

# FIRST CONTACT



McGill

## FEBRUARY 2010

GET IN GEAR!

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### **FEBRUARY'S TO-DO LIST & UPCOMING EVENTS**

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February 4	Warm up with SEDE – 3:00-5:00, 3610 McTavish rm 12 – rsvp <a href="mailto:equity.diversity@mcgill.ca">equity.diversity@mcgill.ca</a> or 514-398-2039
February 5	PGSS Health Plan opt-out/opt-in period ends for newly admitted students
February 10	Deadline to file forms to write Winter Semester Exams with OSD
February 11	Macdonald College Founder's Day
February 14	Deadline for course withdrawal without refund Valentine's Day Chinese New Year
February 17	Ash Wednesday
February 22-26	Study Break
February 27	Purim

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## UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Whether you just started this January, or you are into your second semester, it is important to verify your personal information on [Minerva](#). Make sure that your Montreal address and telephone number are indicated and that you have activated your McGill e-mail account.

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## STUDY BREAK

February 22-26, 2010 is McGill's study break. This week provides the perfect time to catch up on coursework before the rush and before the semester ends. Make sure you are aware of all midterms and papers coming up after the break so you can be sure to stay on top of things. This week also gives you some time to relax and refresh yourself. If you are from out of town, take this opportunity to explore Montreal and all it has to offer!

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## LIBRARY FINES

Books cost \$.50 for every day they are late, recalled books cost \$2.00/day. These fines can add up very quickly. Make sure you never owe more than \$10.00, as this will block you from taking books until you reduce your balance. Fines can be paid at any Library on campus and can be paid by cash, credit or debit cards. If you happen to lose a book, you will be charged the cost of replacing the book (which varies), as well as a \$50.00 processing fee. Accessing your Library Account online will help you to:

- See which books you have out and when they are due
- Renew books
- Monitor your recalls and hold requests
- View any outstanding overdue fines

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## STUDENT SERVICES WORKSHOPS

The workshop pamphlet for the winter semester is now available. Make sure to pick one up at your Student Affairs Office, the reception desk at the Brown Student Services Building, or at the First Year Office.

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## STUDENT AID OFFICE

Are you having financial difficulties, are you running a little short on money? You can always contact the Student Aid Office for help. They offer the following services to full-time students:

- Budget and financial counselling
- Government loan information
- Information about McGill loans and bursaries
- Information about the SSMU bursary for undergrads
- The work/study program

## IMPORTANT UPDATE:

The US government and Department of Education are planning changes to the US government loan program for the 2010-2011 academic year.

ALL US students will maintain their eligibility for US government loans. Annual loan amounts will remain the same. Students will still need to complete and file a FAFSA before June 1, 2010 at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

The remainder of the application process (e-signing/signing of Master Promissory Notes – MPNs) and DEADLINE DATES will be added to their website once they have received updates from the US Department of Education. Please check [www.mcgill.ca/studentaid/government/US](http://www.mcgill.ca/studentaid/government/US) in late March 2010 for an update.

Student (Financial) Aid Office  
Brown Student Services Building, Suite 3200  
514-398-6013

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## COUNSELLING AND TUTORIAL SERVICE

Winter is here – but that does not mean you have to hibernate until spring! The Counselling Service is offering a number of workshops designed to warm your “woollies”. Meditation Based Stress Management, Overcoming Procrastination and Public Speaking are among the “hot” topics. See the Counselling website for more info at <http://www.mcgill.ca/counselling/>

Reminder: The Tutorial Service offers the first hour each semester for free to 1<sup>st</sup> year students and additional free sessions to any student on probation. “When the going gets tough, the tough get....tutoring”.

They also offer free open tutorial sessions for the following classes (no registration required):

**MATH-141** - Thursdays from 17:00 to 19:00, Brown Student Services Building, Room 3001

**PHYS-102** - Mondays from 17:00 to 19:00, 3600 University Street, Room 115

Macdonald Campus:

**AEPH-114** - Mondays from 19:30 to 21:30, Centennial Centre, CCI-150

**AEMA-102** - Wednesdays from 19:30 to 21:30, Centennial Centre, CCI-150

For more information, please contact Counselling & Tutorial Services, Brown Building, Suite 4200

Phone: 514-398-6011

See the Tutoring website at <http://www.mcgill.ca/tutoring/>

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## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – OFF-CAMPUS WORK

The Off-Campus Work program was created so that international students can benefit from the Canadian labour market. By working in Canada during their studies, international students have a better chance of getting a job after their graduation.

You qualify for an Off-Campus Work Permit if you:

- are enrolled in a degree, diploma or certificate program at McGill;
- have a valid Study Permit;
- have a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN) card;
- are not an exchange or visiting student;
- are not taking part in an ESL/FSL language program;
- studied full-time and were in good academic standing for at least six months of the year preceding your off-campus work permit application;
- are not a participant in the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program, or a recipient of awards funded by the Canadian International Development Agency or the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

For more information, please visit the website:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/internationalstudents/workopportunities/offcampuswork/>

For students who started in the Fall 2009 semester please note that you will be able to request an off-campus work permit starting March 1st, 2010.

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## HEALTH SERVICES AND DENTAL CLINIC

Colds and the flu are common this time of year, so remember you have access to Health Services here on campus. The emergency drop-in clinic is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 16:00 p.m. As with all clinics, there may be a wait, so be prepared. Better yet, make an appointment to save time.

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We need your help to welcome new first-year students! Volunteering is a great way to get involved, meet new people and boost your CV. Volunteers needed for:

***Discover McGill, Orientation Centre, First-Year Buddy Program, CSI McGill, International Student Buddy Program, McGill Summer Send-Off, Career Peer Education, Health Promotions***

The success of all these programs depends on student volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, pick up an application from the First-Year Office, the Brown Student Services reception desk, or online at:

[www.mcgill.ca/firstyear/work/volunteer](http://www.mcgill.ca/firstyear/work/volunteer). We look forward to working with you!

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## INTER-FACULTY TRANSFER

McGill students who would like to transfer to a different undergraduate program in another faculty in September 2010, must make the request on Minerva before June 1, 2010.

If you are interested in registering in a different program, don't forget to look at the prerequisites. You can find all the necessary information in section 3.3.12 of the [McGill Undergraduate Programs Calendar 2009-2010](#). Please note that the

transfer is not automatic and that the deadline varies by faculty so make sure you contact the appropriate Student Affairs Office as soon as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://www.mcgill.ca/student-records/inter-faculty-transfers/>

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## WRAP UP

We are here for you. Please do not ever hesitate to seek help when you need it. *Student Services - Promoting Student Success and Well-Being*. If you do not know where to go, remember that the First-Year Coordinator, Leslie Copeland, and her team in the First-Year Office can help. You can reach them at 514-398-6913 or [firstyear@mcgill.ca](mailto:firstyear@mcgill.ca)

Watch for the next issue of First Contact in March 2010.

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