



MOTION REGARDING THE CREATION OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE DIVERSITY OF SSMU EVENTS 2020-04-02

Submitted for: 2020-04-02

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Moved by:	Jeremy Garneau <i>Senate Caucus Representative</i>	Current Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Mustafa Fakih <i>Engineering Representative</i>		

Issue

The Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU)'s core purpose is to serve and represent the undergraduate student body of the University; however, that is not the case with the events held within the Vice President (Internal Affairs)'s portfolio. The social events of the VP Internal portfolio, which are usually planned within its event planning committee, the Students' Society Programming Network (SSPN), have historically been and continue to be drinking oriented. This effectively restricts a significant portion of the student body from being involved in these events, whether it would be participating in them or organizing them. Therefore, the SSMU fails to appropriately fulfill one of its core purposes in serving and representing its student body.

Background and Rationale

Discussions about the increase of non-drinking events and the culture of current drinking events handled within the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio and the SSPN have continuously been brought up within the SSMU's governing bodies and debates. During the Legislative Council session of March 26th 2020, a motion for the creation of a non-drinking events committee was not approved, not because it did not see the need to increase the presence of non-drinking events, but rather because many Councillors believed that, in order to increase the presence of non-drinking



events within the VP Internal portfolio and the SSPN, a broader discussion should be had about why the current structure and culture promotes much more drinking events at the expense of non-drinking events.

The creation of a new Committee would provide a platform for such a discussion to be held and would be more fruitful than solely a discussion on Council for many reasons such as the inefficiency of holding complex discussions on a body that is comprised of more than 30 members, the lack of defined diverse perspectives on the Legislative Council and the lack of information and data to argue facts and come up with concrete solutions.

By approving this motion, the Legislative Council acknowledges the issue that is present in terms of the diversity of events and provides a platform for research, consultations and discussions to be held. With its well defined goal of improving the place of non-drinking events within the SSMU as a whole, the existence of this Committee demonstrates a strong willingness of the SSMU to strive to become a more inclusive society.

Alignment with Mission

This motion perfectly aligns with the mission of the SSMU¹ as one of the committee's main goal is ensuring proper representation of the student body while making sure the Society's functioning is in line with its own policies, especially the Equity Policy², Accessibility Policy³, Events Policy⁴ and the Gendered and Sexual Violence Policy⁵.

Consultations Completed

An extensive discussion was held at the March 26, 2020 Legislative Council meeting, where many members of the council expressed interest in having a much more in depth discussion about the nature of the events within the SSPN and the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio.

Various SSMU Executives were consulted with regards to the details and nature of the committee and the Events Researcher position.

A SSMU Equity Commissioner was consulted with regards to the purpose of the Committee and the role of the Equity Commissioner on the Committee.

¹ <https://ssmu.ca/about-us/organigram/>

² <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/K.-Equity-Policy.pdf?x21981>

³ <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/A.-Accessibility-Policy-1.pdf?x21981>

⁴ https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mixTCFDS4MdeD7zIZBYsb4E89J_zoidZmklHpR_sRko/edit

⁵ <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/M.-Gendered-and-Sexual-Violence-Policy.pdf?x21981>



Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Use of financial resources to pay the wages of the Events Researcher and the few extra hours of an Equity Commissioner. Some extra work for the HR Manager for the employment process.

One of the main goals of the Committee would also be to reduce the risk associated with SSMU Events; therefore, there would ultimately be a reduction of risk to the Society.

Sustainability Considerations

It provides a better social sustainability. By being able to include more students in the SSMU's activities, it increases the overall interest of general members for the SSMU and promotes a better public perception of the SSMU.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this motion passes, the Committee will be created. The first step being the hiring of an Events Researcher (ER) by the SSMU President in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager. The new hiree would then proceed to find members for the Committee as quickly as possible. By the end of the Fall semester, the Committee should have presented its final report to the Legislative Council and depending on the recommendations of the report, more steps will be taken. If any changes in portfolios were to be approved by the Council, they would then be sent to Referendum in Winter 2021 and, if approved, these changes would be enacted for the 2021-2022 Academic Year.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approves the formation of a new Ad Hoc Committee on the Diversity of SSMU Events, outlined in Appendix A, and have Appendix A added to the Committee Terms of Reference book.

Be it resolved that the SSMU President proceed with the hiring of the Events Researcher before June 1st, 2020.

Results of the Vote

- In favour ()
- Opposed ()
- Abstain ()



Appendix A : Terms of Reference of the CoDE

Ad Hoc Committee on the Diversity of SSMU Events (CoDE)

Oversight

The CoDE shall be an ad hoc committee of the Legislative Council.

Background

Discussions about the increase of non drinking events and the culture of current drinking events handled within the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio and the SSPN have been continuously brought up within the SSMU's governing bodies and debates. A motion for the creation of a non drinking events committee was not approved during the March 26, 2020 Legislative Council meeting in favour of a more long term solution. As a result, the Legislative Council approved the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Diversity of SSMU Events (CoDE) at its April 02, 2020 meeting.

General

The CoDE shall serve as a committee tasked with investigating, analysing and reporting on the place of drinking events within the SSMU, primarily focusing on the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio and the Students' Society Programming Network (SSPN); the CoDE shall also provide recommendations for approval by the Legislative Council with respect to its findings.

Membership

The CoDE shall consist of

- SSMU Events Researcher (Chair) (non-voting);
- Vice President (Internal Affairs) (non-voting);
- One (1) Equity Commissioner;
- One (1) Representatives from the Legislative Council;
- Four to Six (4-6) Members at Large; where at least two (2) are alumni of the 2019-2020 Legislative Council;



Roles

The SSMU Events Researcher (ER) shall be a paid staff position. Their position shall conclude when the CoDE is dissolved, unless otherwise recommended.

Responsibilities

The following are the responsibilities of the CoDE:

- a. Document and analyze all drinking events that occur within the SSMU, primarily focusing on the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio and the SSPN;
- b. Collect data and feedback from the student body about the inclusivity of the events organized by the VP Internal and the SSPN;
- c. Research previous discussions, debates, and changes within the SSMU with regards to the issue of the place of drinking events within the SSMU;
- d. Investigate ways to increase the presence and significance of non-drinking events within the Vice President (Internal Affairs) portfolio and the SSPN;
- e. Investigate if the Committee on Diversity of SSMU Events and/or the Events Researcher need to continue operating in the long term, or dissolve (as previously recommended by the Winter 2020 Legislative Council);
- f. Present findings and recommendations for approval in the form of a report to the SSMU Legislative Council during the Fall 2020 semester.

As well as chairing the CoDE, the ER shall also specifically:

- g. Consult with current and previous Executives, Equity Commissioners (EC's), Anti-Violence Coordinators (AVC's), members of the Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students' Society (SACOMSS), the HR Manager and other relevant personnel with regards to these events;
- h. Analyse the overlying problems from brief, redacted summaries of incidents that occurred at the events organized by the VP Internals and the SSPN in collaboration with the HR Manager;
- i. Consult individuals who have staffed SSMU drinking events;
- j. Present findings and recommendations for approval in the form of a report to the SSMU Legislative Council during the Fall 2020 semester.



Meetings

The CoDE shall meet no less than once every four weeks, from the time the committee is filled until it has dissolved.

Quorum

Quorum shall be a simple majority of voting members. The Chair gets a vote in the event of a tie.

APPROVED