



# MOTION REGARDING STUDENT SUPPORT FEE REFERENDUM QUESTION 2022-02-17

Submitted for: 2022-02-17

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council      **Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2022-02-17-008

**Moved by:** Karla Heisele Cubilla      **Current Status:**  FOR APPROVAL  
VP Student Life       APPROVED  
 POSTPONED  
 COMMITTED  
 NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** Nathan Claret  
Services Representative

## Issue

Student Support is seeking a **\$9.99/semester opt-outable** fee levy in exchange for providing McGill students access to Calm, Grammarly, and Udemy for a period of 1-year in order to first test usage rates in hopes of running another referendum for the full 5-year term.

## Background and Rationale

Student Support is a startup committed to providing students with access to services that help ease their academic experience. They use an economies of scale model where the total number of students from all the Canadian schools we have agreements with allow us to request competitive rates from the several services they partner with. The three services Student Support currently offers in this package include:

[Grammarly Premium](#) – Grammarly is one of the world’s leading writing assistant softwares that helps users review spelling, grammar, punctuation, clarity, engagement and delivery mistakes. The service is popular amongst universities as it has been found to improve students’ writing accuracy and complement the work of Academic Learning Centers.

[Udemy](#) - Udemy is the world's leading online learning and teaching marketplace providing access to over 6,000 courses on leadership, management, technology, business, wellness, marketing & more.



[Calm](#) – Calm is the world’s most recognized wellness and meditation platform proven to reduce stress and quality of sleep. It’s been named as Apple’s App of the Year, has been ranked #2 in the App Store, and received Google Play Editor’s Choice. Using Calm can reduce student stress, improve mindfulness, and increase self-compassion.

### Usage Rates

Student support has already sold 3000 Grammarly subscriptions to Ryerson University with all students at 100% usage rate (number is high since Grammarly is an add-on tool and works without having to launch any app).

According to Udemy, their utilization adoption rate for all the partners that have access to their software within a 3-month period is 70% in the public and private sector. As of September of 2021, the platform has more than 46 million students, 175,000 courses, and 60,000 instructors teaching courses in over 75 languages. There have been over 644 million course enrollments. Find more case studies for usage rates over [here](#).

According to a case study carried out at the University of Notre Dame, Calm has a 25% utilization rate among all undergraduate and graduate students, with 8% using the application on a heavy daily basis. The case study can be [accessed here](#).

The annual subscription cost for these 3 services as listed on their official websites is: Calm<sup>1</sup> \$76.99 CAD, Udemy<sup>2</sup> \$360 USD, and Grammarly<sup>3</sup> \$144 USD. When converted to Canadian Dollars and applying a conversion rate of 1 USD = 1.26 CAD, this would be **\$712.03 CAD annually**<sup>4</sup>. Through Student Support, we can provide these three services at **\$19.98 CAD annually (\$9.99 CAD/semester)** for a period of 1-year as a test trial to evaluate usage rates for possibility of running referendum again next year for a 5-year period.

It is important for us to communicate that Student Support is eager to work as an ally to SSMU and provide additional services, if need be, in the future. We want to learn what services students require at McGill and work towards creating these partnerships over time. Finally, being that Student Support's main goal is saving students money for critical services, the Student Support fee will be opt-outable as we understand not all students will be using these services.

1. Calm Pricing: <https://www.calm.com/freetrial/plans>
2. Udemy Pricing: <https://business.udemy.com/plans/>



3. Grammarly Pricing:  
<https://support.grammarly.com/hc/en-us/articles/115000090011-How-much-does-Grammarly-Premium-cost->
4. Udemy and Grammarly costs are only listed in USD on their websites. The conversion rate from January 8th, 2021 is used: 1 USD = 1.26 CAD. The annual price calculated does not include taxes.

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### Alignment with Mission

SSMU is committed to supporting mental health initiatives, academic success, and financial wellness for their membership. Student Support offers services that align with SSMU's at a competitive, affordable rate.

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### Consultations Completed

This question has been discussed with and reviewed by the SSMU Vice-President Student Life, and the SSMU Vice-President Finance.

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### Risk Factors and Resource Implications

If this question does not pass the referendum, students will not be offered Calm, Grammarly, and Udemy at the discounted rate.

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### Sustainability Considerations

This fee would allow mental health and academic services to be available at an affordable rate for McGill students, aligning with SSMU's mission to promote financial sustainability with the membership.

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### Impact of Decision and Next Steps

The question would be included in the Winter 2022 Referendum period by Elections SSMU and sent to the Membership for approval. If the question is approved by the Membership, the fee will be into effect as of the semester of Fall 2022.

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### Motion or Resolution for Approval

The question would be included in the Winter 2022 Referendum Period by Elections SSMU and sent to the Membership for approval. If the question is approved by the Membership, the fee increase will go into effect as of Fall 2022 semester. Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Winter 2022 referendum period:



**Whereas**, Student Support is a Canadian startup that provides students with access to services at an affordable rate to help ease their academic experience.

**Whereas**, the SSMU Student Support Fee is a single fee that will offer the following services: Grammarly, Udemy, and Calm at a discounted rate.

**Whereas**, the annual subscription cost for these 3 services as listed on their official websites is: Calm<sup>1</sup> \$76.99 CAD, Udemy<sup>2</sup> \$360 USD, and Grammarly<sup>3</sup> \$144 USD and when converted to Canadian Dollars and applying a conversion rate of 1 USD = 1.26 CAD, **this would be \$712.03 CAD annually<sup>4</sup>**. Through Student Support, we will be providing these three services at **\$19.98 CAD annually (\$9.99 CAD/semester)**, a 97% reduction in price.

**Whereas**, Grammarly, Calm, and Udemy are highly utilized services across the student demographic. With case studies showing adoption rates for Grammarly 100%, Udemy at 70%, Calm at 25% (8% daily users) university students.

**Whereas**, Student Support is looking to onboard additional services in the future, taking inputs from McGill students on what services are needed and working towards creating these partnerships over the coming months to help create a more inclusive and accessible environment.

Be it further resolved, that the following question is asked during the Winter 2022 referendum:

*“Student Support Canada is proposing that all part time and full time undergraduate students pay an opt-outable Student Support Fee of \$9.99 per semester for students to receive semesterly subscriptions for Calm, Udemy, and Grammarly, starting in Fall 2022 and ending in Winter 2023 (inclusive) for an initial one-year period to evaluate usage rates in hopes of running a second referendum next year for a long-term agreement. Do you agree?”*

Be it further resolved, that the Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.



**Office of the Speaker | Bureau du président du conseil**  
Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | [speaker@ssmu.ca](mailto:speaker@ssmu.ca)  
3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3  
*Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories*

**Results of the  
Vote**

In favour	(20)*
Opposed	(1)
Abstain	(0)

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\*Note: The motion was approved via Email

Approved