



School Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 10th 2025, 2:30 – 5 pm

(Zoom + In person)

Approved at March 11th 2026 School Council Meeting

Attendance: **a) Faculty:** Alicia Boatswain-Kyte, Syndie David, Régine Débrosse, Myriam Denov, Amal El-Sana, Jill Hanley, Nicole Ives (Director/chair), Ainsley Jenicek, Julia Krane, Lucy Lach, Heather MacIntosh, Mike MacKenzie, Pam Orzeck, Marjorie Rabiau, Ann Seymour (**arrived after vote), Tamara Sussman; **b) Field Coordinators:** Melvin Buquerente, Nicole Mitchell; **c) Administrative Staff:** Marilena Orsini, Heather Langer; **d) Course Lecturers:** Nona Moscovitz, Corrie Sirota-Frankel; **e) Students:** Emma Felice (SWAGS), Olivier Joncas (SWAGS), Isabelle Kirsch (SWAGS), Aiya Hyslop-Healy (SWSA), Berdie Pidika Matondo (SWSA); **f) Field Supervisors:** Lisa Fazio, Rebecca Pimienta; 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 for October 29th 2025 School Council meeting was approved by majority of the attendees.

Action item: edits to the minutes to be sent to Feng.

3. Constituency Groups' Reports from 2024-25 and Priorities for 2025-26

3.1 Program Directors (Krane for BSW, Lach for MSW, Rabiau for MScA CFT, Sussman for PhD, and Orzeck for Field), lead for the School Council Committees (Débrosse for Endowment, Gifts, Awards and Bursaries Committee, Seymour for Indigenous Access McGill, Boatswain-Kyte for Black Access McGill, MacKenzie for Equality, Diversity, Decolonization, Indigenization), Student Support team (Mitchell), the Simulation Centre (Jenicek), SWSA (Social Work Student Association, Hyslop-Healy and Matondo), and SWAGS (Social Work Association of Graduate Students, Felice, Joncas and Kirsch) all provided an update on their work since the October School Council meeting (details see [*SC Min Appendix I*](#)).

4. Motion for vote on "Savoir-être in Direct Practice" course

4.1 Prof. Lach proposed a motion, seconded by Prof. MacKenzie, to approve the proposal for a new complementary course (SWRK 618 – Savoir-être in Direct Practice) for inclusion in the Social Work curriculum, effective Fall 2026, pending university-level approvals.

Rationale:

A core area of competency for students entering the Social Work and Couple and

Family Therapy professions is *savoir-être*—the knowledge, skills, and capacities related to one's ways of being and relating to others. Listed in the professional standards of both professions, *savoir-être* encompasses essential qualities such as self-awareness, self-regulation, humility, critical reflexivity, and integrity, as well as one's relationship to self and to others. The School currently does not offer a course that focuses explicitly on these competencies across both programs. This course is intended to prepare students for subsequent practice courses and for field placement.

Motion:

Be it resolved that the School of Social Work Council approve SWRK 618 for inclusion in the Social Work curriculum, effective Fall 2026.

Follow-up Action Required:

If approved, the course will be recorded in Minerva and forwarded to the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee for further approval.

- 4.2 Before the voting, Prof. Jenicek provided a brief introduction of the proposed course; Prof. Lach further explained the purpose of the course, including its role in supporting the re-branding of the two MSW areas of practice, as well as outlining the approval process and timelines at various levels. It was noted that a proposal focusing on key concepts (rather than detailed specifications) must be submitted promptly to meet committee review timelines, with further course details to be developed subsequently. This was followed by discussion regarding the course's fit within the current curriculum and program structure, including questions about potential overlap with existing courses.
- 4.3 An anonymous vote was held via email to Feng with the below result: (a) number of voters: 25; (b) Votes in favour: 17; (c) votes against: 3; and (d) abstentions: 5. (** the voting result was confirmed with all members via email after the adjournment of the meeting).
- 4.4 **Action Items:** (a) Based on the majority vote in favour, Prof. Lach will proceed to the next stage of the approval process; and (b) discussions will be held with instructors teaching *Use of Self* to obtain further clarity regarding course alignment and overlap.

5. Adjournment

- 5.1 The meeting adjourned at 5 pm.
- 5.2 Next School Council meeting will be on **February 11th 2026. (**Note: it was changed to February 25th, 2026)**

School Council Minutes Appendix I:

Updates from the School Council Constituency Groups

BSW Program (Krane)

Prof. Krane provided an update on the BSW Program, including the following:

1. The BSW program webpage is being updated, including the upload of advising documents and forms.
2. Efforts are underway to better prepare students for field practice and strengthen integration between coursework and field education, in response to feedback received from BSW cohorts. This includes minor course revisions in collaboration with the Field Team.

MSW Program (Lach)

Prof. Lach provided an update on the MSW program including the following:

- (1) Listening Circles were held with MSW (thesis & non-thesis students) and MSW-Qualifying Year (QY) students, providing opportunities for students to share what they value in the program and to identify areas for improvement. MSW thesis students indicated a need for additional support beyond supervision. In response, Brown Bag Lunch sessions will be organized during the Winter term. Request from students to split a required MSW course across two terms was noted and has since been addressed.
- (2) Students in the MSW-QY program are now eligible to apply to the combined MSW–Law program.
- (3) A proposal to deliver SWRK 665 remotely to accommodate students’ need was discussed. Prof. Lach consulted the TAP (Teaching & Academic Programs, previously the Teaching & Learning Services) and a revised proposal will be submitted to the Arts Curriculum Committee.

MScA CFT Program (Rabiau)

Prof. Rabiau provided an update on the MScA (CFT) Program, including the following:

- (1) The University’s Cyclical Review is being finalized. The Self-Study was submitted on October 6, 2025, and the action plan was submitted last Friday following review of the report received.
- (2) Planning and recruitment of new placement sites and supervisors are underway. Match Day between students and supervisors is scheduled to take place in February.

PhD program (Sussman)

Prof. Sussman provided an update on PhD program, including the following:

- (1) currently working with PhD directors at UQAM and UdeM to plan a cross university PhD symposium day; this collaborative effort is meant to encourage exchange between

the universities and to provide PhD students with no cost opportunities to present their work; and

- (2) A PhD funding sub-committee was struck to discuss the funding landscape for current and incoming PhD students and to work out a systematic way of eliciting faculty contributions; this effort reflects a philosophical shift in how we fund our students and may have implications on admissions and funding packages.

Field Program (Orzeck)

Prof. Orzeck provided an update on the Field program including the following:

- (1) With a lot of changes and actions going on, it was a bit hard to strike the balance given that the BSW field coordinator is a part-time position.
- (2) Field Fair will be held in January to allow students to share their experiences.
- (3) Planning for suicide prevention training is in progress.
- (4) Meeting with MSW students and the field sub-committee to explore the possibilities of international placement and placement with private practice.

The EGAB Committee (Endowment, Gifts, Awards & Bursaries, Débrosse)

Prof. Débrosse provided an update on the EGAB Committee, noting the following:

- (1) Funding has been particularly challenging this year due to changes in the funding structure, including the discontinuation of Vanier scholarships, project awards, and graduation awards and the change of the GPS funding. The Graduate Mobility Award, which can support international placements, is available, but limited.
- (2) The Committee is paying close attention to new funding opportunities and resources that are not specific to McGill or to Social Work. Options to better support students are being explored, including the possibility of paid placements as was highly requested by the students under great financial stress and access to McGill financial aid.

IAM (Indigenous Access McGill, Seymour)

Prof. Seymour provided an update on IAM, including the following:

- (1) Challenges related to student engagement were reported last year; however, this term has seen improvement with support from colleagues including Buquerente and Fazio.
- (2) Recruitment activities are being planned in Nunavik; efforts are underway to strengthen relationships by reaching out to the broader community.

BAM (Black Access McGill, Boatswain-Kyte)

Prof. Boatswain-Kyte provided an update on BAM, including the following:

- (1) 2 Black Students' Talk Circles were held in October and November to connect with students and address issues of concern. Additional sessions are planned for the Winter term.

- (2) Upcoming initiatives include a Winter book talk (“Salvation”), reviewing applications for emergency funds/aid in collaboration with EGAB, and a winter clothing donation drive.
- (3) The Annual Black History Month event has successfully secured funding and will be held on February 18, 2026, at 550 Sherbrooke. Further details will be shared once the flyer is finalized.

EDDII (Equity Diversity Decolonization Inclusion Indigenization, MacKenzie)

Prof. MacKenzie provided an update on the EDDII Committee, including the following:

- (1) The Committee began work over the summer on developing a Land Acknowledgement template for use at School events and conferences, following discussions held at the March 2025 Ped Friday meeting.
- (2) The bi-annual Social Work Climate Survey will proceed in Spring 2026 as planned;
- (3) The Committee will identify 3 priority areas from the five domains outlined in the Strategic Plan that guide its work (Pedagogy, Student Engagement, Governance, Research, and Community).

Simulation Centre (Jenicek)

Prof. Jenicek provided an update on the Simulation Centre including the following:

- (1) A total of 11 in-course simulation events were held in Fall 2025 across seven courses, resulting in 289 student simulation experiences (BSW: 192; MSW-QY: 49; MSW: 36; CFT: 12). These activities involved seven individual actors (11 actor engagements), three community members with lived experience, and three support associates (community partners).
- (2) Coordination is transitioning due to funding constraints that have reduced available hours for administrative support. A new student coordinator was hired and will replace the departing coordinator by the end of 2025.
- (3) Current funding is primarily provided through a McGill Dialogue Grant held by Prof. Tarshis. Additional funding opportunities will be explored in the new year.

Student Support (Mitchell)

Mitchell provided an update on the student support including the following:

- (1) The team has been meeting with many students experiencing a range of challenges including mental health, finance, balance between work, study and family; students have shown their appreciation for the help from Andrea Corral Rodríguez, the newly hired assistant;
- (2) Ongoing discussions have been taking place with Campus Life and Engagement regarding the potential implementation of McGill’s existing Student Buddy Program within the School; the Student Support Team has reviewed the program and agreed that it would be beneficial to pilot it in the School (<https://www.mcgill.ca/cle/peer-programs/new-student-buddy-program>).

SWSA (Social Work Student Association, Hyslop-Healy & Matondo)

The SWSA team provided an update on SWSA including the following:

- (1) The SWSA End-of-Term Party was held on December 3; SWSA will also co-host a holiday event on December 19 with the School of Physical and Occupational Therapy.
- (2) SWSA is running a Toy Drive in support of Carolyn's Community, a charity that has organized an annual toy drive for over 20 years for children in women's shelters and community organizations across Montreal.
- (3) SWSA plans to conduct a survey among BSW students to assess their experiences in the program and explore next steps, including interest in pursuing the MSW program.
- (4) SSMU (the Students' Society of McGill University) will hold its AGM in the new year, providing an opportunity to become familiar with new members.
- (5) SWSA plans to organize working groups and collaborate with faculty to plan and organize skills-based workshops.

SWAGS (Social Work Association of Graduate Students, Felice, Joncas & Kirsch)

SWAGS provided an update, including the following:

- (1) A Listening Circle was held with strong attendance and active engagement. Discussions focused on issues related to international, paid, private practice placements and included specific dialogue on situations in Palestine.
- (2) The first Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in January. This will provide an opportunity to strengthen connections with students. Planned areas of focus include the organization of workshops and trainings, as well as enhancing community-building through social media.