

In the space below, please provide a statement (approximately 300-words) that will be helpful to the electorate in their selection. This page will be posted to the University Secretariat website exactly as submitted by the nominee; do not submit personal information on this page (i.e., address, telephone number, e-mail address, photograph, etc.). Please limit your statement to this page only.

Name of Nominee: Neil McLaughlin

I am a Professor of Sociology who has published widely in the sociology of intellectuals, academic disciplines and, more recently, on academic freedom. I am involved in Globalization and Social Psychology programs. I have become deeply concerned about the rise of conspiracy theories (I publish on the antisemitic attacks on George Soros) and the attacks on academic freedom that are occurring in the United States under Donald Trump, and around the world and sometimes even among liberal-left professors themselves when speakers are cancelled and debate is limited by smears and deplatforming.

These are the issues I would represent on the Senate. I tend towards a pro-Palestinian view but do not support intimidation tactics on campus nor terrorist tactics on both sides. We need to have students, faculty and staff feel safe on campus, but that does not mean that criticisms of Zionism as well as defenses of Zionism and the state of Israel cannot be voiced on campus when done in scholarly and intellectual ways. I am working on establishing a chapter of Heterodox Academy at both the University of Toronto (where I have a courtesy appointment) and here at McMaster, (see psychologist Jonathan Haidt). Academics should argue with evidence, be intellectually humble, constructive and generous in their readings of others and express what they believe openly. McMaster should be institutionally neutral and alive with debate on gender, politics, culture, science and DEI.