

Report of the Indigenous Affairs Committee  
November 14, 2018

Overview:

The Indigenous Affairs Committee is responsible for increasing visibility and advocating for increased representation and service for Indigenous students. The Indigenous Affairs Committee fulfills its mandate through demonstrations, awareness campaigns, educational conferences, and community service.

The Indigenous Affairs Committee works to enforce the SSMU Indigenous Solidarity Policy, while coordinating with Indigenous student groups to meet the needs of the Indigenous student community.

Membership:

The Indigenous Affairs Committee serves as a representative body of the Indigenous student community, with representatives from each Indigenous student group on campus. Non-Indigenous members-at-large provide allyship and aid in the mobilization of the Indigenous Affairs Committee.

Tomas Jirousek, Indigenous Affairs Commissioner, Chair of the Indigenous Affairs Committee  
Isabel Gagne, President, Desautels Indigenous Business Society  
Jocelyn Couture, Indigenous Law Association Representative  
Vanessa Racine, Co-Chair, Indigenous Students Alliance  
Catie Galbraith, Co-Chair, Indigenous Students Alliance  
Isabelle Prevost-Aubin, McGill Chapter of the American Science and Engineering Society, Representative  
Joel Grant, President, McGill Chapter of the American Science and Engineering Society  
Claire Grenier, Community Affairs Commissioner, Member-At-Large  
Jo Roy, Social Work Representative, Member-At-Large  
Kellie Angelina Aguiar, Member-At-Large  
Margot Maclaren, Member-At-Large  
Amy Edward, Indigenous Students Alliance Representative  
Anneka Anderson, Indigenous Students Alliance Representative  
Caitlin Oswald, Member-At-Large  
Manon Gentes, McGill Chapter of the American Science and Engineering Society, Representative  
Fanny Elisa Caouette, Member-At-Large  
Codey Martin, Member-At-Large

The membership of the Indigenous Affairs Committee provides consultation to the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner. The Committee also acts as a body which mobilizes with the support of members-at-large.

Meeting Dates:

September 10, September 26, October 4, October 7, October 11, October 15, October 19, October 27, November 6, November 8

This semesters events:

Cultural and Community Building:

- September 26, Medicine Walk with Elder Kanienkéha:ke Elaine Delaronde
- October 18, Rotinohson:ni: Social Songs and Dance with Knowledge Holder Kanienkéha:ke lakotennirkonrare
- November 22, The Resilience of Urban Indigenous Peoples with Nakuset, Executive Director of the Native Women's Shelter

#### Collaboration, Cultural and Community:

- First Peoples' House, Community apple picking
- First Peoples' House, Elder networking and lunches in Kahnawake
- First Peoples' House, Medicine as Making, Beading Workshops
- First Peoples' House, ImagineNATIVE conference and trip

#### Indigenous Advocacy and Activism:

- Vote Yes to the Indigenous Equity Fee
  - Indigenous Equity Fee: Information Session
- Standing with First Nations Youth- An Demonstration Protesting the Federal Government's Appeal of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Ruling regarding Compensation for First Nations Youth separated by the Child Welfare System
  - Standing with First Nations Yout: Poster Making
- Allyship and Activism: Lessons from #ChangeTheName Campaign

#### Collaboration, Academic:

- November 14, Research and Sustainability Network, Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives

The Indigenous Affairs Committee has continued in providing stable and consistent consultation to non-Indigenous partners at both the SSMU and McGill. Examples include the Indigenous Affairs Commissioners ongoing work with campus-partners in establishing and working towards the designation of "safe spaces" where Indigenous students will be able to smudge with proper ventilation and accessibility.

#### Ongoing event planning:

Intergenerational Resiliency: Overcoming Trauma, with keynote Cindy Blackstock

- March 2020, to be facilitated in collaboration with the community to integrate Indigenous vendors, Indigenous caterers, and an Indigenous art exhibition on campus.

#### Long-term Planning and Progression:

The Indigenous Affairs Committee is in the process of advocating for internal reforms which will further empower the Indigenous student community to advocate for greater support systems within both McGill and the SSMU.

These changes include fiscal autonomy, internal reforms to the relationship between Indigenous Affairs and the executive committee, and amending the Indigenous Solidarity Policy in order to facilitate a greater degree of autonomy and allyship from the SSMU.

These changes will facilitate a campaign comparable to last year's #ChangeTheName campaign. Following the successful implementation of such changes, the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner will expand the Indigenous Affairs team by hiring an Indigenous Equity Researcher, and Indigenous Affairs Campaigns Coordinator. Together, these three positions will begin the planning phase for another campaign, which will begin the Winter 2020 Semester. The campaign will be publicly launched in the fall of 2020 to coincide with McGill's bicentennial year, after a period of consultation with Indigenous stakeholders. This will include consultation with Urban Indigenous community partners, Kanienkehá:ke, and stakeholders within the McGill Indigenous community.

Broad discussions we hope to facilitate include the creation of an Indigenous studies major, the expansion of services offered by the First Peoples' House, the facilitation and promotion of Indigenous recruitment pathways, and the further implementation of Indigenous specific financial aid.

Submitted by,

Tomas Jirousek  
Indigenous Affairs Commissioner