

***Setting the Course* Strategic Oversight Committee**

Terms of Reference

1. Background

McMaster University is entering a pivotal chapter in its institutional journey, marked by the recent appointment of President Susan Tighe. President Tighe's leadership presents a timely and transformative opportunity to reimagine the university's strategic direction. As McMaster continues to evolve in response to global challenges, societal shifts, and academic innovation, the development of a new strategic plan will serve as a foundational roadmap to guide priorities, investments, and impact over the coming years. This process will be anchored by a Strategic Oversight Committee to ensure broad engagement, thoughtful deliberation, and alignment with McMaster's values and aspirations. *Setting the Course* will serve as the strategic framework underpinning planning development, priority identification, resource allocation and reporting on progress and will lead McMaster into the next phase of its journey.

2. Mandate

The Strategic Oversight Committee has key responsibilities to provide oversight to the design and implementation of the *Setting the Course* consultation process, communication strategy, feedback themes, document drafts, final revised strategy and approval process.

3. Membership (x22)

Membership of the Strategic Oversight Committee shall be comprised of:

1. Susan Tighe, President and Vice-Chancellor | Chair
2. Mike Ayers, Communications Engagement Program Manager, Faculty of Health Sciences
3. Monique Beech, Executive Director Strategic Communications, Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs (CMPA)
4. Kusum Bhatta, President, Graduate Student Association (GSA)
5. Katherine Cuff, Professor, Economics; Faculty of Social Sciences
6. Brent Davis, University Counsel

7. Darran Fernandez, University Registrar
8. Bonnie Freeman, Associate Professor, School of Social Work & Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Academic Co-Chair, Indigenous Education Council.
9. Bhagwati Gupta, President, McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA); Professor, Biology; Faculty of Science
10. Jennifer Heisz, Professor, Kinesiology; Acting Director of PACE; Faculty of Science
11. Violetta Igheski, Associate Professor, Philosophy; Faculty of Humanities
12. Beverly Jacobs, Vice-Provost Indigenous; Associate Professor, Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences
13. Natalia Lishchyna, Board of Governors Member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council; Town Councillor for Oakville Ward 6
14. Susan McCracken, Professor, Accounting & Financial Management Services; DeGroote School of Business
15. Nancy McKenzie, Director of Strategic Planning, Office of the President
16. Piper Plavins, President, McMaster Students Union (MSU)
17. Jen Power, Director Development; Faculty of Health Sciences
18. Sara Salimi, Postdoctoral Fellow; Faculty of Engineering
19. Jonathan Sherbino, Professor, Medicine; Assistant Dean, Medical Education Research, Innovation and Theory (MERIT); Faculty of Health Sciences
20. Keena Trowell, Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering; Faculty of Engineering
21. Nicole Wagner, Assistant Professor, Information Systems; Director of eHealth Graduate Programs; DeGroote School of Business
22. Margaret Zanel, Vice-President McMaster Alumni Association; Partner, Strategy and Leadership, Wentworth Strategy Group

4. Timeline

Service on the Committee shall be during the strategy development period, after which the Committee will be disbanded. It is expected that the Committee will be active from November 2025 to June 2026 with meetings anticipated to be every 3 to 4 weeks.

5. Duties of the Committee

- a) To meet on a regular basis to ensure an efficient and effective workflow
- b) To provide oversight to the design and implementation of a consultation process with internal and external stakeholders
- c) To analyze information gathered from the consultation process along with other relevant information which may be gathered during the strategic development period
- d) To develop a *Setting the Course* strategy based on the consultation process and other relevant information
- e) To oversee the communication to the McMaster University community and other key external stakeholders using the web, social media, presentations, etc.
- f) To oversee the development and implementation of an engagement and governance process for discussion of draft documents and approval of the *Setting the Course* strategy

6. Member Responsibilities

- a) Regular meetings will be held, with members required to prepare prior to the meeting
- b) Participation in the meetings will be in-person, but may be virtual/hybrid as well
- c) If a member cannot regularly attend meetings, the Chair will take steps to find a replacement member

7. Duties of the Chair

- a) To chair meetings of the Committee
- b) To ensure that all Committee members have access to the information from the consultation process and other appropriate sources of information

- c) To ensure that the website for the McMaster University community is updated with summary information from the Committee's work
- d) To ensure that the work of the Committee is communicated to all key representative units of McMaster University
- e) To ensure that the process is conducted in a timely manner with approval by Board of Governors in June 2026

8. Committee Support – Strategic Planning Team

A Strategic Planning Team will provide record keeping, required research and/or benchmarking, draft and presentation preparation, communications and consultation logistics. Membership of the Strategic Planning Team shall be comprised of:

Co-Chairs (x2)

1. Susan McCracken, Professor, Accounting & Financial Management Services
2. Nancy McKenzie, Director of Strategic Planning, Office of the President

Members (x9)

1. Amanda Baldwin Director, Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Vice-President (Operations and Finance)
2. Fernando Carneiro, Associate Director, Communications and Marketing, Office of the Provost
3. Laura Couchie, Communications Officer, Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous, Indigenous Education Council
4. Arlene Dosen, Assistant Dean and Executive Director, Student Success | Student Affairs
5. Joanne Gittens, Director, Office of Institutional Research & Analysis (IRA), Office of the Provost
6. Karen Knott, Administrator, Indigenous Initiatives, Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous, Indigenous Education Council
7. Karen Krueger, Administrative Assistant, Office of the President

8. Cheryl Lauzado, Director, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression, Equity and Inclusion Office
9. Kerry O'Brien, Advisor to the President, Strategic Projects, Office of the President

Advisors (x5)

1. Beverly Jacobs, Vice-Provost Indigenous; Associate Professor, Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences
2. Alex Lawson, Special Advisor, Institutional Initiatives, Office of the President
3. Karen McQuigge, Director, Alumni Engagement
4. Clare Mitchell, Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to the President, Office of the President
5. Mark John Stewart, Managing Director, Wentworth Strategy Group; Industry Professor, McMaster University

9. Deliverable

A Setting the Course strategic vision that will be used to guide the McMaster University community from 2026-2031.