

Graduate Student Constituency

(FOUR to be elected)

The following graduate students have been nominated for membership on Senate for the July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027 term.

1. **BEDARD, Denise** – PhD / Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
2. **KAMAL, Rayyan** – PhD / Anatomy and Cell Biology
3. **MALHEIRO, Grace** – MCISc/PhD / Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
4. **MCCALLUM, Duncan** – PhD Music / Musicology
5. **YAN, Haiyi** – PhD / Curriculum Studies
6. **YIP, Antonia** – PhD / Curriculum Studies

Candidate statements are provided below.

BEDARD, Denise

PhD / Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

I am a PhD candidate in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences with extensive experience spanning senior leadership, community-based care, and Long-Term care homes. In addition to my doctoral studies, I served as CEO of a not-for-profit long-term care organization, where I worked closely with boards, regulators, and multidisciplinary teams to advance quality, equity, and accountability for residents. This leadership background has shaped my strong interest in governance, policy, and inclusive decision-making. My interest in seeking election to the Senate stems from a commitment to ensuring that graduate student voices, particularly those balancing research, leadership, caregiving, and community engagement, are meaningfully represented in institutional decision-making. I would bring to the Senate a collaborative lens informed by governance experience, applied research, and community partnership. I am particularly interested in contributing to discussions related to graduate education, student well-being, equity, and the translation of research into societal impact. I value thoughtful dialogue, transparency, and evidence-informed decision-making, and I would be honored to serve the graduate student constituency in this role.

KAMAL, Rayyan

PhD / Anatomy and Cell Biology

I am Rayyan Syed Kamal, a PhD candidate in Anatomy & Cell Biology at Western's Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. I'm seeking election as a graduate student Senator because Senate decisions on academic policy, program quality, and standards shape the day-to-day realities of graduate training across Western.

Over the past 10 years at Western, I've been deeply involved in student communities and leadership roles, keeping me closely connected to what students need to succeed. As President of the Western South Asian Dance Team, I led a 56-member organization, managed a \$29,000 annual budget, and represented student priorities in province-wide council meetings. Through long-standing mentorship and community involvement, I've supported students as they navigate belonging, workload pressure, and professional identity. As a racialized student, I bring an EDID lens grounded in lived experience, attentive to how policies affect access, supervision culture, and psychological safety for students from equity-deserving groups. I will consult graduate students before key decisions, elevate concerns around funding stability, teaching opportunities, and well-being, and communicate outcomes back in clear, practical language, while collaborating respectfully across disciplines to advance academic excellence for the whole University.



MALHEIRO, Grace**MCISc/PhD / Health and Rehabilitation Sciences**

Hello everyone! My name is Grace Malheiro, and I am a MCISc/PhD student in Hearing Science. I am an active campus member serving as Vice President of External Communications for the Health and Rehabilitation Graduate Student Society and Senior Advisor for the Health Studies Students' Association. I have volunteered for several years with the London Public Library, the London Food Bank, and St. Joseph's Health Care London. These experiences have strengthened my ability to work collaboratively and represent diverse perspectives. Having completed my undergraduate degree at Western, I have developed a strong understanding of our campus community and institutional structures, which will enable me to advocate effectively for graduate students. As a senator, I aim to represent you and support your academic journey. If elected, my goals are to ensure that graduate student voices are meaningfully incorporated into administrative decision-making and to advocate for priorities related to academics, student support, sustainable campus initiatives, and inclusivity so that every student feels heard and valued.

**MCCALLUM, Duncan****PhD Music / Musicology**

I am seeking a position in the Senate to bring a strong arts-focused graduate student perspective to university governance. As a graduate student in music who has been at Western for four years, I have developed a deep appreciation for the role the arts play within the academic and community life of our school, as well as an understanding of the unique challenges faced by graduate students in arts programs. During my undergraduate studies at McMaster University, I served as President of the Music Society for two years (2020-22). In this role, I represented my program within both the faculty and the broader student body, advocating for student needs and community engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic years. This also came at a time when McMaster was in the process of discontinuing their music program. This experience taught me the importance of representation and constructive dialogue across academic units. Having benefited greatly from my time at Western, I am eager to re-engage in service to the university. I am particularly motivated to ensure that graduate students in the arts are meaningfully represented in discussions that shape academic policy and the future direction of the university.



YAN, Haiyi**PhD / Curriculum Studies**

My name is Haiyi Yan, and I am a doctoral student in Education Studies, with experience as a teaching assistant, research assistant, and graduate researcher across multiple Canadian universities. I bring extensive experience in academic governance at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. During my undergraduate studies, I served as the Faculty of Arts student representative on the University of Ottawa Senate, where I engaged in university-wide discussions on academic policy and student affairs. During my master's studies, I further served as a Graduate Student Representative on the McGill University Senate's Committee on Student Services (Standing Committee), contributing to deliberations related to student support, services, and institutional policy. My academic interests focus on language policy, multilingualism, and equity in education, particularly in relation to international and linguistically diverse students. These research interests, combined with my governance experience, have given me a strong understanding of how institutional policies directly shape graduate students' academic experiences and well-being. I am seeking election to the Senate to continue representing graduate student perspectives in meaningful ways. As a Senate member, I would bring a well-informed, policy-oriented, and student-centered perspective, grounded in prior Senate service, cross-cultural experience, and a commitment to transparent and inclusive governance.

**YIP, Antonia****PhD / Curriculum Studies**

I am seeking election to Senate to contribute a graduate student-centred perspective to university-level decision-making. I bring substantial experience in academic governance, student leadership, and policy work, along with a strong commitment to service. At the university level, I serve as a Director and Councillor of the Society of Graduate Students (SOGS), where I have contributed to organizational decision-making, policy review, financial oversight, and cross-faculty collaboration. Within the Faculty of Education, I am a voting member of the Faculty Council and Graduate Faculty Council. Through these roles, I have developed a solid understanding of university governance priorities, consultation processes, and how Senate decisions shape teaching, learning, and research. Additionally, I serve as President of the Education Graduate Student Association, where I actively represent graduate students' interests, communicate student concerns, and support student-led initiatives. As a PhD student in Education, my research in curriculum studies and culturally responsive pedagogy informs the perspective I will bring to Senate. This lens enables me to examine academic policies with careful attention to equity,



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inclusion, and student experience. Combined with my governance and leadership experience, I will contribute a thoughtful, informed, and accountable voice to Senate deliberations.