

## **Motion Regarding Commitment to Mental Health Promotion and Awareness**

*Whereas*, one in five people will experience a mental illness over the course of their lifetime

*Whereas*, a recent study surveying more than 30 000 Canadian students found an increase in mental health issues as compared to previous year's results<sup>i</sup>[i]

*Whereas*, the study found that 90 percent of students said that they felt overwhelmed by all they had to do in the past year, more than 50 percent said they felt hopeless, 63 percent said they felt very lonely, 9.5 percent said they had seriously considered taking their own lives in the past year and 1.3 percent had attempted suicide<sup>ii</sup>[ii]

*Whereas*, many who suffer from mental health issues experience prejudice and discrimination

*Whereas*, the World Health Organization had identified stigma as a "hidden burden" of mental illness and a major public health challenge<sup>iii</sup>[iii]

*Whereas*, the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has challenged signatories to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability, including but not limited to raising awareness and eliminating stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices<sup>iv</sup>[iv]

*Whereas*, Canada is among one of the 150 signatories to this convention<sup>v</sup>[v]

*Whereas*, McGill's campus services are overwhelmed, under-promoted and unfamiliar to many students and the administration has limited resources with which to support student-run mental health initiatives

*Whereas*, there are many clubs and initiatives dedicated to Mental Health across McGill and SSMU but are dispersed and disconnected

*Whereas*, the SSMU does not currently have a policy regarding Mental Health

*Be it resolved that*, the SSMU be mandated to promote a mentally healthy community

*Be it resolved that*, the SSMU support students who are trying to bring awareness and reduce stigma and who are offering peer mental health support

*Be it resolved that*, an ad-hoc committee of Council be convened and dedicated to mental health issues and work to make connections with relevant parties across both McGill and the SSMU so that these services can work more efficiently together

*Be it resolved that*, this committee will draft a Mental Health policy before the end of the 2013-2014 academic year

Moved by,  
Joey Shea, Vice-President, University Affairs  
Katie Larson, President  
Brian Farnan, Vice-President Internal  
Sam Harris, Vice-President External  
Stefan Fong, Vice-President Clubs and Services  
Tyler Hoffmeister, Vice-President Finance and Operations

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i[i] [http://www.cacuss.ca/Library/documents/Canadian\\_S13\\_Ref\\_Grp\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_1\\_copy.pdf](http://www.cacuss.ca/Library/documents/Canadian_S13_Ref_Grp_Executive_Summary_1_copy.pdf)

ii[ii] Ibid.

iii[iii] <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/commentary/overcoming-mental-illness-means-overcoming-stigma/article12480148/>

iv[iv] <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

v[v] <http://www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=17&pid=166>