



## Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

*Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.*

## Students' Society of McGill University

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# SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC MINUTES

December 1, 2022

The regular monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference, on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 18:00.

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

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:18 on December 1, 2022. The Speaker reminds everyone that the meeting will be recorded.

### 2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

### 3. Attendance

The Speaker takes attendance.

Present: Councillors Mickelson, O'Boyle, Voustinas, Gurung, Sakajiri, Tai, Djoussou, Pollard, Reed, Thom, Griffith, Wan, Dadulla, D'Amore, Adler (proxy), Parish, Wang, President Wright, VP Internal Affairs Williams, VP Finance Pizarro, VP External Affairs Masny, VP University Affairs Yang.

Absent: Councillors Dakdouki, Syed, Nam, Thomas, Seth, Whitcomb, VP Student Life Koulibaly.

The Speaker notifies everyone that Councillor Dang (Services Representative) resigned on November 25, 2022.

### 4. Adoption of the Agenda – **ADOPTED**

The Agenda is distributed.

VP University Affairs Yang adds a motion.

The Speaker states that a motion can be presented as a late motion by waiving the requirement of presenting a motion 2 days in advance by  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority Council vote, following a report on the urgent



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matter. He will give VP University Affairs Yang a 2-minute speaking time to present the urgent motion and then the Speaker will entertain a debate and vote on the motion.

VP University Affairs Yang states that the title of the motion is: Motion Regarding a Donation of \$4,000 of Winter Clothing to Resilience Montreal, which was brought forward by the Indigenous Affairs Councillor. This motion would provide a donation to Resilience Montreal, a service that provides Indigenous people with housing. Since it is already getting cold, they want to ensure that the donation is done before the really cold weather hits.

The Speaker entertains a debate period on the addition of the motion.

Councillor Wan motions to call the question.

The motion is seconded.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote by reaction/hands.

The motion passes unanimously and is added to the agenda.

VP Finance Pizarro motions to adopt the agenda.

Councillor O'Boyle amends the agenda: to table point 16b: Motion Regarding an Interim Provision To Internal Regulations on Elections and Referenda.

The Speaker states that he can table this motion once the Council gets to that point.

Seeing no opposition, the Agenda is adopted as modified.

#### 5. Adoption of the Minutes:

The Minutes are distributed.

VP Finance Pizarro makes an amendment.

The Speaker states that they can figure this out during the recess.

Seeing no corrections, the minutes stand approved as distributed.

#### a. SSMU Legislative Council Public Minutes 2022-10-25 – **APPROVED**



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## b. SSMU Legislative Council Public Minutes 2022-11-03 – **APPROVED**

### 6. Report of the Steering Committee

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee met on November 25, 2022, to review motions that will be presented. They also reviewed a motion that was presented as a notice, and a motion that was sent back to the Council by the Board for further consideration. A new reporting schedule has been uploaded to the shared Drive. There is a confidential session this evening.

The Parliamentarian reminds everyone that they should vote, because it is their responsibility.

The Speaker adds that it is Councillors' job to vote, and their inactivity is noted by the Accountability Committee and the records will reflect the lack of votes, which could result in action by faculties.

### 7. Confidential Session

The Speaker asks everyone who is not invited to the Confidential Session to leave the meeting [temporarily].

### 8. Presentation: Progress Report - Student Support

Councillor Wan motions for a 2-minute recess.

This motion is seconded.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a 2-minute recess.

The Council resumes at 19:10.

Ajamu presents the progress report for Student Support. Services offered include Calm, Grammarly and Udemy. They have done a survey with students, and will present the findings. They wanted to figure out the best communication channel to raise awareness of the service. They've tried events, flyers, and student ambassadors, but they found that 64% of students who signed up for the service heard about it through SSMU emails. 86% of students said that having access to these services had a positive impact on their life. They have had 36% of the undergraduate student body sign up for the service, which is great because they were originally aiming for 30% by the end of the year. They have had over 3 billion words processed through Grammarly, which analyses all writing when typing and gives suggestions. When the software makes a suggestion, around 50% of the time, students accept the suggestion and correct their writing. Students use the music tool on Calm, and students tend to use the sleep aid tool at night and the meditation tool in the morning and at night. With Udemy, there



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have been 1,400 hours of learning. 80% of the learning was spent on technological skills: programming and data science. Students use Udemy to improve their resumes or to study for a test. Student Services sent a survey to 700 students, and received a few hundred responses. For Calm, 76% of users said that it improved their anxiety or sleep. 99% of respondents said they wanted to have access to these services next year. Throughout the past three months, they found that Grammarly sometimes gave students incorrect suggestions. They are learning that the software is not 100% accurate. Students want to learn how to become a better English writer in the long-term, and they are trying to see if there are better tools for students. They will continue to look into this, to see if this can be improved. They want to improve their marketing to raise awareness, because word of mouth is one of the main ways students have found out about the service. Student Support wants to get involved with clubs to have them spread the word. When a student accesses Student Support services, it can take up to 48 hours for them to gain access. They have been working with McGill to input single sign-ons; everything a student will need to do is log in with their McGill email address. They will definitely work with vendors to create additional services, and they will have more emails sent out to improve engagement. Many students really like Calm, which helps them alleviate stress and relax. Udemy has been useful for job offers.

The Speaker entertains questions.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki states that there is a student fee associated with Student Support. She asks if they are a club, service or an external organisation. She asks if there are any rules in place for how personal information is being used.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers that Student Support is an external service; the data is anonymised and students agree to sharing it when they sign up.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki clarifies that her question was more concerning student usage of services.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers that the services provide them with dashboards with anonymised data. Students agree to share data when signing up, but Student Services cannot access individual student data.

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#### **Question:**



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Councillor Whitcomb asks where the \$17.00 fee goes, because that is a steep fee for students.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that most funds go towards the services (80%) and Student Services uses the rest to sponsor clubs and do marketing. Student Support does not actually make a profit this year.

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**Question:**

VP University Affairs Yang asks, since Student Support is a for-profit, how they make money.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that Student Support is not making profits from SSMU this year, they will see a return later once the critical mass of students is hit. In the future, they will be able to keep some profits for operations and expansion.

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**Question:**

VP External Affairs Masny asks if SSMU can see the data from the surveys, and when considering the \$17.00 fee, it comes to approximately \$500,000 total. They ask what the advantage is for having online services when they could hypothetically hire five (5) psychologists for students instead.

The Speaker states that Ajamu has left the meeting. He proposes a 2-minute recess for him to reach out to Ajamu.

The meeting resumes at 19:30.

VP External Affairs Masny repeats their questions.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that the fee is \$9.99 per semester, and they have received about \$200,000 from students this year. Estimates for next year are similar. Most funds are going towards services, because they are quite expensive. The other funds are going towards marketing, to raise awareness. Online services and psychologists are very different, for example Calm can be a precursor to therapy. Students voted this in, so they are getting value from it.

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The Speaker clarifies that the second question was if SSMU could access the survey data.



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Ajamu answers that they would need to ask students for approval, to share the data with the SSMU. This would help improve the services.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Nam asks if it would be possible to offer French or bilingual services in the future. They could offer Antidote for the writing software, because many French courses at McGill suggest Antidote, but it is quite expensive.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers that he is open to suggestions. Student Support asked if a French writing tool would help students, and many of them (over 60%) said yes. They have reached out to Antidote to see if this tool can be added at no additional cost.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor [name inaudible] states that the survey went out on Saturday, to 7,000 students with a few hundred responses. The survey was also quite positive, because it was asking about improvements and not rating its usefulness. They ask if there are any plans to reach out to students who are not signed up for the service, or to try and get a more diverse set of responses and try to get more feedback.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers that the best way to go forward with this is to send out a second email. They could then reach out to students who have not signed up for the platform. They could conduct surveys on campus. Student Support did receive some feedback about Grammarly, but they can go get more diverse feedback on the other services.

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The Speaker entertains 2 more questions.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Djoussou asks if Antidote would replace Grammarly, because having only one writing tool could reduce the fee. He also asks if Student Support intends to send another survey during the Winter semester.

#### **Answer:**



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Ajamu answers that he has reached out to Antidote, and he is trying to see if it would be possible to keep a strong English writing tool as well as Antidote, at no additional cost. Student Support will make the survey more nuanced, and will try to get more students involved in the survey. They could offer gift cards to incentivize students to participate in the surveys.

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#### **Question:**

VP Finance Pizarro states that there are around 30% of students who are enrolled in the services. He asks how many students opted out of the service.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers that there has been a 36% usage rate among students who did not opt out of the fee. There is around a 12% opt-out rate.

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The Speaker states that they have reached the end of the question period.

The question period is extended by five (5) minutes.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki asks if the 12% previously mentioned refers to those who opted out entirely of the fee.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu answers yes. There are around 20,000 students paying the fee, and about 7,200 are using the service.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Dakdouki states that Ajamu mentioned that students were asked for permission for Student Support to collect their information. She asks if Ajamu knows the exact wording of the permission. She states that some money goes to clubs on campus, and she asks for details about this.

#### **Answer:**

Ajamu states that he can find the survey with the wording. He states that they have sponsored 2 clubs, a trading society and a coding camp. They sponsor the club, and the club spreads the word about the services.



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#### Question:

Councillor Parish asks if services are using one or multiple services.

#### Answer:

Ajamu answers that the most-used service is Grammarly, the second is Calm and third is Udemy. There are 4,000 students using Calm, who could also be using the other services. There are over 6,000 students using Grammarly, and 3,700 using Udemy.

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#### Question:

VP University Affairs Yang asks if they can see financial statements regarding service fees.

#### Answer:

Ajamu answers that he can't disclose pricing, but he could provide some additional information.

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#### Question:

Councillor Reed asks whether the fees are forecasted to change as the user base grows, or if they are expected to change.

#### Answer:

Ajamu answers that when the fee is instituted, it will be static for the next 5 years. Usage won't increase fees. Student Services signs a multi-year agreement with the services. Some vendors charge Student Support in USD, which will fluctuate, but they will always be able to provide services.

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#### Question:

Councillor Dakdouki asks if Ajamu could get information about how many times the average user is using the service.

#### Answer:

Ajamu answers that this information can be provided. The service providers give them usage statistics. For Calm, some students use it for sleep when they feel they need it. Others use it everyday, notably Grammarly. He invites everyone to email him more questions at [ajamu@studentsupport.ca](mailto:ajamu@studentsupport.ca).





**Question:**

VP Finance Pizarro asks how many people filled out the survey.

**Answer:**

Ajamu answers that there are around 250 responses.

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The question period ends.

9. Reports by Faculties

a. Athletics

Councillor Djoussou presents the Athletics report. The Council had its first meeting on September 1, and the former President had to resign, but the new President has been fantastic. They are currently meeting twice a month, and they are trying to get student athletes together. They are scheduling activities once a month, with the first being on October 15. They also held a Halloween party. Athletics is currently working on gathering donations for the homeless community. They are also scheduling activities focused on mental health for every Monday in January, and hosting a welcome-back party in the new year. The Advisory Board had its first meeting on October 5, which was about arranging all administration affairs. The Board is working on the McGill Golf Tournament and increasing turnout. They also reached pre-pandemic levels of registration for the Fitness Centre. The Student Athletic Council had its first meeting on October 25, and they are currently partnering with residences to provide activities for free at the fitness centre. Two of the cross-country team's female athletes have been named to the RSEQ all-star team, as well as four male runners. The quarterback of the Redbirds won the RSEQ Rookie Award, and won the same award at the national level. Two football players have been named to the RSEQ all-star team. Two other athletes have been selected for the national team. Two soccer players have been selected for the rookie all-star team, while another is on the national team. Two female soccer players have been selected for the all-star team at the national level, while another two received awards. The hockey team won the provincial championship, and they are playing in the semi-final at nationals tomorrow. 7 players have been to the all-star team. A lacrosse player received an award, while another player has been named to the all-star team. Councillor Djoussou states that the Athletics' Instagram account has the activities schedule and provides highlights, and provides tickets.

b. PTOT (3)



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Councillor D'Amore presents the PTOT report. The Council is having monthly meetings, and they are thinking about going back to Zoom. Photos of the Council will be uploaded to the website soon. The Presidents organised the elections, the wine and cheese event, and attended the MASH meetings and uphold communications with administration to coordinate events. VP Finance has been finding sponsorships, and has been settling contracts with new clinics and setting up a new credit card, as well as sending reimbursements. He is also working on a joint sponsor event. VP Academics has been attending the OT meetings and staying in contact with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapy. She has also been attending PT meetings. Councillor D'Amore and VP Academics are planning a 5-7 for the private sector clinics. She will also be meeting with PT representatives from universities across the country. VP Communications has been sending bi-weekly newsletters, and there has been a lot of promotion on social media. They are also working on revamping the PTOT website. Councillor D'Amore has been working on the 5-7, and working on the PTOT games, which will host over 500 students in early January. She is working on registration. VP Internals organised Frosh, and attended those meetings. They also plan monthly events for students. VP Wellness & Equity organised various activities, and the Graduate Representatives are planning the grad ball and have been fundraising for. VP Global Health has been attending meetings and organising forms.

#### c. Outaouais (3)

Councillor Tai presents the Outaouais report, and states that Councillor Wan will present a separate medicine report. The Outaouais campus had a clothing sale, and there was an intramural league during the year. There was Frosh in August, as well as rock climbing and paintball events. There was a Halloween party with the uOttawa Medicine School. There was a gala for second-year students. There were Council meetings on September 13 and November 7. Upcoming events include a Christmas gift exchange for med 2, and the General Assembly was the previous night. There is also a new Dean, as well as Internals and Med Games in January and May, respectively. They also bought new study pods. There are elections in March, and VP Finance found new sponsors. There is continued representation at many levels, and they are advocating for a fee reduction for Athletics. Councillor Tai adds that there are 5 Outaouais-specific clubs that host many events.

Councillor Dakdouki asks if Campus Outaouais is only the medical cohort.

Councillor Tai answers yes.

#### d. FYC (3)

Councillor Maddie presents the FYC report. FYC started meeting on October 21, and has been having weekly meetings. They had their first event last week, which was an Athletics mixer at Gerts. One of the challenges is communications and getting the word out about events. They want to partner with other organisations to get the word out. Other ideas include a ski trip in partnership with SSMU Ski & Snowboard. They have been working on advocacy, discussing how to get menstrual products in



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residences and looking at food prices in residences. Councillor Maddie states that people can follow the FYC's Instagram and FaceBook for more events.

#### 10. Reports by Committees **(27)**

##### a. Executive Committee **(3)**

President Wright presents the Executive Committee report. They continue to meet every week, and major approvals include hiring an Equity and Policy Specialist, which has been a long time coming. Other approvals include some budget approvals, and some to sign onto certain initiatives.

##### b. Community Engagement **(3) – POSTPONED**

The Community Engagement Committee report is postponed.

##### c. SSAMMOSA Committee **(3) – POSTPONED**

The SSAMMOSA Committee report is postponed.

##### d. Services Committee **(3)**

VP Student Life Koulibaly presents the Services Committee Report. They meet once a month to update everyone on operations and provide feedback on policies. Some services have not been to meetings yet, but it would be nice to get their input. The Committee has been discussing projects and plans, and solving a few issues. There have been a few reminders about processes, and some new collaboration opportunities for Services. Projects include consultations on the IR, which will come to LC; a discussion on the fee consolidation; and discussing raising awareness of Services. The Services Representative has resigned, so the Services Coordinator is currently chairing the Committee.

##### e. Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee **(3) – POSTPONED**

The Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee report is postponed.

##### f. Indigenous Affairs Committee **(3) – POSTPONED**

The Indigenous Affairs Committee report is postponed.

##### g. Students' Society Programming Network **(3)**

Councillor Reed presents the SSPN report. They had the 4 Floors Halloween event, and finished some reports for the event. They are planning the Faculty Olympics, and attended a retreat. FAC-O is set for March 7-11. The VP Internal has assigned positions to everyone, and they have set expectations and set a general schedule. They are in the process of obtaining venues, and logistics will be figured out at a later date. Hype Night is coming up on January 25, and they will plan it during the December break. They are starting to plan Graduation Frosh, which will be after FAC-O. Information about FAC-O will go



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out to faculties' VP Internals in the next couple of weeks, and the information for Hype Night will come out in January. Councillor Reed encourages everyone to be a staffer for either of these events.

#### h. Clubs Committee – **APPROVED**

VP Student Life Koulibaly presents the Clubs Committee report, which is made of herself, VP Finance Pizarro, the Clubs Representative and a staff member. They still need Councillors and Members at Large. They reviewed interim status applications, three of which were approved. Clubs need a score of 24 to pass. 4 full status applications were approved, and there was one name change request that was approved. Some constitutional changes were also approved. VP Student Life Koulibaly notes that they have changed the full status application to change attendance requirements at events. As of right now, the requirement just included a write-up of the event.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the report.

Seeing no opposition, the Clubs Committee Report is ratified.

#### i. Funding Committee (\*balance of funds presentation) **(3) – APPROVED**

The Funding Commissioner presents the Funding Committee report. They spent \$70,000 from the Club Fund, which gives funding to full status clubs. They have a surplus this year, so they are trying to spend more of the money. They had 23 clubs and services ask for funding. They spent \$25,000 on Campus Life, but this amount does not include the last two meetings of the semester, so they spent a bit more. They spent \$40,000 from the Ambassador Fund, which provides funding to students who travel to conferences or competitions. They spent \$15,000 on Community Engagement, but they should be spending more. There was not a lot spent on the Mental Health or Equity funds, and there is a lot of money there. They have just started using the First-Year Fund, and received an application for the Environment Fund, but they did not receive money. The Equity fund received some applications that had to be rejected because of surpluses. The Space Fund also received applications that could not be approved.

Councillor Djoussou asks, if they want to apply for funding, if it must be related to a club or service. He asks how the funds work.

The Funding Commissioner answers that there is no limit. Individuals can apply to all funds except the Club Fund.

VP Finance Pizarro asks what the Funding Commissioner's recommendations are for spreading the word about funds.

The Funding Commissioner answers that efforts are paying off, and they are using more money. The problem is that they have a big surplus from the last two years. They need more applications, and they will start sending out a listserv to spread the word. They have received about 170 applications this year. The Funding Commissioner notes that many clubs with surpluses in their budgets have applied,



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so the Funding Committee does not need to give them money.

Councillor Djoussou asks what the average amount of funding provided is.

The Funding Commissioner asks if Councillor Djoussou is referring to the average amount of money requested per application.

Councillor Djoussou answers yes.

The Funding Commissioner answers that there is no average amount, and they want people to apply for the money they need rather than what they think the Committee will approve. They approve a lot of money. The maximum amount that they can fund is 15% of the fund applied for, so that the funds can be distributed evenly. Anything larger must be ratified by the Legislative Council. For example, they gave \$15,000 to a club, and they gave \$100 to a club.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the Funding Committee Report.

Seeing no opposition, the Funding Committee Report is ratified.

#### j. Accountability Committee (3)

Parliamentarian Kaur presents the Accountability Committee Report. The Committee is made up of herself, the Speaker and the Governance Manager. There are no voting members, so they are working on recruiting Members at Large who can vote. They are also keeping record of absences and late reports. They are working on restructuring the committee. Parliamentarian Kaur states that people who are interested in the Committee can reach out to any of its members.

VP Student Life Koulibaly asks who can be a voting member.

Parliamentarian Kaur answers that they need four Members at Large, and need Directors who are not Executives or Councillors. They are currently in the process of hiring Directors from the Nominating Committee, so once that is done, they can join the Accountability Committee.

Councillor Wan asks what the implications of not having any voting members are.

The Speaker answers that the Board nor the Legislative Council can be held accountable for their actions. This has been a consistent issue, where the Committee has to use unorthodox methods to reprimand absent Councillors, because the regular methods are unavailable because there are no voting members. This position is essential, so the Speaker encourages people to apply.

Councillor Wan understands why Directors or Councillors cannot serve on this committee, but he asks if any of the Provisions could be changed to extend eligibility for the committee.

The Speaker answers that the main issue is that a Director cannot keep other Directors nor themselves accountable.



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Councillor Wan asks if not having an Accountability Committee is better than having a non-functional Committee.

The Speaker answers yes.

#### 11. Executive Reports **(18)**

##### a. President **(3)**

President Wright presents her report. She states that she is beginning the EDI review of the Constitution, there has been extensive research about this process. She has also started working on supporting the Board, as they get ready for next semester. She congratulates the new Directors. She highlights the collaboration between the Mac Campus Students' Society and the SSMU. Both presidents have been talking about joint advocacy about increased buses. She has been doing consultations on policy drafting, and she has been consulting about food security. There was a joint Board of Governors and Senate meeting about accessible education, and she highlights the McGill Senate meeting. She has been supporting the HR department as they work on new policies, and she has been managing various legal affairs. President Wright has also been supporting the Buildings department and Gerts. She states that the pilot Grocery Program is starting, and all 200 spots were filled. She is also drafting the grocery fee motion, which will hopefully go to the referendum in the winter. There has been work on the EDI plan with the EDI Committee. There has also been work on the Interfaculty Relations Policy. President Wright highlights the Environment Committee and the Sustainability Policy Revision Working Group are working on policy renewals. She highlights that SSAMOSA Committee met, and discussed updates. The Presidents' roundtable has been meeting monthly.

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#### Question:

Councillor Djoussou asks if there has been a Councillor who has joined the Board.

#### Answer:

President Wright answers that Councillors have joined the Board.

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##### b. VP Finance

VP Finance Pizarro presents his report. He presented the finances last week, and the auditors were very happy with the results. He has been working on the fee consolidation for the winter referendum, and he is starting the budget review, which will be presented soon. He is also trying to switch banks, so in the new year RBC will do a presentation on why they should not change banks.



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#### c. VP Student Life

VP Student Life Koulibaly presents her report. The Clubs Committee has been meeting, and clarifying applications. The Services Committee has also been meeting to evaluate their evaluation methods. She is looking to include that for the IR Revision, because there is no standard evaluation policy. There have been a few student group collaborations, and she is looking to facilitate this. There have been a few club executive conflicts that VP Student Life Koulibaly has mediated. There have also been some ongoing equity complaints. The Services budget revision took place, worked on by VP Finance Pizarro and the Services Finance Coordinator. She is looking to improve Services' interactions with SSMU without infringing on their independence. She has an updated constitution format that is pending approval, and there is an ongoing Bill 96 review. Coffee hours started, and anyone can come ask questions. There is a new winter semester bookings protocol, which will allow groups to book without it being hard for staff to manage. A few sanctions have been sent out for misuse of spaces. They have cleaned out the dead clubs and removed them from the masterlist. Student group workshops are being planned, and VP Student Life Koulibaly is looking to add optional workshops to the list. The Mental Health Roundtable met, which she has been facilitating. There has been work on My Wellness, and the service will provide mental health service recommendations. There is a launch party in January. She is currently working on a short-term accommodation form. There has been a memorandum with MSERT, to provide support for their free first-aid courses. She wants to extend the University Centre's operations to accommodate more groups, because spaces are limited. She wants to synthesise opportunities for groups. VP Student Life Koulibaly is working on initiatives for Black History Month, and is working on a cultural fair. There has been a collection of resources for clubs that can't use the University Centre. She is in the final review stages of the clubs' portal, there has been a slight delay. Gerts cultural nights are starting next semester, and they will be posted on a calendar. There have been updates on the food policy. She is working with Campus Life and Engagement for better orientation initiatives. She did an Instagram takeover on the SSMU Instagram account, which was very insightful. She also did budget revisions and sat on the Scholarship Subgroup Committee, which reviews all scholarships that have not met the GPA threshold.

#### d. VP University Affairs

VP University Affairs Yang presents his report. He has been talking with the administration about a note-sharing portal, which is one of his main projects. He is working on short-term accommodations, and has created a subcommittee to work on this. He is working to streamline the process of exam deferral due to COVID. He has been working on expanding the Free Menstrual Health Product Policy, and has expanded the number of pickup locations. He ordered more biodegradable and reusable products, and received SPF funding to expand products. The turnout on November 11 was lower than expected, so VP University Affairs Yang encourages everyone to spread the word. They are going to hand out products in the library next time (December 6). He is working on equity complaints and he is



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organising equity training for the Equity Commissioners. VP University Affairs Yang is still meeting with the Dean of Students and the administration. A new principal has been selected, and VP University Affairs Yang is meeting with the Senate Caucus. He is meeting with his committees as well as SSMU committees. There has been a lot of holiday spending for the Daycare, and he is doing some negotiations for new policies. He is also working on communications and expanding initiatives.

#### e. VP External Affairs

VP Finance Pizarro presents VP External Affairs Masny's report. They are in Ottawa until tomorrow. They hosted the Activities Bootcamp, as well as a town hall and met with PGSS and MCSS about Bill 96. They are working on building affordable housing with UTILE. They also met with other community organisations. They started reviewing some policies. They volunteered during Volunteers' Day and started organising Community Engagement Day in February. VP Masy supported Divest McGill and other McGill coalitions (Defund the Police, Uyghur Rights). They supported the Francophone Affairs Commissioner with education efforts, and also supported the Black Affairs Commissioner. They are doing some hirings, which are available on their website. VP External Affairs Masny is also working on changing banks, and met with their committees.

The Speaker reminds the Council that it is 20:59. He must declare the meeting adjourned at 21:00, unless someone motions to set aside the orders of the day.

Councillor Wan motions to set aside the orders of the day, and to adjourn the meeting at 21:45.

The Speaker entertains a vote.

Councillor Djoussou asks, if they vote yes, the meeting will continue.

The motion to extend passes.

Councillor Wan asks if the meeting can be extended after 21:45.

The Speaker answers yes. When they reach 21:45, he will ask for extensions.

Councillor D'Amore states that she needs to leave at 21:15 for another meeting.

The Speaker states that Councillors can leave if they have other commitments.

VP Finance Pizarro asks how many people they need to maintain a quorum.

The Speaker states that they need to maintain 50% +1.





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#### f. VP Internal Affairs

VP Internal Affairs Williams presents her report. She finalised some hirings in the Communications department, and she is giving out some SSMU merch. She is in the process of translating all documents, and she is revising the SSMU website. SSPN had some events and a retreat, and gained a few members. FAC-O is being planned, and information will be coming out soon. First-Year Affairs got their GSVP training, and they came up with a plan for this year. She met with some student initiatives and groups. She had a thrift event at Gerts, which was successful and will be done again next semester. She met with her various committees, and she is reviewing budgets for some of them. She also reviewed Campus Life and Engagement documents to see how they can improve for next year.

The Speaker clarifies that the quorum is a simple majority. If less than 50% of members are present, the meeting shall be adjourned.

#### 12. Announcements

Councillor Wan motions to suspend the rules to add the Funding Committee's motion to the agenda.

The Speaker states that the policy for late motions requires a two-minute presentation on why the motion is urgent and should be added to the agenda, and then a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote.

Councillor Wan states that this motion is urgent because Formula Electric, who submitted their funding request earlier this year, requested a large amount of money. They must present it at this meeting since it is the last one of the semester. The Funding Commissioner was unaware of the stipulations, so that is why this motion is being presented now.

The Speaker entertains a vote on adding this motion to the agenda. After this vote is entertained, the motion will be sent to the Steering Committee for review before being added to the agenda.

This motion is unanimously approved and will be added to the agenda. It will be reviewed by the Steering Committee during the recess.

VP Finance Pizarro motions to suspend the rules to add a motion.

The Speaker invites VP Finance Pizarro to present this motion.

VP Finance Pizarro states that he thought his motion had been added to the agenda, but it had not. It was supposed to be voted on at the last meeting, so the Revised Budget should really be voted on tonight.



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The Speaker entertains a vote on adding this motion to the agenda.

The motion is added to the agenda.

#### 13. Question Period

There are no questions from the general public. The Speaker entertains votes from the floor.

Councillor O'boyle asks for more information on the presentation from Student Support. He asks why someone from the organisation presented.

VP Student Life Koulibaly answers that part of the SSMU's contract with Student Services is that they will provide them with reports on usage. This was a good time to do it since it was the last Council meeting of the semester.

VP Student Life Koulibaly has an announcement on the behalf of VP External Affairs Masny. She states that Education students at UQAM went on strike for 5 weeks, for better internship conditions. They are currently facing oppression by the administration, who wants to add more classes to discourage future strikes. This is dangerous for student democracy. VPs Koulibaly and Masny are writing a letter of support for students. Once it is written, they will encourage faculties to sign it. People who want to get involved can email [external@ssmu.ca](mailto:external@ssmu.ca).

#### 14. Recess, Consent Items

The Speaker states that he will entertain a 5-minute recess so that everyone can vote on the consent items. Consent items allow the Council to mark motions as consent or debate. If everyone votes to consent to the motions, they will be approved and not debated. The Speaker sends the consent form in the chat.

#### 15. New Business

The meeting resumes at 21:40.

Councillor Wan motions to extend the meeting until the agenda is completed.

The Speaker entertains a vote on this motion.

Councillor Dadulla asks what they are voting on.



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The Speaker answers that they are voting on extending the meeting until the exhaustion of the agenda.

The motion passes and the meeting is extended until the agenda is exhausted.

The Speaker takes attendance of those on Zoom since some have left. Present are Councillors Voustinas, Wan, Wang, Djoussou, Dadulla, Pollard, Thom, Nam, O'boyle, Dakdouki, Sakajiri, Wendy (McGill Tribune Representative), Tai, VPs Williams, Koulibaly, Masny, Pizarro. Quorum is maintained.

a. Motion Regarding Position Against COP-15 – **APPROVED**

VP External Affairs Masny presents the motion. It is about COP15, a UN summit about biodiversity. It is December 17-19, and it has a damaging effect on the city, especially on students. After having many requests from students and groups to mobilise against the summit, VP External Affairs Masny thought it was wise to ask Councillors about it. It is their understanding that this position is in line with SSMU's policies.

The Speaker entertains a question period on this motion.

Councillor Djoussou asks how much money SSMU will be giving to those protesting against COP-15, and what other types of support will be given.

VP External Affairs Masny answers that political campaigns can receive financial and non-financial support for their initiatives. Currently, the internal regulations require any contribution of greater than \$500 to be approved by the Executive Committee. The amount of support will likely be under \$500; if the amount is greater the Committee will need to submit a budget to be reviewed. They mostly do reimbursements.

Councillor Dadulla asks what resources will be provided for students who want to protest against COP-15.

VP External Affairs Masny states that these resources can be financial or non-financial. They give a few examples. At this time, they are considering this campaign as part of their mission. The external team will decide on a budget.

The Speaker entertains a debate period on this motion.

Councillor Djoussou states that the motion mentions that SSMU supports the *Coalition anti-capitaliste et écologique contre la COP15*, a political organisation. He asks if there is a possibility that this group could engage in some activities that could potentially harm SSMU.



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VP External Affairs Masny answers that there is never a guarantee of political organisations' actions, but this coalition is an official coalition that is made up of individuals of various organisations who come together to protest. So far, they have put forward workshops, protests and demonstrations. This coalition is public, so their methods are in line with SSMU's policy. The coalition is enabling a safe space. They could retract their support if they find that the coalition's actions are not in line with SSMU's mission.

Councillor Wan agrees with Councillor Djoussou, because they can never know what a public coalition can do. Moving forward, he would be in favour of removing this clause entirely or dividing the question.

Councillor Thom agrees with supporting the public coalition. A quick Google search reveals that the coalition's website uses a curse word in its domain name, which is not great for SSMU. She asks how this will affect students who are participating in the summit as delegates.

VP External Affairs Masny answers that there is a clause about respecting the diversity of tactics, so they are not working to stop students who want to partake in the summit from doing so. They will not denounce those who participate. Their goal is to push governments to make decisions that would positively affect biodiversity and the climate crisis. VP External Affairs Masny has contacted both students participating, who cannot comment on the issue since they are part of Canada's delegation team. SSMU cannot support state delegation teams. In all their consultations, people could not comment or did not see an issue with SSMU's position.

The Speaker notes that Councillor Wan can propose a motion to divide the question. It requires a second; there will be no debate but the motion can be amended further. The vote requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

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#### **Question:**

VP Finance Pizarro asks VP External Affairs Masny if they know how other universities feel about COP-15.

#### **Answer:**

VP External Affairs Masny answers that there are close to 8,000 students striking against the summit, representing about 7 student associations. There are still general assemblies being held to discuss taking a position.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Sakajiri asks if other Montreal students' societies have endorsed this coalition, or other similar initiatives.

#### **Answer:**

VP External Affairs Masny answers that this coalition is the only one. They have received support from various Montreal and Quebec students' associations. This coalition is the result of student mobilisation against COP-15, and it would be difficult to act on this position without supporting this coalition. Because the summit is so soon, SSMU might not be able to offer support soon enough.

---

Councillor Dadulla agrees that there are issues with COP-15. He asks if SSMU's position would affect students who don't participate in protests or if it would affect SSMU's image.

VP External Affairs Masny answers that any position would reflect SSMU's image. Supporting a campaign would reflect on it as well. Because this summit is occurring during the final exam period, many students might not participate in protests, so the SSMU's position will not affect them. They can better equip students who want to mobilise.

Councillor Wan believes that if they do not explicitly support this coalition, it does not imply that they are against the coalition. He motions to divide the question.

The Speaker states that if this motion is approved, the Council would vote on this clause separately from the rest of the motion; it requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

Councillor Sakajiri seconds the motion.

The Speaker entertains a vote on dividing the question.

The motion to divide the question passes.

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#### **Question:**

VP External Affairs Masny asks how to call the question considering the question is divided; they motion to call the question on the motion as a whole.

#### **Answer:**

The Speaker states that once the question has been called, the Council will vote on both questions.



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Councillor Wan seconds the motion to call the question.

Councillor Djoussou asks if they are calling the question on the division of the motion.

The Speaker answers that the question has been divided; they are calling the question on the motion itself.

Councillor Djoussou asks if they are calling the question on the main motion, and then discuss the divided clause.

The Speaker answers that there is no further debate if they call the question. They will vote first on the divided clause, and if it passes they will vote on the entire motion. If the divided clause fails, they will vote on the motion without it.

Councillor Djoussou asks for a re-explanation.

The Speaker re-explains.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote on the clause that supports the *Coalition anti-capitaliste et écologique contre la COP15*.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor O'Boyle asks if this is a vote to keep this clause in the motion.

#### **Answer:**

The Speaker answers yes.

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VP External Affairs Masny asks about the order of the votes.

The Speaker answers that they are voting on the motion first, because the clause cannot be voted on if the entire motion fails. Since they voted to divide the question, they are voting on whether or not to keep the clause in the motion. And then the Council will vote on the motion as a whole. Once the motion is approved, they can vote on the clause individually.



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There are 1 vote in favour, 10 against, and 2 abstentions on Zoom. In person, there are 2 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. The clause is removed from the motion.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the motion as a whole.

Councillor Djoussou asks if they are voting on the motion.

The Speaker states that they have voted to call the question and the clause that had been divided, so they are now voting on the motion as a whole.

The Speaker shares the voting form in the chat.

With 4 abstentions, 2 votes against and 12 votes in favour, Motion 15a passes.

- b. Motion Regarding a Donation of \$4,000 of Winter Clothing to Resilience Montreal –  
**APPROVED**

There is a motion to call the question and vote by unanimous consent.

VP External Affairs Masny seconds the motion to call the question.

The Speaker states that the motion should be presented.

VP University Affairs Yang presents the motion. The Council has the money to donate to Resilience Montreal. This motion needs to go through the Council because the Indigenous Affairs Committee does not have quorum. Since committees fall under the Council's umbrella, the Council can approve this. The Council should approve this big purchase.

The Speaker states that the motion to call the question still stands.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote on Motion 15b.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 15b is unanimously approved.

- c. Motion Regarding Approval of the Formula Electric Funding Application –  
**UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Director Wan presents this motion on behalf of the Funding Committee, who is allowed to approve most funding applications to their discretion. If they exceed 15% of the fund's allocation, they need to bring it to Council. The Formula Electric application does, so it is being presented. Formula Electric



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builds electric cars and races them, which falls under the purview of the Campus Life Fund. The application exceeds \$30,000; it was discussed by the Funding Committee. It is a large amount of money for a relatively small amount of people, but it is eligible for funding. SSMU has leftover money from COVID, and they are still under the limit, so this funding should not affect future years.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

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#### **Question:**

YP University Affairs Yang asks if they need to grant the full \$30,000 or if they can grant it in part.

#### **Answer:**

Councillor Wan answers that they could grant a portion of it, but the Funding Committee has suggested that they fund the entire project.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor Djoussou asks what percentage of the Campus Life Fund this application represents.

#### **Answer:**

Councillor Wan answers that he will consult the Funding Committee, but he believes it to be between 15-25%. He clarifies that it is 15.1%.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor [inaudible] asks if this is in line with previous requests for funding by Formula Electric.

#### **Answer:**

Councillor Wan answers yes.

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VP University Affairs Yang motions to call the question.

The motion to call the question is seconded.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote.





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Councillor Wan motions to vote by unanimous consent. VP University Affairs Yang seconds the motion.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote by unanimous consent.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 15.c is unanimously approved.

The Speaker clarifies that this motion does not have a default voting method because this motion was added late, so there was no form created for it.

#### d. Motion Regarding the Fall 2022 Budget Revision – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

VP Finance Pizarro presents the motion. Every year, they need to do two budget revisions; in October and February. He was supposed to present this earlier. He mentions that this Budget Revision will not have any power on the budget that had been approved in April. This is more of a forecast, to help managers understand where the Society's finances are going. There was an understanding in previous years that the revision would be based on the operating budget, but this is not the case. All departments at SSMU have their own budgets with signing officers (Commissioners or Managers). When students pay fees, they go to a specific fund or services, so Executives cannot use the money as they please. The base fee goes into the operating fund. VP Finance Pizarro presents the list of departments and the types of expenses. To do the revised budget, he asked all managers about their new expenses. There was then a conversation among Executives about essential expenses. Last year's VP Finance approved a budget with a \$627,000 deficit, so the revised budget incorporates that. There were also many external factors; inflation, investments that did not provide the expected amount, Bill 96, which forced them to hire staff and change documentation. Because of Bill 96, they hired a full-time translator, and the External department was not budgeted because they did not know how many expenses to expect. Considering this, their part of the budget revision is a general budget. There were also new hires. VP Finance Pizarro is estimating a \$700,000 deficit. The last Council was confident about a fee levy, but VP Finance Pizarro is trying to find money elsewhere. Hopefully, the forecast will be higher than actual budgets. However, the deficit is huge and a fee levy may not be possible, because there are already a lot of referendum questions for the Winter semester.

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#### **Question:**

Councillor [inaudible] asks who the person identified as Desmond is on the motion.

#### **Answer:**

VP Finance Pizarro clarifies that Desmond Rodrigues is the Comptroller, who told VP Finance Pizarro that he has never been consulted as many times as he was this year. VP Finance Pizarro



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assures everyone that the appropriate consultations were made; the best interests of the Society are being put forward.

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The motion is edited to clarify Desmond's position.

The Speaker entertains a debate period.

Councillor Wan motions to call the question.

Seeing no opposition, Councillor Wan motions to vote by unanimous consent.

Seeing no opposition, the Speaker entertains a vote on Motion 15d.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 15d is unanimously approved.

#### 16. Old Business:

- a. Motion Regarding Free Menstrual Health Products on Campus – **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

This motion has been unanimously approved.

- b. Motion Regarding an Interim Provision To Internal Regulations on Elections and Referenda – **TABLED INDEFINITELY**

Councillor Djoussou states that the mover wanted to table this motion, so he suggests tabling or modifying the motion.

Councillor O'Boyle motions to table Motion 16b. He states that there were issues with disinformation among the Elections officers, and they suggested working with student publications in the future to revise Internal Regulations.

The Speaker asks Councillor O'boyle not to speak about information that was discussed in the confidential session.

Councillor O'Boyle states that there is a need to revise the Internal Regulations. However, this is not the time; the motion did not pass within the appropriate time frame. It should be discussed before the next referendum.



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Councillor Wan seconds the motion to table Motion 16b.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 16b is tabled indefinitely.

17. Adjournment: **22:44**

The Speaker declares the meeting adjourned at 22:44. He wishes everyone a happy holiday season.

---

Risann Wright, SSMU President

APPROVED