

## SSMU General Assembly 2014-02-06

### 1) Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 5:18 pm

President Larson: Welcome to the Winter GA. If you have friends who cannot come today, these minutes are available to them online live. There are translators for French translation simultaneously. Thank you for coming.

Speaker: Good evening. My name is Rida and our parliamentarian is Rachel. If you need to leave the room please give your voting card and make sure you sign out and sign back in on your way in. If you know anyone who is coming please tell them to come.

### 2) Approval of the Agenda

#### **Motion to amend agenda by Councillor Benrimoh.**

David Benrimoh -- Medicine: Motion D moved to first motion because I have permission to be late to a class that is mandatory to be here and I'd like to motivate this motion.

Speaker: That would be in order.

Benrimoh: When was it decided to be an external motion?

Speaker: By steering.

Benrimoh: Can I contest it?

Speaker: No.

**Ben Fong: Seconded.**

**The motion passes.**

**The agenda is amended.**

Speaker: We are having mild technical difficulties.

#### **VP Shea motion to adopt agenda.**

**Seconded by Councillor Stewart Kanigan.**

**Adopted.**

### 3) Reports of the Executive Committee

#### a) VP Farnan for report of the executive committee: (Internal Affairs)

Third GA this year so it might be redundant for the returning people. This is a brief update of what we've been doing. Some of it will be repetitious. Bear with me.

*Orientation*: happens at beginning of year. We went over it at first GA and second.

*Quickly through the positives*: one of the best froshes ever seen. Very positive on the security side. Again, all new initiatives were implemented. Minor and specific problems like in the past but new system of Beach Day Busses.

*Negatives*: Budgeting problems. We were at a deficit this year. Mainly ensuring a better budget going forward. Working with General Manager, internal accountants and VP of Finances. Due to new initiatives, we'll be ensuring more efficiency next year.

*Communications*: Big step (again a little redundant) but we had guides for communications. This has helped for work flow and standards. We have improved on listserv, website, and online activities. We increased efficiency there.

*Website*: re organizing website, looking at dead-links and homepage.

*Listserv*: both positive and negatives:

- Positives: higher readership, consistent interaction with content.
- Negatives: instance where new checking system was implemented and didn't catch a certain image. We've learned a lot though. Also saw a lot of student involvement concerning this issue and so can be viewed as positive.

*Multi-media*: TVM for SSMEWS episodes. Consolidation of SSMU instagram. Overhaul of social media, we've attained all our goals for the year at our half point so we've been growing with these goals.

*Publications*: Yearbook. Complete overhaul! Complete revamp of staff and management of yearbook. We've already beaten last year's total sales! Very good on that point!

*Events*: Four Floors. Work with the Equity and Sustainability Commissioners throughout planning. We collaborated with VP of University Affairs on it too.

*Events*: Faculty Olympics: working with SSP, working on participation and competitiveness. Coming the weekend of March 13th.

Awards ceremony: flaws last year in organization in how it would go. So moving forward we are changing things making it more of a celebration and ceremony for services that make up SSMU. A whole evening too. April 3rd. Make sure everyone knows and good luck anyone who is participating!

Red and White: Final project of the year, in president's portfolio. New initiative. First weekend of May. Especially if you're graduating: stick around, going to be amazing! Prepare you more for afterwards.

*Centraide*: I really enjoyed my time on this. They reached out to SSMU to participate. It's a really cool community. People look at it but see it as a big organization hard to interact with. But actually very fun interacting with. A lot of volunteer work and links McGill students have are already supported by Centraide. So very happy to be involved with this cause. We want more involvement and awareness next year.

Questions:

Arts constituent: Is red and white the same as Grad Frosh?

VP Farnan: it has been associated with that term colloquially. Yes.

b) VP Finances' Report by VP Hofmeister:

I sign the checks and make sure every transaction is okay, and do mini courses, the Nest, and Gert's finances. The largest portfolio is the budget: I will be creating the budget for next year. I will be done the current budgets this February. Slowly but surely. Thanks to last VP finances, because of the overhaul of all the banking, I was able to look through everything and was able to double the capital accounts. Should save us thousands of dollars every year.

*Clubs*: changed club audits procedure. Now will be more predictable.

*Services:* changing by-laws surrounding Student Life Fund. This is to put extra capital in this account. Going to change it so that things like clubs not funded by fees can access that money.

*Operations:* Gert's has a jukebox! We got a foosball table now! We have poutine and chili additions to the menu. Minicourses have had a record year for registration. Moved some classes to actual dance studios.

*The Nest:* SRC very successful this semester already. Management committee is in place (go over SRC, goals for SRC is it worth subsidizing for SSMU).

*Financial Ethics Research Committee:* looked into research into implementation of the purchasing policy that was assed several years ago.

*Funding committee:* they've been allocating funding, now we are doing it for another semester. We changed the accounting side of it this semester. Thank you!

Questions: None.

c) VP Shea University Affairs

*Governance:* I sit on university committees, senate. I'm responsible of student allocations, deal with senators and senate caucuses. Senate is the highest governing body of the university, deals with academic policies. 107 members, 13 of which are students.

*Executive Duties:* report to GA, council, and senate committee. Specifically within my own portfolio: research projects, equity, etc.

*Personal Projects:*

1. Mental Health: committee, various steps of mental health across campus. It will be brought tomorrow to council.
2. Formal consent: football team allegations and sexual harassment at McGill. Feb 26, 4-7pm in ballroom -- important to show up.
3. International students: there's a lot of red tape right now because of different laws. We are working on that.
4. Equity research projects: looking at our policies and comparing them with other societies.

Questions:

Jake -- Arts: Last Tuesday at AUS council -- I'm working with Dean to talk about contracts. First off when did SSMU hear about course cuts and what actions are you planning to do?

VP Shea: The first I heard was at senate caucus on Monday night from representative Jasmine. It was brought up and we haven't developed a plan of action yet. The good thing about SSMU and my role, we don't get into a turf war because we're elected by arts students. In terms of plans, we are definitely interested in working with new ideas.

d) Fong -- Clubs and Services

### *First part: General Overview*

A lot of things under my portfolio -- manage relations between SSMU and its Clubs and Services and Independent Study Groups. A lot of my job consists of allocations. One of the main things I do is deal with joining clubs and new clubs, I am also one of the managers of the building and I manage student staff in the clubs and services portfolio. Also I sit on the ssmu daycare and CKUT.

2. Accomplishments: New Room Booking procedures (12k requests last semester). Also did new office allocation procedures. Better listserv management, detailed form analytics, up to date membership. Did the 4th floor cleanup: we had a mouse situation and are currently dealing with that but the 4th floor was the worst and I dealt with that. Cleared up the junk there. New building hours and portering schedule to accommodate peak booking hours. Between 4-7 we don't only have 1 porter now. Revamped that so that we have 2 porters during peak hours.

Lastly: building modifications: renovations to Lev Buhkman room and ballroom to rent it out. Past week: misconduct in building (2 incidents): fire alarm pulled without just cause. Important to take care of safety. We had to pay fines. Fine comes out of student fees.

We don't want to be paying thousands of dollars in fines. One of the signs upstairs has broken off the wall. These are unexpected costs. I recommend that you always tell someone when you see something suspicious.

Mice infestation: a lot fewer sightings since last semester.

*Upcoming projects:* Revamp of by-laws and clubs and services. Make it simple for people to understand. Services transition and promo videos. Lev Buhkman renovations and Club Hub. Fantastic project: designed to be this online club management portal. Find out your status online and deal with things online. Get the info out. Emails not needed for information with Club Hub.

### e) VP External Sam or VP Harris

Three main parts of my job:

1. Community Relations
2. Political campaigns
3. External affairs.

1. TaCEQ: as many of you probably heard, REMDUS voted in last referendum to leave TaCEQ, there will be only 3 associations in TaCEQ, this has brought us to question our own membership. I would recommend coming to council tomorrow if interested. We aren't going to make any decisions without thinking.
  - Laurent Proulx court case: something that will happen into the summer, it's something TaCEQ are involved in and it's still worth fighting for and maintaining regardless of our involvement in TaCEQ.
2. Political campaigns:

- Anti-Charter Values: Working with Inner and Inter University collaboration. Few responses but waiting on more. Very important to get students to express their opposition to the charter and statistics show that youth are into this issues. Regardless of language we are all working together against this. Possibly March 22nd we will be doing a protest. Because of 2 years ago March 22nd there was a huge protest in the streets. We are involved in other actions as well as working on responding to the rejection of our petition.
- Community Relations and Engagement: always new things happening, always new things. Respectfulness around the neighbourhood. We have initiatives and street teams.

### Questions

Justin Fletcher – Arts: Question regarding Holiday Inn: what kind of relations will the Milton Parc residents have with the buyout?

VP Harris: I have not taken an official position about them so I can't comment further than that but it is an issue and I think it's something Council will do something about.

### f) President's report: Katie Larson

There are 99 people in the room! I kept it simple. Going to explain bullet points and if you have questions about what I do, let me know.

#### *Highlights of last semester:*

- Constitution was passed last semester. Cleaned it up, easier to read.
- SEAMLESS: went well, Joshua did the meeting last year, bringing together all execs and campus leaders. Networking. Getting a sense of projects on campus.
- GA: interesting semester, special GA, kind of rocky, we made an ad hoc committee about GA because of it. People don't really think anything of the GA, we had an info session last week and we had 6 people. It's a good opportunity to talk about the GA, what you want and need from the GA.
- New Principal and new Deputy Provost. Great to meet them and get them involved in what we're doing.

#### *Last semester challenges:*

- Sustainability: lost the coordinator and it was difficult. People didn't show up to the committee then instituted to replace him. So we have to work on that going forward and there's a motion about it this GA.
- Budget Cuts: Where to make up for lost revenue, very tough, cut a lot, no bagels today! We got through it and able to change for next year.
- Lease Negotiation: worked on those last semester, happy to report we made substantial progress. We should be hearing about it soon.

#### *Looking forward:*

- Lease progress over the next couple of weeks.

- By-laws: out of date and need revisions. We are looking at re-separating by-laws. Council is a different part of governing systems, important for those people to have consistent jobs.
- Sustainability Committee and continuing consultations.
- Red and White week: super exciting, good chance for graduating students to have a good ending and have support. McGill isn't too big on helping graduates so we're hoping to celebrate conclusion of degree and look forward. Networking with alumni and being part of McGill community after your degree. After you leave university, it's not going to be a system of club and services so you have to be able to be engaged in community.

### Questions

Theo -- Arts: Students are not interested in the GA. Can we get rid of it?

Larson: The reason we have a GA is because of our size it doesn't mean we have to have quorum or motions so one suggestion is that we could remove the type of GA we have now and change to just a meeting. Encourage you to come out to info sessions and consultation sessions, we could use your input on priorities.

Arts constituent: Are there motion writing workshops for constituents to come and contribute ideas to council?

Larson: There was an info session, poorly attended. That was an opportunity to learn more about motions and these kinds of things. As far as council writing motions no not specifically, generally councillor hold office hours and are open to hearing things like that.

Jess -- Arts: Grad Frosh: What will be the approximate cost?

Larson: Probably going to be 40\$ for each participant, then an additional 30\$ for party-orientated Grad Frosh.

Bell -- Arts: What's the status of new coordinator of sustainability?

Larson: As you may have noted, I put up a motion to discuss this today. Right now there's a mandate for SSMU to take care of that but for right now, I don't have answer for that yet. It depends on the type of goal that students see fit.

Fletcher -- Arts: Given that faculties do their own career stuff, what type of consulting have you done with faculties?

Larson: Most of faculties were very degree specific and what we're looking for is not career oriented stuff but a better rounded perspective. A lot of what we want to talk about is general networking, McGill networking, as a support networking. There will be opportunities for networking for a career too though. Not a central focus though.

Speaker: We cannot proceed with the next motion because we need 500 quorum. Not reached.

#### 4) New Business

a) Motion Regarding Inclusion of Academic Assessment Rights on Course Outlines  
Claire Stewart Kanigan: Since 2011, McGill had assessment policies that outlines professors aren't allowed to have exams worth more than 75% of grade without another option, etc. A lot of testimonies of students are saying professors are not respecting this. So we thought a good way of enforcing this is to have this included in course outlines. An academic rights part of outline included now where the plagiarism is. It would be great to have a strong student mandate to move forward from GA.

Fletcher -- Arts: I commend you for this. What if this motion is passed tonight or student council, what the time line will be? Like fall 2014?

Stewart Kanigan: David said he was interested. He said going forward we should discuss with the student rights committee. I think it'll have more weight if we have a student mandate too. The timelines will be more generic but I see no reason not to be in place for fall 2014. Also we are writing a question a senate about this. So we could get input from university as to what they're doing about spreading info about academic rights.

**Brian Farnan motion to previous question**

**VP Hofmeister seconded.**

**[Quorum was reached at this time.]**

**4 abstaining**

**96 for**

**Motion adopted**

Point of parliamentary inquiry from David Benrimoh: Why were the movers not advised it was an external motion?

Speaker: As far as I am aware it was clear.

Benrimoh: No.

Speaker: As far as I am aware yes, you can email me otherwise.

b) Motion Regarding Sustainability at the SSMU  
[Katie Larson read resolved clauses available online]

Larson: Sustainability at SSMU is handled by an ad hoc committee right now but it has floundered because of scheduling problems and disinterest. We need to look at this publicly and report on it at GA to be transparent. The GA is better than council in this case because more of the student body is here. Floor opened for debate.

[No debators]

**VP Shea motion to move into voting procedure**

**Seconded by Councillor Ibrahim**

**Passed**  
**26 abstaining**  
**0 opposed**  
**Motion adopted.**

c) Motion Regarding the Timely Distribution of Course Information

[Movers read clauses available online]

VP Shea: In order for students to make informed decisions, they need to do so in advance. Helps students organize their schedules properly. It's a bit vague, we're looking for a lot of cooperation so it's useful to have flexibility. If you want this to be made into university wide policy, we have to apply it to all faculties. That's why it's vague.

Floor opened for debate:

Fletcher -- Arts: I really like spirit of motion but syllabi – what's the plan of implementation? A lot of great ideas are difficult to implement so what are some concrete steps?

VP Shea: At last senate caucus meeting, we drafted what the changes to the policies would be.

Stewart Kanigan -- Arts: Question regarding not resolved clause: spirit of motion is to get course syllabus out before beginning of semester or at least before add drop

Shea: It's to make sure information is available even if the student is not registered to the course – just available online. Also before the first class would be good.

Stewart Kanigan: Making them available to students not registered is maybe something that should be included that in the motion to make it clearer.

Alex -- Engineering: What's the point of this policy if that's what the add drop period is for?

Shea: It's actually a lot to do with textbooks. It gets difficult when you want to buy something cheaper like on Amazon, we may not have time in add/drop to make that decision. Also students don't have all the time in the world to attend all the classes they might want. Also to speak to the scheduling part: the spirit is for students who have to leave during semester, for them to plan out when to schedule flights and stuff it would be helpful to know when the exams and assignments are.

Stewart Kanigan -- Arts: I would like to propose an amendment -- additional resolved clause -- be it resolved that the information be available online to students prior to registering in a course.

**VP Farnan motion to previous question**

**Shea seconded**  
**Motion passed**



**10 abstaining**

**0 opposed**

**Motion adopted.**

d) Motion Regarding the Guarantee of Freedom of Dress in the SSMU Building  
[Be it resolved clauses read by movers available online]

Morgan: This comes out of us realizing that SSMU has power to ban clothing. Trench coats banned from SSMU building! Frosh shirts! etc. I don't think that's right, I think that if they think that something is offensive, it should be dealt with on a case to case basis. That's about all I have to say. I think as a progressive student association, we should have this in place.

Stewart Kanigan -- Arts: I will speak to the 2nd resolved clause, what kind of implementation?

Morgan: That part of it doesn't matter to me. Or it does matter to me, but if a SSMU exec sees someone wearing something offensive, they should go up to them individually, or an equity commissioner, and shouldn't be unilaterally decided.

Natasha -- Arts: What was your opinion on four floors? A group of people doing case by case, should it be in a similar format?

Morgan: Yes! Exactly the kind of thing that needs to be in place. If ssmu wants to stand at the doors and look, it's their prerogative.

Science constituent: Please elaborate on the policy and what has been done in past?

Morgan: They (SSMU) have banned lab coats but I don't know the extent of what was done in the past.

Shea -- Arts: Please shed some light on background of what prompted this motion.

Morgan: Me, realizing there was a possibility of a ban.

Shea: So no specific incident in the 2012-2013 year?

Morgan: That incident did bring it to my attention.

Shea: Do you feel that the GA needs to know what the context was and could you elaborate?

Morgan: Philharmonic orchestra received a letter from SSMU exec saying that they denounced the philharmonic orchestra. They didn't say what constituted the offensive lab coats but they blanket banned lab coats from the building. I don't think it should be all banned.

Arts and Science constituent: If following SSMU policy, do you think complaints will be resolved in timely manner if case by case?

Morgan: The way it works now, probably not, but SSMU should look into a way of resolving it in a timely fashion.

Shea: Did the PPO receive this notice out of the blue?

Morgan: Yes, we were invited to an awards banquet, and 2 days later they were uninvited because of reasons they said. We were re-invited after exchanges and we went to ssmu awards banquets and we wore our lab coats and we were asked not to wear our lab coats and we wore them anyway. We did receive a letter that we had promised we wouldn't wear them but there were a lot of rumours. I forgot what I was saying.

Brandon -- Engineering: Was there ever an equity complaint or record of equity violation?

Morgan: No. If there had been then we would have been notified and had the opportunity to respond but it was just an executive resolution.

Southey – Science: Was this decision online or public?

Morgan: No. Only in private.

Fletcher -- Arts: Would you argue that lab coats are not offensive?

Morgan: That's the basis of the motion. I think there are some offensive lab coats. When people join the organization, they receive a lab coat with drawings on it. They keep it for life. In years past, they were all very homophobic and sexist but as an organization we recognize it's not what we want to be or who we want to be. So you do see the vestiges of old members once in a while. And each offensive one should be banned but most are not offensive.

Shea -- Arts: do you think that it would be a good use of the student resources of having roaming equity commissioners?

Morgan: No but I also don't think it's a good use of time to write letters banning entire clothing.

Natasha – Arts: What are you fighting for? Why is it important (the lab coats)?

Morgan: As individuals of this organization, these lab coats represent all our accomplishments and history and identity. I don't think that should be stripped from us.

Ayukawa -- Arts: Some of these lab coats are offensive but not all are do you think an additional resolved clause involving the review of lab coats could be friendly?

Morgan: No I don't think that's a good use of everyone's time.

Kanigan – Arts: It's not a good use of time, but that's what the motion is suggesting?

Morgan: if you want to go through 85 years of lab coats, you can, but going through is not important I don't think.

Fletcher – Arts: Why hasn't the PPO taken more responsibility in the offensive lab coats?

Morgan: I think it's each individual member's freedom to do that. As a leader don't feel comfortable policing coats and I'll leave it up to them to decide whether it's offensive.

Engineering constituent: Is this not actually only asking on the basis on one subset of clothing, asking that you can ban one thing not all things?

Morgan: Yes.

Engineering constituent: The grand motion is very broad. Are you trying to ensure that all students can wear what they want unless it offends someone?

Morgan: Yes.

Josh – Arts: Are there sexual assault or racism on the coats?

Morgan: No undergrads right now that have that, no.

Shea -- Arts: Is it a contradiction to ask SSMU to police clothing and yet you as a member don't want to police them yourself?

Speaker: This is a question about opinion rather than motion itself. Not in order.

Natasha -- Arts: Would you be amenable to the coats being subject to a public formal complaint?

Morgan: not really sure what you're asking. But I think it's not okay for things to be banned in total.

Engineering constituent: How long has the PPO voluntarily not been including racial/derogatory terms on lab coats?

Morgan: 2 years possible longer but I wasn't involved before then.

Josh -- Arts: any other bans in ssmu history?

Morgan: I don't know.

Shea -- Arts: shed light on situation I have to admit that I personally wasn't UA at the time. The reason why the complaint wasn't filed against PPO was because they're not an official SSMU group.

Alex -- Engineering: I'd like to remind everyone to bring back to the root of the motion. Not trying to implement policing -- just trying to bring in individuality in bans and not just banning full subsets of clothing.

Morgan -- Engineering: proposed amendment by Southey is not friendly.

Speaker: We are not yet discussing this.

Ben -- Arts: I'd like to speak for the motion. These things are wide -- at the point where SSMU can say you can't draw offensive things on lab coats. Execs shouldn't be able to just ban clothing. It would be find to have a reset on lab coats and set up rule on continuous violations and ban lab coats if it becomes impractical to ban them one by one. If the lab coats that they keep bringing to SSMU are offensive then ban the lab coats again through SSMU council.

Shea -- Arts: This motion is asking ssmu equity to look to each clothing and determine if equitable or not and yet the origin of the issue comes from an organization where its own leader doesn't even want to police the clothing theirself. I think substantial changes need to be made before this can be approved.

Engineering constituent: It makes more sense in context of 4floors. If something is offensive, you say get it out of here you can't have this. You can't ban costumes, you can ban this specific costume. That's the spirit of the motion.

Natasha -- Arts: If you look at things that are offensive on campus, and if frosh shirts are considered inequitable, SSMU is supposed to represent students. Unless the ban is applied to groups like frosh or certain costumes. The argument that it could be a waste of resources to check individual is not a good argument.

Fletcher: Essentially this is a fair war between EUS and PPO and SSMU policies. If SSMU decides lab coats are not okay with their policies. What really troubles me is that leader could not take responsibility for what's on their lab coats.

Engineering constituent: Basically saying that one group or individual wearing a type of garment makes it okay to ban that clothing completely. Having that kind of ban on one group is against equity for all which is SSMU's policy.

Stewart Kanigan: Would it be amenable to strike resolved clause (lift ban right now) and replace it with the one we are proposing right now?

Southey: amendment would be just added to bottom.

Morgan: Since PPO isn't an official McGill group, it's not SSMU's mandate to go through our lab coats. If you want to do that you can make a separate motion to do that. It's not within SSMU's mandate to police what people wear outside the building.

Stephanie -- Engineering: amendment to amendment. Would like to remove word remove.

Farnan -- Arts: Is this amendment permanent adjustment or is this an adjustment to be made when individual with inequitable clothing is within building.

Southey: meant IN building. Please add that to the amendment.

Ibrahim -- arts: In my mind essentially this leaves room for similar actions to be taken so this asks for ban to be lifted.

Stewart Kanigan: I'd like to speak in favour of this amendment. It's confusing because it was supposed to be evaluated case by case, the mover said that she didn't want to ask members to censor lab coats, so I'm confused by that.

Frederic engineering: With the new amendment of amendment -- only in ssmu it comes back to original motion.

**Ben move to voting procedure on amendment motion passed.**

**21 for**

**35 against**

**29 abstaining**

**Ben motioned to call to question**

**Fong motioned to divide the question**

Speaker: done when in voting procedure.

**Motion to amend by Shea**

**Motion to move to voting procedure**

**Seconded by Fong.**

Fong motioned to divide -- Arts: some of the resolved clauses denote different things. I would like to be able to vote on resolved clauses separately.

Ayukawa: can it be larger?

Speaker: yes, working on that.

[Resolved Clauses were read out loud -- available online]

**All those in favor of dividing the question into resolve clauses separately:**

**37 for**

**29 against**

**Motion passed**

**First Be it Resolved Clause all those for:**

**44 for**

**3 against**

**28 abstentions**

**This passes.**

**Second Be it Resolved Clause:**

**51 for**

**7 against**

**18 abstention**

**This passes.**

**Third Be it Resolved Clause**

**37 for**

**20 against**

**20 abstentions**

**This passes.**

**The motion passes as a whole.**

**Motion to adjourn Brian Farnan 7:25pm**

**Seconded by Fong**

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:25 pm**

Approved