



Legislative Council - March 29th, 2018

## Motion Regarding Adoption of a Sustainability Policy

**Whereas**, SSMU is committed to sustainable practices and leadership on our campus, in Canada, and around the world;

**Whereas**, SSMU passed a Sustainability Policy on April 11, 2013 that expires on April 11, 2018;

**Whereas**, an amendment to the current Sustainability Policy was passed on October 23, 2017 that bans the sale and distribution of bottled water in the University Center and the distribution of plastic take-out containers that cannot be composted but that will expire alongside the current Sustainability Policy;

**Whereas**, the current Sustainability Policy does not sufficiently operationalize SSMU's commitment to sustainability;

**Be it Resolved, that** the following policy, which provides no change in spirit to the Sustainability Policy passed in 2013 but only improved guidance, clarity, and practicality, be adopted as the Society's Sustainability Policy as seen in Appendix I. The Sustainability Policy passed in 2013 can be seen in Appendix II.

**Moved by:**

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Sustainability Policy

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### **Introduction: Mission and Vision**

This policy lays out the guiding principles upon which multi-year goals and efforts to continually improve shall be based. Crucially, this policy seeks to provide more tangible recommendations and strategies to improve sustainability in the SSMU context, as well as measures of accountability to ensure that initiatives and goals are implemented and executed.

Students at McGill and across Canada have led efforts to make our campuses more sustainable.<sup>1</sup> At McGill, for example, student leadership has established a Sustainability Projects Fund, conducted a major environmental sustainability assessment of the SSMU, established and revised the SSMU's Equity Policy, and led McGill to hire staff specifically to make its food system more sustainable.

Students operate a large number of important services for students and are leading movements to improve sustainability at McGill, including the work and advocacy done by groups such as Divest McGill, ECOLE, McGill Permaculture Club, Midnight Kitchen, the Flat Bike Collective, the Union for Gender Empowerment, the Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students' Society, Queer McGill, WalkSafe, Drivesafe, Nightline, the Black Students Network, and many more.

The pursuit of a sustainable campus has largely hitherto been led by students, and SSMU must continue to be the joint effort of Executives, Councillors, and staff, and will be strengthened by the active participation of student groups and the student body at large.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/spf>; <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/SSMU-Equity-Policy-Revisions.pdf?x26516>



**Mission:** To achieve sustainable practices by balancing and integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations in the way it acts, and by having people collaborate to achieve this balance. The SSMU's commitment to sustainability is first and foremost outlined in the [Preamble of the SSMU Constitution](#)<sup>2</sup>:

“VI All Students’ Society endeavours shall be undertaken with full respect for human dignity and bodily sovereignty and without discrimination on the basis of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, language, sexual orientation or social class.

VII The Students’ Society commits to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection. The Society shall be mindful of the direct and indirect effects corporations, businesses and organizations have on their social, political, economic, and environmental surroundings. VIII The Students’ Society commits itself to groups, programs and activities that are devoted to the wellbeing of a group disadvantaged because of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or social class.”

Further, the SSMU shall demonstrate leadership for sustainability by:

- fostering sustainability across campus and beyond through our advocacy, leadership, and all public actions;
- engaging students and student groups, connecting people who share the same ideas for change and coordinating projects with multiple stakeholders;
- promoting awareness of sustainability through its communications, informational resources and mandatory annual, in-depth trainings for SSMU executives and staff, and by leading by example in the delivery of events, services, and political action;

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/SSMU-Constitution-2015-02-21-EN.pdf>

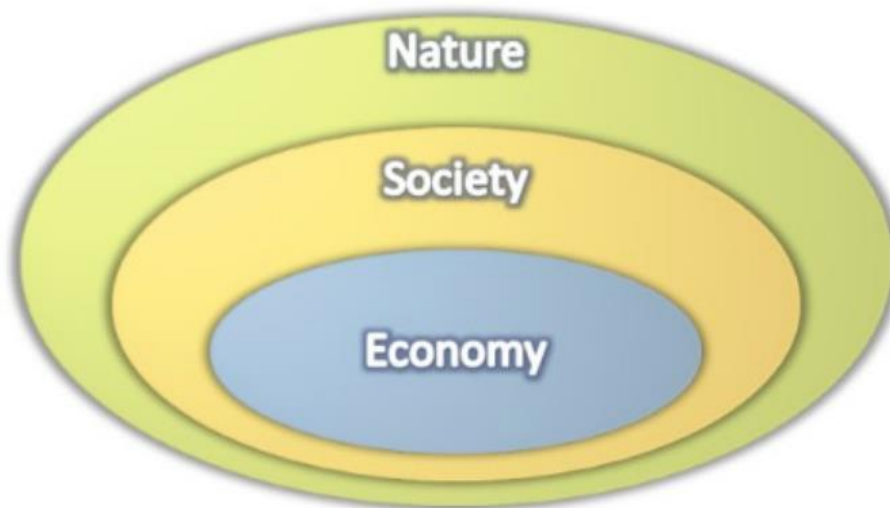


- Applying sustainability within its internal operations, through creating a just, empowering community within SSMU staff that encourages, incentivizes, and supports sustainability initiatives by minimizing barriers, providing tools and knowledge, and sets high standards for the SSMU's sustainability practices;
- setting ambitious and feasible multi-year goals, drawing on best practices from other organizations to achieve them, reporting both qualitatively and quantitatively, and annually reviewing the goals to ensure that change is iterative and adaptive

**Vision:** As efforts for a sustainable SSMU and a sustainable campus intensify, the SSMU should not only successfully and meaningfully support grassroots student initiatives, but also serve as a leader for social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

## 1. Definitions

**Sustainability:** As defined in section 2, Sustainability is an approach and practice that allows present generations to meet their needs without compromising the needs of future generations, and includes environmental, social, and economic considerations.



*Fig 1. This image, which consists of nested spheres, illustrates how we should consider and understand the 3 spheres or pillars of sustainability. “Nature” encompasses all of*



*the physical world we are in, commonly referred to as the “Environment”. A sub-section of that is all of human “Society”, and “Economy” is a sub-section of human society. The two images together provide basic visuals that can help contextualize thinking about sustainability. From <http://www.projectcss.eu/description/objectives.jpg> accessed March 20, 2012*

**Student organizations:** All clubs and services operating under SSMU.

**Student Associations:** University-level or faculty-level groups that are governed by elected student representatives.

**Officers vs Executives:** Both refer to the elected SSMU executives.

## 2. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

- Staff, elected representatives, operations, Clubs, and Services, of the Students' Society of McGill University.
- All activities and events hosted, funded, and promoted by the Society and SSMU-affiliated Clubs and Services.
- Written or graphic material, which is published, distributed, endorsed, or funded by the Society.
- Activities, events, campaigns, and promotions held in the William Shatner University Centre.

## 3. Understanding Sustainability

Sustainability in this context is about balancing and integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations in the way we act, and having people collaborate to achieve this balance. Different definitions are used in this document, within in the McGill community, and in many Canadian and international scholarly articles. These definitions provide a common framework, not to be exhaustive or definitive, and can be refined in the future.

### 3.1 Environmental

Practices that lead to resilient ecosystems which can support healthy life and lifestyles.

To that end, the SSMU will strive to:



- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive buildup of substances extracted from the Earth's crust (for example, heavy metals, fossil fuels, greenhouse gas emissions) by reducing unnecessary purchasing of materials, opting for more sustainable materials when possible, encouraging, advertising, and incentivizing the usage of reusable materials and containers at events, and reconsider traditional methods of distribution of information through promotional materials;
- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive buildup of chemicals and compounds produced by society (for example, dioxins, PCBs, and DDT) by transitioning to materials that do not contain such chemicals<sup>3</sup>) and by more strongly advertising and supporting the current electronic recycling program;
- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive physical degradation and destruction of nature and natural processes (for example, over harvesting forests and paving over critical wildlife habitat) by prioritizing the minimal use of these materials in general, and choosing products and/or vendors/corporations that adhere to socially and environmentally responsible guidelines.

### 3.2 Social

The SSMU will strive to promote a strong, safe, and empowering community by endeavouring to minimize systemic power imbalances within society and to foster a culture of anti-oppression. Socioeconomic inequity has been shown to be well correlated to ecological degradation<sup>4</sup>. This potential positive feedback loop of inequity exacerbating biodiversity loss which exacerbates inequity is one example of how equity struggles are, or should be, an inseparable part of the sustainability movement. The SSMU will aim to be of service to the communities of which it is a part, in keeping with the values laid out in the Constitution and Equity Policy. Please refer to the Equity Policy updated in April 2018 for more information on SSMU and equity. Beyond the Equity Policy, SSMU will approach social sustainability by ensuring that:

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<sup>3</sup> for example: sustainably-sourced and manufactured LED lighting

<sup>4</sup> Mikkelsen GM, Gonzalez A, Peterson GD (2007) Economic Inequality Predicts Biodiversity Loss. PLoS ONE 2(5): e444. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0000444 (Accessed on April 8, 2013 at <http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0000444>)





- it supports student initiatives that contribute to the aims stated in this section, and it will liaise with different groups to do so.
- it encourages and provides additional support for projects and initiatives that address multiple aspects of sustainability, such as environmental and social.

### **3.3 Economic**

The SSMU is tasked with managing fees collected from many thousands of students. The SSMU undertakes to manage these funds in a manner which respects students and the communities of which SSMU is a part. The SSMU will strive to:

- be stewards of students' money in an ethical manner, as per the Ethical Investment Policy, the Purchasing Policy, and this Sustainability Strategy;
- be transparent, accountable, and open to student participation in budgeting students' money;
- be responsible in its long-term planning of finances to ensure year-to-year financial stability and flexibility as major expenses arise;
- work to prioritize funding to initiatives that will (a) lead to cost-savings for the SSMU in a reasonable time-frame or (b) lead to considerable social and/or environmental benefit.
- Emphasize, communicate, and advocate to partners, donors, sponsors, administration, and other relevant parties that short-term investments in sustainability projects virtually always lead to long-term financial gains as long as the necessary maintenance is carried out.

## **4. SSMU's role in fostering a community of sustainability**

### **4.1 Overview of the SSMU's role**

The SSMU will, through the actions of its elected representatives, staff, committee members, clubs, and services:

- seek to be a catalyst for change in the McGill community;
- represent student interests pertaining to sustainability issues on campus to the relevant community members;





- work to build awareness of sustainability issues, and work to ensure that its internal practices adhere to a high standard of sustainable behaviour;
- show leadership beyond the SSMU bureaucracy and the William Shatner University Centre for the good of the student body as a whole and the broader community and society.
- take on the responsibility of reaching out to other groups to learn more about their activities, advocacy and research, what is going on and informing others of what is happening with the SSMU.

#### **4.2 Coordination**

The SSMU will use its relationships and its understanding of the community to connect members who are working on similar topics, problems, campaigns, efforts, research, etc. while ensuring it does not create extra or unnecessary burden for its collaborators

#### **4.3 Facilitation**

The SSMU will facilitate sustainability advocacy, resources and education for its members by:

- Hosting an annual SPOKES (Students Pursuing Opportunities and Knowledge in Environment and Sustainability) conference
- providing mandatory and non-mandatory workshops on sustainable event planning (See Section 7)
- Communicating sustainability opportunities through the Sustainability Corner (see Appendix A)

Other programming carried out through the academic year

#### **4.4 Outreach**

The SSMU, in an effort to create a more sustainable community, will reach out to relevant groups in the community to (a) look for beneficial collaborations (b) Inform the community at large as to what the SSMU is doing for their reference (c) prevent the duplication of efforts on campus and (d) seek out best practices.



## 4.5 Awareness-Raising

The SSMU will work to make its members and the community more aware of how to live an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable lifestyle. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing structured educational opportunities, for example, Mini-Courses and workshops, that help students practice sustainable lifestyles that may be otherwise financially inaccessible, such as living zero-waste;
- Providing educational signage about sustainable practices such as using reusable dishes in dining areas in the building.
- Promoting other ongoing educational opportunities and events in the community, promoting collaboration to increase the scope and impact of beneficial initiatives<sup>5</sup>;
- Providing and compiling resources on SSMU's outreach and communication platforms to help all members of the Society fulfill the goals and act according to the values outlined in this policy

Responsibility for determining what issues and campaigns to focus resources falls on relevant Executive Officers, SSMU Committee(s), the society's General Assembly and its Legislative Council. More information on responsibilities can be found in the Appendices.

## 5. Internal practices and procedures

The SSMU will strive to be a model for sustainable internal practices insofar as is possible given organizational constraints. This includes learning from peer organizations, drawing on student research capacity and innovation, and proactively engaging students in projects and decision-making processes

### 5.1 Executive-Commissioner relationship

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<sup>5</sup> relevant people include the VP Student Life, General Manager, Building Committee for Shatner Building projects, Environment Committee, Sustainability Commissioners



- Sustainability Commissioners will provide sustainability trainings for Executives during their training periods.
- Executives will meet with the Sustainability Commissioners at the beginning of their term and throughout the year to develop a tailored plan to incorporate sustainability into their portfolios.

### **5.1.1 Reporting**

Staff and committees report successful innovations to executives, and briefly to Council according to the relevant reporting schedules;

### **5.1.2 Role Modeling**

The SSMU Executive and staff shall role model sustainability during daily practices by only using reusable or compostable containers in the distribution of food or beverage in meetings and in the SSMU Office.

In addition, SSMU staff and committees carry out the day-to-day decisions and actions of the SSMU. As such:

- Staff and committees are responsible for upholding and integrating this policy into their decisions and actions, possibly by creating decision-making frameworks;
- Staff and committees should be reporting successful innovations to executives, and briefly to Council according to the relevant reporting schedules;
- The Sustainability Coordinator is mandated to provide support, track progress, and meet with employees and committees regarding strategy throughout the year. This includes collaborating with interested students and student staff to coordinate projects and responsibilities.

As outlined in this policy, sustainability is complex, both in theory and in practice. In order for this policy to be truly effective, its goals must be integrated across all portfolios of the SSMU. While each year's elected representatives and student staff will have their particular skills sets and interests, it is expected that all staff and decision-makers within the SSMU will act in good faith towards achieving the goals of this policy.



## 5.2. Building

The SSMU will seek to make the William Shatner University Centre Building and all other associated SSMU spaces operate as sustainably as possible through its operations and the responsibilities of the Building Manager, Sustainability Commissioners, and the SSMU Executive whose mandate includes operations if such a role exists.

### 5.2.1 Infrastructure

The SSMU will seek to maintain the infrastructure of the building in a fashion that:

- keeps energy usage as low as possible while providing reasonable payback period if renovations are necessary to do so. The focus here may tend towards energy efficiency and undertaking efforts to inform students/staff/tenants of best practices of behaviour.
- is accessible to students of all abilities by individuals involved with building design and construction undergo
  - training on equity, ableism, and universal design;
  - provides infrastructure to assist sustainable lifestyle choices;
  - ensures safety, above and beyond fire code and alcohol regulations.

### 5.2.2 Use of space

The SSMU will seek to ensure that the spaces under its purview are used in a way that:

- Facilitates a safer space for all students in accordance with SSMU's Equity Policy<sup>6</sup>;
- Aims to reduce the amount of waste (e.g. disposable cups and other materials) the space or events held in the space generate;
- Materials enter the right waste streams;
- Prioritizes student interests and services for students.

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<sup>6</sup> Article 3.2



### 5.2.3 Purchasing

- The SSMU will adhere to the Ethical Investment Policy and Purchasing Policy.
- Material purchases should be carefully evaluated to avoid financial and material waste. Exit reports from events shall include recommendations regarding how to cut down on excess materials. The Events Administrator(s) will undergo tailored sustainability training, whereby the Sustainability Commissioners will work with them to identify key areas of consumption and how to mitigate the waste produced.
- In the event that surplus materials are purchased, every effort should be made to either repurpose them or donate them to a worthy, sustainable student or community organization. Suggestions of such organizations can be requested from the Sustainability Commissioners, Equity Commissioners, and/or Sustainable Events Team.
- The SSMU will work with applied student research and McGill Food and Dining Services to continually improve the sustainability standards of all food providers on McGill campus and will prioritize waste reduction, then waste management. Relevant people for these practices include the President, General Manager, tenants in the building, and Executive Chef of SHHS, or otherwise the individual in charge of operations and sustainability within McGill Food and Dining Services.
- The SSMU will encourage all vendors that sell food and beverages to stop the sale of bottled water in the University Center. Failure for a vendor to comply with this policy will be asked to attend a review meeting carried out by the Sustainability Commissioners, supervising SSMU Executive, and General Manager.
  - Further, the SSMU will include sustainability as a factor when negotiating new vendor agreements and corporate sponsorships.

### 5.3 Human Resource Practices

In its efforts to act as a socially sustainable and responsible organization, the SSMU shall



strive to uphold best practices regarding Human Resources. As outlined in the Human Resources Policy, this includes providing meaningful work for both students and full-time staff, nurturing a sense of empowerment for all staff members, and striving to provide a productive and pleasant work environment.

The SSMU will support staff to exhibit leadership in fulfilling the goals of this policy, the SSMU shall provide training tailored as much as possible to specific jobs regarding issues of social, environmental, and economic<sup>7</sup>.

## **6. Events**

All SSMU-operated events must be planned in light of the values laid out in this policy. This includes financial accountability and responsibility, ensuring that events are inclusive and equitable (refer to the Equity Policy), and minimizing their environmental impact.

The SSMU will actively encourage events held within the University Center to use only reusable materials, mandating that events held within the University Center use only compostable materials if disposable materials are used at all.

The SSMU will eliminate the distribution of bottled water and non-compostable disposable materials during all internal events affiliated with the SSMU, such as but not limited to, Orientation (Frosh) and 4Floors.

## **7. Clubs & Services**

Clubs and Services must attend a minimum of 1 Sustainable Event Planning workshop per year, facilitated by the Vice-President (Student Life) and Sustainability Commissioners to further support the implementation of sustainability in the club or service's operations. The Sustainable Event Planning workshop includes training on all

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<sup>7</sup> Definition adapted from Advocates for Youth  
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/safespace.pdf> accessed on March 21, 2012sustainability.



aspects of sustainability, with particular emphasis on environmental and social sustainability. Failure to attend will factor into club status. Clubs and Services who are found to be in repeated violation (1 or more) of this policy will attend an obligatory meeting with the Sustainable Events Planning Team or Sustainability Commissioners. If violations continue, Clubs and Services in question will be subject to a review by the Clubs Committee and Services Review Committee, respectively.

## **8. Implementation**

### **8.1 Leadership**

While all of the SSMU decision-makers are responsible for implementing this policy, the SSMU Executives, the Sustainability Commissioners, student staff within the Sustainability and Equity portfolios, and the Equity and Environment Committees must champion leadership and support, in line with the guidelines found in Appendix A.

### **8.2 Communication and Collaboration within the SSMU**

As outlined in this policy, sustainability is complex, both in theory and in practice. In order for this policy to be truly effective, its goals must be integrated across all portfolios of the SSMU. While each year's elected representatives and student staff will have their particular skills sets and interests, it is expected that all staff and decision-makers within the SSMU will act in good faith towards achieving the goals of this policy.

## **9. Reporting and Accountability**

### **9.1 Accountability within the SSMU Executive**

The SSMU Executive shall report on all progress achieved within the purview of this policy to Council once in the Fall Semester and twice in the Winter semester with support from the Sustainability Commissioners and leadership from the President;

#### **9.1.1. Final Report of the Academic Year**

The final report of the academic year shall constitute an annual report compiled by the President, Sustainability Commissioners and Environment committee, and shall include:

- Recommendations approved by the previous years' Council
- Work achieved that academic year and up-to-date campus initiatives
- SSMU's current organizational capacity in relation to this policy





- Updated implementation plan and benchmarking rubrics<sup>8</sup>
- Recommended goals of the following academic year

### **9.1.2 Collaboration with the Sustainability Commissioners**

The Sustainability Commissioners will hold monthly meetings with the SSMU executives in order to develop plans to incorporate sustainability into their portfolios.

## **Appendix A: Responsibilities of Specific Positions and Committees within the SSMU**

### *Role of the SSMU Executives*

Description: Executives work (more than) full-time to make SSMU work, and they carry much of the knowledge about the activities of SSMU. To be successful, the implementation of this policy must be acted on in good faith by every Executive Officer. Weekly Executive meetings are a place of many political decisions that set the behaviour of the SSMU. It is important for those responsible for this policy to be aware of what decisions are being made at executive meetings and how they affect this policy. Decision-making frameworks should be developed shortly after the Sustainability training in May to ensure make sure sustainability is not a forgotten consideration at exec meetings.

Roles: Many roles of execs are identified in the text of this policy and are detailed further below just as much for the executives as for students who are working on sustainability efforts. (Exec positions listed in alphabetical order, not order of importance!)

### *President*

- The President is responsible for ensuring environmental leadership.
- The President, along with the VP University Affairs, share responsibilities for advocating for stronger adherence to sustainability policies and pursuit of

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<sup>8</sup> This shall not be allowed to detract from pursuit of qualitative or difficult-to-measure efforts



relevant actions to the McGill Administration. In the event of the creation of new committees pertaining specifically to sustainability, such as those involving administration, the President should advocate for the most qualified student to serve as the representative. Oftentimes, this will be the Sustainability Commissioner.

- The President is the official link to faculty-specific undergrad associations and to the First Year Council and Inter-Residence Council.
- The President oversees the work of the two (2) Sustainability Commissioners.

#### *VP Student Life*

- The Vice-President (Student Life) should foster the integration of student groups' initiatives & input
- They collaborate with staff to implement sustainable operations and infrastructure within the Shatner Building (University Centre)
- They should distribute information to all Clubs, Services, and students on issues pertaining to bottled water and promote the sustainable alternative of tap water, other sustainable methods of water distribution, and readily available services related to waste reduction such as The Plate Club.

#### *VP External*

- The Vice-President (External) plays a critical role in providing two-way communication with community organizations such as the Milton-Parc Citizens Committee and EcoQuartiers, and municipal, provincial, and federal governments in the pursuit of this policy's goal.

#### *VP Finance*

- The Vice-President (Finance) has the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of the Ethical Investment Plan and Purchasing Policy;
- Overseeing the long-term financial viability of SSMU;
- and providing leadership in the integration of the values laid out in this policy within the SSMU's Operations (Gerts and MiniCourses)



- The VP Finance & Operations oversees the work of the FERC Commissioner, Funding Coordinator, Gerts Manager, and Mini Courses Manager.

### *VP Internal*

- The Vice-President (Internal) has a lead role to play in minimizing the impact of the Society's events and in promoting awareness within the student body. Repeating a mantra of "use less, use things that will be useful, and send the right messages with events and communications" will be an important contribution the VP Internal can make.
- The VP Internal will create and maintain a "Sustainability Corner", similar to the "Dean's Corner" on the SSMU listserv, wherein one upcoming event or project in which students can become involved related to sustainability is featured.
- The VP Internal oversees several Frosh Coordinators over the summer, and a Sponsorships Coordinator when needed throughout the year.
- The VP Internal shall ensure that the Sustainability Policy is followed in Frosh and refrain from the distribution or sale of any bottled water and non-compostable plastic. Further, the VP Internal should aim to work with sustainable manufacturers in the purchase of Frosh merchandise, a list of which can be obtained through the Sustainability Commissioners and/or the exit report from Frosh 2017.

### *VP University Affairs*

- The VP University Affairs is responsible for SSMU's commitment to Equity and representing SSMU on issues of equity to McGill units / administration.
- Shares responsibilities with the President for advocating for stronger adherence to sustainability policies and pursuit of relevant actions to the McGill Administration.
- The VP University Affairs oversees the work of the Equity Commissioners and often works with the Sustainability Commissioners.

### *Role of Council and Councillors*



Description: SSMU Council, the highest decision-making body of SSMU (in practice but not in law), meets every two weeks and consists of approximately 25 McGill undergraduate representatives. Council is, ideally, a place where substantive decisions are made and where information travels back and forth between SSMU and the rest of campus through faculty undergraduate associations. Sometimes this information transfer is not perfect. Councillors have to review large volumes of information before each meeting in addition to completing their full-time school work and any other responsibilities they take on.

Role: Early in the academic year, councillors should be engaged by those responsible for pursuing the Sustainability Policy (SSMU Executives and Sustainability Commissioners) in order to inform them of past progress, future direction, and to involve them in fulfilling the requirements of the policy. A council meeting early in the academic year is an optimal time to engage councillors and discuss the contents of the SSMU Sustainability Policy and how it may be of mutual benefit to councillors' constituents. Many student associations have sustainability groups and committees and are often searching for guidance early in the year, which could be provided by this policy and its connection to Vision 2020. Councillors should be encouraged to sit on committees, such as Environment Committee and the Financial Ethics Review Committee, and shown how their roles tie directly into the direction this policy sets. This policy should be presented regularly to council, ideally once in early fall to build involvement, then again in January for the same reason, and finally in March/April to present the progress through the year(s).

#### *Role of Senators and Senate Caucus*

Description: SSMU Senators represent SSMU at McGill's Senate, which is the highest academic decision-making group at McGill. Senate consists of over 100 people. There are about a dozen SSMU senators from all over campus. Any one of them may ask a question or make a proposition at Senate. The SSMU senators meet with regularity at what is called "Senate Caucus" and they discuss what is on the Senate agenda and what they will do, propose, or say.



Role: SSMU's Senate caucus may benefit from having some understanding of SSMU's Sustainability Policy and SSMU's progress in adhering to it. Since it may be difficult to get enthusiastic support from all senators for one initiative, those responsible for the Sustainability Policy may want to meet one-on-one with senators to discuss what they are excited about and how they can work together to advance the Sustainability Policy and the direction set by Vision 2020 (McGill's sustainability strategy).

### *Role of Environment Committee and the Sustainability Commissioners*

The Environment Committee (EC) is chaired by the Sustainability Commissioners. The Sustainability Commissioners are responsible for ensuring that campaigns of the EC are facilitated properly to raise awareness and affect the change desired by the EC. The Commissioners ensure that EC acts as:

- € A gathering area and a clearing house of ideas
- € An incubator for student groups whose leaders have since left the McGill community
- € A facilitator of capacity building activities and resources that help move students along the learning curve of how to achieve environmentally beneficial changes in the community

The EC's outreach and communications strategy shall focus on building connections with 6 main groups in order to share information about each others' campaigns, services offered, events, and activities:

- € Faculty associations
- € Green Groups
- € SSMU Equity Committee
- € Downtown student body
- € Involved students and student groups at the Macdonald Campus
- € McGill administrative units including the Office of Sustainability (the Office of Sustainability is becoming a highly valuable resource for connecting students with the appropriate staff on campus to pursue projects, as well as for helping students develop applied student research projects)

Efforts to communicate with students shall include:

- € More centralized and accessible information



- € Online resources as well as physical spaces like the green corner
- € Creating strong sense of community (building inter-personal relationships)

### *Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners*

Note: The roles of the Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners have been laid out in the Equity Policy, passed on March 1, 2012, and subsequently updated in April 2018. What follows here is a short addition connecting the Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners to the work of the Environment Committee and Sustainability Commissioners. This is not an exhaustive detailing of the Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners. The Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners provide a valuable resource to SSMU and the entire student body in grappling with equity issues broadly in the community and dealing specifically with equity complaints as they come forward.

€ It will be the role of the Environment Committee to periodically connect with the Equity Committee, report back to Environment Committee and arrange collaborations.

€ It will be the responsibility of the Sustainability Commissioners to ensure that communication between the typical environmental and social spheres within SSMU's internal operations is open (e.g. goings on in Building Committee, events being planned by Students' Society Programming Network, etc.). This will be an essential connection as Equity Committee is mainly concerned with social sustainability as described in this document and Environment Committee is mostly concerned with environmental sustainability.

## **Appendix II**

### **SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

Valid: April 11, 2013 -- April 11, 2018

Whereas, SSMU is committed to sustainable practices and leadership on our campus, in Canada, and around the world,



Whereas, SSMU passed a Sustainability Policy in March 2012, Whereas, the Sustainability Policy lacks clarity in some areas, such as the overlap of equity and sustainability including incorrect references to Equity Policy,

Whereas, the Sustainability Policy ought better guide those working at SSMU and interested students at large on how to help SSMU adhere to said policy,

Resolved, that the following policy, which provides no change in spirit to the Sustainability Policy passed in 2012 but only improved guidance and clarity, be adopted as the Sustainability Policy,

Resolved, that SSMU Council will discuss the implementation of this policy at a session of council in early in fall 2013, and it will be the responsibility of the Sustainability Coordinator to coordinate this discussion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Josh Redel, President  
Haley Dinel, Vice-President (University Affairs)

#### Introduction: Mission, Vision, and Scope

Students at McGill and across Canada have led efforts to make our campuses more sustainable. At McGill, for example, student leadership has established a Sustainability Projects Fund, conducted a major environmental sustainability assessment of the SSMU, established and revised the Equity Policy, and led McGill to hire staff specifically to make its food system more sustainable.

Students operate a huge number of important services to students, including Midnight Kitchen, the Flat Bike Collective, the Union for Gender Empowerment, the Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Society, Queer McGill, WalkSafe, Drivesafe, Nightline, Reboot McGill, the Black Students Network, and many more. (An exhaustive list of accomplishments would take many pages)

Mission: Sustainability in this context is about balancing and integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations in the way we act, and having people collaborate to achieve this balance. Aspects of sustainability have been, and continue to be, integrated into governance documents of the Society of McGill University (SSMU). This is evident in the Preamble of the SSMU Constitution:





“VI All Society endeavours shall be undertaken with full respect for human dignity and bodily sovereignty and without discrimination on the basis of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, language, sexual orientation or social class. VII The Society commits to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection. The Society shall be mindful of the direct and indirect effects corporations, businesses and organizations have on their social, political, economic, and environmental surroundings. VIII The Society commits itself to groups, programs and activities that are devoted to the wellbeing of a group disadvantaged because of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or social class.”

Vision: As efforts for a sustainable SSMU and a sustainable campus intensify, the SSMU will not only support grassroots student initiatives, but seek to cohesively transform our student association into a leader for social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

To this end, the SSMU shall demonstrate leadership for sustainability:

- by fostering sustainability across campus and beyond through our advocacy, leadership, and all public actions;
- by engaging students and student groups, connecting people who share the same ideas of changes to bring about, and coordinating projects with multiple stakeholders;
- by promoting awareness of sustainability through its communications, informational resources and workshops, and by leading by example in the delivery of events, services, and political action;
- within its internal operations, through creating a just, empowering community which minimizes its negative environmental impacts while using resources responsibly;
- by setting ambitious and feasible multi-year goals, drawing on best practices from other organizations to achieve them, reporting both qualitatively and quantitatively, and annually reviewing the goals to ensure that change is iterative and adaptive.

Scope: The SSMU has adopted many measures, both formally and informally, to become a more sustainable organization. This policy lays out the guiding principles upon which multi-year goals and efforts to continually improve shall be based. Crucially, this policy seeks to expand the focus of sustainability efforts from environmental



initiatives to include social equity and justice. The pursuit of a sustainable SSMU must be the joint effort of Executives, Councillors, and staff, and will be strengthened by the active participation of student groups and the student body at large.

1. Understanding Sustainability Sustainability in this context is about balancing and integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations in the way we act, and having people collaborate to achieve this balance. Different definitions are used in this document, within in the McGill community, and in many Canadian and international scholarly articles. These definitions provide a common framework, not to be exhaustive or definitive, and can be refined in the future.

## *The Three Spheres of Sustainability*

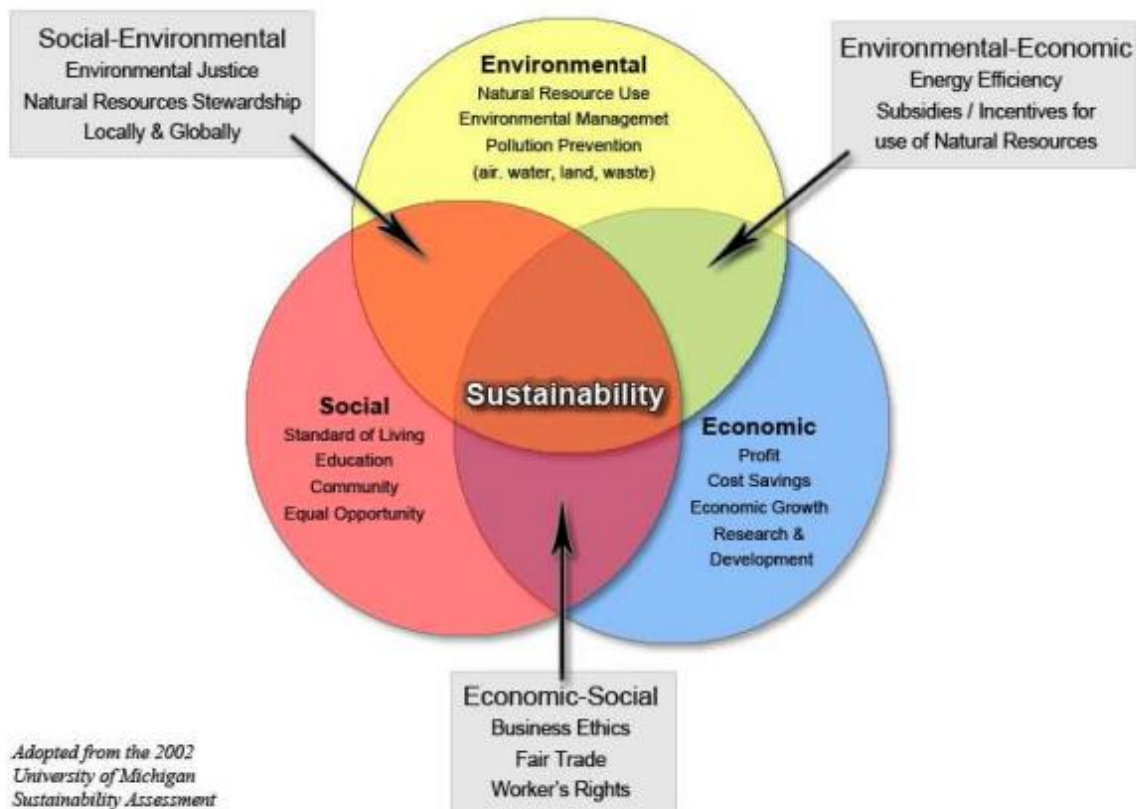
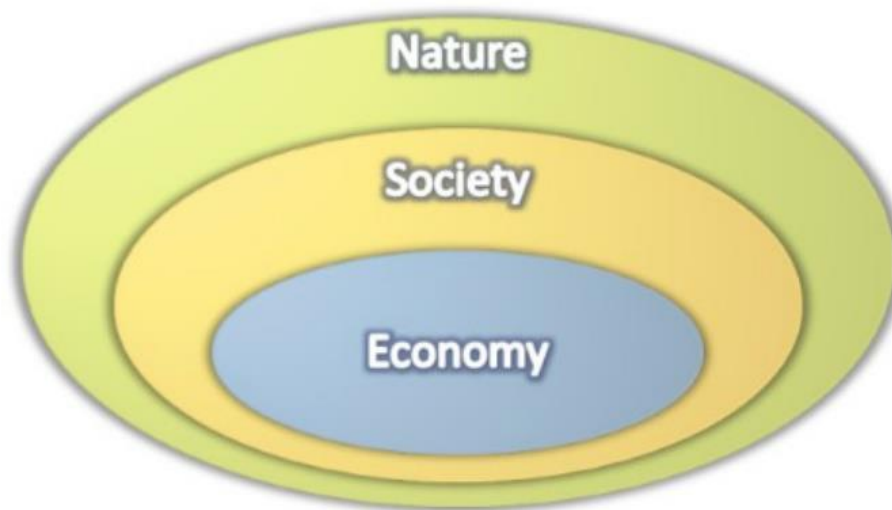


Fig 1. The important point of this illustration is that sustainability comes from the balance and integration of all three spheres. In our context, the following additions might be made to the Social sphere: Equity, Safety, Empowerment. From: [http://ext.morainevalley.edu/green/wpcontent/uploads/2011/09/sustainability\\_spheres1.png](http://ext.morainevalley.edu/green/wpcontent/uploads/2011/09/sustainability_spheres1.png), accessed on March 20, 2012.s



*Fig 2. This image, which consists of nested spheres, illustrates a different way of looking at the 3 spheres or pillars of sustainability from the previous image. Nature encompasses all of the physical world we are in, commonly referred to as the Environment or Planet Earth . A sub-section of that is all of human Society , and Economy is a sub-section of human society. The two images together provide basic visualsthat can help contextualize thinking about sustainability. From <http://www.projectcss.eu/description/objectives.jpg> accessed March 20, 2012*

### 1.1. Economic

The SSMU is tasked with managing fees collected from many thousands of students. The SSMU undertakes to manage these funds in a manner which respects students and the communities of which SSMU is a part. The SSMU will strive to:

- be stewards of students' money in an ethical manner, as per the Ethical Investment Policy, the Purchasing Policy, and this Sustainability Strategy;
- be transparent, accountable, and open to student participation in budgeting students' money;
- be responsible in its long-term planning of finances to ensure year-to-year financial stability and flexibility as major expenses arise;
- work to prioritize funding to initiatives that will (a) lead to cost-savings for the SSMU in a reasonable time-frame or (b) lead to considerable social and / or environmental benefit

### 1.2. Social



The SSMU will strive to promote a strong, safe, and empowering community by endeavouring to minimize systemic power imbalances within society and to foster a culture of anti-oppression. Socioeconomic inequity has been shown to be well correlated to ecological degradation.<sup>9</sup> This potential positive feedback loop of inequity exacerbating biodiversity loss which exacerbates inequity is one example of how equity struggles are, or should be, an inseparable part of the sustainability movement. The SSMU will aim to be of service to the communities of which it is a part, in keeping with the values laid out in the Constitution and Equity Policy. Please refer to the Equity Policy updated in April 2013 for more information on SSMU and equity. Beyond the Equity Policy, SSMU will approach social sustainability by ensuring that:

- it supports student initiatives that contribute to the aims stated in this section, and it will liaise with different groups to do so.

### 1.3. Environmental

The SSMU will strive to actively promote practices that will lead to resilient ecosystems that can support healthy life and lifestyles. To that end, the SSMU will strive to:<sup>10</sup>

- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive buildup of substances extracted from the Earth's crust (for example, heavy metals, fossil fuels, greenhouse gas emissions);
- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive buildup of chemicals and compounds produced by society (for example, dioxins, PCBs, and DDT );
- Eliminate its contribution to the progressive physical degradation and destruction of nature and natural processes (for example, over harvesting forests and paving over critical wildlife habitat).

## 2. The role of the SSMU in fostering a community of sustainability

The SSMU will, through the actions of its elected representatives, staff, committee members, clubs, and services:

- seek to be a catalyst for change in the McGill community;
- represent student interests pertaining to sustainability issues on campus to the relevant community members;

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<sup>9</sup> Mikkelsen GM, Gonzalez A, Peterson GD (2007) Economic Inequality Predicts Biodiversity Loss. PLoS ONE 2(5): e444. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0000444 (Accessed on April 8, 2013 at <http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0000444>)

<sup>10</sup> The following items have been adapted from The Natural Step framework of sustainability available at <http://www.naturalstep.org/the-system-conditions> accessed on March 21, 2012.



- facilitate student activities that foster a community of sustainability including reaching out to other student organizations (associations, clubs, services, independent student groups, etc.);
- work to build awareness of sustainability issues, and work to ensure that its internal practices adhere to a high standard of sustainable behaviour
- show leadership beyond the SSMU bureaucracy and the William Shatner University Centre for the good of the student body as a whole and the broader community and society

### 3. Coordination, Facilitation, and Outreach

The SSMU may act in a coordinating role to facilitate efforts on campus by reaching out to other groups to learn what is going on and informing others of what is happening with the SSMU. Staff, Executives and Councillors have a responsibility to help connect people to facilitate successful efforts (as elaborated in Appendix A).

Coordination: The SSMU is connected with many parts of the McGill community. The SSMU will use its relationships and its understanding of the community to connect members who are working on similar topics, problems, campaigns, efforts, research, etc. While the SSMU may act in a coordination capacity at times, other groups will lead many change efforts in the community.

The McGill Office of Sustainability has emerged as an entity that has filled a coordination role on many, but certainly not all, campus sustainability efforts between staff and students. It is, therefore, essential to stay in close communication with the Office of Sustainability. It is primarily the responsibility of the SSMU Sustainability Coordinator to provide two-way communication between the SSMU and the Office of Sustainability as well as the projects it helps to facilitate.

To this end, the Sustainability Coordinator will deliver brief activity reports from and to the Office of Sustainability and SSMU Environment Committee on a weekly basis with the aim of improving communication and building collaborations.

As SSMU has endorsed the Vision and Goals of Vision 2020: Creating a Sustainable McGill and indicated it will actively help the community pursue said Vision and Goals, SSMU shall evaluate its sustainability priorities semesterly in line with the strategy laid out in the Vision 2020 process. SSMU will continue to play a leadership role in advancing the sustainability strategy of the McGill community. SSMU is well placed to communicate the sustainability vision and specific goals to students and student groups, including faculty undergraduate societies. SSMU may be well placed to take action to





directly pursue goals of Vision 2020, particularly in the Connectivity and Administration and Governance sections.<sup>11</sup>

**Facilitation:** The SSMU will act as a resource and a facilitator for assisting and connecting members and groups who are working to create a more sustainable community. This is especially relevant to issues of social and environmental significance as clubs, services, and individual students may not be aware of many concurrent, ongoing efforts in the community. To this end, the SSMU will continue to host a Green Groups Forum event semesterly and will re-establish a Sustainability Ambassadors program.<sup>12</sup>

**Outreach:** When the SSMU begins an internal effort that aims to create a more sustainable community, it will use its connections to reach out to relevant parts of the community to (a) look for beneficial collaborations and (b) let the community at large know what the SSMU is doing for their reference. Tools to be used to get word out include: the SSMU website (homepage and SSMU Environment site), SSMU listserv, undergrad society listservs, McGill website (homepage or Office of Sustainability site or other relevant page), posting on active Facebook pages, contacting news editors of student papers, etc.

#### 4. Awareness

The SSMU will work to make its members and the community more aware of how to live an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable lifestyle. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing structured education such as Mini-Courses and workshops that help students develop an understanding of how to live sustainably (relevant people include the Sustainability Ambassadors, Sustainability Coordinator, VP Finance for Mini-Courses);
- Providing unstructured education such as signage in the building and showing best practices in ways of doing, such as using reusable dishes in dining areas in the building (relevant people include the VP Clubs & Services, General Manager,

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<sup>11</sup> Vision 2020 documents available here <http://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/vision2020/final-reports>

<sup>12</sup> The SSMU Sustainability Ambassadors program needs to clarify its role as either promoting sustainable lifestyle behaviours or communicating what sustainability efforts are happening on campus in order to encourage student involvement. This needs to be clarified. If it is pursuing lifestyle behaviours, it is essential that there be collaboration with existing groups who are doing similar work. If it is about efforts on campus, there needs to be communication with the Office of Sustainability (including Sustainability Projects Fund), the McGill Leadership Development Office, and the SSMU Sustainability Coordinator & Environment Commissioners



Building Committee for Shatner Building projects, the Green Building Coordinator, Environment Committee, Sustainability Coordinator);

- Promoting other ongoing structured and unstructured education in the community, such promoting an online platform(s) for collaboration (relevant people include Environment Committee, the VP Internal, the VP External);
- Promoting collaboration to increase the scope and impact of beneficial initiatives;
- Providing and compiling resources on SSMU websites, on Vibe, and physically to help all members of the Society fulfill the goals and act according to the values outlined in this policy (relevant people include Communications and Publications Manager for website, Systems Administrator for Vibe, VP Internal for website and email, Environment Commissioners and Sustainability Coordinator for developing and compiling resources)

Responsibility for determining what issues and campaigns to focus on falls under the relevant Executive Officers along with the relevant SSMU Committee(s). More information on responsibilities is found in the Appendices.

## 5. Internal practices

The SSMU will strive to be a model of sustainability in its internal practices insofar as is possible given organizational constraints. This includes learning from peer organizations, drawing on student research capacity and innovation, and proactively engaging students in projects and decision-making processes.

### 5.1. Building

The SSMU will seek to make the William Shatner University Centre Building operate as sustainably as possible. This is the responsibility of the Vice-President (Clubs and Services) and the General Manager.

#### 5.1.1 Infrastructure

The SSMU will seek to maintain the infrastructure of the building in a fashion that:

- keeps energy usage as low as possible while providing reasonable payback period if renovations are necessary to do so. The focus here may tend towards energy efficiency and undertaking efforts to inform students/staff/tenants of best practices of behaviour.
- is accessible to students of all abilities by ensuring Building Committee goes through training on equity and universal design;
- provides infrastructure to assist sustainable lifestyle choices;





- ensures safety, above and beyond fire code and alcohol regulations.

### 5.1.2 Use of space

The SSMU will seek to ensure that the space in its jurisdiction is used in a way that:

- is a safer space for all students where discrimination, oppression, harassment, and assault are not tolerated. Safer spaces should aim to be spaces where anyone can relax and be fully self expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability<sup>13</sup> (refer to the Equity Policy for more information);
- in regard to materials used, primarily aims to reduce the amount of waste materials being created, such as disposable cups at events (relevant people include the VP Internal, Green Events and Green Building Coordinators, VP Clubs and Services, and Events Administrator);
- then secondarily ensures that materials enter the right waste streams (relevant people include the VP Internal, Green Events and Green Building Coordinators, VP Clubs and Services, and Events Administrator, porters) ;
- prioritizes student interests and services for students.

### 5.2 Purchasing

The SSMU should adhere to the behaviours outlined in the Ethical Investment Policy and Purchasing Policy, which are the responsibility of the VP Finance working with the Financial Ethics Review Commissioner.

Material purchases should be carefully evaluated to avoid financial and material waste. Exit reports from events shall include recommendations regarding how to cut down on excess materials. The events booking points of influence shall be identified and will discourage wasteful consumption. In the event that surplus materials are purchased, every effort should be made to either repurpose them or donate them to a worthy, sustainable student or community organization. A list of such organizations can be requested from the Green Events Coordinator. Relevant people for these practices include: Events Administrator, Green Events Coordinator, VP Internal, Security Supervisor, VP Clubs & Services).

The SSMU will work with applied student research and McGill Food & Dining Services (MFDS) to continually improve the sustainability standards of all food providers in the building. The SSMU shall use the recommendations in the MFDS report An Appetite for

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<sup>13</sup> Definition adapted from Advocates for Youth  
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/safespace.pdf> accessed on March 21, 2012



Sustainability (2011, being revised in 2013) and the Fair Trade Campus certification as a baseline for success. Relevant people for these practices include the President, General Manager, tenants in the building, and Oliver di Volpi of MFDS.

### 5.3. Human Resource practices

In its efforts to act as a socially sustainable and responsible organization, the SSMU shall strive to uphold best practices regarding Human Resources. As outlined in the Human Resources Policy, this includes providing meaningful work for both students and full-time staff, nurturing a sense of empowerment for all staff members, and striving to provide a productive and pleasant work environment. Issues of hiring equity, pay equity, and childcare are to be worked on and may be outlined in more detail in the Equity Policy. The SSMU staff has a substantial role in creating the culture of the society. To help staff to exhibit leadership in fulfilling the goals of this policy, the SSMU shall provide training tailored as much as possible to specific jobs regarding issues of social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Relevant people for these practices include the HR Committee, Equity Committee, the HR Advisor, and Sustainability Coordinator.

### 5.4 Events

All SSMU-operated events must be planned in light of the values laid out in this policy. This includes financial accountability and responsibility, ensuring that events are inclusive and equitable (refer to the Equity Policy), and minimizing the environmental impact. Event planners should consult the Equity Commissioner and Green Events Coordinator as necessary to seek advice and to design appropriate logistical procedures.

### 5.5 Clubs and Services

The SSMU shall implement an annual sustainability audit for all clubs and services, incorporating social and environmental indicators into the annual financial reporting structure. Training regarding this policy will be included in annual workshops provided to clubs and services (coordinated by the VP Clubs & Services, VP Finance, and Sustainability Coordinator).

## 6. Implementation

### 6.1 Leadership

While all of the SSMU decision-makers are responsible for implementing this policy, the SSMU Executives, the Sustainability Coordinator, student staff within the Environment



and Equity portfolios, and the Equity and Environment Committees must champion leadership and support. Further details are included in Appendix A.

## 6.2 Representation

SSMU staff and committees carry out the day-to-day decisions and actions of the SSMU. As such:

- Staff and committees are responsible for upholding and integrating this policy into their decisions and actions, possibly by creating decision-making frameworks;
- Staff and committees should be reporting successful innovations to executives, and briefly to Council according to the relevant reporting schedules;
- The Sustainability Coordinator is mandated to provide support, track progress, and meet with employees and committees regarding strategy throughout the year. This includes collaborating with interested students and student staff to coordinate projects and responsibilities.

## 6.3 Communication and Collaboration within the SSMU

As outlined in this policy, sustainability is complex, both in theory and in practice. In order for this policy to be truly effective, its goals must be integrated across all portfolios of the SSMU. While each elected representatives and student staff will have their particular skills sets and interests, it is expected that all staff and decision-makers within the SSMU will act in good faith towards achieving the goals of this policy.

## 7. Reporting and Annual Review

With support from the Sustainability Coordinator and leadership from the President, the SSMU Executive shall report on all progress achieved within the purview of this policy to Council once each in September, January, and April. The April report shall constitute an annual report which shall include recommendations for the subsequent year.

The President, with support from the Sustainability Coordinator and student staff, shall oversee an annual review of sustainability goals and benchmarks in order to adapt the SSMU's efforts in light of changes in organizational capacity and campus and societal shifts. The Sustainability Coordinator will lead a process of developing detailed implementation plans and benchmarking rubrics to ensure measurable, effective change; this shall not be allowed to detract from the pursuit of qualitative or difficult-to-measure efforts.



## APPENDIX A

### Role of the SSMU Executives

Description: Executives work (more than) full-time to make SSMU work, and they carry much of the knowledge about the activities of SSMU. To be successful, the implementation of this policy must be acted on in good faith by every Executive Officer. Weekly Exec meetings are a place of many political decisions that set the behaviour of the SSMU. It is important for those responsible for this policy to be aware of what decisions are being made at exec and how they affect this policy. It may be prudent to develop decision making frameworks to make sure sustainability is not a forgotten consideration at exec meetings.

Roles: Many roles of execs are identified in the text of this policy and are detailed further below just as much for the executives as for students who are working on sustainability efforts. (Exec positions listed in alphabetical order, not order of importance!)

#### President

- The President is responsible for ensuring environmental leadership.
- The President, along with the VP University Affairs, share responsibilities for advocating for stronger adherence to sustainability policies and pursuit of relevant actions to the McGill Administration
- The President is the official link to faculty-specific undergrad associations and to the First Year Council and Inter-Residence Council.
- The President oversees the work of the two (2) Environment Commissioners, the Sustainability Ambassadors organizer(s), the Green Events Coordinator, the Green Building Coordinator, and the Sustainability Coordinator

#### VP Clubs & Services

- The Vice-President (Clubs & Services) should foster the integration of student groups' initiatives & input
- They collaborate with staff to implement sustainable operations and infrastructure within the Shatner Building (University Centre)

#### VP External



The Vice-President (External) is critical to connecting in two-way communication with community organizations such as the Milton-Parc Citizens Committee and Eco-Quartiers, and municipal, provincial, and federal governments in the pursuit of this policy's goal.

#### VP Finance & Operations

- The Vice-President (Finance & Operations) has the responsibility of ensuring the implementation of the Ethical Investment Plan and Purchasing Policy;
- of overseeing the long-term financial viability of SSMU;
- and providing leadership in the integration of the values laid out in this policy within the SSMU's Operations (Gerts and MiniCourses)
- The VP Finance & Operations oversees the work of the FERC Commissioner, Funding Coordinator, Gerts Manager, and Mini Courses Manager

#### VP Internal

- The Vice-President (Internal) has a lead role to play in minimizing the impact of the Society's events and in promoting awareness within the student body. Repeating a mantra of use less, use things that will be useful, and send the right messages with events and communications will be an important contribution the VP Internal can make.
- The VP Internal oversees several Frosh Coordinators over the summer, and a Sponsorships Coordinator when needed throughout the year.

#### VP University Affairs

- The VP University Affairs is responsible for SSMU's commitment to Equity and representing SSMU on issues of equity to McGill units / administration
- Shares responsibilities with the President for advocating for stronger adherence to sustainability policies and pursuit of relevant actions to the McGill Administration
- The VP University Affairs oversees the work of the Equity Commissioners and often works with the Sustainability Coordinator

#### Role of Council and Councillors

Description: SSMU Council, the highest decision-making body of SSMU (in practice but not in law), is a meeting every two weeks of approximately 25 undergrad representatives from around McGill. Council is, ideally, a place where substantive



decisions are made and where information travels back and forth between SSMU and the rest of campus through faculty undergrad associations. Sometimes this information transfer is not perfect. Councillors have to review large amounts of information before each meeting in addition to doing their full-time school work and any other responsibilities they take on.

Role: Early in the academic year, councillors should be engaged by those responsible for pursuing the Sustainability Policy (President, Sustainability Coordinator, Environment Commissioners) in order to inform them of past progress, future direction, and to involve them in the process. A council meeting early in the academic year is an optimal time to engage councillors and discuss the contents of the SSMU Sustainability Policy and how it may be of mutual benefit to counsellors' constituents. Many student associations have sustainability groups and committees and are often searching for guidance early in the year, which could be provided by this policy and its connection to Vision 2020. Councillors should be encouraged to sit on committees, such as Environment Committee and the Financial Ethics Review Committee, and shown how they tie directly into the direction this policy sets. This policy should be presented regularly to council, ideally once in early fall to build involvement, then again in January for the same reason and finally in March/April to present the progress through the year(s).

#### Role of Senators and Senate Caucus

Description: SSMU Senators represent SSMU at McGill's Senate which is the highest academic decision making group at McGill. Senate is over 100 people large. There are about a dozen SSMU senators from all over campus. They tend to be quite involved students on campus, and into all kinds of different things. Any one of them may ask a question or propose something at Senate, so they are not an easily predictable or controllable group (which is fun). The SSMU senators meet with regularity at what is called Senate Caucus and they discuss what is on the Senate agenda and what they will do/propose/say.

Role: SSMU's Senate caucus may benefit from having some understanding of SSMU's Sustainability Policy and SSMU's progress in adhering to it. It has been observed that it is hard to get all senators excited about one thing, so those responsible for the Sustainability Policy may want to meet one-on-one with senators to discuss what they are excited about and how they can work together to advance the sustainability policy and the direction set by Vision 2020 (McGill's sustainability strategy).

#### Role of Environment Committee and the Environment Commissioners





The Environment Committee (EC) is chaired by the Environment Commissioners, with assistance from the Sustainability Coordinator on request. The Environment Commissioners are responsible for ensuring that campaigns of the EC are facilitated properly to raise awareness and affect the change desired by the EC. The Commissioners ensure that EC acts as:

- A gathering area and a clearing house of ideas
- An incubator for student groups whose leaders have since left the McGill community
- A facilitator of capacity building activities and resources that help move students along the learning curve of how to achieve environmentally beneficial changes in the community

The EC's outreach and communications strategy shall focus on building connections with 6 main groups in order to share information about each others' campaigns, services offered, events, and activities:

- Faculty associations
- Green Groups
- SSMU Equity Committee
- Downtown student body
- Involved students and student groups at the Macdonald Campus
- McGill administrative units including the Office of Sustainability (the Office of Sustainability is becoming a highly valuable resource for connecting students with the appropriate staff on campus to pursue projects, as well as for helping students develop applied student research projects)

Efforts to communicate with students shall include:

- More centralized and accessible information
- Online resources as well as physical spaces like the green corner
- Creating strong sense of community (building inter-personal relationships)

The Environment Committee website will be used as:

- A central source of easily accessible information for the committee
- A means of engaging students about sustainability issues on campus, especially environment focused ones
- An interactive tool

Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners





Note: The roles of the Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners have been laid out in the Equity Policy, passed on March 1, 2012, and subsequently amended and up for approval April 11, 2013. What follows here is a short addition connecting the Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners to the work of the Environment Committee and Environment Commissioners. This is not an exhaustive detailing of the Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners.

The Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners provide a valuable resource to SSMU and the entire student body in grappling with equity issues broadly in the community and dealing specifically with equity complaints as they come forward.

It will be the role of the Environment Committee to periodically connect with the Equity Committee, report back to Environment Committee and arrange collaborations. It will be the responsibility of the Sustainability Coordinator to ensure that communication between the typical environmental and social spheres within SSMU's internal operations is open (e.g. goings on in Building Committee, events being planned by Students' Society Programming Network, etc.).

This will be an essential connection as Equity Committee is mainly concerned with social sustainability as described in this document and Environment Committee is mostly concerned with environmental sustainability.

#### Role of Sustainability Coordinator

The Sustainability Coordinator's role is primarily to make sure that efforts are developing in a coordinated manner, and that people working on the same issue are aware of what each other are doing and given the opportunity to collaborate. The Sustainability Coordinator also lends expertise, acts in an advisory role, supports student efforts, and helps with troubleshooting as issues arise. This is detailed more in depth, and formally dictated by, the Sustainability Coordinator job description.