



**Association étudiante de l'Université McGill**

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

**Students' Society of McGill University**

*Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.*

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# Politique de soutien des affaires francophones de l'AÉUM

**Adopted on: November 7, 2024**

**Expires: January 1, 2027**

## 1. DESCRIPTION

### 1.1 Issues

This policy aims to strengthen the place of Francophone affairs within the SSMU by reaffirming its commitment to its Francophone population. The policy also defines the roles of the Commission for Francophone Affairs. Here are the major issues:

- Defend the rights of McGill's Francophone community;
- Promoting the Francophone community and its diversity;
- Support Francophone groups, as well as their projects and initiatives.

## 2. Scope

The Francophone Affairs Support Policy applies to the entire SSMU student community, its clubs, services, part-time and full-time staff, as well as its executive and administrative councils.

This policy will also apply to relations between Francophone groups, to the Commission des affaires francophones and to the commissioner.

Finally, this policy also concerns inter-university relations as well as Montreal communities that relate to Francophonie and Francophone affairs.



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## 3. Definitions

3.1. The Commission for Francophone Affairs (hereinafter referred to as "CAF") is dedicated to Francophone issues. Its composition and missions are defined in its Terms of Reference.

3.2. The role of Commissioner for Francophone Affairs (hereinafter referred to as "the Commissioner") chairs the CAF and works closely with the Vice-President (External Affairs) to ensure the proper functioning of the Commission and the maintenance of relations with Francophone groups and external interlocutors.

3.3. The Vice-President (External Affairs) (hereinafter referred to as "the Vice-President") has the duty (according to the Constitution) to "implement SSMU's commitment to the Francophone community".<sup>1</sup>

3.4. Francophone groups are groups whose main language of communication is French and/or who participate in the promotion of the French language and the Francophone community.

3.5. So-called Francophile groups are groups whose main language of communication is English but who include a significant number of Francophone members and/or who wish to participate in the promotion of the French language and the Francophone community (for example, by making their activities more accessible).

## 4. Context

### 4.1. At SSMU

At present, Francophone issues are poorly represented within the SSMU. Francophone groups are in the minority and suffer from a lack of support and visibility. However, these groups are essential to the life of the Francophone student community and its integration into the broader student body. In addition, they promote the diversity of Francophonie and allow allophones to discover the different Francophone cultures and learn the language outside an academic context.

Finally, despite SSMU's good intentions (particularly with the Francization Plan and Equity Policy), there is still a need to increase visibility and implement mandates that aim to improve resources. It is

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<sup>1</sup><https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/La-Constitution-de-IA%C3%89UM-2021-11-15.pdf?x77765&x2198>



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also important to note that the Society could improve its efforts in terms of accessibility for its Francophone members when it comes to services, events, and access to funds.

In concretizing these objectives, it is important to note that the Society has the mandate to follow the Equity Policy and the SSMU Constitution, as well as to fully comply with *the Act respecting the official and common language in Quebec, French* (Act 96). Although SSMU adopted a francization plan in 2020, renewed in 2023, this plan is not yet widely disseminated on the website<sup>2</sup>. As a result, few SSMU members are aware of its existence, limiting its impact. In addition, several proposals to grant a contribution to Francophone affairs were rejected by members in the referendum. These funds could have financed the initiatives and mandates provided for in the Francisation Plan.

## 4.2. At McGill University

Although the official language of McGill University is English, there are still several resources and services to help the Francophone student community integrate and succeed academically. However, these services and programs suffer from a lack of visibility and accessibility. According to language policy, students have the right to submit their written assignments in the official language of their choice, English or French.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the University is unable to guarantee compliance with the requirements of Bill 96 due to its exempt status.

In particular, it offers programs and courses taught in French, or that explore Francophone culture, including through the Quebec Studies Program and the Département des littératures de langue française, de traduction et de création<sup>4</sup>. In addition, members of McGill's non-French-speaking student community want to learn or improve their level of knowledge of French. Some programs, such as law and medical studies, even require a good knowledge of both languages. Outside of classes, a knowledge of French is a great asset to find a job and settle in Montreal.

At McGill, the Centre d'enseignement du français<sup>5</sup> offers language courses, but depending on their curriculum, it is not always possible for students to integrate these courses into their schedule. In addition, in order to obtain a place in these courses, there are two mandatory criteria that become barriers to accessibility: pass a ranking exam<sup>6</sup> and attend each course from the beginning of the session until the end of the "add/drop" period.

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<sup>2</sup> [Copy of Motion Regarding Adoption of the SSMU Francisation Plan 2023-04-06 - Approved](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/academicrights/course/french>  
[https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2024-2025/university\\_regulations\\_and\\_resources/undergraduate/gi\\_lang\\_policy](https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2024-2025/university_regulations_and_resources/undergraduate/gi_lang_policy)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/getready/etudiants-francophones>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/fic/fr/cours-et-programmes/cours-dete>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/fic/fr/inscription-0/tests-de-classement>



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SSMU's mandate is to represent the interests of its Francophone and Francophile student community members at the University. To accomplish this mandate, therefore, it is necessary for the SSMU to be aware of the desires and needs of these groups and for these groups to have a means of communicating their perspectives to leaders.

## 5. Internal Advocacy

5.1. The Commission and the Vice-President will ensure that the rights of Francophones at McGill are respected, in particular regarding to the right to submit written work in French or English. Indeed, section 15 of the Charter of Rights of the Student Community of McGill University provides "*the right to complete their graded written course work in either French or English, except in courses where language proficiency is an objective.*"<sup>7</sup>

5.2. **The Commission** and **the Vice-President** will ensure that this right is respected by all faculties and departments of the University and will communicate to the administration the requests and needs that the student community raises during the meetings of **the CAF** or in the surveys distributed by **the Commission** each year.

5.3. To ensure that the rights of Francophones are well represented at the administrative level of the University, the Vice-President assumes the mandate to communicate any incident to the President and the Vice-President of University Affairs, and to present them to the Senate as well as to the Board of Governors.

5.4. The Commission will maintain regular contact with Vivre McGill en Français<sup>8</sup>, the Centre d'enseignement du français<sup>9</sup>, the Centre de recherches interdisciplinaires en études montréalaises (CRIEM)<sup>10</sup>, and other stakeholders, to ensure that any incident or lack of resources can be reported on a regular basis.

5.5. In accordance with the Constitution<sup>11</sup>, French is one of the two official languages and members of the Society may use it at meetings and may consult documents in the language of their choice.<sup>12</sup> To

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/academicrights/course/french>

<sup>8</sup> <https://vivreenfrancais.mcgill.ca/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/flc/fr>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/centre-montreal/fr>

<sup>11</sup> 19. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE SOCIETY English and French are the official languages of the Society. Members may use either official language at all meetings and in all documentation of the Society

<sup>12</sup> <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/La-Constitution-de-lA%C3%89UM-2021-11-15.pdf?x77765&x21981>



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this end, the SSMU, through **the CAF** and **the Commission**, undertakes to make its services, documents and communications available in French on request.

5.6. In order to follow its equity policy, **the SSMU as a whole**, in collaboration with the **Commissioner**, is committed to ensuring that “Gender-neutral language will be used, as a default, in all documents, minutes, transcripts, electronic and written correspondence, and in the workplace.”<sup>13</sup> Implementing this commitment will require the use of the SSMU Guide to Gender-Inclusive Language<sup>14</sup>. It is better to use the neutral wording than to use the interpoint, as the interpoint is incompatible with the use of screen readers, violating the SSMU Accessibility Policy.

5.7. To ensure that the fundamental rights of Francophones mentioned in the previous section are well known to their beneficiaries, the SSMU's mission is to ensure that its members are well informed.

5.7.1. **The Vice-President (External Affairs)** and the **Commissioner** are mandated to ensure that the SSMU Francization Plan<sup>3</sup> is accessible on the website and that staff are aware of their responsibilities. To that end, there will be detailed conversations at the beginning of the mandate period (June-July) with stakeholders, particularly the Executive Board and Communications Department.

5.7.2. . **The CAF**, in collaboration with **the Vice-President (External Affairs)** and **the Commissioner**, is mandated to ensure that SSMU broadcasts the “Know Your Rights” campaign (verified by the **Vice-President (External Affairs)**) every semester on its social media platforms (e.g. @ssmu\_ea and @ssmu\_aeum) as well as in SSMU's weekly newsletter (listserv). In addition, this information will be made available and updated regularly on [the Francophone Affairs page of the External Affairs website](#).

5.8. To promote and implement the rights of French-speaking members with regard to access to services in French, and to implement the objectives of the Francization Plan, **CAF**, in collaboration with **the Vice-President (External Affairs)** and **the Commissioner**, will be responsible for creating and sharing an accessible form. The latter allows to receive translation requests (Fr -> En and En -> Fr) in order of priority, first by the services and then by the clubs. This form will be integrated into the SSMU website and [the External Affairs website](#).

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<sup>13</sup> <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Equity-Policy-2021-05-13-fr.docx-1.pdf?x74610&x77765>  
(7.2.)

<sup>14</sup>[Guide d'écriture neutre et inclusif](#)



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5.8.1. To accomplish this mandate, the SSMU will create and regularly update two paid internship positions in partnership with the Département des littératures de langue française, de traduction et de création (DLTC) to provide work experience to its members. If CAF were to receive a contribution, between 20 and 25% of these funds would be used to finance these positions. If the SSMU does not receive any application from the DLTC, **the CAF** as well as the **Vice-President (External Affairs)** and **the Commissioner** would open the position to the entire student community.

5.9. **The CAF** and **the Commissioner** are mandated to bring together the representative members of the Francophone groups and to represent their interests at the SSMU, as well as to promote the French language and the Francophonie on campus. To do this, the Commissioner maintains a list of contacts of French-speaking groups and follows up with all of them each year to ensure that its information is up to date. These groups will thus have the means to communicate their needs to the SSMU by being invited to sit on the CAF. In addition, a survey will be conducted each semester among the Francophone community to determine its needs and requests.

5.10. Furthermore, CAF will promote Francophone groups via the External Affairs website and the SSMU newsletter. A section of the website will be dedicated specifically to groups that are affiliated with CAF, or are simply Francophone groups. In this way, SSMU members will be able to find all the information in one place. Once to three times per semester, if necessary, the commissioner will share a publication in the Society's newsletter to share the activities of CAF and the Francophone and Francophile groups affiliated with it.

5.11. In addition to supporting its Francophone members, the SSMU also has a mandate to promote learning of the French language among its members. Each year, CAF, in collaboration with the Commissioner, will establish a list of French learning resources and distribute this list to SSMU members through the External Affairs website and posters, if possible. Moreover, the SSMU will offer at least one French MiniCourse per semester in partnership with the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Montréal (CRIEM), other French-speaking organizations, or independently.

## 6. External Advocacy

### 6.1. Inter-university social groups in French ("Les Pipelettes")

To maintain links between SSMU members and other associations of the Montréal student community, to promote French and encourage the learning of French among the student community, allowing them to have a richer experience of Montréal and Québec, to create the opportunity to learn French in



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a conversational and informal environment, and to value and promote the multiculturalism of the Francophonie.

The Commission for Francophone Affairs, the Commissioner, and the Vice-President (External Affairs) have the mandate to continue the "Les Pipelettes" project in collaboration with SSMU, the CSU, AFESPED, and each of its partners. This will make it possible to maintain the links between members of the Society and other Montréal student associations, to promote French and to encourage its learning among the student community. This will allow them to have a richer experience of Montréal and Québec, to create the opportunity to learn French in a conversational and informal environment, and to value and promote the multiculturalism of the Francophonie.

The draft plan for the beginning of the year 2024-2025 can be found at the link below:

[Les Pipelettes!](#) (Francophone Social Groups) 2024-2025

More specifically, the Vice-President (External Affairs) is responsible for maintaining open and strong links with their counterparts in other associations, as well as with the Commission, to concretize the continuation of the initiative and the exchange of ideas.

In addition, before the beginning of each semester, the CAF and the Commissioner, with the help of the Vice-President (External Affairs), will have to confirm with the partner associations that the program can continue operationally, both financially and organizationally. If necessary, the Vice-President (External Affairs) will reserve the necessary spaces in the University Centre as well as in the premises of the other student associations and unions participating in it.

## 7. Monitoring and accountability

The person in the **position of Commissioner for Francophone Affairs (CAF)** as well as the **Vice-President (External Affairs)** will be responsible for the implementation of the mandates, under the supervision of **the Commission for Accountability**.

## 8. Appendix

[Translator Internship- Job Description 2024.docx](#)