



### **Motion Regarding the Creation of a Mental Health Fee**

WHEREAS, mental health is a major concern requiring urgent action on university campuses across North America, with one in five McGill students using mental health services each year<sup>1</sup>;

WHEREAS, the results of the Student Experience Survey conducted in 2014-2015 indicate that SSMU members would like to see increased resources allocated to mental health programming and advocacy<sup>2</sup>;

WHEREAS, the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) is actively involved in lobbying the University to improve mental health support resources, including through the reorganization of service intake and referrals; the review of academic policies to reduce student burden; and the development of a University-Wide Wellness Strategy;

WHEREAS, in this context, student-led initiatives are key to a network of mental health de-stigmatization, prevention and peer counselling efforts on campus;

WHEREAS, this year the SSMU Mental Health Committee has established a Seasonal Affective Disorder "Happy Lights" lending program, expanded creative outreach initiatives, and coordinated the only cross-campus Mental Health Awareness Week;

WHEREAS, due to budgetary constraints, the funding for these and other student-run mental health initiatives, as well as Mental Health Coordinator student staff hours, cannot be increased and will likely be reduced in favour of other areas of the SSMU budget;

WHEREAS, the SSMU Mental Health Policy and Five-Year Plan have both included the establishment of a Mental Health fee levy<sup>3 4</sup>;

WHEREAS, the restricted funds received from this fee would be dedicated towards student-run mental health initiatives including SSMU's annual Mental Health Awareness and similar events and outreach initiatives, student staff to coordinate SSMU's mental health initiatives and advocate for improved University-run services, and towards a Mental Health Fund<sup>5</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> National College Health Assessment Survey, McGill Data, 2014

[https://www.mcgill.ca/healthymcgill/files/healthymcgill/mcgill\\_ncha\\_report\\_dec\\_2014\\_final.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/healthymcgill/files/healthymcgill/mcgill_ncha_report_dec_2014_final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Student Experience Survey Presentation, SSMU Legislative Council, January 14 2016 <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Student-Experience-Survey-Presentation-January-14-2016.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> SSMU Mental Health Policy

<http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Addenda-SSMU-Mental-Health-Policy-2014-02-20.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> SSMU Mental Health Five-Year Plan

<http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Addenda-SSMU-Mental-Health-Five-Year-Plan-2014-02-20.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Refer to Mental Health Fee Budget, Appendix A



WHEREAS, the aforementioned Mental Health Fund would be used for funding mental health-related initiatives, projects, and events run by students and student groups, the funds from which would be disbursed by the Funding Committee. A minimum of one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the total annual fee revenue would go towards the Mental Health Fund;

WHEREAS, a tentative budget for the fee is detailed in Appendix A;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Winter 2016 referendum period:

**Do you agree to the creation of an opt-outable Mental Health Fee of \$0.40 per student per semester, payable by all undergraduate students who are members of the SSMU, starting Fall 2016 and ending in Winter 2021 (inclusive) at which point it will be brought back to the membership for renewal?**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the whereas clauses contained herein be included with the question on the referendum ballot.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Appendix A be included on the ballot;

Moved by:

Chloe Rourke, Vice-President (University Affairs)

David Benrimoh, Senate Caucus Representative

Erin Sobat, Senate Caucus Representative



### Appendix A - Mental Health Fee Revenue Breakdown

Fee Breakdown	Estimated Amount	Notes
Mental Health - General	\$ 2,200.00	To be used for general projects, initiatives, events, and campaigns e.g. Mental Health Awareness Week, Happy Lights Lending Programme, etc.
Mental Health - Staff	\$ 6,000.00	Approximately 400 staff hours (incl. fringe benefits)
Mental Health Fund	\$ 6,500.00	For distribution by the Funding Committee for mental health-related projects, events, etc. This fee would be restricted so that a minimum of 1/3 of the total revenue each year (approx \$4900) goes to the Mental Health Fund

**TOTAL \$ 14,700.00**

Revenue estimation

Gross fee revenue	\$ 17,200.00	<i>est. 21,500 members @ \$0.40 per student per semester</i>
less: opt-outs	\$ (2,580.00)	<i>est. 15%</i>
	<b>\$ <u>14,620.00</u></b>	

APPROVED