



Submitted to Legislative Council, October 12th, 2017

Motion to Acknowledge Rape Culture on McGill Campus and at SSMU

Whereas, rape culture is defined by the Government of Ontario as “[a] culture in which dominant ideas, social practices, media images and societal institutions implicitly or explicitly condone sexual assault by normalizing or trivializing [...] sexual violence and by blaming survivors for their own abuse” (*Government of Ontario, 2016*);

Whereas, rape culture feeds into sexualized stereotypes about certain groups (Indigenous people, racialized groups, trans* and gender diverse communities) and reinforces a belief that they are somehow more likely to abuse, or are “immune” to victimization;

Whereas, rape culture makes us think it is acceptable that our policies, practices, law enforcement, and courts do not respond well to the problem;

Whereas, rape culture facilitates the high rates of sexual violence across university and college campuses;

Whereas, McGill’s Policy Against Sexual Violence does not mention or acknowledge rape culture on campus or the need to address it;

Whereas, the SSMU has committed to the Our Turn National Action Plan to End Campus Sexual Violence;

Be it resolved, that the SSMU recognize that rape culture exists on our campus and that it facilitates the high rates of sexual violence across university and college campuses.

Be it further resolved, that the SSMU recognize its own complicity in perpetuating rape culture in the past and in the present,

Be it further resolved, that the SSMU recognize that individuals with marginalized identities, such as, but not limited to, women, trans* and gender nonconforming people, queer people, people of colour and racialized people, Indigenous people, people with lower socioeconomic status, and people with disabilities, are disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.



Be it further resolved, that the SSMU take meaningful action to combat rape culture and make campus safer for students, staff, faculty and visitors, including consultation with members and community groups on what action it can take.

Be it further resolved, that the SSMU create an Our Turn Task Force, to be composed of members-at-large and to serve as a consultative body, and that the SSMU refer to this Task Force in its work to combat rape culture.

Be it further resolved, that the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) advocate for the acknowledgement of rape culture in the Policy Against Sexual Violence, and within the development of the University's strategy to combat sexual violence, including but not limited to the programming organized by the Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education (O-SVRSE).

Moved by:

Connor Spencer, Vice-President (External Affairs)
Vivian Campbell, Engineering Representative
Caitlin Bazylykut, Nursing Representative

FOR APPROVAL