

Canadian Psychological
Association

Student Section Newsletter

FALL
2025

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear CPA Student Section Members,

Welcome to our first newsletter of the academic year! I'm honoured to serve as Chair of the Student Section for 2025-2026, and I look forward to creating opportunities for psychology students across Canada.

Firstly, I'd like to give a big thank you to all outgoing members of our executive team: Tosa Oliogu (JEDI Executive), Karla Heisela Cubilla (Undergraduate Student Affairs Executive), and Adnan Zoubi (Chair-Elect). Your contributions have been invaluable!

I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to our new executive members; Kethmi Egodage (JEDI Executive) and Sarah Gallant (Undergraduate Affairs Executive)! I'm excited to be serving alongside our wonderful returning executive members:



Anisa Nasser (Past Chair), Marie-Pier Mazerolle (Administrative and Finance Executive), Alexandra Brilz (Communications Executive), Chloé McLaughlin (Francophone Affairs Executive), and Noémie Viens (Graduate Student Affairs Executive).



LAST year, the CPA's annual convention in St. John's, Newfoundland was a success. The student section executive team planned workshops and panels on navigating academia, managing stress in graduate school, advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, applying for scholarships and grants, and exploring different career paths in psychology. A highlight was Dr. Sheila Garland's engaging talk on her journey in academia and research in cancer and sleep. At our Annual Business Meeting, we discussed meaningful initiatives to better support students and deliver programming with direct benefits for psychology students across Canada. This year, our executive aims to refine our existing programs and develop new programming for the upcoming CPA convention in Montréal, Québec from June 4-6th, 2026. If you have any suggestions or feedback for student section programming, please feel free to email me.



CURRENTLY, initiatives that are active include the 2025-26 student mentorship program, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, the undergraduate and graduate campus representative program, and MindPad journal opportunities for publication. The theme of this newsletter is psychology for Francophone individuals, reflecting the growing need for bilingual psychologists and the upcoming CPA convention in Montréal.

BROADER DEVELOPMENTS

I also want to address broader developments affecting psychology students nationwide. As we know, becoming a clinical psychologist in Canada is a rigorous process, with acceptance rates for clinical psychology programs ranging between 1-3%, and completion typically averaging 6 to 7 years post-Bachelor's degree. Psychologists hold the protected act of diagnosis and are expected to provide evidence-based care for complex mental health concerns. Accredited doctoral programs are designed to teach core competencies in assessment, intervention, ethics, research, supervision, and program development and evaluation as outlined by the [CPA accreditation standards](#).



Recently, proposed regulatory changes in Ontario by the [College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts of Ontario \(CPBAO\)](#), have sparked national debate. These proposals include removing the doctoral degree requirement for psychologists, allowing registration with a master's degree and one practicum, eliminating the four-year supervised practice period, and replacing the ethics exam with a no-fail online module. The oral examination for autonomous practice (e.g., practicing as a psychologist without supervision) would also be removed, and candidates could attempt the licensing exam as many times as needed, without a limit on the number of attempts. These changes represent a significant departure from current standards, which require years of doctoral-level training, multiple practica, and thousands of supervised hours to ensure competency. While the stated goal is to improve access and diversity, many professional bodies, including the CPA and OPA, have raised concerns that these changes could lower training standards and compromise public safety. Psychologists often work with individuals experiencing severe mental health challenges, and reducing training requirements may increase the risk of misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment. Suggested alternatives include expanding Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) programs to increase capacity while maintaining rigour, creating different entry-to-practice national standards for master's level versus doctoral psychologists, creating national licensure standards rather than province-specific rules,

improving funding in the public sector, and supporting enrollment across all mental health professions.

At the same time, many universities and colleges are experiencing financial pressures linked to international student permit caps, tuition freezes, and longstanding funding models. These challenges, combined with internal budget decisions, have led some institutions to implement hiring freezes, reducing course offerings, and scaling back research capacity. For students, this can mean fewer teaching and research assistantships, limited access to supervisors, and reduced lab capacity and grant support, which may affect research opportunities. While these issues are not universal, they reflect broader trends that influence academic pathways and professional preparation in psychology.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THIS AS STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY?

Whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student studying clinical, experimental, or another area of psychology, staying informed, asking questions, and engaging in conversations about these changes is essential. Reading CPA's statements on regulatory proposals, attending webinars and talks about these issues, and sharing your perspectives with your peers and faculty can help. These changes affect not only clinical practice, but also the reputation and structure of psychology as a discipline. Your perspective as a student is valuable in shaping the future of our field.



Despite these challenges, our section remains committed to providing resources, fostering community, and amplifying student voices. Please share your feedback and ideas for new initiatives - we want to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Alzena Ilie

Ph.D. Student | Clinical Psychology | she/her/hers

Dalhousie University | Ancestral and Unceded Mi'kmaq Territories

Chair of the Student Section | Canadian Psychological Association

chair.cpastudentsection@gmail.com

2025 Fall

Introducing Your New Executive Members



CHAIR ALZENA ILIE

Alzena Ilie is a fourth-year PhD student in the Clinical Psychology program at Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS. Her doctoral research focuses on developing and evaluating eLearning programs to train healthcare providers in pediatric insomnia and other sleep disorders. Her broader research interests include pediatric sleep in marginalized populations and in children with neurodevelopmental disorders. Alzena is also deeply engaged in student advocacy. In addition to serving as Chair of the CPA Student Section, she is the graduate student representative for the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at Dalhousie University and the co-student representative on the Executive Board of the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia (APNS). Clinically, Alzena works with children and adolescents at the IWK Health Centre and Dalhousie Centre for Psychological Health, providing assessments and interventions for a range of concerns. Outside of her academic and clinical roles, she enjoys playing and teaching piano, traveling, exercising, and spending time with friends and family.



PAST-CHAIR ANISA NASSERI

Anisa Nasserri is a second-year PhD student in the School and Applied Child Psychology Program at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC. Her research interests broadly revolve around understanding the experiences of newcomer students and families in Canadian schools and ensuring that programming is responsive to the needs of this population. Her dissertation explores the adaptation of a social-emotional learning intervention for refugee middle-school students as a means of boosting resilience. She currently works as a doctoral student clinician providing therapy for children and youth. Additionally, she works as a psychologist assistant assisting with psychoeducational assessments, and as a research coordinator on a project with the Squamish Nation focused on inclusive education. Anisa has engaged in various community service roles, such as mentoring through Big Brothers Big Sisters, facilitating youth groups, leading English classes for refugees and newcomers, and conducting peer-support sessions. In addition to her position as Past-Chair of the Student Section, she serves as the student representative on the CPA Board of Directors. Apart from her academic and community service involvement, Anisa enjoys travelling, trying new restaurants, thrifting, reading, and spending time with family and friends.



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE
SARAH GALLANT

Sarah Gallant is a fourth-year Bachelor of Science student majoring in Psychology at Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS, with plans to pursue an Honours thesis in her fifth year. Her research interests include couples and intimacy, sexual health, psychopathology, and eating disorders. Sarah has volunteered with several organizations, including Best Buddies and Play4All, reflecting her passion for inclusivity and community engagement. She also enjoys traveling, baking, spending time with family and friends, and reading!



JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION
EXECUTIVE
KETHMI EGODAGE

Kethmi is a graduate student currently completing her M.A. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Dr. Uzma Rehman. She holds an Honours B.Sc. from the University of Toronto, where she specialized in Psychology Research and majored in Criminology. Currently, Kethmi's research is grounded in a commitment to understanding how early life experiences shape adult relational functioning, particularly within historically marginalized communities. Her work explores the long-term impacts of childhood maltreatment and abuse on intimacy capacities in adult romantic relationships, examining both sexual and non-sexual forms of closeness. She is especially interested in how these patterns manifest in BIPOC and LGBTQ2IA+ populations, with the goal of informing trauma-informed, culturally responsive clinical practices. Outside of her studies and research, Kethmi enjoys reading, yoga, and cooking.



2025 Fall

CONTINUING ON THE EXECUTIVE

NOÉMIE VIENS



GRADUATE STUDENT
AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE

MARIE-PIER MAZEROLLE



ADMINISTRATION AND
FINANCE EXECUTIVE

ALEXANDRA BRILZ



COMMUNICATIONS
EXECUTIVE

CHLOE MCLAUGHLIN



FRANCOPHONE
AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE



CPA2026 MONTRÉAL

Next stop: Montréal! June is a vibrant month filled with numerous festivals and events, where busy streets turn into pedestrian promenades. We're thrilled that the 87th Annual CPA National Convention will take place in vibrant Montréal June 2026! Join colleagues from across the country for an unforgettable gathering of connection, learning, and celebration — while experiencing the unique culture, cuisine, and charm that Montréal has to offer.

**Registration will open for the CPA2026: 87th Annual
National Convention in early February 2026!**

STUDENT AWARDS

1 Best Student Poster Award

Amount: Two awards of \$150 each for English posters and one award of \$150 for French posters.

This award will recognize the most outstanding poster submissions, as determined by the executive committee of the Section for Students.

2 Student Travel Award

Amount: 20 awards valued at \$250

Due: April 30, 2026

This award will recognize high quality students with strong submissions (to any section of the CPA), primarily based on financial need, as determined by the executive of the Section for Students. The applicant's distance from the location of the annual convention will be taken into consideration.

Visit [Student Awards](#) for more information on how to apply.

3 Student Research Grant

Amount: 3 grants of \$500 each

This award is intended to support students in undergraduate or graduate programs in any domain or discipline within psychology who are actively engaged in research.

Application Procedure: Visit [Student Awards](#) for information on this funding envelope, application requirements, general rules, a list of eligible/ineligible expenses, and links to apply.



STUDENT AWARDS

4 Campus Initiative Grants

Amount: 2 grants of \$750 each

The purpose of the Campus Initiative Grant is to support events or programs that serve to enhance the educational experience in psychology of students on campus.

More information on this opportunity will be sent in the new year.

5 Campus Representative Award of Excellence

Amount: \$100

This award will recognize the most outstanding campus representative as determined by the executive committee of the Section for Students.

6 Mentorship Recognition Awards

Amount: 2 awards of \$50 each

These awards will recognize the most outstanding mentor and mentee in the Student Mentorship Program as determined by the executive committee of the Student Section.





MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



**WELCOME TO
THE 11TH
EDITION OF THE
CPA STUDENT
MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM**



If you are interested in participating in the CPA Student Mentorship Program next year, mark your calendars! The call for applications for the 2026-2027 year will be released in late July 2026. We will announce this on our webpage, social media platforms, and will also be circulating emails to all our CPA Student Affiliates, so keep an eye out! Learn more at the [CPA student mentorship webpage](#).

The CPA Student Section is proud to launch the 11th edition of the CPA Student Mentorship Program – an initiative that has grown steadily over the past decade and remains one of the most impactful offerings available to student affiliates. This program is designed to connect psychology students across Canada, foster meaningful peer relationships, and support both academic and professional development through structured mentorship.

This year, the program welcomed 99 mentors and mentees representing seven provinces. The official launch took place during the Orientation session in late September, where participants had the opportunity to connect, engage, and begin building rewarding and lasting mentoring relationships.

The CPA Student Mentorship Program offers a unique opportunity for student affiliates to engage in peer mentorship with fellow psychology students. Mentorship plays a crucial role in the field of psychology – providing guidance, clarity, and encouragement, especially during key transitions such as applying to graduate school, exploring research opportunities, and planning career paths. For mentors, the experience also fosters the development of leadership, communication, and supervisory skills by offering a platform to share their academic journeys.

The program aims to create a structured and enriching environment where students can learn from one another, gain insights into academic and career possibilities, and build confidence in their personal and professional goals. The CPA Student Section is committed to ensuring that all participants have the tools and support they need to make the most of this experience.

For any questions about the CPA Mentorship Program, or if support is needed in a mentor or mentee role, participants are encouraged to reach out. Feedback from both past and current participants is also welcomed to help continuously improve the program.

Wishing everyone a successful and fulfilling 2025-2026 academic year.

MENTEES

- Mentees can have the opportunity to ask questions pertinent to which courses to take, professional opportunities, academic options, graduate school applications, self-care throughout the academic journey, how to ask for reference letters, and many more.
- Mentees also have a unique opportunity to learn from someone else who has an understanding of what is it like to go through these academic processes and the decision-making challenges that can sometimes arise. Having a mentor and knowing that you are not alone during a potentially confusing and overwhelming time can make a significant difference.



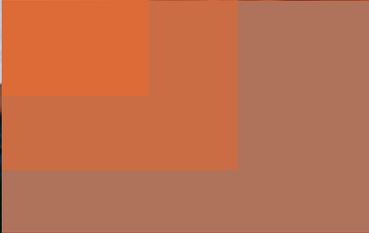
Mentorship



BENEFITS

MENTORS

- Many mentors have shared with us that they wish they had someone who could have provided guidance and support as they were considering applying to graduate school. Being a mentor allows senior students to offer this guidance and support they wish they had and offer a service to our community of psychology students.
- This is also an opportunity for mentors to sharpen their communication, supervision, leadership skills. The program provides participants with mentoring manuals and suggested topics for discussion to facilitate the mentoring process.



Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee Update

We are excited to share that the JEDI Committee for the 2025–2026 year has officially been recruited! Our new team brings together a range of perspectives, experiences, and passions, and we are eager to begin working together.

Over the coming months, we will be meeting to share ideas, set goals, and plan programming and resources that reflect our commitment to fostering equity, inclusion, and belonging within the CPA Student Section. While our plans are still taking shape, we look forward to creating meaningful opportunities for students to engage with JEDI themes throughout the year.

Stay tuned for updates in future newsletters and on our student section platforms — we can't wait to share more as our initiatives take form!

In solidarity,
Kethmi Egodage
JEDI Executive, CPA Student Section



Publish with MindPad! Call for Student Articles

MindPad is Canada's student written, edited, and published psychology newsletter. Our aim is to provide a professional newsletter that is written and reviewed by students in psychology. It aims to offer an opportunity to experience a formal submission process, including submission, review, and resubmission from the points of view of both submitter and reviewer/editor. MindPad publishes a range of submissions, including original research summaries, review summaries, psychology-related and career-related articles, commentaries on new trends in psychology, commentaries on psychology in the media, and reports on conferences or workshops attended.

MindPad has an excellent team of student Associate Editors and Reviewers for the 2025-2026 year. We accept publications on a rolling basis and highly encourage our Student Section members - both undergraduate and graduate – to submit their articles for publication!

Once submitted for review, you can list your article as "in press" on your CV, and once accepted, you can add it to your list of publications. This may be especially important for undergraduates applying for graduate school, as having peer-reviewed publications strengthens your application substantially.

Here are a few key requirements to submit your article to MindPad:

- Submissions need to be between 800-2000 words.
- Submissions should adhere to APA publishing guidelines.
- All authors need to be CPA members/affiliates.
- Articles submitted cannot be previously published or accepted for publication in another peer-reviewed journal or book.

For a full list of requirements, please review our [Editorial Policy](#). To submit, complete the [Submission Form](#) and [email](#) it to Anisa Nasseri, Editor in Chief.





CPA CAMPUS AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM – WE’RE GROWING!

Are you passionate about psychology, building community, and connecting students with valuable resources? The **CPA Campus and Student Representative Program** is expanding, and we want YOU to be part of it!

PROGRAM GOALS FOR THIS YEAR

This year, the CPA Student Section is placing a strong focus on **recruiting new representatives**. We’re also making a dedicated effort to welcome more **francophone student representatives**, especially from underrepresented institutions.

Whether you’re an undergraduate or graduate student, this is a unique opportunity to represent your school, gain leadership experience, and help foster a vibrant, inclusive student psychology network across Canada.

WHAT ARE REPS DOING SO FAR?

While the year is just getting started, we’ve already heard from one enthusiastic rep who’s gearing up to promote the CPA by requesting and posting CPA materials around her campus. We look forward to hearing more from others as the year progresses.

WHAT DOES A REPRESENTATIVE DO?

CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVE

As a Campus Representative, you’ll act as the main point of contact between CPA and your university. Your responsibilities include:

- Recruiting one graduate and one undergraduate Student Representative
- Hosting one CPA-related event during the academic year
- Coordinating monthly meetings and email communications with your student reps
- Promoting CPA membership and opportunities

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

As a Student Representative, you’ll collaborate with your Campus Rep to:

- Share CPA opportunities with your peers
- Help plan and run psychology-related events
- Amplify the voice of students in your program

WHAT YOU’LL GET

- A complimentary one-year CPA Student Affiliate membership (value \$75) for the year following your completed term
- Leadership and event planning experience
- The chance to grow your network and boost your CV



CPA CAMPUS AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM – HOW TO GET INVOLVED

1. **Check** if your university has a vacant rep position
2. **Email** the Graduate and/or Undergraduate Student Affairs Officers (contact info here: <https://cpa.ca/students/about/executive/>)
3. **Submit** a short paragraph explaining your interest, your CV, proof of enrollment, and CPA membership
4. **If** no position is open at your school, we'll add you to our waiting list for future openings

More information about the roles, eligibility, and application process can be found on the [CPA Student Section website](#).

LET'S MAKE THIS YEAR OUR MOST CONNECTED AND COLLABORATIVE YET!

An abstract painting with a grid pattern of light-colored squares. In the foreground, there are dark silhouettes of people holding hands, suggesting a group or community. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of orange, red, and purple. The text is overlaid in white, serif font.

FRANCOPHONE VOICES IN PSYCHOLOGY

NEWSLETTER
FEATURE



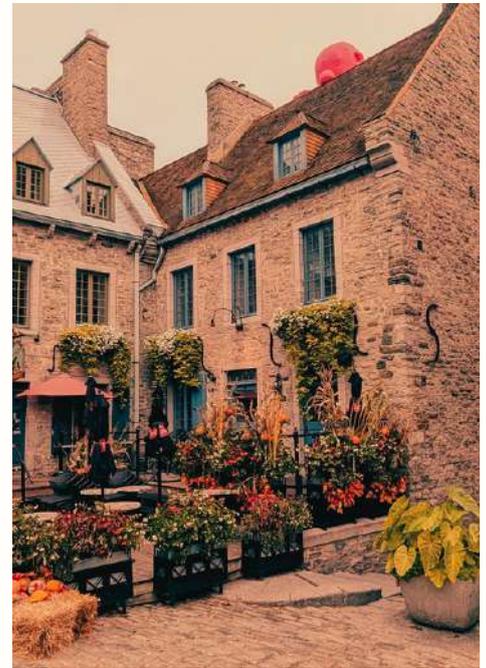
The CPA2026 Convention in Montréal presents a powerful platform to elevate and celebrate Francophone voices in psychology. Canada's bilingual identity runs deeper than language, it's a defining part of who we are, uniting two vibrant linguistic and cultural traditions into the heart of our national story. Yet, Francophone Canadians often encounter obstacles that leave them struggling to access the mental health care they need and discourage aspiring students from pursuing their passion for psychology in higher education.

For decades, psychology in Canada has evolved largely through an Anglophone lens. This has left deep-rooted challenges for Francophone Canadians.



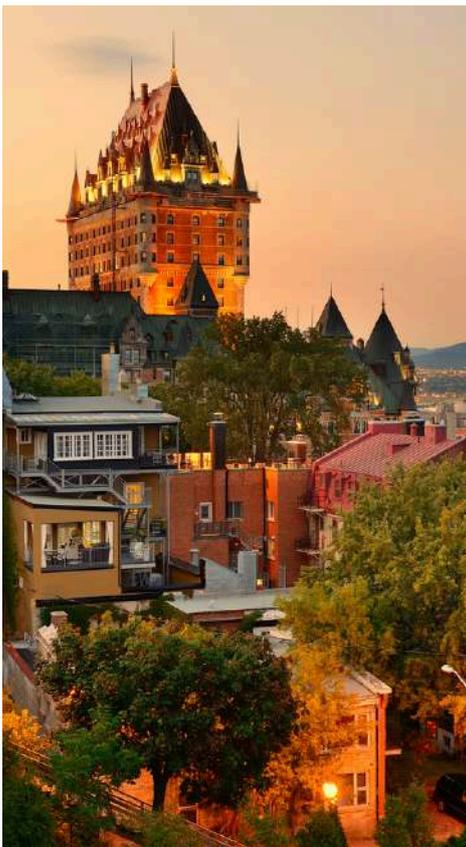
Patients often face an uphill battle to find care in their language but also professionals who understand their lived experience as Francophones in Canada, particularly outside of Québec. As one Francophone described, "When you have a mental health problem, in your head it happens in your mother tongue!" Even when services are available in French, wait times can surpass the already lengthy national average and some bilingual programs fall short of providing consistent care in French.

These gaps in care for Francophone Canadians are further compounded by the limited availability of funding for mental health research focused on Francophone communities as well as the challenges in securing it. Clinicians and researchers also struggle with a



limited supply of French-language assessment tools and professional materials. Additionally, clinical psychology students frequently encounter barriers to Francophone supervision and training outside of Québec.

In this issue, we share the voices and experiences of those navigating this complex landscape, with the goal of sparking dialogue, inspiring action, and advancing a more just and unified future for psychology in Canada. This is our chance to deepen trust between Francophone and Anglophone communities, elevate the quality of care, and ultimately, create a more inclusive and responsive discipline for Canadians.





MESSAGE FROM THE FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS EXECUTIVE OF THE CPA STUDENT SECTION

I am very excited to present this new edition of the newsletter. As Francophone Affairs Executive of the CPA Student Section, I believe it is essential to highlight the issues facing Francophones in psychology in Canada.

Francophonie and bilingualism play a fundamental role in clinical psychology practice and research in Canada. As students and future psychology professionals, we have a responsibility to promote true equity in a context where two official languages coexist. It is up to us to make our voices heard and ensure that the French language occupies its rightful place, both in research and in clinical practice.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this newsletter and who spoke up to identify issues and propose solutions.

I warmly invite you to join our panel on the realities of Francophones in psychology in Canada, which will take place during the CPA2026 conference in Montreal.

With commitment and solidarity,

Chloé McLaughlin

Francophone Affairs Executive, CPA Student Section

A NOTE FROM DR. ANNIE ROY-CHARLAND, PH.D., R.PSYCH.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE CANADIAN JOURNAL OF BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES

Dear students of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA),

As editor-in-chief of the Canadian Journal of Behavioural Sciences (CJBS), I am very honored to address you in this newsletter. I would like to highlight an issue that is particularly important to me: the possibility of submitting articles in French to the Canadian Psychological Association's scientific journals.

In the international scientific publishing landscape, it is unfortunately still too rare for French-speaking authors to have a real space to publish in their first language. The fact that the CJBS and other CPA-affiliated journals maintain and promote the use of French is therefore a real strength, a mark of recognition and inclusion for French-speaking researchers in Canada and elsewhere.

Why is this opportunity so important?

1. Writing in a second language is demanding:

Even for individuals who are perfectly bilingual, producing an academic text in their “second” language remains cognitively more demanding than writing in their mother tongue. Canadian studies have shown that writing in a second language (L2) involves distinct processes of writing, composition, and metacognition. In other words, even if you are “fluent” in English or French as a second language, producing arguments, structuring a discussion, and choosing precise scientific vocabulary in that language remains a more difficult task than in your native language.

2. Promoting linguistic and scientific diversity:

Publishing in French also affirms that science is not limited to a single language. As an academic community in Canada, an officially bilingual country, it is our responsibility to support this plurality. The option to choose the language of submission allows French-speaking researchers to present their work without facing an additional language barrier.

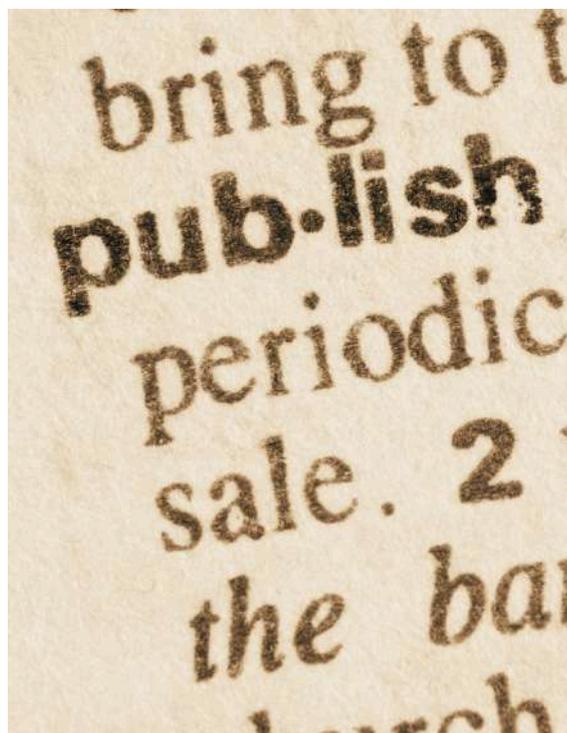


3. Accessibility to French-speaking audiences:

Publishing in French increases the visibility and accessibility of results to French-speaking academic, government, and professional communities. It also facilitates dissemination to non-English-speaking communities and helps to strengthen the societal impact of your research.

I warmly invite you to consider submitting articles, short research reports, and systematic reviews in French to the CJBS or other CPA journals. Whether you are just starting your career or already enrolled in a doctoral program, your work deserves to be published in the language in which you are most comfortable.

And if you are hesitant “because” English is the dominant language of many scientific journals, I encourage you not to underestimate the benefits: clarity, fluidity, nuance, and persuasiveness that you can achieve in your first language can really make a difference. I would like to congratulate you on your commitment to your research, and I look forward to reading your future contributions—in French! If you have any questions about the submission process, the journal's criteria, or the support available, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Annie Roy-Charland, Ph.D., R.Psych.

Editor-in-Chief, Canadian Journal of Behavioural Sciences





Francophone
Voices at the
Heart of Care:

MindSession
Intercultural
Psychology
Leads the Way



mindsession

INTERCULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

At a time when many still face barriers to accessing quality mental health care, MindSession Intercultural Psychology stands out as a clinic reimagining what inclusive therapy can look like. Based in Montréal and founded by Dr. Lara Kalaf, MindSession's vision is that mental health support should be available to everyone, no matter where they are or what language they speak.

Driven by this commitment, MindSession's multilingual team works tirelessly to close the gaps in care for those living in remote areas, people with limited mobility, and anyone for whom traditional services have felt out of reach. Their therapeutic approach is deeply intentional: each session is shaped by the understanding that culture plays a central role in how we struggle, how we heal, and how we connect.

Their clinicians, diverse in background, language, and perspective, bring this to life by offering care that respects the cultural values, identities, and lived realities of every client. Whether supporting individuals, couples, families, or entire communities, MindSession blends evidence-based approaches with a deep appreciation for intercultural understanding.

More than a clinic, MindSession is a movement toward equity, empathy, and healing that honours the full complexity of who we are. We're proud to feature their voices in this edition and grateful for their generous contribution to the conversation on bilingual and francophone care.



— Training & Supervision

Are you a clinical psychology graduate student interested in learning more about intercultural psychology? MindSession offers opportunities for internships and supervision!



**DR. LARA KALAF, PSYCHOLOGIST AND DIRECTOR,
MINDSESSION INTERCULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY**

As a psychologist working in both French and English, I'm often reminded that language is never neutral — it shapes how we think, how we connect, and even how we heal. Being a Francophone or bilingual clinician in Canada often means inhabiting a space between worlds: translating not just words, but systems of meaning, theoretical frameworks, and clinical language that were rarely designed with us in mind. So much of the psychological literature, training, and supervision culture is anchored in English, which can make it challenging to find nuance in concepts or emotional expressions that simply don't translate perfectly across languages.

At the same time, this duality offers a depth of perspective that I wouldn't trade. Working across languages teaches you to listen differently — to attune to tone, silence, and metaphor in ways that transcend words.

It also brings awareness to the subtle power dynamics of language: whose knowledge is valued, whose narratives are centered, and how this affects both clinicians and clients. At Mindsession Intercultural Psychology, these questions are at the heart of our work. Our clinic was founded on the belief that language and culture are inseparable from mental health, and that truly inclusive care must honour both. Our team includes clinicians who speak multiple languages and come from diverse backgrounds, allowing us to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps every day. We see bilingualism not as a complication, but as a creative force that enriches therapy and expands our understanding of human experience. Initiatives like this CPA feature remind us of the importance of making space for Francophone and bilingual voices in psychology — not as a translation of the mainstream, but as an integral part of Canada's psychological landscape.



**DR. ANDREA LOMANDO CANETE,
PSYCHOLOGIST AT MINDSESSION
INTERCULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Since French is my second, or even my third language, becoming a French-speaking clinician has opened new doors for me: I now have access to works in their original version. If before I had a certain number of texts available to me, learning French has doubled that access. But being a clinician goes far beyond verbal understanding. The fact of being not only French-speaking but also bilingual has sharpened my senses: beyond spoken language, it has strengthened my sense of observation and my attention to what is communicated beyond words. It has allowed me to truly listen to the person — with more presence and fewer preconceived ideas.

And, in the end, everyone speaks their own language.

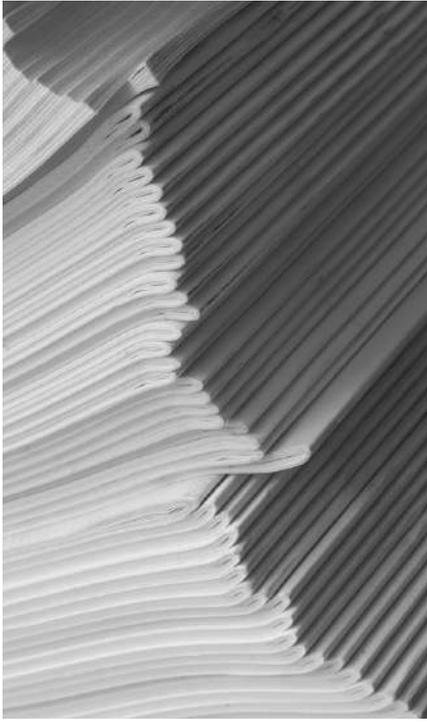


BETWEEN TWO LANGUAGES: NAVIGATING PSYCHOLOGY AS A FRANCOPHONE STUDENT IN CANADA

Logane Gnassi is a Clinical Psychology Graduate Student at the University of Saskatchewan. Originally from Montréal, Québec, Logane attended Concordia University for her undergraduate degree in Psychology. She shared her insightful experience navigating the Canadian academic system as a bilingual Francophone student from Quebec. Her journey provides a window into the systemic challenges faced by Francophone students, a first-hand account of navigating dual language identities, and a quiet but powerful call for reform in Canadian research culture.



LOGANE GNASSI



A Language Divide in Canadian Psychology

“The first gap that I really identified,” Logane told me, “was the lack of science in general, being communicated in French.” Despite being one of Canada’s two official languages, French is significantly underrepresented in published literature and academic communications. “I had subscribed to a monthly...it was almost like a newsletter of different articles [from CPA],” she recalled. “Out of 15 new articles, maybe one or two were in French. Some editions didn’t have any French at all.”

The implications go beyond inconvenience. French-speaking students and researchers often find themselves excluded from foundational knowledge or forced to engage with scientific material in their second language. “If people want to get their literature out there, the onus is on them to translate it,” she said. This forces many Francophone Canadians to adapt to the majority or risk being overlooked.

Strategic Sacrifices: Choosing English to Succeed in French

In Québec, this imbalance leads some students to make difficult choices. Logane shared how several of her Francophone peers deliberately enrolled in English-language undergraduate programs, not out of preference, but strategy. Their goal? Build a strong enough foundation in English to navigate the literature and scientific discourse, then return to French for graduate studies.

It’s a kind of linguistic detour that demands early planning. “You have to almost be planning before you go to university,” Logane said. “As soon as you turn 17, you need to know, okay, am I going to pursue graduate studies in psychology?”

“Even if [my peers] would have preferred to go to Université de Montréal or Laval,” she explained, “they tried to go to one of the English universities for their for their undergrad, so that they had that foundation, and then switch back to French...I know one person who did that, and she’s doing very well, and she’s doing her PhD in French now. But because of her basis in English, she really had a lot more success in her career and could understand literature a lot better.”





There's "a barrier there for them to translate their work in French," noted Logane, and "can almost [keep] the Francophone researchers and the Anglophone researchers segregated."

Bilingual Advantage

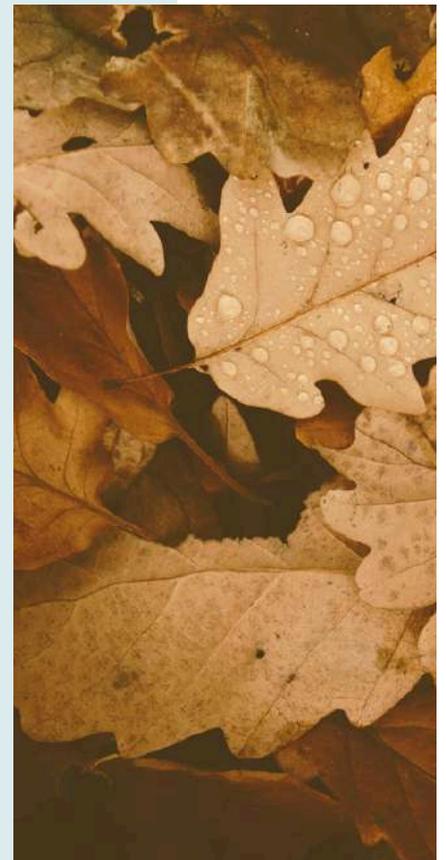
Logane's experiences as a bilingual Francophone have been shaped by her unique educational path and upbringing. Logane lived primarily with her mother, who is Swiss-French, and stepfather, a Québécois, but attended primary and secondary school in English. For Logane, English was for school, while French was for home, community, and everyday life. "It was this perfect storm," she said, "that made me really bilingual."

In academic settings, that meant she could read and write fluently in both languages. This provided advantages in university. "I was cleaning [French] verbal fluency data...and no one else at the lab was able to do that...I was contributing to the lab in a really unique way." She also found herself translating abstracts and documents for her peers, particularly those applying for federal funding.

The Hidden Costs of Language Inaccessibility

Throughout our conversation, Logane emphasized that language inaccessibility affects far more than individual students, it shapes entire careers, research trajectories, and populations. We discussed how measures used in studies are often not validated in French, which restricts the inclusion of Francophone participants in Canadian research. When French speakers are included, they may receive materials that haven't been fully translated or adapted, introducing data quality concerns and reinforcing systemic exclusion.

Even publication norms in Canadian journals can fail to account for language realities. "If you look at a French text, it'll be considerably longer than English," Logane explained. "But sometimes the abstract word limit will still be 250... There's a lack of adaptation... for French scientific writing." We further discussed how the Tri-Council has made some progress, allowing French submissions to be longer by half a page, but many institutions and journals have not followed suit.



Research, Responsibility, and Representation

For Logane, the conversation around language is a question of responsibility to both Francophone and Anglophone Canadians.

“When we get funding from the federal government, it’s our responsibility to make our research accessible to Canadians,” Logane explained. “It’s also our responsibility to make sure that all Canadians can... understand our research.”

We discussed how language access could be built into grant applications and departmental planning, just like considerations of sex, gender, or other equity factors. Imagine if there was just one line in the grant application: ‘How will you communicate your research to both English and French-speaking Canadians?’ That could begin the conversation surrounding Francophone-Anglophone representation in Canadian research. Still, she’s realistic. Not every researcher is comfortable translating their work. It’s intimidating. We need institutional support, bilingual staff, translation services, even templates or glossaries to help.



A Personal Commitment to Change

Despite the challenges, Logane is taking the lead in her own work. “I’ll be translating everything I do,” she told me. “It’ll be like a trial run...to see how feasible it is and how was that experience for me? And how feasible it is for others to kind of get on that train?”

That spirit of initiative reflects a broader theme in our conversation: Francophone students are often left to do this work alone. Translating, navigating, adapting. Logane hopes to change that, not just through advocacy, but through action. She’s determined that if she can help departments see the value of translation, if she can show how it makes research better, more inclusive, more Canadian, maybe that will make a difference.

Additional Voices

Do you feel that your bilingualism (or lack thereof) has impacted your experience as a psychology student?

During practices the team I worked with received files from Quebec that were only in French. I was able to translate the assessments so the team was able to build their treatment plan with adequate information that otherwise would have been lost to them.

–CLINICAL PRACTICE

I have had this experience a few times when working with ESL students in classroom settings, mostly because I sometimes have a hard time hearing people. Navigating that was hard but I tried to do my best to sit closer to them so I can hear better and also try to speak slightly slower and use simpler language without offending them.

–MADELINE, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA-OKANAGAN

No, it hasn't impacted me negatively in these contexts.

–MEG, ADLER GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

Being multilingual will hopefully help me during my practice to help with accessibility for clients; but during training, finding the accurate words in English sometimes leads to miscommunication between supervisors & classmates.

–LISA, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

I recognize that my research is impacted by my lack of language skills in that I can only access research in English. This means I may be lacking knowledge and understanding from research described in other languages.

–UNKNOWN

If I want to be able to apply to grad schools outside of my country, I would be virtually unable to given my lack of language skills.

–JENNIFER, DOUGLAS COLLEGE

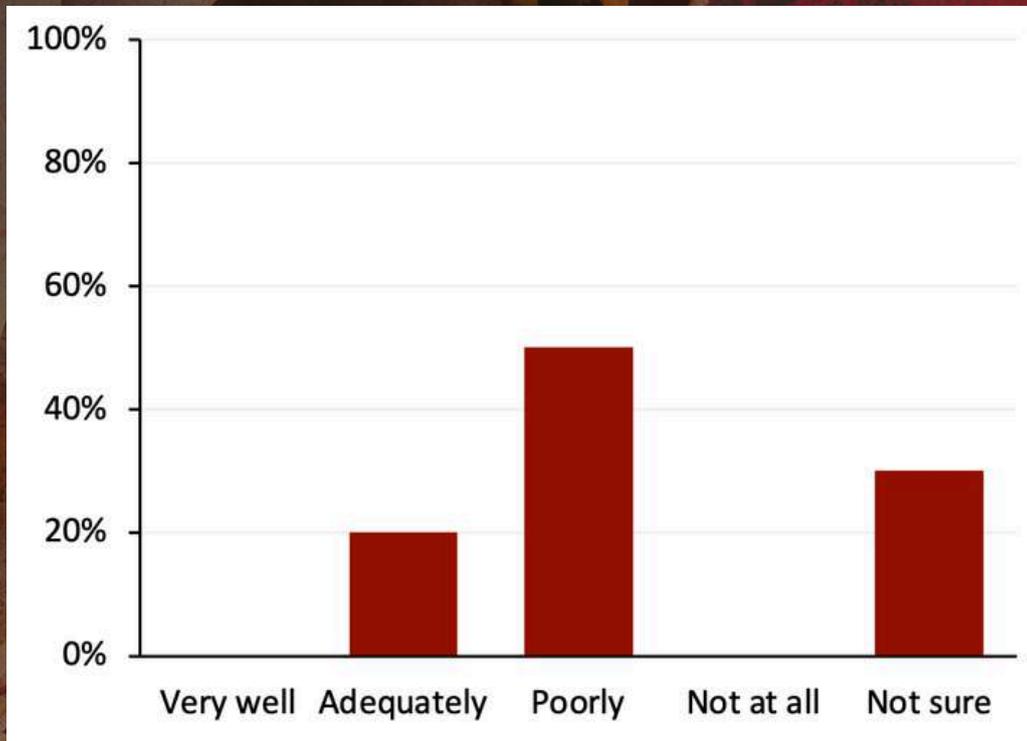


During a recent clinical placement in Ontario, parents of several children enrolled in French Immersion sought a psychoeducational assessment at a private clinic. Given the lack of norms for this student population where their most spoken language is English but their education is in French, can make considerations for which measures to use during assessments difficult. The students were able to be administered some French academic measures to help form a broader picture of their learning abilities. However, as I have now completed that placement, there is no longer a bilingual individual available at that clinic to assist with assessments. Bilingual clinicians are absolutely important in regions where French Immersion is growing significantly but there may be a lack of French-speaking clinicians as the area itself isn't predominantly French.

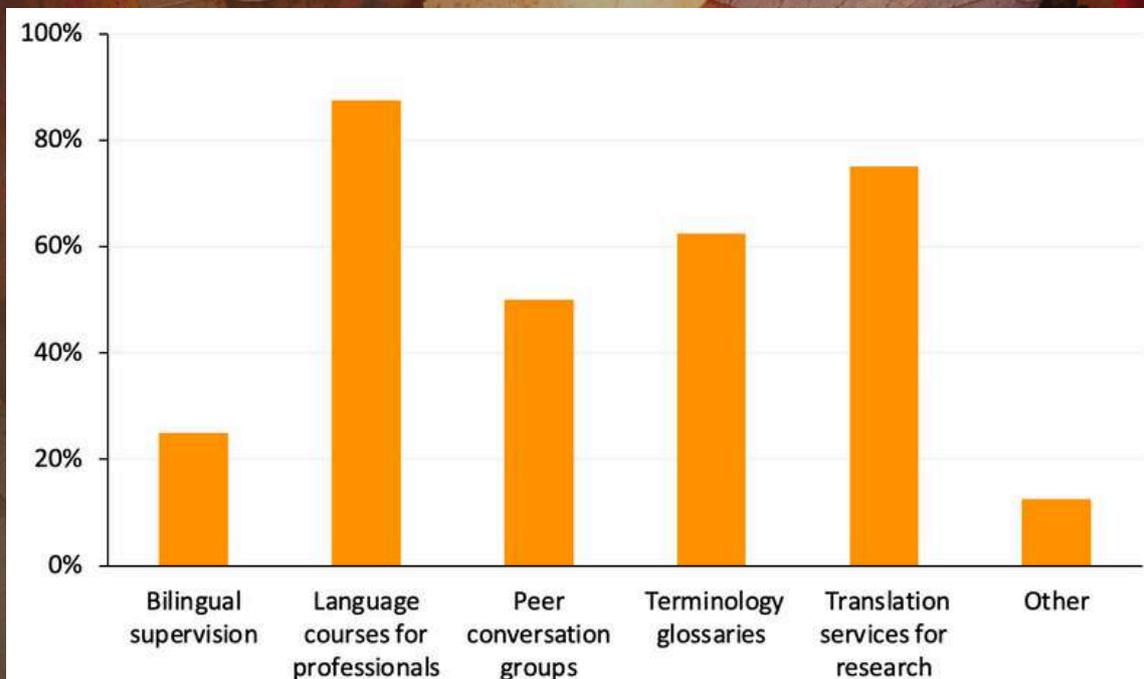
–KARINE, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON



In your opinion, how well do mental health services in Canada accommodate clients in both official languages?



What kind of language support would you find most helpful? (Select all that apply)



What role do you think psychologists should play in bridging linguistic divides in Canada?



None. This is not our role or place, other than when communicating directly with a client.

– Clinical Practice

I believe that psychologists should do their best to learn how to bridge linguistic divides in order to provide services to people that are not native English speakers.

– Madeline, University of British Columbia - Okanagan

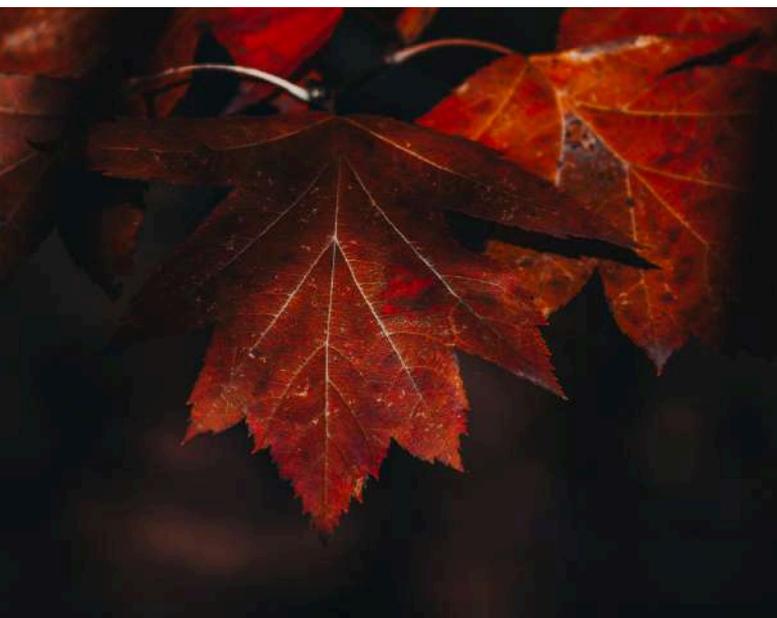


Bilingual services should be more available across the country and not just in certain regions.

– Maeve, Vancouver Island University

We should all aspire to at least be bilingual.

– Lisa, University of Saskatchewan



Immersion Pathways for Anglophone Students

After highlighting the experiences of francophone students and clinicians in psychology and the central role language plays in their experiences, many anglophone readers may be wondering how to strengthen their own French in meaningful, real-world ways. If you're feeling motivated to build your skills, or to better understand the linguistic realities of your peers, there's a wide range of immersive options across Canada that make learning both accessible and rewarding.

1. Explore

A nationwide French immersion program for Canadian citizens and permanent residents offered in the spring or summer. The federal bursary usually covers tuition, housing, meals, and activities. Students pay travel and small fees.

2. Odyssey

A nine-month paid placement where you assist in a classroom and live in another province. It's not a course, but you use French every day and gain strong immersion experience.

3. Université Sainte-Anne (Nova Scotia) – Summer Immersion

A well-known 5-week residential French immersion session with full days of classes, workshops, and activities. Ideal for adult learners and university students.

4. Université Sainte-Anne (Halifax Campus) – Full-Time French Sessions

Five-week full-time French programs for adults who want intensive study without a full degree. Weekday classes, small groups, and a supportive setting.

Immersion Pathways for Anglophone Students

5. Université de Montréal – Summer French School

A 4-week intensive French program offered through the École de français. Includes language classes, cultural activities, and the chance to live in Montréal.

6. UQAM – Intensive French Immersion

Short-term French immersion programs for adults in downtown Montréal. Focus on communication, culture, and practical French.

7. Collège Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière – 5-Week French Immersion

A classic, small-town immersion experience on the St. Lawrence River. Five weeks of classes, workshops, and cultural activities for students and adults.

8. Alliance Française – Intensive Adult Classes (Various Cities)

Alliances in cities like Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, and Moncton offer intensive multi-week French classes for adults and post-secondary learners. Great if you want flexible scheduling rather than a full residential immersion.

Pathways for Francophone Students

For francophone students, strengthening English skills can help with academic confidence, research opportunities, and future career paths, especially where readings, presentations, and professional communication often happen in English. If you're looking for structured support, there are a wide range of programs across Canada designed specifically to help non-native speakers build fluency in the academic contexts that matter most.

EXPLORE – ENGLISH IMMERSION FOR FRENCH SPEAKERS

01

Explore offers a five-week intensive English immersion program for francophone students who want to strengthen their English in a supportive, real-life environment. Participants study on an English-speaking campus elsewhere in Canada and take part in classes, workshops, and cultural activities. A federal bursary typically covers tuition, housing, meals, and activities, making it an affordable option for students who want to build confidence in academic and everyday English.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY – ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

02

Concordia offers credit English courses that help students strengthen academic reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary while building confidence in oral communication. These courses are ideal for students who already speak English but want stronger skills for university presentations, discussions, and written work.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY – SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES – ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

03

McGill's English for Professional Communication program focuses on workplace and professional English, including writing, presentations, and clear spoken communication. It's designed for students who want to improve English specifically for professional settings rather than general language skills.

Pathways for Francophone Students

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL – CENTRE DE LANGUES – ENGLISH COURSES

04

Université de Montréal provides both credit and non-credit English courses aimed at improving oral and written communication for academic or professional use.

Courses range from general communication to specialized reading and writing and can be taken by regular students or independent learners.

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL – ÉCOLE DE LANGUES – ENGLISH & MICROPROGRAM

05

Université Laval offers a wide selection of English courses at multiple levels, including writing, speaking, grammar, and academic communication. For students seeking structured skill-building without a full degree, the short microprogram provides a coherent set of English courses to strengthen overall proficiency.

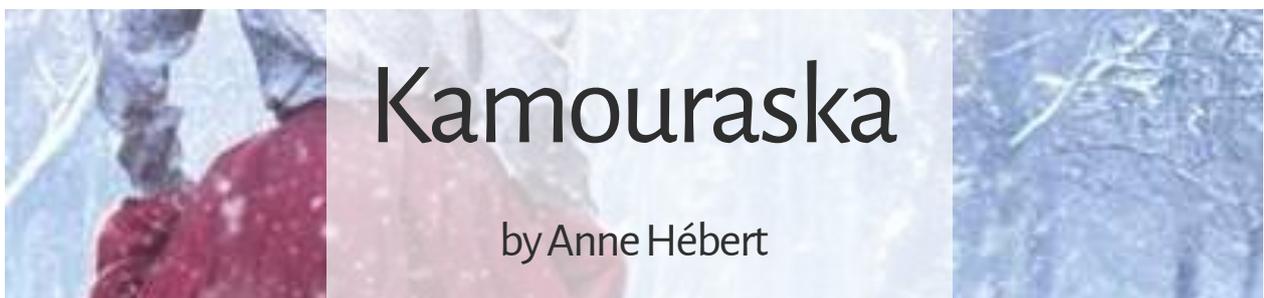
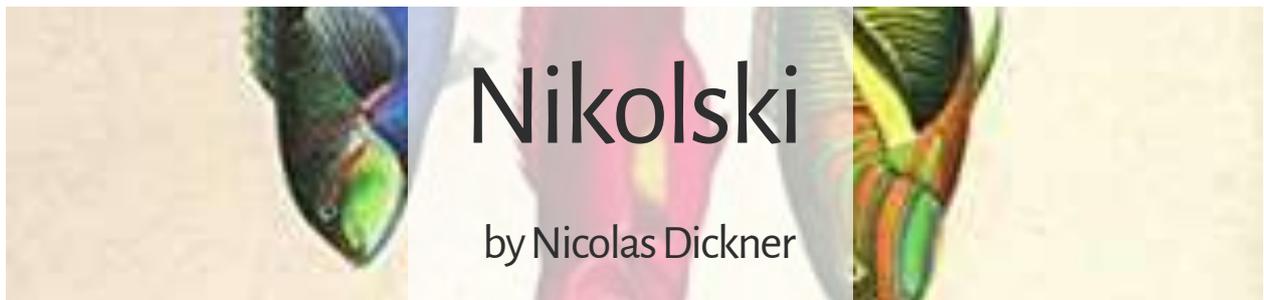
UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON – CONTINUING EDUCATION – ENGLISH COURSES & WORKSHOPS

06

Université de Moncton's Continuing Education division offers ongoing English courses and specialized workshops designed for students and adult learners. Programs include level-based core English courses and targeted workshops such as workplace communication, making them suitable for those looking to refine practical and professional English skills.

BOOK CLUB

To celebrate CPA2026 in Montréal and Francophone contributions, we've gathered a selection of must-read books from Francophone authors!



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