



Submitted for: October 11th, 2018

Motion Regarding Responsible Representation 2018-10-11

WHEREAS, the Vice-President (External) created a Facebook post on October 2nd on the official SSMU External Affairs page regarding the new Quebec government;

WHEREAS, the Vice-President (External) characterised the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) as “a racist, xenophobic, far-right government with documented ties to white supremacists” without citing any sources or providing any proof to substantiate their claims;

WHEREAS, neither the Legislative Council nor the Executive Committee nor the SSMU membership mandated the Vice-President (External) to make a statement regarding the election of a new Quebec government or passed a resolution taking a position on the CAQ;

WHEREAS, such an extreme and unsubstantiated statement may conflict with the Vice-President (External)’s constitutional mandate to “lobby federal, provincial, and municipal governments to further the objectives, goals, and Policy of the Society”;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Legislative Council mandates the Vice-President (External) to delete their Facebook post from October 2nd on the SSMU External Affairs page within twenty-four (24) hours of the passage of this motion;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Legislative Council mandates the Vice-President (External) to post the letter (as outlined in Appendix A) on the SSMU External Affairs Facebook page immediately after deleting the October 2nd post;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Legislative Council mandates the Vice-President (Internal) to post the letter (as outlined in Appendix A) on the SSMU Facebook page within 24 hours, and at the top of the upcoming SSMU listserv;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT the Policy on Responsible Representation (as outlined in Appendix B) be adopted as a Policy of the SSMU;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT this Policy expires on May 1st, 2023.



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Located on unceded, Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory

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FOR APPROVAL



Appendix A

On October 2nd, 2018, Vice-President (External) Marina Cupido posted a statement regarding the new Quebec government that was elected the day prior. This statement, and the opinions contained within it, were not authorized by the SSMU Legislative Council nor the Executive Committee. The SSMU acknowledges that this statement was inflammatory, divisive, and polarizing, and regrets the disappointment that this statement may have caused amongst our members. The SSMU would like to reaffirm its commitment to serving, representing, and leading our members regardless of their political ideology while being steadfast in standing up for the human dignity and rights of our members.

The SSMU has taken concrete steps to ensure that this does not happen again, including passing a new Policy on Responsible Representation that you can find on the SSMU website shortly or by contacting the SSMU President at president@ssmu.ca. With regards to the recent provincial election results, the SSMU would like to establish a good working relationship with the new CAQ government in order to advance the objectives, goals, and policies of our Society, as we are mandated to do so. This does not preclude our right to condemn and criticize policies of the CAQ that are detrimental to the welfare of the members of our Society, and we will not hesitate in doing so when appropriate. The SSMU has, and will always, take a stand against those who seek to discriminate based on national or ethnic origin, race, colour, religion, language, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or social class.

If you would like to express your opinion on this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact your SSMU executives or your faculty's councillor.



Appendix B

Policy on Responsible Representation

1. **SCOPE.** This Policy shall apply to all casual and full-time staff, volunteers, Officers, Commissioners, and elected officials of the SSMU, as well as all those who have access to SSMU-affiliated social media accounts.
2. **DEFINITIONS.**
 - 2.1. **COMPLAINANT.** A Member of the Society filing a complaint for a violation of this Policy.
 - 2.2. **OPINION.** A view or judgment formed about a particular issue , not necessarily based on fact or knowledge.
 - 2.3. **REPRESENTATION.** Statements made to communicate an opinion, position, or stance.
 - 2.4. **RESPONDENT.** The person that a complaint for a violation of this Policy is filed against.
 - 2.5. **SSMU-AFFILIATED SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT.** Any account on social media that bears the name “SSMU”, in part or in whole, as the main title of the account.
3. **GENERAL.** All those who make representations on behalf of the SSMU to the public (including, but not limited to: the press), as well as all those who make representations on SSMU-affiliated social media accounts, must follow the regulations listed as follows:
 - 3.1. **FULFILLMENT OF MANDATE.** It is permitted to make a representation on behalf of SSMU if it is necessary to fulfill the mandate of a policy, resolution, officer position, or in reference to a governance document. This may include, but is not limited to: communicating information about events to students, posting information for the benefit of students, and stating opinions, policies, and positions duly passed by the Legislative Council, the Executive Committee, or by the membership through Referendum or the General Assembly.
 - 3.2. **AUTHORIZATION OF COMMUNICATIONS.** It is not permitted to unilaterally make a representation on behalf of SSMU without having a mandate from the Legislative Council, the Executive Committee, or by the membership through Referendum or the General Assembly.



- 3.3. **REPRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL OPINION.** It is not permitted to express an individual opinion that does not have the documented mandate of support from SSMU's membership on behalf of the SSMU or on its affiliated social media accounts.
 - 3.4. **SSMU-AFFILIATED SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS.** Representations (including, but not limited to: posts, tweets, and photos) made on SSMU-affiliated social media accounts are to be considered as official statements by the SSMU, and as such, should only be used to represent the policies and positions duly authorized by the SSMU.
4. **VIOLATIONS OF POLICY.** Any Member of the Society is able to file a complaint if they believe that this Policy has been violated. Should an allegation of a violation of this policy arise, the following procedure shall be taken to rectify the violation:
 - 4.1. **ADJUDICATION.** A complaint shall first be adjudicated by the Executive Committee.
 - 4.1.1. **RECEIPT OF COMPLAINT.** A Complainant must file a complaint, in writing, to the President of the Society. They must state who they allege has violated this Policy and must explain how the Respondent has violated the Policy. If the Complainant wishes to file a complaint against the President for violating this Policy, they must file a complaint to the Vice-President (Internal).
 - 4.1.2. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING.** Upon the receipt of a complaint, the Executive Committee shall address the complaint within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving it. If necessary, the President shall call an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee. The Complainant and Respondent have the right to be informed of the time and place of the meeting and be able to attend. If the Complainant or Respondent are unable to attend the meeting, they may send a written statement to express their arguments. If an Officer is the Respondent, they may not attend the deliberations of the complaint except to express their arguments regarding the complaint.
 - 4.1.3. **DECISION.** The Executive Committee shall decide if the complaint is valid after considering the arguments of both the Complainant and the Respondent. Should an Officer be accused of violating this Policy, they shall not be able to vote to decide the result of the complaint.



- 4.1.4. **REMEDY.** Should the Respondent be found in violation of the Policy, within twenty-four (24) hours of the adjudication by the Executive Committee, they must remove the offending representation (should it be on a SSMU-affiliated social media account) and/or issue a statement regarding the retraction of the representation.
- 4.1.5. **REPORT.** After the adjudication of a complaint, the Executive Committee must detail their proceedings in their report to the Legislative Council.
- 4.2. **APPEAL.** The Complainant or the Respondent may appeal to the Legislative Council if they are dissatisfied with the decision made by the Executive Committee. They must transmit, in writing, a Notice of Appeal to the Speaker of the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council shall consider this appeal at their next regular meeting unless an extraordinary meeting is called to specifically adjudicate this appeal. If an Officer or Councillor is the Respondent, they may not attend the deliberations of the complaint except to express their arguments regarding the complaint.
- 4.2.1. **DECISION.** The Legislative Council shall decide if the decision made by the Executive Committee should be stayed or overturned after considering the arguments of both the Complainant and the Respondent. Should an Officer or Councillor be accused of violating this Policy, they shall not be able to vote to decide the result of the complaint.
- 4.2.2. **REMEDY.** Should the Respondent be found in violation of the Policy, within twenty-four (24) hours of the adjudication by the Legislative Council, they must remove the offending representation (should it be on a SSMU-affiliated social media account) and/or issue a statement regarding the retraction of the representation.