



SSMU Fall General Assembly – October 22, 2014

1. Call to Order

Speaker: Welcome to the SSMU GA. We apologize for the delay but that's what happens when more people show up to a GA.

A couple of important announcements:

This is a safe space: please remember to keep your comments respectful and polite. If I hear any comments or non-adherence to safe space rules you will be asked to leave. Mood watchers are wearing blue t-shirts; please address them with any concerns or uncomfortableness. The Peer Support Network is also waiting on standby. Please limit your support to snaps. Snaps not claps. Talking needs to be kept to an absolute minimum too. This is a logistical nightmare. In order for it to go smoothly I need to see what's going on. If you need French, we have a whisper translator. The minutes are available in French and English live and after the meeting. I understand most people do not know Robert's Rules, but that's the procedure. If you need help or questions, find anyone wearing a red t-shirt, you can ask them. They know what's going on. We ask that you please stay seated, if you wish to speak, the microphones are located in front of the green tape indicating where you can speak. I know a lot of people will want to speak at once but please don't stampede. Be careful of fingers and toes too. If you are not press or volunteer members, stay out of the aisles. We need the aisles for security reasons.

"I now open the floor for debate" or "Anyone would like to speak to this" are signs that you can speak. You can watch but you cannot speak if you are not a member of SSMU. Currently the speaking time is 10 minutes. You may only speak twice to a motion for or against. We have many members here. Unless this changes from a motion on the floor, these are the rules. You have all voting and speaking privileges in the ballroom as well. We have people working to make sure everyone is heard equally. If you have questions you can ask the volunteers upstairs too. Voting: anyone who tries to commit voting fraud (voting twice, voting for someone else, and handing in 2 ballots, anything of the sort) will be expelled. This is a very contentious issue on the floor and we want to make sure everything is going according to procedure. There are two kinds of votes. One is procedural: voting yes or no (everyone must vote always). A substantive vote is about things like motions. These votes can be yes, no or abstain.

[Speaker effectuates a practice round.]

If I need to count ballots, I will be announcing it beforehand. The volunteers will collect the ballots in the area they are assigned to. You hand your ballot in when you want to vote and we will tally them. You cannot tamper with the ballot of another person. This is grounds for immediate removal from the room.



Just to clarify: the volunteers in red are to count ballots. Purple volunteers are runners from room to room, pink are regulating doors, and blue are Peer Support and mood watchers.

The General Assembly was called to order at 6:03pm.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Speaker: Are there any points or motions on the floor about adopting the agenda?

Councillor Benrimoh (Medicine): I'd like to add two motions; I would like to add a Motion Regarding Solidarity with Students in Hong Kong to New Business.

Speaker: That needs to be seconded and pass with a 2/3 majority vote.

The motion was seconded.

The motion to add the Motion Regarding Solidarity with Students in Hong Kong was adopted. It will be added to New Business as item e).

Speaker: Any other points or motions regarding the agenda?

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: We would also like to add the Motion Regarding Solidarity Against Austerity.

Speaker: Is there a second?

The motion was seconded.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: Basically the motion is about letter cuts to McGill University. \$21 million was cut from McGill; this motion is to oppose these cuts.

The motion to add a Motion Regarding Solidarity Against Austerity was adopted. It will be added to New Business as item f).

McKenzie (Arts): I ask that item d) be moved to the top of the agenda of New Business.

Speaker: However just so you know, the Board of Directors nominations will be moved above it. This requires simple majority to pass.

The motion to move item d) to the top of the agenda for New Business passes.

Ameya Pendse (Arts): I motion to move item 4 to item 3.



Speaker: The order of the agenda is in the by-laws. You would have to suspend the rules. Seeing as the reports last three minutes each, I'd like to use this time as a buffer. Would you like to rescind the motion?

[Motion is rescinded.]

3. Report of the Executive Committee

a) Report of the Vice-President (Internal)

VP Chaim: Throughout the summer my role was planning Orientation Week for McGill. I'd prefer if you went through my report to see. Highlights: Milton-Parc community projects. Everyone was very happy with Orientation Week. It was really successful. I worked on a listserv revamp too. You saw the new layout this week. I hope to include more submissions every week. Upcoming events: next Thursday is 4 Floors. On Monday and Tuesday we will have ticket sales until 4:00pm. Regarding the costume campaign: be respectful of costume choices. Get ready for great events for the rest of the year. Any questions?

Speaker: Seeing none, we are moving on to the VP Finance and Operations.

b) Report of the Vice-President (Finance and Operations)

VP Bradley: My report will be short and sweet. My major roles are to develop and approve the annual budget. I work with all 20 services in the authorization of their funds. I work on the Long-Term Financial Plan too. I also deal with the investment portfolio. I also work with the dental and health plan for students. If you have questions, come ask me! Everything you need to know about our financials is online. If you don't know how to read a budget, come see me since they are super boring. If you're interested in The Nest or Gert's, you can get involved by emailing me. We also work with Funding Committee; if you're looking for funding or know someone who is, go see the Funding Committee. This year we will be working with the ethical purchasing program and long-term financial sustainability. If you're interested, just let me know. If you have any questions email me or I stand for questions.

Rachel: Are there any questions from the floor? Seeing none, we will move on to the VP University Affairs.

c) Report of the Vice-President (University Affairs)

VP Stewart-Kanigan: I'm VP Stewart Kanigan. I'm basically kind of like a VP Academic plus. I work with Senate and mental health. I have to deal with everything to do with libraries. I coordinate Senate Caucus; they represent your interest in Senate which is the highest form of student government. One of the biggest things I'm working on is passing the Sexual Assault Policy. I am working on re-establishing the academic roundtable and I am also passing academic assessment rights. Equity is also under me. I oversee the Equity Policy. Some projects include indigenous awareness such as SSMU and McGill level



indigenizing the academy policies, as well as implementing Equity Policy research. Mental health is a new part of my portfolio. There is a new Mental Health Coordinator and new policies. For SSMU-university relations, I am working on a SSMU-McGill MOA. We want it to be as public and transparent as possible. There's a big Library Improvement Fund going on so if you need any information about that let me know! Questions?

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: What's an MOA?

VP Stewart Kanigan: Memorandum of Agreement.

d) Vice-President, Clubs & Services

VP Fong: SSMU has 255 clubs and services. He worked hard over the summer to complete the club archives. Now we are happy to say more clubs are active this year than last year. They came to our workshops. We also held the first fall Services' Summit this semester. Walksafe, Drive Safe and Midnight Kitchen came to this info session about how to be good services to students. If you have recommendations too they'd be happy to hear them. This year it was very difficult to plan Activities Night. I apologize for it being more hectic than usual. I am working on the Club Hub to make it more efficient. The last thing is the myInvolvement Pilot project, to track volunteer and extracurricular involvement to add to transcripts. If you agree, you can snap with me.

e) Vice-President, External

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: I am the VP External and I am almost completely bilingual. My job is to represent you outside McGill and to lobby federal and provincial governments for student rights. There are three main areas: communicating our position with external bodies, political campaigns, and community relations. If you have any questions about any of this, you can find information online and you can ask me. We disaffiliated from TaCEQ last year. I've been working with different student unions and working on student loans from the Quebec government. I have also been working with the pipeline project. I basically strengthen community relations. If you have a campaign you want to start, we bring it to the GA and we work on it together. There are two committees that I sit on; you can come see me. Over the last few days, a lot of people have communicated to me that they don't think we should take positions on external affairs, but I don't believe that. I think that all issues should be discussed by SSMU.

f) President

President Ayukawa: Organizing this GA, I have learned a lot and I am in charge of Council and the Board of Directors. You all have at least one Councillor representing you. You can contact them with any concerns.



Mohammed Anani (Science): Do you agree that by students showing up here it means they agree that the Constitution policy applies to them?

President Ayukawa: Yes. I know it applies to every meeting. The student population is so diverse that it might not be appropriate at all times, but it definitely applies.

Mohammed Anani (Science): Is there ever going to be information about the last elections released?

Speaker: Questions must be relevant to the report.

4. New Business:

a) Board of Directors Nomination

VP Bradley: This Board of Directors needs to be voted on because it has to do with the liquor licence in Gerts.

[Technical issues prevented part of the minutes from being taken.]

Sukhmeet Rohan Sachal: Motion to amend the Board of Directors' members to include me.

Speaker: There are no objections, so this amendment will be included on this motion. Are there any further motions on the floor?

VP Stewart-Kanigan: I would like to amend my title and change the typo in the VP External's last name.

President Ayukawa: I am actually making a quick announcement before going into voting. It is a higher priority than voting that we are safe and have security. It is also because of that that we have closed both rooms and we are currently at capacity. Those in line cannot come back in until someone leaves. At this point this is all I can do.

Speaker: Moving to voting procedure. This will be a counted vote. Please hand in your ballots to vote. All in favour hand in your placards now.

With 484 in favour, 43 against, and 239 abstentions, the Board of Directors Nominations were approved.

b) Motion Calling on SSMU to Stand in Solidarity with the People of the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Speaker: This is the Motion Calling on SSMU to Stand in Solidarity with the People of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.



[Speaker reads the resolved clauses.]

Are there any points or motions on the floor?

Ameya Pendse (Arts): I motion to table this indefinitely.

Speaker: According to Robert's Rules you can do two things. Do you mean to postpone the motion or to lay the motion on the table?

Ameya Pendse (Arts): Postpone indefinitely.

Speaker: **The motion is seconded.**

Dina (Management): Motions to amend the speaking time to 2 minutes.

Speaker: Yes. All in favour of the change of speaking time from 10 to 2 minutes?

The motion to amend the speaking time to 2 minutes passes.

Discussion returns to the motion to postpone indefinitely. This requires a simple majority to pass.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: Is it not a 2/3 majority?

Speaker: No, it is simple majority.

Didier (Arts): A question about the threshold on voting: is there any possibility to amending it from a simple majority to a 2/3 majority?

Speaker: I don't think that's in order. It isn't in Robert's Rules.

Didier: Could we suspend the rules and create a new rule?

Speaker: We are looking this up. [...] It is not amenable.

Dedier: There are about 800 people; I don't think people are assembled here today to NOT debate this. I would strongly encourage everyone to vote against this motion that was put forward. I think it's a real shame to the entire process to not even get to the stage of discussion. So, for anyone who wants to have their voices heard, I strongly encourage you to vote no.

Max Worth (Arts): It is a highly complex and difficult and controversial issue; indeed, many political issues are. I find it disconcerting that we would entertain the motion when it is very one-sided. Those who support this motion demonstrate that they do fail to understand the nuances. Many here seem to



feel that voting against this motion is different to being against it. It is not SSMU's habit to make a position on every political issue. I support the motion to postpone it indefinitely.

Speaker: Speak slower.

U3 Arts Student: That is assuming the students have the knowledge of the Palestinian conflict. We all have opinions, but the reason why there are 800 kids here is because we have an opinion. Postponing this debate is running away from the debate some people are uncomfortable with that but we are here at an international university, and we are here to debate in a constructive manner. I encourage voting against postponing the motion.

Trav (2L Law): I strongly implore you to vote no on the motion before us tonight. The motion, while it claims to open a pathway, actually closes pathway...

Speaker: Please clarify.

Trav: Vote yes to postpone the motion. While this motion claims it is opening a pathway to dialogue, it actually homogenizes our discussion. In postponing this motion, we deny the attempt to overtake the SSMU which speaks to multiplicity. For this reason I would ask you to vote yes.

Ameya Pendse (Arts): There are 800 people here tonight. If we vote on the actual motion, there will only be a loser. We will leave this campus divided. If we vote now to postpone, we can actually come together on this issue. Every student can study together here; issues like this should not be debated. Please vote to postpone this forever.

Dina (Management): I am a coordinator of the Yes campaign. I believe wholeheartedly in this motion and I have been targeted. It makes me sad to realize I cannot feel safe or speak openly about human rights issues.

Yohan: I tried as much as possible to not put anything in on this issue, but I am from Israel. What it means to walk through Israel...

Speaker: This is not pertaining to the motion at hand.

Yohan: Ok, I will wait.

Mckenzie Kibbler: I came to McGill with my own free voice; I did not come for a nation or a student union to speak on my behalf. I do not see SSMU as a vehicle to show my political views without my consent. On behalf of all students who are not here because they were locked out or because they were at home, it is the right thing to postpone this. It is tragic that the Facebook was hacked. I do



condemn that. We were in no way responsible. The only thing we can count on is ourselves. Make a vote for free speech and vote yes.

Michael (U1 Management): It was mentioned earlier that we are knowledgeable. How many people here have actually been to Gaza?

Speaker: Would you like to keep speaking on the motion at hand?

Michael: Many people have not understood the issue, as someone who has served there I think we should postpone indefinitely.

Melanie (Arts): If we do not discuss this issue, we already take a no stance.

Samuel (U1 Arts): If we're not going to postpone it, we need to at least take into account the other side of this conflict so it shows both sides.

Ryan (U2 Arts): I find it ironic that people are arguing to postpone this debate in the name of free speech. Postponing this debate is shutting down anyone who has anything to say about this issue. It's disingenuous. To shut it down is to not take a stance at all. If we don't take a stance, what's the point?

Lori (Arts): Almost every discussion on campus about Palestine and Israel is often extreme. Not discussing this motion is taking the voice of people who do not agree with the status quo. They should not be marginalized or attacked for that. I, as a student, do not feel safe freely expressing my opinion on this issue. I have been personally attacked for doing so. It is supposed to be a safe space.

Speaker: Rachel will give an announcement upstairs about coming down to speak in this room. So we will continue.

Ali (Science): After seeing these concerns one word arises: telltale. It's telltale of any debate when there is a push for silence, the first position they stand on is the debate topic itself. Where else other than university is there to do this? In the workplace and in your personal life you are silenced. This is the place we need to be discussing this!

James Newman (Theology): SSMU has no business entertaining this motion. How can we support a motion that supports Palestine when it doesn't mention other forces that are damaging the future of Palestinians? Until we address these other acts, we have no business entertaining this motion.

Speaker: Please do not yell directly into the mics because it is very loud upstairs.

Maggie (U3 Arts): By debating the motion we are dividing the McGill community. A motion like this is a symptom not a cause. It is not the place to homogenize the



body of population. Under governing body, such issues are determined by democratic vote. Even if not everyone agrees, it is a democratic representation.

Nissan (Arts): Congratulate everyone here who said NO to this motion. We need to educate ourselves, understand the opposition, and understand what we believe in. I came to university to discuss, to understand, to reflect. I hope you will all join me in debating this issue and not letting it slide like every other person who says so.

Chris (U3 Science): It's pretty clear from all speakers that have gone so far that they are pretty charged up. Evidently it is much divided. I think we should have a motion to amend the state of the couch. We shouldn't have a motion that isn't really pertaining to the school. What I'm trying to say is that our student union should be representing us on issues like our administration or libraries.

Sarah (Engineering): The act of postponing implies that it would be suitable for another time. Is there a better time for this to be discussed? Just say you would rather shut this down completely instead of postponing it.

Speaker: For clarification, this is a motion to postpone indefinitely. If it were to pass, it cannot come back in its current form.

Zara (Arts): I would like to comment on something I hear a lot. If you read the resolved clauses, there is no condemnation of a single actor. Instead, there is the condemnation of the violation of human rights and international law. To table indefinitely is to censor this. I agree that the discussion is very heated and complex; the reason it is this way is because both sides of this issue have made the mistake of holding on to their personal convictions. We need to let go of identity attachments to this issue. If you had better things to do, you wouldn't be here.

Yassan (Arts): Appeals to the speakers here. We can't vote unless you don't speak. Please sit down if you would like to vote.

Omar (Engineering): We do not have the courage or the will to talk about human right violations. This is time that we come together and talk about ideas. Let us have a constructive discussion about it.

Adam (U2 Science): There are 800 people here and McGill has thousands of students. 800 is a minority. We all feel very strongly. I came to school as well to have my voice heard. I did not come here to force my opinion. I came here to learn science; this is not a theater for opinions to be pushed under an ideological umbrella. I bet a lot of people tonight would not be able to vote yes or no just because they could not make it tonight. I think we should postpone for that reason.



Nosim (Arts): If the motion is passed, will it be voted through online ratification?

Speaker: Yes, only if the motion passes.

Madeleine (Arts): Freedom of speech is super important to conform to the principle of safe space that I truly value. This is the improper forum for this kind of discussion. It would be inappropriate to discuss this here; there are safer spaces to discuss this. I strongly urge voting yes to table this motion.

Rijdee (U3 Mechanical Engineering): Ballroom guys there's hope down here. This is my first time at a GA and I've been here for 3 hours. This is a motion to postpone a motion. Very rarely are we provided the opportunity to have a nonviolent platform to discuss these things. As a very simple person, there are only about 12 more people wanting to speak. We're talking about 40 more minutes of people motioning to motion.

Ameya Pendse (Arts): Is it possible to suspend debate and vote?

Speaker: No. You can limit or extend the current debate or speaking time though. Time limits can be made. It would require 2/3 majority. Or, instead of going through this time, you can amend the length of speaking time.

Ameya Pendse (Arts): **Motion to limit speaking time to 1 minute individually and 10 minutes total time for debate.**

Speaker: This has been seconded and requires a 2/3 majority to pass.

Ramy (U1 Arts): **Motion to limit debate to 2 minutes.**

Sunny (U4 Arts): **Motion to end debate.**

Speaker: The previous two motions are out of order

Sunny (U4): **Motions to change the speaking time [for debate] to 2 minutes with individual speaking times of up to 30 seconds.**

Speaker: Would you like to withdraw your motions?

[Both withdraw their motions.]

Both motions are withdrawn. I would look favorably upon no one else standing.

Nabi (Management): Since childhood I have been taught these people are right, these people are wrong. I vote not definitely knowing who is right who is wrong.



Education is for all. My parents didn't send me here just to sit in a fancy suit. My parents sent me here to have a good life. Humanity is before religion.

Speaker: If anyone is live-streaming on their laptop here, please stop because we are over our bandwidth.

Alex (U3): We already had a couple hundred kids turned away from this event. This same SSMU is supposed to be able to comment on something as complicated as the Middle East conflict.

Speaker: Everyone who can vote is allowed to.

Sean (U0 Arts): If this motion is passed, will it go to online ratification?

Speaker: Yes.

Ameya Pendse (Arts): Can that be repeated so people will stop asking?

Speaker: I think I've said it enough.

Chair of SSMU: We only had one week to find space. We did our absolute best.

Lira: She minored in Political Science. I love talking about this issue and other issues. It's a big part of who I am and why I came to university (seeing different groups on campus having opinions). I don't think, however, that the Student Society is the right place to talk about this. I think if the SSMU chooses to make one statement about the entire issue, we're closing off the debate on campus. So please vote yes to table indefinitely.

KC (U1 Engineering): People who want to postpone this topic are here to stop free speech. I disagree. I believe that free speech is very important. I strongly encourage those with strong opinions to be heard. I personally believe that the Students' Society of McGill University should be the place to discuss this. We are not here to suppress your voice; we are here to say we don't want to talk about this here. Some people may disagree with me, and that is probably because they don't understand where I'm coming from. I am neutral.

VP Stewart-Kanigan: Is it not outlined in the SSMU constitution that we are mandated to take stances on these kinds of issues?

Engineering Student: It is in the SSMU mandate to discuss such a motion and to stand for them. If this is not an appropriate platform to do so, then tell me what is. McGill University is for the leaders of tomorrow. We reflect our society. This motion should unite people to stand for human rights. We should all be united.



Mechanical Engineering Student: We're not talking about a humanitarian issue; we're talking about a political issue which makes this not an appropriate place to discuss this.

Speaker: In regards to a motion regarding speaking time, I will rule that out of order.

Felton: This is not an issue of social justice but an issue of military involvement. I was hoping to bring up the constitutional issue of minority rights. The student body should represent the diversity of students. It just alienates part of the student body.

Benjamin: Whether it pleases the students who have gathered here or not, this is the place where you can discuss this issue. As an Israeli and Jew, as someone who does not think this motion is appropriate, I still believe it should be discussed.

Michael: By proposing that we debate this, one side really doesn't want to listen. Quite frankly whichever side wins, one side loses. A lot of the Jews will feel condemned by their student union, which isn't fair. By taking a stance, you are condemning 15-20% of student body.

Moustafa: I wasn't planning on speaking today. We are fortunately living in a world governed by rules and regulations. Human rights need to be protected. So protecting these human rights means condemning violent acts. As previously mentioned, voting yes for the motion of debating means censoring both parties. If the original motion passes, it won't be about the minority of the 800 people in the room; this is a very legit channel for that. Again, this is not a political stance; it is a human rights one.

Sam Fuller (Arts): In response to earlier speaker saying it doesn't affect people at McGill. McGill has relations with Israel. How do you feel about people using their tuition dollars to support weapon making in Israel?

Michael A. (Mikie) Schwartz (Law): Everyone here is quite passionate about the issue. This isn't the best forum to discuss it. There are other and better fora to do so. [Interruption: Like What?] How about the Daily? I have to read that drek every week. I don't see a genuine interest on the part of SPHR to promote reasoned debate. They could have done that by stating they wanted a reasoned debate. They instead proffered a motion condemning Israel. The assertion that the current adventure does not constitute adequate debate is spurious. We have spent several hours in agonizing discussion. Debate on the merits of discussing the initial motion, as well as the vote thereupon, is essentially a debate and vote on the resolution itself.



Anthony Anderson (Arts): In this harsh and ever changing game that we call life we need constructive dialogue more than ever. We need more discussion on this issue because there is a clear divide. We need to raise awareness on the issue and discuss it.

President Ayukawa: A lot of people have been here for a very long time. If you need to go to the bathroom (I would recommend going after voting procedure) after you get your ballot back, when you leave, give your ID and ballot to Caroline, and you can identify yourself by your name. The other announcement that I want to clarify for people is that if it passes today, it still goes to online ratification. Anyone waiting in line is able to vote.

Speaker: There are no abstentions, you must vote for or against. Rather than pass your ballots, just hold it up and it will be collected.

VP Chaim: If it passes, we will hold on to the ballots, and anyone who would like to leave, please leave. If you're in the cafeteria and you want to leave, please leave.

With 402 in favour and 337 against, the motion passes and the Motion Calling on SSMU to Stand in Solidarity with the People of the Occupied Palestinian Territories is tabled indefinitely.

c) Motion Regarding Action on Climate Change

Speaker: This is The Motion Regarding Action on Climate Change. At this time we will now enter debate. I open the floor to any points or motions.

Benrimoh: **Motion to move to the previous question.**

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: There is a very big correlation between building pipelines and emitting CO2. We cannot be complicit in the funding of the fossil fuel industries. We cannot be complicit in the destruction of our climate. We need to impose a strong voice in this.

Eric Taylor (Engineering): I'd like to speak against in this. It ensures that Quebec purchases oil from Saudi Arabia and Middle Eastern countries. Real climate changes needs to come from systemic changes rather than from this kind of motion. It needs to come from removal of dependence on oil, not just access.

Benrimoh: I would like to say that I speak for this motion. I agree that we have to remove dependence on oil. If we keep building infrastructure for oil, we are saying to ourselves that we can extend our dependence on oil. Oil prices will go up, fine, we will have to find another way. It's difficult to change people's minds about it so we have to make it difficult to maintain status quo.



Grace (U2 Arts): We opened this meeting with a declaration that we were on stolen land so we would be extremely hypocritical to vote against this.

Brianna (U3 Science): She is strongly in favor of this motion. There will be 30 million tonnes of CO2 emissions with this.

Yousef (Arts): "restoring indigenous people's sovereignty to the land" ... what does that mean?

Bailey (Engineering): Unfortunately you're missing your "I love oil" stamps. There are economic and social benefits for pipelines. At this day and age, it is a huge source of funding for grant money and for the Canadian economy. When other sources of energy become available, let's all jump on board.

Benrimoh: This is like the parable of a hungry mouse in drowning in water. We have two options. The first option is butter floating in the water, which will keep us going a little longer. We eat the butter, clog up our arteries and we'll die. Still eating a bit of butter is our other option, while still climbing the razor barbed wire. Our options are making the difficult choice of acting now, or dealing with short term benefits. Not even environmentally, but also economically. We should remove the dependence now while we still have some control.

Jonathan (Law): He agrees with the previous speakers. I wonder if the pipelines are the right way to address that. We need pipelines to lubricate bikes, turbines, and other resources to help the environment. Is this the right approach to stopping the detrimental effects of oil?

VP Stewart-Kanigan: Pipelines are a useful site of resistance; they not only are environmentally unsound but also hurt the sovereignty of indigenous populations who do not want these pipelines.

Sam (Arts): We should bring our concerns to McGill. There's environmental policy and such, we need to make sure that the pipelines that we put down are well vested in communities. We need to understand that when we make statements from McGill that have effects on later funding, we can have an effect on how people view us. No one here is planning research that is going to change anyone's mind. I disagree with this motion, but I vote that the people in charge will keep remarks.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: Pipeline technology is technology of the past. The statement that a renewable energy society is not in the works is not true. Look at places like Germany, the technology is there. The fact that we're still so dependent on oil has more to do with government and policies than whether we're actually getting support for these environmentally friendly options.



Arts Student: More pipelines mean more chances of oil spills and destroying water, the environment, and wildlife.

David (Engineering): I will not be supporting this. This is a controversial issue and I would like to address a number of points: this would cause an increase in carbon emissions. Oil is an expensive commodity. The trucks now drive it across the country. In the long term it will have less of an impact. This is the transition to renewable energy. Germany is not a good example of a success story. They have invested a lot of money in renewable energy, for example, solar energy. It is an intermittent energy source. The baseline energy has increased the CO2 emissions. Right now we don't really have a good energy replacement for oil. We need to focus on getting renewable energy.

Sam Fuller (Arts): The economic aspect is profitable only for the short term for the pipeline. A pipeline is one of the most destructive ways to extract oil; this is the cost that we will face with climate change.

Joy (Arts): Fossil fuel is very limited and is not sustainable so our economy will not survive in the long term. We have natural resources to help sustainable resources. Instead of going against a motion like this, why don't we accept that pipelines may not be our future but sustainability will be?

Ibrahim: We're here for learning and sharing on important issues like this. Through the learning that has happened, we need to take a stance.

Sunny: It's not about making one decision; it's about the University of McGill. As the GA, we can make a statement for McGill. What one side of the debate is saying has nothing to do with the statement of McGill. It is a period of austerity. The highest amount of money you can get coming out of university is as an oil engineer. As a left-leaning university, we can be on the side of a productive conversation where we can benefit from a real economic benefit for our school. We don't make enough money; we're doing so poorly economically. I hope you see a lighter side to this issue.

Lola (Arts): She highly encourages people to vote in favor of this motion. She reminds and informs the assembly that we were mandated to divest on climate change. The second resolved clause mandates the VP External to do just that.

Johnathan (Law): Is this motion opposing pipelines that don't have approval from indigenous communities, or all pipelines?

Arts Student: [Reads a quote from Divest McGill's budget.]

Brianna (Arts and Sciences): We just joined ECO and that needs to be renewed every year.



VP Moustaqim-Barrette: **Motions to extend debate to allow everyone to speak 3 times to an issue.**

Speaker: **Seconded.** All those in favour.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: This motion mandates the VP External to bring forward an action plan with SSMU. I think that should be incorporated in your decision on this motion.

Sunny: I don't support the industry. I don't believe it's a good idea. I think the oil industry is a terrible thing. I am talking specifically about making a statement about something not supporting something that can help our economy. 5% is a significant amount of budget. I know you've heard it from people who were more right wing than I am.

Benrimoh: I would like to address something that was said; we understand that it makes SSMU look anti-business. If Engineering remains pro-business, Medicine is also probably pro other business, but that will be dealt with within the faculty. I would vote for it even if it meant less money from oil. You stand up and you suffer and the only way to make things change and impose democratically when we disagree is to do this. We will help effect change. I will not sell my non-existent soul for that.

Grace (Arts): By taking no position on this issue, it's not as if we're taking no position because a vote for neutrality is a vote for the status quo.

Emily (Science): 5% of the budget does not come from oil. It is way less than that. Both of the pipelines are going straight through Quebec, most of which is going to be exported. The economic gain is very minimal.

Anikke (Engineering): I think that two resolved clauses are separate. One is about policy and the other is more action-orientated. Consider looking at the other one if you don't agree with one of them.

Speaker: As there are no other speakers we will enter voting procedure.

Rioux: **Motion to divide the question.**

Speaker: The motion is in order.

The motion to divide the question fails. The motion stays as a whole.

With 111 in favour, 17 against, and 6 abstentions the Motion Regarding Action on Climate Change passes.



d) Motion Regarding Support of a Campus Free from Harmful Military Technology Development

Speaker: Opens the floor for debate on the Motion Regarding Support of a Campus Free from Harmful Military Technology Development.

Azad (Arts): We have been organizing for the past year. There are a lot of reasons to support this. I think McGill should end all relations with military contractors. There are a lot of powerful people in the world who benefit from the profits of war. It's important to remember that when McGill engages in these relations, they are complicit. Living in a capitalist society, it is a fact that we contribute to ending war by not supporting these. I recognize that engineers that by passing these motions, it is threatening some of their job prospects, but f*** it.

Arts: Psychologists at McGill developed a technique called water boarding used at Guantanamo; people need to be more involved.

Clarence: Reads an amendment.

Mohammed Anani: Does the Speaker not think that there might be a conflict of interest in deciding whether the second amendment is in order?

Speaker: It is in order for the second amendment. The previous motion was also tabled indefinitely so please remember that it cannot come back in its same form. I can talk about the Robert's Rule on this point.

According to the request (because of the conflict of interest previously stated by Speaker) the second Speaker is being asked to come back.

Clarence: I would like to remove the second resolved clause and instead I'd like to change the resolved clause (reads amendment).

Speaker: The second resolved clause is appropriate. As for the amendment concerning SSMU publicly condemning a human rights violation, I will wait for a ruling from the second Speaker.

Clarence: You could change it to "including but not limited to Israel, Canada and the US".

Anani: Does the Speaker rule this in order or not?

Speaker: I am waiting to confer with the second Speaker.

Grace (Arts): I support this strongly. I very strongly feel we shouldn't be getting in front of our financial needs instead of human rights.



Jonathan (Law): He has a point of information for the movers. How do we distinguish between harmful or non-harmful? Who is making this distinction? It is not specific enough to be implemented, I think.

Joy (Arts): McGill is in a destitute situation financially. Warfare is a natural part of civilization and usually we can combat this. Civilians are not being killed. I accept this motion because I will not stay in a campus where they value any financial contribution over human life.

Sunny (Arts): Morally I'm on the majority side; I really am trying to explain what it is that happens when the GA votes on things. You have to understand the importance of what we are doing here; you have to think it will have severe consequences. This motion says that everything that the military brings into this university is bad, it has no nuance, and I think it's risky to say that. You have to understand that you are voting for McGill.

Anani: I'd like to retract my previous request to have the Speaker present to confirm ruling.

Pharmacology Student: A professor from McGill did confirm that to confirm the GABA receptor in brain, they had to dissect more than 200 rats. They need to be reviewed and it's good to have people and activists outside of the scientific community; we always have to consider ethical issues.

Daniel (Arts): I wholeheartedly support this motion, but to drive this point home, before I heard about Demilitarize McGill, it's very monetarily and fiscally a problem. There's a lot of millions dollars of research put into research that is neither efficient nor financially responsible.

Mathematics Student: What is harmful? I'm addressing this issue. There is the thermovavic weapons made solely to kill. They are not used in mines or construction. Drones have also killed thousands of civilians in Pakistan. Missile systems have been made at McGill with Israel. Right now there are harmful technologies developed at McGill. Right now we have to ask our role as a university.

Anani: What is the status of the reply of other Speaker?

Speaker: She is looking at it now.

Dan (Law): I don't want us to win this battle but lose the larger one. We still need an online approval from campus. Be mindful that we are very passionate. So maybe just keep that in mind.



Benrimoh: I speak in favor of this for the simple reason that the university is not a place for making bombs. If it was a question of prosthetic legs and such it wouldn't be a problem, but bombs and drones are meant to kill people. If they're going to do that, they should use their own time, own budget, own space. I believe university is not the place for this and it should not continue here, especially not with our consent and tuition money. I say no.

Jonathan (Law): It's not totally clear that it's always harmful. How are we going to make this distinction?

Anikke: There are two debates here, one on military research and one on harmful research. Not all military research is harmful, and not all harmful research is military. We have to make that distinction. Not all of the research in a military context is meant for harm. I'm talking about very basic and fundamental things. Airplanes became what they are today on the basis of World War I. We have to consider that military does not equal harmful.

Catherine (Engineering): This is a public research university, from a country where funds are given to the military. The quality of education would be severely affected just because we do not agree with some military research; we should not condemn all military research. In my opinion this is more of a question.

Student: We need to acknowledge that not all military research is harmful, emphasize that the military institution is harmful and is sucking resources out of society. I want to say that the military institution is something that provides a basis for all f**d up s**t that happens in society. We need to now just look at specific cases, but we need to remember that those things happen because the military exists. There is no compromise. Nothing can justify it.

Joy (Arts): People have been fighting since the dawn of history; civilians are getting killed right now though. When drones are hitting Palestine and killing thousands, when military technology is going to Hamas or such people, that's when I have a problem. Control is necessary and possible.

Laura (Arts): I would rather McGill have a harder time finding good professors than give money to this.

Grace: The people who oppose this motion have been saying it'll hurt our economic and educational abilities. Military research has already harmed educational abilities. So how dare you say that?

Motion to extend the speaking to 5 minutes.

Motion to limit this debate time to 10 minutes.



Rachel (Speaker): All those in favour of extending the speaking time?

The motion to extend speaking time to 5 minutes fails.

All those in favour of limiting debate?

The motion to limit the debate time to 10 minutes passes.

Anani: Why is it taking so long for the motion to be approved by the Speaker?

Speaker: I don't know.

Philip (Engineering): I want to clear up some fallacies. We were told it was the largest time where civilians have been killed. This happened in World War II and in Vietnam too. I'm not telling you it's good, but the number of civilian deaths has gone down.

Melissa (Arts): She is an international student from the Middle East. I don't like the possibility that McGill will be going back to bomb my own country.

Abdullah (Engineering): After 10 minutes will we be voting on entire thing or just the initial motions?

Aisha (Arts): The amount of civilian deaths decreased since World War II. People are still dying, it doesn't matter how many. I don't think that the decrease has anything to do with the argument.

Wade (Arts and Science): For people criticizing it, not all military research is harmful. This will help McGill to ONLY do non-harmful research.

Speaker: Pause the timer.

Anani: Why is it taking so long for the motion to be approved by Speaker?

Speaker: I don't know.

Linda (Arts, PGSS Speaker): The first amendment in my opinion would be in the spirit of motion. The second part is too vague concerning the relationships defined because these relationships are too complex to just include military technology.

Speaker: I would suggest that the movers of the amendments, if you have questions, maybe just ask her aside.



Arts Student: I think the issue is not whether or not drones will be flying overhead. How dare you condemn Canada who was attacked by terrorism just today?

President Ayukawa: If you are not in line to speak, you must sit down. This is a fire hazard and a security issue.

Zana (U1 International Development): Congratulates everyone for coming out. It is absolutely important to mention Canada, the U.S. and Israel; we can't do this without mentioning the most important relationships.

Clarence: I would like to add that SSMU will include, along with this condemnation, a list of relevant military relationships that they have with these states. I think this addresses this issue that it follows the military technology and transparency about this military technology.

Motion to limit debate time to 5 minutes.

Motion to extend debate time to 15 minutes.

Speaker: All in favour?

The motion passes. [Unclear from the minutes which motion it was.]

Engineering: The motion should be passed because harmful and useful is a debate for another day, we condemn the harmful. If we say the harmful is condemned, at least it's out there. We can decide in the future what the harmful is and what the useful is. That pertains to involvement and research done for any country.

Brandon (Arts): If you want to condemn the military research that's fine but it is inappropriate to name three countries. I think it is inappropriate to ignore the fact that there was a motion rejected earlier tonight.

VP Stewart-Kanigan: Prior to the addition of these amendments, I cannot support these amendments. You see how frustrated I was with that last vote, but I can't support these amendments because I know how students will take this. The democratic process must be respected. I think we should reintroduce this discussion on the Palestinian issue, but doing this will make SSMU a farce. I really care about the original content of the motion.

Alex (Arts): I signed a petition for this motion; this is not the petition that I signed. I find this will be a democratic deficit. I know you feel really strongly about that, I believe that this would fail in an online referendum, thereby taking away the opportunity for change.



Voting procedure begins on whether to accept the proposed amendments.

Motion to vote on the amendments one by one.

Motion to remove the second resolved clause, leaving just the first amendment, which was made by the mover (which means it is automatically adopted).

The motion to include the amendment passes.

Cadence: I respect the work that went into this motion. I think through the use of this motion, what happened earlier in this GA shows that it is so important that we explicitly name what is going on, but I understand that in an effort to respect the work that Demilitarize McGill is doing, it had to be removed.

Vote on whether or not to call to question.

Speaker: In order to allow the SSMU democracy to proceed; we want to continue to allow people to enter. This is one the first times I am making a ruling on this. Does anyone wish to rescind my ruling?

[Two people wish to rescind.]

Debate is opened on rescinding the Speaker's ruling to allow people to enter the room.

Eva-Lou (Arts): I am in favor of letting people in. I think it is important to allow every individual the vote. We must allow the vote or suspend the GA.

Amanda (Law): Many people came and they were not willing to stay, I find it is extremely disrespectful for the debate for people to come back now, I think it's completely out of order for people to come back now.

U2 Arts Student: We were about to add the amendment and they shouldn't be able to vote on the amendment itself, but just vote on the motion as a whole.

Benrimoh: Democracy is not negotiable, one student, one vote. We cannot decide how much someone knows or how much someone should be able to know. Democracy is absolutely non-negotiable.

Speaker: The appeal is now rescinded as people have already entered. We will move into voting procedure on the motion as it stands. We cut off the line when there was a decision to move into voting procedure. Because of my ruling of going into voting procedure, the people outside are not allowed inside.



[The Speaker re-reads the motion for everyone in the room.]

Motion to divide the question. Seconded.

The motion to divide the question fails.

The Motion Regarding Support of a Campus Free from Harmful Military Technology Development passes.

e) Motion Regarding SSMU Solidarity with Students Protesting for Democracy in Hong Kong

Benrimoh: Hong Kong and rest of China, especially students, have expressed interest in a democratic government. Whenever we have the chance to encourage others agitating for democracy in their countries, I think it's worthwhile. It is a very complicated issue, but at the heart of it, I see police brutality, demonstration, and a desire for democracy. I would like to stand in solidarity with these students.

VP Stewart-Kanigan: Can you pull the motion up on the screen?

Speaker: It will be done.

Arts Student: Can the University of Mexico be added to the list of students?

Arts Student: This is last minute and there was no time for anyone to form either a yes or no committee and people from China and Hong Kong have different views. Many people at McGill are actually against the protest. I don't think SSMU should enforce their opinion. I would also like to give some context. Hong Kong was taken away from England. They never enjoyed free democracy under the British. They never massly protested about suffrage. Hong Kong people never enjoyed universal suffrage. Beijing is granting universal suffrage; I know this is attached with condition that people should be chosen by Beijing because Beijing wants to prevent separatism. It is not a perfect democracy, but it is progress. Should SSMU condemn this?

Gabriel (Management): This is precisely the reason that SSMU should not be taking external policies. We each have our own voice. I agree that democracy is important but do I believe that the student government should be taking a position? No. McGill should be focusing on issues like McTavish and medical services, etc.

Benrimoh: I am well aware of the history of Hong Kong. To be perfectly honest, I don't care. Universal suffrage is something that everyone should have. The history is irrelevant. If it happens slow, if it happens fast, fine, but it needs to happen. We always need to push for more. SSMU's role in all this is that SSMU



has a mandate in its constitution to take these positions. We are making strides in student health services, but the GA is the only appropriate place for these things because we cannot do it in Council. Education is a big point of this motion. It's important to practice and develop citizenship and take sides. It matters.

Eva Lou (Arts): I am against this motion. I did very strongly want to debate the motion earlier today. SSMU has a firm dedication to foreign affairs and human rights. We deserve a better motion than this. It was introduced today. There are very few representatives from this area. The motion itself lacks any historical context. It does not delineate who will do this education. I disagree very much that it was brought by Councillors and not by petition.

Yousef (Arts): Motions are very important for SSMU in external matters because of SSMU's mandate for humanitarian rights. I am against this motion because some people who may have a very strong interest in this question were not informed enough in advance. I think it should be postponed to another meeting in which it can be discussed and people will be informed.

Motion to postpone the Motion Regarding SSMU Solidarity with Students Protesting for Democracy in Hong Kong, definitely to the Winter 2015 General Assembly.

The motion is seconded.

Speaker: Opens the floor to debate on whether to postpone the motion definitely.

Saphir (Pharmacology): In defense of this motion, look at the first resolved clause. The right to protest is very highly connected to democracy. It's really important to make sure the right to protest is protected.

Ibrahim: He recognizes the intention behind this motion to speak as a body and have a say on international issues. He would like recognition of the fact that the greatest disservice is to speak badly on their behalf. He is in favor to postpone the motion to the next GA.

Arts Student: I am against the motion to postpone it definitely. I rather suggest that we just vote no. Due to the lack of representative bodies, I don't think the appropriate method was used in coming forward with this. I want to vote no because it lacks those appropriate measures.

Michael (UO Student): Hong Kong will be a very different thing by the next GA. If you don't like it vote against it, but postponing it is useless.



Kristin (U3 Arts): She is not super familiar with Robert's Rules. Motions to adjourn the meeting.

Speaker: Sorry, I can't entertain the motion right now.

Ralph: I speak in favor of postponing. Voting on this issue gives precedent to the passing of other issues. I think it makes a very clear message that we are making an international stance on these issues. I think recognizing that a motion like this being voted on right now doesn't send right message.

Benrimoh: I didn't mean to insult anyone. I did not have time to do that. I understand your concerns. I think there would be enough there to mandate SSMU to research and educate. It will not be the same in the winter, but it will probably still be a topical issue in the winter. That being said, there would be a two week ratification period. If it would really upset people from the region as it is now, I understand. I tried inducing consultation before this but I didn't have time, there were only three days. I did submit it as soon as I could. Either way is fair.

President Ayukawa: Please keep an eye on your valuables.

Joy (Arts): I acknowledge the attention that came to this motion, but I would still recommend that we vote to postpone.

With 105 in favour and 77 against, the motion passes and the Motion Regarding SSMU Solidarity with Students Protesting for Democracy in Hong Kong is tabled definitely to the Winter 2015 General Assembly.

f) Motion Regarding Solidarity Against Austerity

Speaker: We are now moving on to the Motion Regarding Solidarity Against Austerity.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: She thought the GA would be a better forum for this motion. The government has spent \$132 million from funding and \$21 million will be cut from McGill. The administration has taken these cuts without a word against them. I think SSMU should take a stance verbally against them. Public sectors and jobs are being affected everywhere. It would be a stance against the austerity measures. This would be for SSMU to inform students about mobilisations and to encourage SSMU members to speak against the budget cuts.

McKenzie: He is against this motion as it is a precursor to striking. A general strike was debated three years ago.

Lola: Can the resolved clauses be read?



Speaker: That is in order, the clauses will be read.

Daniel (Arts): It's important because without this it's difficult for SSMU to publicize where budget cuts are happening. I don't want to move towards striking again. We are not pushing for striking, but we're not looking at this properly.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: This is just a motion condemning the measures and informing the students about what is happening. This is not a motion to strike.

Julia: I think that McGill should do its part to support the movement against the budget cuts at McGill.

McKenzie: Les étudiants sont indépendents. The concern that I feel is that the student body at McGill does not support striking. I think this should be revisited at a point where it can be revisited.

Motion to limit debate time to 5 minutes.

Motion passes.

VP Moustaqim-Barrette: McGill students are not involved with the past strikes. This does not propose a strike, but austerity measures DO affect all students so we should support this motion. We should have a stance on this.

Engineering: A lot of recurring comments are fear-mongering about striking.

Jonathan (Law): It is possible to take a position against something without striking. The online campaign in the past was good to persuade the government to change its decision on something.

McKenzie: That is a valid point but I am unsure what this accomplishes for McGill students. Many Arts students that were walking on the streets of Montreal voted against strike, but nevertheless, the students were still on the streets. I think consultation is needed though.

Benrimoh: If a strike were to happen, it would not be voted on. The strike would be brought to the next GA regardless of this motion or not. This motion is about budget cuts. It's a huge threat to our operations in this university. The point of this motion is to give SSMU the mandate for going on to oppose these budget cuts, so it's not about strikes or particular action, it's about a stance. You can be a part of it if you want to. If they want a strike, they will have it whether or not this is passed. SSMU can never tell its members to do things they doesn't want to.



President Ayukawa: She sits on a lot of committees and this is a major concern for people in our committees. She is especially in favor of last resolved clause about the open forum session. SSMU receiving a mandate to do this would show support for this. She would also like to say that in a lot of her meetings in the young administration, this concern is about breaking even, and it will be a problem with budget cuts.

Motion to extend debate by three minutes. Seconded.

Motion to extend debate fails.

Voting procedures have begun.

With 142 in favour, 14 against, and 20 abstentions, the Motion Regarding Solidarity Against Austerity passes.

g) Preferential Ballot for Elections

Ben Fung: I brought this to the GA because it has been a proposed change and we believe it should have the most feedback possible. It will be a plebiscite question too. It will also be discussed at Council tomorrow. If you want to leave, leave, if you want to come tomorrow you can. There's nothing on the PowerPoint, but what we're proposing is a switch to a partial preferential ballot. Instead of casting vote for your candidate, you would instead rank them. This is different in different ways. In a single winner election, it would proceed like normal. In single winner situation with multiple candidates, the votes would be allocated to the first preference on each ballot. If there is a candidate that achieves 50% of the vote, the last place candidate will be eliminated. The procedural elimination will continue until the 50% quota is reached. The reason we are bringing this forward is that it's been a suggestion for a very long time and is done in many universities in the U.S. His last point is that it's partial preferential voting; you don't have to rank all of them. This prevents a donkey voting event where you just rank them in order for no reason. If you want the details, you can ask me. Otherwise I stand for feedback. We encourage your feedback.

Anani: Regarding the motion that was tabled indefinitely, that can only occur after debate, and to postpone before debate would require a 2/3 majority, not 50%, according to this.

Patrick: He would like to highlight some drawbacks. This isn't just an amazing thing that is universally loved. I was wondering if we could hear the drawbacks.

Ben Fung: Whether or not this is a more democratic way of voting, the details of that is up for debate; there are arguments for both sides. In terms of empirical drawbacks: you often have candidates in multi-winner elections that were only



elected because they were the last ones left to elect. The only way around this situation is doing complete preferential voting. The ranking becomes then meaningless because it is done at random. His recommendation is to look up preferential voting and list all the criteria that evaluate how well it tests on a scale of validity.

5. Question Period:

Lola: Who's coming to Gerts with me after this?

The body sings happy birthday to Kristin.

Lola: She has a question for President Ayukawa: how do you like your eggs?

President Ayukawa: I have no favourite.

Patrick: Thank you to the Recording Secretary and thanks to everyone for coming.

6. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Devin. Seconded by Ibrahim.

The General Assembly was adjourned at 12:26am


Michael Tong, Chairperson


Rachel Simmons, Chairperson


Lydia Jones, Recording Secretary