

Vice-présidence (Vie étudiante) de l'AÉUM
SSMU Vice-President (Student Life)

*Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.*

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Service Overview

-  2021-02-09_MSA McGill Service Constitution.pdf

The MSA aims to be a service that brings together the Muslim community at McGill University. We cater to specific Muslim day-to-day needs that are not otherwise met on campus, such as prayer obligations, while also providing services conducive to personal and spiritual growth, such as educational classes, mental health support, charity initiatives, and social events. We work to ensure that Muslim students have a space in which they are able to feel included and supported, while having the resources to grow into more positive and proactive members of the university and society at large, all while being good ambassadors of the faith. We also aim to promote and increase the knowledge of non-Muslims within the wider McGill community about Islam and Muslims, especially during tense periods on campus, through educational classes and outreach initiatives, in hopes of fostering a more understanding and inclusive society.

- Contact Info
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Activities & Operations

- Key Activities this Semester
 - The majority of our events have been free of charge as we always strive to do, ranging from social to education events. The only times where we charged so far happened to be at Frosh and our Tremblant Hike trip where we also subsidize and offer tickets at a discounted price. We recently participated in charity week where we had numerous events, some of which were paid to send all proceeds to the charity and encourage people to donate any amount they like by having tickets start at just \$5.
- Usage/Participation statistics
 - *We primarily publicize our Service through our various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and a mailing list/newsletter. This year, we are also enhancing our website to improve its functionality and provide a central point of information for our service. Over the past year, we also started recording and uploading our classes and sermons on our youtube channel to keep it active and publicize the service.*
 - *We also attend SSMU's Activities Nights as well as keep close contact with the McGill Office for Religious and Spiritual Life (MORSL) who can refer us to interested users. As such, we also participate in various initiatives organized by the university such as*

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orientation days or Discover McGill, where we reach out to new students who are interested in our Service. We occasionally advertise on other newsletters as well whenever feasible (SSMU, MORSL, faculty associations etc). Moreover, we tend to take a moment at our big events (e.g. Halal Frosh, Friday Prayers, General Assembly, Community Dinners, etc.) to inform people of the other work that we do. Finally, we collaborate with other faith groups on campus and participate in joint panels.

- *We also started the initiative to table regularly around campus because we realize that Word of mouth outreach is one of the most effective ways to reach people.*
- **Highlights & Success**
So far, we've been able to engage the community in initiatives we call them for. For example, we were able to raise over \$8.4k for charity week and we were able to sell out marquee events/activities like our frosh, hike and big community events.
- **Challenges/Barriers Faces**
The main barrier we are currently facing is the STM Strike, which as it stands, has been forcing us to cancel some events because they would typical start and end in the evening when the strike is taking place

Finances

- Budget allocations
 - [MSA Running Budget Sheet](#)
- Previous year surplus
 - Detailed in the running budget sheet

Future Plans/Projects

- **Acquire a Larger Prayer Space (*Priority*)**

Context: Over the past few years, we've made significant efforts to address the need for a larger prayer space. We've collected data on Muslim usage across campus, engaged with the administration and SSMU, and submitted requests to different buildings and through the Library Improvement Fund. Unfortunately, our requests were not accorded the weight that we felt they deserved, given the dire need for the Muslim community. Additionally, the university faces space and budget constraints, making it difficult for us to secure a new dedicated prayer space in the immediate future. We've only been offered small, quiet spaces around campus. While these spaces are good, they do not meet our essential need for a Muslim community space that is specifically catered to our religious and communal needs. Our primary requirement is a larger space that can accommodate the growing number of students who use our service, with access to water for ablution.

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Tentative Plan:

Next 2 years:

- Track attendance patterns to highlight overcrowding and demand.
- Research and identify potential campus locations that can accommodate a larger space with necessary amenities.
- Engage with SSMU Executives (President, VP Student Life, and VP Operations) to explore the possibility of converting unused or underutilized campus spaces into a dedicated prayer area.
- Investigate larger spaces that are currently occupied but not frequently used, to determine if a switch to a prayer space could be feasible.
- Goal is to, by the end of year 2, have found a suitable space and worked out an agreement.

Year 3:

- Begin fundraising efforts for any required renovations to the new space.
- Develop a detailed transition plan for moving to the new space, considering logistics, resources, and timing.
- Oversee any required renovations and ensure the space meets student needs, including ablution facilities.

- **Increase Student Awareness on MSA services**

Context: The MSA is a relatively new service (4 years), and our operations have dramatically expanded. However, many students are still unaware of our presence and the services we offer. This year, we've made efforts to spread awareness through various tabling events at the start and during the academic year, while also collaborating with cultural clubs that have overlapping communities and strengthening our online presence

These efforts have contributed to a significant increase in student participation in our events and social media engagement. Notably, we've grown our Instagram surpassing 4,100 followers this year. Our goal is to continue spreading awareness about the MSA to be able to cater to the whole of the Muslim McGill community.

Tentative Plan:

- Continue tabling at key events such as orientation, club fairs, and major campus gatherings.
- Continue strengthening online presence by creating engaging content.

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- Continue developing collaborations with other student organizations to expand outreach efforts.
- Strengthening Core Initiatives While Expanding Engagement

Context: Over the years, we have significantly expanded our events and initiatives to better serve the Muslim student community. From our Muslim friendly Frosh to educational classes, social events, community dinners, volunteering initiatives, charity fundraisers, online community servers and weekly gatherings, our services have grown to engage a wider audience. We want to continue providing these services at the same standard while striving to increase in quality, sustainability and engagement.

Tentative Plan:

- Foster a stronger sense of community, by providing more creative and engaging events that allow members to meet new people, build relationships, and feel connected.
- Regularly gather community feedback on desired events.
- Leverage social media to boost engagement by posting teasers, reels, live streams, interactive stories, etc.