



Bureau du président du conseil de l'ÀÉUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

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MOTION REGARDING THE REFERENDUM QUESTION FOR A SSMU MEMBERSHIP FEE INCREASE FOR SALARIES AND GENERAL OPERATIONS 2024-02-01

Submitted for: 2024-02-01

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-02-01-006
Moved by:	Amina Kudrati-Plummer <i>SSMU Vice-President (Finance)</i>	Current Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Rajan Duncan <i>First Year Representative</i>		

Issue

The SSMU Membership Fee has not seen an increase since 2019 aside from automatic CPI adjustments, but the SSMU has since significantly expanded operations. Given the scale of its operations, the SSMU must increase its Membership Fee in order to continue to provide for its members, the students, and its staff. This motion proposes a Membership Fee increase that will allow the SSMU to address its current financial needs and expand its support of the student body and the livelihoods of the SSMU staff during a time of unprecedented inflation and rise in the cost of living.

Background and Rationale

As per the SSMU's Constitution, the SSMU seeks "to provide excellence and quality of service at all times, and shall continue to enhance the quality and scope of these services." The Membership Fee is used for a variety of elements of the SSMU's operations including building management, staffing, and other crucial amenities. By increasing the Membership Fee, students will have more opportunities to take advantage of the SSMU's assets and be provided assets of greater quality.



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Furthermore, the SSMU is currently operating at a significant deficit, and has done so for several years. If this continues, the SSMU will have to reduce operations significantly and will therefore not be able to provide the student body and its associated clubs and services with its current levels of support. At the same time, the SSMU's 2023-24 operating budget is not sufficient to maintain its current levels of operation, and thus a fee increase that covered only the current budget would still require a reduction in operations.

The SSMUnion, the union of the SSMU employees, has also asked that salary brackets be increased to meet the median pay grade in line with the cost of living. This motion proposes an increase for all staff, **excluding SSMU Executives**, to ensure that all SSMU employees are paid at a rate in line with the cost of living. The SSMU currently employs over 100 part-time/student staff and approximately 30 full-time staff, who are crucial to all of SSMU's operations and services.

Per the same agreement, the money generated from this Membership Fee increase will only go towards unionized staff salaries, guaranteeing that this amount of money is set aside solely for unionized staff. The estimated revenue (\$1,301,982.09) will cover approximately 80% of the current total unionized staff salaries (\$1,633,818.55). This will free up space in the existing operating budget to cover the amount currently needed to sustain the SSMU.

Alignment with Mission

The SSMU's highest priority is to maintain a high quality of service for its members, one that requires adequately paid labor and sufficient funding. The SSMU is committed to paying workers, including its student workers, a fair wage for their work and holds strong pro-worker positions.

Consultations Completed

Consultations have been completed with all of the SSMU Executives, including the VP Sustainability and Operations, as well as the SSMU General Manager. The fee increase calculations were done by the VP Finance.

The Policy and Advocacy Coordinator and the Governance Manager were consulted to ensure the motion and referendum question are in line with SSMU standards in documentation.

Extensive consultations with the SSMUnion have been conducted, and the SSMUnion is in support of the Motion, as it will increase all staff salaries.



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Risk Factors and Resource Implications

An increased Membership Fee may pose an economic risk to the student body as they will be responsible for paying more towards the SSMU's operations, especially given the relatively large increase. However, the additional gains will allow the SSMU to maintain the quality and quantity of its services and this will likely close the gap as students take advantage of these services. Further, it must be noted that, if this Membership Fee increase does not pass, the SSMU will be pushed into financial peril.

More specifically, to resolve its financial difficulties without an increased contribution from Members, the SSMU will likely have to drastically reduce its operational scale. This reduction could directly affect specific operations, services, and programs that the SSMU offers to its members such as Gert's Bar, support for clubs & services, political representation, advocacy, and support, as well as all events and activities that foster student life on and off campus.

Sustainability Considerations

This motion is in line with the SSMU's responsibility in long-term planning of finances to ensure year to year financial stability as mandated within the Sustainability Policy. As the Membership Fee increase serves to better compensate its staff, it also supports aspects of the SSMU's social sustainability efforts. However, the SSMU recognizes the additional financial burden on the student body and will minimize this burden through exceptional services and support.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should this motion be approved, the referendum question in this motion will be forwarded to Elections SSMU for review and approval.

Per the IRs of Elections, the SSMU Executives, in collaboration with the SSMU Union Executives, will assume the responsibility of campaigning for a "Yes" vote on this referendum question.

Should the Membership Fee increase be approved by referendum, the SSMU will be able to maintain and expand its operations, better providing services to its membership, while continuing to provide its employees fair compensation for their work. The funds from this increase will be entirely dedicated to the salaries of employees, allowing these to match market value and providing a salary floor. This would liberate a significant part of



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the overall operational budget to address current financial needs at the SSMU and allow for the growth of new initiatives and programs.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Winter 2024 Referendum Period:

Do you agree to the increase of the non-opt-outable SSMU Membership Fee, payable to all undergraduate students who are members of the SSMU, to outlined in the table below, per student per semester starting in Fall 2024 to cover salary increases of the staff of the SSMU (excluding Executives) and to facilitate the operations of the SSMU as a whole, with the understanding that a majority “no” vote would result in would likely result in a drastic reduction of SSMU’s operations, including support provided to the Clubs and Services under SSMU?

Outcomes of Proposed Fee Increase		
Full Time Students	Faculty Group A*	Faculty Group B**
Current	\$68.48	\$50.31
Increase for Salaries and Operations	\$27.11	\$29.92
New Proposed Fall 2024 Membership Fee	\$95.59	\$70.23
Part Time Students	Faculty Group A*	Faculty Group B**
Current	\$33.24	\$24.14
Increase for Salaries and Operations	\$13.16	\$9.56
New Proposed Fall 2024 Membership Fee (part-time)	\$46.40	\$33.70

*Faculty Group A: Arts, Architecture (B.Sc. Arch), Education, Engineering, Music, Management, Nursing, Physical & Occupational Therapy, Science, and Arts & Science.



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****Faculty Group B: Law, Dentistry, Medicine.**

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve, and recommend to the Board of Directors for approval, the report in Appendices A and B.

Be it resolved that the final wording of the referendum question be reviewed and approved by Elections SSMU before it appears on the Referendum Ballot.

Results of the Vote

In favour	(16)
Opposed	(3)
Abstain	(4)



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Appendix A: Outcomes of Proposed Fee Increase

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Appendix B: Proposed Fee Increase Calculations

Base statistics

Annual Deficit	Estimated 15% Salary Increase Excluding Executives	Total Additional Money Needed Annually	Total Additional Money Needed per Semester
\$923,057.90	\$378,924.19	\$1,301,982.09	\$660,991.04

Notes:

- **Annual Deficit**

Amount	Explanation
\$726,257.90	2023-24 Revised Budget Deficit: This is what the SSMU is currently operating under for the 2023-24 year. However, this is not sustainable in the long-term, as it leaves several departments severely understaffed and under-resourced. This is based on current 2023-24 statistics, as the 2024-25 budget will not be completed before the end of the nomination period.
\$45,000	Estimated salary for an additional full-time Porter for the Building Department. Between 2018-2021, the University Centre was closed. Since its reopening, the demand on the building has only increased, though no additional staff positions were created. For the Building Department to address this demand, to take strain off of the current porters, and to ensure the University Centre is as available as possible to the student body and for events, this position is necessary.
\$53,000	Estimated salary for a full-time Building Coordinator for the Building Department. Same reasoning as above, specifically to take strain off of the Building Director.
\$55,000	Estimated salary for a full-time Events Manager for the Events Department. As SSMU has expanded its Clubs and Services since the COVID shutdowns, the demand on the Events team has increased substantially, to an extent that the current team needs additional support. This position would help relieve that demand and allow for faster processing of Event Declarations, Room Bookings, and other related processes.



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\$6,000	Estimated wages for a part-time Accessibility Commissioner for the VP Student Life Department. This is an existing position that has not been hired for due to the restricted budget, but is crucial for ensuring the SSMU is accessible in all of its planning and events.
\$5,000	Estimated wages for a part-time Operations Assistant for the VP Operations Department. The VP Operations is the only Executive without staff, as the position has not been filled since 2017, and requires additional support in overseeing the Building and Operations Departments.
\$1,500	Estimated increased wages for approximately 80 additional hours for the Deputy Speaker for the Governance Department. This is a crucial position within SSMU, as the Deputy Speaker also acts as the Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary writes the minutes for both Legislative Council and the Board of Directors, which is crucial in ensuring the long-term recordkeeping of these events.
\$14,000	Adjustments to where the Minicourses Coordinator & Sponsorship Coordinator (one staff person) is paid from, as their salary is currently taken fully out of Minicourses, which is paid by an independent fee. As they work in both the Mini Courses and Sponsorship Departments, their salary should be split between both. This is an approximation of that split.
\$2,000	Additional event support for the VP Internal Department, as several major SSMU events have had to be canceled this year or heavily limited due to reduced funds, such as the SSMU Halloween Party, which is generally very popular with students.
\$5,500	Additional event support for the VP Student Life Department, as several major SSMU events have had to be canceled this year or heavily limited due to reduced funds, such as Activities Night, which are generally very popular with students and help bolster the presence of Clubs and Services on campus.
\$4,000	Additional support to the VP External Department for campaigns, as the budget for this was severely restricted for the 2023-24 year, which has resulted in reduced capabilities of the Department in planning campaigns across the board.
\$5,000	Additional support to the Governance Department to provide support for the Legislative Council, as resources for this have been very limited this past year. This includes updating technology where necessary, and occasional food purchases to show appreciation for Councillors, who volunteer their time to participate in these important meetings.
\$800	Additional support to the University Affairs Department to provide support for University Senate, as resources for these have been very limited this past year.



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	This includes updating technology where necessary, and occasional food purchases to show appreciation for Senators, who volunteer their time to participate in these important meetings.
\$923,057.90	Sum

● Salary Increase

- This increase is for all of the SSMU employees, **excluding Executives**, in order to meet the median pay grade in line with the cost of living in 2024
- Estimated at 15% based on unprecedented inflation that has occurred since the last salary adjustment in 2021 (breakdowns of individual salaries will not be provided for privacy)
- Total annual staff salaries: approx. \$2,526,161.27 based on October 2023 data
- 15% of staff salaries: approx. \$378,924.19 based on October 2023 data

Faculty statistics

Faculty Group	Proportion of Total Fees paid by each Faculty Group	Percent of Total Fees paid by each Faculty Group	Total Amount to be paid by each Faculty Group per Semester	Total Students in each Faculty Group	Proposed Additional Amount per Student per Semester
Faculty Group A, Full-Time	0.8890706061	88.9%	\$578,777.00	21349.44	\$27.11
Faculty Group A, Part-Time	0.03079606215	3.1%	\$20,047.96	1523.52	\$13.16
Faculty Group B, Full-Time	0.07689200847	7.7%	\$50,056.01	2513.28	\$19.92
Faculty Group B, Part-Time	0.003241323272	3.2%	\$2,110.07	220.8	\$9.56

Notes:

- **Proportion of Total Fees paid by each Faculty Group** are based on the proportions currently paid
- **Total Students in each Faculty Group** is based on McGill reports, with a 4% decrease to account for fewer students due to new Quebec legislation



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Final Fee Statistics

Faculty Group	Proposed Additional Amount per Student per Semester	Current Amount per Student per Semester	Proposed Total Amount per Student per Semester
Faculty Group A, Full-Time	\$27.53	\$68.48	\$95.59
Faculty Group A, Part-Time	\$13.36	\$33.24	\$46.40
Faculty Group B, Full-Time	\$20.22	\$50.31	\$70.23
Faculty Group B, Part-Time	\$9.70	\$24.14	\$33.70

Notes:

- The proposed percent increase would be 39.6%