

Report to Legislative Council:

Actions taken as mandated by the Motion to De-gender language at the SSMU

Presented by Isabelle Oke, VP (University Affairs)

On February 8th 2018, the SSMU Legislative Council approved the Motion to de-gender language at the SSMU. This short report highlights the actions taken as a result of this motion. I encourage councillors and SSMU members to send their questions to ua@ssmu.ca or to propose amendments and changes in council. The consultation done to put this together was with the equity commissioners but unfortunately not with anyone else due to a reduced capacity to coordinate with people given my being at a conference this week. In the case that wider consultation is necessary to move forward, I can take this on and present a final report to council at its next iteration.

The biggest step taken on will be to create a short term contract to hire someone to develop a guide to using gender neutral language in order for this work to have a cohesive and far reaching scope (Job Description in Appendix A). Until this work is completed and a final follow-up can be done by the Gender Neutral Language Researcher, I propose Legislative Council adopt the interim measure outlined below. The last section of this document outlines the Be it Resolved clauses from the Motion to De-gender Language at the SSMU with the steps taken or projected to be taken for each step.

SSMU Interim Measures (In addition to the amended standing rules)

- Councillors should be asked to add their pronouns on the sign in sheet in addition to their signature at the beginning of each council.
- Gender Neutrality in french documents follow the guide created by UOttawa ([link](#))

Current standing rules:

3.5. Unless a member requests otherwise, their placard should include their pronouns, in both English and French. Members may request their pronouns be added, removed, or changed at any time.

3.6. Guest Speakers and members of the gallery should be encouraged to include their pronouns when they introduce themselves. 3.7 The official Minutes should use the correct pronouns as provided from 3.5 & 3.6 above, or gender-neutral pronouns if unspecified.

Actions taken/Projected to take

Mandated actions by the Motion to De-Gender Language at the SSMU	Actions taken/to be taken
<p>Be it further Resolved, that Legislative Council recommend the following include the relevant person’s pronouns, unless requested otherwise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Email signatures of SSMU staff, Officers, Directors, Councillors, and any other SSMU personnel; b. Any bios posted on the SSMU website or other SSMU publications, including those of Councillors, Directors, and Officers; c. Any time someone is introduced. <p>The Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) shall ensure the relevant parties are informed of this recommendation and shall coordinate efforts to implement it.</p>	<p>To be taken: Communication of these practices will be communicated, implemented and followed up on by the Gender Neutral Language Researcher*</p>
<p>Be it further Resolved, that the SSMU, through the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) create a SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A standardization for both French and English language b. The actions outlined in this Motion c. A section advising campus media on reporting & interviewing d. General guidelines for formal and informal communication. <p>Ideally this guide would be produced as part of a larger SSMU Guide to Inclusive Language, addressing topics such as race and disability, along with gender. In creating the SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language, the SSMU should seek input from campus groups representing transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, and gender nonconforming people.</p>	<p>To be taken: Communication of these practices will be communicated, implemented and followed up on by the Gender Neutral Language Researcher.</p>
<p>Be it further Resolved, that, in accordance with the SSMU Equity Policy, the Office of the Vice-President</p>	<p>Done: IRs, plans, policies and confidentiality agreements for volunteers all have gender neutral</p>

<p>(University Affairs) supervise the removal of, and replacement with gender-neutral terminology, any gendered language referring to the general public or a person/people whose pronouns and/or gender have not been communicated from all SSMU documents, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Internal Regulations of the SSMU b. SSMU Motions, plans, and policies c. Employee Contracts d. Confidentiality Agreements e. Waivers, Insurance Forms, and any other HR Documents 	<p>text, except for a couple instances in the Policy against Unpaid internships when quoting a couple pieces of legislation and I will be addressing these instances in the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>To do: Verifying other ssmu documents I would like to delegate to a hired staff</p>
<p>Be it further Resolved, that the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) prepare a report for Legislative Council, to be delivered at the next meeting of Legislative Council, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. An summary of the current state of SSMU documents as mentioned above. b. A timeline and plan for the implementation of the mandates in this Motion 	<p>This Report was submitted for the February 22nd for consideration and comments</p>
<p>Be it further Resolved, that the Equity Policy be amended to include reference to the SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language as follows:</p> <p>1.1.4. Using gender-neutral language in all documents, electronic and written correspondence from SSMU addresses, and in the workplace, in accordance with the SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language. This Guide shall be maintained by the Equity Commissioners.</p> <p>This amendment shall come into effect upon completion of the SSMU Guide to Gender Inclusive Language.</p>	<p>Steps to be taken: Hiring of a Gender Neutral Language Researcher</p>

** The work of reaching out to staff, executives, representatives and related members can be done currently through the office of the VP (University Affairs), however I would like to suggest giving this work to the student staff position in order for this work to be done more cohesively. I also welcome suggestions of delegating part of this work to a future employee and have part of this work done in a timely fashion, in the next week or so.

Appendix A:

JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Gender Neutral Language Researcher

CATEGORY: Casual Staff

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Vice-President (University Affairs)

SECONDARY SUPERVISOR: Vice-President (External Affairs)

DEPARTMENT: Vice-President (University Affairs) **CREATED:** February, 19 2018

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Gender Neutral Language Researcher will implement the goals and projects mandate of the Motion to De-gender the Language of the SSMU[1] and the Equity Policy in order to facilitate the implementation of improved equitable hiring practices at SSMU.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Review and revise all SSMU documents to ensure a consistent gender-neutral language;
2. Coordinate with SSMU permanent staff, services, clubs and elected representatives to facilitate implementation of procedures and practices to de-gender language at SSMU;
3. Assist in developing an enhanced on-boarding process that implements the practices to ensure gender neutrality;
3. Research and create a SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language to be submitted to the Vice-President (University Affairs);

SUPERVISION REQUIRED:

The Gender Neutral Language Researcher receives general direction from the Vice-President (University Affairs).

WORKING CONDITIONS:

1. High pressure work environment from both an operational and political perspective.
2. Equipment used: Computer, Microsoft Environment (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Google Environment (Gmail, Google Drive).

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

1. Have a good knowledge of and commitment to equity principles;
2. Experience in integrating equitable practices in an organization;
3. Good organizational and planning skills;
4. Good communication skills, in both verbal and written are desirable;
5. Knowledge of SSMU administrative or the SSMU HR structure is an asset.
6. **WWW**

CONFIDENTIALITY:

It is understood and agreed that all matters to the SSMU and those clubs association or groups forming part of the SSMU are to be kept in the strictest of confidence, and nothing regarding the operations, policies and general activities of the SSMU or its constituent groups shall be divulged to any third party without the express consent of the General Manager and/or the Executive Committee of the SSMU.

[1]

<https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Motion-to-De-gender-the-Language-of-the-SSMU-APPROVED-2018-02-08.pdf?x26516>