

Student Advocacy Resource Committee  
Head Steward's Report  
March, 2014  
For SSMU Council and the General Public

*Note: due to confidentiality requested by our Requesters, names and certain details have been left out of this report. If further details are required by Council, these may be provided by the Head Steward at an in camera session of Council*

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## 1. Update on Structure, Set-Up and Advertising:

**Structure:** There have been no changes in structure. Currently, our UAC comprises of Daegan Sit (Head Steward), Ariele Peterson (Triage Steward Representative) and Umair Khan (Steward Representative).

Our members are:

- Daegan Sit, Head Steward
- Sara Behar, Campus Issues Steward & Ombudsperson
- Pouya Bandegi, Campus Issues Steward
- Jen Wong, Campus Issues Steward
- Ayad Ali, Campus Issues Steward
- Umair Khan, Campus Issues Steward (UAC)
- Kanika Wadhwa, Services Steward
- Ariele Peterson, Triage Steward (UAC)
- Richad Hirani, Student Government Steward
- Brett Hartley, Volunteer
- Layla Makhzoumi, Volunteer
- Meira Davidowitz, Volunteer
- Aila Khan, Volunteer (Advertising Role)
- Yasmin Ali, Volunteer

**Advertising Plan:** Currently, we are working on a low-budget strategy of listservs and social media. We have a Steward and a Volunteer dedicated to these tasks. Moreover, we hope to start to contact counselors and more McGill staff to make them aware of our services so that they may suggest PARC to students that need our help.

One of our members has been working on an infographic that will be useful in communicating our objectives and a step-by-step methodology that we help students on campus.

We would also like to seek out assistance in obtaining a SSMU email and a small standard budget for promotional materials.

## 2. Case Reports:

Here you will find reports on all our open cases; the original case report, if one exists, is reproduced, followed by an update.

### 2.1 Graduate Student Case

Steward in Charge: Daegan Sit

Consulting Stewards and Volunteers: Brett Hartley, Ariele Peterson

Previous Stewards and Volunteers: Richad Hirani, Yasmin Ali, Dana Levin

The requester for this case has asked for complete confidentiality. Also, to protect the identity of this requester, we must limit the information presented about this case.

Overview of the case:

The requester has asked for increased recognition of the previously undefined process for resolving conflicts between supervisors for research projects and students. Moreover, the student also wants McGill to adopt a proactive role for the defense of the degrees it confers. To achieve this, our plan of action was to approach both PGSS and SSMU and to create legislature that would implement his ideas and put pressure on McGill Staff to create new policies.

The case thus far:

- We have done extensive research on NSERC agreements (made between professor, student, university and industry); intellectual property agreements; current policies by McGill relevant to this case; and similar policies at other universities.
- We have created two pieces of legislation: one in regards to conflicts between professors and students and one that addresses McGill's policies to defending its degrees. They ask that
- We have presented these pieces of legislation to a SSMU councilor and they were successfully passed.
- We are currently trying to pass similar legislation with PGSS

## 2.2 Food Case

Steward in Charge: Umair Khan

Consulting Stewards and Volunteers: Sara Behar

Overview of the case:

A new requester wanted changes in the meal plan for students in residence. She would like a change in policy in regards to how unused money left over after the second year is automatically deducted to zero. This requester will give us more details on the case and what she would like us to accomplish, but feels that the requirement to purchase and use up the meal plan within a restricted amount of time is unfair, especially with those who have dietary restrictions (and thus can only eat a smaller variety of offered food).

The case thus far:

One of our Stewards has set up a meeting date with this requester and we will come up with a plan of action. Research has already been conducted on Food Plan

policies at PARC.

### 2.3 External Contract Case

Steward in Charge: Jennifer Wong

Consulting Stewards and Volunteers: Ayad Ali, Meira Davidowitz

The requester for this case has asked for complete confidentiality. Also, to protect the identity of this requester, we must limit the information presented about this case.

#### Overview of the case:

A student group is negotiating between an external organization and a larger student group. There are disagreements on where liability stands between both the student groups and the external organization. The requester's student group is trying to a) create a contract agreeable to all parties or b) separate from the larger organization.

#### The case thus far:

We have met with the requester. Currently, we have to look at similar contracts that the external organization has made with other student groups to determine if there is any chance of leniency with the contract. Email correspondence to several universities have been sent, and we have been re-directed towards various student organizations. Evaluations of the applicable similarities between contracts is being conducted.

### 2.4 Retake Case

Steward in Charge: Kanika Wadhwa

Consulting Stewards and Volunteers: Maymanat Nazari

The requester for this case has asked for complete confidentiality

#### Overview of the case:

-Our requester, who is not named for confidentiality reasons, would like the Subcommittee on Student Affairs Policies to consider allowing students who have received above a C but below an A in a class to retake that class in order to improve their grade (but not for new credits).

#### The case thus far:

We submitted a proposal, which listed out ideas for the implementation of the policy, the benefits and challenges of its implementation, as well as thoughts on how to overcome the challenges to the Subcommittee on Student Affairs

Policies. We received feedback from them on major points that we addressed. We are in the process of seeking more information about how this policy is implemented at other universities in Canada and hope to submit a re-proposal if we have substantial evidence as to why this policy is effective and thus, should be implemented.

## 2.5 SSMU Research Regard Fees

Steward in Charge: Brett Hartley  
Consulting Stewards and Volunteers: Ariele Peterson

### Overview of the case:

Our requester has asked us to do research concerning the pay of staff members of SSMU.

### The case thus far:

We have researched policies at other universities as well as policies for public organizations that collect fees. We have also begun contacting the student governments of other universities.

## 2.6 Creation of a new Actuary Program

Steward in Charge: Daegan Sit

### Overview of the case:

Our requester has asked us to help implement a new a program in the math department of actuary science.

### The case thus far:

We are currently waiting on the requester to schedule a meeting with one of our stewards and the Math Departmental organization to discuss how we can assist them.

## 3. Plan for the Coming Months:

- We will continue pushing cases forward.
- We will make our services aware to SSMU councilors and perform research roles where necessary.
- We plan to explore new options for advertising by reaching out to McGill staff channels and student groups.