



**SCIENCE
UNDERGRADUATE
SOCIETY**

CONSTITUTION

Amended January 2018

CONSTITUTION

SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE

SOCIETY (SUS)

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Preamble

Representation The SUS shall act as organization to represent and promote the welfare and interests of all students in the Faculty of Science and Faculty of Arts and Science at McGill University. It shall serve as the official voice of the undergraduate Science students at McGill and shall always act in the best interests of the members. The SUS shall also act as an umbrella organization to coordinate and support the departments in the Faculty of Science and provide them with the resources to best represent and provide for members in their departments.

Service The SUS shall provide activities and services to enhance the educational, cultural, and social conditions of its members. The Society shall be recognized by its members and the Students' Society, Senate, and Board of Governors of McGill University as representative of all undergraduate science students at McGill University (Downtown

campus).

Article 1: Interpretation

- 1.1 In the case of disagreement in the interpretation of the English and French versions of this constitution, the English version will take precedence.
- 1.2 In the event of a conflict between the Constitution of a Departmental Society and the Constitution and By-laws of the Society, the Constitution and By-laws of the Society shall take precedence. In the event of a contradiction between the Constitution and the By-laws of the Society, the Constitution shall take precedence.
- 1.3 In the case of conflict between the Constitution and Quebec law, Quebec law will take precedence.
- 1.4 Words in the singular include the plural and vice versa.
- 1.5 The preamble shall form an integral part of the Constitution.

Article 2: Definitions

- 2.1 “**Academic Year**” shall begin the first day of classes of the fall semester and end the last day of classes in the fall semester. It will resume on the first day of classes of the winter semester and end on the last day of classes of the winter semester as defined by the McGill Calendar;
- 2.2 “**By-law**” shall be any of a set of rules adopted by the Society, a standing committee of the Society, or a General Assembly for governing its own meetings or affairs;
- 2.3 “**Coordinator**” shall refer to any person appointed to run a Society Organizing Committee or as editor of a Society Publication;
- 2.4 “**Departmental Society**” shall be the group of Society members representing students within the department;
- 2.5 “**Executive**” shall refer to the Executive Committee of the Society established in accordance with Article 8 of the constitution;
- 2.6 “**General Assembly**” shall refer to the body of the Society, as established in accordance with Article 17 of the constitution;
- 2.7 “**General Council**” shall refer to the body of the Society, as established in accordance with Article 6 and Article 7 of the Constitution;
- 2.8 “**Member**” shall mean any person satisfying the requirements for membership to the society in accordance with Article 3 of the Constitution;
- 2.9 “**Policy**” shall refer to an independent motion passed by the General Council or Executive Committee which is intended to provide a guideline for the conduct of the Society or Executive Committee;
- 2.10 “**Senate**” shall refer to the Senate of McGill University.
- 2.11 “**Society Membership Fee**” shall mean the fee paid by all members.
- 2.12 “**Speaker of Council**” shall preside over the General Assembly and meetings of the

- General Council, as well as any other relevant Committees as outlined in the By-laws.
- 2.13 “SSMU” shall refer to the Students' Society of McGill University.
- 2.14 “SUS” and “Society” shall mean the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) of McGill University or l’Association Étudiante de la Faculté des Sciences de premier cycle de l’Université McGill (AEFSPCUM);
- 2.15 “CRO” shall refer to the Chief Returning Officer, who shall be responsible for the conduct and execution of the elections and referenda according to the articles in the Constitution and By-laws.
- 2.16 A “Simple Majority” is defined as fifty percent (50%) of votes cast plus one. An abstention shall count towards quorum but not count as a vote cast.

Article 3: Membership

- 3.1 Members of the Society shall be all students currently registered at McGill University (Downtown campus) in the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Arts and Science, subject to payment of fees prescribed in Article 4.

Article 4: Membership Fees

- 4.1 The Fiscal Year of the Society shall be from the first (1st) of May to the thirtieth (30th) of April the following year.
- 4.2 All members shall pay a Society Membership Fee, as adopted by way of a Referendum.
- 4.3 Any change in the Society Membership Fee shall be subject to ratification by the Society's members voting in a referendum called for that purpose.
- 4.4 A percentage of the Society Membership Fee shall be designated for distribution via the Equalization Fund to the departments. The amount shall be stipulated in the Financial By-laws.

Article 5: Finances of the Society

- 5.1 There shall be a set of Financial By-laws of the Society governing the finances of the Society. The Society shall not operate at a deficit, always remaining above the amount stipulated in the Financial By-laws.
- 5.2 The Society shall be subject to an audit, by a third party, at the end of the every fiscal year.
- 5.3 The accounts of the Society shall be maintained according to standard accounting practices and shall be available to the membership.

Article 6: Members of the General Council

- 6.1 The General Council shall consist of:
 - 6.1.1 The members of the Executive as defined in Article 8.
 - 6.1.2 A representative of each of the Science Faculty's departmental associations, to be chosen in accordance with each association's constitution.
 - 6.1.3 The Science representatives to SSMU Council, as elected in accordance with Article 13.
 - 6.1.4 The Science representatives to the Senate.
 - 6.1.5 The Speaker of Council.
- 6.2 No member of the Society may concurrently hold more than one position on the General Council.
- 6.3 Each member of the General Council has the right to one (1) vote. The Speaker of Council, Executive Administrative Officer, Executor of Clubs and Services and Executive Revenue Officer shall be non-voting members and not have the right to vote at meetings of the General Council. All questions submitted to the Legislative Council shall be decided by Simple Majority, unless otherwise provided for.
- 6.4 Quorum for a meeting of the General Council shall be fifty percent (50%) of its voting members.

Article 7: Powers and Duties of General Council

- 7.1 The General Council is the governing body of the Society and as such shall:
 - 7.1.1 Recognize the authority of the Society's constitution.
 - 7.1.2 Ensure that the aims of the Society are met.
 - 7.1.3 Uphold the views of the students it represents.
 - 7.1.4 Be empowered to make all decisions on behalf of the Society.
 - 7.1.5 Adopt the Society's annual budget.
 - 7.1.6 Establish Committees of Council when and where it deems necessary.
- 7.2 Regardless of their terms of office in any other related functions, the term of members of the General Council shall be from May first (1st) to April thirtieth (30th).
 - 7.2.1. First Year Undergraduate Science Society and Med-P Dent-P Student Association members are excluded and may maintain an interim position until the incoming members have been elected.
- 7.3 The General Council shall have the power to mandate the votes of the representatives to SSMU.
- 7.4 The General Council may, by way of a resolution, create permanent and ad-hoc committees as necessary, which shall have the powers and responsibilities as determined by the General Council.

- 7.5 Meetings of the General Council shall be held at least once every two (2) weeks during the academic year with the exclusion of holidays stipulated by the University. The President or any eight (8) members of the General Council may call a meeting of the General Council with forty-eight (48) hours notice.
- 7.6 Meetings of the General Council shall be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order and presided over by the Speaker. The meetings shall be governed by the General Council By-laws.
- 7.7 With the exception of closed sessions, General Council meetings will be open to the public in a non-voting capacity.
 - 7.7.1 Only members of the General Council, as stipulated in Article 6.1, shall be permitted to attend a closed session.
 - 7.7.2 Items discussed in a closed session may be disclosed to the membership if a motion to do so is passed with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the council members present at said closed session.
- 7.8 Quorum for a meeting of General Council shall be fifty percent (50%) of its voting members.
 - 7.8.1 If the designated representative is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, it is that representative's responsibility to send a proxy from their council.
 - 7.8.2 If an appropriate proxy cannot be found, written notice must be given to the Executive Administrator with a valid excuse.
 - 7.8.3 Any unexcused absences or absences without a valid excuse shall be reported to the President of the council in question.
 - 7.8.4 Three unexcused absences over the course of the year shall result in a loss of funding and privileges for the council in question for the upcoming semester.
 - 7.8.4.1 Funding includes Equalization payments and access to any funds available through an application.
 - 7.8.4.2 Privileges include but are not limited to table booking in Burnside Basement and room bookings coordinated through the Executive Committee.
 - 7.8.5 Funding and privileges will be restored after one full semester without violating Article 8.1.4 or by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote by the Executive Council.

Article 8: The Executive Committee

- 8.1 There shall be a committee of the General Council called the Executive Committee, which shall govern the Society between meetings of the General Council in a manner consistent with policies set out by the General Council.
- 8.2 The Executive Committee shall be composed of:

- 8.2.1 The President
- 8.2.2 The Vice-President, Academic
- 8.2.3 The Vice-President, Finance
- 8.2.4 The Vice-President, Internal
- 8.2.5 The Vice-President, External
- 8.2.6 The Vice-President, Communications
- 8.2.7 The Vice-President, Sustainability
- 8.2.8 The Executive Administrator

8.3 All members of the Executive Committee, whether elected or appointed shall have one (1) vote on the Executive Committee.

8.4 All members of the Executive Committee are mandated to have at least two (2) office hours per week during the academic year.

Article 9: Powers and Duties of the Executive Committee

9.1 All members of the Executive Committee shall be bound by this Constitution and By-laws, and must act in the best interest of the Society.

9.2 All members of the Executive Committee shall meet at least once every two (2) weeks during the academic year, with the exclusion of holidays stipulated by the University.

9.3 The Executive Committee shall have all the powers of General Council between meetings of General Council except that it shall not vote on motions to amend this Constitution and By-laws.

9.4 The minutes of all resolutions and actions of the Executive Committee taken between General Council meetings must be made available to General Council.

9.5 Incoming members of the Executive Committee shall attend meetings of General Council and General Assembly immediately upon election or appointment.

9.6 Incoming members of the Executive Committee should prepare, in conjunction with incumbent members, draft budgets before the incumbents' term ends.

9.7 The **President** shall:

- 9.7.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.7.2 Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the Society.
- 9.7.3 Be the official spokesperson for the Society.
- 9.7.4 Act as internal ombudsperson for the Executive Committee.
- 9.7.5 Ensure all Executive Committee members fulfill their constitutional duties.
- 9.7.6 Hire and supervise the Speaker of Council, Chief Returning Officer, and Accountability Director.

- 9.7.7 Call all meetings of General Council and General Assembly.
- 9.7.8 Call and preside over meetings of the Executive Committee.
- 9.7.9 Be responsible for the organization of the annual Executive Orientation.

9.8 The **Vice-President, Academic** shall:

- 9.8.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.8.2 Be responsible for all educational and curricular concerns of the Society.
- 9.8.3 Be responsible for the representation of the Society at meeting of the Faculty of Science and Academic Committee.
- 9.8.4 Ensure that the President fulfills their constitutional duties.

9.9 The **Vice-President, Finance** shall:

- 9.9.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.9.2 Advise the General Council on all financial matters of the Society.
- 9.9.3 Prepare the Society's budget, including the budgets of the Society's committees, in accordance with the Financial By-laws of the Society.
- 9.9.4 Keep proper accounts and records in accordance with the Society's By-laws.
- 9.9.5 Prepare a year-end financial statement by the first (1st) of November.
- 9.9.6 Be responsible for the prompt and proper filing of tax and insurance papers.
- 9.9.7 Be responsible for the Society's corporation and the adherence of the Society to corporate responsibilities as outlined by Quebec/Canadian corporate laws.
- 9.9.8 Be responsible for relationships with government.
- 9.9.9 Chair the Finance Committee.

9.10 The **Vice-President, Internal** shall:

- 9.10.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.10.2 Be responsible for the organization of social, cultural, and other activities for the members of the Society.
- 9.10.3 Ensure all social, cultural, and other events are in accordance with the Equity Policy By-laws.
- 9.10.4 Represent the Society at all Orientation Week related meetings.
- 9.10.5 Promote inclusivity and sustainability in all events organized by the Society.

9.11 The **Vice-President, External** shall:

- 9.10.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.10.2 In conjunction with the President, represent the Society to outside bodies and individuals.
- 9.10.3 Be responsible for matters relating to the interaction of the Society with outside groups except for the press and government.
- 9.10.4 Be responsible for maintaining relationships with student organizations at the provincial, federal, and international levels and with other science student societies of other universities.

9.12 The **Vice-President, Sustainability** shall:

- 9.11.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.

- 9.11.2 Promote the social and environmental sustainability of the Society and its members.
- 9.11.3 Be responsible for the Society's philanthropic endeavors.
- 9.11.4 Be responsible for the implementation of the Equity Policy By-laws.
- 9.11.5 Promote inclusivity and sustainability in all events organized by the Society.
- 9.11.6 Promote and create mental health and self-care initiatives.

9.13 The **Vice-President, Communications** shall:

- 9.13.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
- 9.13.2 Be responsible for the proper publicity of all Society services and events.
- 9.13.3 Be responsible for the maintenance of all the Society's web outlets, including but not limited to the Society's Facebook page and website.
- 9.13.4 Be responsible for the coordination and distribution of the Society's listserv and first-year handbook.
- 9.13.5 Liase between the Executive Committee and departments.
- 9.13.6 Liase between the Executive Committee and SUS Clubs, Services, and McGill Science Computer Taskforce.
- 9.13.7 Be responsible for the implementation of the Clubs By-laws and Services By-laws.
- 9.13.8 Be responsible for the allocation of the Clubs Fund.
- 9.13.9 Be responsible for overseeing First Year Undergraduate Science Society's appointment and operation.

9.14 The **Executive Administrator** shall:

- 9.14.1 Be appointed and hold no vote on General Council.
- 9.14.2 Ensure the proper maintenance of the Executive Committee office.
- 9.14.3 Assist in management and improvement of the Society's spaces and spaces utilized by undergraduate Science and Arts & Science students.
- 9.14.4 Be responsible for the official transcription of all Executive Committee and General Council meetings.
- 9.14.5 Be responsible for the official transcription of all General Assemblies.
- 9.14.6 Ensure the proper internal publicity of Executive Committee and General Council affairs and meetings.
- 9.14.7 Maintain all relevant documentation including, but not limited to Terms of Reference for departments, Constitutions, and Bylaws.

9.15 In the event of the resignation or impeachment of the President, one of the Vice-Presidents, or representative to SSMU, a replacement shall be chosen according to the procedure outlined in Article 19.6.

9.16 Quorum for an Executive Committee meeting shall be fifty percent (50%) of its members.

Article 10: Departmental Societies

- 10.1 The SUS shall recognize, at most, one (1) departmental society from each department of the Faculty of Science, and one (1) society representing First Year Science students.
- 10.2 Each departmental society must have a Constitution which defines its name, membership, purpose, and structure. Said Constitution must be submitted to the SUS VP Communications at the beginning of each academic year.
 - 10.2.1 Amendments to departmental constitutions must be passed through the General Council with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote .
- 10.3 Each departmental society must be audited along with the third-party audit of the Society's budget, as outlined in Article 5.2 and the Financial By-laws.
- 10.4 The departmental societies shall be considered as part of the Society and be bound by the Memorandum of Agreement with the University, as well as the rules, regulations, and policies of the Society. In cases of dispute the Constitution and By-laws of the Society shall take precedence, as outlined in Article 1.2.
 - 10.4.1 Any contract entered into by the departments with an external company must be presented to the ERO one (1) week prior to the contracts' signing solely for the purpose of ensuring there are no conflicts with existing contracts signed by the Society.
 - 10.4.2 All contracts signed by the departments must be co-signed by the ERO.
 - 10.4.3 Departmental societies may not issue their own compulsory student fee, independent of the Society's base fee.
- 10.5 Each departmental society shall have one (1) vote on General Council.
- 10.6 If any departmental society does not conform to Article 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, and the departmental society shall cease to be recognized by the Society, and shall lose all rights and privileges associated with being a recognized departmental association of the Society.

Article 11: Duties of the Representative to SSMU

- 11.1 SUS representatives to SSMU must be accountable to the Society. They shall:
 - 11.1.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on General Council.
 - 11.1.2 Be a voting member of SSMU Legislative Council and be bound by the SSMU Constitution and Bylaws.
 - 11.1.3 Serve as a liaison between Science students and the SSMU.
 - 11.1.4 Represent the views of the General Council to the SSMU Legislative Council.
 - 11.1.5 Report on all relevant decision and discussions of the General Council to SSMU and of SSMU to the General Council.
 - 11.1.6 Hold at least one (1) hour of office hours per week during the academic year.

- 11.2 Representatives to SSMU may have their vote on SSMU Council mandated by the General Council, as stipulated in Article 7.3.
- 11.3 Representatives to SSMU must be able to justify their vote on SSMU Council to the General Council. Failure to do so shall be considered grounds to be evaluated by an ad-hoc, Executive or any other body deemed fit by the General Council.

Article 12: Duties of the Science Senator

- 12.1 The Science Senator(s) must be accountable to the Society. They shall:
 - 12.1.1 Be elected and removed from office as per SSMU By-laws.
 - 12.1.2 Hold one (1) vote on General Council.
 - 12.1.3 Represent and be guided by the views of the General Council at Senate Meetings.
 - 12.1.4 Serve as a liaison between Science students and the Senate
 - 12.1.5 Report on all relevant decision and discussions of the Senate to General Council.

Article 13: General Elections

- 13.1 All members of the Society shall be eligible to vote in Society elections.
 - 13.1.1 Only members of the Society enrolled in the Bachelor of Science program (excluding students enrolled in the School of Environment, who have their own SSMU Representative) shall be eligible to vote for the Science Representative to SSMU positions.
- 13.2 Elections shall be conducted in accordance with this Constitution and the Electoral and Referendum By-laws.
- 13.3 Elections shall be won by a simple majority.

Article 14: Electoral Officers

- 14.1 There shall be a CRO who shall be responsible for the conduct and execution of the elections and referenda according to the articles in this Constitution and the By-laws.
- 14.2 To ensure that the CRO shall fulfill their duties with the strictest impartiality, the Executive Committee will appoint one (1) individual who shall conform to the criteria listed below.
 - 14.2.1 The student shall be a U3, or higher, undergraduate graduating student or a student currently enrolled in graduate studies at McGill University.
 - 14.2.2 The student shall not be a full-time or part-time undergraduate student in the Faculty of Science nor shall they be enrolled in a minor in the Faculty.
- 14.3 The CRO shall submit a formal, written report to the Executive Committee within a week after each election or referendum.

14.3.1 This report shall be made available to any member of the Society within five (5) days of a written request.

14.4 A decision made by the CRO concerning the interpretation of articles in this Constitution and By-Laws regarding elections and referenda shall be considered binding, subject only to appeal to the General Council.

Article 15: Eligibility in Elections

15.1 All members of the Society in satisfactory standing, as determined by the University, shall be eligible to stand for election to any of the Society Executive positions.

15.1.1 Only members of the Society enrolled in the Bachelor of Science program (excluding students enrolled in the School of Environment) in satisfactory standing, as determined by McGill University, shall be eligible to stand for election to the Science Representative to SSMU positions.

15.2 All elected individuals must remain members of the Society throughout their tenure. If this requirement is not met, the individual in question must resign from position.

Article 16: Procedures of Elections and Referenda

16.1 All members of the Society shall be eligible to vote in Society elections and referenda.

16.2 Elections and referenda shall be conducted in accordance with the Electoral and Referenda By-Laws.

16.3 A referendum may be initiated either by a resolution passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SUS Council with at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the General Council in attendance, or by a petition signed by at least two hundred and fifty (250) members of the Society.

16.4 Referenda passed will remain in effect for at least the rest of the academic year unless the decision is overturned in a subsequent student-initiated referendum.

16.5 Elections and referenda shall be passed by a simple majority.

16.6 All referendum questions must be approved by the CRO to ensure the question is stated fairly and without bias, according to the interpretation of the CRO.

16.7 The quorum for all referenda and elections shall be ten percent (10%) of the members.

Article 17: General Assembly

17.1 The Society shall hold at least one (1) General Assembly per academic year.

- 17.2 A General Assembly may establish, amend, or rescind any policy of the Society except:
- 17.2.1 The Constitution of the Society.
 - 17.2.2 Membership fees or other financial matters of the Society.
- 17.3 A General Assembly shall be convened by the President, either at the request of the General Council or by a request signed by at least one hundred (100) members of the Society.
- 17.4 General Assemblies shall be chaired by the Speaker of Council.
- 17.5 At least five (5) days public notice must be given for a General Assembly.
- 17.6 Quorum for a General Assembly shall be one hundred (100) members of the Society.
- 17.7 All resolutions passed at the General Assembly must be submitted to an online vote for ratification, as outlined in the Electoral and Referenda By-laws.
- 17.7.1 Quorum for online ratification shall be five percent (5%) of all members.
- 17.8 Resolutions adopted by a General Assembly supersede all decisions made by General Council, and may not be overturned by General Council.

Article 18: Judicial Board

- 18.1 The Judicial Board of the Students' Society of McGill University shall be the final authority on:
- 18.1.1 The interpretation of the Constitution and By-laws of the Society.
 - 18.1.2 The interpretation and legality of any motion passed by the General Council or the General Assembly.
 - 18.1.3 The interpretation and legality of referenda.
 - 18.1.4 Any decisions made by the CRO.
- 18.2 The Judicial Board shall have the power to declare invalid any act of the Society or its Committees, or decisions of the CRO which deviate from the Constitution and By-laws of the Society.
- 18.3 All decisions of the Judicial Board shall be binding upon all involved parties, and no appeals will be permitted.
- 18.4 All members of the Society shall have the right to petition the Judicial Board on matters falling within its authority.

Article 19: Removal or Vacancy from Office

- 19.1 Any member of the Executive or representative to SSMU may be removed from office

for impropriety, violation of the provisions of this Constitution and By-laws, delinquency of duties, or misappropriation of funds.

- 19.2 A motion to remove a member of the Executive or representative to SSMU must:
 - 19.2.1 Be presented in writing to the Speaker of Council at least one (1) week before a General Council meeting.
 - 19.2.2 The Speaker of Council must present the accused with notice of the motion to impeach on the day the motion is received by the Speaker of Council.
 - 19.2.3 Be signed by at least one-third (1/3) of the members of the General Council, or one hundred (100) of the Society.
 - 19.2.4 Be distributed to all members of General Council at least six (6) days prior to a regular meeting of the General Council.
- 19.3 Quorum for a motion to remove someone from office shall be two-thirds (2/3) of General Council.
- 19.4 Passage of a motion to impeach shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present at the General Council meeting.
- 19.5 Anyone removed from office shall have the right to appeal to the Judicial Board of SSMU, as outlined in Article 21.
- 19.6 In the event of a vacancy in the Executive Committee or representative to SSMU position(s), the Executive Committee will appoint a replacement on an interim basis to be approved by General Council, until a by-election, if deemed necessary by the General Council, is held.
 - 19.6.1 The appointed replacement must pass with a two-third ($\frac{2}{3}$) approval by the General Council.

Article 20: Language of the Society

- 20.1 English and French are the official languages of the Society.
- 20.2 Members of the Society may use either official language at all meetings and in all documentation.

Article 21: Freedom of Information

- 21.1 All documentation of the Society and all its committees shall be made public.
- 21.2 Information, documents, and minutes from closed sessions of Council or its committees shall not be made public unless passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- 21.3 Requests to see the minutes and documents of the Society and all its committees shall be addressed in writing to the Executive Administrator.

Article 22: Superseding Clause

22.1 This constitution supersedes all previous constitutions of the Society.

Article 23: Language of the Constitution

23.1 The Constitution shall be made available in English and French.

23.2 The Constitution shall respect the principle of gender neutrality at all times.

Article 24: By-Laws to the Constitution

24.1 Appended to this Constitution are a set of By-laws which are adopted by the General Council, providing that such By-laws conform to the principles embodied in this Constitution.

24.2 Quorum for a motion to enact, amend or rescind a By-law of the Society shall be two thirds (2/3) of the members of the General Council.

24.3 Passage to enact, amend or rescind a By-law shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of General Council present.

Article 25: Amendments to the Constitution

25.1 Amendments to the Constitution shall be made by means of referendum, as outlined in Article 16.