



# CONSTITUTION OF THE

## SSMU FIRST YEAR COUNCIL

Updated as of 2025-07-29



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## PREAMBLE

- I. The Students' Society of McGill University's (SSMU) First Year Council, hereafter referred to as the "FYC" and "First Year Council," inclusively, is an entity that represents all students in their first year of studies at McGill University; that is, any undergraduate student in their U0 or U1 year who is attending McGill for the first time.*
- II. As the FYC is a branch of the SSMU, the FYC's constitution shall be in agreement with the Students' Society of McGill University's Constitution and Governing Documents. In the case of a dispute between this constitution and the official documents of the Students' Society of McGill University, the Students' Society of McGill University's official documents shall supersede this constitution, and this constitution shall require an amendment to be in accordance with the conflicting document(s).*
- III. An amendment to the FYC constitution was approved by Students' Society of McGill University in April 1998 (SC97/98 D-202). This amendment eliminated the requirement that further amendments to these terms of reference be approved by the SSMU.*
- IV. An amendment to the FYC constitution was made, in accordance with Article 1.1, and ratified by the First Year Council Executive Committee and the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) in 2017.*
- V. An amendment to the FYC constitution was made, in accordance with Article 1.1, and ratified by the SSMU Executive, in consultation with the FYC, in September 2018.*
- VI. An amendment to the FYC constitution was made, in accordance with Article 1.1, and ratified by the SSMU Executive Committee, in consultation with the FYC, in July 2025.*

# **SECTION I**

## **THE CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I: RATIFICATION AND AMENDING CLAUSE**

1. This constitution may be amended only by a unanimous vote of the FYC or a unanimous vote of the SSMU Executive Committee alongside consultation with FYC.
2. The most recent copy of this constitution shall be posted on the FYC website.
3. No amendments may be made to Article 2.
4. Amendments to the constitution and applicable wording of such amendments are to be ratified at the directly subsequent FYC council meeting.

### **ARTICLE II: SUPERSEDING CLAUSE**

1. The Constitution of SSMU shall take precedence over this constitution and shall apply to areas not covered by it.

### **ARTICLE III: LANGUAGE OF THE CONSTITUTION**

1. The constitution and bylaws of the FYC shall be made available in English and French. In the event of ambiguity in interpretation due to translation, the English version of the constitution shall supersede the French version.

### **ARTICLE IV: DISPUTES**

1. Disputes regarding constitutional articles, referenda, or executive elections shall be adjudicated by the Judicial Board of SSMU.

## **SECTION II**

### **The First Year Council**

#### **ARTICLE V : OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF THE FIRST YEAR COUNCIL**

1. To represent all first-year undergraduate students and to advocate for their needs and interests..
2. To promote the involvement of first-year students—both those students in residence and those living off-campus—in a variety of extracurricular activities.
3. To ease the transition of first-year students into university life by means of the provision of social and academic services.
4. To expose first-year students to Montreal life and culture, encouraging them to explore and experience the city of Montreal beyond the McGill community.
5. To hold a variety of events for first-year students, including events with and without alcohol.
6. To encourage and promote cooperation between first-year organisations.
7. To foster a strong sense of community among first-year students.
8. To promote and support the well-being of first-year students.

#### **ARTICLE VI: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FYC**

1. The FYC shall, in effect, be under the portfolio of the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and, as such, the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall act as a mentor and non-voting authority on matters of the FYC.
  - 1.1. The FYC shall seek the counsel of the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) in situations including, but not limited to, those wherein an understanding of the greater McGill community or of governance structures at McGill is required.
2. The SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and all other officers and committees of SSMU shall make themselves available to provide logistical support and advice.
3. The SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) may leverage, at their discretion, any resources and/or advisors that may support the FYC and its work, in accordance with the terms of this constitution.

## **ARTICLE VII: Meeting Procedure**

1. Meetings of the FYC shall occur at least biweekly, at the discretion of the FYC executive. The SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) may call an emergency meeting with 24 hours' notice.
  - 1.1. Meetings require a simple majority of members to be present, with at least two (2) executive members in attendance
  - 1.2. These meetings shall be open to any first-year students and other interested parties, upon request.
  - 1.3. The structure of meetings shall be agreed upon annually by the members of the FYC at the first meeting of the academic year.

## **ARTICLE VIII: TOWN HALL**

1. In order to hear the opinions of first-year students regarding matters that affect them at the University, the Vice-President (Student Affairs), in conjunction with the President, shall organise a Town Hall to happen at least (1) once per semester. As such, the Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall
  - 1.1. Chair the discussions of the Town Hall;
  - 1.2. Ensure the documentation of the feedback gathered from the discussions of the Town Hall;
  - 1.3. Communicate the feedback of the Town Hall to the FYC and to any other applicable administrative authorities;
  - 1.4. Make accessible to first-year students the information collected at the Town Hall.

## **ARTICLE IX: FUNDING**

1. The FYC shall operate under a base fee, or initial budget, which shall be allocated and reviewed annually by the SSMU Vice-President (Finance) and Vice-President (Internal Affairs).
2. The Vice-President (Finance) may petition SSMU for additional funding in the form of a greater subsidisation by SSMU if the initial budget has been spent responsibly and if there is a



- legitimate reason for an increase in funds. The Vice-President (Finance) may also consult with the SSMU Vice-President (Finance) on the possibility of running fee referenda.
3. The FYC may also request additional funding from SSMU for a specific event if the expenses for the event exceed the FYC's remaining budget and if the SSMU Vice-President (Finance) and Vice-President (Internal Affairs) determine the supplementary funds to be warranted.
  4. The FYC may apply for funding from the various SSMU funds for relevant events, activities, or services.
  5. The FYC may also request a float, provided this request is submitted to SSMU a minimum of five (5) working days before the event for which it is required.
  6. The FYC may fundraise for large-scale events for which the FYC budget and/or SSMU funding is insufficient.
  7. The FYC should aim ultimately to break even at the end of the academic year; that is, all net profit should be reinvested to fund activities.
    - 7.1. Any budget surplus may be rolled over to the next academic year at the discretion of the FYC and the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs), though this is not encouraged except in extenuating or unique circumstances.
  8. The finances of the FYC operate on a system of reimbursements and invoices. Invoices for approved FYC spending may be sent directly to SSMU for payment
    - 8.1. All reimbursements require an original receipt or invoice and must be accompanied by the appropriate paperwork.
    - 8.2. Reimbursements can be filed with the SSMU Vice-President (Finance) and submitted to either the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) or the SSMU Vice-President (Finance).
    - 8.3. No member may sign a cheque request form for their own reimbursement.

## **ARTICLE X: ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY**

1. All members of FYC shall use FYC funds and resources solely for the benefit of first-year students, and may not, under any circumstances, use FYC funds or resources to acquire goods or services for personal use or gain.
2. An executive office may in no way be used to further a personal agenda.
3. The FYC should, with due diligence, undergo ample consultation with its membership through methods such as calls for opinions and online surveys before undertaking campaigns (especially those requiring any significant resources or funds) or taking positions on issues in the name of first-year students.

## **ARTICLE XI : TRANSITION OF INCOMING FYC**

1. All members of the FYC shall provide Exit Reports.
  - 1.1. Each member shall draft their own report.
  - 1.2. The master exit report shall contain detailed descriptions of all resolutions reached, activities undertaken, events planned or held, positions taken, and partnerships formed, along with contact information for connections made during the year, complete financial records, a complete set of all the minutes from the outgoing FYC's meetings, planned future projects, and any other details the FYC deems necessary. Should the compilation of individual members' reports not include all of these elements, it is the responsibility of the President to add these.
2. Members of the outgoing FYC shall designate and plan a transition schedule with the incoming FYC. These meetings shall be held as soon as possible after the election results are known.
3. At least one (1), but not more than two (2) members of the outgoing FYC team shall be designated as non-voting advisors to the incoming FYC, to provide advice, if needed, during the first three meetings of the FYC.
4. The outgoing members of FYC must provide the incoming executive officers with their contact information.
5. After the SSMU elections in March, the outgoing members of the FYC shall invite the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs)-elect to sit in on the remaining FYC meetings of the academic year.



## **SECTION III**

### **THE FIRST YEAR EXECUTIVE**

#### **ARTICLE XII: THE ROLES OF FIRST YEAR EXECUTIVE**

1. The First Year Council executive shall consist of five (5) elected officers;
  - 1.1. The five (5) elected positions shall consist of the President, the Vice-President (Internal Affairs), the Vice-President (External Affairs), the Vice-President (Student Affairs), and the Vice-President (Finance).
  - 1.2. Members must be in their first year at McGill University and a member of the SSMU.
2. The FYC's membership will also include two (2) appointed officers: shall consist of: the Athletics Representative and the Off-Campus Representative.
3. The FYC's membership will also include one (1) or two (2) representative(s) from each faculty's first-year body.
  - 3.1. If any given faculty does not have a first-year body, that faculty shall still be permitted to hold one (1) seat on the FYC, filled by a first-year representative from that faculty.
4. No person shall hold more than one (1) seat on the FYC.
5. Each member of the FYC shall have one (1) vote on every matter that goes to a vote.

#### **ARTICLE XIII: THE PRESIDENT**

1. The President shall be the chief officer and spokesperson of the FYC.
2. The President shall be responsible for calling meetings of the FYC if a weekly meeting time is not agreed upon or if an emergency meeting must be held.
3. The President shall call to order all FYC meetings.
4. The President shall be responsible for preparing an agenda for each meeting of the FYC, to be disseminated to all members at least 24 hours in advance of each meeting.
5. The President shall, along with the Vice-President (External Affairs), build and maintain the relationship between the FYC and SSMU.
6. The President shall be responsible for the overall administration of the FYC's agenda, and shall delegate tasks to the appropriate members of the FYC accordingly.



7. The President shall distribute appropriate and reasonable penalties to any members of the FYC who neglect their responsibilities and/or have an attendance record with two or more absences without providing permissible excuses for these absences. These penalties shall be issued at a meeting of the member in question, between the President, the Vice-President (Internal Affairs), and the member in question.
  - 7.1. Should a member have three or more excused absences, the President and Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall meet with this member to determine possible penalties or solutions.
8. The President and the Vice-President (Finance) shall be signing officers for the FYC's funds, in coordination with and prior signing of the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and the SSMU Vice-President Finance.
9. The President shall work to ensure the long-term integrity and sustainability of the FYC by, among other things, verifying that its constitution is upheld and is up-to-date.
10. The President, with the support of the Vice-President (Internal Affairs), shall be responsible for preparing the Master exit report for the incoming members of the FYC.

## **ARTICLE XIV: THE VICE-PRESIDENT (FINANCE)**

1. The Vice-President (Finance) shall, with support from the SSMU Vice-President (Finance), keep the FYC informed as to the financial status of the FYC.
2. The Vice-President (Finance), in coordination with the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and the SSMU Vice-President (Finance), shall make freely available to all first-year students the budget, debits, and credits of the FYC.
3. The Vice-President (Finance) shall remain accountable to the FYC and the SSMU Vice-President (Finance) for all matters of funding and sponsorship.
4. The Vice-President (Finance) shall be responsible for the oversight of financial tasks related to all activities of the FYC.
5. The Vice-President (Finance) shall coordinate financial interactions between the FYC and the SSMU, including the timely completion and submission of all cheque requests and purchase orders.
6. The Vice-President (Finance) shall be responsible for the integrity of the budget and for ensuring the long-term financial stability of the FYC.
7. The Vice-President (Finance) shall spearhead sponsorship proposals and financial contracts but shall not make any binding agreements without the approval of the FYC.

## **ARTICLE XV: THE VICE-PRESIDENT (INTERNAL AFFAIRS)**

1. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall oversee the online presence of FYC, managing the listserv, the FYC's website, all FYC social media accounts, and any other channels of communication.
2. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall coordinate the administration of the FYC, including, but not limited to, staffing, room booking, and supplies collection.
3. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall regularly update an organised schedule/calendar of events to be shared.
4. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall be responsible for undertaking efforts to ensure high morale among FYC members..
5. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall serve as the FYC's ombudsperson, bringing every complaint to the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and subsequently either addressing any given complaint internally or directing the complainant to the SSMU Equity Commissioners.
6. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall maintain the FYC's email account and shall reply to email enquiries in a timely fashion.
7. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall update the FYC's website and social media pages as necessary, with appropriate aid from the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) and relevant SSMU permanent staff members.
8. The Vice-President (Internal Affairs) shall serve as recording secretary during FYC meetings.
  - 8.1. They are responsible for taking minutes during meetings, sending a digital copy of the minutes to FYC within two (2) days of the meeting, and making the minutes available to all first-year students.
  - 8.2. If an FYC member must miss a meeting, they must contact the Vice-President (Internal Affairs) or President at least 24 hours in advance to be considered excused, except in extenuating circumstances
  - 8.3. If the Vice-President (Internal Affairs) cannot attend a meeting, the Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall assume the role of recording secretary for that meeting.

## **ARTICLE XVI: THE VICE-PRESIDENT (EXTERNAL AFFAIRS)**

1. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall be responsible for fostering the relationship between the FYC and SSMU, as well as various faculty, inter-faculty, school, and departmental student associations.



2. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall be the representative for all first-year students on the SSMU Legislative Council.
  - 2.1. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall sit on the SSMU Legislative Council, attending bi-weekly meetings, and serving on at least one (1) SSMU subcommittee, such they shall be responsible for providing reports to both councils.
  - 2.2. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall bring to the Legislative Council any matters pertaining to the first year constituency.
3. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall communicate to FYC any external issues which may affect McGill University or its students, especially those issues that have a direct impact on first-year students.
4. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall be responsible for encouraging and maintaining event-planning collaborations with other first-year student groups.
5. The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall organise, coordinate, promote, and conduct social, educational, cultural, and political activities or events for the constituency.  
The Vice-President (External Affairs) shall report to the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs) on various matters, including, but not limited to, the archiving of the FYC's official documentation, such as the constitution and FYC exit reports.

## **ARTICLE XVII: THE VICE-PRESIDENT (STUDENT AFFAIRS)**

1. The Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall research, evaluate, and debate principles of issues regarding the first-year student experience. Relevant issues include, but are not limited to, student engagement, academic policy, post-secondary transition, and orientation. These positions shall be communicated to the FYC, which collectively shall propose strategies to the appropriate administrative authorities.
2. The Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall promote bilingualism, accessibility, pro-survivor language, and respect both on and off campus, and shall oversee the observation of these principles in FYC events, initiatives, and operations.
3. The Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall promote equity in all operations of the FYC.
4. The Vice-President (Student Affairs) shall advocate for, support, and promote a healthy environment on campus by focusing on matters such as mental health, student health..
5. The Vice-President (Student Affairs) should serve as an ambassador to the administration, representing and advocating on behalf of incoming students for inclusive orientation activities, accessible academic resources, and social supports.
6. In the event that the President is temporarily absent or temporarily can't fulfil their responsibilities, all Presidential duties shall be assumed by the Vice-President (Student Affairs).



## **ARTICLE XVIII: THE ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVE**

1. The Athletics Representative shall serve as an ambassador to the FYC, representing and advocating on behalf of incoming students who are part of Athletics.
2. The Athletics Representative shall propose strategies for engaging with McGill Athletics by way of cross-collaboration, promotion, and resource acquisition.
3. The Athletics Representative will be the FYC Representative to sit on the Students' Athletics Council.

## **ARTICLE XIX: THE OFF-CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVE**

1. The Off-Campus Representative shall serve as an ambassador to the FYC, representing and advocating on behalf of incoming students who live off campus.
2. The Off-Campus Representative shall propose strategies for engaging with Off-Campus Connect and other bodies that serve off-campus students.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Elections and Nominations of the First Year Executive**

#### **ARTICLE XXI: GENERAL**

1. Elections of the FYC executive shall be conducted as outlined by the SSMU Internal Regulations of Elections and Referenda (IRs)

#### **ARTICLE XXII : REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER APPOINTMENT**

1. The appointed members of the FYC shall be selected for a term of one (1) year commencing each fall with the following stipulations:
  - 1.1. Candidates shall be selected by the SSMU Executive Committee after the submission of their resume and cover letter to the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs).

#### **ARTICLE XXIV: FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES**

1. Every faculty shall have the right to send one (1) or two (2) Representatives (at the discretion of the SSMU President to sit as members on the FYC
  - 1.1. If any given faculty has a first-year council, the Representative(s) of this faculty shall liaise between this council and the FYC
  - 1.2. If any given faculty does not have a first-year council, the faculty's student society shall choose one first-year Representative via a process of the faculty's choosing
2. Faculty Representatives shall have voting privileges on the FYC
3. Faculty Representatives shall both represent their respective faculties on the FYC and act as general members, providing perspective and support to the FYC's operations, as needed.

## **ARTICLE XXV: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

1. Any member of the FYC may be removed from office.
  - 1.1. This removal shall only be valid if a quorum of two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of FYC members are present, including at least two (2) executives
  - 1.2. A successful impeachment vote shall require two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of members present to vote in favour of the motion.
  - 1.3. Notice shall be given to the officer in question at least seven (7) days before the vote to remove said officer.
    - 1.3.1. Said notice must contain the specific reasons for removal. The officer or member involved must have the opportunity to defend themselves against these allegations before the vote.
  - 1.4. The officer in question shall have the right to present a speech of no longer than three (3) minutes prior to the vote on the motion to impeach.
  - 1.5. Any removed officer shall retain the right to appeal the decision to the Judicial Board of SSMU.

## **ARTICLE XXVI: BY ELECTIONS**

1. If the President is impeached or resigns, a by-election will be triggered.
  - 1.1. If the President is impeached or resigns after Fall Semester has concluded, an internal by-election, facilitated by the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs), shall be held to replace the President.
  - 1.2. If the President is impeached or resigns before Fall Semester has concluded, a membership-wide by-election, facilitated by the SSMU Vice-President (Internal Affairs), shall be held to replace the President.
2. If an executive other than the President is impeached or resigns, a by-election may be triggered, given that certain conditions are met.
  - 2.1. If the impeachment or resignation occurs on or after October 1 of the academic year, there will be no by-election. Rather, the responsibilities of the executive shall be dispersed across the FYC, at the discretion of the members of the FYC.
  - 2.2. If the impeachment or resignation occurs before October 1 of the academic year, a membership-wide by-election shall take place.
3. If the Sustainability, Off-Campus, or Athletics Representative is impeached or resigns, a new nomination period may open to fill the position, given that certain conditions are met.

**Association étudiante de l'Université McGill**  
**Students' Society of McGill University**

*Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.*  
*Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.*

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- 3.1. If the impeachment or resignation occurs on or after October 1 of the academic year, there will be no new appointment. Rather, the responsibilities of the Representative shall be dispersed across the FYC, at the discretion of the members of the FYC.
  - 3.2. If the impeachment or resignation occurs before October 1 of the academic year, a new nomination period shall be launched, and the SSMU executives shall subsequently select the replacement Representative.
4. If a Faculty Representative is impeached or resigns, their faculty's first year council or student society shall select a replacement Representative through a process of their choice.