

Policies of the SSMU Legislative Council

Created on 2020-04-02





TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL POLICIES	4
Accessibility Policy	6
1. Background	6
2. Scope	6
3. Definitions	6
4. Framework	8
5. Implementation	8
5.1 Communications and Promotions	8
5.2 Programming and Events	9
5.3 Physical Access	10
5.4 Student Groups	11
5.5 Advocacy	11
5.6 Society Governance	11
5.7 Reporting	12
Climate Justice Policy	13
1. Scope	13
2. Definitions	13
3. Framework	14
4. Operations	14
4.1 Business Partnerships	14
4.2 Carbon Emissions	15
4.3 Waste Reduction	15
5. Education	15
5.1 Curriculum	15
5.2 Showcasing Solutions	15
6. Advocacy	16
6.1 Tactics	16
Council Transparency Policy	17
Effective Committees Policy	18
1. Composition of Committees	18



2. Common Duties of Committees	18
3. Committees Treating on External Issues	18
Events Policy	20
1. Overview and Scope	20
2. Increased Risk Events	20
3. Contracts	20
4. Staffing, Safety, and Emergencies	21
5. Budgets And Sponsorships	23
6. Reporting And Exclusions	24
7. Creating a Culture of Inclusivity	25
Free Menstrual Hygiene Products Policy	26
1. Scope	26
2. Definitions	26
3. Product Subsidizing	27
4. Distribution	28
5. Advocacy	28
6. Education	29
Indigenous Solidarity Policy	30
1. Background	30
2. Scope	30
3. Definitions	30
4. Implementation	31
4.1 Consultation and Decision-Making	31
4.2 Support for Indigenous Students	32
4.3 Support for Indigenous Communities	33
4.4 Advocacy & Solidarity within the University	34
4.5 Physical Campus Environment	34
5. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada	35
6. Accountability	35
Mental Health Policy	36
1. Background	36
2. Resource Promotion and Increased Accessibility	37
3. Accountability and Follow-Through	37
4. Advocacy and Solidarity	37
Policy Against Unpaid Internships	38
1. Introduction	38
2. Scope	38
3. Definitions	38



4. Screening Criteria	39
5. Education and Awareness	40
6. Programming	41
7. Advocacy	41
8. Reporting	42
Smoking on Campus Policy	43
1. Introduction	43
2. Implementation	43
2.1 Education	43
2.2 Resources	44
2.3 Designated Smoking Areas	44
3. Consultation and Review	45
Support for Family Care Policy	46
1. Background & Scope	46
2. Definitions	46
3. Implementation	47
3.1 Consultation	47
3.2 Support for Student Parents	47
3.3 Support for Students with Dependents	48
4. Reporting	49
Sustainability Policy	50
1. Background	50
2. Scope	50
3. Interpretation	51
4. Fostering a Community of Sustainability	51
4.2 Coordination	52
4.3 Education	52
4.4 Outreach	53
4.4 Advocacy	53
5. Internal Practices and Procedures	54
5.2 Executive Portfolios	55
5.3 Buildings	55
5.3 Purchasing	56
5.4 Human Resources	56
6. Events	57
7. Reporting and Accountability	57

APPENDIX: RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPECIFIC ROLES AND COMMITTEES WITHIN THE SSMU

57



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

A.1 Role of the SSMU Executives	57
A.2 Role of Council and Councillors	60
A.3 Role of Senators and Senate Caucus	60
A.4 Role of Environment Committee and the Sustainability Commissioners	60
A.5 Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners	61



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL POLICIES

SSMU's policies provide detailed guidance on the execution and pursuit of general goals and values held by the Society, as laid out in other governance documents. Some policies must be adaptable given the shifting landscape of SSMU's staffing structure and resource allocation, which itself follows the prioritization of certain projects in a given academic year. As such, policies are subject to a five-year cyclical review unless otherwise indicated. Amendments made throughout the five-year period do not reset the review cycle. The Implementation Guide (appended below) outlines best practices for creating and amending policies.

Because the governance of the Society applies to different groups depending on the subject at hand, some policies are under the purview of the Legislative Council (often with regard to policies related to external-facing issues or best practices for advocacy), while others are other the purview of the Board of Directors (largely those related to human resources, finances, and legal matters). This book outlines those policies that are monitored by the Legislative Council, a body that meets bi-weekly and enjoys broad representation from McGill's faculty associations, SSMU's clubs & services, and other constituency groups that the SSMU has a special interest in representing. Largely, these policies direct the work of the Executive Committee in pursuing the issues that are important to the student body, as expressed by the Legislative Council.

All representatives and employees whose actions receive guidance from policies (often identified in the "Scope") are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Policy Books to the best of their ability. The Legislative Council Policy Book is updated regularly based on the resolutions brought to the Legislative Council and General Assembly. General questions regarding SSMU's policies can be directed to governance@ssmu.ca or president@ssmu.ca. Questions regarding SSMU governance, including how to adopt a new policy, can be directed to president@ssmu.ca.



Accessibility Policy

Date Adopted: 2016/04/07

Expires: 2021/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background

In order to stand in solidarity with students with disabilities, this Policy serves as the operationalization of a commitment to ensuring that the Society prioritizes accessibility and the unique needs of students with disabilities. This involves engaging with issues of disability and ableism in meaningful ways through solidarity and advocacy, while recognizing that disability does not exist in isolation and often intersects with other identities, such as race, gender, and class, to disproportionately marginalize certain individuals and/or groups.

2. Scope

This Policy shall apply to all individuals and bodies involved in decision-making processes for the Society, including but not limited to Directors, Officers, Councillors, Senators, Committees and Committee Members, and Staff.

This Policy shall apply to all activities and events hosted, funded, and promoted by the Society, all materials published by the Society, and all promotion taking place within the William Shatner University Centre.

3. Definitions

3.1 *Ableism:* Ableism, which can be conscious or unconscious, refers to practices and dominant attitudes in society that privilege able-bodied individuals. Ableism is the belief system that underlies negative attitudes, stigma, and discrimination against people with disabilities.

3.2 *Accessibility:* Accessibility refers to the ability for everyone, regardless of disability or a difference in needs, to access, use, and benefit from everything within their environment. As a practice, it aims to facilitate the full participation of individuals with disabilities in society.



3.3 Anti-Oppression: Anti-oppression recognizes that various axes of oppression, including disability, contribute to power imbalances that differentially marginalize certain communities.

3.4 Barrier: Barriers refer to circumstances or obstacles that prevent the full participation of an individual in a given activity or in society at large. Barriers may include, but are not limited to, economic, systemic, environmental, attitudinal, psychological, physical, academic, informational or communication-based, or technological factors.

3.5 Disability: Disability refers to an exclusion or limitation that may restrict the full participation of an individual in society as a result of systemic barriers, including, but not limited to, physical, attitudinal, and social factors.

3.6 Disadvantage: A circumstance or a situation that puts an individual or a group of people in an inferior or less favourable position compared to others, resulting in compromised access to resources or opportunities.

3.7 Social Model of Disability: The social model of disability maintains that systemic barriers to participation and exclusion, including physical, attitudinal, social, and other factors, are the primary contributing factors to an individual's experience of disability, and it is therefore society that disables a person, not their impairment. The model describes an impairment as the difference in ability of an individual, while disability refers to the exclusion resulting from societal and systemic barriers.

3.8 Solidarity: Acting in solidarity requires maintaining relationships with affected communities, facilitating opportunities for self-advocacy whenever possible, including a diversity of voices in Society decision-making, and striving for the participation of affected individuals in all advocacy and policy.

3.9 Universal Design: Universal Design (UD) is a concept that promotes the production and creation of physical spaces, products, services, and built environments that allows for use by everyone to the greatest extent possible. This process involves continuous improvement toward the ultimate goal of full inclusion.

3.10 Universal Design for Learning: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) refers to a teaching approach that encourages diverse methods of instruction, assessment, accommodation, and resource provision with the goal of meeting the needs of the greatest number and most diverse group of learners possible. The goal of UDL is to create a learning culture in which diversity is respected and embraced, and where all students are encouraged to learn and demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways.



4. Framework

The Society will formally adopt a framework for accessibility based on its values of equity and anti-oppression, and the Society shall refer to these fundamental principles in advocacy for and implementation of accessibility within the Society, on campus, and in society at large. The Society's framework of accessibility shall be based upon the following fundamental values:

- 4.1** The Society shall operate under the understanding of a social model of disability, which focuses on the structures and barriers that impose limitations on certain groups or individuals.
- 4.2** The Society shall, in its advocacy and programming, work toward the promotion of universal access, with the goal of all individuals having the opportunity for full participation in society. To accomplish this objective, the Society will draw on the principles of Universal Design and Universal Design for Learning.
- 4.3** The Society will advocate and organize around the principles of an anti-oppressive mandate. The Society shall confront these historical and current inequalities, and promote and practice anti-oppression in all facets of the implementation of accessibility within the Society.
- 4.4** The Society will act in meaningful solidarity with individuals with disabilities. The Society shall follow the leadership of and defer to individuals with disabilities advocating on their own behalf where desired.

5. Implementation

This Policy mandates the Society to take action in six areas associated with barriers to accessibility within the context of the Society: communication and promotions, programming and events, physical access, student groups, advocacy, and Society governance.

5.1 Communications and Promotions

All Society communication projects must be undertaken with full respect for accessibility and with the goal of ensuring that all Society information is accessible. This goal will be operationalized through the following means:

- 5.1.1** Accessible design standards for online communication and web content shall be incorporated into the Society's Communication Plan and reviewed on an annual basis by the Vice-President (Internal Affairs).



5.1.2 All online publications, including the Society's Website, shall be adapted to ensure accessibility of web content through the implementation of accessible design standards into the Society's Website. All updates to the Society's online presence shall take into consideration the accessibility of the information presented through consideration of the use of fonts, graphics, colours, headings, content organization, and other factors affecting the accessibility of information online.

5.1.3 All communications and promotions regarding Society events that are published in print or online must explicitly include basic accessibility information about the event in question, including the physical accessibility of the venue and the availability of additional accessibility factors, including but not limited to whisper or sign language translation and childcare.

5.1.4 All external promotional materials advertised by the Society must include explicit accessibility information to be considered for promotion.

5.1.4.1 Submissions to the Society Listserv or social media channels that do not include accessibility information where applicable, including the physical accessibility of venues and the availability of additional accessibility accommodations, including but not limited to whisper or sign language translation and childcare, shall not be accepted nor promoted through the Society Listserv.

5.1.4.2 Submissions of event posters for approval for posting in the University Centre that do not include accessibility information where applicable, including the physical accessibility of venues and the availability of additional accommodations, including but not limited to whisper or sign language translation and childcare, shall not be accepted nor posted in the Shatner Building.

5.2 Programming and Events

All Society events must be physically accessible and must make every effort to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that all Members have equal access.

5.2.1 All Society events must make every effort to be accessible to all Members, and must be held in venues that are physically accessible to individuals with limited mobility.

5.2.2 All Society events must publicize in their promotions a list of accessibility services available upon request, including but not limited to whisper or sign language translation, childcare, and adapted physical access.

5.2.3 The Society shall promote and encourage the use of accessible venues for events across campus and shall advocate for the inclusion of accessibility training in the planning for



all cross-faculty events in which the Society participates, including but not limited to Orientation Week, through the Office of the Vice-President (Internal Affairs).

5.2.4 The Society, through the Equity Committee and the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs), shall raise awareness of accessibility issues on campus and in the community-at-large through hosting at least one annual event with a focus on accessibility and disability.

5.2.5 The Society shall take accessibility into consideration when making determinations about the allocation of Fees distributed by the Finance Committee to programming and events, through the Office of the Vice-President (Finance).

5.2.5.1 The Finance Committee shall incorporate at least one question soliciting accessibility information about the event or project seeking funding into the Funding Application.

5.2.5.2 The Funding Coordinator shall consider the physical accessibility of event venues prior to making funding decisions.

5.3 Physical Access

The Society, through the Office of the Vice-President (Operations), shall ensure that the integrity of the University Centre as an accessible space is maintained and actively improved upon in order to ensure the continuance of access for individuals with disabilities.

5.3.1 The Society will address cosmetic access needs in the University Centre, including but not limited to the transition of lighting to non-fluorescent, improving building signage, increasing the number of push buttons in the building and ensuring their functionality, implementing event grating on floors, changing knobs to handles, ensuring accessible seating lounges and cafeterias, and widely publicizing accessibility information for the building on the Society's website.

5.3.1.1 Prior to the development of renovation plans within the University Centre, the Society shall consider the implications of the renovation for accessibility and shall ensure the application of barriers free design standards.

5.3.1.2 The Society shall make every effort to consult and involve the Office for Students with Disabilities in the planning process for potential renovation or construction projects to ensure that spaces within the building remain accessible.

5.3.2 Accessibility of projects and initiatives within the building shall be taken into consideration prior to the funding of such projects from the Space Fee as allocated to internal Society projects. The Committee responsible for these allocations shall be responsible for



reporting to Legislative Council on the accessibility implications of the projects selected for funding.

5.3.3 In order to facilitate continuous improvement in the accessibility of the University Centre, the Society shall execute an Accessibility Audit of the building on a bi-annual basis and shall develop a series of recommendations to Legislative Council for making spaces within the building more accessible.

5.4 Student Groups

The Society, through the Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall ensure the consideration of accessibility and inclusion among student groups through the provision of resources and awareness regarding accessibility issues.

5.4.1 The Vice-President (Student Life) shall be responsible for educating student groups on issues of access through the inclusion of accessibility information in training materials made available to student groups, including but not limited to the inclusion of accessibility content in Club Workshops, at the Services Summit, and in the Society's online resources.

5.4.2 The Vice-President (Student Life) shall be responsible for the production and annual maintenance of a master list of accessible venues to be identified as priority venues for event bookings for student groups. The accessible venue list shall be paralleled by a "blacklist" of event venues that are physically inaccessible, for which booking events shall be discouraged.

5.4.3 The Vice-President (Student Life) shall be responsible for the production and maintenance of an Equitable Event Planning Guide to be circulated to student groups as a resource for hosting accessible events with the support of the Vice-President (University Affairs).

5.5 Advocacy

The Society, through the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and its student membership on relevant University committees, shall make every effort to promote a culture of accessibility within the McGill community-at-large, including advocating for the prioritization of accessibility on campus.

5.5.1 The Society shall stand in solidarity with any member of the McGill community who is discriminated against or prohibited from full participation within the University due to their disability.

5.6 Society Governance

The Society, through the Office of the President, shall make every effort to increase the accessibility of participation of its membership within the Society's governance structures and will work towards



eliminating any and all barriers to participation in decision making.

5.6.1 The Society recognizes that there currently exist barriers to participation in Society governance, including but not limited to the time commitment associated with serving as an elected representative and the length and intensity of meetings of the Society's governance bodies.

5.6.2 The Society will provide reasonable accommodations when required in a manner that does not compromise the functioning of the Society in order to make participation in Society governance accessible to all students.

5.6.3 The President shall be responsible for maintaining an accessible work environment for all staff of the Society and for ensuring the implementation of reasonable accommodations where required.

5.6.4 The President shall be responsible for conducting an audit of all the governance processes and positions of leadership within the Society with attention to the social, attitudinal, and physical barriers limiting participation.

5.7 Reporting

All Officers responsible for the implementation of the Accessibility Policy through targeted action points shall report to the Equity Committee on a bi-annual basis and to the Legislative Council on an annual basis regarding the fulfillment of their responsibilities as outlined in the Accessibility Policy.



Climate Justice Policy

Date Adopted: 2019/11/14

Expires: 2022/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Scope

This policy shall apply to Directors, Councilors, Officers, Senators, Commissioners, Permanent Staff, and all others involved in Society decision-making processes for the duration of their formal involvement with the Society. It shall be used as a guide for decision-making and a plan for taking action on the climate crisis.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of the Climate Justice Policy, the following definitions and considerations apply:

2.1 “Global North”: The Global North refers to the 59 countries with very high human development and the 53 countries with high human development as reported in the United Nations Development Programme¹. Most, 19 but not all, of these countries are located in the Northern Hemisphere.

2.2 “Global South”: The Global South refers to the countries of the rest of the world, most of which are located in the Southern Hemisphere. It includes both countries with medium human development (39 countries) and low human development (38 countries).

2.3 “Oil Sands”: Oil sand is a naturally occurring mixture of sand, clay or other minerals, water and bitumen, which is a heavy and extremely viscous oil that must be treated before it can be used by refineries to produce usable fuels such as gasoline and diesel.

2.5 “Divestment”: Fossil fuel divestment involves institutions, governments, and investment funds selling away shares in fossil fuel and related stocks. Divestment campaigns place high value in ethical principles and also emphasize applying political and economic pressure to curb the harmful effects of the fossil fuel industry. The ultimate aims of divestment

¹[United Nations Development Programme: “2018 Update”](#)



is reverting the anthropogenic contributions to the climate crisis in a just manner, placing a fair share of onus on the producers of fossil fuels².

2.6 “Climate Justice”: Within the fight against the man-made climate crisis, this term comes from the understanding that the climate crisis has unequal effects on global populations, with communities in the Global South being more susceptible to many of the negative effects of the climate crisis such as droughts, mass migration, and flooding.

3. Framework

3.1 In this Policy, the Society details not only its commitment to reducing our consumptive impact, but also mandates those identified in Section 1 to challenge producers and the systems that allow them to function through the exploitation of natural resources.

3.2 Anti-oppression

The SSMU’s efforts to combat the climate crisis must include the protection of human rights; respecting the right to development; ensuring transparency, accountability, and fair participation; addressing gender inequities, and emphasizing education and partnership³.

3.2.1 The Society will organize initiatives around the recognition that climate change, extraction, and environmental destruction disproportionately impact the most vulnerable groups in society. The Society will strive to ensure these voices are centred in environmental initiatives, and provide educational resources on the links between oppression and the climate crisis.

3.3 Solidarity

The Society will act in meaningful solidarity by maintaining relationships with directly affected communities, with a particular emphasis on Indigenous groups in accordance with the Indigenous Solidarity Policy. Acting in solidarity includes, among other things, consulting groups before publicly discussing content related to their lived experience and providing every opportunity possible for groups to self-represent rather than being spoken for.

4. Operations

The SSMU will, through purchasing and investment, support businesses that share our values and comply with provincial and federal environmental and labour laws.

² [ScienceDirect: “Summary of the Divestment Argument”](#)

³ [Mary Robinson Foundation: “Principles of Climate Justice”](#)



4.1 Business Partnerships

The SSMU will prioritise the purchasing of products from companies that display a strong commitment to sustainability.

The SSMU will continue to avoid all investments in the fossil fuel industry and follow other sustainability screens outlined in previous Five-Year Ethical Investment Plans.

4.2 Carbon Emissions

While recognizing and prioritizing the need for systemic action, the SSMU will strive to reduce our carbon footprint as reasonably possible and encourage the membership to do the same.

4.2.1 Transportation

The SSMU will have greater accountability for its transportation impacts. It will promote opportunities for collective transportation to meetings and assemblies and encourage the usage of public — bus or train — transport whenever possible. Additionally, when applicable, teleconferencing will be a strong consideration in attendance at events to minimize carbon outputs.

4.2.2 Events

Larger-scale events will make use of a carbon calculator, such as the McGill Office of Sustainability's McGill. The Society will work toward limiting those activities found to have an elevated carbon footprint, and will, when necessary, work toward offsetting remaining activities with carbon credits.

4.3 Waste Reduction

The SSMU will strive to minimize overall material consumption of the organization by investing in reusable supplies and to encourage waste diversion through compost and recycling. The SSMU will also periodically conduct research into potential energy reductions in the University Centre and present the findings of this research to the Legislative Council.

5. Education

5.1 Curriculum

The SSMU will lobby the University for increased research funding and internship opportunities in fields such as renewable energy that contribute to a just transition to a zero carbon future. The SSMU



will seek to partner with on campus actors that support applied student research in climate change initiatives such as the McGill Office of Sustainability and Teaching Staff.

5.2 Showcasing Solutions

The Society will host or partner with events which aim to showcase the viability of alternative energy and job opportunities within the renewable energy sector at least once per academic year.

6. Advocacy

The SSMU will advocate for solutions to address the climate crisis in communities and at all governmental levels, such as community renewable energy projects; fair, ambitious, and binding carbon pricing systems; and initiatives contributing to more sustainable food systems. This may be done independently or in conjunction with a provincial student Federation.

6.1 Tactics

The Campaigns Department, in its mandate to mobilize the student body, shall support a diversity of tactics needed to address the climate crisis effectively and equitably. In particular, it shall support the following groups insofar as they pressure various institutions to take action on the climate crisis:

6.1.1 Divestment

Fossil fuel divestment has been the most visible tactic towards the goals of climate justice supported by the Society. SSMU divested its funds from fossil fuels in 2013, and has actively supported the autonomous Divest McGill campaign through funding, outreach assistance, space booking, and task completion as needed through the Campaigns Coordinators and Vice-President (External Affairs). The Society shall continue to assist in these ways, and to coordinate initiatives between campus divestment campaigns.

6.1.2 Emissions Reduction

Climate Justice Action McGill (C-JAM) participates in a province-wide effort to pressure institutions and governments to reduce their emissions as required by the IPCC. Within the University context, emission reduction takes the form of divestment from fossil fuels. The Society shall support C-JAM through funding, outreach assistance, space booking, and task completion as needed through the Campaigns Coordinators and Vice-President (External Affairs). Participation in province-wide actions shall be overseen by C-JAM rather than the Society, unless otherwise requested.



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

Council Transparency Policy

Date Adopted: 2018/10/18

Expires: 2023/05/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

Steering Committee shall endeavour to work with on-campus partners, including but not limited to: TVM: Student Television at McGill, the McGill Daily, Le Delit, the McGill Tribune, and the Bull and Bear to ensure that meetings of Legislative Council are live-streamed whenever possible.

The SSMU shall take steps to disseminate access to the livestream via social media and listserv. The SSMU will post on social media and in the listserv the location and time of the next Legislative Council.



Effective Committees Policy

Date Adopted: 2019/02/07

Expires: 2023/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Composition of Committees

All SSMU committees will have the following components for their composition:

- 1.1** A SSMU Executive on the committee (except in situations where an executive present goes against the premise of the committee);
- 1.2** A SSMU student staff in a leadership role on the committee; and
- 1.3** At least 1 SSMU Councillor (if a committee under Legislative council) or at least 1 SSMU Director (if a committee under the Board of Directors)

2. Common Duties of Committees

SSMU committees have the following expectations during the academic year:

- 2.1** A SSMU committee will report at least once during the year to its respective body;
- 2.2** A SSMU committee will make recommendations (if any) to its Terms of Reference at the end of the each Academic Year; and
- 2.3** A SSMU committee will submit an exit report highlighting the years work for documentation purposes.

3. Committees Treating on External Issues

- 3.1** A SSMU committee treating on external issues has the responsibility to reserve seats for student groups that work on similar subject matter, as determined by the incoming and outgoing Committee Chairs at the start of each academic year;
- 3.2** The chair of a SSMU committee treating on external issues has a responsibility to engage in dialogue with groups that work on similar subject matter throughout the year in order to amplify the work being done by these groups.



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

3.3 A SSMU committee treating on external issues that is given access to a portion of a SSMU fund may use this funding both for their own activities and in the co-creation of initiatives with other student groups engaged in similar work.



SSMU Events Policy

Date Adopted: 2020/03/26

Expires: 2025/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Overview and Scope

The Students' Society of McGill University ("SSMU") has the final legal responsibility for all events planned and hosted by its internal bodies such as the Students' Society Programming Network ("SSPN") and the Executive Committee. This Policy seeks to balance risk management and mitigation principles of the SSMU with the operational needs of event organizers to flexibly plan and organize events that enhance student life at McGill University for SSMU Members. It also incorporates harm reduction principles, taking into account the effects of alcohol on the ability of an event organizer to ensure the safety of participants. Finally, it seeks to recognize the V.I.P. Culture perpetuated within Society events, in order to mitigate undue power dynamics arising from such.

This Policy applies to all events organized either directly or indirectly by the Executive Committee or the portfolio committees of any Officers of the SSMU.

2. Increased Risk Events

2.1 All events that exceed 200 people in attendance, include alcohol, host an outside speaker, include unusual activities or equipment, and/or involve expense(s)/revenue(s) in excess of \$1,000 must be approved at the Executive Committee 15 days prior to the event;

2.2 All organizers of events that exceed 200 people in attendance, include alcohol, host an outside speaker, include unusual activities or equipment, and/or involve expense(s)/revenue(s) in excess of \$1000 must inform the Building and Operations Directors 15 days prior to seeking approval from the Executive Committee;

3. Contracts

3.1 All third-party contracts must be negotiated and will be signed by the Operations Director and in their absence the General Manager, but the Executive organizer and members of the planning



committee will be permitted to search for, reach out to, and begin discussions with venues and other 3rd parties with the Operations Director being made aware;

4. Staffing, Safety, and Emergencies

4.1 All SSMU Executive organizers and other paid event organizers must not consume drugs or alcohol prior to and for the duration of the event. Alcohol or drug consumption by Executives should be reported to the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Directors, and may result in suspension or other disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate by the Committee and ratified by the Board. Intoxication of other paid event organizers should be reported to their Supervisor or the Executive in charge of the Event.

4.1.1 The Human Resources Committee should, in their deliberation, consider historical incidents of SSMU and ensure that there is not a misappropriation of resources provided to those planning SSMU events.

4.2 Volunteer organisers will be chosen by the Executive in charge of the event to remain sober, so as to assist in the proper and safe functioning of the event. These volunteer organisers shall be in charge of facilitating the event and shall be overseen by the employees and Executive in charge of the event. They will be given shirts and other materials by event organizers so as to ensure that they are easily identifiable by participants.

4.2.1 The number of these organisers shall vary based on the total number of volunteer organisers in the event-planning body. For a body of less than fifteen people, it shall be two organisers. For more than fifteen, it shall be four.

4.2.2 Volunteers or unpaid committee members will have no decision-making ability on matters with legal implications, or on matters with financial implications beyond the budgeted amount.

4.2.3 The event organizers may choose to set up a schedule of volunteer shifts, in which case the volunteers shall only be prohibited from consuming alcohol prior to and during their shift.

4.2.4 All volunteers are expected to abide by the Policies of the Society and the Volunteer Manual.

4.3 There must be 1 certified First Aid responder as part of the organizer or support team per 100 attendees; for events over 200 attendees, this requirement may be reduced to not less than two (2) certified First Aid responders, regardless of the number of participants, at the discretion of the Building Director and Operations Manager, if event-related risks to participants are deemed low;



4.4 Event organizers should, as a matter of harm reduction, work with established campus partners to ensure the safety of participants at events. These partners fulfill needs such as: offering water to intoxicated individuals (Red Frogs), driving or walking individuals to a safe location (DriveSafe/WalkSafe), First Aid responders (MSERT), peer support workers (Peer Support Centre and SACOMSS).

4.4.1 Organizers shall ensure that these partners are given information pertinent to the fulfillment of their roles prior to the start of the Event. This includes a general briefing on the itinerary, contact information of event organizers, fire exits, etc.

4.5 The VP Finance, and in their absence, the President, should be on call or available in person for any legal or financial issues;

4.6 Events requiring Executive attendance are considered working hours;

4.7 All events including alcohol will be managed by the Operations Director and security for said event will be managed by the Building Director. In the absence of either party, the General Manager will assume management. “Management” shall entail the authority to direct staff and volunteers, communicate with the venue, declare an end to the event, and other operational and safety decisions;

4.8 All events will held more than 5km away from the downtown campus must be approved by the Executive Committee;

4.9 For issues arising from events that cannot be controlled or managed by the event organizers, the point of emergency contact will be in the following order:

- a. Operations Director;
- b. Building Director;
- c. General Manager;

4.10 All itineraries and locations of events involving alcohol must be approved at the Executive Committee;

4.11 The layout of any event must be approved by the Building Director and in their absence, the General Manager;

4.12 All security and server plans will be approved by the Building Director and Operations Director respectively;

4.13 All events that fail to meet safety and security standards may be cancelled or altered at any time by the Building Director and in their absence the General Manager. Event organizers will be notified of any cancellation or alteration of the event.



4.14 All SSMU events that include alcohol consumption off campus must be held at an establishment with a valid liquor permit;

4.14.1 As a matter of law, alcohol cannot be served at these venues by staff and/or volunteers. The employees of the establishment have a legal requirement to monitor the consumption level of individuals, and are trained to identify when an individual should be cut off.

4.14.2 Volunteers cannot reasonably be expected to have this information, and are therefore prohibited from serving alcohol to participants, on their teams or otherwise. This includes continuously pouring alcohol for other participants at events such as “Power Hour”.

4.15 All attendees that consume alcohol and/or drugs and are visibly intoxicated prior to the event will be excluded from entry. In the case of purchased tickets, no refunds will be given;

4.16 All attendees that carry alcohol and/or illegal drugs to an event will be excluded from entry. In the case of purchased tickets, no refunds will be given;

4.17 All organizers of events involving registration shall work with the SSMU Anti-Violence Coordinators to ensure that individuals restricted under the Involvement Restriction Policy shall not be able to register for said event.

4.18 All organizers of events must ensure that all participants are made aware of and consent to the following policies: SSMU Gendered and Sexualized Violence Policy and SSMU Equity Policy.

4.18.1 Other behaviours that make participants unsafe shall be grounds for removal from events, at the discretion of the event organizers.

5. Budgets And Sponsorships

5.1 All events must include a budget (see Budget Template) approved by the Vice-President Finance (VP Finance) 5 days prior to seeking approval from the Executive Committee. In the absence of the VP Finance, the General Manager will approve the budget;

5.2 Sponsorship for events will be conducted primarily through the Operations Department, and/or the Sponsorship Representative, though others, including the event’s planning committee will have permission to seek out sponsorship opportunities. The only signing officers for sponsorship are the VP Finance, General Manager, Operations Director, and President.

5.3 All budgets must include a 10% contingency cost.



5.4 Expected or real cost overruns must be reported to the VP Finance immediately. Deficits will be assumed by consecutive, future events, unless in the case that the Executives take exceptional action to cover all or part of a deficit with an alternative funding source. Should the Executives decide that a deficit renders an event untenable, and should no funding be available, the Executives shall meet to decide whether the event should be cancelled for the transaction year.

5.5 All ticket and associated item sales will be managed by the Operations Department in consultation with the VP Finance. Under no circumstance will Executives or volunteers be allowed to accept or manage any cash or cash equivalent transactions.

5.6 All payments for vendors, materials and supplies must be made through the Operations Department, under no circumstances should Volunteers or Executives be reimbursed for any transactions.

5.7 Payments for Vendors, materials and supplies must be made through the Operations Department prior to the date of the event.

5.8 In extenuating circumstances, small purchases totalling less than \$150 per person and within the scope of the event budget may be made at the discretion of the Executive organizers and will be reimbursed in accordance with accounting policies. No alcoholic beverages of any kind may be purchased by volunteers for the purpose of running the event.

5.9 All reimbursement requests must be submitted with original receipts and bank statements within 90 days of the event. Any reimbursement requests not submitted within 90 days of the event will not be approved.

6. Reporting And Exclusions

6.1 A master exit report, with input from all relevant parties, must be compiled by the lead organizer and submitted within ten (10) days of the event's completion.

6.2 The Executive Committee will include a permanent “Event Declaration” business item on each agenda to include dates, times, locations and participation numbers (if known, applicable).

6.3 Governance and charitable events will be excluded from the above regulations unless the events include alcohol or carry a higher risk;



7. Creating a Culture of Inclusivity

7.1 SSMU funds must not be spent on alcoholic beverages or gifts exceeding fifty dollars (\$50) in value exclusively for SSPN members or for any other individuals planning SSMU events; exceptions need to be approved at Executive Committee.

7.1.1 This should not be interpreted so as to imply that organizers should take on personal expenses where such expenses are necessary for personal safety or the functioning of the event or event series (e.g., travel, food, entry to events).

7.2 Event organizers shall take reasonable steps to ensure that events are inclusive and accessible to non-drinkers, Members with accessibility needs, and Members requiring equity considerations.

7.2.1 Event organizers will consult with the SSMU Equity Commissioners on all event themes, including team names, scavenger hunt challenges, and other events, prior to this content being released to participants. Suggestions by the Equity Commissioners will be incorporated unless the parties agree that this is infeasible.

7.2.2 Event organizers should consider physical accessibility in the selection of event venues. Moreover, accessibility info should be advertised along with every event, including but not limited to: the presence of flashing lights, strong scents, wheelchair access, gender-neutral washrooms, availability of services, quiet area and event organizer contact numbers.

7.3 Event organizers will ensure that gluten-free and alcohol-free options are available at all events where alcohol is sold or provided.

7.3.1 Similarly, when advertising events, organizers must ensure they are not promoting alcohol consumption.

7.4 In budgeting for events, Event Organizers should consider the financial accessibility of events as event price can serve as a barrier to participation.



Free Menstrual Hygiene Products Policy

Date Adopted: 2016/10/26

Expires: 2021/10/20

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Scope

This Policy shall apply to Directors, Councillors, Executive Officers, Senators, committee members, staff (employees), and all others involved in Society decision-making processes for the duration of their formal involvement with the Society. It shall be used as a guide for decision-making and a plan for taking action on providing menstrual hygiene products to those who need it.

2. Definitions

All terms used in the Free Menstrual Hygiene Products Policy shall adopt the same definitions as those given to similar terms previously defined in the Constitution. In addition, the following terms shall be defined herein:

2.1 Sex: refers to the social, legal, and medical classification assigned to one's body at birth. Sex, unlike Gender, is not self-defined, though it can be changed.

2.2 Gender: a set of cultural identities, expressions and roles, codified as feminine or masculine, that are assigned to people based upon the interpretation of their bodies, and more specifically, their sexual and reproductive anatomy. Since gender is a social construct, it is possible to reject or modify the assignment made, and develop something that feels truer and just to oneself.⁴

2.3 Gender Non Conforming (GNC): a descriptive term and/or identity of a person who has a gender identity and/or expression that does not conform to the traditional expectations of the gender they were assigned at birth. People who identify as “gender nonconforming” or “gender variant” may or may not also identify as “transgender.”

2.4 Gender Binary: the Gender Binary, also referred to as “gender binarism” or “binarism”, is the incorrect classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.

⁴ <https://www.glsen.org/GSA/making-your-club-inclusive-transgender-and-gnc-students>



2.5 Cisgender: Cisgender refers to a person whose gender identity coincides with their sex at birth.

2.6 Transitioning: the process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another, GNC or non-binary. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal, physical or medical changes. There is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo in order to have their gender identity affirmed and respected.

2.7 Transgender: encompassing term of many gender identities, some binary and some nonbinary, of those who do not identify or exclusively identify with their sex assigned at birth. The term transgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life.

2.8 Menstrual Hygiene Products: any products used during a person's menstrual cycle in order to assist them with the experiences and/or difficulties of menstruation. Persons may choose in some cases to not use these products at all, a decision that is entirely theirs to make and one that should be respected as such. For the sake of this policy, such products may include, and shall be defined as, but are not limited to:

2.8.1 Tampons: an unscented and hypoallergenic plug of soft material inserted into the vagina, using a plastic applicator, to absorb menstrual blood, which must come in a variety of sizes.

2.8.2 Sanitary Pads: an absorbent item worn by a person who is menstruating.

2.9 Pink Tax: the Pink Tax refers to the discrimination against non-male defining people that manifests itself in an increased expense on products typically labelled, explicitly or implicitly, “for women.”

2.10 Economies of Scale: a proportionate saving in costs gained by an increased level of production and purchasing.

2.11 Luxury Goods: products which are not necessary but which tend to make life more pleasant for the consumer.

3. Product Subsidizing

The SSMU will continue to bring the Menstrual Hygiene Products Fee back to the membership for renewal, at the initially passed price per student or higher, until McGill, or the Municipal, Provincial or



Federal Government recognize that these products must be classified as Necessary Goods and pass a subsidy program to eliminate their cost and/or supply them publicly.

3.1 If, at any point, the SSMU finds itself running a surplus with the funds collected, those surplus moneys collected will be pooled into a fund (to be referred as the Health and Hygiene Products Fund) to be reserved for the purchasing of alternative health and hygiene products, including, but not limited to, Diva Cups.

4. Distribution

The SSMU shall seek to provide menstrual hygiene products through as many prominent access points on campus as are outlined, but not limited to, herein.

4.1 SSMU Building

The Vice-President (Operations) shall establish dispensaries at key access points in the building, namely in, but not limited to, the two gender neutral washrooms in the SSMU Building. The Vice-President (Operations) will also create and maintain clear signs on the first and fourth floor indicating where these products are, and shall coordinate with the VP External's annual awareness campaign (outlined below) to promote the existence of these free products in the building.

4.2 McGill Campus

The Vice-President (Internal) will be responsible for coordinating with Healthy McGill to distribute these products as widely as possible through their kiosks on campus. As well, the VP Internal shall contact all other groups they feel would be interested in working with the SSMU on providing free menstrual hygiene products, in order to promote the creation of more access points across campus into this Policy.

5. Advocacy

The SSMU will advocate for similar policies to be adopted at all higher levels of governance, including, but not limited to, at McGill, Municipal and Provincial Government.

5.1 The Vice-President (University Affairs) shall advocate for the McGill administration to adopt a similar Policy, as well as establish dispensaries on campus through any official capacity they have, such as Senate and its Committees.

5.2 The President shall encourage the McGill administration, as well as faculty associations, to adopt similar policies and establish dispensaries through any official capacity they have, such as Senate and its Committees, the Board of Governors and its Committees, and the Presidents' Roundtable.



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

5.3 The Vice-President (External) and the President shall both be tasked with the responsibility of advocating for similar policies at the Municipal, Provincial, or Federal level through media relations, provincial associations, as well as personal outreach to the City of Montreal by the Vice-President (External) in particular.

6. Education

The Vice-President (External) shall put on, in coordination with the Office of the Vice-President (Operations), an annual awareness campaign that aims to both explain the Pink Tax and educate people about how it negatively effects and discriminates against GNC, Transitioning, Transgender, and Cisgender people that experience menstruation. The predominant role of the Vice-President (Operations) in this is outlined in 4.1.1, but they will also act as a general support to the Vice-President (External) throughout the campaign.



Indigenous Solidarity Policy

Date Adopted: 2016/03/31

Expires: 2021/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY POLICY

Adopted by Legislative Council: 2016/03/31

Expires: 2021/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background

The SSMU Constitution commits the SSMU to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection. The SSMU acknowledges that McGill University is located on traditional Kanien'kehá:ka territory in the Constitution and has historically failed to promote and respect Indigenous voices. Indigenous solidarity is a crucial component of practicing social justice, and the SSMU recognizes that Indigenous students face a number of unique barriers and challenges to their well-being and learning opportunities on campus. As such, the SSMU recognizes the authority of Indigenous student bodies on this topic and commits to providing solidarity and allyship to ensure their wellbeing and success during their time at McGill. The thoughts, opinions and needs of Indigenous students will remain an influential driving force behind SSMU decisions and actions.

SSMU's history of leadership on issues of equity and social justice, demonstrated through such documents as the Constitution and the Equity Policy. Because Indigenous solidarity is a crucial component of practicing social justice, the Indigenous Solidarity policy aims to further this commitment by taking measures such as the following:

- Running public awareness campaigns that recognize under-addressed components of Indigenous history;
- Adapting current SSMU services to better support and meet the needs of Indigenous students
- Engaging in continuous consultation, via the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner, as to how the SSMU can best adapt in supporting Indigenous students
- Engaging with the territories and offer specific support mechanisms to Kanien'kehá:keka students
- Improving and increasing access to supports for Indigenous students;



- Lobbying the University to prioritize Indigenous solidarity in service provision and academia
- Calling out and taking swift action when injustices are seen to be occurring individually or collectively against any one or many Indigenous students;
- Ensuring consequences follow from actions taken against the interests and wellbeing of any one or many Indigenous students
- Undertaking other tasks as necessary to achieve the objectives targeted by this policy

The SSMU recognizes the historical and ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples both in the McGill community and society-at-large. In particular, the SSMU acknowledges that both McGill University and the SSMU have historically failed to recognize and address their role in colonialism and the ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples. This policy aims to address those oppressions and commits the SSMU to prioritizing Indigenous voices and histories in its activities. The SSMU recognizes a plurality of Indigenous voices and identities both in the Canadian context and internationally, however this policy focuses primarily on Indigenous peoples in Canada.

This commitment is further demonstrated as the SSMU has implemented a traditional territory acknowledgement statement for meetings as follows:

The SSMU acknowledges that McGill University is situated on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee nations. The SSMU recognizes and respects these nations as the true and constant custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. Further, the SSMU commits to and respects the traditional laws and customs of these territories.

2. Scope

This policy shall apply to all:

- 2.1 Staff, elected representatives and business operations of the SSMU.
- 2.2 Activities and events hosted or promoted by the SSMU.
- 2.3 Written or graphic material, which is published, distributed or endorsed by the SSMU.
- 2.4 Clubs, Services, and SSMU Representatives to Independent Student Groups.
- 2.5 Any other individuals, student groups or events relating to SSMU activities.

3. Definitions

3.1 Indigenous: Refers to a person who self-identifies as First Nations (status or non-status), Inuit, Metis, American Indian, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians.

3.2 Indigenous Community: Refers to a group of Indigenous people with shared background and/or interests including, but not limited to, reserves, non-status communities, urban Indigenous communities or community groups.



3.3 Stakeholders: Refers to any person or group who has an interest in the outcome of a decision or event related to Indigenous issues or who has relevant expertise, including, but not limited to, the First Peoples' House, the Social Equity and Diversity Education.

4. Implementations

The Policy shall mandate the Society to act in five key areas related to Indigenous Solidarity: consultation and decision-making; support for Indigenous students; support for Indigenous communities; advocacy and solidarity within the university; and physical campus environment.

Such efforts will be coordinated by the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner --as the representative of Indigenous students within the SSMU-- with the Society being held responsible as an ally to the Indigenous student community. As such, the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner will coordinate with and prepare allyship status reports to the SSMU Board of Directors. In execution of this policy, the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner will maintain lateral relations with the SSMU Vice-President (University Affairs) in fulfilling the mandates outlined below.

- Promote awareness of supports and services available to Indigenous students
- Build ongoing rapport with Indigenous students to ensure their voices are heard and needs are met
- Ensure Indigenous students have adequate access to mental health care and supports
- Take definitive steps to expand the Indigenous Studies program
- Expand access to services that are in high demand for Indigenous students
- Facilitate access to off-campus supports and services for Indigenous students
- Ensure the availability of cultural activities and practices conducive to the wellbeing of Indigenous students

4.1 Consultation and Decision-Making

The SSMU recognizes the importance of developing relationships with McGill-based and local Indigenous groups that are grounded in open communication and respect. Furthermore, the SSMU acknowledges that meaningful advocacy and decision-making can only occur in dialogue and ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities. All consultation efforts should take into account the diversity of Indigenous peoples and perspectives as well as the awareness that some perspectives may at times be harmful to Indigenous students and community members. The SSMU shall institutionalize consultation protocols through the following actions:

4.1.1. Each academic year, the Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall compile an internal document with the contact information of all relevant Indigenous Stakeholders, including University units, student groups, external organizations, individuals and local community groups. The SSMU will act in good faith with these Stakeholders based on First Refusal Rights and only refer students to them with their explicit permission. This document



shall serve to facilitate consultation and shall be updated on an annual basis. In the event where SSMU has been found not acting in good faith with these Stakeholders, SSMU will consult with these Stakeholders to determine the best course of action to make amends for its failure to do so.

4.1.2. The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) and Vice-President (Student Life) shall produce and distribute a consultation guide for reference by Clubs, Services and Independent Student Groups in their activities. The Indigenous Affairs Committee shall be responsible for making appropriate changes as needed and approving this guide and overseeing consultation requests in collaboration with the relevant Executive Officer(s).

4.1.3. The Offices of the Vice-President (External Affairs) and the President shall work to expand formal and informal opportunities for Indigenous student participation within the SSMU, including by actively reaching out to Indigenous student groups for their input on the role in Indigenous Student life.

4.1.4. The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall consult relevant Stakeholders in Indigenous student life at the University, as well as local Indigenous communities, regarding the renewal and revision of this policy before it expires.

4.1.4.1 All consultation processes shall involve an official meeting with notice at least 30 days prior, in addition to a minimum of 14 days to review the policy before it is submitted to the SSMU Legislative Council. The feedback must be presented with the renewal of this policy.

4.1.5. For any matters involving Indigenous student life at McGill which are not covered within this policy, the Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall consult the aforementioned Stakeholders for direction.

4.1.6. The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall seek out and implement any additional means through which to appropriately recognize and compensate Indigenous students and Stakeholders for their consultation and contributions.

4.2 Support for Indigenous Students

The SSMU, through the Offices of the Vice-President (Student Life) and the Vice-President (University Affairs), shall ensure that support for Indigenous students and student groups shall remain a priority. The SSMU shall improve support for Indigenous students and student groups at the University. This shall occur through the following actions:

4.2.1. The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall provide Stakeholder-identified educational and consultation resources to student groups in an effort to ensure that adequate



support and consideration is provided to Indigenous students, accounting for their unique perspectives, experiences, and needs.

4.2.2. The Executive Committee shall ensure that Traditional Territory Acknowledgements are included as part of all public SSMU-organized events in whatever form is most appropriate.

4.2.2.1. The Executive Committee shall also endeavor to increase the visibility and breadth of Traditional Territory Acknowledgements at other events in the McGill community.

4.2.2.2. The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall be responsible for ensuring that Traditional Acknowledgements are made at events organized by SSMU Clubs and Services and Independent Student Groups

4.2.2.3. The Funding Committee shall request that student groups make Traditional Territory Acknowledgements at all events funded by the Society.

4.2.3. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and the Vice-President (Student Life) shall advocate for University-run services to provide adequate support for Indigenous students, accounting for their unique perspectives and needs. This includes, but is not limited to, targeted support for financial aid, housing, academic advising, peer mentorship, mental health support, and career services.

4.2.4. The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall provide Indigenous student groups on campus with all access to room booking privileges in the University Centre equivalent to those of any Full-Status Club.

4.2.5. The Club Committee shall consider the underrepresentation of Indigenous students at McGill University when assessing Club applications from Indigenous student groups and will waive membership requirements for these students where appropriate. The Legislative Council will ensure that this underrepresentation is accounted for prior to approving relevant reports of the Club Committee.

4.3 Support for Indigenous Communities

4.3.1. The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall maintain outreach efforts to Stakeholders in local Indigenous communities. This shall include, but is not limited to, an open invitation for dialogue at the beginning of each academic year, as well as issue-specific dialogue throughout the year. If requests that contact cease or be avoided at any point throughout this process, such a request shall be immediately respected. Various methods of contact shall be used- depending on the needs and resources of the group, including, but not limited to, phone calls, email messages, and in-person meetings.



4.3.2. Indigenous communities shall receive First Refusal Rights for services including, but not limited to, speaking engagements, education or instruction, and artistic or cultural production that are relevant to Indigenous events organized by the SSMU. The SSMU shall strive to prioritize Indigenous-run businesses for such events whenever possible.

4.4 Advocacy & Solidarity within the University

The SSMU shall act in meaningful solidarity with Indigenous peoples through building and maintaining relationships with Indigenous communities; facilitating opportunities for self-representation wherever possible; incorporating a variety of perspectives in decision-making; and otherwise working towards the participation of Indigenous peoples in advocacy and policy development, as is desired by Indigenous community members. The SSMU shall follow the leadership of and defer to Indigenous peoples advocating on their own behalf.

4.4.1. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall lobby the University to actively respect, consult with, and take direction from Indigenous Stakeholders and to increase Indigenous presence on the University campus as a whole.

4.4.2. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall work with the University to better recruit, retain, and support Indigenous students, including by ensuring that pertinent data regarding current and incoming Indigenous students is collected, maintained, and assessed on a regular basis in order to determine where additional supports are needed, and by streamlining the admissions process among various faculties.

4.4.3. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and the President shall advocate for increasing the number of tenured Indigenous faculty and support staff members at the University through equitable and cluster hiring, the development of a full Indigenous Studies department and integrating Indigenous knowledge and history into existing courses and programs. Such roles must avoid tokenization, be substantive and authoritative, and avoid being only symbolic.

4.4.4. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall lobby the University to ensure that Indigenous peoples have a substantive and authoritative formal role in the decision-making processes of the University, such as through representation of the Board of Governors and in senior administrative positions. Such a role must avoid tokenization, be substantive and authoritative, and avoid being only symbolic.

4.5 Physical Campus Environment

The SSMU shall advocate for the development of physical and symbolic representations on campus that reflect Indigenous histories and continued presence on the land, specifically that of the



Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg peoples. Such efforts shall be undertaken with the goal of educating the community-at-large as well as developing spaces that facilitate the comfort, well-being, and cultural activities of Indigenous students. Furthermore, all activities should account for diversity in artistic and cultural representations; the societal prevalence of pan-Indigenous stereotypes; and the role of self-identification in Indigeneity and cultural expression.

4.5.1. The Office of the President shall ensure that there is a visible Indigenous presence in the University Centre building. This includes, but is not limited to, art displays produced by Indigenous artists; room and building naming, and creating or modifying spaces to accommodate cultural activities, such as smudging

4.5.2. The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall lobby the University to ensure that there is visible Indigenous representation in the campus environment of the University including, but not limited to, room and building naming; and creating or modifying spaces to accommodate cultural activities such as smudging.

5. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada released its final report, including 94 Calls to Action, in 2015. The SSMU recognizes that the TRC framework is not universally accepted and does not meet the needs of all Indigenous peoples. However, it shall actively support the implementation and maintenance of these Calls to Action based on community consultation and direction, taking into account other local resurgence, nationhood, self-determination and self-governance frameworks. There shall be a particular focus on Calls to Action 6-17, 62-66 and 87-92, as these recommendations focus on issues within the scope of a university institution, including *Education, Language and Culture, Education for Reconciliation, Sports and Reconciliation, and Business and Reconciliation*.

6. Accountability

All staff and elected representatives of the SSMU are accountable for the implementation of this policy. To this end, the vision, planning, and decision-making of the Society should uphold the principles, support measures, and consultation protocols outlined in this document. Furthermore, the Legislative Council is responsible for ensuring that all Executive Officers and Committees integrate and communicate this commitment in their activities as well as in the development, implementation, and evaluation of new initiatives.



7. Reporting

The Office of the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner shall report to the Legislative Council once per semester on the status of the mandates contained in this policy. The SSMU shall ensure that this report be made available to Stakeholders in an accessible format.

8. Enforcement Policy

If at any point, SSMU or any of its members or officials have or are seen to be disregarding this policy, discussions with affected parties must be held on how to rectify the situation and on appropriate amends to be made.



Mental Health Policy

Date Adopted: 2020/01/30

Expires: 2023/05/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background

This document explicates the Students' Society of McGill University's approach to student mental health and wellness. It contextualizes the approach with a comprehensive description of the current mental health climate on McGill's campus and across comparable Canadian post-secondary institutions. This compiled research informs the three overarching, multifaceted commitments of resiliency, accountability, and solidarity that the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) shall work towards in the next three academic years. This policy is meant to be understood in conjunction with the SSMU Mental Health 2020-2023 Three Year Plan.

This policy is meant to lay out a long-term vision for SSMU's continued dedication to the improvement of mental health resource access, promotion, and institutional accountability. The SSMU recognizes not only the importance of working with the Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) and the Macdonald Campus Students' Society (MCSS), but also the crucial input of student groups in order to better represent the unique mental health needs of all McGill students. This policy is a living document and will serve as the foundation for future mental health projects. This policy's mandate will last for the next three years; goals and timelines should be updated every semester by the mental health commissioner and their team to ensure accountability between years, and the achievement of the long-term goals highlighted in the Three Year Plan.

This policy seeks to build upon the foundations started by countless mental health advocates on campus and advocate for tangible changes to the accessibility and diversity of resources; the implementation of new promotional and educational campaigns; and the integration of the 2020 Mental Health Commission of Canada's Post-Secondary Standards.

This policy intends to highlight the ways in which small, student-driven changes can help diminish, or balance, the negative effects of the high intensity environment. Our vision is to gather together student groups, community members, stakeholders, faculty, and McGill administration, to create a stronger network of professional and student-driven services that will respect and represent the diversity of needs of McGill's student population.



2. Resource Promotion and Increased Accessibility

The SSMU will work with passionate student groups, both on and off campus, to provide a diverse array of services that meet the unique needs of every student. The SSMU MH Committees will provide an environment for student groups and campus allies to create functional, streamlined service promotion and educational campaigns in order to minimize overlap and maximize the number of students reached. Most importantly, the SSMU shall prioritize service accessibility by increasing collaboration with students who are underrepresented and whose needs may not currently be met by McGill services.

3. Accountability and Follow-Through

Due to the constant turn-over of student leadership, strong collaboration between each year's Mental Health Commissioner (MH Commissioner), SSMU Vice-President Student Life, and the Rossy Wellness Hub is critical to ensuring the follow-through of long-term goals. This policy shall represent a new commitment to accountability by including concrete steps and detailed timelines that will facilitate the achievement of goals that may require multiple years to complete. Further, when students enter their new positions in May, they will be given detailed exit reports, updates on year's goals, and all necessary information to jump head-first into the role. As a result, there will be a MH Commissioner who ensures the Hub's accountability throughout the entire year, including over the summer and in September (during which institutional accountability and communication is known to decrease).

4. Advocacy and Solidarity

Building on Section 2, the SSMU must recognize that mental health services at McGill do not equally cater to the lived experiences of marginalized student groups. Further, the burden of mental distress disproportionately affects the same individuals that services frequently underrepresented. As such, the SSMU MH Commissioner and their team must be allies for student groups and advocate for personalized mental and physical health care that reaches the students who may need it most.



Policy Against Unpaid Internships

Date Adopted: 2017/03/09

Expires: 2022/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Introduction

The SSMU Policy on Accessible Education calls for the elimination of all financial barriers to education and training. As a result, the SSMU has a responsibility to advocate against unpaid and exploitative labour practices and to demand accessible, quality experiential learning opportunities for all McGill students. To this end, a policy was developed in order to institutionalize existing and future measures for advocacy and awareness-building around unpaid internships.

According to Article 9 of the McGill University Charter of Student Rights, every student has a right to a quality education. The University's corresponding obligation is fulfilled where: (a) the University offers an education capable of providing students with an adequate level of competence in the relevant field of study, (b) the University makes every reasonable effort to maintain the quality of education it dispenses, and (c) the University makes every reasonable effort to provide an appropriate environment for learning and assessment activities. As internships, particularly those taken for course credit or circulated by the university, are designed to further a student's education, the administration must also be held accountable for their quality and accessibility.

2. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

- 2.1** Individuals involved in decision making processes for the Society, including Directors, Officers, Councillors, Senators, Committee Members, and Staff;
- 2.2** Clubs, Services, and Independent Student Groups (ISGs);
- 2.3** Activities and events hosted, funded, or promoted by the Society, including all those occurring within the University Centre;
- 2.4** Materials and communications published or distributed by the Society.

3. Definitions

- 3.1** **Disadvantage:** A circumstance or situation that places an individual or a group of people in an inferior or less favourable position compared to others, resulting in compromised access to resources or opportunities.



3.2 Employee: A person who works for an employer and who is entitled to a wage. According to the Quebec Act Respecting Labour Standards, this also includes a worker who is a party to a contract, under which they:

- I. undertake to perform specified work for a person within the scope and in accordance with the methods and means determined by that person;
- II. undertake to furnish, for the carrying out of the contract, the material, equipment, raw materials or merchandise chosen by that person and to use them in the manner indicated by him or her; and
- III. keep, as remuneration, the amount remaining to him or her from the sum he has received in conformity with the contract, after deducting the expenses entailed in the performance of that contract;

3.3 Employer: Any person who has work done by an employee.

3.4 Internship: An experiential learning opportunity that integrates knowledge gained in the classroom into a supervised role in an employment setting, including a defined start and end date, job description, and clearly identified learning outcomes and evaluation related to a student's field of study. Not simply an operational work experience that just happens to be conducted by a student.

3.5 Wage: Remuneration in currency and benefits having a pecuniary value due for the work or services performed by an employee.

4. Screening Criteria

Some unpaid internship opportunities may in fact qualify as legitimate training experiences. However, clear screening criteria are required in order to ensure that such opportunities are not merely exploitative. When assessing the validity of unpaid internships for the purposes of this policy, it is recommended that the following criteria from the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE) be considered⁵:

- 4.1** The training is similar to field-specific or applied training that can be found at a post-secondary institution.
- 4.2** The training is for the benefit of the intern.
- 4.3** The organization providing the training derives little, if any, benefit from the activity of the intern while he or she is being trained.
- 4.4** The intern does not displace employees of the organization providing the training.
- 4.5** The intern is not accorded a right to become an employee of the organization providing the training.

⁵ "CACEE Statement on Unpaid Internships" Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (2012). http://www.cacee.com/CACEE_Statement_on_Unpaid_Internships.html



- 4.6** The intern is advised that he or she will receive no remuneration for the time that he or she spends in training.
- 4.7** The skills and/or experience gained must be transferable to other employment settings.
- 4.8** There are clearly defined and articulated learning outcomes for the intern to realize by the conclusion of the internship.
- 4.9** Regular supervision is given by a professional pertinent to the internship.
- 4.10** Internships must be for a defined period of time.

For the purposes of this policy, the above exceptions do not apply to professional stages or internships with private companies, public institutions, or intergovernmental agencies.

In a response to a question at the Senate meeting of November 23, 2016, the Provost indicated that all McGill internship and career offices follow the CACEE framework as a guideline for vetting placements that are not degree program requirements⁶.

Furthermore, Concordia University has developed salary guidelines⁷ and sample responsibilities⁸ for internships based on corresponding academic programs, which provides a clear guide for both students and supervisors to assess fair remuneration and learning outcomes in these instances.

5. Education and Awareness

The SSMU shall make efforts to educate all Members on the negative impacts, legality, and protections related to unpaid internships. This shall include the following actions:

- 5.1** The Office of the Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall make information regarding the legality, criteria, and protections surrounding unpaid internships available on the Society's website as well as through other communication channels as appropriate.
- 5.2** The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and Vice-President (External Affairs) shall distribute informational resources regarding the legality of unpaid internships and available protections through annual educational campaigns and third-party events (including but not limited to relevant job fairs, volunteer fairs, and career information sessions).

⁶ "Question Regarding University Regulation of Unpaid Internships," McGill University Senate (2016). https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/question_and_response_regarding_unpaid_internships.pdf

⁷ "Student salary guidelines," Concordia University Institute of Co-operative Education (2017). <http://www.concordia.ca/academics/co-op/employers/student-salary-guidelines.html>

⁸ "Sample Co-Op student responsibilities," Concordia University Institute of Co-operative Education (2017). <http://www.concordia.ca/academics/co-op/employers/sample-co-op-student-responsibilities.html>



5.3 The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall make information on this Policy available to all existing and prospective student groups.

6. Programming

The SSMU shall ensure that all constituent and affiliated student groups, programming, and events of the Society do not offer, promote, circulate, or otherwise communicate unpaid internship opportunities.

6.1 The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall ensure that Club, Service, and/or Independent Student Group status is not granted to groups that offer, promote, circulate, or otherwise communicate unpaid internship opportunities as one of their primary activities.

6.2 The Office of the Vice-President (Finance) shall ensure that SSMU funding is not allocated to groups or activities that offer, promote, circulate, or otherwise communicate unpaid internship opportunities.

6.3 The Office of the Vice-President (Finance) shall ensure that sponsorship and contractual agreements are not made with businesses that offer, promote, circulate, or otherwise communicate unpaid internship opportunities.

6.4 The Office of the Vice-President (Operations) shall ensure that no events are approved or hosted within the University Centre that offer, promote, circulate, or otherwise communicate unpaid internship opportunities. In the case of events where full oversight may not be possible, educational materials shall be distributed regarding the legality, criteria, and protections surrounding unpaid internships.

7. Advocacy

7.1 The SSMU shall advocate for the improved fairness, quality, and legality of internships for Members, and shall communicate with relevant McGill University offices including, but not limited to, the Internship Offices Network (ION), Career Planning Services (CaPS), and Faculty internship or student affairs offices.

7.2 The SSMU shall advocate for the required remuneration of internship opportunities in collaboration with any relevant external groups.

7.2.1 The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall liaise with campus labour unions and staff associations on any concerns, priorities, or initiatives related



Students' Society of McGill University

Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca

3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories

to unpaid internships, including through the Inter-Union Council (IUC) and the McGill Communities Council (MCC).

7.2.2 The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall facilitate collaboration between Members, external advocacy groups, student federations, labour unions, and campaigns related to unpaid internships, locally, provincially, and federally.

8. Reporting

All Officers responsible for the implementation of this Policy shall report to the Legislative Council on an annual basis regarding the fulfillment of their responsibilities as outlined above.



Smoking on Campus Policy

Date Adopted: 2016/04/07

Expires: 2021/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Introduction

The health risks of second-hand smoke are well known, as are the risks of smoking. It is with this knowledge, and with the desire to ensure that students are provided with “safe and suitable conditions of learning,” as stipulated in the Charter of Student Rights of McGill University⁹, that the Society is putting forward this Policy.

All actions and messages stipulated in this Policy have as a guiding principle the support of the mental health and overall wellness of smokers and non-smokers and respect the intersection between smoking and mental health, culture, social and economic inequalities such as class¹⁰, gender, sexuality¹¹, as well as other points of intersection.

The Society will ensure that the voices of smokers are prioritized in conversations, programs, and policies regarding smoking on campus.

2. Implementation

The SSMU commits itself to advocating for the following measures, in accordance with the principles stated above:

2.1 Education

Education around smoking on campus must be adapted to the needs of students. It also must be non-directional and should seek to inform students and provide alternatives. The Society will work with McGill Student Services to provide a spectrum of educational materials and opportunities that seek to achieve the following objectives:

2.1.1 Provide students with clear information about University smoking policies;

2.1.2 Employ harm reduction approaches and encourage smokers to voluntarily reduce the exposure of others to second-hand smoke. Information on the effects of second-hand smoke on individuals with pre-existing medical conditions should be included;

⁹https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/charter_of_student_rights_last_approved_october_262017.pdf

¹⁰ https://preventionforme.org/channels/special_populations/low_income_and_education.php

¹¹ http://www.thedccenter.org/facts_smoking.html



2.1.3 Provide all students with information about smoking and its lesser-known risks, such as social smoking and other smoking practices, adapted to the unique context of university students;

2.1.4 Informing students about different smoking reduction and cessation resources and strategies, including both on- and off-campus options;

2.1.5 Actively fighting the stigmatization of smoking and recognizing addiction as a form of mental illness.

2.2 Resources

The Society will advocate for the provision and promotion of extensive, varied resources for smoking cessation and reduction to meet the needs of students. These resources should represent a range of approaches from non-directional peer support through to nicotine replacement therapy and medications. Partners will include McGill's Wellness Hub, the Office for Students with Disabilities, the Society student health plan provider, and the international student health plan provider. The Society shall work to ensure a variety of resources are available to students, including but not limited to:

2.2.1 Providing students with the contact information of smoking chatlines;

2.2.2 Providing peer support for those wishing to quit or reduce their smoking;

2.2.3 Providing smoking cessation counseling and treatment at Student Health, Mental Health, and Counseling Services;

2.2.4 Providing links and coverage information for off-campus resources and counseling.

2.3 Designated Smoking Areas

In line with best practices from other institutions, such as the University of Melbourne and the McGill University Health Centre, the Society will work with the University to put in place improved designated smoking areas where smokers can smoke while not exposing others to second-hand smoke. Principles that should be followed when developing these smoking areas are:

2.3.1 Consultation: Engagement with smokers and the community-at-large on the placement, design, and number of the areas;

2.3.2 Safety: Ensuring appropriate design standards, ventilation, comfort, and ease of use, while complying with current law that does not allow the construction of roofed shelters for smokers;



2.3.3 Location: Placement where smokers will use them, but off of high-traffic routes;

2.3.4 Promotion: Identifying the areas as the locations for smoking and adjusting enforcement mechanisms as necessary.

3. Consultation and Review

If any of the above requirements cannot be fulfilled, the Society will re-evaluate its commitment to a smoke-free campus and bring a discussion of this issue to the SSMU Legislative Council. The society also commits to working with stakeholders like the University Health and Safety Committee, the student health services, the Libraries, and our constituents to continually review and re-evaluate this policy.

The Society shall fulfill these mandates through the Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and the Office of the Vice-President (Student Life). The Vice- President (University Affairs) and the Vice-President (Student Life) shall be responsible for reporting on this matter to Legislative Council once a semester. With respect to timeline, the Society commits to actively pursuing and working towards the implementation of all aspects of this policy within five years, at which point this policy should be revisited for renewal.



Support for Family Care Policy

Date Adopted: 2016/10/15

Expires: 2021/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background & Scope

The SSMU recognizes that this Equity Policy, in its current form, does not explicitly recognize the discrimination and exclusion faced by Students with Dependents, Pregnant, or Breastfeeding student and aims to actively address this issue through this policy.

This policy shall apply to all:

- a. Staff, volunteers and elected representatives of the SSMU;
- b. Activities and events hosted and promoted by the SSMU;
- c. Written or graphic material, which is published, distributed, or endorsed by the SSMU.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of the Support for Family Care Policy, the following definitions and considerations apply:

- 2.1 *Childcare:*** Refers to services that ensure the supervision of children.
- 2.2 *Dependent:*** Refers to a person who is financially, emotionally, legally and/or physically dependent on another individual.
- 2.3 *Family Care:*** Refers to all matters pertaining to Childcare, Elder Care and Dependents.
- 2.4 *Student with Dependent:*** Refers to any student with a Dependent, as well as Student Parents collectively. This includes, but is not limited to, caring for an elderly family member, a sick family member, and financially supporting others remotely.
- 2.5 *Student Parent:*** Refers to a student who is pregnant or who has one or more children.
- 2.6 *Stakeholder:*** Refers to any person or group that has an interest in the outcome of a decision or event related to Family Care within the University or that has expertise in said area.



3. Implementation

3.1 Consultation

The SSMU recognizes the importance of developing relationships with Stakeholders that are grounded in open communication and respect. Furthermore, the SSMU acknowledges that meaningful advocacy can only be done in consultation with these communities. The SSMU, through the Office of the Vice-President (Student Life), shall achieve this by:

3.1.1 Ensuring that prior to each academic year, in August, the contact information of all relevant stakeholders is compiled into a central document, namely University units and other student groups, related to Family Care within the McGill University community. This document shall serve to facilitate consultation and institutionalize support and shall be updated on an annual basis and shared with relevant Stakeholders, which must also be made publically on the SSMU's website.

3.1.2 Consulting all relevant Stakeholders in Family Care at the University, including, but not limited to the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office, the Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity Subcommittees on Women, Family Care and Disabilities, the Post-Graduate Students' Society, and any interested students with Dependents.

For matters involving Family Care at the University which are not covered within this policy, the Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall consult the aforementioned Stakeholders.

3.2 Support for Student Parents

3.2.1 The Office of the Vice-President (External Affairs) shall advocate for increased support for current and future efforts to research regarding the barriers faced by and needs of Students with Dependents, in addition to the expansion of childcare services in Quebec.

3.2.2 The VP Student Life in conjunction with the Building Manager shall endeavour to increase the accessibility of the William Shatner University Centre (following renovations) and the 3501 Peel street for undergraduate Student Parents and their children through the implementation of one or more child-friendly spaces for Student Parents and their children, including a private space for Breastfeeding

3.2.3 The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall endeavour to establish consistent childcare service to Student Parents in need, pending available financial resources. This shall include:



- a. The creation of a list of available caregivers;
- b. Liaising with campus groups and/or administration for other Breastfeeding spaces on campus with the VP University Affairs;
- c. Inclusion of childcare possibilities for events in club workshop and club handbook and every clubs & services listserv;
- d. Addition of required childcare provision upon request as a requirement for clubs;

3.2.4 The SSMU Executive Committee shall ensure that all SSMU-run or SSMU-endorsed events held in the William Shatner University Centre or other SSMU spaces have childcare available, if requested at least 24 hours in advance.

3.2.5 Service provision and advocacy efforts undertaken by the SSMU must take into account the unique needs of Student Parents who are single, Indigenous, queer, trans, disabled, racialized, of a lower socioeconomic status, and international student parents, due to additional barriers faced by these groups both institutionally and societally. The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall collaborate with these self-identified student parents to ensure consultation shall be provided in addressing these needs.

3.2.6 The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall work with the University to ensure that pertinent demographic information regarding Students with Dependents is maintained and assessed on a regular basis to determine where additional support is needed and how the University can ensure the retention of Students with Dependents.

- a. This can be done by launching a survey which polls the Undergraduate student body on its needs regarding Family Care beginning in 2019.

3.2.7 The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall lobby the University to create a physical Family Resource Office for Undergraduate students.

3.2.8 The Funding Committee will consider whether student groups seeking funding will be making childcare services available upon request at their events.

- a. The Funding Committee may make recommendations to reallocate funds to do so if available funding does not allow for this.

3.3 Support for Students with Dependents

The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall ensure that support for Students with Dependents shall also remain a priority for the SSMU.

3.3.1 The Offices of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and President shall lobby the University to institutionalize better support for Students with Dependents, including:

- a. A University-wide leave of absence policy for all Students with Dependents;



- b. A more accessible medical note policy for staff and Students with Dependents.
- c. An Accommodation Policy for Students who are Pregnant or Breastfeeding who require lab work to fulfill degree requirements;

3.3.2 The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) will continue to work towards removing the barriers for undergraduate Students with Dependents from participating fully in and accessing SSMU activities and services, including, but not limited to: SSMU Legislative Council and its committees, Clubs, Services and jobs at the SSMU.

3.3.3 The Vice-President (University Affairs) shall include information about the rights of Student Parents and Students with Dependents in the Know Your Rights Campaign.

3.3.4 The Office of the Vice-President (Student Life) shall collaborate with local organizations, such as Head and Hands and The Yellow Door, to support student caregiving projects, as well as McGill-specific organizations such as Midnight Kitchen or QPIRG-McGill, who could provide support in projects directed towards children and elderly persons .

4. Reporting

The Office of the Vice-President (University Affairs) and the SSMU representative to pertinent Joint Board Senate Committee on Equity Subcommittees on Women, Family Care and Disabilities shall report to Legislative Council each semester on the status of the mandates in this policy. This report shall be made available to all interested relevant Stakeholders and publicly on the SSMU website.

4.1 Should the Vice President (University Affairs) fail to report, the Speaker should remind counselors of this when they complete the accountability survey.

4.2 Failure to report will also result in a complaint made to the Accountability Committee.



Sustainability Policy

Date Adopted: 2018/04/05

Expires: 2023/01/01

[Adopted Motion \(Link\)](#)

1. Background

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.

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. The SSMU should not only successfully and meaningfully support grassroots student initiatives, but also serve as a leader for social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

SSMU shall further demonstrate leadership for sustainability by:

- a. promoting awareness of sustainability through 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;
- b. 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;
- c. 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.

2. Scope

This Policy shall apply to:

- 2.1** Staff, elected representatives, operations, Clubs, and Services, of the Students' Society of McGill University;
- 2.2** All activities and events hosted, funded, and promoted by the Society and SSMU-affiliated Clubs and Services;



2.3 Written or graphic material, which is published, distributed, endorsed, or funded by the Society;

2.4 Activities, events, campaigns, and promotions held in the William Shatner University Centre.

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.

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.

3. Interpretation

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.

For the purpose of the Sustainability Policy, the following definitions and considerations apply:

3.1 Environmental Sustainability: Practices that lead to resilient ecosystems which can support healthy life and lifestyles;

3.2 Social Sustainability: Practices that minimize systemic power imbalances within society and to foster a culture of anti-oppression. Socioeconomic inequality has been shown to be well correlated to ecological degradation¹². 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.

3.3 Economic Sustainability: Managing fees collected from many thousands of students in a manner which respects students and the communities of which SSMU is a part.

4. Fostering a Community of Sustainability

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

4.1.1 Seek to be a catalyst for change in the McGill community;

¹² 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>)



- 4.1.2** Represent student interests pertaining to sustainability issues on campus to the relevant community members;
- 4.1.3** Work to build awareness of sustainability issues, and work to ensure that its internal practices adhere to a high standard of sustainable behaviour;
- 4.1.4** 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.
- 4.1.5** 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.
- 4.1.6** Support student initiatives that contribute to the aims of social sustainability, and liaise with different groups to do so.
- 4.1.7** Encourage and provide additional support for projects and initiatives that address multiple aspects of sustainability, such as environmental and social.

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 Education

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

- 4.2.1** Hosting an annual SPOKES (Students Pursuing Opportunities and Knowledge in Environment and Sustainability) conference;
- 4.2.2** Providing mandatory and non-mandatory workshops on sustainable event planning;
 - a. 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 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 or Services Review Committee, as applicable.

4.2.3 Communicating sustainability opportunities through the SSMU listserv;

- a. This includes promoting other ongoing educational opportunities and events in the community, promoting collaboration to increase the scope and impact of beneficial initiatives¹³;

4.2.4 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;

4.2.5 Providing educational signage about sustainable practices such as using reusable dishes in dining areas in the building;

4.2.6 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.

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.

4.4 Advocacy

The SSMU shall 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.

¹³ Relevant people include the VP Student Life, General Manager, Building Committee for Shatner Building projects, Environment Committee, Sustainability Commissioners



Responsibility for determining what issues and campaigns on which to focus resources falls on relevant Executive Officers, SSMU Committee(s), the society's General Assembly and its Legislative Council.

5. Internal Practices and Procedures

5.1 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. In general, the SSMU shall:

5.1.1 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;

5.1.2 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 chemicals¹⁴ and by more strongly advertising and supporting the current electronic recycling program;

5.1.3 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;

5.1.4 Be stewards of students' money in an ethical manner, as per the Ethical Investment Policy, the Purchasing Policy, and this Sustainability Strategy;

5.1.5 Be transparent, accountable, and open to student participation in budgeting students' money;

5.1.6 Be responsible in its long-term planning of finances to ensure year-to-year financial stability and flexibility as major expenses arise;

5.1.7 Work to prioritize funding to initiatives that will:
a. Lead to cost-savings for the SSMU in a reasonable time-frame; or

¹⁴ For example: sustainably-sourced and manufactured LED lighting



- b. Lead to considerable social and/or environmental benefit

5.2 Executive Portfolios

Sustainability Commissioners will provide sustainability training for Executives during their training periods. Executives will meet with the Sustainability Commissioners throughout the year to develop a tailored plan to incorporate sustainability into their portfolios.

5.2.1 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.

5.2.2 Staff and committees should be reporting successful innovations to Executives, and briefly to Council according to the relevant reporting schedules;

5.1.3 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.

5.3 Buildings

The SSMU will seek to make the William Shatner University Centre Building and all other associated SSMU spaces operate as sustainably as possible. This shall be the responsibility of the Building Manager, Sustainability Commissioners and the SSMU Executives whose mandate includes operations.

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

5.2.1 Keeps energy usage as low as possible while providing a reasonable payback period if renovations are necessary. The focus here may tend towards energy efficiency and undertaking efforts to inform students/staff/tenants of best practices of behaviour.

5.2.2 Is accessible to students of all abilities by having individuals involved with building design and construction undergo training on equity, ableism, universal design;

5.2.3 Provides infrastructure to assist sustainable lifestyle choices;

5.2.3 Ensures safety, above and beyond fire code and alcohol regulations.

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

5.2.4 Facilitates a safer space for all students in accordance with SSMU's Equity Policy;



5.2.5 Aims to reduce the amount of waste the space or events held in the space generate by reducing the use of disposable cups and other materials and by ensuring materials enter the right waste streams;

5.2.5.1 The SSMU will work with applied student research and McGill Food & Dining Services (MFDS) 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.

5.2.6 Prioritizes student interests and services for students.

5.3 Purchasing

5.3.1 Material purchases should be carefully evaluated to avoid financial and material waste. 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.

5.3.2 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.

5.3.3 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.

5.3.3.1 Further, the SSMU will include sustainability as a factor when negotiating new vendor agreements and corporate sponsorships.

5.4 Human Resources

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.



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.

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 the environmental impact.

The SSMU will actively encourage events held within the University Centre to use only reusable materials, mandating that events 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. Reporting and Accountability

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.

APPENDIX: RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPECIFIC ROLES AND COMMITTEES WITHIN THE SSMU

A.1 Role of the SSMU Executives

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 sustainability is not a forgotten consideration at exec meetings.

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 listen in



alphabetical order, not order of importance!)

A.1.1 President

A.1.1.1 The President is responsible for ensuring environmental leadership.

A.1.1.2 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. 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.

A.1.1.3 The President is the official link to faculty-specific undergrad associations and to the First Year Council and Inter-Residence Council.

A.1.1.4 The President oversees the work of the two (2) Sustainability Commissioners.

A.1.2 VP (Student Life)

A.1.2.1 The Vice-President (Student Life) should foster the integration of student groups' initiatives & input

A.1.2.2 They collaborate with staff to implement sustainable operations and infrastructure within the Shatner Building (University Centre)

A.1.2.3 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.

A.1.3 VP External

A.1.3.1 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.

A.1. VP Finance

A.1.4.1 The Vice-President (Finance) has the responsibility of:

A.1.4.1.1 ensuring the implementation of the Ethical Investment Plan and Purchasing Policy;



A.1.4.1.2 Overseeing the long-term financial viability of SSMU; and

A.1.4.1.3 providing leadership in the integration of the values laid out in this policy within the SSMU's Operations (Gerts and MiniCourses).

A.1.4.2 The VP Finance & Operations oversees the work of the FERC Commissioner, Funding Coordinator, Gerts Manager, and Mini Courses Manager.

A.1.5 VP (Internal)

A.1.5.1 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.

A.1.5.2 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.

A.1.5.3 The VP Internal oversees several Frosh Coordinators over the summer, and a Sponsorships Coordinator when needed throughout the year.

A.1.5.4 The VP 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

A.1.6 VP (University Affairs)

A.1.6.1 The VP University Affairs is responsible for SSMU's commitment to Equity and representing SSMU on issues of equity to McGill units/administration.

A.1.6.2 They share responsibilities with the President for advocating for stronger adherence to sustainability policies and pursuit of relevant actions to the McGill Administration.

A.1.6.3 The VP University Affairs oversees the work of the Equity Commissioners and often works with the Sustainability Commissioners.



A.2 Role of Council and Councillors

SSMU Council, the highest decision-making body of SSMU (in practice but not in law), meets every two weeks and consists of approximately 35 McGill undergrad 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 undergrad associations. Councillors have to review large volumes of information before each meeting in addition to doing their full-time school work and any other responsibilities they take on.

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 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 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 be 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).

A.3 Role of Senators and Senate Caucus

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/say.

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).

A.4 Role of Environment Committee and the Sustainability Commissioners

A.4.1 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. A gathering area and a clearing house of ideas;
- b. An incubator for student groups whose leaders have since left the McGill community;
- c. 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.

A.4.2 The EC's outreach and communications strategy shall focus on building connections with following 6 main groups in order to share information about each others' campaigns, services offered, events, and activities:

- a. Faculty associations;
- b. Green Groups;
- c. SSMU Equity Committee;
- d. Downtown student body;
- e. Involved students and student groups at the Macdonald Campus;
- f. McGill administrative units including the Office of Sustainability¹⁵

A.4.3 Efforts to communicate with students shall include:

A.4.3.1 More centralized and accessible information;

A.4.3.2 Online resources as well as physical spaces like the green corner;

A.4.3.3 Creating a strong sense of community (building interpersonal relationships).

A.5 Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners¹⁶

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.

A.5.1 It will be the role of the Environment Committee to periodically connect with the Equity Committee, report back to Environment Committee and arrange collaborations.

A.5.2 It will be the responsibility of the Sustainability Commissioner to ensure that communication between the 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.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ This is not an exhaustive detailing of the Role of Equity Committee and Equity Commissioners.