



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.

ssmu.ca | (514) 398-6800 | 3600 rue McTavish, Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

SSMU BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MINUTES

March 11, 2025

The Board of Directors meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held by teleconference and in the SSMU Boardroom on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 18:00.

Present: Jonathan Dong (Chair, non-voting), Jessica Bakar (Parliamentarian, non-voting), Sierra Fallis (Deputy Speaker, non-voting), Hugo Solomon (Officer, non-voting), Zeena Zahidah (Officer, non-voting), Abe Berglas (Officer, non-voting), Pauline Jolicoeur (Director), Dymetri Taylor (Director), Maya Marcus-Sells (General Manager, non-voting), Hamza Abu Alkhair (Council Member), Fawaz Halloum (Director), Seraphina Crema Black (Council Member), Sophia Garofalo (Director), Rishi Kalaga (Council Member), Emma Chen (Council Member), Honoah Xu (Director), Dylan Seiler (Director), Simone Brown (Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, non-voting), Rajan Duncan (Director), Joshua Chin (Alumni Representative, non-voting)

Absent:

1. Call to Order: **18:09**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 18:09.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair 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



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The Chair takes attendance.

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

The agenda is distributed.

The Chair adds a question period to the agenda.

Officer Solomon adds Discussion Item 9d.

Director Kalaga asks Officer Solomon to speak on the Policy on Anti-Semitism.

Officer Solomon answers that he was going to wait for the confidential session to discuss it.

Seeing no opposition, the agenda is adopted.

5. Bounce Presentation

Mike introduces himself and his colleague Sean. He has been at Bounce for 8 months, and they are focusing on expanding to Canadian universities.

Sean introduces himself; he started Bounce when he was part of student government and a student athlete at Queen's. He was frustrated that distribution tools were not well suited to student unions. If students do not have support systems on campus, they will not do well or make connections. He realized that there was an opportunity to build a tool for students, which $\frac{1}{3}$ students use today. The app is safe but also fun, which makes students want to use it. There are already 10% of McGill students already using Bounce, and they want to work with SSMU to make it easier to connect them with students.

Mike states that Bounce is a social app built to help students connect with student life. It centralizes events into a single space that makes it easy for students to see what events are happening and what their friends are doing. Clubs and events are centralized in Bounce and are publicized to students, to make events more accessible to students.

Sean adds that Bounce is an app that looks good, because people will not use an app that looks bad. University is a great time, and should be showcased. Bounce increased turnout at engineering tutoring sessions, which can change a student's trajectory on campus.

Mike states that Bounce is present at many schools across the country, and they are trying to connect people in the post-pandemic world. Student engagement is down, and it is hard to change this



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because it is hard to track. Bounce will help monitor student engagement and will help SSMU increase it, specialized for SSMU. They try to look familiar and to be similar to popular social media platforms, but without pushing advertisements. Advertisements are a problem that is getting more prevalent, and it is becoming more difficult for students to get off their phones. Bounce's end goal is to get students off their platform, which is unique from other sorts of social media that seek to monetize people's screen time. Students have to be comfortable with the software they are using, and Bounce was built as an app for students rather than adapted into an app. Bounce will announce their partnership with SSMU, and will use the channels that most SSMU members use. The most popular platform is Instagram, so Bounce will make a post sharing the relevant information.

Sean states that anyone can post on Instagram, but Bounce will brand with SSMU and even make merchandise. They hire representatives on campus, which puts money back into the campus environment. Bounce does not sell student data and does not need to because they are present on campus.

Mike states that his first question is always how students get involved in clubs. The process is not always easy or clear, which is standard across universities. Bounce tries to increase visibility and accessibility to make it easier for students to join clubs. Everything is centralized in a single space. Students may not join clubs, but they will be interested in some events done by clubs or SSMU, which they would miss out on if they were not following their page on a different social media platform.

Sean states that social media platforms are built to benefit ridiculous things, not events or clubs. What matters to students looking for events is not what the event poster looks like, but who else they know that is going. When he was in university, he joined a club only because he knew friends who were part of it. It ended up being some of the most fun times of his life, but he only came to know of it because it was visible to him. There is a list of student groups on SSMU's website, but it is hard for students to decide which clubs to join. There is no platform built to showcase groups like this, so Bounce's goal is to share everything in one place. Events on Bounce list the guest list, event information, and more. Often, information is spread across different platforms, which causes an information risk. People have to do this because there is no platform to centralize things.

Mike states that Bounce has individual club pages, which SSMU will have as well. There is a group chat space and photo upload spaces, which is very popular. This is better than Google Drive because people can comment on photos and download them, and club administrators know who is interacting with the photos. The spaces are also more tight-knit than Instagram pages. Clubs can post club-specific events and share updates. This is where real engagement between community members takes place. Post-event, Bounce has an invite back function to ensure that students who enjoyed an event are notified of a subsequent event. Users can also see what their friends are buying tickets for. Bounce allows members to get involved in things their friends are doing. This creates a big ripple effect in creating visibility for events. If there are last-minute changes to events, messages can be sent to ticket



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holders via Bounce. Before events, SSMU can require students to fill out forms or waivers before they purchase tickets. There are many forms that clubs have to fill out when hosting events, and Bounce makes it easy to fill out forms. The app allows clubs to fill out forms and sends them directly to the VP Student Life. There are so many events on campus that SSMU has no insight on, because groups often go around the regulations when they feel that they are too complex. Banking will be different for clubs and services, but bank accounts can be associated with clubs through Bounce and can be locked to specific groups. The analytics part of Bounce is the most important part, because it allows event hosts to see who is attending their events and who is coming back. There are early touchpoints for students with low engagement, and top engagers are visible in the app. This information can then be shared to prove that SSMU is making change.

Sean states that the analytics part is his favourite part of Bounce, because it is hard for student unions to make decisions without relevant data. The university holds the student union accountable to certain metrics. If Bounce gives SSMU more data, they can show how changes in funding and event types can lead to changes in engagement. They can also collect data to address retention or word of mouth problems, and address students with low engagement. For example, UCLA has not been able to increase their fees for the past 20 years and will have to abolish parts of their union because they cannot afford it. If UCLA's union cannot afford to run, unions in Canada will suffer even more. Unions are not built to succeed, because the universities impose metrics on the student union to hit. Bounce can also show where students go after a student union event, and metrics can help justify more funding and support.

Officer Solomon asks if Bounce's data will help justify the utility of SSMU's events to McGill, and to show that student engagement is tied to SSMU.

Sean answers yes, and to find underserved students and serve them. Bounce helps SSMU find out more information about their students. When Sean was in student government, he did not know much because not many people reported back after events. Often, those who report back are not happy with the event.

Director Chen asks what a Bounce House is. She notes that Greek Life is a part of Bounce, and that Bounce partners with Greek Life to host parties. She asks what this would look like given that McGill does not have much Greek Life and is in a large city.

Sean answers that Bounce breaks down cities into different types, and Montreal is a large city that has a university downtown. Other schools such as Western University in London is a much smaller city with a large university. Bounce will partner with local venues outside the university community, but Bounce Houses can still take place in apartments and have sponsors, given that they do not break by-laws. They can also partner with conferences, speaker series and case competition events. Bounce



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does content, commerce, and communications, but everything starts from the student union's programming. Bounce supports organizations on campus and pulls other students in.

Director Jolicoeur asks what measures are in place to ensure that events follow rules. She asks what app administrators can do, and how much financial reporting is done by clubs versus the union.

Sean answers that administrators have a central view of all clubs within SSMU, and can see all events and approve events. Bounce requires clubs to fill out a form when hosting an event, and SSMU can approve it or reject it. SSMU can then help clubs make their events better so that they get approved. There is a safety rating feature, and the app tends to see risk before something bad happens. If schools fall below their safety threshold, Bounce will let the school know and work with them to increase their safety rating. Unions can also regulate banking for each club, and can generate reports and access club bank accounts. These reports provide information about ticket sales and act as an audit protection.

Mike adds that events in Bounce are approved by the union administrators. Updates and feedback can be shared so that the event can eventually be approved.

Director Seiler states that there are many events and clubs that are not affiliated with SSMU or that are affiliated with faculties. He asks if Bounce would only apply to SSMU clubs and services.

Sean answers that Bounce would only be for SSMU clubs and services, but third party organizations can use Bounce on their own outside of the SSMU page. These activities can be found outside of the organization. Unions can also co-host events with faculty societies, at which point the event will be listed in the SSMU space. Faculty societies usually have their own pages because they have their own rules and by-laws. The SSMU feed is built specifically for SSMU. For example, McMaster has doubled their spending on events but their events get low attendance because students think the university is hosting the events rather than the union. They asked that the page be branded as the MSU, so that students know that the student union is promoting events.

Director Garofalo asks if Bounce can be extended to faculties.

Director Taylor answers yes.

General Manager Marcus-Sells asks how Bounce will be implemented. She asks how the implementation work is delegated between the Bounce and SSMU staff, and how ongoing support is organized. She asks how the forms are implemented.

Sean answers that Bounce will provide a dedicated success representative and a support representative to SSMU, along with their own email address. Any questions can be funnelled to this email address, and there is an AI robot that answers questions. Bounce will custom build a page for



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each club and faculties in under 24 hours. Bounce adopts a new union each week, and they are starting now rather than in September. Bounce provides a full implementation plan for the union, and the only thing they need from the union is permission to post photos of events.

General Manager Marcus-Sells asks if all implementation for SSMU and its clubs will be done by Bounce.

Sean answers yes, and they already have some photos from the SSMU site that they can use to make the SSMU Bounce page. They will ask SSMU to send them event declaration forms so that they can be put into the app. They will build the forms so that they exist in the app and so that SSMU can approve events through the app.

General Manager Marcus-Sells asks how long it will take to onboard an organization at the beginning, how long it would take to add a new club or a new form.

Sean answers that SSMU could be up and running on Bounce in 24 hours, provided that they share the required forms. New forms can be uploaded within 24 hours; it is quick and easy because they have a form builder tool. Creating a new organization is quick, but linking them to SSMU can be tricky. SSMU would need to confirm that a club or group is part of SSMU before they are linked. Clubs can also be removed by Bounce or by SSMU. Linking can be quick provided that SSMU confirms the existence of the new group. At the end of the year, groups can be removed from Bounce by sending the list of clubs to Bounce.

Director Jolicoeur states that all event, sponsorship, and funding forms are listed on their website and organized by purpose. She asks how this would be transferred to Bounce.

Sean answers that it is not difficult to upload forms. They onboarded a school last week that had 56 forms of various lengths. The event approval forms will be integrated into event applications on Bounce. They can also be listed separately, but they should be integrated into the application to make it easier for club events to be approved, as some forms will be required when clubs apply to host an event.

Director Seiler asks if there is an option to input information about oneself to tailor results to one's potential interests.

Sean answers that this is not possible. Data collection is personalized, so SSMU can require students to prove that they are a McGill student when they download the app. It can be risky to tag themes of some types of events, for example some LGBTQ+ events do not want to be tagged as such. Organization tags are possible, though. The notifications can also lead students to clubs they are interested in given what their friends are buying.



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Director Jolicoeur asks if the events can be labelled by theme or type of event, so that students can match their interests to events or groups.

Sean answers that events are grouped by organization, but they can look into tagging by theme. The infrastructure is built but has not been implemented.

Director Garofalo asks if there is a list of all clubs. If someone wanted to join a specific club, they could scroll through the list and find what they are looking for.

Sean answers yes. There are lists of events and organizations. Bounce will match a student's activity on Bounce to the organizations they are interested in.

Director Halloum asks if the platform is like an events booking site where SSMU clubs are plugged into the software.

Sean answers yes, the platform combines event booking, social media, and payments. It is like a FaceBook group combined with Eventbrite and E-transfer, because payments can also be done through Bounce.

Director Halloum asks if it is like Eventbrite and Instagram, as opposed to using both platforms individually.

Sean answers yes, it allows users to see what events people around them are attending and has the payment, RSVP, form, and private event infrastructure within it. Administrators can also see where their clicks are coming from.

Director Halloum asks if the app is like Shopify, but tailored to student unions.

Sean answers yes.

Director Halloum asks what the fee for a booking is. He states that Eventbrite charges a fee for bookings.

Director Seiler states that Director Taylor sent the costs by email.

Sean answers that Bounce takes \$1.00 from each ticket sold for paid events, and credit card processing costs \$2.90 per transaction, about half of what Eventbrite charges. Bounce tries their best to stay low-cost. If the event is free, the booking is free and all the functions are free as well. Most of the events on Bounce are free.



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Director Garofalo asks if they charge for paid events because they have to process transactions.

Sean answers yes.

Mike adds that most events on Bounce are free. Bounce is a great way to advertise activities to students as it gives them good visibility. Free events usually go unseen because there is no financial reporting associated with them.

Director Halloum states that the app is a one-stop shop for event booking and sharing, with reduced prices. The Bounce model depends on student associations subscribing to it and not using social media or Eventbrite. He notes that Eventbrite is accessible on a browser, whereas Bounce is only an app; Director Halloum was not able to access Bounce on a browser. This might be a downside when it comes to larger events, such as SSMU General Assemblies. He asks if there is a reason why Bounce cannot be accessed via a browser.

Mike answers that tickets can be purchased on the Bounce website or through the app. Students will probably not stop using Instagram and they are not suggesting that clubs stop using it to promote events, but Bounce allows students to join clubs and SSMU. Bounce allows SSMU to have better access to its members. Bounce is not trying to replace Instagram, because it can be a good tool to promote events.

Sean adds that the goal is to give student unions the space they need to advertise events and provide them with a custom-built tool. Instagram is good for certain types of distribution. In the top right corner of the Bounce website, there is a login page, after which there is a map of all events around the user. The website has all the same features as the app and is mobile-optimized. So, users do not need to download the app.

Director Halloum states that he sees the page being referred to now. He notes that it may be hard to convince students and clubs to use Bounce, but it is easy to convince student groups and clubs to use it. Clubs will probably make up the majority of users.

Sean states that clubs usually make up 10-20% of the campus ecosystem and are on boarded first. Bounce tends to find that students will use Bounce because it is easier to use than to use many separate platforms. A lot of SSMU organizations use Discord, which is helpful until the creator of the Discord channel graduates and the channel gets deleted. Bounce makes yearly transfers easy and allows clubs to track events and members.

Director Halloum asks if clubs will be registered based on SSMU's list and Bounce will communicate login information with clubs directly. He asks if the app has a front and back end, and if Bounce



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registers the clubs constantly or if it would occur just once. He asks how clubs would be directed by SSMU to use Bounce.

Sean answers that Bounce would work closely with SSMU to have onboarding sessions with clubs to show them how to use the platform and answer any questions. There will be at least two per year per campus, and sometimes more if the student union wants it. Bounce will support SSMU with representatives and a Bounce email address. SSMU could still use the app for free without a partnership with Bounce.

The Chair thanks the Bounce representatives for their presentation. He declares a recess until 19:30.

The meeting resumes at 19:30.

The Chair notes that Director Taylor has requested a discussion item on the Bounce presentation.

Seeing no opposition, the Chair entertains discussion on the Bounce presentation.

Director Taylor states that he sent the Bounce pricing to the Board. The same presentation will not be done at the Legislative Council, because of how long it was, but the information will be shared with faculties. They will talk about this again at the next Board meeting after it is discussed at the Executive Committee. There is no need for any further discussion at this time.

6. Executive Committee Public Report 2025-02-18 – **POSTPONED**
7. Executive Committee Public Report 2025-03-11 – **POSTPONED**
8. Minutes for Approval
 - a. [SSMU Board of Directors Public Minutes 2025-02-18](#) – **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed.

Seeing no changes or opposition, the minutes are approved.

9. Question Period

Member Lapensée asks why Section 14.4.4 of the MoA was signed without being contested by SSMU.

Director Taylor answers that it was contested.

Member Lapensée asks for the justification behind that section.



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Director Taylor answers that the addition of this section was because the terms of the MoA were reviewed when the new Associate Provost, Angela Campbell started. The administration wanted to expand the eligibility requirement for Executives. McGill has their own interests in SSMU because they manage millions of dollars of student fees. They claim to want to ensure the safety of students.

Director Seiler asks to be sent the new MoA. He asks what section they are discussing.

Director Garofalo answers that they are discussing Section 14.4.

Member Lapensée asks why this section is relevant; it does not make sense to prevent Executives from doing their job if they are found responsible for violating the Code of Conduct.

Director Taylor answers that they were under a time crunch when the negotiations were being made. If the MoA was not signed by last Friday, the clubs and services would not have been able to use the McGill name any longer. The SSMU was opposed to adding this clause, but in an agreement like the MoA sections can be added by either party involved. Because of the relationship between SSMU and McGill and the importance of the MoA, this section was added in consideration of how important the MoA is for SSMU clubs and services.

Officer Solomon asks if it is possible to add addendums to the MoA, despite that it is now signed.

Director Taylor answers that this can be done and was discussed with the administration.

Officer Solomon states that Section 14.4.4 does not clarify that Code of Conduct violations require approval by the CSD. Sometimes, people accused of violating the Code are found guilty pending the decision of the CSD. He suggests that this would be a worthwhile addendum, because the CSD often exonerates students.

Director Taylor states that the section refers to the final decision in a Code violation, but it is not clear in the wording. Thus, if new Executives read the MoA they may misunderstand the meaning of this clause.

Member Lapensée states that violators of the Code can be found responsible for violating the code, at which point they can either be admonished or reprimanded. They ask if this was brought up during negotiations.

Director Taylor answers that he does not know why McGill chose this wording. He proposed wording changes to this effect, but McGill refused.

Officer Solomon asks what the process would be to propose an addendum.



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Director Taylor answers that the Board would need to determine which parts of the MoA it wants to reopen and then approve this decision. McGill would not be happy to reopen negotiations because they were just finalized and since they now have to renegotiate the Space Agreement. It would be difficult to work on both the MoA and the Space Agreement at the same time. This could be done over the summer because the Space Agreement will likely be done soon, given how fast the MoA was signed.

Director Halloum states that it is unacceptable to let McGill dictate who can become an Executive. This section might make SSMU legally liable, because the process by which students become Executives and Board members is legislated. It is possible to exclude students from running because of this section. He asks for a legal review to be done on this, as it might violate the Act respecting the accreditation of student unions, which outlines how Executives are elected. He wonders whether this clause is enforceable by law; students who are affected by this clause may seek injunctions in court.

Director Taylor states that the legal counsel was involved in the signing of the MoA, particularly related to this section. They did not say that this section was illegal, but suggested addendums to protect students who want to run for Executive positions.

Officer Zahidah asks if they are in the confidential session.

The Chair answers no.

Officer Zahidah suggests discussing this in the confidential session, as there is some context missing. She asks for a Director to amend the agenda to add the discussion item.

The Chair notes that this can be done once they reach the confidential session.

Officer Solomon states that the Act respecting the accreditation of student unions allows the SSMU to set their own eligibility criteria and warns against strictly limiting student participation in governance. If they had no eligibility criteria, anyone in Quebec could run for SSMU Executive positions, which would be absurd. The MoA has set eligibility criteria in the past, so this is not new. They even received a demand letter about these requirements. The imposition of these restrictions are not desirable and were forced upon SSMU at the last minute. Clarifying the section through an addendum would help mitigate the impact of the eligibility restrictions. As long as the section is not discriminatory, they should defer to their legal counsel.

Member Lapensée asks why the Board does not think that this section is discriminatory. They sit on the CSD, and they know that McGill often throws disciplinary cases to people loosely, especially to protestors on campus. This section can be used by McGill to prevent students from being SSMU Executives by finding them responsible for unfair violations of the Code of Conduct.



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Director Taylor states that they tried hard to prevent it and to change the wording when McGill refused to remove the section, which was also not possible. Thus, they had to bite the bullet and sign the agreement for the greater good of the Society and its clubs and services, despite that they did not like this section. It would be worse if clubs and services could no longer use the University Centre.

Director Halloum asks if they are discussing the approval of the MoA.

The Chair answers that they are in a question period. There is a discussion item about the MoA later on, and there will be one in the confidential session as well. He asks Director Halloum to hold his point until then.

10. Approved Motions from 2025-02-27 Legislative Council

- a. [Motion Regarding the Policy on Black Student Advancement and Inclusion](#) (Officer Solomon) - **RATIFIED**

Officer Solomon states that this was written by the Black Affairs Commissioner and Coordinator, along with the Policy & Mobilization Researcher and Officer Solomon. It clarifies the role of the Commissioner within SSMU, expands and defines its anti-oppression framework, and addresses structural inequalities that Black students face in SSMU. A much more thorough description of the Policy was given at the Legislative Council. It was passed during Black History Month, so the Board should ratify it as soon as possible.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 10a is ratified.

- b. [Motion Regarding Full Status Club Recommendations](#) (Director Abu Alkhair) - **RATIFIED**

Director Abu Alkhair states that 6 clubs applied for full status: the Club de débat francophone, the McGill Climbing Club, the McGill Esports Student Association, the Palestinian Culture Club, Swab the World McGill, and the Women's Network McGill. All the clubs have been doing amazing work.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 10b is ratified.

- c. [Motion to Endorse the EUS Stance on the Premature Cancellation of the Bourse Perspective Québec Program](#) (Councillor El Murr) - **RATIFIED**



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Director Abu Alkhair states that the Bourses perspectives program was cancelled and the motion signed SSMU onto the EUS's statement opposing the program's cancellation.

Seeing no further speakers, the Chair entertains a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 10c is ratified.

11. Motions for Approval

- a. Motion to appoint Director Duncan to the HR Committee (Director Taylor) – **APPROVED**

12. For Discussion

- a. Reformulating the Equity Policy (Officer Berglas)

Officer Berglas states that the Equity Commissioners, the General Manager, the HR Manager, and Officer Berglas are considering merging the Equity Policy with the Gender & Sexual Violence Policy to treat complaints against individuals and groups in the same policy and address discrepancies in the Equity Policy. The merger would also be able to better train staff to deal with complaints between individuals and reimagine the Equity Policy as something that applies to groups or processes. It would allow them to better deal with complaints that are not against people, because there is no mechanism to deal with this right now. They would also carve out space for unionized staff so as to not violate the Collective Agreement in their complaints process.

Director Jolicoeur asks what the tentative timeline for this project is.

Officer Berglas answers that it would be nice to have this done quickly, but the idea was discussed only recently. This semester might be ambitious, but it could be a good summer project for the next VP University Affairs. It could definitely be done by the fall.

- b. Appointment of Director X to be on the HR Committee (Director Taylor)

Director Taylor states that the HR Committee requires a Director to sit on it. The committee assists with policies and plans related to unionized staff. The meetings are about an hour and there are also consultations to be done with unionized staff.

Director Duncan volunteers.

Director Taylor motions to suspend the rules to add Motion 11a.

Director Duncan seconds.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 11a is added to the agenda.



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Seeing no opposition, Motion 11a is approved.

c. Consequences of the new MoA (Officer Berglas)

Officer Berglas states that they have an ongoing disciplinary hearing, because on the first day of school they went to a transphobic professor's lecture and silently handed out flyers with quotes of his and an email address for students with concerns. McGill claims that this breaches the Code of Conduct, but Officer Berglas disagrees. They met with the Dean of Students, who did not know about the new MoA. Officer Berglas thinks that the University is trying to symbolically show that this is an offence because they want to cut down protests and lower the bar on what counts as a disruption. If Officer Berglas is found guilty, them being in their position will breach the MoA. Per the Constitution, SSMU will have to hold a General Assembly to remove Officer Berglas, and have the decision ratified by the Board, if they are found guilty. They will find out on Friday whether they are found guilty or not. Officer Berglas asks how the Board plans to approach this, given that there is no meeting soon after their hearing.

Director Taylor answers that McGill has to make their concerns known, the Board would only consider action if McGill notifies them of concerns. If they do not, there is nothing that needs to be done. If they do, it would be redundant to impeach Officer Berglas. The academic year is almost over, and McGill can deal with it for another month.

Officer Solomon states that Section 14.1 states that the new MoA allows the constitution to be amended, but cannot supersede or modify the MoA. Thus, the provisions around impeachment would not apply, given that SSMU and McGill have agreed that the MoA supersedes the constitution.

Officer Berglas appreciates Director Taylor's solidarity. They think that SSMU breaking its own constitution poses a liability, no matter what the MoA says.

Director Halloum states that the university takes many measures to reduce advocacy and protests on campus, and makes anyone open to oppression from the administration. This poses a real legal threat to SSMU. A legal review has been done, but there are also moral and ethical concerns. He asks what the new MoA would imply for Officer Berglas and new Executives.

Officer Solomon states that this situation is comparable to when first-year students ran. They were told that they could not run because they did not meet the eligibility criteria. If they have agreed that the MoA supersedes the constitution, they are not violating the constitution. They would need to go to court to say that the existence of the MoA violates the Charter of Rights & Freedoms. He believes that since they have established that the MoA is above the constitution, that is the rule they must follow.

Officer Berglas asks if Officer Solomon would advocate for their removal if they were found guilty.



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Officer Solomon plans to advocate for Officer Berglas's exoneration at their hearing on Friday. It is close to the end of the year and the claims made by McGill are absurd. They did not make a large disruption and communicated truthful statements made by the professor in question. Students in that class could have been seriously harmed by the professor's homophobic and transphobic statements. This is an expression of discontent by McGill towards students who protest and who question this professor's conduct in relation to McGill's supposed values.

Member Lapensée states that McGill is bringing this case against Officer Berglas for political reasons, and this will continue to happen. McGill will not stop giving absurd code violations. They ask what the Board will do if this occurs next year.

Officer Solomon agrees that this is a political move. This year has highlighted the necessity for smart people on the CSD who understand McGill tactics to put students in trouble. McGill took SSMU by surprise by adding this section at the last minute and not budging on its wording at all, which is why it was important to discuss an addendum. Officer Berglas has empowered the CSD and asserted the Society's rights this year. Officer Solomon was also sent a bogus disciplinary violation for something he was doing in the context of his position. SSMU only has so much leverage when McGill knows that they can take the University Centre away. SSMU did their best to negotiate this, but this clause still should not be in the MoA. They will advocate for Officer Berglas and he hopes future Executives will do the same, when the section in question is used in political ways.

Director Jolicoeur agrees that advocating for an addendum in the summer is the most effective next step to mitigate the impact of the section in question.

Director Halloum disagrees that this situation is similar to not allowing first-year students to run as Executives. Older students have more advocacy experience and knowledge, and may have violated the code of conduct. He states that this section violates SSMU's sovereignty, and allows McGill to dictate the structure of SSMU. When McGill does things like this, it renders student activists inadmissible to positions of power in SSMU. It prevents them from doing advocacy work, as these are the people who get handed code of conduct violations. It would be interesting to see the percentages of protestors who have disciplinary records versus legitimate ones. To give McGill power over SSMU allows them to objectively dictate who can be a SSMU Executive. The disciplinary records can take many forms and oppress activism on campus. Director Halloum thanks Officer Berglas for bringing this up in the public session, because it is not something the Board agrees on. The previous MoA had some concessions, but this one is crossing the line. He thinks there might be legal implications to this section. He motions to suspend the rules to declassify the legal opinion on the MoA.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that one of the changes of the new MoA is the removal of the default section. Rather than a default section, the new MoA has a reciprocal notice of termination clause, and none of SSMU's money would go into a trust fund controlled by McGill. After the notice of



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termination, there are 6 sessions of required mediation, after which the MoA is terminated if mediation is unsuccessful. If the Board wants to proceed with any action, they can do so in a way that is less onerous than the previous default clause.

Member Lapensée states that Board members have brought up their willingness to discuss this in the summer. They ask the Board if it can assure its constituents that this will be addressed and renegotiated in the summer.

Director Taylor answers that the Board will try its hardest to speak with McGill to amend the MoA, but he cannot guarantee any outcome because of the nature of the agreement. McGill can always refuse SSMU's suggestions.

Officer Solomon states that the MoA is just now being implemented, and they cannot be sure how McGill will invoke these clauses in relation to Officer Berglas's case. If they are using the section to prevent certain Officers from being in power, they will have a case for changing the clause. SSMU knows how McGill operates, but now that they have an Internal Counsel, they can act against McGill. As soon as McGill starts acting suspicious and abusive, they will pursue amendments to the MoA or legal action.

Director Halloum states that the implications of the MoA are immense, and students need to be aware of them. The notice of termination clause is not necessarily better than a default clause, because McGill can still threaten a notice of termination. The termination and default are the same, and termination may be even worse because it would trigger mediation or judicial proceedings. Either way, McGill would insist on getting their way, otherwise they would terminate the agreement and take the University Centre away. McGill adds new clauses every time the MoA is renegotiated, which causes SSMU to acquiesce to their demands. The section in question prevents students from doing advocacy work within SSMU. Everyone should have the right to run for Executive positions. In the future, McGill may make more intense demands. Director Halloum does not think SSMU should allow this section to exist, because they have their bargaining rights, despite that SSMU is less powerful than other types of unions. McGill cannot levy any fees on students that are not tuition related without SSMU, which allows them to support many initiatives at McGill, such as healthcare, the Dean's office, and more. Students can also alter the fee structure by bargaining. Director Halloum thinks that this is a slippery slope, and students should be aware that SSMU does not always need to accept the administration's pressures. This is caused by inertia, whereas other types of unions have more power because they are more active. McGill students may not be aware that SSMU can levy fees, such as the one for the athletic centre.

Officer Zahidah states that they should discuss this again in the confidential session. She notes that she has never heard the Speaker interrupt anyone's point, as was done previously. It is important to discuss this in a public session. Director Halloum was making a valid point.



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The Chair notes that there is a section in the Standing Rules that mandates Directors to avoid repeating statements to move the agenda along. They have had a long meeting already, and he would not have intervened if Director Halloum's points had not been iterated many times before.

Officer Zahidah states that Director Halloum was making multiple points, and notes that Directors have made long speeches about less important things in the past. She found the interruption odd, and thinks they should discuss this in the confidential session.

Director Halloum thanks Officer Zahidah for her intervention. He did not mean to have any sort of tone, and notes that he was happy to discuss this issue in the public session. He thinks that if they are going to discuss this again, it should be in the public session because the implications are too immense. He is not sure what is confidential about this issue, or what motions need to be made. He notes that this is very important, and the pain of the section will be felt by student activists for many years. It is already impacting the Executives, and future candidates might be in the same boat. The email that was sent to students about the new MoA did include the MoA as an attachment. They should allow students to access the documents because of its large implications. Unlike a labour union, student representatives are not in their positions for more than a few years. Not everyone will read the MoA, but they should highlight the important parts for students. Excluding a class of student activists from student government is not okay, because they are already excluded because they advocate for marginalized groups. These activists, such as those who participated in the encampment in the summer or who protested different speakers, are those who are targeted by disciplinary action or even suspended. The university now has different ways to dictate who runs the SSMU. There are student tribunals to make decisions on some disciplinary cases, but there are also disciplinary committees that are stricter. Director Halloum suggests discussing this now, and discussing more important issues in the confidential session.

Officer Solomon states that there was a moment to express the desire to communicate the changes to the MoA to the student body, which was before the break. It is a bit late to express frustrations now, because actions could have been taken before. The Board did the best they could at the time, and they did a good job given the unexpected challenges. If there is something that a Board member would have liked to do, there was a moment to suggest them, which has now passed. They discussed addendums being proposed, which is productive. Looking backwards is not the best use of the Board's time.

Director Taylor agrees. The point of these discussion items is to make some decisions. If the Board is going to have a back and forth discussion that goes on too long, it is not productive. It would be best to discuss this in the confidential session, because a decision was made at the last confidential session regarding a legal matter pertaining to the MoA. He notes that attendance at the meetings are important, and Board members should keep themselves informed if they cannot attend a meeting. Given how long the discussion has been, Director Taylor suggests moving on to the next point.



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d. PAGIP (Officer Solomon)

Officer Solomon states that he went to court today to appeal the decision on SSMU's appeal of the injunction on the Policy Against Genocide in Palestine. The plaintiff, known by X because the judge granted them anonymity, lacked reason and interest because she is no longer a SSMU member. Her claim for discrimination is not valid because the PAGIP does not target nor mention Jewish people. It targets the state of Israel and its military, which X is not. Injunctions can only be based on personal attacks rather than group attacks, so if there is an action taken against a leader of a particular faith, someone of that faith cannot claim to be attacked because they are not the principal recipient of the attack. SSMU defended its right to take political stances, even if they are controversial and demonstrates that there was no proof of actionable threats of physical harm against the plaintiff. McGill's lawyers talked about defending the plaintiff's right to anonymity, but there was no evidence of potential for harm against the plaintiff, as noted by the judges. All the evidence was reviewed and this argument was shut down. SSMU's lawyer noted that this tactic allowed McGill to hide behind the plaintiff, when they are the ones who are trying to subvert student democracy. The plaintiff's lawyer said that she had a right to be protected because they were the representative of the no campaign against the PAGIP. Her lawyer claimed that she still had that right to protection because the policy has not yet been ratified, regardless that X is no longer a student. The judges disagreed. X's lawyer claimed that the policy was anti-semitic, but admitted that the plaintiff faced no physical threat. Officer Solomon can share his notes from the hearing if the Board wants, but notes that everything from the hearing is publicly available. The judge will make a decision in about a week, which will be very important for setting a precedent where courts have intervened in student union affairs. Normally, the bar is quite high for interfering in the affairs of a non-profit and the bar is even higher for interfering in the affairs of a student union. SSMU proved that there is no evidence of violence to the plaintiff. They will see how this situation resolves, and they will see how McGill responds to it. They took no stance on the substance of the policy in the hearing, only defended the anonymity of X, so SSMU does not know how they will react after the hearing. They can no longer default SSMU based on the preamble of the constitution, which is what they did in this case. In the future, they will have to go to mediation, which might be better to resolve political issues, as McGill often backtracks on their claims once they get more complicated.

Director Halloum notes that his ancillary motion from earlier needs a second and needs to be discussed. He apologizes for interrupting previous speakers, but notes that the previous discussion point was exhausted preemptively. He notes that everyone is entitled to expressing their opinions in public sessions, for transparency reasons. He asks to find a second for his ancillary motion.

The Chair asks to be sent the legal opinion.

Officer Solomon states that there was no written opinion, only verbal opinions from their lawyer.



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Director Halloum states that since SSMU stands by the advice it receives from its lawyers, especially the suggestions on alternative language for the section of the MoA in question. He urges the Board to second this motion in the name of transparency and to be clear with students about what their leadership is doing.

The Chair asks Director Halloum to clarify his amendment to his motion given that there is no written legal opinion to declassify.

Director Halloum states that he does not want to change the essence of the motion, but wants to clarify that alternative wording was recommended by their lawyers when drafting the MoA. For the sake of transparency with students, the Board should declassify the legal opinion on the MoA with McGill.

The Chair clarifies that there is no written legal opinion to declassify, so the motion would need to seek an opinion before declassifying.

Director Halloum states that he misunderstood, because he thought that there was a written legal opinion. He motions to suspend the rules to seek a legal opinion on the MoA.

General Manager Marcus-Sells clarifies that there was a legal review done in a meeting, but there was no written legal review.

Director Halloum amends Motion 11b to seek a legal review on the MoA given that section 14.4 may cause legal liability for SSMU. The Board should seek to find out whether there are legal implications to the MoA, because it could exclude some students from running for Executives. He would like for MMGC to undertake the legal review. Director Halloum would like to find out what would happen to students who protested on campus and were subjected to a code of conduct violation.

The Chair asks Director Halloum if he is happy with the wording of the motion.

Director Halloum answers yes. He wants to specify that the legal review will be done by MMGC.

Director Jolicoeur asks if this is a motion to seek and declassify a legal review.

The Chair answers yes.

Director Jolicoeur states that there would be no budget needed because the review would be done by their Internal Counsel.

The Chair asks if Director Halloum would like to specify a budget.



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Director Halloum asks the General Manager or Director Jolicoeur what this would cost.

Director Jolicoeur answers that a written consultation can cost \$500-2,000 depending on how extensive it is.

Director Halloum is amenable to this budget.

Seeing no second, the motion is not added to the agenda.

Officer Zahidah asks the Chair to ask again for a second.

Director Halloum asks if Officers can second motions.

The Chair answers no.

Director Abu Alkhair seconds Motion 11b.

With 2 in favour, 5 against, and 3 abstentions, the motion is not added to the agenda.

Officer Zahidah states that she finds this decision concerning. The Board seeks legal opinions all the time, and they are almost always approved. She thinks that it would be important to get one on the amendment to the MoA.

Director Taylor states that the Internal Counsel started this week and can provide them with a legal opinion without incurring any expenses. To ask MMGC to review the MoA, which they have decided not to do because of MMGC's lack of experience with the MoA, and after choosing another law firm to do the legal review is redundant. They also already received a positive opinion about the MoA, and it is a waste of time to get another legal review. The Internal Counsel is coming to the next Board meeting, so they can ask her her opinion then. It is unnecessary to spend more money when they can use their own Internal Counsel.

Officer Zahidah notes that Director Taylor's tone was concerning. The Internal Counsel began today and is still being onboarded, so she thought the external legal counsel would be beneficial given the importance of the question. It would not be a waste of student money since they get legal reviews all the time.

Director Halloum states that it is jarring that a legal review was not approved when the Board usually approves them. It would not be a burden on their finances nor their Internal Counsel, because they have a legal budget that they would still fall within if they got this legal review done. It is not acceptable to say that since this was discussed in a confidential session, because this motion was not



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on the agenda at the last meeting. They have approved many legal reviews in confidential sessions, and it might be a conflict of interest because some Board members are running in the next election.

Director Jolicoeur states that this legal review should go to the Internal Counsel because they have already reviewed the MoA and because they will continue to work with it for the time they work at SSMU. They hired the Internal Counsel to avoid having to send small questions like these to external law firms.

Officer Zahidah states that the Internal Counsel began yesterday, and the Executive election results will come out soon. Some Executives will be maintaining their positions and this section of the MoA will have immediate and important implications. She does not understand the problem with sending this question for an external legal review given that the Internal Counsel is very new. The Internal Counsel is not yet ready to give a legal opinion because she is still in training. This is why she was shocked that the motion to seek a legal review was voted down.

13. Confidential Session:

- a. There is a Confidential Session this evening.

14. Adjournment: **21:20**

The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 21:20.