



Mental Health Commission

Legislative Report Thursday, March 12, 2020

The following is a summary of the work conducted by the SSMU Mental Health Commissioners and the respective Mental Health Committees prior to March 13, 2020. Prepared for the Legislative Council of Student's Society of McGill University, by the SSMU Mental Health Commissioners, Olivia Frank (she/her).

1. Goals (January-May 2020):

1a Advocacy Committee

I. Implementation of Mental Health Policy

The primary goal of the advocacy committee's Fall semester was to rewrite the 2020-2023 SSMU Mental Health Three Year Plan. This policy will serve as an opportunity to create long-term goals that mental health commissioners in the future can continue to work toward, thus serving to increase accountability and continuity between school years. The policy was ratified by the SSMU Legislative Council in January of 2020. The committee is currently tracking the success of short term initiative outlined in the policy.

II. Feedback Mechanism for the Hub

Members have been disseminate the anonymous Hub feedback form. They have been gathering and interpreting student feedback in a comprehensive manner. The data from this form has been utilized by the mental health commissioner in advisory meetings to support student-led improvements in the Hub and service provision.



III. Mental Health Inclusion in Academic Material

The advocacy committee has decided to focus their Spring 2020 efforts on the intersection of mental health and academic policies on campus. As such, they have begun the research for a new classroom wellness survey that will be distributed to all undergraduate students by the end of March 2020. The goal is to better understand what makes a classroom environment safe, healthy, and conducive to the academic, physical, and mental success of students. Once collected, the data will be used to inform new procedures and policies through the Office of the Dean of Students and the Office of the Vice-Provost of Teaching and Academic Programs.

1b Outreach Committee

In light of the resignation of one of the Mental Health Commissioners, we have hired a new Mental Health Outreach Coordinator, Rhiannon Petrycka. This is a new position, put forward by the Mental Health Policy. The coordinator will be focusing on overseeing the Mental Health Outreach Committee and its initiatives.

I. Round-tables

The goal is to bring all faculty mental health commissioners together and discuss specific needs of students in each faculty, and how to address the unrepresented faculties. We aim to bring representatives from every student-led mental health initiatives and associations (Jack.Org, Peer Support Centre, SACOMSS, Queer McGill, Nightline, Queer McGill, The Union for Gender Empowerment, the Black Student Network, etc.) in order to facilitate communication and collaboration on like-minded issues.

The mental health roundtable has met on December 3, 2019, January 28, 2020 and will meet on March 11, 2020. Various initiatives taken by groups, as well as any events and projects were discussed. The roundtable also collaborated for the SSMU Winter Mental Health Action Week, where the SSMU provided a platform and additional resources to groups.

II. Video Project

The scope of this project is to help make navigating various services more accessible to students. Projects include navigating OSD, the Student Wellness Hub website, and wayfinding videos for PSC the Wellness Hub and other services. This project will be the focus of the Outreach committee this semester, with the goal to publish videos before the beginning of finals (April 2020).



1c General

I. Active Engagement

As the advocate for mental health at the SSMU, the mental health commissioner is making a concerted effort to participate in the Hub's improvement in a meaningful way through positions on the Hub Leadership Meetings, Healthy Living Annex Committee, the Student Wellness Hub Advisory Committee, the Student Health Insurance Committee etc. Currently, the main projects include the implementation of a Student Suicide and Crisis framework (note: working title) and the Keep.MeSafe campaign in collaboration with MCSS and PGSS student governments.

2. Mental Health Action Week

Mental Health Action Week was a roundtable led event series. There were events and workshops by the Law Students' Association, the Student Wellness Hub, the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (MORSL), McGill Students' Chapter of Jack.org, and the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS). The SSMU offered logistical and resource support as well as a platform for promotion. In line with the new Mental Health Policy, these weeks will be centred around elevating the events done by campus groups rather than being SSMU-led events.

3. Library De-Stress Events

During fall finals season, we organized two de-stress days (December 5 and 11) in collaboration with the McGill Library and the Healthy Living Annex. We offered coffee, tea and snacks as well as de-stress activities including art activities, board games, and mindfulness activities/de-stress stretching.

There is one planned during midterms on March 12, 2020 (12PM - 2PM) as well as for winter finals period (dates to be announced).



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4. Weekly check-in meetings with SSMU VP Student Life, Billy Kawasaki.

In our weekly meetings, we discuss our progress and keep each other accountable regarding our respective tasks. The meetings function as casual brainstorming sessions for new initiatives, such as the Keep.MeSafe campaign, and help us troubleshoot any issues that arise in our plans.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Frank
Mental Health Commissioner