



PHGSA/AÉDSP Annual Report

ISSUE #5, SUMMER 2014

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

“Welcome PhD Cohort 2014!” Happy Hour Series

- Thursday Aug 21 2014 – 16:30 at Cafe Nostalgica (603 Cumberland St)
- Thursday Sept 4 2014 – 16:30 at the Royal Oak Pub (161 Laurier Ave E)
- Thursday, Sept 18 2014 – 16:30 at the Lunenburg Pub (14 Waller St)

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Introducing PHGSA/AÉDSP Annual Report

The PHGSA/AÉDSP has issued an [annual newsletter](#) each summer for the past three years. This year we are trying something new for reflecting on the 2013-2014 academic year, which we hope is simpler and briefer. Rather than soliciting members and pop health researchers for articles, we have decided to devote this space to report back to you on the major events and updates from the year.

The work outlined in these pages is the result of the collective efforts of your [executive members](#), including Yannick Fortin (president), Tanya Hewitt (treasurer), and the rest of the

general executive members. Current general executive members serving are Reed Beall, Rosanne Blanchet, Rodrigue Deuboue, and Rania Al Dweik. Four executive members (Flora Nassrallah, James Crispo, Caroline Babin, and Patience Ambe) served during the 2013-2014 academic year, but have since announced resignations due to graduations or to devote more focus to other things.

In particular, we'd like to thank Flora Nassrallah for four years of outstanding service as President of this organization and we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

We'd also like to recognize James Crispo for his two and a half years of service and for establishing so many initiatives and other infrastructure that we now rely upon, especially in the area of technology (e.g., our website, Evernote account, email account). We wish him the best going forward!

We are currently looking for new executive members for the 2014-2015 academic year! If you are interested, please email us at phgsa.aedsp@uottawa.ca.

We hope you enjoy this year's edition of the annual report and look forward to serving you in the coming year!

Pop Health Peer-to-Peer Program

In the summer of 2013, the PHGSA took on the initiative to create a mentorship program to help new students transition into the life of a doctoral student at the University of Ottawa. To help us craft the program, we met with a member of the University of Ottawa's Student Academic Success Service (SASS) and we were able to obtain documentation for our student mentors. We then surveyed all new incoming students to gauge interest in the initiative

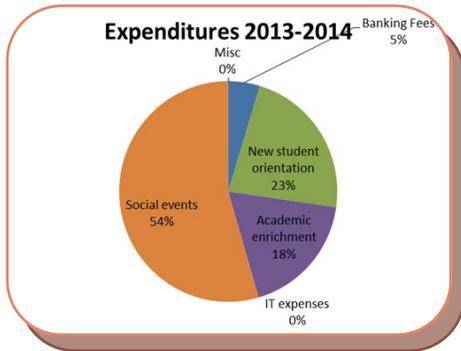
and matched everyone who agreed to a senior student. In a recent survey on the value of the program, we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from those who had a chance to interact with a mentor. In the coming year, we hope to implement a new version of the program where senior students and those from the new cohort can build relationships in a more organic manner through participation in weekly social events.

Continuing in this spirit, this year we are holding three happy hours with food to welcome the 2014 cohort. We hope you will join us!

Here are the details:

- Thursday Aug 21 2014 – 16:30 at Cafe Nostalgica (603 Cumberland St)
- Thursday Sept 4 2014 – 16:30 at the Royal Oak Pub (161 Laurier Ave E)
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PHGSA/AÉDSP Budget and Spending



The PHGSA receives money from GSAED in accordance with the number of students enrolled in the programmes the PHGSA covers. Two cheques of a little over \$400 each were received in the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014.

We spent \$996.09 in the school year 2013/14. A rough breakdown of the expenditures is shown. For more detailed information, please contact the treasurer of the PHGSA for 2013/14, Tanya Hewitt, at thewi025@uottawa.ca.

Cohort 2013 Orientation Week

To greet the incoming PhD students, the PHGSA gave a presentation at the orientation session. The executive introduced themselves and a

bit about what they had done on the PHGSA. The website <http://phgsa.ca/> was presented, tickets for the GSAED boat cruise were distributed, and all

were encouraged to take part in the GSAED BBQ on the lawn of Tabaret Hall.

Scholarship Application Session

Current Pop Health students have had quite a bit of success applying for major scholarships, including the OGS, CHIR, and Vanier awards. On September 17th 2013 (timed well with respect to application deadlines), we brought four of these students who

have had recent success to share tips on what strategies they used to win these competitive awards in an interactive, panelist format. One panelist had even served as a reviewer on scholarship applications, and as

such, was able to provide her perspective on both sides of the application process. The session generated lively discussion, was well attended, and was considered successful. Depending on demand from the 2013 and 2014 cohorts, this session will be offered again this fall.

Cohort 2013 Comprehensive Exam Preparations

Taking the comprehensive exam is a rite of passage in many doctoral studies and this is certainly the case in the Population Health program. Following a request from the 2013 cohort, the PHGSA assembled a small group of students that had previously passed the comprehen-

sive exam to share their experience with the new cohort. During the hour long session, successful students proposed study strategies, talked about how they survived the exam, and gave words of encouragement to those set to take the exam next. The new cohort asked

many questions and got the perspective of senior students. The session was a success and we have little doubt that the 2013 cohort will give a stellar performance on their upcoming exam this September.

2013 GSAED Boat Cruise

GSAED organized a boat cruise on the Ottawa River for graduate students as part of Welcome Week in Sept 2013. The PHGSA bought 15 tickets for use for PHGSA members, principally to welcome the new cohort. Music, dancing and finger foods made the party on the water a great

way to get to know one another. The dance floor was absolutely dominated by pop health students in an unprecedented and awe inspiring fashion and we hope to do it again this year. It was a super start to the school year!



Pop Health Movie Screenings

The PHGSA organized students to go to two movie screenings. Students saw "Inequity for All" at the Bytowne Theatre about income inequality in the United States during the winter semester. Students also attended a screening during the summer semester that was organized by Doctors without Borders at the Mayfair Theatre. The film was called "Fire in the Blood" and was about the politics behind the dis-

semination of HIV/AIDS drugs over the past 15 years and disputes over intellectual property and pricing. This event was well attended by pop health students from all cohorts as well as a few faculty members. A lively discussion followed with Doctors without Borders experts working on the global campaign for HIV/AIDS medicines access.

GSAED Grad Ball

The GSAED grad ball was held March 15 2014 at the Chateau Laurier, with a 20's theme. The PHGSA subsidized the price of the tickets for PHGSA grad students and a guest. Six grad students (most with guests) enjoyed an evening of excellent food, swing dancing les-

sons, and a DJ., etc.) . This event is not to be missed! If the event is offered in the coming academic year, we strongly recommend attending. Don't miss out!



PHGSA/AÉDSP Volleyball Team



The PHGSA registered for the first time a volleyball team to the Fall 2013 intramurals league at the University of Ottawa. This activity led by PHGSA member Rodrigue Deuboué was initiated to encourage students and researchers interaction outside the classroom, office or even facul-

ties! It was a great success as participants were from 3 different population health cohorts and faculties. More such activities should be implemented in the future. The team has some success, even making it to the first round of playoffs!



PHGSA/AÉDSP Holiday Party

An end of fall semester holiday party was held on Dec 13 2014 at the Fish Market Restaurant in the Bytown market. Approximately 20 guests attended, which was the highest turn out for a PHGSA event

of the year. Tickets were paid for in advance, and the PHGSA subsidized the price for the lunch. Choices of appetizer, entrée and dessert ensured that all left the venue not only with full bellies, but

with satisfaction of a semester well done and looking forward to the holidays. We hope to continue this tradition in the coming year.

PHGSA/AÉDSP Advocacy Efforts

The 2013-14 academic year was a busy time for advocacy at the PHGSA. Here are some highlights:

The Faculty of Medicine proposed to take over governance of the PhD programme from the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral studies in summer of 2013 without consulting students about this decision (note: the programme is still under the FGPS). The Association wrote and met with the Faculty of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies to insist that students as major stakeholders be included in any decision making concerning the future of the PhD Population Health programme's major stakeholders. The senior administration of the FGPS agreed to keep us in the loop.

Last December, the PHGSA was informed by IPH scientists that the University is considering closing of the

Institute. As students and future researchers in the field of population health, the Association worked with the graduate student representative on the Senate and attended a Senate meeting along with IPH researchers. We spoke about our issue directly with the president of the University, Mr. Allan Rock, who assured us we would receive advance notifications of motions concerning the IPH. Additionally, after consulting members, we wrote and delivered a letter to the Senate highlighting the value of the IPH for population health students, and our position that the IPH should be retained.

The PHGSA also attended every monthly meeting held by the University of Ottawa Graduate Student Association (GSAED) during 2013-14 session. At such meetings, the PHGSA voted on your behalf to support our interests. In one in-

stance, we were part of a group of program representative who defeated a motion that would have reduced the amount of reimbursement funding available for those attending conferences.

Each year, at least one PHGSA member sits on the Population Health PhD program committee, giving us the opportunity to advocate for student interests and remain informed on decisions likely to impact us. For example, this year, we proposed the creation of a new travel grant that would be available for pop health students doing data collection. The committee agreed and this funding is now available. We also helped ensure that the timing of the comprehensive exam did not overlap with the deadlines for external funding competitions, requested clarifications regarding readmission processes, and advocated for sessions on academic integrity and plagiarism.

PHGSA/AÉDSP Communication & Branding

The PHGSA worked on communication and branding at the outset of the school year. A website, <http://phgsa.ca/> (also accessible as <http://www.aedsp.ca/>) was created to communicate the executive, events, programmes run by the PHGSA and students in the programmes' mini bios. This latter was in part in response to a finding of the PHGSA in a survey conducted in 2012/13, whereby students identified the lack of interaction between stu-

dents in other cohorts as a weakness. Business cards and magnets with a custom made PHGSA logo were also made – the cards are available from Roseline and in a business card holder in the PhD room, IPH 223.

L'Association des étudiant.e.s diplômé.e.s en santé des populations
Population Health Graduate Students' Association
phgsa.aedsp@uottawa.ca

PHGSA/AÉDSP Constitution Updates

The PHGSA underwent an extensive constitution review in 2013/14. A member had highlighted that the constitution on file with GSAED was not the version the PHGSA executive believed was on file. Many changes were made to the constitution, but the major changes were to introduce a less regulated governance structure to the executive positions, and to introduce the requirement for

student representatives on the Population Health Programme Review Committee (PhD only). A table of changes was created and maintained, and the constitution went out for consultation from April 30 to May 31 (by email to the phgsa.aedsp@uottawa.ca, or through the Facebook group). Voting on the constitution took place from June 4 – 24 2014 through the Facebook group poll, email to the PHGSA email ac-

count, or in person on June 23 and June 24. In all, 7 votes were registered. The amended constitution was signed by the President (Yannick Fortin) and treasurer (Tanya Hewitt) July 10 2014. The voting instructions, proof of voting and the amended constitution were deposited with GSAED July 11 2014.

Some Ongoing PHGSA/AÉDSP Responsibilities

- Representation at monthly GSAED meetings
- Student representation (Yannick Fortin) at monthly PhD program committee meetings
- PHGSA/AÉDSP Facebook page upkeep
- Website maintenance
- PHGSA/AÉDSP email account maintenance
- PHGSA/AÉDSP LinkedIn account upkeep
- Email notifications to members about program news
- Monthly open executive meetings (last Friday of every month in the PhD Room at IPH at 9am) - ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED!
- Documentation of association meetings and policy decisions

About the PHGSA/AÉDSP

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/PHGSA.AEDSP

Website: www.aedsp.ca or www.phgsa.ca

Email: phgsa.aedsp@uottawa.ca

Linked In: <http://ca.linkedin.com/pub/population-health-graduate-students-association/31/312/b05>



L'Association des étudiant.e.s diplômé.e.s en santé des populations

Population Health Graduate Students' Association

phgsa.aedsp@uottawa.ca

The Population health graduate students' association (PHGSA/AÉDSP) is a non-profit, student organization that functions as a sub-group of the Graduate Students' Association (GSAÉD) of the University of Ottawa. The PHGSA/AÉDSP was created for the purpose of supporting and representing to the GSAÉD council, its student members. Its student members are exclusively enrolled graduate students in the Population Health PhD programme, and Population Health Risk Assessment and Management Graduate certificate at the University of Ottawa. Activities that the PHGSA/AÉDSP is primarily responsible for include an annual student orientation, a holiday party, and various other social activities. Other activities may include the facilitation of and advocacy for professional and academic development of its student members.