

Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University

3650 McTavish Street, Montreal, Quebec



Mina Anadolu, Internal Affairs Officer
March 2016 General Meeting Report

internal.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca

Your vote is your voice! Vote in the March 2016 Referendums!

March is upon us and it is referendum season! Polls open on Wednesday, March 16th and will remain open until March 25th. Please **don't forget to vote and remind your friends to cast their votes**. Your vote is your voice! Please go to <https://pgss.simplyvoting.com/vote.php> to vote!

Hello Post-Graduate Student's Society (PGSS) members!

I am excited to be with you today (March 16th, 2016) as this is my first General Meeting since I was elected as Interim Internal Affairs Officer (IAO) in December 2015. In this report I will outline my duties as Internal Affairs Officer and provide you with information on what we have accomplished this year. I would also like to briefly introduce myself to you and inform you of my involvement with PGSS before I was elected as IAO.

Mina Anadolu, BSc.

I am a second year Ph.D. student in Neuroscience in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience (IPN) of McGill University. I completed my undergraduate studies at McGill in 2013 in the field of Biology, with a minor in Neuroscience. I joined the PGSS Internal Affairs Committee (IAC) in February 2015 and have been organizing and running events for PGSS ever since. I worked closely with the past two IAOs and learned a great deal about how to engage PGSS members in our functions. I am also on the Post-Graduate Orientation Planning Committee. Some of the new initiatives I brought to life this year are the Montreal Food Crawl during the first Post-Graduate Orientation Week, Healthy Lifestyle Night in collaboration with Health and Wellness Committee (HaWC) and the first International Board Games Night as part of I-Week. My primary goals for this year as Interim IAO were 1) to ensure a seamless transition and that all events planned by the previous IAO are run successfully 2) to increase transparency within the governing bodies of PGSS and between PGSS and their members 3) to organize events and workshops to advocate for equity and diversity. If you would like to contribute to the 2015-2016 mandate and help me reach these goals, please email internal.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca. You can also get the inside scoop by following my IAO Tumblr at <http://pgssinternal.tumblr.com/>

Duties of the Internal Affairs Officer

The IAO is responsible for organizing and running events and workshops that will enrich the post-graduate experience of PGSS members. The IAO portfolio includes a variety of activities such as Post-Graduate Orientation, PGSS parties and socials, information sessions and workshops to help graduate students and post-doctoral fellows regarding their welfare and professional development and other activities to foster a sense of community. The IAO is also responsible to inform the membership of the latest developments at PGSS through the bi-monthly e-newsletter, PGSS Newswire. The duties of the IAO do not end there. The IAO should also be keeping in touch with Post-Graduate Student Associations (PGSAs) as well as clubs and services on campus, to ensure a well-connected and a well-informed society and to recruit volunteers for various PGSS functions.

Summary of Accomplishments after Taking Office

The winter semester is always a tough one for PGSS events as data from past years have shown that member participation drops significantly during the winter months. Through the hard work of the Internal Affairs Committee and our collaborations, we have managed to keep the PGSS spirit alive this winter! I would now like to provide you with summaries of what we have accomplished since the beginning of my term in December 2015:

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2016 is a Year for Collaboration

I place great value in collaborative effort. There are many services and student groups on campus that have a lot to offer to our members and through collaborating with them we can not only extend our reach but also **bring important services to our members' doorstep.**

Since the beginning of my term in December (**duration of 3 months**), I have collaborated with:

- ASEQ
- Campus Life & Engagement (CL&E),
- CKUT Radio Station
- Health and Wellness Committee (HaWC)
- Healthy McGill,
- International Community Action Network (ICAN),
- International Student Services (ISS),
- McGill Athletics and Recreation,
- McGill Counselling Service,
- Office of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies,
- Peer Support Center,
- PGSS Environment Committee,
- PGSS Equity Committee,
- PRIDE Team,
- Queer McGill Post-Graduate Working Group,
- Randolph Gaming Pub,
- Social Equity and Diversity Education Office (SEDE),
- Teaching and Learning Services,
- The Gamers' Guild,
- The McGill Fencing Club,
- Warner Brothers.

The events that we organized until now rely heavily on these collaborations and **I urge all of you to increase your collaborative effort.** The more we collaborate with each other, the greater our success will be. Compared to last year's data, the **participation in our functions have greatly increased** and I believe this is a result of the collaborations we have initiated, the new friends we have made outside of McGill and through the hard work of not only Internal Affairs Committee members but also the members of the above stated groups. **I am looking forward to collaborating with more of you** and I urge you to email me and ask for help if you need to find partners to collaborate with. If you have ideas that will benefit our membership that you would like to see come to life, talk to me and I will provide you with as much support as I can. We are here for each other so let's take advantage of the diversity in this room (General Meeting) and work together. **Please email me at internal.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca to collaborate!** Seeking collaborations with:

- Walksafe and Drivesafe: for a safer commute for PGSS members to and from events. Interested in forming a Carpool Network for Downtown and Mac Campus members to help each other commute;
- Legal Information Clinic: for info sessions on tenant/landlord law and on Quebec employment law;
- Skillsets: Workshops in Thomson House on securing funding for your studies and professional development.

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Winter 2016 Orientation Week

We have collaborated with Campus Life and Engagement (CLE) to organize the Winter Post-Graduate Orientation Week for a class of 300 incoming students. Our budget for Winter Orientation was quite limited, however we were able to organize numerous events for our new members.

Here are the Winter Orientation Events:

- January 8th – Night at Thomson House, Graduate Orientation Social (PGSS, CLE)
- January 11th – Discover McGill (CLE)
- January 11th – “What I Wish I’d Known Starting Grad School” Panel (CLE, PGSS paneling)
- January 12th – Trivia Night (PGSS)
- January 14th – Health Insurance Info Session (PGSS, ASEQ, Blue Cross)
- January 15th – Winter Housewarming Party (PGSS)

All of our Winter Post-Graduate Orientation Week events have been very successful and Winter Housewarming alone has drawn in over 150 students!

January and February Events

We organized a total of 17 events in January and February, excluding trivia nights which are held every second Tuesday. Our excursion trips have sold out and we have received a lot of great feedback to help us improve our trips for next year.

Here is a list of our January and February events:

- January 28th – Evening Snowshoeing on Mont Royal
- January 29th – Thomson House Scotch Night
- January 30th – Ottawa Canal Rideau and Winterlude
- February 4th – Committee Recruitment Day
- February 5th – International Board Games Night (I-Week)
- February 6th – Quebec City Winter Carnival
- February 10th – Speed Dating, Heterosexual and Queer Editions (Love Sex Week)
- February 11th – Drag and Burlesque Show (Love Sex Week)
- February 12th – Valentine’s Day Party
- February 13th – Night Snowshoeing in Val Morin
- February 26th – Ice Skating in Old Port

In February, our Love Sex Week events received a lot of attention. The Heterosexual Speed Dating event sold out in a couple of days and the participation for the Queer Speed Dating event quadrupled compared to last year. Our Drag and Burlesque Show also sold out and was received very well by our members.

The first International Board Games Night as part of I-Week

This year, I organized the first PGSS International Board Games Night for I-Week at Thomson House. We were able to offer a large selection of table top games as part of the Board Games Buffet, courtesy of The Gamer’s Guild. We also had 3 gaming experts from Randolph Gaming Pub to set up 15 unique gaming stations and to teach our members how to play them! **We received an estimate of 200 participants** for this event. The venue was always full to maximum capacity from 7pm until 12:00am with a constant turnover of participants; because of limited space, we spilled out onto the main floor of Thomson House! Participants requested this event be an annual or a semesterly event and perhaps organized during orientation.

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Data Collection

We collect data on all of your events through feedback forms sent out to participants after each event. This data provides us with valuable information regarding the success of our events, logistical improvements and overall satisfaction of participants. **We started collecting data on how many Master's, PhD and Post-Doc level members are attending our events** and this data will help us learn about our target audience and organize events tailored to underrepresented members of our society.

Peer Support for Graduate Students

For the first time, we provided Peer Support Centre Staff on site, in case some of our members felt overwhelmed, wanted to step away from an ongoing event, and talk to someone one-on-one. **We also had certified first responders from the McGill Student Emergency Response Team (MSERT) in Thomson House** during parties, to ensure all our members are partying safely. We are currently seeking collaboration with Walksafe and Drivesafe.

I also negotiated with Thomson House to reserve a space for the Peer Support Center to host one-on-one, confidential and non-judgemental Peer Support Hours at Thomson House. Graduate Students can now come to Room 403 of Thomson House, every Tuesday between 5pm and 7pm in a drop-in basis, to seek peer support.

Fall 2016 Post-Graduate Orientation

Work on planning events for Fall Post-Graduate Orientation has already begun! I have attended preliminary meetings with Campus Life and Engagement on the tentative schedule of Post-Grad Orientation events on the last week of August and first two weeks of September! **We will need a lot of volunteers to help us out this year so if you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to internal.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca**

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: Fall 2016 Post-Graduate Orientation (August 28-September 11)

We are looking for volunteers for the Fall 2016 Post-Graduate Orientation for the following teams:

1. Orientation Planning Team
2. "Ask me about PGSS" Team for Discover McGill
3. Promotion Team
4. Group Leaders for MTL Food Crawl and other events (similar to Frosh Leaders)

If you are interested, please email internal.pgss@mail.mcgill.ca to learn more about these teams. A detailed notice will be included in the upcoming Newswires.

Upcoming Events

Here are some events you can look forward to:

- March 6th – Curling at Royal Montreal Curling Club
- March 12th – Snowtubing in Valcartier
- March 17th – St. Patrick's Day Party
- April 2nd – Sugar Shack
- April 3rd – Curling at Royal Montreal Curling Club
- April 8th – Laser Tag
- May 6th – Hiking on Mont-Royal
- May 14th – Ottawa Tulip Festival

The IAC is working on planning new initiatives for April and May as well as the PGSS Summer Sports League!

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Below you will find a list of my meetings and representations since the beginning of my term in December 2015.

Meetings and Representation

Date	Meeting	Activity/Event/Description
Nov 30	Katherine Hales of CLE	Discussed Winter Orientation Week events, finalized details of Orientation Social on January 8 th
Dec 7	Administrative Coordinator Jenna McMullan	Briefing regarding PGSS social media accounts and details on designing and sending out our bi-monthly PGSS Newswire
Dec 8	Health Commissioner, HaWC and Mental Health Policy Working Group	Progress report on the development of a Mental Health Policy for the PGSS Policy Manual and its implementation. Also worked on forming a taskforce of HaWC to be dedicated to Mental Health Initiatives at PGSS.
	William Liu of Peer Support Centre	Discussed how we can increase Graduate and Post-Doc participation in the functions of the Peer Support Centre and how we can increase the presence of Peer Support in Thomson House.
Dec 14	IAC Meeting	Assigned Project Leaders to upcoming PGSS events
Dec 15	PGSS and Thomson House Staff	Met with Thomson House Manager Bliss Ward, PGSS Operations Manager Andre Pierzchala, Evening House and Bar Manager Sonia Confolent, to brief them about Winter Housewarming Party on January 15 th . Discussed event details and logistics.
Dec 16	Zhen Xu, IAC	Discussed IAC event details and responsibilities for Housewarming.
Dec 18	PGSS Student Life Coordinator	Met with Mirka Rasoanilana. Discussed details of excursion events, volunteer briefing and general procedures during off campus events.
Dec 18	PGSS Administrative Coordinator	Met with Jenna McMullan. Finalized design of printed communications for the Winter Term. Reduced number of printed materials to support the 5-year Sustainability Action Plan
Dec 18	Business Manager, PGSS Operations	Met with Business Manager Andre Pierzchala. Discussed general responsibilities of the IAO and strategies to succeed in increasing transparency within PGSS and Thomson House.
Dec 21	PGSS Newswire	
Dec 28	Business Manager	Discussed IAO Transition Report.
Dec 30	Official Transition Meeting	Met with previous IAO Sahil Kumar about the position, general responsibilities, and executive responsibilities.
Jan 4	PGSS Financial Affairs Officer	Discussed PGSS Budget and details on the re-structuring of the Events Budget in October. The current Events budget breaks even.
Jan 5	Executive Meeting	Discussed Orientation Week, the formation of a Sponsorship Committee, Motion on Public Statements, Pre-Council drop-in.
Jan 6	PGSS External Affairs Officer	Discussed PGSS' stance on Quebec student unions

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Jan 7	Appointments Board	Committee Recruitment. Review of Applications
Jan 8	Orientation Social	Over 100 new students attended winter orientation social
Jan 8	Council Speaker	Discussion on contents of Pre-Council Drop In
Jan 9	IAC Meeting	Finalizing logistics of January events
Jan 11	Discover McGill	Panelist, What I Wish I'd Known Starting Grad School Panel
Jan 12	Exec Meeting	Minutes available on pgss.mcgill.ca/documents
Jan 12	Trivia Night	Did you know that coffee plants have red fruits?
Jan 13	Council	January Council Meeting. First Council for me.
Jan 14	ASEQ, Blue Cross	Health Insurance Info Session for new students
Jan 14	TH Staff	Meeting with Operations Manager, House Manager, Evening House and Bar Manager to discuss February event logistics
Jan 15	Housewarming	PGSS Housewarming Party for over 150 attendees!
Jan 18	Newsire	January 18 Newsire
Jan 18	FAO	Budget meeting with Financial Affairs Officer
Jan 19	Counselling Service	Meeting with Dr. Martha Chamodraka and PRIDE Team regarding Love Sex Week events and LGBTQ representation at PGSS
Jan 19	McGill ICAN	Meeting with Andrea Rosevear Clegg and Adnan Mahameed regarding McGill International Community Action Network Masters in Social Work (MSW) Fellowship program and increasing exposure to ICAN's Seeds of Change Campaign for Syrian MSW Fellows
Jan 19	Executive Meeting	Closed Session
Jan 19	Caucus Meeting	Minutes available on pgss.mcgill.ca/documents
Jan 22	Executive Meeting	Closed Session
Jan 25	Student Life Coord.	Event Planning and Leader Sheet Reform : all documents redone
Jan 25	Administrative Coord.	Registration details of February events
Jan 25	TH Staff	Meeting with Operations Manager, House Manager and Evening House and Bar Manager regarding St.Patrick's Day Party at TH
Jan 26	Trivia Night	Did you know that Uranus's equator is perpendicular to it's orbit?
Jan 26	Executive Meeting	Minutes available on pgss.mcgill.ca/documents
Jan 28	Snowshoeing Mt. Royl	First snowshoeing event of the season
Jan 29	Healthy McGill	Met with Dorothy and Sophie, Healthy McGill Sexual Health Peer Educators for collaboration during #SelfCareChallenge and February 10 th tabling at TH Main Floor.
Jan 30	Ottawa Winterlude	2 busses sent to Ottawa for Canal Rideau and Winterlude Festival
Feb 1	Newsire	Busy February full of events!
Feb 1	Executive Meeting	Minutes available on pgss.mcgill.ca/documents

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Feb 2	Groove and Yoga	HaWC's first Groove and Yoga event at the McGill Gym! Full house.
Feb 4	IAC Meeting	Finalizing February event logistics, welcoming new members
Feb 4	Peer Support Centre	Met with William from Peer Support Centre and Health Commissioner on the implementation of One-on-one Peer Support hours at TH.
Feb 5	I-Week: PGSS International Board Games Night	PGSS's first ever International Board Games Night in cooperation with Randolph Gaming Pub and The Gamers' Guild. Attendance of 200 with constant turnover. Great feedback. Do this annually?
Feb 6	Quebec City Trip	Sent, 3 busses, 141 participants to Quebec City Carnival
Feb 8	Newswire Special Ed.	Love Sex Week events! An event every day!
Feb 9	Trivia Night	Do you know what a NuvaRing looks like?
Feb 9	Executive Meeting	Minutes available online at pgss.mcgill.ca/documents
Feb 10	Speed Dating	PGSS Presents Speed Dating: Heterosexual and Queer Editions, 2 events happening at the same time!
Feb 11	PGSS Drag Show	PGSS' second Drag and Burlesque Show! Sold out! Amazing! Had Peer Support Center Staff on site.
Feb 12	Valentine's Day Party	PGSS's infamous Valentines Day Party! DJs from CKUT! Had McGill Student Emergency Response Team staff on site.
Feb 13	Val Morin Trip	Sent 47 for Snowshoeing in Val Morin. Sold out!
Feb 15	Newswire	Whew! What a month!
Feb 16	Appointments Board	Reviewing applications
Feb 16	Executive Meeting	Pre-Council update.
Feb 16	Executive-Commissioner Caucus	Debate on PGSS Budget. Discussed sustainability for Environment Committee events such as Green Drinks, MUNF3C
Feb 17	Council	Photo before council. Reports were not presented due to time concerns
Feb 18	Equity Commissioner	Meeting regarding PGSS Events creating safer spaces for LGBTQ members
Feb 23	Executive Nomination Info Session	Nomination period for PGSS Executive Elections has begun! PGSS members were invited to learn more about executive positions for the upcoming mandate. Turnout was not good. Need to inform members better.
Feb 23	Trivia Night	Name one river that runs through Turkey!
Feb 24	PGSS Staff	Meeting with Jenna McMullan and Mirka Rasoanilana on Skating in Old Port event on February 26
Feb 25	IAC Leader meet-up	Meeting with Camille Juzwik on details of Skating Event.
Feb 26	CL&E, GPS, TLS	Meeting with Campus Life and Engagement (CL&E) First Year

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	Orientation Meeting	Coordinator, CL&E First Year Transitions Representative, Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies Academic Projects Officer, Teaching and Learning Services Graduate Education Officer on Fall 2016 Post-Graduate Orientation. Preliminary meeting outlining duties and tentative dates.
Feb 26	Skating in Old Port	Last chance to skate before the ice melts!
Feb 29	Newswire	March is upon us and it is nomination season!
Mar 1	Executive Meeting	Interest in 2016-2017 election nominations are low. Discussed how we can increase participation in executive nominations
Mar 1	PGSS Staff	Details on St. Patrick's Day plans and Curling on Sunday
Mar 1	CRO	Meeting with Chief Returning Officer regarding referendum and campaign regulations. Campaign Period Begins.
Mar 6	Curling	Sold out curling event at the Royal Montreal Curling Club! PGSS was invited to come back for a free, open house, curling day!
Mar 7	CRO	All candidates meeting. Briefing regarding candidate debate on March 8 th .
Mar 8	Trivia Night	Name the 3 rd US president!
Mar 8	Candidate Debate	All candidates running for office in the 2016-2017 mandate presented their platforms and answered questions. Low turnout. Video will be shared on Youtube. Mac Debate Scheduled for March 15 th .
Mar 9	IAC Meeting	Internal Affairs Committee meeting to discuss March and April events. We selected tentative dates for Fall 2016 Orientation Week events.
Mar 10	Equity Commissioner	Conference call regarding safe spaces at PGSS events
Mar 10	Equity Commissioner, External Affairs Officer and undisclosed PGSS member	Meeting regarding safe space practices during PGSS events
Mar 10	Solutions for Syria Panel	Acting as moderator during the Solutions for Syria: Perspectives for Empowering Refugees panel in Leacock 232.
Mar 11	IAC Leader meet-up	Snow Tubing in Valcartier Briefing
Mar 12	Snowtubing in Valcartier	Enjoy the biggest winter playground in North America!
Mar 14	Newswire	Referendums begin March 16 th ! Don't forget to vote!
Mar 15	Mac Debate	Candidate debate at the Mac Campus during Bagel Breakfast.
Mar 16	Council and General Meeting	Report to Council and General Meeting
Mar 17	St.Patrick's Day Party	Come to Thomson House for Green Beer and live music!

Winter Orientation Social – January 8th 2016



Winter Housewarming Party – January 15, 2016



I-Week International Board Games Night – February 5, 2016

