



SSMU FALL 2021 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

October 18, 2021

1. Call to Order: **18:07**

The Speaker welcomes everyone to the SSMU General Assembly. The Speaker states that today's attendance is under 350 people which means that the General Assembly Quorum was not reached. Thus this meeting will be a consultative forum and any motions will have to be sent to the Legislative Council for approval, that is if we do not reach the quorum number before the voting begins.

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:07 on October 18th 2021.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the land acknowledgements.

The Speaker moves to the agenda item 3 - Adoption of Standing Rules.

3. Adoption of Standing Rules – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

VP External Affairs motions to approve the Standing Rules, seconded [unknown].

The Speaker encourages anyone who has any questions about the procedure throughout this General Assembly to send him a message or to speak up. Further, if there are any points, members should raise their hand and the Speaker will take the points.

The Speaker also reminds the attendees to change their username to that which they would like to be referred to by.

The Speaker moves to the adoption of the agenda.

4. Adoption of the Agenda – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

VP External Affairs motions to approve the agenda, seconded by the VP Internal Affairs.

The Speaker asks if there is any opposition to this agenda or any amendments.



The Speaker announces that the Agenda has been approved and moves to the Agenda Item 5.

5. Minutes for Approval

a. Winter 2021 General Assembly Minutes 2021-02-16 – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

These are the minutes from the last General Assembly. The Speaker states that the minutes can be found on the website. The translation for them will be provided if needed.

The Speaker asks the members to motion to approve or to correct the minutes.

Councillor Javed motions to approve, seconded by the VP University Affairs.

The Speaker inquires if there are any amendments or any opposition to this motion.

Seeing none, the Minutes for the Winter 2021 General Assembly have been approved.

The Speaker moves to Item 6.

6. Question Period:

This is the time to ask questions to the whole assembly or to a specific member of the assembly. The Speaker announces that the question period will begin with 5 minutes, but if need be the time can be extended.

Question:

VP External Affairs asks whether or not a motion will have to be passed during this General Assembly to give Legislative Council power to approve motion 7a, considering that this General Assembly does not have a quorum.

Answer:

The Speaker responds that there is no need to approve a motion here to give the Legislative Council the power as this is done automatically per the Constitution. Since this General Assembly has not reached quorum, this is not a General Assembly, but a Consultative Assembly. And in that anything that is passed here today, will have to be then approved by the Legislative Council.



The Speaker announces that the Assembly will be entering a question period for 5 minutes and asks the members to please raise their hands if they have any questions.

Councillor Wun Yu notifies the Speaker that they will have to leave earlier today.

There are no further questions, the Speaker moves to Item 7 - New Business. This is the motion that needs to be approved today.

7. New Business:

- a. Motion Regarding Nominations to the Society's Board Of Directors 2021-10-18 –
APPROVED

The Speaker asks to display the motion and give the floor to VP Internal Affairs.

VP Internal Affairs states that this motion is meant to ratify the decisions made by the Legislative Council, which included a nomination of 8 directors to the Board of Directors. VP states the Board of Directors should consist of four (4) Directors representing the Legislative Council and four (4) Directors representing Officers. There were a few resignations, as such, new Directors had to be selected to maintain quorum. This motion presents the names of individuals nominated as well as the day when they were nominated.

The Speaker proceeds to a Question Period and asks those with a question to raise their hands. Seeing none, the Speaker moves to the Debate Period and asks anyone who wants to speak on this motion to raise their hand. Seeing no debate, the Speaker moves to Voting.

The Speaker advises the Assembly that the voting forms will be shared with the members shortly. The voting begins.

The Speaker announces that the voting will end in 30 seconds.

The Speaker states that the Voting Period has ended and announces the results:

20 votes in favour
1 abstention

The motion passes in this Consultative Forum and will be sent to the Legislative Council for further approval.

The Speaker moves to the next agenda item: the Report of the Board of Directors and gives the floor for 5 minutes to the VP Internal.



8. Report of the Board of Directors:

VP Internal Affairs introduces the members to the notion of Board of Directors and some of its key decisions that have been taken since the last General Assembly in Winter 2021.

The Board of Directors is composed of 12 people: 4 Executives, 4 Councillors and 4 Members at large that are decided through an application process. The General Manager is also a member of the Board, but as a non-voting member.

There are a number of requirements for one to be on the Board of Directors. All members must be at least 18 years of age; citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. The members should not be bankrupt or declared incapable by a court, and should not have a criminal record.

The Board of Directors is the highest governing body of the SSMU and makes decisions on the finances, operations, human resources and any legal cases/issues that might come up. The Board also ratifies the Resolutions passed by the Legislative Council.

The Board meets bi-weekly during the academic year.

A number of cases from the Judicial Board were ratified, and a new Equity Policy was adopted in May 2021. There was also an adoption of the Divest for Human Rights Policy, and an international student was added to the Dialog Service through Student Care, which allows to broaden the discussion. Finally, new furniture was purchased for the SSMU office.

The VP Internal Affairs ends the presentation and stands for questions.

The Speaker asks those who have questions to raise their hands. Seeing no questions, the Speaker moves to the next point.

9. Report of Executives:

a. Vice-President (External Affairs)

VP External Affairs reports to the Assembly what was done by the portfolio so far. The VP states that the portfolio has a few official and unofficial mandates. Official mandates include: External Affairs, Community Relations, Political Affairs, Union Affairs, Black Affairs. And the portfolio consults on Francophone Affairs, Indigenous Affairs, and Popular Education. During this Fall, the External Affairs Portfolio has been working very hard with UCRU (the Coalition of the Federal Level Government of the top 10 of Canadian Research Intensive Undergraduate Universities). The UCRU holds two lobby weeks throughout the year, the MPs about the needs of students and big priorities. Currently the portfolio is



helping to prepare for the UCRU lobby week at the end of November. There was a lot of work done on the Government relations (Municipal and Provincial levels) and VP had an opportunity to speak with several local representatives. Discussion about the International students and the Bill 21 was presented at UCRU where the VP External Affairs was elected as a chair of the Bilingual Committee where the topic of international students and inclusivity is very important and on the Federal side and the External portfolio side we've been looking at how to make things more inclusive environment for the international students.

The VP served at the Inter-Associatif conference (a conference that happens between the most Quebec student Unions, an unofficial coalition). The VP External Affairs presents what work was done in the Community Affairs side of the portfolio. A big project that the portfolio has been working on is the Royal Victoria Hospital Sites; VP and his team had an opportunity to speak with several relevant stakeholders on the Royal Victoria Hospital Site in the hope to continue the work that was done by the previous Executives and to ensure non-privatization of the sites, and ensure that it goes to the Community and Student needs. Moreover, the SSMU is in the process of joining the Communauté Saint Urbain, which will be a great opportunity for us to get involved with the local community in which the McGill student body is very present. Further, a large part of the Community Affairs is the Affordable Student Housing and the question of housing in general. So we are in the process of starting a campaign on housing and tenants' rights, and of course the Royal Victoria Hospital Site project will be underlined as we want to include the Affordable Student housing in the project. SSMU and UTILE (a partner for the Affordable Student Housing plan) have already found a couple of suitable locations.

Finally, the portfolio is developing Frosh Street Teams to ensure that students are safe.

VP External Affairs moves to presenting the Political Campaigns. A big part of that has been the Royal Victoria Hospital Site. There also was a protest held by the VP UA for the safe and accessible campus to mandate McGill to increase COVID related safety on campus and accommodations for the students and the staff alike.

The Divest for Human Rights Policy was adopted at the Board of Directors. The VP presents the work done on the Union Affairs and Black Affairs side of the portfolio. Work with the McGill's Anti-Black Racism team was done on how to increase the inclusivity and create an equitable space for BIPOC students on campus. The team was also discussing with Black Students Network (BSN) to continue the Campaign James McGill and Take Down James McGill. The Black Affairs Committee will be discussing that and one member from each bipoc group on campus will be included in the discussion. As recommended by the Black Affairs Commissioner, awards for Black students on campus will be created and presented in February to bipoc students who partake in that community. The VP had a chance to lobby with the U15 schools to strengthen the relationship with them and to create coalition building initiatives in the future. VP External Affairs was working with McGill on access to health and support resources on campus. VP External Affairs was elected to the CKUT Board of Directors.



The Speaker encourages those who have any questions to raise their hands now. Seeing no questions, the Speaker moves to the Report by the VP Finance.

b. Vice-President (Finance)

VP Finance starts by presenting his day-to-day work consists of many administrative tasks like supporting clubs and services, working on general finance of the Society - a lot of this is providing signatures and making sure that the forms are properly filed. VP Finance is currently working on the audit (yearly financial year) to make sure that all the finances are in order. The VP also works with funding and sits on the funding committee. VP Finance does a lot of work in regards to the Health Insurance Plan.

VP Finance presents his projects for this year. VP Finance wants to evaluate and expand the operational needs; work on the Services and Funds that have a COVID surplus. Many of our clubs have supplies as COVID limited our ability to hold events. VP Finance will also be reexamining the SSMU portfolio on ethical and practical bases. VP Finance is looking at expanding Health Insurance for Trans students and working on other goals and projects.

There are no questions on the report of the VP Finance.

c. Vice-President (University Affairs)

VP University Affairs presents the report. VP University Affairs' portfolio includes University level representation. She presents the responsibilities that include on a daily basis. There are many meetings with stakeholders. Another branch is dealing with academic rights. For instance, students who report academic violations by instructors can reach out to her.

Regarding COVID-19 and academics, the pandemic has affected academics and the University. They are seeing a lack of accommodations for students who are vulnerable to COVID-19 and for students in other countries who are trying to return to Canada. She notes that the SSMU has been able to successfully advocate for students on an individual basis, to ask their professors for alternate arrangement, but there is still a lack of accommodations. One route that has helped is the [McGill] Ad Hoc Committee of Senate on COVID Academic Planning and Policies which meets weekly to make decisions of an academic nature related to COVID-19. The Committee provides a separate avenue for academics. Further, the University Affairs and External Affairs portfolios worked with staff and volunteers on the Protest for a Safe and Accessible Campus. There were additional projects for advocacy in the University-level, but not much has changed, since McGill University has not been including these changes. VP University Affairs notes that she is in contact and communication with other student unions across Quebec and Canada to discuss how their campuses are handling COVID-19.



Regarding issues with COVID-19 on campus, there has been a lack of streamlined communication, lack of attendance, and the Committee that she serves on takes COVID-19 seriously [EOC]. Many of the decisions are not made in a transparent manner at the McGill level.

In regards to the Library and the Library Improvement Fund, they are working to make more space in libraries.

As for Indigenous Affairs, she supports the portfolio to strengthen the SSMU mandate. Regarding Gender and Sexuality affairs, the QUIPS Motion was approved and she encourages members to review the motion, noting thanks to the Gender and Sexuality Commissioner for their work.

VP University Affairs is working to reduce unpaid labour at SSMU.

Regarding Menstrual Health, there are products available across campus.

VP University Affairs explains that she is currently working on revising the Family Care Policy and Menstrual Health Policy. She also has assisted with staffing needs and building needs.

There are no questions on the report of the VP University Affairs.

d. Vice-President (Student Life)

VP Student Life presents herself and begins the presentation. The overview of the portfolio will include the general presentation of the portfolio, Activities Night, Student Groups, Clubs, Services, Family Care, Mental Health, and more. VP Student Life oversees over 250 clubs, 17 services and 11 independent student groups, and manages the relationships between SSMU staff and the groups. The VP Student Life is also responsible for the conflict resolution. The VP is responsible for carrying out SSMU Mental Health Initiatives – which is done with the Mental Health team – and for the SSMU's family care policies and practises, as well as for collaboration with McGill's Student Services staff.

VP Student Life states that the Student Group Portal is currently being developed, the portal will be used as a centralised place for communication with the groups. The [student group] Masterlist was updated and now includes group descriptions, logos, social media handles, preferable communication emails, financial information, status, sanction archives and more.

As of now, the Student Group Executives under SSMU will receive a recognition in their McGill University co-curricular record, which is the first time this occurs.

The VP Student Life is in the process of reviewing and amending the Internal Regulations of Student Groups. She also oversees events and ensures compliance with COVID-19 regulations.



VP Student Life notes that the Club Workshops were helped on September 18-19, 2021 and went well. The Club processes document has been updated and all sanctions are included in it. She notes that there were some issues with student groups' elections, which were resolved. There were also sanctions applied to those who didn't submit their audits.

In regards to Services, the Services Summit took place on September 18-19, 2021. SSMU partnered with MSERT to offer free First Aid Certified Trainings, which was the first time this occurred. She further resolved conflicts with groups. In collaboration with VP Finance, they ensured that financial protocols are respected and understood within Services.

Regarding Family Care, the Family Care Policy is up for renewal, which is a project led by the VP University Affairs. She attended the JBSCE Family Care Subcommittee, held on October 6, 2021. VP Student Life continues that the SSMU Daycare is running smoothly and they are in the process of providing parents resources for knowledge on CPEs.

In regards to Mental Health, the Mental Health Awareness week took place between October 3-10, 2021, which went very well. Further, the Mental Health Commissioner is working on Student Suicide Prevention Framework. The Mental Health Advocacy Coordinator, in collaboration with the Mental Health Commissioner are working on the Academic Proposal. The first meeting of the Mental Health Roundtable took place on September 27, 2021. The Wellness World Portal is in the implementation phase. Lastly, the Mental Health team is working on the Wellness Hub Scope campaign, in collaboration with Student Services.

There are no questions on the report of the VP Student Life.

e. Vice-President (Internal Affairs)

VP Internal Affairs presents the report. VP Internal Affairs is responsible for communications, events, SSPN, First Year Affairs, Alumni Affairs, Gerts, and Francophone Affairs.

In regards to Communications, they changed the theme to yellow and blue colours on social media. There are weekly updates from Executives. There is now a Linktree in the bio of the Instagram page to ensure all the relevant links are available to SSMU members. In regards to style guides, these have been revamped and updates have been made to the SSMU Listserv. Further, the signage project has been completed this year. A full-time translator has been hired at SSMU.

Regarding events, there will be a Bar Crawl Halloween Event, which was sold out in three (3) minutes. This year, they are hoping to work on trainings to inclusivity and ensure that each event has a sustainability completion. Further, VP Internal Affairs indicates that she has hired a new Internal Affairs position, which has been supporting her with creation of events and internal affairs.



Regarding First Year Affairs, there were workshops for involvement at McGill in August 2021. The First Year Council has been composed, and they will be meeting soon. They have created a First Year Council guide and will be adding additional information to the website.

Regarding Alumni Affairs, this is divided into two (2) branches. First, there is the McGill Alumni Student Engagement Council (MASEC), which deals with alumni and leadership affairs. LifeAYD is more an events-based initiative. There will be a LinkedIn crash course on October 13 and 15, 2021.

In regards to Gerts, it is finally open, from 13:00 to 23:00 Mondays to Fridays. They have created a new Gerts logo and have been working on an Instagram plan for Gerts. The merch budget has been increased. There have been policy reviews and she attended meetings with VP University Affairs at the McGill University level.

VP University Affairs notes that the Gerts logo squirrel's name is Cloudberry; this is noted in the Minutes.

There are no questions on the report of the VP Internal Affairs.

10. Adjournment: 19:02

Councillor Wan moves a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by VP Internal Affairs.

The meeting is adjourned at 19:02.

Darshan Daryanani, President