



General Assembly Reform – Process Framework

Please send comments to Maggie Knight at president@ssmu.mcgill.ca.

The format of the General Assembly continues to be an issue of debate. While it is clear that reforms are needed, no consensus has been reached on what type of reforms. Since the debate concerning General Assembly reform in 2010-2011 was ultimately inconclusive, this process is being expanded and continued this year. We hope to keep working documents and resources centralized and accessible on the SSMU website, so that interested students have access to all relevant documentation.

This document outlines the intended process for achieving successful reform and is intended as a discussion document; if you have suggestions for improving the process and/or would like to get involved, please email president@ssmu.mcgill.ca.

Stage One: Outlining the Process

Students and Councillors sometimes complain that SSMU's deliberative and decision-making processes are insufficiently transparent and accessible. In part by providing this document for discussion, we hope to ensure that students interested in this issue understand how to engage with this process of reform.

Stage Two: Compile Feedback Regarding Process

Feedback on this document will be compiled and appropriate adjustments and clarifications made.

Stage Three: Prepare a Survey for the Student Body

Working with the bylaw review committee, a survey regarding the key issues at stake in General Assembly reform will be created and distributed to the student body. Key issues are likely to include:

- Method of voting (in person vs. online)
- Ability to introduce motions from the floor of the General Assembly
- Accessibility of Robert's Rules
- Effective publicity strategies
- Quorum
- Timing of the GA
- Ability of students to directly call for a GA

Stage Four: Propose Changes & Host a Town Hall

Based on the survey results, the work completed in 2010-2011, research regarding General Assemblies used by other universities, and the ongoing revision of SSMU legislation by the bylaw review committee, 1-3 proposed new sets of bylaws will be created for further feedback. Consultation at this stage will include a Town Hall to discuss the options.

Stage Five: Bring the Proposed Changes to a Vote

Based on the above process, the bylaw review committee will recommend a set of bylaw changes for the consideration of SSMU Council. This document should focus on the option



which seems to be the most supported and effective (or which combines multiple supported and effective elements from different options).

Stage Six: Implementation & Evaluation

Assuming the proposed changes pass in time, the new structure will be tested out at the Winter General Assembly (February 1st). An evaluation of the new structure's strengths and weaknesses in practice will then be completed, with recommendations for any further changes either achieved through a similar process to the above or left as recommendations for the 2012-2013 SSMU Executive and Council to continue.