



Report of the President to Legislative Council

9 January 2014

*Cat Fact: Even though my cat had to have his really cute snaggle tooth removed by a kitty surgeon this week, it is a **fact** that he is still the cutest cat I know.*

SSMU Governance

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Council and Committees – Overall Council was satisfactory last semester. My committees did not meet as early or as often as I would have liked, and it is something I would like to improve upon for next semester. Overall, Council seemed to be a bit inconsistent in content. Next semester I hope that we can use council to be more effective within the SSMU through committee work, and through more interaction with SSMU decisions by the Executive.

Executive Committee – The Executive Committee has worked together extremely well so far this year. Although we have not had consistent group meetings (sorry Stefan!), the team has been supportive of each other and conflict resolution within the group has been handled well. Moving into next semester, we have decided to implement workplan meetings for Executives the same way that other staff at SSMU do this. We felt that this will not only add accountability to ourselves, but will also be beneficial to help us stay on track with our projects and goals. The workplan completion will also help to hand off to successors.

GOVERNANCE BODIES

General Assembly – The second semester GA will be on February 5th!! Mark your calendar and if you are interested in helping out on the day, please email generalassembly@ssmu.mcgill.ca Obviously, we discussed last semester's GAs at length, and the ad-hoc committee on the GA will continue into this semester. On January 28th, SSMU will be hosting an open session on the GA which will allow interested students to come talk about the GA in an open setting. The content for this meeting will need to be created by the ad-hoc committee in collaboration with myself and Jordan.

Judicial Board – The J-Board was not easy to recruit this year. Through the process myself and the HR coordinators have found a good process for approaching this very specific position which will hopefully expedite the process for next year. Additionally, the Ethics Commissioner and I have discussed looking at the J-Board requirements to determine if they are restrictively strict to the formation of this important body.

Board of Directors – Although forming the board this fall was a problem, in the future with online voting hopefully it will not be. The CEO of Elections SSMU and I talked this week about the online BoD election, and the format for how to get nominations from new councillors will be something I work on with the faculties this spring. It will still be a beta year next year, and I anticipate that there will still be further iterations to make sure we have a solidified full-year board at SSMU, but it is a start.



STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Faculty Relations – PRT went well last semester, although I could have been more organized about the structure of the meeting. It will continue this semester and we will continue to discuss issues as well as look into revising the photo contract.

PGSS – We only did a few collaborative events last semester but they were successful. On University committees we have been able to work very positively with PGSS reps.

Governance Document Review – Continue going through the constitution and adding changes. I'll admit I haven't gotten around to it myself but please remember!

Orientation Week – SQ

Handbook – Oh my where to start. Thank you for approving the additional colour pages. Manuella, Becky and I with the help of Tania managed to find and organize everything in Myriam's handbook files. There is one ad missing, that Myriam never followed up on in May and now the company does not have a copy of it either. I have been in contact with them but other than this ad the handbook is ready to go to proof.

SPACE – SQ

Mental Health/Healthy Living Campaign – SQ

McGill Governance & Relations

Lease – I had a lease meeting with Prof Dyens on December 18th to go over a final draft to be submitted to Council.

Board of Governors – One of the successes of the semester was the student/BoG presentation meeting. The Board was impressed and has asked that more student groups make presentations to the Board. This is a step in the right direction, although not extreme they are making an effort to engage more with groups at the University to understand the community more. Additionally, the CAMSR ToR review finally had a meeting on December 12th, where it was decided that it was important to talk to the entire McGill community about the definition of "social injury" that the committee uses. This will be an important process for students to be a part of and I am looking forward to working hard to make sure that as many students as are interested are able to take part.

Senate – This semester at Senate was very polar, I felt. There were a few isolated instances of action but mostly there was a lot of reporting and normal business. Although at Senate itself I tend to take a backseat to the VP UA, the committees of Senate have been important this year, particularly the Committee on Student Services. The students there have done a good job, and have been actively advocating in a strong way.

Alumni Association – The Alumni Association Board is restructuring and will no longer directly include student members at the board but rather into committees. Myself along with the SOAR co-presidents will be working this semester to make recommendations about how an advisory committee for students will be formed. In addition, the MAA has made a effort to look at



student life on campus and how that translates into Alumni relations and McGill Alumni community culture. I think this is long overdue and have been very upfront with how students feel about McGill and about becoming alumni (for example the use of the McGill name as a negative against making students feel a sense of affinity for the University).

McGill Admin – Now after having both a new Principal and DPSLL for a whole semester it is interesting to see how the relationship between SSMU and McGill has changed during that time. Both Profs Fortier and Dyens have done the legwork to meet the community, and make connections. They have both been actively involved with meeting students, and have made an effort to be more accessible. Hopefully the relationship will continue in a positive way.

Sustainability

One of the biggest challenges of the semester was the departure of the Sustainability Coordinator. Although it was probably one of the most stressful months for the entire exec, it has had the positive of re-opening a discussion about how SSMU approaches sustainability institutionally. I am looking forward to working next semester to come up with a recommendation for SSMU going forward. It is also likely that a motion will be coming from some execs or councillors about the fleshed-out mandate of this committee so that students will have a chance to see it and talk about it. The bulk of the consultations will start mid-February with the second Spokes conference put on by the Environment Committee, and then continuing as the committee designs throughout the semester. This is an important opportunity for those who feel strongly about this issue to make an impact.

Overall

The last 7 months have been quite the experience, and at times very difficult. I often feel like the most difficult part of the job is how disjointed the many aspects can be. Hopefully I will be able to focus on making my work more cohesive this semester, but I may be tempting fate just by thinking about it. I am looking forward to this semester even though I know that continued challenges lie ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Larson