

Michael Minor, BAH, MA, PhD
Student Representative

Term: 2024-2025 (1st term)
Region: Capital

Biography



Dr. Michael Minor (he/they) is a cis-het white man born in Thunder Bay, Ontario (subject to the Robinson-Superior Treaty). As a high-school student in the International Baccalaureate Programme, Michael was a distinguished student, cross-country runner, musician, and advocate for food security. He moved to Peterborough, Ontario to attend Trent University, graduating with honours with a BAH in English Literature and Political Studies. During his time at Trent, Michael was an Academic All-Canadian and captain of the cross-country running team, food security advocate through Trent Meal Exchange, student radio host, soloist with the Peterborough Singers, and board member of the Seasoned Spoon Café, a student run local, organic, and ethical alternative to the corporate food service provider at the university. Upon graduation he moved to St.

John's Newfoundland to pursue an MA in Newfoundland literature, where he lived for two years. During these years he was a soloist with Newman Sound chamber choir and sang in the Memorial University chamber choir. He also used his final year of eligibility to compete nationally as a varsity cross country runner. After completing the MA, Michael moved to the Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic where he taught middle school until deciding to continue his education at the University of Manitoba. Michael's PhD is in English and his SSHRC funded research focused on Indigenous prairie poetry as a model for decolonization in the settler-colonial context. After some time of post-doctoral studies in Caribbean and Indigenous literary alliances, Michael accepted an academic writing Instructor position at the University of Manitoba in the Inner City Social Work Program (ICSWP), where he has worked since 2017. A true life-long learner, Michael soon began studies towards an MSW degree. He was admitted to U of M's inaugural offering of a two-year MSW for students who have not earned a BSW. He is now on study leave from teaching and aiming to complete the final year of the MSW, graduating in 2025.

Through his vested interests in decolonization, employment at the ICSWP, and completion of the first half of the MSW, Michael has been impacted by the pronounced need for finding the balance point between the vigorous theoretical study of decolonization and crucially applied practice of social work as a profession. Indigenous and decolonial studies would benefit immensely by taking a more active role in the material realities of colonial violence that social work is almost always contending with. Similarly, social work could benefit from the work of many scholars and artists to conceptualize the political economy of settler colonialism and apply this theory more precisely to the practice of social work. Michael's ongoing advocacy work for the housing and food insecure, as well as his opportunity to focus on his own studies exclusively for a year, have given rise to his interest in serving as a student representative for the MCSW board. Michael is particularly privileged to have the opportunity to see social work education from the twin vantage points of

a student and an instructor. He hopes to make the most of this opportunity by contributing whatever he can of his perspective to the good governance of the profession of social work in Manitoba.