

## **Resolution Regarding the Abolishment of the General Assembly**

*Whereas*, The Referendum Process exists to provide the Society's Membership with a mechanism to engage in direct democracy;

*Whereas*, The Referendum Process is executed online, and is therefore accessible to every member of the Society;

*Whereas*, In order to ensure direct democracy, the General Assembly should be accessible to every member of the Society;

*Whereas*, No physical space on the campus of McGill University has the capacity to fit every member of the Society;

*Whereas*, Section VII of the Constitution states,

### Section VII – General Assemblies

#### Article 28 – General

28.1 A general assembly may establish, amend or rescind any policy of the society except:

- This constitution;
- Membership fees or other financial matters of the society;
- The composition of the society's staff
- Policies on matters external to the Society's regular activities.

28.2 Exceptionally, a policy on a matter external to the Society's regular activities may be adopted at a General Assembly if the following conditions are satisfied:

- Five hundred (500) members of the society are present
- 2/3 of the General Assembly votes in favor of debating the resolution
- The resolution passes with a simple majority

#### Article 29 – Procedures

29.1 The speaker of council shall call a general assembly if requested to do so in writing by no fewer than four (4) councilors or one hundred (100) members of the society from at least four (4) different faculties or schools with no more than fifty percent (50%) being from any one faculty or school.

29.2 The Speaker of Council shall call a Regular General Assembly to be held once per each fall and winter semester: Items on the agenda shall be submitted in writing to the Speaker of Council two weeks before the date of the Regular General Assembly, either by no fewer than four (4) councilors or one hundred (100) members of the Society from at least four (4) different Faculties or Schools without more than fifty percent (50%) being from any one Faculty or School.

29.3 The office of the President in conjunction with the executive and the speaker shall be responsible for the wide scale promotion of the General

Assembly, including but not exclusive to: emails, website promotions, publicity in the campus press as well as posting. The SSMU executive will use all means at their disposal to meet quorum for this body. The executive shall make every effort to actively advertise the assembly in the campus media.

29.4 Quorum for a regular general assembly shall be one hundred members of the society from at least four (4) different faculties or schools. A maximum of fifty (50) members from a particular faculty or school are counted for purposes of quorum.

29.5 Quorum for a strike general assembly shall be five hundred (500) members of the society from at least four (4) different faculties or schools. A maximum of two hundred and fifty (250) members from a particular faculty or school shall be counted for purposes of quorum.

29.6 General Assemblies shall be chaired by the speaker of council and governed by Roberts Rules of Order and any special rules of procedure established by council;

*Whereas*, Bylaw I-5 states,

#### Bylaw I-5 – General Assemblies

##### Part I: Special Rules of Order

##### Article 1 – Order of Business for a Regular General Assembly

1.1 The order of business for any regular General Assembly of the Society shall be as follows:

- 1.1.1 Call to Order
- 1.1.2 Approval of the Agenda
- 1.1.3 Question Period
- 1.1.4 Report of the Executive Committee
- 1.1.5 Old Business
- 1.1.6 New Business
- 1.1.7 Adjournment

##### Article 2 – Question Period

2.1 There shall be a maximum of twenty (20) minutes allotted to Question period;

2.2 Any member of the Society may ask a question. A maximum of five (5) minutes per question and answer will be allowed. Questions may be addressed to any Councillor, including the Executive Officers.

2.3 Should an individual being asked a question not have the appropriate information to answer it, s/he shall respond to the question in the SSMU Listserv and website within the next two weeks.

2.4 Supplemental questions that are on topic will be allowed. All questions and answers shall be addressed to the Speaker.

### Article 3 – Report of the Executive Committee

- 3.1 The Report of the Executive Committee to Regular General Assemblies shall focus on any action undertaken by the Executive Committee as a result of motions passed at the previous General Assembly;
- 3.2 The Report shall also address any other issues deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.
- 3.3 The Report shall be delivered by the President and other Executive Officers in no more than fifteen (15) minutes.
- 3.4 A question period of no more than twenty (20) minutes relating exclusively to matters discussed in the Report shall follow the delivery of the Report. Any member of the General Assembly may ask a question. Questions must be addressed to an Executive Officer of the Society.
- 3.5 The Report shall be made available to the students no less than one week in advance of the General Assembly and shall be published on the SSMU Website.

### Article 4 – Attendance

- 4.1 The Executive and Council shall be present at the General Assembly and shall be present for the entire Question Period excepting extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to, illness.

### Article 5 – Procedures of General Assemblies

- 5.1 The Speaker of the SSMU shall be responsible for the coordination of the Society's General Assemblies; for the administration of agenda items and setting of the agenda, for the preparation and distribution of the agenda, and for the conduction of the meetings themselves.
- 5.1.1 As the administrator of the agenda, any amendments to the agenda shall be reviewed and approved by the Speaker.
- 5.2 Items tabled from any General Assembly shall appear on the agenda of the next GA unless otherwise specified when tabled.
- 5.3 It shall be the prerogative of the SSMU Speaker to rule as to whether or not motions presented for the General Assembly shall be in order. These rulings may be subject to appeal to the Judicial Board of the SSMU.
- 5.3.1 This ruling shall occur within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the motion by the Speaker.
- 5.3.2 Should the Judicial Board fail to make a ruling on an appeal of the Speaker's decision in advance of the General Assembly in question, the motion shall come to the floor of the GA.
- 5.3.3 Should motions or statements come to the floor of a GA which, in the Speaker's opinion, directly contravene Article 6 of the preamble, or Article 29, of the SSMU Constitution, the Speaker shall have the authority to rule these motions or statements out of order and have them stricken. Such decisions shall not be subject to appeal by the Assembly, and can only be challenged at the Judicial Board of the Society.
- 5.4 The Speaker shall, in consultation with the mover, review and edit all motions submitted for concision and cogency.
- 5.5 There shall be an SSMU parliamentarian, selected by the President and Speaker, who shall field all questions of Assembly procedure for members of the Assembly.

5.6 Should more than one General Assembly be called for the same time period (such as a special GA & a strike GA), it shall be the purview of the Speaker to combine these two Assemblies into one, providing the appropriate quorum requirements are applied to the relevant motions.

5.7 All General Assemblies shall be in a physically accessible room and building according to the 1996 McGill standards for accessibility on campus.

5.7.1 The room or space selected for any General Assembly must have a room capacity of at least quorum.

5.7.2 All efforts must be made to select the largest room or space available.

5.8 All speaking from the floor shall be conducted in congruence with the principle of gender parity (male/nonmale) where possible.

5.9 A motion to hold an online vote on a main motion shall be in order at any time when a main motion is pending. Any member of the General Assembly, other than the Speaker or Parliamentarian, can move or second this motion.

5.9.1 The online vote shall be open to all members of the SSMU.

5.9.2 The motion for an online vote shall require a 2/3 majority of the General Assembly to defeat.

5.9.3 This vote shall be held no more than forty-eight (48) hours following the close of the General Assembly. It shall be open for a period of forty-eight (48) hours, and no campaigning shall be allowed on the motions in question. There shall be no quorum for this online vote.

Minutes from the GA shall be made available during the voting period.

5.9.4 The Speaker of Council shall have discretion to rule a motion for an online vote out of order if used in a disruptive manner.

## Article 6 – Special General Assemblies

6.1 Special General Assemblies shall be called where there exists a policy concern.

6.2 Special GAs may also be called in order to provide a forum for input and discussion in regards to the development of SSMU policy.

6.2.1 The process for placing such motions on the agenda shall be as laid out in Article 29.2 of the SSMU Constitution.

6.3 A special General Assembly shall be a General Assembly other than the required regular General Assembly held by the Society once per each fall and winter semester. It shall be called according to Article 29.1 of the Constitution.

6.4 The Speaker shall call any Special General Assembly four (4) weeks after receipt of a petition for a Special GA.

6.4.1 The Speaker shall ensure, along with the President and petitioners for Special GAs, that the arising deadlines for motions are well-publicized.

6.4.2 Should the four (4) week requirement place the Assembly in a mid-semester holiday, the Speaker shall schedule the Assembly for the next available regular academic day.

6.4.3 Should the four (4) week requirement place the Assembly in either a (end of semester) holiday or exam period, the GA shall be called for a date in the first two weeks of the next semester.

6.6 The process for placing items on the agenda for a special GA shall be the same as for a regular GA, as specified in article 29.2 of the Constitution.

6.7 Any motion to be placed on the agenda for a special GA shall require the Constitutionally mandated number of signatures to be placed on the agenda,

and signatures gathered for the purpose of calling a special GA may not be used to place a motion on the agenda.

6.8 The agenda of a special GA need not follow the formula laid out in article 1.1 of these by-laws, and shall be prepared by the Speaker in consultation with the SSMU President.

#### Article 7 – Consultative Forums

7.1 A consultative forum shall be established when any GA which fails to reach quorum or loses quorum at any point. Such a consultative forum may revert to a General Assembly if and when quorum is reached. Should a Regular General Assembly fail to reach quorum half an hour after its scheduled time, the Speaker of Council shall turn it into a non-decisional Consultative forum addressing the items on the agenda.

7.2 A consultative forum shall not have the powers of a GA. However, the Speaker shall chair the meeting as though it were ongoing. Procedural motions under Robert’s Rules, or the special rules of order for General Assemblies, shall be in order.

7.3 The Speaker of Council shall report the minutes to next Council meeting so that a discussion can be held on the issues debated at this Forum.

7.4 Motions tabled from a GA which loses quorum shall be inscribed upon the agenda of the next GA, regular or special, of the Society.

7.5 In order to be included in the agenda, motions not voted upon by a GA due to a loss of quorum or failure to achieve quorum, must be resubmitted.

7.6 The quorum for maintaining a consultative forum shall be fifty (50) students.

#### Article 8 – Procedures of a Strike General Assembly

8.1 A “strike GA” shall be any General Assembly to which a motion for a strike is brought, Regular or Special.

8.2 Should a motion to strike be brought to a General Assembly, the consideration of the strike motion will require the quorum specified in the Constitution (500 students from at least 4 faculties, with no more than 250 from any given faculty or school) for the purposes of a “strike” GA. The Assembly may consider other motions without the need for a strike quorum, provided it reaches the required regular quorum as per Article 29.4 of the Constitution.

#### Article 9 – Responsibilities & Publicity

9.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee to make all necessary efforts to publicize General Assemblies, Regular or Special.

9.2 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the content and accuracy of all advertising for these Assemblies.

9.3 In the case of Special GAs, the Executive Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of promoting and publicizing the GA to ensure that quorum is met. This committee shall be composed of parties bringing forward the call for the Assembly and any motions to be placed on the as well as the SSMU President and Speaker.

9.3.1 This shall include, but not be limited to: postering, flyering, and making classroom announcements (when appropriate).

9.3.2 All costs for publicity and operation of the GA shall be provided by the SSMU.

9.4 The SSMU's efforts to publicize its GAs shall not contravene the Society's Constitution or By-Laws, nor shall they have an egregious environmental impact.

9.5 It shall be the responsibility of the VP Internal, in conjunction with the President and Speaker, and the Executive Committee to organize the logistics of the actual Assembly, including the physical location and instruments of the Assembly.

9.6 Following any General Assembly, a copy of the minutes and a written summary of the decisions made shall be made available on the SSMU website.

#### Article 10 – Items for the Agenda

10.1 As per Article 29.2, the Speaker shall receive items for the agenda up until 2 weeks in advance of the GA in question.

10.2 This deadline shall be at five pm (5pm), two weeks in advance of the GA.

10.3 The Speaker shall make him or herself available at the SSMU office until this deadline.

10.4 Motions may also be delivered up until this deadline at the SSMU front desk.

10.5 Items for the agenda shall require either the signatures of one hundred (100) students or four (4) councillors, with no more than 50% from any one faculty and students from 4 faculties.

10.5.1 Petitions to place items on the agenda shall require the name, signature, faculty and student number of all students in support of placing the motion on the agenda.

10.6 The Speaker or the SSMU Front Desk shall issue a receipt for all petitions for Special GAs and agenda items, along with a signed photocopy of said petitions.

10.7 All petitions and motions should list a mover of the motion, with up-to-date contact information such as e-mail and if possible, a phone number.

; and

*Whereas*, Article 3.1 of Bylaw I-2 states,

3.1. Only councilors shall have the right to bring resolutions, vote on resolutions, ask questions and engage in debate in Council, in accordance to the procedures outlined in the SSMU Constitution and By-Laws.

*Resolved*, That Section VII of the Constitution be replaced by the following:

#### Section VII – Annual General Meetings

##### Article 28 – General

28.1 An Annual General Meeting shall consist of the following agenda items:  
- Presentation of the State of the Society.

28.2 An Annual General Meeting may also consist of the following agenda items when required by law:

- Ratification of Nominations to the Board of Directors;
- Review of the Audited Financial Statements; and
- Nomination of the Financial Auditor.

28.3 Annual General Meetings shall not entertain any other resolutions that are not contained within Articles 28.1 and 28.2.

#### Article 29 – Procedures

29.1 The President shall call an Annual General Meeting to be held once in each Fall and Winter Semester.

29.2 The Office of the President, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, shall be responsible for the promotion of Annual General Meetings.

29.3 Annual General Meetings shall be chaired by the Speaker of Council.

29.4 The Presentation of the State of the Society shall be presented by the Executive Committee.

; and

*Resolved*, That Bylaw I-5 be removed; and

*Resolved*, That “have the right to bring resolutions” be removed from Article 3.1 of Bylaw I-2; and

*Resolved*, That the following shall be inserted in Article 3.1 of Bylaw I-2, and the rest renumbered accordingly:

3.1 All resolutions considered by the Council shall be moved by at least one (1) councilor or at least fifty (50) members of the Society.