



# MOTION TO CALL A SPECIAL REFERENDUM

2020-09-24

Submitted for: 2020-09-24

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council      **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2020-09-24-002

**Moved by:** *Jemark Earle*  
President      **Current Status:**  FOR APPROVAL  
 APPROVED  
 POSTPONED  
 COMMITTED  
 NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** *Libby Williamson*  
Arts Councillor

## Issue

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

In the 2019/2020 Academic year, the CGRC identified inconsistencies within SSMU’s governing documents that could only be addressed via constitutional reform, therefore requiring a Special Referendum.

Addressing these inconsistencies will help to contribute to the overall coherence of the SSMU’s governing documents and streamline business practices

## Background and Rationale

Over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, the CGRC worked diligently and met regularly to go through iterative processes of identifying challenges and barriers to meaningful student engagement with the Society’s governance and the SSMU more widely. Through this work, the CGRC began to formulate potential changes to the structure and function of the Society’s governance bodies, documents, and processes, to make them more accessible and engaging for the student body writ large.



## Alignment with Mission

As per article 20 of the SSMU Constitution: “Unless otherwise provided for by law, the Constitution may be amended, superseded, or repealed by way of a Referendum.”

## Overview of Proposed Amendments

As per the recommendation from the judicial board, we have been advised to adopt the 2020 Constitution in both English and French. Key Changes from the 2017 version include

- Greater Commitment to Representation in the Preamble
- A Renewed Vision for the Justice Board
- Authority of the French Constitution
- Representation for the School of Religious Studies (Bachelors of Theology) to Legislative Council
- Formatting of Resolutions

## Consultations Completed

Consulted with the SSMU President, Chief Electoral Officer, Deputy Electoral Officer & Governance Manager.

## Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Elections SSMU will need time to organize, and publicize this event. SSMU would need to dedicate resources for campaigning. Due to the remote semester, it may be harder to meet quorum for the motion to pass.

## Sustainability Considerations

A considerable sustainability point is the longevity and wellbeing of the Society. In order to properly function, it is crucial to adopt a Constitution that corresponds to the Society’s Membership representation and advocacy, as well as be in accordance with Quebec legislation.

## Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should this decision pass, the SSMU will operate under the guise of the 2020 Constitution. As a result, key changes as outlined in the “Overview of Proposed Amendments” will be implemented. Should this decision fail, the SSMU will revert back to the last Constitution that was properly adopted in 2017.



**Motion or  
Resolution for  
Approval**

Be it Resolved that the SSMU Legislative Council adopt the motion calling for a Special Referendum Period for the following Constitutional amendments.

Be it Further Resolved, that the Legislative Council approves the following referendum question: Do you agree to supersede and replace the Students' Society of McGill University constitution as outlined in Appendix A?

**Results of the  
Vote**

In favour (CONSENT)  
Opposed ()  
Abstain ()

APPROVED



## Appendix A : Overview of Proposed Amendments

APPROVED