



School Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 7th 2023, 2:30 – 5 pm
(Zoom + In person)

Approved at February 14th 2024 School Council

Attendance: **a) Faculty:** Alicia Boatswain-Kyte, Shari Brotman, Régine Debrosse, Syndie David, Charles Gyan, Jill Hanley, Nicole Ives (Director/chair), Ainsley Jenicek, Julia Krane, Lucy Lach, Mike MacKenzie, Kate Maurer, Pam Orzeck, Marjorie Rabiau, Tamara Sussman, Sarah Tarshis; **b) Field Coordinators:** Nicole Mitchell; **c) Administrative Staff:** Maria Pacheco; **d) Course Lecturers:** Corrie Sirota-Frankel, Zeldá Freitas; **e) Field Instructors:** Vivian Myron; **f) Students:** Laurence Breton (SWSA), Stavroula Timeliadou (SWSA), Godfrey Makoha (SWAGS); and **g) Non-voting member:** Yong Hong Feng (Minutes).

1. Approval of agenda

1.1 The agenda was approved by majority of the attendees.

2. Approval of minutes

2.1 The minutes from October 18th 2023 School Council meeting was approved by majority of the attendees.

3. Business arising/Updates:

3.1 Prof. Ives provided an update on the School since the last School Council as below:

1) **2023 Kagedan lecture series on social work and human rights:** the lecture was held yesterday, December 6th 2023, and presented by Prof. Nate O. Fuks (Douglas Centre for Clinical Psychology and Department of Psychology, McGill) entitled *McGill Ukrainian Mental Health Aid Initiative: Cultural & Linguistic Competences Acquired and Lessons Learned?* The sponsor of the lecture series, Lila Kagedan, also attended the lecture; it is an opportunity for the School to engage more with the presenters on their expertise areas.

2) **Space issues:** request for a permanent Social Work space and for upgrading the current kitchen furniture was recently put forward to the Faculty of Arts.

Action item: Prof. Ives and Orsini to follow up on the request.

3) **Hiring:** a) the current hire freeze across campus (** tenure, promotion, and hiring of course lecturers, teaching assistants and research assistants are not affected) would affect the School's plan to hire a ranked CAS (** contract academic staff; job duties include training field supervisors, navigating on challenging issues/topics, engaging with communities, and teaching a summer course); and b) the new hire for the IAM Director position will join the School on March 18th 2024.

4) **Opportunities for collaboration:** a) The Cree School Board (CSB) contacted Prof. Ives to discuss the possibility of developing a program similar to that of Nunavik for Fall 2025 mixed with in person classes and online sessions; CSB would discuss it at the next board meeting and come back to us for next steps; and b) Prof. Ives' recent participation in a social work

education conference hosted by the University of Greenland generated intentions to build on the School's more than a decade of work on Indigenous education for further collaboration.

5) Coping with the pressure to produce more social work graduates and increase enrollment:

a) a grant application for 150 k was recently submitted to the Ministry with the hope to provide additional BSW sections to make it possible for students with advanced standings to complete the BSW in 2 years; and b) potential issues caused by the accelerated process was also discussed such as field hours, greater flexibility regarding equivalences and course options, etc.

6) **Congratulations:** to Boatswain-Kyte and David for their 3-year reappointment.

- 3.2 **Update on Social Work Climate Survey** (details see [October 18 2023 SC Minutes](#)): Gyan reported that a) faculty volunteers (Brotman, Debrosse, Ives, and MacKenzie) and Gyan met to review the survey; and b) while no significant changes are to be made, there is challenge with the survey tool; the switch from McGill's free lime survey to Qualtrics Survey would cost more than 5k.

Action item: MacKenzie to reach out to Faculty of Education/Medicine to see if possible to get around the cost.

- 3.3 **Update on 2-year MSW Program:** Lach reported that a) the proposal is now off the table; the approval from the Arts is conditional on the resource commitment from the Provost's office who has confirmed that the Provost was not in a position to support the program, esp. given the current challenges facing McGill due to the tuition increases; b) if the School decided to go with the proposal, the key challenge would be how to use the current available resources to run the program without affecting the quality; and c) other options to increase the MSW enrollment were explored: resurrecting the 60 credit BSW was not possible given that it had been retired for more than 5 years; a major challenge with the Qualifying Year was that it had no access to loans and bursaries or other funding opportunities.

4. Motions

- 4.1 Ives proposed a motion, seconded by Gyan/Jenicek, to officially approve Black Access McGill as a constituency group within the Social Work School Council as below:

Given that Black Access McGill is a support program dedicated to a) promoting the interests and addressing the concerns of Black students within the McGill School of Social Work. Recognizing Black Access McGill as a constituency group would provide a platform for Black students to voice their perspectives, contribute to discussions, and actively participate in the decision-making processes of the School Council; and b) fostering an inclusive environment that values the diverse experiences and needs of all students and enhances the overall academic and social well-being of our community, be it resolved that the McGill School of Social Work officially approves Black Access McGill as a constituency group of the School Council; be it further resolved that this motion shall take effect immediately upon approval.

- 4.2 Attendees unanimously voted in favor of the proposed motion.

5. End-of-term reports from Constituency Groups

- 5.1 The leads of the School Council constituency groups all had a brief end-of-term report on the 2023 Fall term (details see [SC Min_Append#I](#)).

6. Adjournment

- 6.1 The meeting adjourned at 5 pm; the next School Council meeting is to be held on **Wednesday, February 14, 2024.**

Appendix I - End of Term Report by Constituency Groups

1. **BSW Program (Krane)**
 - 1.1 In the process of revising BSW equity lime survey and integrating AOP and EDDI principals into BSW curriculum;
 - 1.2 Will bring the 60 credit BSW issue to BSW program committee for further discussion and consult with Faculty Meeting first if anything comes up;
 - 1.3 Will meet with Arts' OASIS advisors to understand better the studying abroad/away options including the funding opportunities and possible barriers.
2. **MSW Program (Lach)**
 - 2.1 Met to discuss the revision on ISP guidelines aiming to bring more clarity to the process and expectations;
 - 2.2 In the process of reviewing and brainstorming on faculty teaching and curriculum in the International & Community Development area.
3. **MScA CFT Program (Rabiau)**
 - 3.1 Held Town Hall and Info Session during the Fall term;
 - 3.2 Worked with the simulation center to better integrate simulation into CFT courses;
 - 3.3 Will prepare for the University's Cyclical Review (2024-25).
4. **PhD program (Sussman)**
 - 4.1 Drafted guidelines for article-based thesis and proposal; will bring to Faculty Meeting first for discussion and feedback;
 - 4.2 Will enhance students' experiences by gathering feedback through survey on students' needs and gaps between their need and possibilities offered by the program.
5. **Field Program (Orzeck)**
 - 5.1 Initiated BSW U1 mini-field placement on voluntary basis and supported by team lead and liaison;
 - 5.2 Continued to provide integrative seminars for BSW U2 and U3 cohorts;
 - 5.3 Will work with SWSA and SWAGS on suicide prevention training and job fairs.
6. **EGAB (Endowment, Gifts, Awards & Bursaries, Debrosse)**
 - 6.1 Ranked applications and provided support for applications for external awards; forwarded to the University 2 candidates for Vanier scholarship; will review MSW applications and travel grant applications;
 - 6.2 Will support students struggling with financial situations with available funding.
7. **Simulation Centre (Jenicek)**
 - 7.1 Held workshop on simulation experiences (Part I) for PED Friday; Will continue with Part II in January 2024 to discuss how to incorporate simulations into teaching;
 - 7.2 Supported 2 BSW, 1 MSW and 1 MScA CFT courses with the piloted simulation project, involving +200 students with positive feedback;
 - 7.3 Added "outside class time" with Field team for students to practice more skills and understand their needs and what works;
 - 7.4 Worked with instructors/actors to envision the long and short-term simulation-based teaching.

8. Student Support (Mitchell)

- 8.1 Reminded faculty to encourage students who are struggling to reach out as early as possible for help and encouraged faculty to offer flexibility to students in need of support;
- 8.2 Continued to meet with students; issues reflected in the meetings included struggle to ask for assignment extensions, mental issues, family and financial issues, etc.;
- 8.3 Will work with student associations so that they can better refer students to available McGill resources, such as workshops on self-care, time management, etc. Info to be included in the School Bulletin.

9. EDDII (Equity Diversity Decolonization Inclusion Indigenization, Ives)

- 9.1 Called for faculty volunteers to fill out the 3 vacancies for the group (*total of 5 faculty members needed); Gyan is the School's EDI representative to work with the Arts;
- 9.2 Will need to further develop Field Advising Committee as a School Council committee (**Action Item, Orzeck**).

10. IAM (Indigenous Access McGill, Ives)

- 10.1 Together with Prof. Krane, met with the Cree School Board who expressed interest in further collaborations and high school students;
- 10.2 The new hire, Ann Seymour, PhD(c), for the IAM director position will join the School on March 18, 2024.

11. BAM (Black Access McGill, Gyan)

- 11.1 Continued to take initiatives to help students in need, such as winter clothing drive and food pantry; 70 percent of the received donations were distributed;
- 11.2 Continued to collaborate with the local Black community as a way to reach out;
- 11.3 Will co-organize Black History Month activities.

12. SWSA (Social Work Student Association, Breton & Timeliadou)

- 12.1 Organized social events to strengthen the sense of community including end-of-term gathering to be held by end of today;
- 12.2 Set up some sub-committees to involve students in a more effective way;
- 12.3 Will collaborate with the School on suicide prevention trainings and addressing current issues such as conflict in Gaza and Israel.

13. SWAGS (Social Work Association of Graduate Students, Makoha)

- 13.1 Held social events for graduate students including a workshop in December and a get-together before the end of exam period;
- 13.2 Continued to work on PhD profiles on the School's website;
- 13.3 Will explore ways to support students who are experiencing stress caused by the tuition increases and imbalances between studying and family responsibilities.