

Constitution of the McGill Graduate Sociology Students Association (MGSSA)

Update:

02-17-2023: The constitution has been updated to reflect the amendments made in the 02-17-2023 General Meeting.

Article I — Name

The name of this organization shall be (include acronym):

McGill Graduate Sociology Students Association (MGSSA)

Hereinafter referred to as (ie, the “Society” or the “Association,” etc)

Article II - Purpose

The purposes of the constitution are:

2a: to provide representation for the Membership, as appropriate;

2b: to facilitate graduate student life for the graduate and postdoctoral researchers working within the Department;

2c: to arrange social activities for its members so that the participants may actively benefit from the athletic, recreational, and/or social nature of an organized event;

2d: to foster a sense of community, academic and otherwise, with equivalent organizations outside the Department.

2e: To act as a public, social, and proactive agent in the fight against social injustices, both internally as an organization and externally in broader society, fighting against all forms of racism, sexism, islamophobia, transphobia, and all forms of inequality, and, the society will act in accordance with other policy decisions made by previous administrations (such as those made by the MGSSA Anti-Racism Committee of 2020 or as is found in the MGSSA Israel-Palestine statement of 2021)

2f: To act as a protector of member rights (as students and citizens), where, if the student is unfairly targeted by the department, the administration or some other university agency (so long as the members conduct does not conflict with our stated positions in Article II, subsection 2e); and if the member is targeted by political authorities or other government/social agencies and organizations (so long as the members conduct does not conflict with our stated positions in Article II, subsection 2e); the MGSSA will promptly support these members, engaging in forms

of collective action typical of a union and/or providing logistical, economic and social support given the need of the student and the ability of the Society.

Article III - Membership

All graduate students and Postdoctoral Scholars currently registered in the department of Sociology are regular members of this Association. Aside from this stipulation, the MGSSA shall not discriminate in any way deemed unlawful or inappropriate by the PGSS constitution or McGill University ethics guidelines.

Article IV - Executive and representative officers

4.1 The Executive Officers of the Association shall consist of

- One or two (1 or 2) Coordinators

4.2 The following Optional Executive Officers shall be elected as needed:

- One (1) Treasurer
- One (1) Speaker

4.3 The MGSSA shall elect representatives to the PGSS and to all committees and bodies within the Sociology Department on which graduate students are entitled to representation. The following Representative Officers shall be elected:

- One (1) Social Activities Coordinator
- One (1) PGSS Representative (or as indicated by PGSS)
- One (1) AGSEM Representative (or as indicated by AGSEM)
- One (1) MCLIU Representative (or as indicated by MCLIU)
- One (1) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Representative

4.4 The MGSSA shall form committees to serve the student body of the Sociology Department. This includes, but is not limited to the academic and social committees. Committee positions can be taken voluntarily by the membership. However, a commitment for the year is expected. The following committee representatives should be elected:

- Hiring Committee Representative(s), as needed
- Social Committee Representative(s), as needed
- Academic Committee Representative(s), as needed
- One (1) Speaker series representative

4b: The Executive shall be elected annually as per the election guidelines set out in this Constitution.

4c: The Executive shall be jointly charged with the responsibility of:

- i. Ensuring prudent fiscal management of the Association's funds.
- ii. Producing Council Meeting and General Assembly agendas.
- iii. Relaying to Council comments, questions, and concerns of relevance to the Association

- iv. Producing and maintaining guides detailing procedures of individual executive functions.
- v. Providing all documents generated by their respective offices to the Secretariat.

These responsibilities shall hereafter be referred to as the “joint responsibilities of the Executive”.

4d: The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

Coordinator(s)

Further to the joint responsibilities of the Executive, the Coordinator(s) shall:

- i. Be the official representative of the Association to all external entities;
- ii. Be responsible for all official correspondence with all external entities;
- iii. Be familiar with the content of the University’s Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and in particular the Charter of Students’ Rights with respect to defending the rights of the Association;
- iv. Be one (1) of the two (2) required signing officers;
- v. Maintaining and organize up to date documents of the Association’s Constitution;
- vi. Compiling meeting agendas with duties including: i) receiving and compiling reports from all other executives and committees; ii) previous meeting records; and iii) agenda items as approved by the Executive.
- vii. Conduct all of the Association’s elections according the procedures and regulations specified in this Constitution; and
- viii. Chair Council Meetings.
- ix. Maintain and transmit the records and documentation of the Association’s activities required by the PGSS to the appropriate PGSS representative within the deadlines stipulated by the PGSS for a Graduate Student Association (GSA);
- x. Verify adherence by the Association to all required regulations concerning the activities of a GSA as specified by the PGSS.

Speaker

Further to the joint responsibilities of the Executive, the Speaker shall:

- i. Be the designated correspondent of the Association to the Membership, including:
 - a. notification of all of the Association’s meetings/assemblies;
 - b. and distribution of meeting materials (e.g. agendas).
- ii. Act as Recording Secretary for Council Meetings and General Assemblies;
- iii. Maintain and organize up-to-date electronic (where appropriate) and paper (where appropriate) records of all of the Association’s documents including:
 - a. financial records as provided by the Treasurer;
 - b. Meeting records (agendas, minutes, etc...);
 - c. Documentation arising from the activities of the Executive;
 - d. Template and filled forms (e.g. Nomination Forms);
 - e. The Association’s operations manuals.
- iv. Representative to the Graduate Committee & Faculty/Department

Treasurer

Further to the joint responsibilities of the Executive, the Treasurer shall:

- i. Be one (1) of two (2) required signing officers;
- ii. Be responsible for ensuring all financial transactions adhere to the approved Association budget;
- iii. Maintain official financial records for auditing purposes including: i) Retaining all Financial records for six (6) years after the year of initial transaction; ii) keeping the Association's budget and Constitution for reference; and iii) destroying all financial records after the six (6) years period.
- iv. Be responsible for preparing the Association's yearly budget and final annual financial statement;
- v. Administering and maintaining the Association's assigned facilities and resources.

Article V - Executive

5a: The Executive shall be the officers of the MGSSA and shall be elected once per year as per the election guidelines set out below.

5b: The Executive shall hold office from Sept 1st of each year until the following August 31st

Article VI – Committees

6a: The duties of the academic and social committees are as follows:

Academic Committee

- i. Further to the joint responsibilities of the Executive, the members of the Academic Committee shall:
 - ii. Plan and execute academic events
 - iii. Producing and maintaining a list of alumni
 - iv. Produce and maintain a comprehensive list of facilities and procedures for aiding Members in obtaining information and solutions to issues relating to academic activities.
 - v. Plan and execute social events and activities when the Association does not have a Vice President Social
 - vi. Coordinate with the CPD to organize the conference workshop

Social Committee

Further to the joint responsibilities of the Executive, the members of the Social Committee shall:

- i. Plan and execute social events and activities
- ii. Ensure that social events follow all applicable rules and laws
- iii. Ensure all events are advertised to the Membership

6b: Other committees are created to meet the needs of the Council, and can be dissolved once these needs have been met (i.e. faculty hiring committee).

Article VII - Finances

7a: The MGSSA shall conduct fund-raising for such programs or activities as it sees fit.

Article VIII - General Meeting

8a: The General Meeting shall be called by a decision of the executives; Meetings may also be called at the request of at least one member or as current affairs dictate.

8b: The coordinator(s) shall call General meetings no less than once per semester (i.e., at least twice per academic year).

8c: Notice of a General Meeting shall be given by e-mail at least one week before the meeting.

8d: Quorum for the General Meeting shall be 10% of the general membership.

8e: All motions shall be passed upon a simple majority of 50% + 1 vote.

Article IX - Elections

9a: Elections shall be held once per year.

9b: Notice of open positions shall be given at least one week in advance of the General Meeting.

9c: Any regular member of MGSSA may seek election for open positions. Each candidate must plan to serve a full term of office, and if graduation is expected before the end of the term, then the candidate must disclose such information.

9d: Ballot shall be secret and be counted in the presence of at least two (2) non-candidate members.

9e: In case of vacancies in an executive position, the tasks of that position should be taken over by the rest of the executive committee until such a time as a by-election can be held.

9f: In the event that there is only one candidate for a position, ballots will still be issued. Members will vote 'yes' or 'no'.

9g: To be elected, a candidate must hold 50% plus 1 of the total votes in favour of the candidate.

Article X - Affiliation

The MGSSA shall be affiliated with the Post Graduate Students Society of McGill University (PGSS), as provided for by that body's constitution.

Article XI - Adoption and Amendments

11a: This constitution has been initially adopted by a two-thirds (66%) majority of a General Meeting of the MGSSA.

11b: Amendments to this constitution shall be made at a General Meeting.

11c: Notice of proposed amendments shall be posted at least one week before the General Meeting.

11d: Amendments will be voted on by open ballot and shall pass by a two-thirds (66%) majority of those present at the General Meeting.