

Constitution of the Music Graduate Students' Society

Last updated September 14, 2017

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall be: The Music Graduate Students' Society (MGSS), hereinafter referred to as: The MGSS.

Article II – Objectives

2a: McGill University collects Student Life Fund fees from MGSS members. The Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University (hereafter referred to as PGSS) distributes money from the Student Life Fund to the MGSS. The MGSS Executive Council (see Article 4) will decide how the money MGSS receives from the Student Life Fund is spent according to the interests of the MGSS membership, following the rules and regulations of the PGSS.

2b: The MGSS Executive Council will organize and run events on behalf of the MGSS membership. These will include the annual Symposium, a General Assembly each semester, and social events during Orientation Week at the beginning of the Fall term. Other past events have included the following (note that future councils will create new events as well):

- The Event Series (events that may be proposed by any MGSS member according to the guidelines given in Article 6d).
- “The Library: After Hours” Open-mic Concert Series
- Workshops, which may be held jointly under the auspices of the Doctoral Colloquium Series.

2c: The MGSS will represent the interests its members (see Article 3).

Article III – Membership

All graduate students currently registered in the Schulich School of Music are members of this Society. In accordance with PGSS membership, this includes Post-Doctoral students but does not include Licentiate students. The MGSS shall not discriminate in any way deemed unlawful or inappropriate by the PGSS constitution, or McGill University policies.

Article IV – Officers of the Executive Council

4a: The Officers of the MGSS shall be referred to collectively as the Executive Council. These Officers include the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Symposium Chair, a Member-at-Large, a number of PGSS Representatives (the number is subject to change depending on how PGSS Council sets council membership), Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill Delegate (hereafter referred to as AGSEM and “AGSEM Music Research Delegate”), and a Representative each for the Department of Music Research (“Research Representative”) and the Department of Performance (“Performance Representative”).

4b: The Executive Council shall hold office for one year. An annual turnover of the Executive Council will take place no later than May 31 at which time the newly elected Officers will assume the responsibilities and duties of their positions as detailed in article 4f. Officers of the Executive Council may be re-elected if they choose to run for office again and are re-elected by the members of the MGSS in accordance with Article 9.

4c: All Officers of the Executive Council are required to attend meetings called by the President. Absences are excusable with prior notice via email. Otherwise, three consecutive unexcused absences will be grounds for forced resignation upon a unanimous vote by the Executive Council.

4d: Quorum at Executive Council meetings shall be 50 percent of Officers of the Executive Council. A co-officer pair (see Article 4e) counts as one person for the purposes of calculating quorum at Executive Council meetings.

4e: Two people may share the duties of an Executive Council Officer position if they run for the position together and are elected. A co-officer pair has only one vote for each matter voted upon by the Executive Council or any other committee(s) where the co-officer pair has voting privileges. If the two co-officers sharing a position disagree on a matter to be voted on, they must abstain from voting. Only one person in any co-officer pair is required to attend meetings within the portfolio of the Executive Officer position the pair holds (see Article 4f).

4f: The duties of the Officers shall be as follows:

All positions: Attend periodic MGSS Executive Council meetings (scheduled on an ad hoc basis depending on need); make and vote on motions regarding MGSS policies, spending, and events; brainstorm new initiatives that would benefit the music graduate community such as workshops and events.

President: Call and run MGSS Executive Council meetings and General Assemblies including drafting the agendas; oversee relations with the Schulich School of Music and PGSS; meet periodically with the Dean and Director of Graduate Studies as needed; attend select events (e.g. Orientation) and deliver short speeches when needed; manage the Special Projects Fund (discretionary) applications (see Article 12); verify that assigned tasks are carried out; attend and vote on non-confidential matters at monthly meetings of the Faculty Council of the Schulich School of Music, representing the needs and interests of all music graduate students at McGill; attend meetings of the Academic Committee on Teaching and Programs (ACTP) of the Schulich School of Music as a non-voting member on an as-needed basis; oversee the election process for Officers of the Executive Council for the following year.

Vice-President: Chair the Event Series Sub-Committee, which is charged with initiating and determining suitable events and then organizing, advertising, and executing them; assume the duties of the president in the president's absence; organize annual orientation/welcome events the week before classes begin.

Secretary: Keep minutes of MGSS Executive Council meetings and General Assembly, distribute them at least one week prior to the subsequent Executive Council meeting or General Assembly, and pass them to the webmaster to be posted on the MGSS website; schedule MGSS meetings at the President's request; create any kind of documents needed for the MGSS Executive (e.g. letters, forms); archive records of MGSS activities and ensure a transfer of these records to the next Secretary; check the MGSS email at least once every two days; assist the President in organizing elections for Officers of the Executive Council for the following year; respond to email inquiries and forward email information to graduate students within two days of receipt. The email password may be given to other members of the executive to facilitate frequent access of emails.

Treasurer: Maintain a bank account for the use of the MGSS; keep a spreadsheet with all MGSS expenses; maintain records of all transactions (as hard copies of receipts); check the MGSS mailbox; correspond with the Student Life Coordinator of the PGSS to ensure that all events meet with the approval of the PGSS, to request funds, and submit copies of all receipts; submit the previous year's approved budget to the Student Life Coordinator within two weeks of its approval and draft a prospective budget for the following year that will be approved at the last General Assembly of the year; ensure all financial accounts and records are transferred to the next Treasurer of the MGSS.

PGSS Representatives: Attend one meeting of the PGSS Council per month; discuss and vote on issues affecting the PGSS as a whole, representing the needs and interests of all graduate students within the Schulich School of Music.

AGSEM Music Research Delegate: Attend delegate council and general assemblies of the AGSEM; discuss and vote on issues affecting the AGSEM as a whole, representing the needs and interests of all AGSEM members who are members of the MGSS; fulfill the duties as articulated in the AGSEM constitution. This is a non-voting position.

[Department of] Performance Representative: One graduate student belonging to the Department of Performance; the Performance Representative is required to attend the monthly meetings of the Schulich School of Music's Department of Performance Graduate Sub-Committee, voting on non-confidential matters and representing the needs and interests of all graduate students in the Department of Performance; sit on the MGSS Event Series Committee (see Article 6d); attend meetings of the Schulich School of Music's Academic Committee on Teaching and Programs (ACTP) as a non-voting member on an as-needed basis; in collaboration with the President, communicate regularly with student Area Representatives and faculty Area Chairs to ensure agreements on how often and in what capacity students will attend area meetings; encourage Performance student Area Representatives to solicit feedback, suggestions, and ideas from students their area. One semester in advance, in coordination with the Music Undergraduate Student Association (MUSA), the Performance Representative must decide with MUSA upon the dates of the online practice-room sign-up period that will be in effect for the semester to come. At the beginning of the next semester, the Performance Representative (or the incoming Representative in Fall semester) will notify graduate students of the process and its deadlines through the gradstudents@music.mcgill.ca listserv.

[Department of Music] Research Representative: One graduate student belonging to the Department of Music Research; the Research Representative is required to attend meetings of the Schulich School's Music Research Graduate Sub-Committee, voting on non-confidential matters and representing the needs and interests of all graduate students in the Department of Research; sit on the MGSS Event Series Committee (see Article 6d); attend meetings of the Schulich School of Music's Academic Committee on Teaching and Programs (ACTP) as a non-voting member on an as-needed basis; in collaboration with the President, communicate regularly with student Area Representatives and faculty Area Chairs to ensure agreements on how often and in what capacity students will attend area meetings; encourage Research student Area Representatives to solicit feedback, suggestions, and ideas from students their area.

Member-at-Large: The Member at Large has no official function within the MGSS structure other than to be present and vote at Executive Council meetings, contribute to discussion and debate, and participate on task forces or special committees if and/or when needed. The extent to

which the Member at Large is involved in various special committees and event planning is dependent on the structure of the current year's council. In past years, the Member at Large participated mostly in event planning committees such as end-of-term parties, general assembly food planning, and the organization of a small reception (snacks and coffee) after each Doctoral Colloquium.

Symposium Chair: The role of the Symposium Chair is to head the organization of the annual MGSS Symposium. This is a prestigious event which includes a keynote address delivered by a respected university professor or a senior member of the world-wide community of music research, as well as student presentations given by students from both inside and outside of McGill. The main responsibilities include: managing the call for papers and correspondence, organizing and liaising with the keynote speaker, assuring all rooms and facilities are available, booking travel and accommodation, maintaining the Symposium website, and producing the content for the programmes and other publicity.

The Symposium Chair is also responsible for assembling a team of volunteers to help with tasks such as catering, budget, posters and printing, and putting together a blind reading panel who will choose the abstracts for the conference. Work on this project starts around October in preparation for the Symposium in March. The Symposium chair is a voting member of the MGSS executive committee and participates in all meetings and in other events.

All things that are not mentioned here shall fall to the Executive Council.

Article V – Area Representatives, Committee Representatives, and other non-Executive positions

5a: It may be possible for an Executive Council member to fulfil a non-executive position defined in this article (e.g., a PGSS Representative may double as the Webmaster).

5b: Two people may share the duties of an Area Representative, Committee Representative, or other non-Executive position if they run for the position together and are elected. A pair sharing the duties of a position has only one vote for each matter voted upon by committee(s) granting voting privileges to that position. If the people sharing a position disagree on a matter to be voted on, they must abstain from voting. Only one person in any pair is required to attend meetings within the portfolio of the position the pair holds (see Article 5c).

5c: The following positions will be elected but will not be considered part of the Executive Council:

- i. **Area Representatives:** These positions require representatives to attend and vote on non-confidential matters in faculty meetings for their respective areas. Area Representatives are expected to keep in regular contact with students in their areas, relay input from other students to the faculty in their respective areas, and vote to reflect the needs and interests of all graduate students within their respective areas. The elected representative is responsible for notifying their area that they are serving in this capacity and asking to be informed about area meetings. There are representatives for the following areas:
Music Technology, Composition, Musicology, Music Theory, Sound Recording, Strings, Brass, Winds, Percussion, Piano, Voice, Organ/Church Music, Jazz, Music Education, Early Music, Conducting

- ii. **Committee Representatives:** These positions require representatives to attend and vote on non-confidential matters in meetings of standing committees of Faculty Council of the Schulich School of Music. Committee Representatives are expected to relay input from other music graduate students to their committees and vote to reflect the needs and interests of all graduate students within the Schulich School of Music. The President of MGSS shall be responsible for notifying the organizers of these committees when a student representative is elected to serve on the committee. There are representatives for the following committees:

The Library Advisory Committee, the Academic Committee on Teaching and Programs, the Concert Committee

- iii. **Other non-Executive positions:**

Webmaster: Maintain a publicly available list of “Executive Councils and Representatives”; keep a current list of all MGSS-related positions and the individuals who fill them; post minutes and other relevant documents to the website; attend Executive Council meetings; assist the Symposium Chair(s) with posting the call for papers and schedule online. (as per Article 5 a).

5c: The Executive Council may appoint MGSS members to form a sub-committee separate from the Council, tasked with a specific goal (e.g., managing Event Series applications).

Article VI – MGSS Sub-Committees

6a: The Executive Council may appoint MGSS members to form a sub-committee separate from the Council, tasked with a specific goal (e.g., managing Event Series applications).

6b: Unless the Executive Council decides otherwise, at least one member of an MGSS sub-committee should be from the Executive Council in order to report sub-committee activities during meetings of the Executive.

6c: The chair of newly formed sub-committees will be appointed by the President.

6d: The Event Series Sub-Committee will be an annually formed sub-committee whose mandate will be to initiate, organize, advertise, and execute events for the MGSS membership. The Vice-President chairs the Event Series Sub-Committee, and the membership includes the Vice-President, the Performance Representative, one graduate student volunteer from the Department of Performance, and one graduate student volunteer from the Department of Research. The Event Series differs from the Special Projects Fund in that the Event Series sponsors events run by the MGSS while the Special Projects Fund helps partially fund events not run by the MGSS (see Article 12).

Article VII – Finances and membership fees

7a: McGill University shall collect Student Life Fund fees from MGSS members on behalf of the MGSS.

7b: In addition, the MGSS shall seek funding directly from the PGSS in accordance with that body’s funding guidelines, if deemed necessary. This happens annually with funding applications for the MGSS Symposium.

7c: The fiscal year of the MGSS shall begin with each turnover of the Executive (see Article 4b).

7d: The MGSS shall maintain a chequing account with two joint signing officers, the Treasurer and the President. The MGSS President shall forward the name and contact information of these two (2) signing officers to the PGSS Student Life Coordinator no later than September 30th after the start of the fiscal year.

7e: Budgets and financial statements shall be presented and approved by a majority vote in favour at MGSS General Assemblies (see Article 8): at the Fall term General Assembly, the prospective budget for the current fiscal year shall be presented, amended as needed, and approved, and the previous year's financial statement shall be presented; at the Winter term General Assembly, the final financial statement for the ending fiscal year shall be presented and approved, and a prospective budget for the new fiscal year shall be presented, amended as needed, and approved. The newly elected or re-elected President shall forward the approved budget and final annual financial statement of the previous financial year to the PGSS Student Life Coordinator no later than September 30th.

Article VIII – General Assemblies

8a: There shall be at least one General Assembly of the MGSS per semester. The Executive may call to order more than one General Assembly per semester if necessary.

8b: The General Assembly shall be called by decision of the MGSS Executive Council.

8c: Members of the MGSS outside of the Executive Council may call to order a General Assembly in special circumstances through a petition containing 15% of the membership of the MGSS.

8d: Notice of a General Assembly shall be given at least one week before the meeting.

8e: Quorum for the General Assembly shall be 7% of the membership of the MGSS. MGSS members who are present at the General Assembly but abstain from voting cannot be counted towards quorum.

8f: All motions shall be passed upon a simple majority of 50% + 1 vote, except amendments to the MGSS Constitution which are detailed in Article XI of this Constitution.

Article IX – Elections for Executive and non-Executive positions

9a: Elections for Executive Council Officers shall be held once per year, with results of the election disseminated to MGSS members no later than the last day of the Winter semester. Results for the Executive Council elections shall be forwarded to PGSS Student Life Coordinator by the President within two weeks of the end of elections.

9b: Elections for Area Representatives, Committee Representatives, and other non-Executive positions shall be held once per year in the Fall semester before the end of October.

9c: Prior to any election, MGSS shall advertise a nomination period of at least one week's duration.

9d: Any member of the MGSS may nominate him or herself to run for an open position or may nominate another MGSS member. MGSS shall notify all nominees of their nomination when the nomination period has ended, giving nominees at least 48 hours to accept or decline their nomination. Upon accepting a nomination, the nominee becomes an official candidate in the election. On-the-spot nominations are permissible if voting occurs during a General Assembly.

9e: MGSS elections will ordinarily use the online voting system provided by PGSS, which shall be open for voting for at least 72 weekday hours. Alternatively, secret ballots can be used during the General Assembly which shall be counted in the presence of at least two other non-candidate members.

9f: MGSS members shall vote on each position separately; slates of candidates to fill multiple positions are not permitted. MGSS members may vote in favour of only one candidate or co-candidate pair per open position, or may abstain from voting.

9g: Quorum for elections shall be 7% of the membership of the MGSS. Votes of abstention do not count towards quorum.

9h: The candidate or co-candidate pair earning a simple majority of votes for any given position wins the election. In the event of a tie, a re-election will be conducted where MGSS members are asked to vote for one of the tying candidates or co-candidate pair(s).

9i: Vacancies during the course of the year shall be filled with a by-election following the regular election procedure. This shall take place after the first General Assembly.

9j: Interim Executive Council Officers may be appointed by the MGSS President to fulfil urgent duties but may not hold office for more than one month without being elected in a by-election or at the next General Assembly.

9k: Any Executive Council Officer or person holding a non-Executive position may resign at any time by providing email notice to the entire Executive Council.

9l: The resignation of an MGSS Executive Council Officer or a person holding a non-Executive position may be forced through a unanimous vote (minus the person in question) of the Executive Council.

9m: Censure: The Executive Council may issue a warning before voting to force a resignation. This is optional, however, not required.

Article X – Affiliation

10a: The MGSS shall be affiliated with the PGSS as outlined in the PGSS Constitution.

10b: The MGSS may choose to be affiliated with other bodies as its membership sees fit, following a majority vote in favour at a General Assembly.

Article XI – Adoption and amendments

11a: Amendments to the MGSS constitution shall be ratified by open ballot at a General Assembly and shall pass by a 2/3 majority of those present.

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

11c: Any changes to the constitution shall be forwarded by the President to the PGSS Student Life Coordinator within one (1) month of their ratification.

Article XII – Special Projects Fund

12a: The MGSS Special Projects Fund helps fund events not run by the MGSS Executive Council. Grants from the Fund are intended for events and projects instigated by MGSS members that primarily benefit other music graduate students.

12b: The Special Projects Fund is administered by the Executive Council of the MGSS according to the interests of the MGSS members, following the rules and regulations of the PGSS (see Article 2a).

12c: The Executive Council manages the allocation of funding for projects in the current fiscal year, which shall begin with each turnover of the Executive (see Article 7c).

12d: The proportion of the MGSS budget committed to the Special Projects Fund shall be decided by the Executive Council, which will be presented and approved by a majority vote in favour at MGSS General Assemblies (see Article 7e).

12e: Any member of MGSS (see Article 3) may apply for the Special Projects Fund. Applicants must fill out the “MGSS Special Projects Fund Application,” available electronically on the MGSS website and by request. Applications must be submitted a minimum of 21 days before the start date of the event or activity. Late applications will not be considered.

12f: Applications for the Special Projects Fund are reviewed on a monthly basis at Executive Council meetings. In the instance of a project occurring before the Executive Council can convene, the President will call a meeting out of necessity so long as quorum can be met (see Article 4d). In the event of a Special Projects Fund application received during the Summer months, the application will be reviewed at an August meeting.

12g: Unless in special circumstances, no more than \$250 will be awarded to an individual event or project. Projects may be partially or fully funded.

12h: The MGSS Executive Council will not review applications to the Special Project Fund for events or activities that have already taken place.

12i: All funding for the Special Project Fund is provided to projects in the form of reimbursement of expenses. Successful applicants of approved projects are required to submit original receipts to the MGSS Treasurer for all requisitioned expenditures.

Article XIII - Policy Statement

The Music Graduate Students’ Society (MGSS) declares its opposition to all forms of discrimination—including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia—and endorses the PGSS Policy Statement on Equity and Diversity.¹

We recognize that historically and/or presently certain groups are systematically marginalized and denied access to full participation in the disciplines of music research and performance. These include, but are not limited to: women, Indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, people of colour, ethnic minorities whose first language is neither English nor French, and people of underprivileged socio-economic status. The MGSS is committed to promoting a faculty culture that supports the pursuit of a range of intellectual endeavours representative of the pluralistic nature of its membership.

13.a: The MGSS encourages the participation of students from diverse backgrounds and experiences in its Executive and committee membership with a view to broadening the scope of ideas and perspectives that contribute to our community.

¹ [https://pgss.mcgill.ca/document/view/1141/PGSS Society Policy Manual.pdf](https://pgss.mcgill.ca/document/view/1141/PGSS%20Society%20Policy%20Manual.pdf)

13.b: The MGSS will endeavour through the usual course of its operations:

i. To strive to ensure MGSS events are as widely accessible as possible, using the PGSS Equity Checklist as a guideline,

To ensure MGSS events are as widely accessible as possible, using the PGSS Equity Checklist as a guideline,

ii. To actively support projects that aim to end discrimination or to promote diversity and equity at the Schulich School of Music.

iii. Not to affiliate or collaborate with organizations known to promote or engage in unjust discriminatory practices.