



MOTION REGARDING THE RELEASE OF STATEMENTS AND OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS 2020-12-03

Submitted for: 2020-12-03

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2020-12-03-003 (to be assigned by Steering)
Moved by:	Brooklyn Frizzle <i>Vice-President (University Affairs)</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 This motion seeks to establish a framework of understanding governing the release of statements and other official communications.

Background and Rationale Following the release of two communications, on behalf of the Society, ambiguities arose surrounding the authority of the Executive Committee to release official communications on behalf of the Society, of their own accord. These ambiguities stem largely from a lack of a procedural framework governing the release of communications.

Concerns raised, by members, to the Executive Committee questioned the legitimacy of statements made by the Committee on behalf of the Society. It has, furthermore, been suggested that communications made on behalf of the Society, as a whole, should rest under the authority of the Legislative Council.

With that in mind, this motion is presented to resolve such ambiguities and establish a framework of understanding between the Executive Committee and Legislative Council by which the release of official communications can be governed.



Alignment with Mission This motion seeks to reaffirm the Society’s constitutional commitments to Representation and Leadership.

Consultations Completed This motion was drafted in consultation with the Executive Committee following a series of generative discussions across multiple meetings of the Legislative Council. This motion, furthermore, seeks to address concerns raised to the Executive Committee by members of the Society.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications Should this motion fail, ambiguities will continue to arise, leaving both the Executive Committee and the Legislative Council in limbo, unclear of their respective ability and authority to release statements. These apparent conflicts between the Executive Committee and the Legislative Council would need to be resolved on a case-by-case basis, creating unnecessary procedural and emotional strains for those involved.

Sustainability Considerations This motion serves 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 Should this motion succeed, the practices outlined below will be implemented, effective immediately, and will govern the release of any applicable communications for the remainder of the 2020-2021 academic term.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved, that the following understanding between the Legislative Council and Executive Committee, as outlined in **Appendix A**, be adopted and enforced for the remainder of the 2020-2021 academic year;

Be it further resolved, that the Legislative Council reaffirms the commitment of the Society to “demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection.”



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Results of the Vote	In favour	()
	Opposed	()
	Abstain	()

APPROVED



Appendix A : Statement of Understanding

- 1) Any official statements or comparable communications, including social media posts, presented as statements, may only be released on behalf of the Students' Society of McGill University by way of a resolution adopted by the Legislative Council for this purpose;
- 2) Likewise, petitions, open letters, or comparable documents may only be signed on behalf of the Society by way of a resolution adopted by the Legislative Council for this purpose;
- 3) Notwithstanding, the Executive Committee will retain the authority to release official statements or comparable communications and sign petitions or comparable documents, of its own accord, on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Students' Society of McGill University;
 - a) An explicit distinction will be made between actions taken on behalf of the Executive Committee and actions taken on behalf of the Society, as a whole;
- 4) Where there is no expressed or documented position of the Society on a given matter for which an official communication is expected, members of the Executive Committee will make every reasonable effort to bring such matters to the Legislative Council for discussion before any statement or official communication pertaining to the matter is released;
 - a) Notwithstanding, both parties acknowledge that, from time to time, such a discussion may not be possible for reasons including, but not limited to, the urgency, confidentiality, or complexity of the matter at hand.