations are nearing completion
- Gilmour Hall office features workplace hoteling and collaboration spaces: office space for one-on-one student appointments with career counsellors and career development staff, international student services and global experience staff (immigration advisors; student success coach and coordinators); staff collaborations and work space (first-year transition, Archway and marketing, communications, events staff); hybrid meeting space (with OWL Pro); quiet student learning spaces; and areas for small-group student program delivery
- Front office area space equipped with modular furniture enables flexible utilization of space for quiet study and work during the day, and small group program delivery, special events and company information sessions in the evenings and on weekends
- SSC workplace hoteling schedule is posted on the MS Teams channel in two- to three-month blocks with each unit determining schedule to best address student needs; online booking tool within OSCARplus manages staff bookings for 'open SSC spaces' during unscheduled days on-campus

A MESSAGE TO STUDENTS FOR 2022-23 ►



**A welcome to
new Marauders
from Susan Tighe,
Provost and
Vice-President
(Academic)**

[Watch Now](#)



**Lessons for
students from
McMaster
Welcome**

[Watch Now](#)

THE STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE (SSC) ►

STRATEGIES

Integration

- Champion a holistic student support model that respects the positionality and intersectionality of our students, that leverages their unique strengths, and that customizes the type and intensity of support offered to best enable their development and learning.
- Build and foster community, strategic purpose and cohesion within the SSC team to support a holistic, transformational and personalized student experience for all students at McMaster University.
- Strategically partner with the McMaster Students Union (MSU), Graduate Students Association (GA), Student Affairs colleagues and Faculty/Program stakeholders (Faculty Experiential Learning/Career Services offices; Offices of the Associate Dean) to co-create, with each student, a foundational career action plan to support their success throughout their McMaster journey.

Inclusivity

- Support the recruitment and retention of historically underrepresented students through targeted initiatives such as the McMaster Access Strategy and Career Access Professional Services (CAPS) program. Leverage the expertise and lived experience of SSC staff and colleagues in Student Affairs and the Equity and Inclusion Office.
- Identify structural barriers, particularly those faced by equity-deserving students. Eliminate barriers by investing in equity-minded policies, practices and behaviours that support student success through the intentional review and design of programs and services.

Impact

- Explore expanded ways to support students as they prepare to transition to careers and post-graduate studies, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and competencies to succeed.
- Work collaboratively with Student Affairs partners and with Faculty stakeholders (Faculty Experiential Learning/Career Services offices; and Offices of the Associate Dean) to co-create a personalized 'career and life action plan' with students to best support their learning, growth and development.
- Leverage SSC infrastructure to enable students to develop and foster the following competencies:
 - Intercultural competency
 - Social consciousness/social perceptiveness/civic engagement competency
 - Leadership competency
 - Innovation mindset/entrepreneurship competency
- Support students in their personal and professional development beyond the classroom through an increased number of co-op and internship opportunities, including on-campus and international work opportunities; greater opportunities to lead and participate in clubs, teams and societies; opportunities to launch their own ventures and develop an innovative mindset; and opportunities to volunteer within the community.

Priorities

- Strategic Alignment Fund proposal: Integrating and Scaling McMaster' Capacity for Experiential and Interdisciplinary (ExCELINT) Learning: collaborate with representatives from the Provost's Office, the Office of Community Engagement and the McPherson Institute, with key Faculty stakeholders, to develop a Student Journey Map that outlines curricular and co-curricular options available for experiential and interdisciplinary learning.
- Strategic Alignment Fund proposal - Financial Education and Empowerment: formalize and scale the operations of Mac's Money Centre to support financial literacy education for McMaster students in collaboration with the Registrar's Office (Aid and Awards) and Financial Affairs (Student Accounts).
- Strategic Alignment Fund proposal - Graduate Student Career Navigation Program: Collaborate with the School of Graduate Studies, Faculty stakeholders and representatives of the Graduate Students Association (GA) to develop a sustainable model to provide career counseling support for graduate students.
- Strategic Alignment Fund proposal - Graduate Student Writing Support: Collaborate with the School of Graduate Studies, Faculty stakeholders and representatives of the Graduate Students Association (GA) to develop a sustainable model for the provision of specialized graduate student writing support and leveraging on the newly renovated, dedicated space in Mills Memorial Library (Learning Commons).
- Global Mobility Software Project: Collaborate with the Office of International Affairs, Faculty stakeholders and University Technology Services to advance the selection and implementation of mobility software to facilitate the expansion of global opportunities for students, the mapping of global engagement activities and international partnerships, and global travel risk management.

STUDENT AFFAIRS ▶

Leadership Team



Sean Van Koughnett
Associate Vice-President (Students and Learning) & Dean of Students



Kevin Beatty
Director, Housing & Conference Services



Shawn Burt
Director, Athletics & Recreation



Allison Drew-Hassling
Director, Student Accessibility Services & Student Case Management



Shylo Elmayan
Director, Indigenous Student Services



Arlene Fajurtrao Dosen
Director, Student Success



Rosanne Kent
Director, Student Wellness Centre



Andrijana Olaizola
Director, Student Affairs Finance & Administration

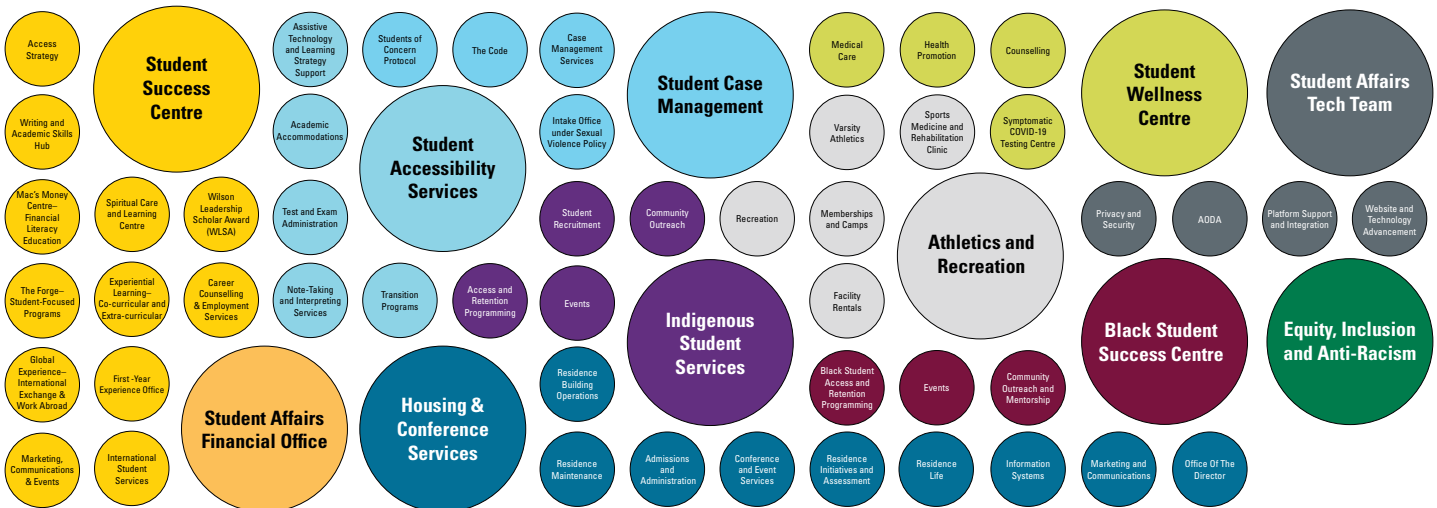


Dr. Clare Warner
Senior Advisor, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism



studentaffairs.mcmaster.ca/leadership/

Student Affairs Divisions



Note: The Student Affairs model relies on strong collaboration with our Student Affairs and Office of the Registrar colleagues and Faculty and Program partners.

Student Success
Centre



studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca