



Motion for Special Emphasis to be Placed on Greater Engagement with Student Governance for 2018-2019 2018-09-27

WHEREAS, between 2004-2018, voter turnout in SSMU Winter Elections has never surpassed 32.8% and has been as low as 17.5%.¹

WHEREAS, last year only the position of President was contested and the year before only the positions of President and one Vice President were contested.²

WHEREAS, SSMU's Constitution has been amended five times between February 21st, 2015 and March 16th, 2017, and, for reference, has been amended an additional seven times since it was originally adopted on May 1st, 1999.³

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of the movers that many students feel that SSMU is not run fairly, efficiently, accessibly, or according to principles of good governance.

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the SSMU Legislative Council declare 2018-2019 as a year for renewed emphasis on broadening general engagement with Student Governance among SSMU's membership and that Council support Elections SSMU in increasing participation in elections.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT Legislative Council adopt the Terms of Reference outlining the establishment of an Ad-hoc Joint Board-Council Committee for Comprehensive Governance Review in Appendix A in order to create a system that inspires greater trust and confidence.

Moved by:

Tre Mansdoerfer, President
Marina Cupido, Vice President External Affairs
Jun Wang, Vice President Finance
Matthew McLaughlin, Vice President Internal Affairs
Sophia Esterle, Vice President Student Life
Jacob Shapiro, Vice President University Affairs
Brandon Hersh, Dentistry Representative

¹ [Elections SSMU Archive](#)

² [Elections SSMU Archive](#)

³ [SSMU Constitution](#)



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Brooke Callaghan, Management Representative

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Bryan Buraga, Senate Caucus Representative

André Lametti, Senate Caucus Representative

APPROVED



Appendix A

Comprehensive Governance Review Committee

1.1 OVERSIGHT. The Comprehensive Governance Review Committee shall be a joint Committee of Legislative Council and the Board of Directors.

1.2 GENERAL. The Comprehensive Governance Review Committee shall review the Society's governance bodies, systems and structures with a view to making our them reflective of our Mission. The Committee will devise a system that is: (a) in accordance with Quebec law, (b) as democratic and transparent as possible, (c) simple, accessible and easy for students to understand. The Committee will look to other successful systems and adapt elements to our context. The Committee will also aim to root out inconsistencies that exist within our governance practices.

1.3 RESPONSIBILITIES. Comprehensive Governance Review Committee shall:

- a) Research best practices at other student societies, union, and similar organizations ;
- b) consult a wide range of student stakeholders in order to develop a governance system that best reflects students needs and realities;
- c) review the entirety of SSMU's documents to sort out possible inconsistencies;
- d) simplify and shorten documents when possible and create guides and other resources so as to make SSMU's governance systems more accessible and easier to understand;
- e) work in consultation with SSMU's lawyers;
- f) recommend practices and systems for review in the future; and
- g) present a report to Council at least once a month and to Board at least once a semester.

1.4 MEMBERSHIP. Comprehensive Governance Review Committee shall consist of:

- (a) A steering committee;
- (b) Two Subcommittees.

The steering committee will be made up of four members of each subcommittee; it must include the SSMU President, as well as either the Speaker, Speaker on Call, or Parliamentarian. One of these four members will be the Committee's chairperson. The Steering Committee will be therefore made up of eight to ten members. In the event it is an even number the Chair will not vote. If it is an odd number, the chair will vote only in the case of a tie. Each Subcommittee will consist of twelve members, and designate its own Chair from among its members:

- a) two members of the Executive, selected by the Executive, one in each subcommittee;
- b) two members of Legislative Council, selected by Council, one in each subcommittee;



- c) two members of the Board, selected by the Board, one in each subcommittee;
- d) two member of the Judicial Board, past or present, selected by the Judicial Board, one in each subcommittee;
- d) two members of Senate Caucus, selected by Senate Caucus, one in each subcommittee;
- e) four Executive of Services, voted on by the Executives of all Services, two in each subcommittee;
- f) four Executives of Independent Student Groups, voted on by the Executives of all ISG, two in each subcommittee;
- g) one member of the Executive or Council of AUS, EUS, MUS, SUS, decided by the respective councils, one in each subcommittee;
- h) two members of the Executive or Council of the other faculty associations as well as schools with current representation on SSMU Legislative Council (DSS, EdUS, LSA, MSS, MUSA, POTUS, SWSA) proposed by the faculty associations and voted on by the Presidents of each association, one in each subcommittee.

Additional members can be consulted as needed and would likely include: Equity Commissioners, Indigenous Affairs Commissioner, Sustainability Commissioners, Mental Health Commissioner, and others staff and committee members as needed.

1.5 DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES.

1.5.1 STEERING COMMITTEE. The Steering Committee will provide general direction. It will refer topics to be studied in closer detail to the subcommittees such as, for example, role and structure of the Judicial Board. The Steering Committee will provide the subcommittees with a different question each month. The Steering Committee will also be responsible for organizing consultation sessions or surveys either at the beginning of the year or spread out, for the subcommittees to then refer to. The Steering committee will be responsible for presentations at the Board and Legislative Council, making final recommendations, and engaging the broader public.

1.5.2 SUBCOMMITTEES. The two subcommittees will work simultaneously and on the same questions. Each will submit recommendations to the Steering Committee, which the Steering Committee will the accept, reject, or amend.

1.6 MEETING.

1.6.1 STEERING COMMITTEE. Steering Committee will meet at least once a month during the Academic Year. Each month it will: (a) review recommendations of the Subcommittee, (b) report on progress to Legislative Council, (c) frame question for Subcommittee to study. Meetings should last approximately 90 minutes.

1.6.2 SUBCOMMITTEE. Subcommittee will meet twice a month and more frequently when needed. It



will work on a problem submitted to it by the Steering Committee and inform itself of: (a) legal considerations, (b) best practices, (c) McGill's particular context, (d) accessibility and feasibility of its recommendations. When the committee has questions about legal considerations or wants to arrange stakeholder consultation, it will communicate this to the Steering Committee. Committee meetings should last no longer than 120 minutes.

1.7 DEMOCRATIC, POPULAR ENGAGEMENT

1.7.1 CONSULTATION & SUBMISSIONS. The Steering Committee will organize ample opportunity for popular engagement both in terms of in-person forums and anonymous or group online survey and submissions.

1.7.2 POPULAR SUBCOMMITTEES. Additionally, beyond referring questions to the two subcommittees to study, the Steering Committee will make questions generally available so that members can organize their own groups and submit proposals for the Steering Committee to consider as it considers recommendations from its subcommittees. The Steering Committee will make publicly known the date by which these recommendations must be submitted. The Steering Committee will consider anonymous, as well as attributed, submissions.

1.8 QUORUM.

1.8.1 STEERING COMMITTEE. Quorum for the Steering Committee is two-thirds.

1.8.2 SUBCOMMITTEES. Quorum for the Subcommittees will be fifty percent.

1.9 ABSENCES.

1.9.1 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. An unexcused absence is any absence that is not communicated to the Chair at least 48 hours in advance. If a committee member communicates an absence with less than 48 hours notice, this is left to the Chair's discretion. Any committee member that incurs three unexcused absences will be asked to leave, and that committee will continue working during the process to replace the member.

1.9.2 EXCUSED ABSENCES. An excused absence is any absence communicated to the chair with more than 48 hours notice and that the Chair deems as reasonable. After a committee member's fourth excused absence, the Chair and committee member must find time to discuss the member's absences in order to see if there is any way to address this for the future. After this conversation and if the Committee member misses another two meetings, the Chair may choose to request that the member resign the seat.

1.10 RECALL & SUSPENSION.

1.10.1 RECALL. The Committee Members' constituency may choose to recall the member by a majority vote at any time. The constituency can then fill the seat according to the process by which it was originally filled.



1.10.2 SUSPENSION. The Committee can vote to suspend a member with a 4/5 majority. The Committee can set a suspension for a maximum term of three months. The Committee must state the reason for suspension. Legislative Council can overturn Committee suspension with a motion to reinstate passed by simple majority.

1.11 REPORTING. The Comprehensive Governance Review Committee will report to Legislative Council once a month for five to ten minutes. The Comprehensive Governance Review Committee will report to the Board of Directors at least once a semester.

