



**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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# SSMU FALL 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

September 30, 2024

## 1. Call to Order: **18:16**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:16. The Speaker notes that the meeting is a consultative forum as the quorum requirement of 350 members has not been reached.

## 2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement. He recognizes that this is even more important on the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation.

*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. [Adoption of Standing Rules](#) – **ADOPTED**

The standing rules are distributed and available on the SSMU website.

Seeing no opposition, the standing rules are adopted.

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

The Agenda is distributed.

A member asks why they have not received news from the Dais on the motion they submitted.



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The Speaker answers that the Steering Committee did not have a chance to review the motion before the meeting and notes that they will recess to do so before the motion is entertained.

A member asks where the motions section is on the agenda.

The Speaker answers that the motions section comes before the discussion items section.

A member asks how long the Executive reports take.

The Speaker answers that each report can last up to 5 minutes.

Member Epstein asks if the change made to the agenda by the Speaker was made with adequate notice.

The Speaker answers that the change was technical, since the Dais has not yet approved any motions.

Member Epstein asks if they can add technical items to the agenda.

The Speaker answers that items that take up no time can be added.

Member Epstein asks if the motion being added will take no time.

The Speaker answers that it will take time as there are motivation, question, and debate stages associated with it. He notes that the change he made to the agenda was to add the motion section, if the motion proposed is accepted by the Steering Committee.

Member Epstein asks if this is an amendment to the agenda.

The Speaker answers that it does not constitute an amendment.

Seeing no opposition, the Agenda is adopted.

### 5. Minutes for Approval

- a. [SSMU General Assembly Winter 2024 Minutes 2024-02-05](#) – **APPROVED**

The Minutes from the previous General Assembly are distributed.

Seeing no corrections or opposition, the Minutes are approved.



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### 6. Announcements

#### a. Call for Committee Members-at-Large and Judicial Board Applications (Speaker)

The Speaker announces that applications are currently open for committees' members at large, through which SSMU makes decisions and recommendations to its governing bodies. There will be positions on the Judicial Board opening soon. Posts will be shared on Instagram and Linktree.

### 7. Report of Executives

#### a. [President](#)

President Taylor states that he will present an overview of his role and his ongoing projects. The President focuses on internal governance of the Society and managing staff. Constitutionally, the President is the CEO and spokesperson of the Society and ensures the long-term sustainability of the Society. He manages the HR department with the VP Finance, sits on the Board of Directors and chairs the Executive Committee. He attends meetings of the Legislative Council and manages the relationship between SSMU and the McGill administration. He represents the undergraduate students on McGill's Board of Governors. He sits on the Senate and one of its committees, and is sitting on the selection committee for the new dean. He will also meet with the committee that organizes orientation activities. President Taylor sits on many SSMU committees, including the Governance Reform Committee, which works on making SSMU more efficient; the Health & Dental Review Committee, which review usage statistics of health insurance; the Building & Operations Management Committee, which manages the University Centre and suggests improvements; the Presidents' Roundtable with presidents from other faculties to establish better faculty relationships as faculties can be quite siloed; the Steering Committee, which review motions proposed to the Legislative Council to ensure compliance with governing documents; the Nominating Committee, which focuses on nominations of members at large to various SSMU bodies; and the Strategic Planning Committee, which looks into improvements to SSMU's operations. The Governance Manager position is currently vacant, so the President manages the Dais, the Secretary General, and Elections SSMU in their absence. President Taylor manages the Daycare with VP Berglas, and they are planning many events for the children. He is working on some constitutional review to make the Legislative Council more powerful, as it was made less powerful when Gerts came under SSMU's wing, as it required a Board of Directors. The Internal Regulations of Governance and of Elections & Referenda are being reviewed as they are out of date. He is planning the Great Gatsby Gala at the beginning of December. President Taylor is working on bringing back the McGill yearbook, as it has not been published since 2016. He is working on negotiating a lease on the University Centre with McGill, as they are currently under a 30-day lease, which is not sustainable and prevents them from providing services in the building. He is looking to sign a management agreement this year or next year, which will allow them to open a cafeteria in the University Centre. President Taylor is also working on renegotiating the Memorandum of Agreement with VP Berglas, VP Zahidah, and the Student Life Operations Committee to amend the MOA. He is also



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helping the Nursing Undergraduate Society (NUS) become independent as they want to open a cafe in one of their buildings.

The Speaker states that questions on the report's topics will be allowed for this section. Speaking time is 1 minute and the Speaker asks everyone to line up at the microphone.

### b. [Vice-President](#) (Sustainability and Operations)

VP Baltes states that this is the second year of the VP Sustainability & Operations portfolio, so there is some uncertainty surrounding it. The role was introduced because the operations department, which was previously under the President's portfolio, had enough work to warrant a whole position. There is also a growing sustainability component that is essential to SSMU's operations. VP Baltes's portfolio includes space and event bookings, building operations, sustainability, and representing students on associated committees. Gerts is currently closed due to maintenance issues, but will be opened as fast as possible. She is working on separating the bar from the cafe to allow the cafe to expand. The cafe outgrew the space it was in, and because it was in the same space as the bar, they could not allow students under 18 to access the cafe. The bar will remain in the same location, and the cafe will move to the first floor to the right of the entrance. She is working on maintenance in the building, and improving working efficiency. She has signed some contracts that will save SSMU some money and offer good deals to students. VP Baltes is hiring the Gerts bar and cafe management teams, and interviews are underway. Part-time positions for students will open soon. She manages the space agreements with tenants on the fourth floor and manages revenue generating operations in the building. She manages the daily building needs and is seeking to expand the team to ensure that the building is accessible and efficient. VP Baltes oversees internal and external event bookings, and they had over 2,000 events in the last fiscal year. She helps support groups when they are making bookings, and manages University Centre bookings. She is working right now on restructuring her department to ease processing of documents, and the website and forms are being updated. VP Baltes works with the Sustainability Commissioners to implement the sustainability goals, and they are working to develop the Environment Committee, which is meeting in October for the first time. The Committee provides access to the Green Fund and they are working with the McGill Office of Sustainability to integrate McGill and SSMU sustainability resources and create a sustainable event checklist. They are also working to expand the Sustainable Projects Fund. She manages Campus Crops, whose gardens are located above the McConnell Engineering Building and in the backyard of the University Centre. Campus Crops provides workshops as well; the Daycare Manager runs workshops for the Daycare. The Grocery Program is now under her purview, and she is working to find new partners and coordinate distribution. The service is offered around finals season to offer subsidized groceries to students. VP Baltes sits on the Environment Committee and the Building and Operations Management Committee, which met this morning for the first time since 2021. It is open for members to sit on, and helps figure out what operations or clients they want in the building. She also sits on the Fair Trade Committee and



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the Senate Committee on Fiscal Development. VP Baltes is working on drafting an Alcohol Policy, which will clarify how they need to abide by Quebec regulations and what student groups need to do to comply with SSMU's liquor permits. She is updating job descriptions and hiring new employees given the high amount of turnover in the operations department. She is also working on a building listserv for any tenants. VP Baltes presents a list of contacts in her department. There are currently some staffing issues so response times may be delayed. If students reached out to the events coordinators and are waiting for a response, they can reach out to her or the Student Life Operations Director.

c. [Vice-President](#) (University Affairs)

VP Berglas states that they work on increasing student representation within the administration, demystifying the MOA. They have remodelled the Accessibility Committee to be a disability roundtable, and sit on the Ad Hoc Committee for Preferred Names. They worked on reformatting Open Educational Resources and supported mental health and library improvement projects. They attend the McGill Academic Roundtable and send out a listserv bimonthly and blog. This and next semester, they will review the Accessibility Policy, sit on the Senate Advisory Committee, and work on community representation. VP Berglas has focused on the presence of security on campus, and notes that they are not trained on the Charter of Student Rights or any McGill policies. They have received many reports of security guards harassing and discriminating against students, especially Palestinian students and students of colour. The presence of security makes students feel criminalized and unsafe, and they are upset that there are security guards in the SSMU Building tonight. It is not appropriate, even if protests can be scary and overwhelming. They were not told that there would be security present tonight. VP Berglas was elected to represent students, not worry about SSMU's efficiency, and that is what they will continue to do.

d. [Vice-President](#) (Student Life)

VP Muñoz states that she is working on transparency of information and processes, as many of SSMU's processes are unclear, which creates a barrier between SSMU and students. It is important for SSMU to provide students with information when they can. She is working on restructuring the Student Life department to make it better at providing services to students. It is important to think about how information and services are presented to students, and there needs to be an effort to make this information more consumable to students. VP Muñoz is also working on better advertising services, because there are many on campus that students do not know about. There are groups that students can join to get involved in the McGill and Montreal communities. SSMU should do better to lift up these services, as this is the basis of SSMU. Her role is to uplift student services. She is also working on outreach to students. A lot more information needs to be clarified and SSMU's bodies can be improved. She wants to acknowledge SSMU's positionality on Turtle Island and in Tiohtia:ke, as there



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is much more that can be done. Land acknowledgements are not enough, and she sees within student groups what can be done at SSMU to address indigeneity. Today is Truth & Reconciliation Day and there has not been engagement with Indigenous groups, but this should be the standard every day. Her final goal is to represent students, as it is important to remember that the Executives are students representing students and should make decisions with that in mind. VP Muñoz works with clubs and services as well as the mental health resources on campus. She sits on the Accessibility Committee with VP Berglas. She planned Activities Night, which went well but can be improved. She is working on creating a checklist for the event to preserve institutional knowledge, as a lack of information caused by Executive yearly turnover prevents SSMU from running smoothly. If a new Executive does not need to think about how to run an event, they can focus on trying to improve it. She is organizing clubs workshops and the services summit, which ran smoothly but the structure can be improved. The workshops are very information dense, and clubs attend to say they were present rather than collect information. They need to provide guidance to student groups so that they know what services are available to them. She is also working on updating the sanctioning guidelines and creating a Google Calendar with dates and deadlines for student groups, as these can be hard to follow for groups. VP Muñoz is also updating the clubs lounge for student groups on the fourth floor. Some of them lose power because there are many groups on the same electrical circuit, so she is working on resolving this and making the lounge a more collaborative space. She is updating the SSMU clubs website and signage as well as creating a Social Media platform to advertise student groups to students. VP Muñoz is working on updating the clubs guidebook to make information clearer and is working on cleaning up the Clubs Committee to change how they assess clubs. She hired a Clubs Coordinator to help her with this. She meets with services monthly and spent the summer updating the services hiring process with help from HR. She created a feedback form for services as well. The Mental Health Committee is being updated to be more effective and a source for students to learn about resources. VP Muñoz is also organizing the student life Google Drive to ensure that information is accessible and that improvements take place year to year.

e. [Vice-President](#) (Finance)

VP Jolicoeur states that the VP Finance ensures the long-term financial sustainability of the SSMU. She oversees the accounting department, the Funding Committee, which disperses about \$350,000 per year to student groups, the clubs and services finances, the investment of reserve funds, and the student insurance plans. She acts as the signing authority for contracts signed and advocates for sound financial decision making and compliance with the Internal Regulations of Finance. One of her main projects is to prepare, revise, and enforce the budget. She also supervises the HR department with the President. VP Jolicoeur sits on the Executive Committee, Legislative Council, and Board of Directors and various other committees. Within the accounting department, she ensures that the audit is completed and signs purchases. She monitors budget variance and tries to keep SSMU on track. The past few years have seen SSMU operating in a deficit, which will hopefully be resolved this year. VP





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Jolicoeur helps clubs with their bank accounts, funding applications, and other resources. She ensures that clubs follow financial regulations and intervenes in cases of mismanagement. VP Jolicoeur collects and review services' budgets, and ensures they stay on track. She approves their purchases and signs their credit card agreements. If services need to increase their fees, she is a person to consult with. She is the main point of contact for the health, dental, and legal insurance plans. She reviews usage statistics and troubleshoots opt-in and opt-out issues. She manages the HR department with the President and General Manager. There are 4 staff in her department: a Club Finance Coordinator, Service Finance Coordinator, Funding Commissioner, and Finance Commissioner. She will prepare next year's budget and wants to review the funding guidebook to make the guidelines clearer. She is planning to automate the accounting processes, as many are outdated and require redundant administrative work. The accounting software also needs to be updated as it is out of date. She is working on developing a service budget template and wants to create a similar one for clubs. VP Jolicoeur created the Where's My Money Going? brochure, and would like to revise their investments. She notes that they will run a base fee increase in the fall. If students want to be involved in SSMU finances, she is looking for members for the Funding Committee. VP Jolicoeur stands for questions.

Member Manovich states that SSMU is in a \$1,500,000 deficit and \$7,000,000 in debt as of May 2023. He asks for clarification.

VP Jolicoeur answers that they operated with a \$700,000 deficit last year, and \$1,500,000 the year before. At the end of last year, they decided to make some layoffs. The revised budget will come out in a few weeks, but she is projecting that they will break even.

f. [Vice-President](#) (Internal Affairs)

VP Zahidah states that her portfolio includes events, first year affairs, alumni and faculty relations, and communications. She is working on managing the communications department, which includes a variety of part-time and full-time staff. They hired a social media coordinator and started a TikTok account. This department is in charge of the handbook and listserv, and ensures compliance with Bill 96. The translator is working hard to ensure they comply. They have a website with all events and resources. She facilitates working relationships between the Executives and the communications department and oversees the publication of statements to members. They have a very outward-facing Executive team this year, and they tabled a lot during orientation week. They each have office hours and are all very accessible and friendly. VP Zahidah created a new tabling schedule for Frosh, increased the Executives' involvement in Frosh to improve faculty relations. They were trained in harm reduction and volunteered as Frosh Coordinators. She is implementing a weekly posting schedule on social media for Executive takeovers. She is streamlining the job postings onto the SSMU website rather than on an external site, to make everything more accessible. VP Zahidah sits on the Events Committee, the CKUT Board of Directors, the MoA & Building Agreement Committee, the IOC, and the



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McGill Alumni Student Engagement Council. She reports to and sits on the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and the Legislative Council. She ensures that the Society's events abide by the Internal Regulations of Events, constitution, and provincial law. There are three committees under her portfolio. The SSPN plans events such as Four Floors and Faculty Olympics, and they are finalizing committee membership. Applications are open for the Internal Events Coordinator position, who sits on SSPN. The First-Year Council plans events for first year students, and they are still finalizing membership and hiring a First Year Affairs Coordinator. The Internal Administrator position was changed to organize more consistent events and to allow SSPN to focus on larger events. They assist with planning, takedown, and hosting two dry events per semester. Applications for this position are open. Fundraising for larger events through weekly events at 212 is underway to finance larger events later in the year. SSPN is aiming to finalize the FACO and St Patty's Day event budgets by November. VP Zahidah stands for questions.

g. [Vice-President](#) (External Affairs)

VP Solomon states that it is important to be transparent and compassionate this year, as there is much going on. He is happy to see so many members in attendance, eager to take part in discourse, which is vital to the integrity of the Society. The VP External portfolio includes community relations, solidarity, external and media representation, francophone, black, and Indigenous affairs, political campaigns, popular education, and affordable housing. He is responsible for representing the Society and communicating its policy positions to external bodies, lobbying to further the goals of the Society, mobilizing students on the Society's positions and assisting in their political campaigns. He is responsible for communicating policy preferences to the Board of Directors, coordinating Indigenous and francophone affairs, and attending meetings of relevant student groups at different levels. VP Solomon is a member of UTILE's Board, a non-profit that is building an affordable housing unit for SSMU members. The project has begun construction and an article in the McGill Tribune was written about it. He sits on the Coalition de résistance pour l'unité étudiante syndicale (CRUES), an inter-university organization. He also maintains close ties with the Concordia Student Union (CSU). He sits on the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Legislative Council, as well as the Community Solidarity Funding Committee, which is looking for a fee increase this year, the Gender & Sexuality Advocacy Committee and QUIPS Bursary Committee, the Francophone Affairs Committee, which is looking for two Councillors, the Black Affairs and Indigenous Affairs Committees, the latter of which is seeking members at large. His staff includes the Community Engagement Commissioner, who plans Community Engagement Day and maintains ties with local groups, the External Affairs Commissioner and Coordinator who assist with projects, the Political Campaigns Coordinator, the Francophone Affairs Commissioner, the Black Affairs Coordinator and Commissioner, who are working on a policy, the Popular Education & Events Coordinator, who is their link to QPIRG and is planning a culture shock walking tour, the Policy & Mobilization Researcher and the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner. VP Solomon is working on increasing patient resources and activities at the Montreal General Hospital





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psychiatry unit. He is working on a francophone affairs policy and fee, a black students' solidarity policy, an inter-university french conversation circle called "les Pipelettes," walking tours with QPIRG, writing a policy against anti-semitism, a fee increase for the Community Solidarity Fund, and a fee increase for QPIRG. VP Solomon stands for questions.

A member asks for details on initiatives for the French language with other universities.

VP Solomon répond qu'il y a beaucoup d'étudiants qui souhaitent pratiquer leur français dans un environnement qui n'est pas académique, et qui veulent parler aux étudiants d'autres universités. C'est pour ça qu'il a développé les Pipelettes.

#### 8. [Report of the Board of Directors](#) (President Taylor)

President Taylor states that the Board of Directors has 12 members; not all positions are filled. There are four Executives, four Councillors, and four members at large on the Board, and the General Manager serves as a non-voting member. There are also two non-voting Alumni Representatives and one International Student Representative. To be on the Board, one must be a SSMU member, 18 years of age, a citizen or permanent resident, not be bankrupt and not have a criminal record. In the past, the powers of the Board varied, but it is now the highest governing body at SSMU and is responsible for the financial, legal, operational, and HR affairs of the Society. It also ratifies decisions made by the Legislative Council and the Judicial Board. The Board meets bi-weekly on Tuesdays. The Internal Regulations of Student Groups were amended early this year to reduce free club hours that can be booked in the building. An Ad Hoc Committee to negotiate the MoA and Management Agreement was created. The Board signed an MoA with MUSTBUS and gave them a loan to allow them to purchase tickets and rent buses for their trips to Ottawa, New York, and other locations during the holidays. The Building & Operations Management Committee was recreated, and contracts with Grammarly and Udemy were signed. Students will receive an email with instructions to sign up. The Board ratified motions of the Legislative Council, including ratifying the standing rules, approving the fall referendum dates, signing a call to action, approving committee allocations, and ratifying the Board members. The Board also ratified the referendum questions. SPHR was removed as a club via a split decision, because of the potential for default of the MoA and a court case. There is no lease on the University Centre, so a default of the lease could put the building in jeopardy. Instead of finding this out in court, the SSMU removed SPHR as a club. President Taylor stands for questions.

#### 9. Presentation

##### a. [Introduction to SSMU Accountability](#) (Accountability Commissioner)

Commissioner Khamis notes that they are on unceded Indigenous territory and states that it is important to reflect on their positionality today and every day. They encourage solidarity in



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individuals' everyday lives. Commissioner Khamis will serve as the Accountability Commissioner until the end of the school year. Their role was created at the end of last year by the Legislative Council. Their main responsibilities include accountability, transparency, and mandate compliance for all officers of the Society. They chair the Accountability Committee, which will soon be hiring, and collaborate with Executives and the Governance team. They monitor the implementation of policies and projects related to accountability. It is important to maintain communication with students, which is why they are mandated to report at General Assembly and Legislative Council meetings. The Accountability Committee has existed in the past, but there have been issues with member retention that have made it difficult for the committee to work. The Committee collects feedback and consults with students to prepare reports to update bodies on initiatives of the Society. It also helps organize accountability initiatives. Commissioner Khamis is hoping to discuss with the Executives about their mandates and priorities. The Accountability Committee is looking for members at large, and Commissioner Khamis will review governing documents related to accountability. There are some amendments to the Accountability Plan that are required to make it more robust. They will also prepare reports for General Assemblies. Commissioner Khamis stands for questions.

### 10. Question Period [5]

Seeing no questions, the question period is exhausted.

### 11. Recess [10]

The Speaker entertains a 10-minute recess to allow the Steering Committee to review the motion that was submitted.

The meeting resumes at 19:52.

The Speaker states that the Steering Committee has approved the motion for the consultative forum. He notes that it can be added to the agenda by a motion to suspend the rules, which can be done by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of members.

A member asks what the motion is called.

The Speaker answers that it is called the Motion on Defense of Palestinian Solidarity in the Face of Administrative Repression.

The Speaker entertains a vote on the suspension of the rules to add the motion to the agenda.

With 46 in favour, 5 opposed, and 3 abstentions, the motion is added to the agenda.



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The Speaker notes that the motion will be added to the agenda. The mover of the motion will have five minutes to present the motion, followed by question and debate periods.

### 12. Motions for Approval at Consultative Forum

- a. Motion on Defense of Palestinian Solidarity in the Face of Administrative Repression (Member El Bakir) — **APPROVED**

Member El Bakir presents Motion 12a. They state that McGill has been repressing Palestinian students' voices for a year, while SSMU has not been able to defend the student body successfully against the administration's intimidation. For the past year, Israel has bombed Gaza and launched incursions into the west bank, violating international law. The situation in Palestine has been deemed a genocide. McGill has provided one sided narratives in their email communications, invested into Israel, and ignored student demands. This has created an environment of repression, where the student union cannot adequately represent students' position in favour of Palestine, as was seen in the 2023 referendum about the Policy Against Genocide in Palestine, which received a vote of 78% in favour. Unfortunately, SSMU cannot represent this position as it conflicts with the administration's interests. SSMU should adopt Motion 12a because students have been demanding action in support of Palestine. This is the morally right thing to do, in the member's opinion. As per their website, SSMU advocates for students to the administration, this goal should be worked towards every day regardless of international affairs. Member El Bakir consulted with the Policy & Advocacy Coordinator on the format of the motion, and consulted with students to gauge their feelings about the administration and McGill's role in Israel's actions. By adopting this motion, SSMU could risk increasing tensions with the administration, and could risk dissolving the MoA. However, to address this risk, negotiations are currently underway. They intend to submit this motion and open a discussion among students about how mobilizations can be organized, how the power dynamics between SSMU and the administration can be shifted, and how SSMU can gain more political autonomy. The student union was invented to represent students, and it seems as though the Executives know where their students' interests lie. The policy could improve general relations and foster trust between students and SSMU. This motion mandates the Board to explore how to obtain better autonomy from the administration and to create a plan to implement students' suggestions in two weeks of the General Assembly. The VP External Affairs will mobilize for a walk out the week of October 7, and publicize events occurring this week. SSMU should adopt a pro-Palestinian stance and support advocacy on this front. This will show that SSMU is in support of students. Member El Bakir reads out the Be it resolved clauses from Motion 12a.

The Speaker entertains a question period.

Member El Bakir asks if they are the only one who can answer questions about the motion.



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The Speaker answers yes.

Member Dubois asks if there is a procedure to amend motions.

The speaker answers yes, the procedure is outlined in the Standing Rules. If members want to amend the motion, they should send them to the Dais via email with the mover and seconder of the amendment. They will recognize amendments as they receive them.

Member Dubois asks how long they have to write amendments.

The Speaker answers that they can propose amendments now as it is being debated now.

Member El Bakir asks if they are entertaining questions about the motion itself or debating the motion.

The Speaker clarifies that they are in a question period now, and will move to debate later.

Seeing no further questions, the Speaker entertains debate.

Member El Bakir states that they were impressed by SSMU's initiatives. They ask VP Berglas how SSMU is going to negotiate the MoA to overcome the power dynamics between SSMU and McGill, considering how students feel about the MoA and the Executives' mandates. They also ask how students can help.

VP Berglas agrees that there is a power imbalance between the McGill administration and students, this was referred to in the statement about SPHR. The MoA has always been favourable to McGill, but the MoA committee is taking an aggressive stance so that McGill has less influence over SSMU's political decisions. They add that there is space for a member at large on the MoA Committee. Members must be undergraduate students to be members on the committee.

Member Duchene asks, given that SSMU is a student union, if the MoA has always had a power imbalance that favours McGill.

VP Berglas answers that it is unusual for a MoA between a university and a student union. Quebec universities are well protected by the law. SSMU had banking difficulties in the 1980s and 1990s, which explains the MoA and McGill's disproportionate power over SSMU.

President Taylor answers that in the 1960s, SSMU went bankrupt and the university rewrote SSMU and its constitution. The MoA came into existence in the 1970s, and there was another instance of financial issues. The 1980s iteration of the MoA was less restrictive, but it was strict in terms of default.



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General Manager Marcus-Sells states that the email for amendments is [ssmu-dais@ssmu.ca](mailto:ssmu-dais@ssmu.ca).

Member Marques notes that they appreciated VP Berglas's comments about the presence of security guards on campus. They assume that there are no ways for SSMU to prevent this, but they ask if there are limits to the presence of security in the building.

Member Dubois suggests a wording change to one of the clauses of Motion 12a, as genocide is a very technical term that requires a lot of proof. The ICJ has not ruled the situation in Palestine as a genocide yet, so they suggest changing the word once the ruling is made. It is important that the resolution be objective.

VP Solomon states that UN experts and legal scholars have characterized Israel's action in Gaza as genocidal as defined by the UN's Rome Statute. Legal experts have also described the situation as a genocide in discussing it. Canadian and American scholars have determined that it is a genocide.

VP Berglas states that the presence of security guards on campus is illegal. They are disheartened by today's security and past security at McGill. They state that they would be a good person to bring complaints to as an Executive.

Member Hillmeyer asks if quorum has ever been met at a General Assembly. They state that the security guards have scared students away, which does not help attract participants. They suggest changing quorum requirements. If they want anything to get done at assemblies, they should make it easier to reach quorum.

The Speaker states that quorum was last met at the 2021 Special General Assembly. He notes that changes to quorum require constitutional amendment.

VP Baltes states that the Executives want to increase engagement at General Assemblies. They wanted to prepare for any possible scenario today, which is why they have security present. She notes that the quorum is 350 members.

General Manager Marcus-Sells states that before the 2021 General Assembly, quorum was met in 2018 at a regular General Assembly, and was more regularly met in the 2000s. There is an issue across student unions with attendance. There are more people present than last year, and General Manager Marcus-Sells states that it would be great to have more people present at the Winter General Assembly.

Member Dubois state that they should wait until the final verdict is determined before using the term genocide.



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Member Hofer asks if anyone involved in the MoA negotiations could inform them as to whether student outreach and mobilization would help reduce the power imbalance between SSMU and McGill.

VP Muñoz states that members can join the MoA negotiation committee. There are many ways to get involved in student issues, and it is important to create a united front about issues. Students hold a lot of negotiating power, and it is important to be collective in their efforts. It is important to have conversations about mobilization in forums such as the General Assembly. She notes that students can also mobilize outside of SSMU.

Member El Bakir states that when they were writing the motion, they wanted to know how students feel about the upcoming events on October 7, 2024. They ask how students would feel if SSMU promoted the student strike occurring that day.

Member Hofer asks if SSMU would be interested in supporting student mobilization efforts and working with student activists to work against the imbalance of power in the MoA. They want to get involved in this type of mobilization, and they ask how it would look.

Member Frankel states that they are alarmed about the reference to the events of October 7. They state that it is inappropriate to bring up the events, given that SPHR is no longer a club, so SSMU can no longer support its advocacy efforts. On October 7, 2023, 1200 innocent people were killed at a music festival and around the area. They ask everyone to gain some compassion on the issue and to understand that there are people grieving.

Member El Bakir specifies that they meant the mobilizations of October 7, 2024, not the events of October 7, 2023.

Member Dubois states that there is ambiguity in the motion's language that some find confusing, and the lack of clarity creates uncertainty. They think that the choice of the date of the mobilization is bizarre. Israel's actions are unreasonable; there is no justification for its actions. There is no reason for the deaths of all of those people. The attacks began on October 8, 2023, so the mobilizations should take place on October 8, 2024. It sends a mixed message to begin the mobilizations on October 7, and there needs to be a clear stance about mobilization.

The Speaker notes that he will tap his gavel with 10 seconds left in a speech, and tap again when speaking time has elapsed.

Member Robichaud states that the mover of the motion is unaffiliated with SPHR. They ask VP Jolicoeur for details about SSMU's investments and how they will be modified.





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VP Jolicoeur answers that the reserve funds being invested will not be modified, they are being verified to ensure they comply with their policies. The investments are very diversified and very safe.

Member Ortega states that they are getting caught in minutiae and should move on with debate.

Member Epstein asks if the mover of the motion will amend the motion to change the date from October 11 to 7, as the motion referred to mobilizations on October 11 but the mover only spoke of events taking place on October 7. They ask if comments on the motion will be resolved.

VP Solomon clarifies the comments he left on the Google Document. He notes that a member claimed that SSMU is not allowed to promote clubs that are not associated with it, but reminds everyone that recently the Legislative Council approved the sharing of information advertising a counter-protest to defend transgender students in Montreal. For future reference, it would be good for members to know the regulations before they share information.

Member Epstein asks for clarification on their previous questions.

Member El Bakir answers that October 11 was written on the motion instead of October 7. Amendments are moot because this is a consultative General Assembly. They referred to the week of October 11 in the motion, which includes October 7.

VP Muñoz clarifies that they are not voting on the motion today because they did not reach quorum. Amendments can be made to the motion after today.

The Speaker states that they are voting on the motion. Because they do not have quorum, decisions made at the General Assembly are non-binding until they are ratified by the Legislative Council and the Board of Directors.

VP Muñoz asks why they are voting on the motion today, since they have not reached quorum.

The Speaker answers that at consultative forums, items can be voted on. Whether the decision is binding or not depends on whether quorum is reached. If the motion is approved, it will be sent to the Legislative Council for ratification.

Member Epstein asks if the comments will be approved if the motion is approved

The Speaker answers that the comments will be approved as they are largely technical clarifications.



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Member Dubois apologizes for previously breaking the rules of order. They suggest an amendment for SSMU to demand a formal apology from President Deep Saini about the divisive language he has used in the past year. He has described pro-Palestinian advocates as anti-Semites and his language has created a divided environment on campus.

Member Headrick asks what the process is to call for a vote.

The Speaker answers that members can motion to call the question.

Member Headrick motions to call the question.

Member Renaud seconds the motion to call the question.

With 37 in favour, 4 opposed, and 16 abstentions, Motion 12a is approved.

Member Kohler adds Discussion Item 13a.

13. For Discussion

a. Truth & Reconciliation Day

Member Kohler asks what actions SSMU is taking to address truth and reconciliation and the committee's 94 calls to action.

Seeing no opposition, Discussion Item 13a is added to the agenda.

VP Berglas answers that SSMU has an Indigenous Affairs Policy under the University Affairs portfolio. The Indigenous Affairs Committee disperses the funds for projects, and they are trying to get indigenous art into the SSMU building. Executives want to do more, and VP Berglas notes that there are some gaps in their policies and their implementation.

Member Bergeron asks if it was an oversight to have the General Assembly on the National Day of Truth & Reconciliation and not create space for Indigenous voices. If this was an oversight, they ask if the Executives are willing to hold themselves accountable.

VP Muñoz answers that different dates were floated around, and apologizes for this date being chosen. She wanted to invite Indigenous groups to the General Assembly, and they did, but it was too close to the date for these groups to be able to attend. The Executives will plan to host more Indigenous-centred events in the future. She apologizes for the General Assembly falling on September 30.



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President Taylor states that the General Assembly was supposed to happen the first week of October, but because of Reading Week, the second week of October, it was moved forward. The conflict of the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation with the General Assembly was only brought up at the Legislative Council last week. President Taylor apologizes for the conflict.

Member Renaud motions to set the adjournment time for 21:00.

President Taylor seconds.

The Speaker notes that the adjournment time is the time that the meeting is supposed to end. It can be extended or adjournment can occur earlier if discussion ends.

Seeing no opposition, the adjournment time is set at 21:00.

Member Zhao motions to adjourn the meeting.

President Taylor seconds.

Seeing no opposition, the meeting is adjourned.

### 14. Adjournment: **20:50**

The Speaker declares the meeting adjourned at 20:50.