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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SSMU GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

September 28, 2026

1. Call to Order: **18:31**

The Speaker calls the meeting to order at 18:31.

2. 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'AÉUM reconnaît que l'Université McGill est située sur le territoire traditionnel et non cédé des nations Anishinaabeg et Haudenosaunee. L'AÉUM 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'AÉUM s'engage à respecter les lois et coutumes traditionnelles de ces territoires.

The Speaker delivers the land acknowledgement.

The Speaker provides instructions regarding entry to and exit from the meeting. He notes that a French interpreter is available and reminds members of the upcoming provincial election.

Member Moutter raises a parliamentary inquiry regarding Rule 6.3 and quorum.

The Speaker explains that quorum requires 350 members. He states that if quorum is not reached by the time the motion is considered, the vote will be consultative and non-binding.

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

The agenda is distributed.

The Speaker asks if there are any additions or changes to the agenda.

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Member Moutter proposes an amendment to add a 45-minute discussion period concerning the matters being considered at the meeting.

The Speaker asks if any members are opposed to extending the discussion period to 45 minutes.

The Speaker notes that more members oppose the extension than support it, and the amendment does not carry. He states that he will extend the discussion period if further discussion is needed when the time comes.

The Speaker asks if there are any further additions or changes to the agenda.

Seeing none, the Speaker asks if any members are opposed to the adoption of the agenda.

Seeing none, the agenda is adopted.

4. Minutes for approval
    a. Minutes of the SSMU General Assembly 2025-09-28 – **APPROVED**

The minutes are distributed.

The Speaker asks if any members are opposed to the approval of the minutes.

Seeing none, the minutes are approved.

5. Announcements
    a. VP H. Wang

Vice-President Harry Wang reminds members that the Quebec election takes place on October 5 and encourages registered voters to participate. He emphasizes that greater student turnout demonstrates to the government that student voices matter in provincial politics. He notes that the voting location has changed to the first floor of Redpath Library. Advance voting takes place on September 27, September 28, and October 1, and members may also vote on election day. He states that the University will cancel most or all classes on election day and reminds members to bring government-issued identification.

The Speaker opens the floor to questions.

Seeing none, Announcement 5a is concluded.

6. Report of Executives (President Abu-Alkhair)

FOR APPROVAL

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President Abu Alkhair presents the Executive Report, covering executive responsibilities, summer activities, and upcoming initiatives. The subsequent Board of Directors' Report will outline the Board's role and key decisions, followed by an opportunity for questions. The President serves as the Society's chief spokesperson and head governing officer, working closely with the General Manager to ensure that operations run smoothly. The Vice-President University Affairs oversees advocacy within the University, including student services, enrollment, and Senate. Their responsibilities include coordinating SSMU student senators and conveying student concerns to the University, including feedback regarding Counselling and Psychiatric Services and health insurance. The Vice-President External Affairs manages the Society's external relations. The Vice-President Internal Affairs oversees communications, events, and alumni relations. The Vice-President Clubs and Services oversees student groups, including clubs, services, Independent Student Groups, and certain faculty associations. President Abu Alkhair commends the recent Activities Night held in the University Centre. The Vice-President Finance oversees the Society's finances. This position is appointed, while the other five executive positions are elected. Regarding summer activities, the executives complete their training in May and oversee staff hiring and onboarding. Their work also includes reviewing governing documents, including the Internal Regulations, policies, and Constitution. The Vice-President Finance works with other executives to oversee finances and operations and ensure that the Society remains on track for the year. Vice-President Internal Affairs Maggie organizes the first movie night, with another scheduled for the following day. Vice-President External Affairs Harry Wang establishes contact with universities across Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec. Student group onboarding is underway, with training sessions scheduled for the upcoming weekend. Upcoming events include Four Floors and a tailgate and homecoming collaboration with Athletics and Recreation, tentatively scheduled for October 23 to 25. The fall referendum will include motions and student fees, alongside a plebiscite question to gauge interest in reinstating the yearbook. President Abu Alkhair encourages members to provide feedback on revisions to the University's Strategic Academic Plan through the available feedback form, including suggestions regarding teaching, laboratories, and guest speakers.

The Executive Report concludes.

7. Report of the Board of Directors (President Abu-Alkhair)

President Abu Alkhair presents the Board of Directors' Report, outlining the Board's composition, responsibilities, and key decisions since the previous General Assembly in fall 2025. The Board comprises four voting executives, four councillors, and four members at large. Applications for member-at-large positions are expected to open soon. Eligibility requirements include SSMU membership, being at least 18 years old, Canadian citizenship or permanent residency, having no criminal record, and having completed at least 18 credits and 18 months at McGill. The Board is the

Society's highest governing body and oversees its finances, human resources, legal affairs, and operations. It also ratifies motions adopted by the Legislative Council. Key decisions include ratifying referendum fees and amendments to the Internal Regulations, approving the annual and revised budgets, and authorizing expenditures for repairs to the University Centre and office space. The Board also adopts an Events Protocol and a Food and Alcohol Protocol and establishes the governance calendar, including referendum, General Assembly, and Legislative Council dates.

The Speaker opens the floor to questions.

Member Jan asks when voting will take place on the motion concerning an academic boycott of the Hebrew University.

President Abu Alkhair explains that voting on the motion will take place after the remaining agenda items, provided that quorum of 350 members is reached. If quorum is not reached, the vote will be consultative.

Member Alice Maitlis asks about the process for becoming Vice-President Internal or Vice-President External.

President Abu Alkhair explains that candidates must apply and obtain 100 signatures from SSMU members before beginning their campaign. Campaign posts must be approved by Elections SSMU. Candidates may use various campaign methods, including songs and videos. Any SSMU member may run for an executive position.

Member Christy asks about the yearbook referendum.

President Abu Alkhair explains that the yearbook ceased publication in 2016 and that the proposed plebiscite is a non-binding question. He notes that a preorder system is being considered through which students could purchase a yearbook.

Member John Vogel asks what happened with Midnight Kitchen over the summer.

President Abu Alkhair explains that, following the restructuring of the lunch service, SSMU hired a Food and Hospitality Services Manager to oversee the lunch program and food pantry. The program employs primarily student staff to prepare and serve meals on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The food pantry is open to all SSMU members. PGSS is expected to propose a fee through a referendum to support increased food pantry capacity.

Member Max Funge asks why the Vice-President Finance position is no longer elected.

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President Abu Alkhair explains that appointing the Vice-President Finance allows candidates to be assessed on their qualifications. The selection process considers their understanding of the Society's financial procedures and accounting, as well as their ideas for the role. The appointment was conducted through the Nominating Committee last year. A separate committee is being considered to improve the selection process and assess both candidates' technical competencies and their ability to collaborate with the executive team.

Member Patrick Jeffrey asks how the Community Solidarity Fund operates.

President Abu Alkhair refers the question to Vice-President Harry Wang.

Vice-President Harry Wang explains that the fund supports social justice initiatives. A new application form is expected to be released this week, and applications are welcome.

Member Alice Maitlis asks about the SSMU Health and Dental Plan.

President Abu Alkhair refers the question to the Vice-President Finance.

The Vice-President Finance explains that coverage is provided through a reimbursement process.

Member Alice Maitlis asks whether supporting documentation is required.

The Vice-President Finance indicates that supporting documentation is required and advises the member to verify the requirements.

A member [name unclear] asks why participation by Zoom is unavailable for this General Assembly.

The Speaker explains that General Assemblies are normally held in person. Previous hybrid meetings accommodate exceptional circumstances, such as the STM strike last year, which creates barriers to attendance. Hybrid meetings present challenges in verifying participants' identities and preventing duplicate voting. Holding meetings in person helps maintain confidentiality and ensure proper representation. The Speaker notes that Section 4 of the Standing Rules requires meetings to be held in person unless the Standing Committee determines that extraordinary circumstances warrant a hybrid meeting.

Member Amnna Attia asks what SSMU will do to support Muslim students following the passage of Bill 9.

President Abu Alkhair explains that the SSMU executives discuss access to prayer spaces extensively with the administration. Their conclusion is that, as private entities, SSMU and PGSS can permit prayer within their spaces. He identifies the Birks Building as another protected space on campus. The

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executives are exploring additional spaces that SSMU could occupy to facilitate access to prayer. However, securing these spaces presents challenges, as it could require leasing or purchasing additional premises.

Member Alice Maitlis requests clarification regarding SSMU's policy against antisemitism, including what occurred and what the policy entails.

The Secretariat searches for the policy document.

President Abu Alkhair reads the policy aloud.

Member Christy Khairallah asks whether quorum has been reached, what the quorum requirement is, and what happens if quorum is not reached.

President Abu Alkhair states that 305 members are present and that quorum requires 350 members.

Member Mars Gagawchuk asks why the Midnight Kitchen fee still appears among the student fees available for opt-out.

President Abu Alkhair explains that the executives, Legislative Council, and Board of Directors cannot unilaterally change fee opt-outs or their descriptions. Any change to the description to reflect the program's current name, SSMU Lunch Service, must go through the referendum process.

Member Emily Cao asks about the process for amending the Standing Rules, particularly Standing Rule 4, noting the limitations faced by members who cannot attend in person when participation by Zoom is unavailable.

The Speaker explains that the Standing Rules governing the current General Assembly cannot be amended at this time. A hybrid meeting requires extraordinary circumstances under these rules. Technical challenges, including setting up Zoom and verifying participants' student status, also make hybrid participation infeasible at this time.

Member Emily Cao clarifies that her question concerns the process for amending the Standing Rules.

The Speaker explains that members should contact the Steering Committee or Secretariat in advance to discuss proposed amendments. Members may also ask their faculty representatives to bring proposed changes to the Legislative Council.

A member (name not recorded) asks why voting will take place by secret ballot, who serves on the Steering Committee, and why this decision was made.

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President Abu Alkhair explains that the Steering Committee reviews motions submitted to the Legislative Council and General Assembly. He indicates that its composition includes the President, four councillors, and members of the Secretariat, with the Deputy Speaker serving as Chair. The decision to use a secret ballot is intended to improve efficiency and facilitate accurate vote counting. Electronic voting allows results to be displayed and participation to be tracked using the record of members attending the General Assembly.

The member asks a follow-up question regarding why this particular motion and topic were selected for a secret ballot.

President Abu Alkhair clarifies that the decision to use a secret ballot does not specifically target this motion. Rather, the Steering Committee selects this method to improve the efficiency of vote counting based on experiences at previous General Assemblies.

The Speaker announces that seven additional members are required to reach quorum.

Member Mounes Abdoh asks about the quorum requirement and when it was last changed.

President Abu Alkhair notes that revisions to the Constitution and other governing documents took place last year. Proposed constitutional amendments do not proceed to a vote because quorum is not reached. The Legislative Council is expected to discuss the Constitution this year and consider whether to move forward with those amendments. He offers to discuss the matter further with the member.

Parliamentarian Chan announces that quorum has been reached.

Member Aubrey Broban asks how members of the Board of Directors are appointed and what the election process entails.

President Abu Alkhair explains that the Board includes four executives. Executive and councillor representatives must meet eligibility requirements, including Canadian citizenship or permanent residency and completion of at least 18 credits and 18 months at McGill. Eligible Legislative Councillors may apply to serve on the Board and are selected through a motion and vote at Council. The Nominating Committee reviews member-at-large applications and recommends candidates for appointment to the Board. Potential constitutional amendments may change the Board's composition, but no such changes are currently in effect.

Member Aubrey Broban asks who serves on the Nominating Committee.

President Abu Alkhair refers the question to the Parliamentarian.

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Parliamentarian Chen explains that she serves as the Committee's non-voting Chair. The Committee comprises two directors from the Board of Directors, two councillors from the Legislative Council, and two to four members at large. Recruitment for committee members at large is underway, with interviews ongoing. Applications for positions on the Board are expected to open soon.

The report concludes.

8. Report of the Accountability Commissioner (Lounes Azzoun)

Accountability Commissioner Lounes Azzoun presents the Accountability Commissioner's Report. His responsibilities include overseeing the accountability of executives, councillors, senators, and directors; directing the Accountability Commission; monitoring accountability policies and projects; and addressing accountability issues and mandate-related complaints from members. The Commissioner reports to the Legislative Council and General Assembly once per semester. This semester's priorities include implementing executive mandate trackers and regular check-ins to assess progress. For the Legislative Council and Board of Directors, the Commission aims to develop mechanisms to ensure that assigned tasks are completed. Priorities for committees include developing codes of conduct and accountability mechanisms. Outreach initiatives include forms, surveys, email, campaigns, and office hours to gather student feedback. Recruitment is underway for two members at large from the student body. Interested members are invited to email the Commissioner or speak with him during the General Assembly. The Commission reviews complaints from the student body and works to ensure their resolution. Accountability Commissioner Azzoun welcomes questions, concerns, and feedback by email.

The Speaker opens the floor to question.

Member Moutter raises a parliamentary inquiry regarding a recess and subsequently raises a point of order under Standing Rule 9.2 concerning a 15-minute recess.

Member Nathan Lippa moves to suspend the rules to forgo the recess, seconded by Member Matias Basanta.

The Speaker asks if any members are opposed to suspending the rules to forgo the recess.

The Speaker announces that the rules are suspended and the meeting continues without a recess.

The Speaker asks if there are any questions regarding the report.

Seeing none, the report concludes.

9. Presentations

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10. Question Period **(5)**
11. Motions for Approval
    a. MOTION REGARDING THE ACADEMIC BOYCOTT OF THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM EXCHANGE PROGRAM ("HUJI BOYCOTT") (Member Sumayya Kheireddine) - **APPROVED**
        i. Note: the Steering Committee has exceptionally approved this item to be voted on by secret ballot

Member Sumayya Kheireddine presents Motion 10a concerning McGill's student exchange agreement with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She explains that the agreement, signed in December 2023, permits each university to send up to three undergraduate students per academic year. The agreement expires in 2028, with renewal negotiations required nine months before expiry. The motion asks SSMU Senators to advocate against renewing or reinstating the agreement. Member Kheireddine situates the motion within previous student advocacy concerning McGill's relationships with Israeli institutions and clarifies that it addresses institutional cooperation rather than the political views of individual students, professors, or administrators. The grounds presented for the motion concern the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's relationships with the Israeli military and the location of its campuses. The university supports military equipment and units and provides academic and financial assistance to students serving in the military, reservists, and combat veterans. Her presentation also identifies a military base on campus associated with the Havatzalot program, described as an academic and military training program for intelligence officers. Regarding campus locations, the Givat Ram campus was built on the site of a Palestinian village whose residents were displaced in 1948. She further states that the Mount Scopus campus is situated on occupied Palestinian territory and has expanded onto expropriated land from a neighbouring Palestinian village. Member Kheireddine explains that the motion follows calls for an institutional academic boycott made by Palestinian academics and civil society since 2004. In her assessment, the exchange agreement provides institutional support and legitimacy to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The reasons presented for ending the agreement include the university's military relationships, Palestinian displacement, and restrictions on Palestinian access to education. She concludes by asking the student body to approve Motion 10a so that SSMU Senators may advocate against renewing or reinstating the student exchange agreement.

Member Senna asks about the results of the consultation.

Member Sumayya Kheireddine states that the feedback is positive and explains that revisions were made following consultation.

Member John Vogel moves to call the question, seconded by Member Yasmeen Wedemire.

The Speaker calls for a vote on the motion to call the question.

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A majority of members raise their voting cards, and the motion to call the question carries.

Voting on Motion 10a takes place by secret ballot.

Motion is passed (not sure if I should add specifics here)

12. For Discussion
    a. To be added by YOU!

A member (name not recorded) moves to suspend the discussion period, seconded by Member Alice.

13. Adjournment: **20:06**

Motion to adjourn and (mover to be confirmed) Member Bianka (name not sure) seconds the motion.

The meeting adjourns at 20:06.

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