



Fall General Assembly - October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

## Motion Regarding Amendments to the SSMU Sustainability Policy

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

**Whereas**, the SSMU passed a Sustainability Policy in March 2012<sup>1</sup>;

**Whereas**, the commercialization of bottled water puts people and the environment at grave risk due to an excessive release of carbon emissions, the depletion of natural water sources, and the release of microplastics into public drinking and natural water sources;

**Whereas**, in 2009, the SSMU General Assembly passed a resolution<sup>2</sup> to counter the distribution and consumption of plastic water bottles;

**Whereas**, the SSMU has a moral imperative to operate with sustainability at its forefront, including third-party operations that take place within the University Center;

**Whereas**, it is imperative that the SSMU demonstrates initiative in decreasing the quantity of waste that the building produces;

**Whereas**, the current Sustainability Policy<sup>3</sup> does not prevent the sale and distribution of bottled water in the University Center and the distribution of plastic take-out containers that cannot be composted;

**Whereas**, the Waste Reduction and Diversion Action Plan that is soon to be published by the McGill Office of Sustainability showed a 15% diversion rate (defined as the successful diversion of all materials that can be recycled or composted from the landfill);

**Whereas**, the Sustainability Policy does not currently outline how the policy will be enforced and by whom;

**Be it resolved**, that the SSMU Executive present a report on the progress of the implementation of the Sustainability Policy at each General Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> <http://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/10/Policy-Manual-Updated-December-9-2010.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ssmu.ca/blog/2009/10/ssmu-institutes-ban-on-water-bottle-sales-in-university-centre/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SSMU-Sustainability-Policy-2013-04-11.pdf>



**Be it further resolved**, that section 3.2 of the Internal Regulations of Student Groups be amended to include a mandatory Sustainability Workshop as a requirement to maintain full club status.

**Be it further resolved**, that the SSMU Sustainability Policy be amended to include a section on implementation and accountability, as follows:

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#### Section 8: Implementation and Accountability.

##### Events:

The SSMU will be actively encouraging for 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 also be mandated to 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.

##### Vendors:

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 factor into tenant negotiations and further will be asked to attend a review meeting carried out by the Environment Commissioner(s) and supervising SSMU Executive.

##### Clubs and 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 Commissioner(s) to further support the implementation of sustainability in the club or service's operations. 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 Commissioner(s). If violations continue, Clubs and Services in question will be subject to a review by the Clubs Committee and Services Review Committee, respectively. The SSMU Executive and staff are included in the zero-waste policy, wherein they are mandated to use reusable or compostable containers in the distribution of food or beverage in meetings and trainings.

##### Outreach and Advocacy:

In order to facilitate education on campus with regards to the reduction of waste generated by disposable containers and water bottle use, the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President will actively lobby McGill University to eliminate the sale and distribution of bottled water on the McGill campus.



Additionally, the Vice-President (Student Life) will distribute information to all Clubs, Services, and the student body on issues pertaining to bottled water and promote the sustainable alternative of tap water, other sustainable methods of water distribution, and readily available services, such as The Plate Club.

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*Submitted to the Fall General Assembly on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017*

APPROVED