

SSMU Positions Book



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
POSITIONS BOOK	2
1. Accessibility	3
2. Black Equity	4
3. Housing	5
4. Education	6
5. Environment and Environmental Sustainability	7
6. Ethics & Responsibility	8
7. Equity and Social Sustainability	8
8. Family Care	9
9. Food Security	10
10. Freedom of Religion	10
11. Gender & Sexuality	11
12. Indigenous Equity	12
13. Institutions of Public Safety	13
14. International Solidarity	15
15. Intersectionality	16
16. Menstrual Justice	17
17. Research	17
18. Sexual Violence	18
19. Clubs & Services	19
20. Wellness	19



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

POSITIONS BOOK

SSMU Positions provide structure and guidance for the advocacy priorities of the Society. Positions lay out the SSMU's values regarding internal and external issues, and are kept until amended, superseded, or removed. The Internal Regulations of Governance outline the procedures for creating and amending positions. SSMU Plans describe the actions being undertaken by the Society to align the SSMU to the Positions established within this Positions Book. The Internal Regulations of Governance mandates that the Positions Book undergoes a complete review every three years and should be updated as necessary.

This Positions Book shall apply to all individuals and bodies involved in or acting on behalf of the SSMU, including but not limited to Directors, Officers, Councillors, Senators, Committees and Committee Members, Services, Clubs, and Staff.

All representatives and employees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the values contained in this Positions Book to the best of their ability. General questions regarding SSMU's positions can be directed to external@ssmu.ca. Questions regarding SSMU governance, including how to adopt a new position, can be directed to governance@ssmu.ca.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

1. Accessibility

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding accessibility on campus, the SSMU believes:

- 1.1.** In the promotion of universal access and the support of students with disabilities.
- 1.2.** That individuals may identify or choose whatever terms they feel most appropriately define their experiences.
- 1.3.** That disability may impact body function & structure, activity, or participation, and be influenced by contextual factors, but does not have to affect all aspects to be considered a disability.¹
- 1.4.** That barriers experienced by students with disabilities extend far beyond the physical environment on campus and affect access to essential support services, participation in the learning environment, and involvement in extracurricular activities.
- 1.5.** That not all individuals who have a mental illness identify as having a disability, but mental illness can be considered a disability.
- 1.6.** That individuals should not be expected to shoulder an undue burden in requesting accommodation within institutions.
- 1.7.** That individuals have no responsibility or mandate to disclose the specifics of their disabilities or health conditions in order to receive consideration or accommodations.
- 1.8.** That there currently exist barriers to participation in Society governance, including but not limited to the time commitment associated with serving as an elected representative and the length and intensity of meetings of the Society's governance bodies.
- 1.9.** That, as described by the social model of disability, there are systemic barriers to participation and exclusion, including physical, attitudinal, social, and other factors, which are the primary contributing factors to an individual's experience of disability, and it is therefore society that disables a person, not their impairment. Impairment is therefore a difference in ability of an individual, while disability refers to the exclusion resulting from societal and systemic barriers.
- 1.10.** In the need for McGill to prioritize improving the accessibility of the physical, social, and learning environment of the University. This should include but is not limited to:
 - a. the transformation of all entrances to all buildings and washrooms on campus to an accessible format,

¹ <http://who.int/standards/classifications/international-classification-of-functioning-disability-and-health>



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

- b. the implementation of Universal Design for Learning on campus in both curriculum and assessment design,
- c. ensuring an accessible work environment for all members of the University, and
- d. the prioritization of funding for accessibility initiatives and services for students with disabilities.

1.11. In the need for the inclusion of the Office for Student Accessibility and Achievement or an Accessibility advocate in the consultation, decision making, and planning processes for all renovation projects on campus.

1.12. In the need for a University-wide accessibility policy that includes a timeline for consultations, implementation, and regular reporting to the public.

1.13. In the elimination of any and all physical, social, and financial barriers preventing a student from receiving the necessary accommodations to fully access academic or social services provided by the Society or the University.

1.14. That implementing accommodations is a balance of factors, where organizers must determine the most appropriate action based on maximizing accessibility and minimizing harm.

2. Black Equity

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations concerning Black equity, the SSMU believes:

2.1. “Black student” describes any student who self-identifies as Black, African American, or of African descent, including those from the African diaspora. This can include individuals with heritage or ancestry from various regions including, but not limited to, Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, and other parts of the world where people of African descent reside.

2.2. There remain specific issues that disproportionately affect Black students, necessitating more focused and targeted interventions.

2.3. In the importance of engaging with external partners to support broader racial equity movements and to advocate for Black student interests beyond the campus.

2.4. In confronting and repairing the injustices caused by racism and taking action at every level to ensure equal opportunity for all people.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

3. Housing

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding the movement toward affordable student housing, the SSMU believes:

- 3.1.** That housing should be clean, safe, affordable, and easily accessible to all.
 - 3.1.1.** That such housing is the foundation for both personal and collective health, wellbeing, and success.
 - 3.1.2.** That exorbitant housing prices impose significant financial burdens on students, negatively affecting their mental health and jeopardizing their academic success.
- 3.2.** That housing is a human right and its access should not be hindered by one's capacity to pay.
 - 3.2.1.** In cooperative, public, and non-profit housing as long-term goals, with the prioritization of affordable and fair market value housing in the interim.
- 3.3.** That homelessness and housing precarity is a product of systemic factors and structural issues, including but not limited to the financial incentives for landlords associated with housing, unregulated housing markets, and a scarcity of social (i.e. cooperative, public, and non-profit) housing.
- 3.4.** That settler colonialism, ongoing settler exploitation of unceded lands, and ongoing systemic discrimination greatly increase Indigenous peoples' risk of experiencing homelessness.
 - 3.4.1.** In the priority of promoting accessible, permanent housing options for Indigenous peoples.
- 3.5.** In the need to inform students, as well as the general public, of tenants' rights, predatory landlord practices, non-market housing, and other pertinent resources, to give them the necessary tools to comfortably and responsibly navigate housing and its associated issues.
- 3.6.** That gentrification negatively impacts existing residents, who are traditionally marginalised, by pricing them out of the area in which they live.
- 3.7.** That access to education is inextricably linked to having access to affordable, secure housing and thus, students of low socioeconomic status should be prioritized in the provision of affordable student housing.
- 3.8.** That the provision of social housing is an especially important aspect of preventing gentrification-induced displacement.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

4. Education

In taking a leadership role in advocacy surrounding access to education, the SSMU believes:

- 4.1.** In high-quality, universally accessible education as a human right.
- 4.2.** In a strong opposition to any mechanism or legislation that would permit a non-consensual increase in student fees for any student, whether Québécois, Canadian, or international.
- 4.3.** In a public reinvestment in education from all levels of government.
- 4.4.** In the elimination of all financial barriers (including costly, mandatory, single-use textbooks) to a high-quality education
- 4.5.** In the progressive reduction of tuition fees for all students, including the eventual replacement of any and all ancillary fees with alternative methods of funding post-secondary education.
- 4.6.** In the fair compensation for labour provided by students during stages, experiential learning opportunities, and internships.
- 4.7.** In the enforcement of existing provincial legislation and the development of stricter requirements for unpaid internships, including the remuneration of all professional stages.
- 4.8.** In increased provincial and federal funding of quality paid internship and work opportunities for students, especially marginalised students.
- 4.9.** In a centralized coordination or screening method to assess the quality of internship postings, and in particular in the criteria from the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers.²
- 4.10.** In greater quality, supervision, and protections associated with education stages, unpaid positions with institutions.
- 4.11.** In improved fairness, quality, and legality of internships for Members offered by McGill offices.
- 4.12.** That academic credit should be offered for applied opportunities.
- 4.13.** That unpaid or for-cost internship offered by various student and external groups are cause for concern.
- 4.14.** In peer-reviewed, openly licensed textbooks that facilitate accessible, diverse and inclusive learning.

² https://www.cacee.com/CACEE_Statement_on_Unpaid_Internships.html



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

4.15. In challenging the implicit support of proprietary publishers and supporting community-expert-led scholarly publishing systems.

5. Environment and Environmental Sustainability

In taking a leadership role in advocacy surrounding climate justice and environmental sustainability, the SSMU believes:

5.1. That the SSMU has a responsibility to encourage students and McGill University entities to combat the climate crisis, as it will affect students and global communities.

5.2. That the fight against the climate crisis is inextricably tied to movements to combat systemic inequalities and the dominance of capitalist and colonialist paradigms.

5.3. That groups affected the most by the climate crisis are often lacking in representation within structures that make crucial decisions impacting the Earth's climate, and as such, the SSMU's efforts to combat the climate crisis must:

- a. Include the protection of human rights,
- b. Ensuring transparency, accountability, and fair participation in the SSMU's approach,
- c. Address intersectional inequalities, and
- d. Emphasize education and partnership.

5.4. That, by continuing large-scale extraction, lobbying governments to amend legislation, and influencing the media, fossil fuel companies worldwide currently act as a barrier to action on the climate crisis.

5.5. In a timely transition away from fossil fuels with the goal of moving away from a climate crisis fed by unchecked capitalism and the effects of colonialism, and toward a more equitable society.

5.6. That countries who have historically and currently been responsible for the production of emissions must take responsibility for leading a just transition.

5.7. That communities who have been historically or currently have lower standards of living are entitled to resources and technology to heighten their standard of living as they ~~plan a~~ transition to a low-carbon economy.

5.8. That the University should increase research funding and internship opportunities in fields that contribute to a just transition to a zero-carbon future, such as renewable energies.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

5.9. That all institutions and communities should ~~must~~ reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

5.10. That solutions to address the climate crisis must come from communities and all governmental levels, and includes:

- a. Community renewable energy projects
- b. Fair, ambitious, and binding carbon pricing systems, and
- c. Initiatives contributing to more sustainable food systems.

5.11. That a diversity of tactics is needed to address the climate crisis effectively and equitably, including divestment from fossil fuel companies by institutions and legislation by governments aimed at reducing overall emissions within their economies.

5.12. That the sustainability standards of all food providers on McGill campus should be continually improved, prioritizing waste reduction, then waste management.

5.13. That consumption of materials such as clothes and electronics should be done in an environmentally conscious way and prioritize sustainable options wherever possible.

6. Ethics & Responsibility

The SSMU holds a broad commitment to ethical and responsible action, and believes:

6.1. That all stakeholders involved in the Society decision-making processes for the duration of their involvement with the Society have a responsibility to adequately educate themselves on related topics and perspectives before forming conclusions.

6.2. That all Members of the Society have a responsibility to remain well-informed on topics related to the function of the Society or McGill, to the best of their ability given the resources available to them.

6.3. That a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity is essential to maintaining public faith in the Society while pursuing its best interests.

7. Equity and Social Sustainability

In taking an allyship role in advocacy and operations surrounding the promotion of equity and social sustainability, the SSMU believes:

7.1. That the SSMU has a responsibility as a leader, representative, and service provider to conduct itself by the highest standards of respect, fairness, integrity, safety, and equitable treatment for all persons.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

7.2. That historical and ongoing processes of oppression disadvantage and harm certain groups of people.

7.2.1. That such harm applies on a systemic level, but does not apply equally or uniformly to each individual.

7.3. That the practice of equity requires the dedication of material support to reduce intersectional barriers for marginalized groups who may benefit from targeted resources.

7.4. That groups who have been historically and culturally disadvantaged face systematic marginalization and oppression, and condemns harassment or discrimination based on but not limited to: gender identity, gender expression, age, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, immigration status, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability, language, size, or socioeconomic class.

7.5. That programs or activities whose purpose it is to improve the conditions of, or provide safer spaces for groups that have been historically and culturally disadvantaged are not deemed discriminatory or oppressive by advocating for specific resources, conditions and spaces to address the social and systemic barriers they face.

7.6. That Civil rights movements have shown the impact of universities and students on progress in equity issues. The Society must remain committed to creating safe havens from the rest of society, where marginalized persons can come together and create communities where they are supported in combating systemic oppression.

8. Family Care

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding support for student parents and students with other dependents, the SSMU believes:

8.1. That the discrimination and exclusion faced by students with dependents, pregnant, or breastfeeding students should be actively addressed in positions additional to those outlining the SSMU's commitment to equity.

8.2. That the visibility of students with dependents is very low.

8.3. That efforts surrounding family care must take into account the unique needs of student parents who are marginalised due to additional barriers faced by these groups both institutionally and societally.

8.4. That pertinent demographic information regarding students with dependents should be maintained and assessed on a regular basis to determine where additional support is needed and how the University can ensure the retention of students with dependents.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

8.5. In the creation of a physical Family Resource Office for students by the University.

8.6. That the University must institutionalize better support for students with dependents, including but not limited to:

8.6.1. A University-wide leave of absence policy for all students with dependents.

8.6.2. A more accessible medical note policy for staff and students with dependents.

8.6.3. An accommodation policy for students who are pregnant or breastfeeding who require lab work to fulfill degree requirements.

9. Food Security

9.1. That access to nutritious food that accounts for dietary restrictions is a fundamental human right.

9.2. That SSMU should seek and promote methods of reducing food insecurity on campus.

10. Freedom of Religion

In its commitment to leadership on matters of human rights and social justice, and in advocacy on freedom of religion, the SSMU believes:

10.1. In the fundamental right to freedom of religion and conscience, as described in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

10.1.1. That this right includes the right to perform and/or receive public services.

10.1.2. That this right includes the ability to dress in a manner that adheres to one's religious belief(s).

10.2. That conceptions of state religious neutrality have been invoked to enact discriminatory restrictions on religious and cultural expression in Quebec, disproportionately harming religious minorities and marginalised people.

10.2.1. That such restrictions cause irreparable harm to these people, including but not limited to loss or limitation of employment opportunities, denial of public services, stigmatisation, dehumanisation, and political exclusion.

10.2.2. That such restrictions are often inscribed in a broader xenophobic political agenda, and are a blatant example of systemic racism.

10.3. That the enactment of laws that discriminate against people on the basis of their religious affiliation, notwithstanding their fundamental rights and freedoms, should be actively opposed at both the provincial and federal levels.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

10.4. That any attempt by any level of government to discriminate against people on the basis of their religious affiliation, conviction, or belief, whether directly or indirectly, must be strongly, vigorously, and unequivocally opposed.

10.4.1. However, this does not extend to the actions of any individual on the basis of their religious affiliation, conviction, or beliefs that cause harm.

11. Gender & Sexuality

In taking an allyship role in advocacy and operations surrounding gender equity, the SSMU believes:

11.1. That, since gender is a social construct, it is possible to reject or modify one's gender assignment, and develop something that feels truer and just to oneself.³

11.1.1. That gender is not determined by assigned sex, gender presentation, or medical procedures, such as gender-affirming surgeries and hormone therapies.

11.2. That an individual's gender identity, gender expression, and sexuality must always be affirmed and respected, including through the use of their preferred name and pronouns.

11.2.1. That there is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo in order to have their gender identity affirmed and respected.

11.2.2. That an individual's gender identity does not need to be stagnant to be affirmed and respected, and that an individual may identify with different genders, pronouns, and/or names over time or depending on the situation.

11.3. That gendered language or pronouns must never be ascribed to an individual without that individual's permission.

11.4. That gender identity manifests differently across cultures, and that the prevailing definition of gender as binary is a product of Western society.⁴

11.4.1. That experiences of colonialism have imposed external gender norms on Indigenous peoples across the world.

11.4.2. That gender equity must involve the recognition of non-Western gender identities, rather than the imposition of colonial gender norms.

11.5. That individuals should be supported and empathized with in their articulation and experiences of gender inequity, including gender-based violence and oppression.

11.5.1. That the well-documented prominence of gender-based inequity in universities emphasizes the need to advocate for and support individuals in their experiences.

³ https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab_1

⁴ https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map-html/



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

11.5.2. That support for individuals articulating experiences of gender inequity should be culturally conscious and respectful of non-Western gender identities.

11.6. That gender equity is especially important to trans* individuals and individuals who present their gender in a way that is non-conforming to Western norms.

11.6.1. That these individuals should be supported through the allocation of relevant resources and services.

11.6.2. That the experiences of these individuals must be supported, and listened to regardless of potential cultural differences.

11.6.2.1. That this may require individuals to self-educate in order to respect other identities.

11.6.2.2. That individuals in positions of power should be especially active in pursuing opportunities to educate themselves to foster an inclusive environment for non-cisgender individuals.

11.7. That gender-affirming products and services should be easily and freely accessible, both on campus and in society at large.

11.7.1. In making gender-affirming products freely accessible to students and community members, and in supporting movements and organizations that would help people access them.

12. Indigenous Equity

In taking an allyship role in advocacy and operations surrounding Indigenous equity, the SSMU believes:

12.1. That McGill University must recognize and address its role in colonialism and the ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples.

12.2. In the importance of developing relationships with McGill-based and local Indigenous groups that are grounded in open communication and respect.

12.3. That meaningful advocacy and decision-making can only occur in dialogue and ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities.

12.4. That all consultation efforts should take into account the diversity of Indigenous peoples and perspectives as well as the awareness that some perspectives may at times be harmful to Indigenous students and community members.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

12.5. In University-run services that provide adequate support for Indigenous students, accounting for their unique perspectives and needs. This includes, but is not limited to, targeted support for financial aid, housing, academic advising, peer mentorship, mental health support, and career services.

12.6. That the University should actively respect, consult with, and take direction from Indigenous Stakeholders and to increase Indigenous presence on the University campus as a whole.

12.7. That the University must better recruit, retain, and support Indigenous students, including by ensuring that pertinent data regarding current and incoming Indigenous students is collected, maintained, and assessed on a regular basis in order to determine where additional supports are needed, and by streamlining the admissions process among various faculties.

12.8. In increasing the number of Indigenous faculty and support staff members at the University through equitable hiring.

12.9. That Indigenous peoples should have a formal role in the decision-making processes of the University, such as representation of the Board of Governors and in senior administrative positions.

12.10. In the development of physical and symbolic representations on campus that reflect Indigenous history and continued presence on the land, specifically that of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, with the goal of educating the community-at-large as well as developing spaces that facilitate the comfort, well-being, and cultural activities of Indigenous students, and accounting for diversity in artistic and cultural representation, the societal prevalence of pan-Indigenous stereotypes, and the role of self-identification in Indigeneity and cultural expression.

12.11. In visible Indigenous representation in the campus environment of the University including, but not limited to, art displays produced by Indigenous artists; room and building naming, and creating or modifying spaces to accommodate cultural activities.

12.12. That the implementation and maintenance of indigenous solidarity actions, including but not limited to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) framework, particularly the Calls to Action based on community consultation and direction, taking into account other local resurgence, nationhood, self-determination, and self-governance frameworks.

13. Institutions of Public Safety

In its commitment to leading in matters of human rights and social justice, and in advocacy on institutions of public safety, the SSMU believes:



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

13.1. That policing disproportionately harms marginalised people, including but not limited to Indigenous peoples, Black people, People of Colour, sex workers, transgender and non-binary people, Queer people, people with disabilities, women, low-income and unhoused people, neurodivergent people, and undocumented immigrants.

13.2. That marginalised people are over-represented in the criminal justice system because they are disproportionately surveilled, detained, and convicted by the police and criminal courts, and because many criminalised behaviours are the result of social marginalisation and inadequate support for social services.

13.2.1. That oppressive and racist colonial practices put in place with the sole purpose of exterminating Indigenous ways of life, culture, and languages, and assimilating Indigenous peoples into settler society have resulted in immeasurable harms and are the single largest factor contributing to the alarmingly disproportionate over-policing and incarceration of Indigenous peoples.

13.3. That police interventions do not address the root causes of crime.

13.4. That equitable representation of marginalised peoples in the police force or greater sensitivity training may be helpful, but cannot fully resolve problems of systemic discrimination and violence in policing.

13.5. That the criminal justice system in its current iteration is insufficient in its protection and service to individuals who have experienced gendered and sexual violence.⁵

13.6. That, given their relationship with marginalised people, the police and the criminal justice system are inherently flawed and require restructuring.

13.7. That the priority of any social institution or institution of public safety must be to develop practices that systematically and proactively reduce harm and insecurity.

13.8. That ensuring public safety for marginalised people requires the withdrawal of disproportionate policing and criminalisation, and the expansion of life-affirming services that respond to social marginalisation.

13.8.1. That such services would include publicly funded, unarmed service teams trained in de-escalation to address mental health and drug-related crimes, traffic violations, and gendered and sexual violence.

13.8.2. That other life-affirming programs, such as youth programs, recreation programs, and social housing are also crucial to this concern.

13.8.3. That harm reductive approaches to substance use must be prioritised by public safety institutions.

⁵ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/trauma/p2.html>



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

13.9. In the prioritisation of transformative and restorative justice approaches to interpersonal harm, over punitive and carceral approaches for non-violent crimes.

13.9.1. That prisons and jails are inextricably tied to policing and criminalisation, and that these institutions must be replaced by life-affirming institutions that address social marginalisation and reduce harm.

13.9.2. That fines and cash bail systems disproportionately impact unhoused people and people with low incomes, reinforcing systemic inequity.

13.10. That policing and criminal justice have been particularly destructive of Indigenous peoples' models of justice, social integration, and conflict resolution, and that Indigenous models of justice from within Indigenous communities ought to be permitted to operate separately and independently of the criminal justice system, not from within it.

13.11. That the City of Montréal must be held to its declared status as a Sanctuary City, which asserts the municipality's consent to grant undocumented immigrants full access to municipal services despite their immigration status.⁶

13.12. That the enforcement of physical borders impedes social and economic mobility especially for undocumented immigrants.

13.12.1. That deportation and the separation of families, which disproportionately targets Black people, Indigenous peoples, and People of Colour, is unjustifiable.

13.12.2. That the financial and social barriers to legal immigration and naturalization must be removed.

14. International Solidarity

In fulfilling its mandate to lead in advocacy and representation surrounding matters of human rights and social justice, the SSMU believes:

14.1. That the criticism of the actions or beliefs of a given government does not equate to the criticism of the nation or its people;

14.2. That the legitimacy and authority of a government is derived from the consent of the governed;

14.3. That protests, community mobilizations, and other non-violent demonstrations are valid expressions of political dissent;

14.3.1. That such demonstrations may not impede on the rights of others.

14.4. That all people have the right to self-determination;

⁶ <https://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/view/40787/36810>



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

- 14.5.** That international disputes should be resolved, first and foremost, through diplomacy and multilateral cooperation;
- 14.6.** That the human rights of migrants and displaced persons, regardless of their status or documentation, must be upheld;
- 14.7.** That Indigenous stewardship and reconciliation are essential to environmental protection and the opposition of colonialism, imperialism, and expansionism;
- 14.8.** That socialization and social services should prevail against deregulation, austerity, and financial destabilization.
- 14.9.** That socioeconomic mobility must be favoured over class systems;
- 14.10.** Nations should have freedom of consciousness regardless of the nature of a government's regime.
- 14.11.** That cultural diversity and relativity should be celebrated rather than discouraged or assimilated.
- 14.12.** That the SSMU should and must oppose oppressive regimes in all of its forms;

15. Intersectionality

- 15.1.** That individuals may experience interconnected systems of oppression differently, in varying configurations and degrees of intensity. This recognizes the larger structures of oppression that form and work in conjunction with each other to produce “certain identities.”⁷
- 15.2.** That disability does not exist in isolation and often intersects with other identities, such as race, gender and class, to disproportionately marginalize certain individuals and/or groups.
- 15.3.** That identities are neither isolated nor reducible to any one or other, and their interaction produces intersecting experiences of marginalisation.
- 15.4.** In an intersectional approach to gendered and sexual violence by way of including representatives from marginalized groups, who are interested and have the capacity to participate in various SSMU and administrative processes.

⁷ “Kimberle Crenshaw Intersectionality NOT identity”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPtz8TiATJY>, August 17th 2017. Patricia Hill Collins essay, “Intersectionality’s Definitional Dilemmas” the term intersectionality references the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but rather as reciprocally constructing phenomena.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

15.5. That institutions which operate within a capitalist system have a responsibility to lead by example and divest from any groups that enable or contribute to any form of systemic violence.

15.6. That restrictions on religious and cultural expression is correlated with the rise of racist attitudes, xenophobic movements, hate crimes, and violence against religious minorities, which especially affects women and gender minorities, both in Quebec and elsewhere in the world.

15.7. That people that experience menstruation are generally economically vulnerable due to patriarchal hiring practices, amongst other sexist work-based issues associated with the systemic oppression in money-making industries.

15.8. In the importance of intersectional, inclusionary identity-based training for all groups and individuals who operate on behalf of the SSMU.

15.9. In the equitable, rather than equal, distribution of resources.

16. Menstrual Justice

In taking an allyship role in advocacy and operations surrounding menstrual justice, the SSMU believes:

16.1. That all persons should have the opportunity and means to choose through a range of menstrual products that best meet their needs.

16.1.1. That a person's choice in some cases to not use menstrual products at all is a decision that is entirely theirs to make and one that should be respected as such.

16.2. That menstrual products should be readily accessible on campus.

16.3. That the maintaining of an additional cost on menstrual hygiene products can label them as "Luxury", a clear marker of the discrimination faced against products deemed "feminine" in nature.

16.4. That free menstrual hygiene product policies should be adopted at all levels of institutions, including, but not limited to, at McGill, and the Municipal, Provincial, and Federal Governments.

17. Research

In taking a leadership role on advocacy surrounding research at post-secondary institutions, the SSMU believes:



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

17.1. That the ongoing on-campus development of military technology intended to inflict harm on people is immoral.⁸

17.2. That the McGill Regulation on the Conduct of Research should require military agency-funded research to indicate “whether the research has direct harmful consequences” before undergoing review for approval.

17.3. In support for student research opportunities that do not contribute harm to society.

17.4. That the University must adopt higher standards of transparency with regard to the sponsors and intended applications of research contracts.

17.5. That increased access to medicines and medical procedures throughout the world is a public good and a human right.

17.6. That McGill University should implement a humanitarian or global access licensing framework for health-related technology transfers to the private sector.

18. Sexual Violence

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding the prevention of sexual violence, the SSMU believes:

18.1. That cultural change regarding consent and sexual violence requires longstanding commitment through advocating for and building institutional change, and maintaining regular campaigns.

18.2. That acts of gendered and sexual violence are not isolated incidents. They occur within the context of the prevalence of rape culture in the broader communities of McGill and beyond.

18.3. That there are many steps the SSMU must take to begin to address the violence that it has historically been complicit in perpetuating. The Society must support, protect, educate, and advocate for the safety and well-being of its Members and be active leaders in the fight against campus gendered and sexual violence.

18.4. That the SSMU's role is to uphold and complement the existing support structures, and advocate for increased resources and intersectional support options. Individuals who experience gendered and/or sexual violence should have access to timely and specialized resources to support their healing processes.

⁸ Includes, among others, collaboration with Lockheed Martin, Techicon, and Defence Research and Development Canada on a missile guidance systems technology (1999-2010), the Aerospace Mechatronics Lab, and the thermobaric explosives developed and tested by the Shockwave Physics Group.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

18.5. In a holistic approach to addressing campus sexual violence that includes prevention, support and survivor-centric disciplinary processes, and requires reforms to both campus policies and provincial legislation.

18.6. In more resource allocation to support services on campus dedicated to sexual violence and to better support individuals with intersecting marginalized identities.

18.7. That the health and safety of complainants in the reporting process, including their mental health and psychological well-being, are paramount.

19. Clubs & Services

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding a heightened quality of student life on campus, the SSMU believes:

19.1. That Clubs and Services impact a large number of students at our University, but a Club or Service does not need to impact a majority of students to be considered valuable to campus life.

19.2. That maintaining and improving the SSMU's structure to support students must remain the Society's highest priority.

19.3. That Clubs and Services should primarily prioritize Members of the Society in their operations.

19.4. Student-focused events should take into consideration equity in their planning and implementation, consulting with relevant stakeholders whenever possible.

20. Wellness

In taking a leadership role in advocacy and operations surrounding wellness, the SSMU believes:

20.1. That all students have a right to live and study in an atmosphere that promotes and facilitates wellness and mental and physical health.

20.2. That students have a right to accessible and equitable mental health services and support options.

20.3. That mental health services should be provided to students with respect for their rights, beliefs, identities, dignity, and autonomy.

20.4. In the innate resiliency of individuals and communities, and in the importance of building a strong sense of solidarity amongst students.



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

- 20.5.** That each individual experiences mental health and wellness differently, and that all mental health and wellness initiatives must respect this diversity of experiences and choices.
- 20.6.** That there must not only be change to the way care is delivered on campus, but also responsibility for mental health and become a more supportive, accepting, responsive, and ultimately, happier and healthier community.
- 20.7.** That steps to understand and address this issue are imperative to inform health promotion and prevention efforts to target the issues faced by students, and help improve overall mental health and stability for their learning, engagement, and satisfaction.
- 20.8.** That there must be further collaboration between student, university, and community initiatives, and many students who could benefit from these services are unaware of their existence or how to access them.
- 20.9.** That students in crisis require significantly more resources to treat.
- 20.10.** That there exists a gap in health services here at McGill and existing services should strive for greater accessibility and quality.
- 20.10.1.** That health advocates on campus must begin to shift advocacy efforts and campus dialogue towards the upstream determinants of student health.
- 20.11.** In a progression from awareness to a sense of ownership of personal and community health.
- 20.12.** In a mandatory mental health information passage in all syllabi, and a mandatory mental health information slide in all classrooms at the beginning of semesters and during times of heightened student distress.
- 20.13.** That student note takers at the Office for Student Accessibility and Achievement should be fairly compensated for their labour
- 20.14.** In a continuous formal evaluation of McGill's exam policies.
- 20.15.** In an increase in the diversity of McGill's Mental Health staff expertise and experience through the hiring of, and/or collaboration with, more people of colour and gender diverse individuals
- 20.16.** That as a community, we are responsible for ensuring that students have access to educational materials about smoking which are adapted to the university context.
- 20.17.** That substance users and those with a history of substance use often go without a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to prevent the harmful effects of drug use
- 20.18.** In the provision and promotion of extensive, varied resources for substance cessation and reduction to meet the needs of students. These resources include, but are not limited to:



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

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

- a. Contact information of chatlines.
- b. Providing peer support for those wishing to quit or reduce their substance use.
- c. Providing counseling and treatment at the Student Wellness Hub.
- d. Providing links and coverage information for off-campus resources and counselling.
- e. Expanded to refer to all substances and all substance use.