

# Zahra (Mona) Ghassemi

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## PROFILE:

- Extensive and varied teaching experience, including 7 semesters as a teaching assistant.
- Experience working with students aged 6-87, including students with special needs.
- Experience working in leadership and instructional roles with youth in community and academic settings.
- Experience giving tutorials and designing lesson plans, assignments and quizzes, and evaluating student progress.
- Trained in active listening and harm reduction, as well as emergency response.

## LANGUAGES SPOKEN AND WRITTEN:

- English (fluent)
- French (advanced)
- Farsi/Persian (fluent)

## EDUCATION:

### **Master of Arts: Social and Cultural Anthropology**

Concordia University (Montreal, QC)

2017

- 3.94/4.30 Cumulative GPA
- Thesis: *Reproducing The Virginity Imperative: Women's Collusion and Men's Complicity Among Young Iranians Living in Montreal*

### **Bachelor of Science: Computer Science and Biology**

McGill University (Montreal, QC)

2014

### **International Baccalaureate in Science**

CEGEP Vanier College (Ville-St-Laurent, QC)

2007-2009

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

### **Private Tutor**

Montreal, QC

2006-present

- Tutored individuals for high school math and science, university-level computer science, and programming.

### **English Second Language Teacher**

VIPkid (remote, China)

2018 - 2019

- Taught over 100 one-on-one ESL classes to more than 40 Chinese children aged 5-12; 5/5 rating from parents.
- Personalized and extended lessons appropriately for student level with creative use of teaching aids.

### **Tutor and Test Prep Teacher**

Prep Academy Tutors of Montreal (Montreal, QC)

August 2018 - January 2019

- Tutor students in high school math, science (physics, chemistry), psychology, and SATs.

### **Computer Teacher**

Communicaid for Hearing-Impaired Persons (Montreal, QC)

September 2018 - December 2018

- Taught fundamental computer skills to hard-of-hearing seniors.
- Planned and delivered a 10-week curriculum, adapting lesson content to student needs.

### **Note-Taker and Tutor (Access Centre for Students With Disabilities)**

<i>Concordia University (Montreal, QC)</i>	2017-2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutored students of differing needs for various courses (Statistics, Interviewing).</li> <li>• Wrote and illustrated clean class notes and sent to students in timely fashion.</li> </ul>	
<b>Teaching Assistant (Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology)</b>	
<i>Concordia University Department of Sociology and Anthropology (Montreal, QC)</i>	2016-2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluated weekly assignments, term paper and final exam.</li> <li>• Created new questions for quizzes and assignments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Course Assistant (Logic and Computability)</b>	
<i>McGill University (Montreal, QC)</i>	2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed questions for use in course assignments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Note-Taker (Office for Students With Disabilities)</b>	
<i>McGill University (Montreal, QC)</i>	2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcribed clean class notes in LaTeX and uploaded them for student in timely fashion.</li> </ul>	
<b>Teaching Assistant (Introduction to Computing)</b>	
<i>McGill University (Montreal, QC)</i>	2010-2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluated programming assignments (Java).</li> <li>• Responded to student questions during weekly office hours and on online discussion board.</li> <li>• Taught and reviewed core course concepts with students during interactive tutorials.</li> </ul>	
<b>Grader (Java)</b>	
<i>Private Contract (Montreal, QC)</i>	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessed programming assignments (Java).</li> <li>• Communicated with instructor to ascertain what was expected of students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Volunteer Tutor and Biology Camp Lead at McGill Computer Science Summer Camp</b>	
<i>McGill University (Montreal, QC)</i>	Summers 2010-2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coached camp participants during programming activities.</li> <li>• Adapted and delivered a lesson on the Java programming language.</li> <li>• Coordinated a small team to ensure the smooth running of the biology section of the camp.</li> </ul>	
<b>Drawing Teacher</b>	
<i>South Asian Women's Community Centre (Montreal, QC)</i>	2004-2005
<i>Noor Cultural Centre (Montreal, QC)</i>	
<i>Relais Côte-des-Neiges (Montreal, QC)</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught weekly or biweekly drawing lessons to children aged 6-12.</li> <li>• Designed lessons appropriate for the children in attendance.</li> <li>• Purchased supplies according to the needs of the class.</li> </ul>	

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING:

### TEACHING WORKSHOPS:

#### Peer Instruction: Engaging Students in Small and Large Classrooms

*GradProSkills, Concordia University* 2018

#### Designing your Course: Aligning Learning Outcomes, Assessment, and Learning Activities

*GradProSkills, Concordia University* 2018

#### Best Practices for Grading and Giving Effective Feedback to Students

*GradProSkills, Concordia University* 2018

#### 32-hour Graduate Seminar in University Teaching

*GradProSkills, Concordia University* 2017

## **T-Pulse Teaching Workshop**

*Tomlinson Project in University-Level Science Education, McGill University*

2010

## **LEADERSHIP, COMMUNICATION, AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:**

### **Peer Support and Advocacy Training**

*Centre for Gender Advocacy (Montreal, QC)*

2017-2018

- Attended over 50 hours of weekly workshops and practice sessions on topics including active listening, harm reduction, mental health, and intersectional issues including race and gender.

### **Leadership Certificate**

*GradProSkills, Concordia University*

2017-2018

### **French Language Workshops - Level 5**

*GradProSkills, Concordia University*

2017

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING:**

- CPR and First Aid Certification

*Concordia University / Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation*

June 2018

- Fire Safety and Extinguisher Training + Evac-Chair Training

*Concordia University*

May 2018

- CERT Volunteer Training

*Concordia University*

May 2018

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE:**

### **Board Member**

*QPIRG Concordia (Montreal, QC)*

October 2019-present

- Participated in board meetings and collective decision-making related to the organization.
- Contributed to the resolution of a staff conflict and acted as liaison to a staff member.
- Finance committee member.

### **Reading Club Organizer and Discussion Lead**

*#BecauseWeveRead Montreal (Montreal, QC) and JooJoo Azad*

2018-present

- Hosted events and promoted through social media and intentional outreach to POC communities.
- Coordinated outreach and created partnerships with local bookstores and other organizations.
- Applied for and received funding from community organizations.
- Communicated with an international team.

### **Robotics Team Leader for CRC competition**

*Vanier College (Montreal, QC)*

2007-2009

- Constructed, with a team, a 12' by 12' kiosk to represent school during competition (both years).
- Arranged team meetings, invited guest speakers, and divided tasks between members.
- Purchased materials and created illustrations for journal, website and video teams.

### **Leadership Team Member**

*Fang-Shen-Do Kung Fu School (Montreal, QC)*

2007-2009

- Taught warmups and children's classes regularly, and a full adult class on emergency notice.
- Keyholder; in charge during absence of head instructors.
- Communicated with public and demonstrated techniques during special events.

## PROGRAMMING AND DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE:

### **Quality Assurance Developer**

*Workjam, Inc. (Montreal, QC)*

January 2019 - Present

- Implemented e2e testing framework in Javascript using REST API calls, Appium, and Sauce Labs integration.
- Implemented front-end mobile tests and contributed to improvement of QA processes.
- On-boarded test developers and mentored an intern working on the localization project.

### **Quality Assurance and Support Specialist**

*Peerio (Montreal, QC)*

October 2018 - December 2018

- Tested software and website on multiple platforms and reported bugs to the development team.
- Created documentation and automated testing scenarios.
- Responded to customer support requests.

### **Programmer/Data Analyst**

*Lechowicz Lab, McGill University (Montreal, QC)*

2014

- Translated code for an ecological simulation from Delphi (Pascal) to Python.
- Streamlined code and added comments to improve reusability.

## WRITING, EDITING, AND TRANSLATION EXPERIENCE:

### **Editor: *Stories from Montreal Student Journal***

*SASU, Concordia University (Montreal, QC)*

2017-2018

- Edited writer's contribution and provided several rounds of feedback.
- Attended team meetings regarding the progress of the journal.

### **Translator (Farsi to English)**

*Smart Solution Systems, Inc. (Montreal, QC)*

2013

- Translated a 650-page catalogue of technical and educational supplies.

### **Private Editor (Montreal, QC)**

2006-present

- Edited letters of intent, essays, and articles.

### **Language Officer: Model United Nations**

*Vanier College (Montreal, QC)*

2008-2009

- Edited delegates' position papers in preparation for McMUN competition.
- Attended club meetings and debriefings.
- Represented VMUN during Vanier clubs' day and to the student council.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEER WORK:

### **Peer Support Volunteer**

*Centre for Gender Advocacy (Montreal, QC)*

2018-present

- Listen actively to visitors seeking peer support.
- Assist drop-in visitors with services such as library, binders, safer sex and injection kits, and outside referrals.
- Keyholder.

### **CERT Volunteer**

*Concordia University (Montreal, QC)*

2018-present

- Responsible during on-campus emergencies to assist individuals in proper emergency response, evacuate floors, and report to other members of emergency response team.

### **Participant in Concordia University Public Conversation on Sexual Assault**

April 2018

- Brainstormed and communicated possible improvements to university sexual assault response

## AWARDS AND HONOURS:

- Concordia Conference and Exposition Award 2017
- Carrie Boucock Memorial Award (Department of Sociology and Anthropology) 2017
- Governor General's Bronze Medal (for top graduating grade at high school) 2006

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

- Revolution or Stasis? Marriage and sexual values among the Iranian diaspora in Montreal**  
*CASCA/IUAES 2017: "Mo(u)vemnt", Ottawa University (Ottawa, ON)* May 2017
- Red and White: A Discussion of Hymeneal Blood Ritual as Gendered Violence**  
*AGSA Conference: "Colour, Tint, Tone", McGill University (Montreal, QC)* April 2017
- Mary's Life on Mars: A Theoretical and Ethnographic Discussion of "The Virginity Imperative"**  
*SAGSA Conference: "To Boldly Go", Concordia University (Montreal, QC)* March 2017

## PUBLIC LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS:

- Bisexuality Workshop - co-presenter on biphobia and bi erasure**  
*Centre Communautaire LGBTQ de Montreal (Montreal, QC)* September 2017
- Reproducing The Virginity Imperative: Women's Collusion and Men's Complicity**  
*CafeLitt (Montreal, QC)* August 2017
- Reproducing The Virginity Imperative: Women's Collusion and Men's Complicity**  
*Three-Minute Thesis Competition, Concordia University (Montreal, QC)* March 2017

## MEDIA APPEARANCES:

- Follow-up Interview (on the aftermath of the tragedy of UIA flight PS752)**  
with Mike Finnerty, CBC Radio *Daybreak* Jan 13, 2020
- Interview ("Iranian Montrealers on Tensions between Iran and the United States")**  
with Mike Finnerty, CBC Radio *Daybreak* Jan 6, 2020
- Interview (on Trump's exit from the Iran Nuclear Deal)**  
with Mike Finnerty, CBC Radio *Daybreak* May 10, 2018
- Interview (on sexual violence)**  
with Mehdi Fallahi, Radio Namaashoum February 12, 2018
- Interview (regarding my thesis research, feminism and virginity)**  
with Mohammad Rad, Hodhod August 23, 2016

## TECHNICAL (COMPUTER) SKILLS:

- **Operating Systems:** Mac OS, Windows, Linux (Ubuntu, Debian/Kali), Android, iOS.
- **Languages:** Java, Python, Javascript (Processing.js, Node.js, React.js), Bash, SQL, html/css.
- **Development tools:** Git (Github: BlueMona), REST, Bitbucket Pipelines, WebdriverIO, Appium, SauceLabs.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

- Member of Game-Curious Organizing Committee 2018-2019
- Member of Reading Group (Anthropology of Iran) with Dr. Setrag Manoukian. 2014-present