



# SSMU LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PUBLIC AGENDA

January 15, 2026

The regular bi-monthly Legislative Council Meeting of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) will be held in the Lev Bukhman Room on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 18:00.

1. Call to Order: **18:25 pm**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:25.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Speaker presents the Land Acknowledgement.

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

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

3. Attendance

The Speaker takes attendance.

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

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The agenda is distributed.

Vice-President Crema Black adds Discussion Item 16c.

Councilor A. Yu adds Motion 14a.

Vice-President Abu-Alkair adds Discussion Item 16d.

Seeing no further changes, the agenda is adopted.

5. Minutes for Approval
  - a. SSMU Legislative Council Public Minutes 2025-12-04 – **POSTPONED**

Vice-President Léger motions to postpone the approval of the minutes. Councilor Baybayon seconds. Seeing no opposition, this agenda item is postponed.

6. Report of the Steering Committee **(3)**

President Taylor states that the Steering Committee discussed the items that were on the agenda for today. In particular, they discussed the round table discussions and made some formatting recommendations, and discussed the idea of reports being presented with the assumption that they had all been read in advance and so the presenter was there just to answer questions.

7. Presentation:
  - a. Hao Yin, Agence Voltaic, re: graduation photos

Mr. Yin gives a presentation reminding all the student societies to book photography sessions for their graduation balls. They can also provide services such as printing or photo booths or standing banners. He encourages everyone to take advantage of these services and to get in touch early.

Most pictures are taken in studio, though they are planning to come on campus at some point in the semester.

- b. [Governance updates and Important dates \(General assembly happening Feb 2nd!\)](#)
  - i. [Supporting doc](#) on Standing Rules updates

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The Speaker presents the updates and reminder of important dates.

She clarifies that Services will now report to the Services Commissioner, and Vice President Abu-Alkair will explain more on this next meeting. For Committees, the Deputy Speaker will be working on restructuring the way they report. Another idea is to have every report start with a short 150 word summary, and it is then expected for Councilors to have read the report so Council can move to questions without a longer report presentation.

The Parliamentarian asks Council to please note that Steering has been changed to Thursdays due to members' availability. Documents are due Wednesday night. Comments from Steering will come Friday night, and then reports are due Saturday night. So now the agenda will go out on Mondays.

8. Announcements

- a. Activities night! January 27-28!! (Come say hi to everyone!)

Vice-President Abu-Alkair reminds Council about the upcoming Activities Night and invites everyone to participate.

- b. Funding committee is open to work!

Vice-President Léger reminds everyone that the FC applications re-open on Monday, January 19.

9. Executive Reports (3)

- a. [President](#)

President Taylor presents his report.

- b. [VP Finance](#)

Vice-President Léger presents his report.

- c. [VP Internal](#)

Vice-President Mirza presents her report.

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Vice-President Aloudat asks if people can volunteer for one event and reserve a free ticket for another event.

Vice-President Mirza answers that it likely depends, but Councilors can speak to her about it.

Vice-President Abu-Alkair asks about the End of Year Gala and interference with exams.

Vice-President Mirza states that they are trying to organize it for as late into April as possible.

Councilor Oelbaum asks what FACO refers to.

Vice-President Mirza clarifies it is Faculty Olympics, an event where Faculties compete against each other.

**10. Reports by Councillors (3)**

- a. [Science\(SUS\)](#)

Councilor B. Yu and Councilor Zaidi present the Science report.

- b. Arts (AUS) -**Postponed**
- c. [Management](#)

Councilor Prendergast presents the Management report.

Vice-President Léger asks about the great performance of the DMCC at the Jeux du commerce that past week.

Councilor Prendergast answers that the Desautels Management Consulting Committee participated in the games and performed better than last time.

**11. Reports by Committees (3)**

**12. Question Period (5)**

- a. President Taylor asks the SUS Rep how is the LAB going?
  - i. Councilor B. Yu responds that the LAB is SUS's upcoming Student bar in Burnside starting Feb 6 (trial date)!

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- b. Vice-President Mirza asks the SUS Rep what the opening and closing times will be for LAB?
    - i. Councilor B. Yu answers it will likely be from 9 pm to late, but that the exact times will be promoted on instagram. The hours take into account being respectful of study spaces.
  - c. The Parliamentarian asks the SUS Rep where the LAB is located?
    - i. Councilor B. Yu answers Burnside, 1b 16 & 17 and the hallway (in a legal manner); It has an open concept layout
  - d. Vice-President Mirza asks the SUS Rep if it may be possible to push the trial date to the next week so events with VP internal do not clash?
    - i. Councilor B. Yu responds that it could be brought up to their VP External but slim chance because he's excited about it.
13. Recess, Consent Items (5)
14. Motions
- a. Motion to add women's rugby and Track and field co-ed to gain temporary interim SSMU club status, it will last until such a time when the team is 1) reinstated by A&R or 2) a new category under SSMU (athletics) is created: - Councilor A. Yu (seconded Councilor Lai) - **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Councilor A. Yu presents Motion 14a.

Vice-President Aloudat asks if Councilor Yu would accept a friendly amendment to have the Motion mirror the previous ones by saying if the teams are reinstated it would no longer be a SSMU group?

Councilor A. Yu agrees.

Seeing no questions or debate, the Speaker calls a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 14a passes unanimously.

- b. Motion to restrict PGSS member access to the SSMU's Midnight Kitchen daily servings and to the SSMU's Food Pantry until such a time that PGSS members are paying fees for those offerings equal to what SSMU members pay - President Taylor, 2nd Prendergast - **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Following Discussion Item 16a, President Taylor proposes Motion 14b.

Seeing no friendly amendments, the Speaker moves to the question period.

Councilor A. Yu asks how to restrict PGSS students from accessing these services.

President Taylor responds that for MK Kitchen they would check IDs and then ask Graduate students to leave.

Vice-President Crema-Black states that she had a conversation with the Building Director and the idea is IDs would be checked when people walk into the food bank to make sure they are students and particularly undergraduate students. She adds that she really hopes PGSS decides to pay for the Food Bank, as it is bad that 25% of the Food Bank usage is by their students, showing a real need.

Councilor Letham states that it is potentially problematic to cut off Graduate student access to the Food Bank given their clear need. She wonders if it is possible to suspend for a few weeks until they decide if they will pay.

President Taylor clarifies that PGSS members used to pay a fee for Midnight Kitchen but have stopped it pending a referendum to cancel it or continue it. They are running a referendum, but until then they will no longer have access to it.

Vice-President Crema-Black states she does not think it's fair to just cut off services without letting them know. She is meeting them next week and will present what Legislative Council decides. Until they vote on it, cutting them off would be unfair. It can be out in the Motion to be more concrete. But if they actively vote against the fee, then we would cut them off.

Councilor Lai asks how we know that 25% of users are PGSS members.

Vice-President Crema-Black answers this comes from PGSS, but also the Food Pantry Coordinator took a survey from the floor.

Councilor B. Yu asks if, in the event that PGSS does not vote for it, are there other resources to combat food insecurity for graduate students.

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President Taylor answers that PGSS, like any other accredited student society, can levy fees from their members for services.

Councilor B. Yu asks if President Taylor knows why PGSS scrapped the fee.

President Taylor responds that presumably they did not like that the service was reorganized, leading to some staff being laid off.

Seeing no further questions, the Speaker opens the floor to discussion.

Vice-President Crema-Black reiterates that the SSMU reorganized a service PGSS paid for, they were unhappy with that decision, they would like to actively stop funding it and therefore allowing their members to have access to it. She thinks PGSS would like more autonomy over how their members access services, so that would mean that PGSS would take over dealing with food security issues for their members. She thinks it is not as problematic a motion as it might seem, but is important for setting a precedent that SSMU Members should not be financially burdened.

President Taylor adds that the result of this Motion vote will be relayed to McGill and they will make sure that that referendum question will clarify the consequence of the vote will mean PGSS members do not have access to these services.

Seeing no further discussion or amendments to the Motion, the Speaker calls a vote.

Seeing no opposition, Motion 14b passes unanimously.

- c. Motion to assign the governance reform committee to investigate and amend the Internal Regulations of Representation & Advocacy to reflect the needs of political campaigns at SSMU – VP Crema Black (Seconded by Councilor Letham) - **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Following Discussion point 16c, Vice-President Crema-Black proposes Motion 14c.

Vice-President Crema-Black recommends there should be a component of the Political Campaigns Protocol that there be a Committee or Group that meets regularly to discuss these issues.

Seeing no amendments, questions, or debate, the Speaker calls a vote.

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Seeing no opposition, Motion 14c passes unanimously.

15. Notices of Motion

16. For Discussion

a. PGSS MK Kitchen - President Taylor

President Taylor explains that an issue arose at the end of last semester. As we know, MK Kitchen as a Service is being reorganized as a Department under the SSMU. However, PGSS has chosen to withdraw its contribution to the Kitchen that was previously provided. The question now is whether PGSS students should still continue to access the meal service, particularly as Undergraduate students pay \$8 per semester for this, and Graduate students were paying \$2 per semester and now are paying \$0. So the question is if graduate students should access services we all pay for, or if it is in the best interests of our students not to allow them to if they are not paying.

He adds that the Food Pantry is another issue.

Vice-President Crema-Black explains that they got the room needed for the Food Pantry which means it can actually be a food bank, not just a pantry. It will have shelves and a display fridge. The issue is financial. We restock the pantry twice a week and the food is gone within 2 hours. 25% of the users are Graduate students, which is not proportional to the number of Graduate students on campus. On top of that, the Graduate students don't pay anything, only SSMU students pay for this. Her rationale is that, since they are struggling to have enough food for undergraduate students, either the Food Pantry should be restricted to Undergraduates or require PGSS to pay the same amount as SSMU. She is thinking of proposing a Motion that the Food Bank will only be open to Graduate students if they pay the same amount as SSMU students.

Councilor Prendergast points out that Graduate Students have Thomson House that they pay for and that Undergraduates are not allowed to use.

Vice-President Aloudat clarifies that some SSMU members can access Thomson House, namely Med and Law students, but they have to pay extra for it. So the precedent exists that for SSMU members to access their services, they have to pay for it. Whereas, we have allowed PGSS members to disproportionately access our services without having to pay. She considers that the requirement for PGSS members to pay is holding themselves to the same standard that they hold SSMU members to.

Councilor B. Yu asks if PGSS pays an overhead fee and what that entitles them to.

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President Taylor responds that we have a ten-year MOA with PGSS which provides that they pay around \$3,500 per year to get access to SSMU clubs and services. This is not very proportional to what Undergraduate students pay.

Vice-President Aloudat adds that the MOA says they pay the \$3500 per year to access clubs and services, and what is being discussed today is two SSMU departments. They wouldn't be entitled to them under the MOA.

Seeing no further points, the discussion point is concluded.

b. Round table discussion: SSMU governance

President Taylor explains that conversation at Council sometimes is dominated by the Executives and proposes this round-table discussion to brainstorm ideas for improvement, including even edits to the Constitution regarding Legislative Council's role.

Councillors are split into small groups and asked to discuss improvements that could be made to council in the future.

The groups present their main points:

- Group 4:
  - Councillors don't feel fully comfortable disagreeing with Execs or speaking up
  - Anonymity may be a way to combat that
  - May cause issues of transparency not to know what remarks are coming from who?
- Group 3:
  - A guidebook / handbook, especially for those who come in later
  - Google form for anonymous questions by Councillors
- Group 2:
  - Using computers during presentations - COouncillors need to bring information back to constituents and this makes it difficult
  - Points of procedure is scary

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- Worried about posing things correctly and makes people uncomfortable
  - Beverages during meals
  - Bonding activities more often?
- Group 1:
  - Bonding activities (more communal / togetherness because we are separated)
  - Different Foods
    - Poke, poulet rouge, soup dumplings
    - Catered platters instead of pizza
  - Coming on time - everyone should aim to get in at 5:50
  - Different room and layout to encourage discussion

In response to a question on voting, the Speaker explains that when she asks if anyone is opposed, if someone raises their placard, it triggers a different form of voting. Once this happens, Council would be given a google form or whatever kind of voting decided on and then all votes are counted out. The question is a bit misleading in that way, it really is meant to trigger whether you want a fuller voting process.

Councilor Prendergast mentions he prefers the current room over the previous one, as the acoustics were difficult.

Vice-President Abu-Alkair suggests passing the mic around to avoid some issues.

Vice-President Aloudat asks if there is budget for more microphones to have some between people. We would need to check if it is compatible with the speaker system.

The Speaker says the tech is actually better in this room, but the heat and noise is a problem. We can try and figure out how to address this. She asks for suggestions for room layout that may help. She commits to mocking up some layouts for the next LegCo.

The Speaker asks if an anonymous form just to ask questions would be enough to make Councilors comfortable, but when they speak in response or discussion they do so out loud so as to represent their constituency. She states she will work on the form.

The Speaker also informs Council she is working on a Council Handbook. She also reminds Council the Secretariat is here to help with procedure questions.

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Council expresses the desire to add friendly amendments after the question period.

The Speaker encourages Councilors to reach out to her about any other suggestions for updates to the Standing Rules.

c. Political campaign protocol -VP Crema-Black

Vice-President Crema Black explains that Political Campaigns are a bit loose at SSMU. When she started she found the rules confusing. There is a short guide, but nothing is in our Governing Documents. Upon discussion with the Policy & Advocacy Coordinator, consulting with former VPs, some political campaigns, the other executives and her Campaigns Coordinator, she has come to the conclusion that there are needs for political campaigns, but what is actually needed is a Political Campaigns committee of Legislative Council to support campaigns and allocate funding. Hopefully we would then add the Political Campaigns protocols to the IRs of Representation & Advocacy.

She is happy to answer questions, especially re oversight needs. She explains that right now she has the ability to give as much as she wants up to \$500. She feels this needs to be further clarified, and questions like what is an affiliated campaign, what is independent, how and who should receive funding, etc. should be more fleshed out and have more checks and balances. There is a Governance Reform Committee that exists that may be a good place to bring these questions.

President Taylor asks what potential issues could arise, if, say, there is a VP External who is very pro gun violence in America.

Vice-President Crema-Black states that there is nothing currently stopping her from just giving money to a political cause she cares about. Obviously they are supposed to be within the Positions Book, but it can be easy to interpret things in a favourable way. She could see a VP coming in and only giving money to campaigns they personally believe in. Though it is a political role, LC is a more representative body than one VP and will represent the will and opinions of the student body better.

Councilor Bongiovanni asks what is happening now.

Vice-President Crema-Black says she asks the Campaigns to give her a proposal, which can be for anything from staffing to banner material, and she decides what seems reasonable. No one has voted for them to be affiliated political campaigns. She feels if SSMU is going to take on an affiliated campaign, it requires more oversight.

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Councilor Letham asks about the existing Committee that Vice-President Crema-Black had mentioned.

Vice-President Crema-Black clarifies it is the Governance Reform Committee, and they review the Governing Documents and propose amendments to them.

Councilor Lai asks how much the VP External can give out in total for campaigns.

Vice-President Crema-Black says it's around \$20,000.

Councilor Zhang asks how the oversight body would work, if they'd be appointed or elected.

Vice-President Crema-Black states it would be like other Legislative Council Committees, with councillors, some VPs, members-at-large. The Governance Reform Committee would decide what the Political Campaigns Protocol would look like, but the questions of who is deciding and what funding is being given to campaigns would come, perhaps, from another committee of Legislative Council.

Councilor Matondo asks about who advises now.

Vice-President Crema-Black answers that she takes advice from the Campaigns Coordinator and often the other Executives. She acknowledges that she is elected and the students put their trust in her, but she does not feel there is enough direction for this part of her role. She feels that in future a VP in her position could have issues.

President Taylor asks how much damage could be done in theory.

Vice-President Crema-Black states that she could theoretically give all the funding to one cause that approaches her under different names, as there are no checks in the system.

d. Mascot - VP Abu Alkhair

Vice-President Abu-Alkair presents an idea of developing a SSMU mascot to complement Marty the Martlett and asks Council for ideas.

Vice-President Aloudat asks about the SSMU bird.

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Vice-President Abu-Alkair says no ideas are off the table, do we want to do the bird, do the same as athletics, etc.

Vice-President Crema-Black mentions the idea of Maria the Martlett to complement Marty and have them be two lovebirds.

Councilor A. Yu proposes Margot instead.

Vice-President Mirza wonders what the mascot could be if not a bird, since SSMU's logo is a bird.

Councilor Letham suggests that arts students could submit options on the SSMU Instagram.

Councilor A. Yu asks how the mascot will be brought to life, will it be a costume walking around campus?

Vice-President Abu-Alkair mentions that we have a lot of events, could walk around and hug the kids at the daycare, etc. The mascot is meant to encourage community. He agrees that it should be a bird.

Councilor Bongiovanni suggests perhaps there should be three birds like in the McGill logo.

Vice-President Abu-Alkair states he is open to all suggestions for ideas and people should let him know.

Vice-President Aloudat says since the mascot is likely to come out at Activities Night the most, perhaps it can be one of the logos created for that, like the owl.

17. There is a confidential session.

18. Adjournment: **21:13**

The Speaker adjourns the Legislative Council at 21:13.