Welcome Month Q&A

Graduate Student Association (GSA) – a non-for-profit organization at McMaster University

Wednesday, September 8th, 2021
2:00 PM
Mission

McMaster University’s GSA advocates for the needs of the collective, acts as a resource, and provides support and services that improve the graduate student experience.
Who is the GSA?
Founded in 1970 by graduate students

- We are a non-for-profit organization on campus that represents graduate students at McMaster University.
- A common misconception: We are not part of University administration, instead we are a group of elected students and employees that work on behalf of graduate students.
- The GSA Executives are graduate students that are elected each year in March.
- There are two staff that keep the GSA running with consistency every year.
- We run the Phoenix Bar & Grill house on campus – this is the local spot for graduate students to hang out!
- Please see our new website for more details about who is part of our team: [https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/our-people/current-people/](https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/our-people/current-people/)
This is us!

Caroline Seiler,  
GSA President  
PhD Candidate (Medical Science)

Spencer Naylor,  
GSA VP Administration  
PhD Candidate (Political Sciences)

Shuwen Qian,  
GSA VP Internal  
PhD Candidate (Biochemistry)

Wei Zhao,  
GSA VP Services  
PhD Candidate (Computer Science)

Sarah Elshahat,  
GSA VP External  
PhD Student (Anthropology)

Mona Mohammed  
Admin. Assistant  
(Staff)

Ashley Ravenscroft  
Director of Operations  
(Staff)

Please see our new website for our contact information!
What does the GSA do for you?
Located in the Rathskeller Building

- Supplies Health & Dental insurance via Studentcare
- Supplies the HSR Bus Pass
- Runs the Phoenix Bar & Grill on campus
- Runs Welcome Week activities
- Runs academic workshops
- Runs social events & trips
- Provides awards, bursaries, and financial aid
- Oversees grad student clubs
- Communicates with other Graduate Student bodies across Canada
- Advocates for you!
  - Contact macgsa@mcmaster.ca for any questions
Health & Dental Plan
Provided by Studentcare

- Coverage is Sept 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2021 to Aug 31\textsuperscript{st}, 2022
- Health Plan: $217.00
- Dental Plan: $199.47
- If you have Dental coverage by CUPE 3906, your dental fee will be automatically refunded
- If you already have health & dental coverage, you can opt out from Sept 3-30\textsuperscript{th}
- Refunds will be deposited in mid-December
- Go to http://studentcare.ca/ or email macgsa@mcmaster.ca for further details
Empower Me – Mental Health
Provided by Studentcare

- Empower Me is a 24/7, 365 day per year, multilingual, culturally sensitive, general inclusive resource that connects you with counsellors, consultants, and life coaches
- As a GSA member, you are entitled to sessions delivered by telephone, video-counselling, or e-counselling
- Check out this website for more details:
Dialogue – Virtual Healthcare
Provided by Studentcare

• Dialogue is a telemedicine platform that provides fast 24/7 unlimited health-care access to licensed professionals, including physicians, nurses, and care coordinators who assist with complete navigation of the health care system.

• As a GSA member, you are entitled to sessions through the app, including video-counselling, or e-counselling

• Check out this website for more details: https://www.dialogue.co/en/

• There will be a vote later this year to choose whether to keep this!
HSR Bus Pass
Provided by Hamilton Street Railway (HSR)

- Unlimited use of Hamilton buses from Sept 2021 to Aug 2022
- Can get using instructions & code on Mosaic (use old website)
- Cost: $288.55
- Those outside of HSR service area should contact macgsa@mcmaster.ca to find out if they can opt-out
Phoenix Restaurant
Running since 1969!

• The GSA owns and operates the Phoenix restaurant and bar
• The Phoenix is currently open Tuesday to Saturday
  o Check out PhoenixMcMaster.com to learn more!
  o Join us for Trivia and Taps & Tales (also VIRTUAL!)

The Phoenix
Craft House & Grill
Est. 1969
Phoenix Restaurant
Running since 1969!

- Largest patio in the city of Hamilton!
- FREE pitcher for successful thesis defendees!
  - Be sure to sign their book to leave your Phoenix Legacy!
Upcoming GSA Welcome Week Events…

*GSA Welcome Week 2021!*

- Aug 28\textsuperscript{th} to Sept 28\textsuperscript{th}: Sciences GSA Scavenger Hunt
- Wednesday, Sept 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2:00-3:00 PM, GSA Welcome Presentation & Q&A Session
- Wednesday-Friday, Sept 8-10\textsuperscript{th}, GSA Grad Essentials Workshops
- Friday, Sept 10\textsuperscript{th}, 4:00-5:30 PM, In-person Campus Tour
- Tuesday, Sept 14\textsuperscript{th}, 6:00-7:00 PM, Trivia Night
- Wednesday, Sept 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2:00-5:00 PM, Phoenix BBQ
- Thursday, Sept 16\textsuperscript{th}, 5:00-6:00 PM, GSA Welcome Yoga Session
- Monday, Sept 27\textsuperscript{th}, 1:00-4:00 PM: GSA Resource Fair & Club Fest

Watch out for…

- Welcome Week Videos
- Online Swag Bags
GSA Academic & Professional Workshops

Look for these opportunities in our newsletter & social media!

• Leadership workshop series, with Ms. Cate Walker Hammond

Watch out for…

• Mental Health, Student/Supervisor Relationship, Financial check-up
• Workshops by Faculty Associations:
  o Engineering Graduate Society:
    • Programming workshops in LaTeX, Python, and MATLAB
  o Health Sciences Graduate Student Federation:
    • Science Communication 6-part workshop series

• … And more!
GSA Social Events/Programs

*The GSA hosts multiple social events during the year*

- Limited events/programs will also be in-person for Fall 2021
- Online events/initiatives this semester include:
  - McMaster Fun & Comfy Zone
  - Multi-cultural event
  - Grad Café sessions
- In-person events/programs this semester include:
  - Trivia nights
  - Gardening for Wellness Program
- To give us ideas on events you want, join the Social Events & Trips Planning Committee (contact gsavpext@mcmaster.ca to join!)
Financial Aid & Funding

*The GSA provides awards, bursaries, and financial aid to students*

- The GSA provides many awards for students, including:
  - Therese Quigley Award of Excellence for Graduate Student Leadership in Athletics
  - Mary Keyes Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to McMaster
  - GSA Keith Leppmann Teaching Assistant Excellence Award
  - GSA Millennium Award for Community Service
  - Travel Awards
    - These can be applied for online conferences
  - Tuition-relief for students delayed by COVID-related shutdowns (in development).
- Learn more & apply to our awards here:
  - [https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/gsa-funding/funding-overview/](https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/gsa-funding/funding-overview/)
GSA Clubs

*The GSA has over 25 clubs & associations that you can join*

- The GSA supports grad student clubs and associations on campus, including…
  - Women In Science & Engineering (WISE)
  - Chinese Graduate Students Club
  - Exercise is Medicine Club
  - McMaster Political Science GSA
  - … and more!
  - Check out this link for the full list and contact information to join: https://gsa.mcmaster.ca/get-involved/clubs/
Advocacy

The GSA represents you when meeting with various organizations!

- The GSA works with…
  - University Administration
  - Hamilton Service Railway (Bus Pass)
  - CUPE 3906 (TA & RA Union)
  - Student associations across Canada (via ThinkGrad)

Connect with us to share your ideas to make student life better for you on campus,

- Questions about current services?
- Suggestions for changing current services?
- Other organizations you want services from?
Questions?

Thanks for listening!
Mona Mohamed
Administrative Assistant
macgsa@mcmaster.ca