



MOTION REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE EQUITY POLICY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EQUITY TRIAGE 2020-11-05

Submitted for: 2020-11-05

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Moved by:	Maheen Akter <i>Vice-President (Student Life)</i>	Current Status:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Darshan Daryanani <i>Senate Caucus Representative</i>		

Issue

In response to longstanding and recurrent complaints of extended wait times associated with internal SSMU processes, this motion seeks to amend the Equity Policy to instal triage systems across SSMU Departments which would prioritize service to equity-seeking groups.

Background and Rationale

The implementation of the Equity Triage is intended to remedy persistent issues of inequity within SSMU's operational processes, which often leave equity-seeking groups facing further barriers to actualizing their goals.

One instance of this was in the Winter 2020 semester, when a student group faced an enormous delay in processing an honorarium request for an Indigenous speaker, which was not only extremely disrespectful to the speaker, but resulted in a lost speaking engagement for another party. This is not the first time that honorariums and other processes have been delayed for equity-seeking groups that were in need of urgent/timely assistance.

As a result of this incident, an Equity Triage was implemented for the Accounting department, which would allow equity-seeking groups to self-identify and receive priority treatment. As well, the Communications



department currently uses a triage system to prioritize requests for boosting posts on social media and listserv submissions. This motion seeks to develop a similar system to be applied across all other departments in which Student Groups request services.

Alignment with Mission

This motion and the proposed amendment are in line with the Service pillar of the SSMU Constitution, which prioritizes services that strengthen the educational, cultural, environmental, political, and social conditions of our Members and mandates the SSMU to strive towards excellence and quality of service at all times, and continue to enhance the quality and scope of these services.

Consultations Completed

The first Equity Triage, which inspired this motion, was implemented in collaboration between the Vice-President (University Affairs), Vice-President (Student Life), Vice-President (External Affairs), Vice-President (Finance), Equity Commissioners, Indigenous Affairs Commissioner, Comptroller, and Communications Coordinator.

In drafting this motion and the proposed amendment, consultations with the Communications Coordinator revealed that an Equity Triage had already been informally implemented in the Communications Department.

Subsequent consultations with the Human Resources Director, Events Administrator, and General Manager indicated that Equity Triages could also be implemented in the IT, Operations, and Human Resources Departments with minimal additional workload for the relevant Staff.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

The implementation of Equity Triages in the Accounting and Communications departments have demonstrated that operationalization of Equity will require notable time commitments from the relevant Departments and Executives.

Sustainability Considerations

The proposed amendments serve to increase the social sustainability of SSMU's practices and promote a strong, safe and empowering community by endeavouring to minimize systemic power imbalances within society and foster a culture of anti-oppression, as outlined in section 3.2 of the Sustainability Policy.



Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this amendment to the Equity Policy is passed, it will be the responsibilities of the Vice-President (Student Life) and Vice-President (University Affairs) to coordinate changes within the mentioned departments, with assistance from the General Manager. Each department head will be responsible for making necessary changes to their operations and developing new workflow to accommodate for the triage. All department heads will also be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness and ease of use of the triage system within their own departments.

The Vice-President (Student Life) will also be responsible for working with the Communications department to make all equity-seeking Student Groups aware of this change in order for them to benefit from it to the fullest extent. In terms of the implementation timeline for the Equity Triage, it is targeted that implementation will be fully completed by the end of the academic year, if not earlier.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved, that Article 4 in Appendix A be added as an amendment to the Equity Policy;

Be it further resolved, that all subsequent Articles currently contained the Equity Policy be amended numerically to reflect the insertion of Article 4.

Results of the Vote

In favour ()
Opposed ()
Abstain ()



Appendix A : Amendment to the Equity Policy

Article 4: The Equity Triage

- 4.1. All internal operations of the Students' Society of McGill University will strive to prioritize service to Student Groups that serve or represent disadvantaged communities as defined by this Policy.
 - 4.1.1. These internal operations comprise, but are not limited to the Operations, Communications, Information Technology, Human Resources, and Accounting Departments.
- 4.2. This prioritization will take the form of a Triage system, whereby equity-seeking Student Groups will be given expedited access to operational services offered to student groups by the SSMU.
 - 4.2.1. Examples of such services include, but are not limited to,
 - a) graphic and web design services;
 - b) the processing of accounting and honorarium request forms;
 - c) room booking and event support;
 - d) use of communication channels;
 - e) IT support;
 - f) support for hiring and other HR processes;
 - g) the ratification or approval of governing documents and legal contracts; and
 - h) the resolution of concerns or problems relating to the aforementioned services.
 - 4.2.2. While the Human Resources Department is encouraged to equitably prioritize the voices and lived experiences of disadvantaged groups, this Equity Triage will not require the expedition of processes relating to Human Resources complaints or resolutions thereof.
- 4.3. Equity Triage systems will be implemented gradually across the implicated Departments of the SSMU, under the supervision of the relevant Executives and Department Heads.
- 4.4. The Vice-President (Student Life) in collaboration with the Communications Department, will be responsible for ensuring that all equity-seeking Student Groups are made aware of the services and resources available to them.