



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

January 30, 2025

The regular bi-monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held in Leacock 232 on Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 18:00.

1. Call to Order: **18:08**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:08. The acting Speaker for this meeting is Deputy Speaker Fallis.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

The SSMU acknowledges that McGill University is situated on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee nations. The SSMU recognizes and respects these nations as the true and constant custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. Further, the SSMU commits to and respects the traditional laws and customs of these territories.

L'ÉUM reconnaît que l'Université McGill est située sur le territoire traditionnel et non cédé des nations Anishinaabeg et Haudenosaunee. L'ÉUM reconnaît et respecte ces nations comme les véritables et constants gardiens des terres et des eaux sur lesquelles nous nous rencontrons aujourd'hui. En outre, l'ÉUM s'engage à respecter les lois et coutumes traditionnelles de ces territoires.

3. Attendance

The Speaker takes attendance.

Present: Councillors Chen, Kalaga, Weissman, Renaud, Tick, McKay, El Murr, Punjabi, Li, Crema Black, Soh, Kohler, Zhao, Gowdy, Director Abu Alkhair, President Taylor, VPs Jolicoeur, Solomon, Berglas.

Absent: Councillors Hamеле, Kim, Bérubé, Nounke, Engo, Farhat, Kumar, VP Zahidah.



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

The Agenda is distributed.

Director Abu Alkhair adds Motion 13b. He states that he sent it to the Steering Committee already.

VP Solomon adds Motions 13c and 13d, both of which he sent to the Steering Committee.

Councillor El Murr adds Discussion Item 14a.

The Speaker convenes the Steering Committee to review the new items and entertains a 5 minute recess.

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee reviewed and approved all the new motions.

Seeing no opposition, Motions 13b, c, and d are added to the agenda.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

5. Minutes for Approval

- a. [SSMU Legislative Council Public Minutes 2025 -01-16](#) – **APPROVED**

The Minutes are distributed.

Seeing no changes or opposition, the Minutes are approved.

6. Announcements

7. [Report of the Steering Committee](#) (3)

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee met on January 29 to review tonight's motion. She reminds everyone to read and understand the documents submitted for each meeting and to consider whether each motion needs to be debated. The suggested time for each item appears in brackets on the agenda as determined by the Steering Committee. The Speaker presents the list of those presenting their reports at the next meeting, and notes that there will be a short confidential session tonight in order to approve the minutes from the last confidential session.

8. Executive Reports (3)

- a. [Director of Clubs and Services](#)



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Director Abu-Alkhair states that he has been working on club applications, review club constitutions. He extended the deadline for the club audit, and there will be sanctions for those who did not meet the deadline. The Services Review Committee met, as well as the Services Committee. He is working on improving the clubs website, which needs a lot of work, and the clubs portal. Clubs workshops are next weekend, as clubs need to attend one workshop session per year. He has developed a feedback form for clubs and services to be sent out. Director Abu-Alkhair has been working with student groups about space agreements in the University Centre. The club masterlist has been completed.

- b. Vice-President Finance - **POSTPONED**
- c. [Vice-President University Affairs](#)

VP Berglas states that the Gender & Sexuality Commissioner is working on a queer mobilization dinner, inspired by a mobilization dinner last semester. Some grievances were worked on in collaboration with the LICM and the UA Secretary General, about the sidelining of SSMU representatives on McGill committees. They have taken charge of the Mental Health team and the Accessibility Commissioner, which is a new role and very exciting. They are working on the Policy for Students with Disabilities, developed by the McGill Senate and is being revised next semester. They worked on a question about the removal of the white pine tree in consultation with the Mohawk Mothers. This week is Muslim Awareness Week, and it will end with an event about Bill 21. They and VP Solomon met with a local activist and they are considering how to bring more awareness to Bill 21. In this political climate, especially considering the situation in the United States, it will become more important to be aware of equity positions at McGill. The Equity Commissioners are working on an audit of equity positions to see if the number of them has been reduced. VP Berglas also plans to consult minority groups on campus to see how they can support them better.

- d. [Vice-President Internal](#)

President Taylor presents VP Zahidah's report on her behalf. There will be a St. Paddy's day 4-Floors event on March 14, the Friday before St. Paddy's day. There will be music and activities on each floor of the University Centre. FACO is happening at the end of March, and the budget is being developed. SSMU Awards are on April 4, and include a dinner, awards, and a ceremony. Later in the evening, there will be a gala, although he notes that there are other galas happening on the same night. These events are being organized by SSPN, and if anyone is interested, they can reach out to VP Zahidah. The Communications team released the awards form for SSMU Awards this week. There will be a collaboration with CKUT for the St. Paddy's day 4-Floors event, and there will be a different theme on each floor. The Faculty Olympics interest form was sent out, and President Taylor asks faculty presidents to share it with their constituents to gauge interest. VP Zahidah helped plan the Activities Night and is working on clubs workshop next weekend. A graphic designer for the SSMU 2026



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Handbook is being hired. The new Gerts Manager was hired and is working their first shift right now; the lighting issue at Gerts was fixed. Scarlet Key applications are due on January 31.

Councillor Zhao asks if the SSMU Awards date is set in stone, because AUS & SUS's Grad Ball is set for April 4.

President Taylor notes that the date can be changed.

Councillor Weissman asks who sits on SSPN, because he and Councillor Zhao were appointed. It seems that SSPN is just VP Zahidah right now.

President Taylor answers that this is true right now.

e. Vice-President External

VP Solomon states that he has been coordinating the legal review for the Policy Against Anti-Semitism, which is not under an injunction. He is working with the Students for Good Jobs Campaign on SSMU affiliation, following feedback from the Speaker. VP Solomon will be attending the CRUES conference next weekend to discuss student mobilization and promote a student campaign to lobby the government to reduce tuition for students from French-speaking countries other than France and Belgium. He met with the McGill administration, and they were very interested in supporting this. He met with CSU to reintroduce the Get Organized workshop series, happening over 7 weeks and covering 7 different topics. Half of the spots are already filled, which is great. He is working on a student-run food pantry, which works on a pay-what-you-can basis. He is still looking for leads on a fridge. VP Solomon has a meeting with SHHS tomorrow to make this project more permanent. The Milton Parc Working Group was revamped, and the group's membership grew to 15 members. Their most recent meeting addressed unhoused community issues in Milton Parc. There was twice as much demand as there was funding for the Community Solidarity Fund. SSMU will be hosting Indigenous artists in the Ballroom on February 7, and there will be a presentation from a student who will be creating a mural in the SSMU Building. Earlier that day, there will be a beading workshop. VP Solomon and the Black Affairs Commissioner have almost completed the Policy on Black Student Advancement, and it will be presented at the next meeting. He and the Francophone Affairs Commissioner met with the head of Francophone Support at McGill, who was supportive in helping them centralize French language tools. He is collaborating with McGill departments on Francofête in March. He is proposing a Francophone Affairs fee at the winter referendum, and Les Pipelettes will be meeting on February 17.

9. Reports by Councillors (12)

a. [Arts \(AUS\)](#)



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Councillor Chen states that the President is working on bylaw updates for Frosh, elections, and funds. There was an increase in demand for student employment, and she is working on lobbying for more funding. The President is also working on increasing study spaces, space allocations for department events, and a new alumni program. There is a new space bookings program, which has been very successful so far. Elections and referendum dates are February 17 to 21. VP Finance completed the 2023 audit, and is working on the 2024 audit. Their insurance has been renewed and all departments are in good financial standing; all Frosh payments have been processed. VP Internal is utilizing the AUS Sustainability Commissioner and funds to implement a sustainability certificate system for events, in collaborating with McGill. Departments will be able to be reimbursed for sustainable events. The First-Year Representative is working with Senators to create student well-being resources.

Councillor Weissman states that VP Social is running BDA, which is in good financial and university standing. Frosh bills have been paid. Grad Ball is booked for April 4 in collaboration with SUS; graduating students should attend. VP Academics relaunched the AUS Writing Centre, and valedictorian applications are open. VP Communications is working on the AUS website.

Councillor Kalaga states that VP External planned career and job fairs, as well as mental health projects. There are many more events taking place this year, which is great. A feedback form was created about Student Services, and many questions have been submitted. Student senators are working on the Senate's overall goals.

President Taylor asks when the Grad Ball tickets go on sale.

Councillor Weissman answers that it is not clear yet.

Councillor Chen reminds everyone that the event will be an open bar.

b. Dentistry (DSS) - **POSTPONED**

c. [Music \(MUSA\)](#)

Councillor Crema Black states that many MUSA bars have been taking place and are growing. They always do a theme, and the last one was an 80s theme. The next MUSA bar will be Valentine's themed on February 7. They held a fall referendum; one of the questions was a bit controversial. MUSA and SSMU hosted the Great Gatsby Gala, and MUSA is now supplying Gerts with musicians every Friday. Musicians are now being paid, which is great. They are getting new therapy dogs for students, and there is a new student wellness director and wellness room. MUSA sold some merchandise and they are planning to sell more in February. Their bi-weekly newsletter, the Soundcheck, was sent out by the VP Communications. They came up with a student feedback form and it was put in the Soundcheck,



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but it did not get much attention. Councillor Crema Black states that everyone should follow MUSA on Instagram and TikTok.

d. [Engineering \(EUS\)](#)

Councillor El Murr states that funding for new lab equipment was approved. There was a tech fair today and it was a great success. VP Academic is running tutoring sessions and meeting with the faculty to change prerequisites for some courses to make it easier to graduate. VP Finance is working on cheque requests and reimbursements. The Canada Post strike affected their ability to pay bills, but this has been sorted out. The budget review took place, and EUS is in good financial standing. Bylaws are being changed to allow bank accounts for external groups such as the Department of Bioresource Engineering and is preparing a funding meeting for the winter semester. VP Services implemented a new payroll software, and created an EUS employee discount for the EUS mall. CopyEUS and Frostbite got new equipment. OAP Lite planning has begun. Foot traffic in the EUS mall has increased, and room bookings are still going strong. VP Communications fixed the issue with the newsletter, and they worked on the first edition of the Plumber's Faucet. They are working with IT to update the EUS website. A new VP Events was hired, and its committees are running fine. Events in the winter semester are being planned. They created a few new clubs, and some club bylaws were updated. The VP External position is vacant and their work is being done by the President. EUS finished well in many Engineering Conferences, and will host next year's conference. VP Internal hosted Frosh and E-week, which were under budget. The Junior Council is hosting many events, and Blues Pub is running smoothly. The President is working on next year's elections, initiatives with the McGill administration, and the centennial Iron Ring ceremony. Councillor El Murr notes that all EUS Executive positions have interested candidates, so there will hopefully be a full council next year.

VP Solomon asks when they can expect a copy of the Plumber's Faucet in the SSMU office.

Councillor El Murr answers that he will make sure a copy is sent.

Director Abu-Alkhair asks if they are still accepting EUS club applications.

Councillor El Murr states that he would have to check with the EUS VP Student Life.

10. Committee Reports (3)

a. [Black Affairs Committee](#)

The Black Affairs Commissioner states that many Councillors and student groups usually attend the Committee's meetings. She is currently reviewing the applications for members at large. The committee usually meets monthly, to review Black Equity fund requests. They also have a form that



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they review by-weekly. They also facilitate collaboration between black student groups. The Policy of Black Student Advancement & Inclusion was consulted on with the administration and student groups. The website will be launched soon, and there will be an event for black students, faculty, non-profits, and businesses in February. She is working on faculty partnerships for Black History Month; events include a breakfast and a dinner with a keynote speaker. The next day, there will be an opening ceremony with another keynote speaker, where the Black Affairs Commissioner will give the opening remarks. She is working with AUS and other student groups on their BHM events. There are new black students' student groups being formed, including the McGill Nigerian Students' Association and the Black Muslim Students' Association. The inter-university conference was meant to happen in February, but was postponed due to issues with room bookings. On February 12, the Black Affairs Commissioner will be presenting the Anti-Black Racism Group's yearly report and make a proposal for a black students' centre. She is always looking for more student groups to collaborate with on BHM events.

11. Question Period (5)

Councillor Weissman asks if the three motions added to the agenda will be added to the consent items form. He states that these motions are not controversial and there is no need to debate them.

The Speaker answers that they will be added to the agenda.

12. Recess, Consent Items (5)

The Speaker entertains a recess.

13. Motions

- a. [Motion Regarding a Fee Increase for DriveSafe Referendum Question](#) (Councillor Abu Alkhair) - **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Due to technical difficulties, this section of the meeting was not recorded.

- b. [Motion for Interim Status Recommendation for 9 Clubs](#) (Councillor Abu Alkhair) - **POSTPONED**

Director Abu-Alkhair states that many clubs have applied for club status, including the McGill Shad Campus Club, the Balkan Students' Society, the Iraqi Students' Society, McCraft, the McGill Yu-Gi-Oh Club, the Black Muslim Students' Association, the McGill Padel Club, the Algerian Students' Association, and the McGill Students for Partners in Health Canada.



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President Taylor asks if the Iraqi Students' Society and the Algerian Students' Association have interim status already.

Director Abu-Alkhair answers that both clubs are applying for interim status.

Councillor Weissman motions to call the question.

Councillor Renaud seconds.

VP Berglas is opposed. They state that some of the clubs did not meet all the requirements; they are unsure that all of these clubs should be approved if they have not met all the requirements. They note that there were no consultations made, but consultation with the General Manager and accounting department could be useful. They suggest that the Director of Clubs and Services recommend approving clubs who have met the requirements and make adequate consultations. The motion could be proposed again in a few weeks.

Director Abu-Alkhair answers that some clubs' applications are lacking, but they still passed the required threshold to become a club. Only 8 of 9 clubs are being approved; the Yu-Gi-Oh Club was recommended to be rejected.

VP Berglas states that there was another club that had a low score on their application, the McGill Shad Campus Club. They would feel more comfortable with some more critical appraisal of the clubs.

Director Abu-Alkhair suggests postponing the recommendation of the approval of the McGill Shad Campus Club until the next meeting.

VP Berglas answers that they would prefer having two weeks to look over this motion.

The Speaker notes that the motion could be postponed.

Councillor Weissman motions to call the question.

Councillor Tick seconds this motion.

Councillor El Murr motions to postpone Motion 13b.

Councillor Renaud seconds.

With 15 in favour and 0 opposed, Motion 13b is postponed.



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c. [Motion Regarding Eleves des Champs ISG Application and Fee Levy](#) (VP Solomon) -
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

VP Solomon yields his time to the Élèves des Champs representatives, Jamila and Sam.

Sam states that Élèves des Champs has been running for 15 years on the Macdonald Campus as a student-run vegetable farm that farms over 40 types of vegetables. They have been growing about \$80,000 worth of vegetables for the past 10 years. They have been independently financed in the past, but have run into some organization and administrative issues, and they had to incorporate as a non-profit and are looking to become an ISG with SSMU to stay in business. They have hundreds of pounds of vegetables to offer every week, and have spoken with SSMU food services who would use their food and be able to offer more free meals. Élèves des Champs would still remain partially self-funded through sales in the summer, but having space to do events downtown would help them expand their services. \$1.25 is a modest fee for this service.

Councillor El Murr asks how the food will be transported downtown, and asks if it will be available to students downtown.

Sam answers that they have access to a truck for deliveries. The food would be supplied to services like SNAC, Midnight Kitchen, and the SSMU food pantry to allow them to provide free meals. Their fall harvest would go to SSMU, and the summer harvest would be sold. A higher fee could be proposed to bring food downtown during the summer, but this does not make much sense.

President Taylor asks if Élèves des Champs reached out to the MCSS.

Sam answers that they have not; they are looking to partner with SSMU because MCSS is much less developed and cannot partner with ISGs. The downtown campus has much more infrastructure to accept the amount of food Élèves des Champs has to offer. They donated vegetables to Happy Belly over the summer, and they had too much food for them.

President Taylor motions to call the question.

Councillor Weissman seconds.

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

Seeing no opposition, Motion 13c is approved.



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d. [Motion concernant la création d'une cotisation de soutien aux affaires francophones](#)
(VP Solomon) - **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Le VP Solomon explique qu'il a essayé de proposer cette cotisation le semestre passé, mais ça n'a pas été approuvé. Il veut essayer encore une fois ce semestre, et il va réduire la cotisation et proposer la question en anglais aussi. It will be made clear that the funding will support francophone groups focusing on mentorship programs for SSMU members. For example, a mentor will take a student to a restaurant to order and help them explore the city through French. Hopefully, asking for \$0.50 instead of \$1.00 will help get the fee passed. Le VP Solomon va contacter les facultés avec les détails de la cotisation.

President Taylor motions to call the question.

Councillor Weissman seconds this motion.

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

Seeing no opposition, Motion 13d is approved.

14. For Discussion

a. [Promotion of Underground Tunnels](#) (Councillor El Murr)

Councillor El Murr states that they presented a map of tunnels to EUS students, and there are a surprising number of students who do not know about them. He wants to publish these maps on SSMU platforms, so that students can use them especially in the winter.

The Speaker notes that there is a tunnel from the Islamic Studies Library to the Leacock building that is not on the map.

Councillor El Murr states that there is also a tunnel from Genome to Wong that is not on the map. He started taking videos in a few of the tunnels to share them online. He has videoed the tunnels from Trottier to Wong, from Schulich to Burnside, and from Burnside to Otto Maass.

Councillor Zhao suggests labelling the map because some tunnels are closed on the weekends and may be one-ways, meaning that students can get trapped in the tunnels.

Councillor El Murr asks who maintains the McGill maps site, because the tunnels used to be on the site, but are no longer there. They should add them back onto the map with labels, because most tunnels are closed in the evenings and on the weekends.



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President Taylor states that if Councillor El Murr sends him the videos, he can send them out in an upcoming listserv. Hopefully they can find a more recent map, as this one is from 2017 or 2018.

15. Confidential Session: **19:37**

- a. There is a Confidential Session this evening.

16. Adjournment: **19:38**

The Speaker declares the meeting adjourned at 19:38.

APPROVED