

Comprehensive Governance Review Committee (CGRC)

Officers and Elections Whitepaper No. 1



Submitted for 2020-02-13



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Governance Review Committee (“CGRC”) was established on September 27, 2018 by a resolution of the Students’ Society of McGill University (“the Society” and “the SSMU”) Legislative Council to analyze the structure and function of the Society’s governance bodies and documents in order to bolster “greater engagement with student governance.”¹

The CGRC having consulted on and completed a considerable part of its work now turns its attention to the structure of Officers and Elections. Given the significant nature of these positions and how they interact with the day-to-day business of the SSMU, the CGRC wishes to engage the members of the Legislative Council in a generative discussion on these issues to better understand the desires of the student body vis-à-vis the composition of the Executive Committee, duties of the Officers, and how the Officers interact with one another.

As such, we hope to receive the thoughts and reflections of the Legislative Council on the following three proposals:

1. Status quo (six or seven individually elected Officers)

- a. High democratic legitimacy
- b. Potential for low group cohesion
- c. Potential for low capacity for shared vision
- d. High degree of autonomy for individual Officers to pursue projects
- e. Moderate barrier to entry for candidates due to uncertainty
- f. High burden on voters (electoral fatigue)

2. Elected slates (slates of six or seven Officers that run together as a slate)

- a. High democratic legitimacy
- b. High group cohesion
- c. Strong capacity for shared vision
- d. Moderate degree of autonomy for individual Officers to pursue projects
- e. Reduced barrier to entry for individual candidates, higher barrier to entry for groups
- f. Risk of excluding already marginalized individuals and groups
- g. Moderate burden on voters (electoral fatigue)

¹[Motion for Special Emphasis to be Placed on Greater Engagement with Student Governance for 2018-2019 2018-09-27](#)



3. Hybrid System (elected President and Vice-President, four or five appointed Associate Vice-Presidents that are interviewed and approved by the Legislative Council)

- a. Moderate democratic legitimacy
- b. High group cohesion
- c. Strongest capacity for shared vision
- d. Limited degree of autonomy for individual Officers to pursue projects
- e. Lowest barrier to entry for individuals not comfortable running in elections
- f. Risk of preferential treatment in appointment of Associate Vice-Presidents
- g. Low burden on voters (electoral fatigue)

FOR DISCUSSION