SSMU EXECUTIVE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

2016-2017

Compiled by: Ben Ger, President

2016-2017 Executive Committee:

Elaine Patterson, **VP Student Life** – studentlife@ssmu.mcgill.ca

Daniel Lawrie, **VP Internal Affairs** – internal@ssmu.mcgill.ca

David Aird, **VP External Affairs** – external@ssmu.mcgill.ca

Erin Sobat, **VP University Affairs** – ua@ssmu.mcgill.ca

Sacha Magder, **VP Operations** – operations@ssmu.mcgill.ca

Niall Carolan, **VP Finance** – finance@ssmu.mcgill.ca

Ben Ger, **President** – president@ssmu.mcgill.ca

PRESIDENT

Governance

Policies & Plans

I am working with the VP Finance on an Ethical Expenditures Policy to harmonize and replace outdated practices; the VP Student Life on a Free Menstrual Products Policy; and the VP Internal Affairs on modifications to our Accessibility Policy based on an accessible events checklist from the Joint Board-Senate Subcommittee on Persons with Disabilities.

This summer I worked with the VP University Affairs and Board of Directors to revise our Conflict of Interest Policy and Committee Terms of Reference, and began conversations around revamping the Accountability Policy. In the future we hope to bring forward an Equitable Hiring Policy based on research completed in Winter 2015.

Equitable Governance Reform

We hired a summer researcher to look into alternative and equitable governance options both internally and at McGill's Board of Governors. Following the release of the report recommendations, an ad-hoc Committee of the Legislative Council will be struck with a mandate to consult students and propose concrete changes. This may include significant amendments to the composition of our governance bodies, alongside means to increase the accessibility of existing SSMU opportunities.

Political Literacy & Accessibility

We will be developing Policy & Motion Writing Templates for those who want to enact change on their own at the General Assembly or through Referenda. As well, we have commissioned the

What does the President do?

The President is responsible for SSMU governance and accessibility; advocacy work through the McGill Senate and Board of Governors; support of the Executive team; and leadership as spokesperson for the Society.

Given the leadership and support nature of this role, many initiatives involve collaboration with other Executives and may be listed elsewhere.

The President sits on the Steering Committee of the Legislative Council and the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Directors, and chairs both the Executive Committee ("ExComm") and the Faculty Presidents' Round Table (PRT).

creation of more digestible content on how SSMU works, such as a SSMU 101 Video for orientation tours and a set of Executive and Governance Structure Organigrams.

In October we will be running a new program called A Day In The Life, where you can sign up to shadow a SSMU Executive and consider if you would be interested in running for election. In addition, by releasing this Yearly Goals document we hope to build understanding of our positions and improve our accountability.

To increase the efficiency of the Legislative Council I modified our proposed Standing Rules to create a Council Committees Reports Timeline. This will allow students to know when they should attend to learn more about different Committees, as well as keep Council meetings to a stricter schedule. This information will be made available through our website in the form of a Governance Timeline, which will also include information on meetings of the Board of Directors. We will also be testing out a new Rotating Council model, where meetings move throughout different buildings on campus during the second semester.

Finally, I have been working with our Secretary General to produce Governance Document Summaries for quick reference, in order to help students understand how SSMU operates.

Advocacy

Joint Board-Senate Subcommittee on Persons with Disabilities

The Joint-Board Senate Subcommittee on Persons with Disabilities has been developing a McGill Accessible Events Checklist. This resource will be implemented by both the University and SSMU, as we are looking at incorporating it into our Accessibility Policy.

Board of Governors (BoG) Reform

Our Alternative & Equitable Governance Researcher is reviewing Board of Governors structures at other institutions, with particular attention to their composition, ethics, and selection processes. This research will inform advocacy efforts to improve the representation and accountability of McGill's Board.

Pre-Board Meeting

In order to increase collaboration among elected members of the Board, I have been working with some members of the Board and re-established a Pre-Board Meeting ("BoG Caucus") to discuss important agenda items in advance.

Mental Health 101 & WRAP Spaces in SSMU

The VP Student Life, VP University Affairs, and myself have been working to implement training for faculty members on the reality of student mental health issues. For starters, all incoming faculty members have received Mental Health Training during their New Faculty Orientation. We will also be jointly advocating for this training to be made mandatory for all professors through Updated Tenure Requirements.

We have also been working with Mental Health Services in order to offer bookable spaces in our building for their Wellness Recover Action Planning (WRAP) group therapy programs.

VP STUDENT LIFE

Student Groups

Co-Curricular Record Recognition

The Co-Curricular Record (CCR) on myInvolvement is a record of a student's extra-curricular involvement during their time at McGill. We have already made strides in offering Club Executives the opportunity to receive co-curricular credit; now, I hope to work closely with the Club Committee to explore the possibility of offering Club Members Co-Curricular Credit as well.

Club Workshops

This year in our Club Workshops, I would like to include information on equitable and sustainable event planning as well as promote resources like the Social Equity and Diversity Education (SEDE) Office and the Green Events Guide. Additionally, my Office is working on a Club Workshop Handbook that will be available to Club Executives for reference throughout the school year.

SSMU Services Constitution Review

This year, I want to meet with each of the SSMU Services to go over their constitutions and ensure that they have clearly defined their mandates for providing resources, education, support, and more to members of the Society.

Mental Health

Mental Health Roundtable

This initiative will bring together campus mental health services (both peer and

What does the VP Student Life do?

The VP Student Life is responsible for maintaining our over 230 clubs, 15 Services, and 14 Independent Student Groups. They sit on the Club Committee, the Funding Committee, the Mental Health Committee, and chair the Services Review Committee.

They are also responsible for the SSMU Mental Health and Family Care portfolios, including working with McGill Student Services in the Brown Building.

professional) to discuss the different benefits they provide, potential concerns, and opportunities to minimize duplication of efforts while still providing students with as many resources as possible.

SSMU Mental Health Policy Review

The 2016-2017 academic year marks the mid-mandate point for our Mental Health Policy. I would like to take this opportunity to review our progress in terms of providing *resources, awareness, advocacy* and *solidarity* for students. I plan on working with our Mental Health Commissioners and the Mental Health Committees to facilitate the review of existing services, events, and initiatives and to determine what may be missing.

Miscellaneous

Free Menstrual Products Policy

The President and I are consulting with various SSMU and Student Services to develop a policy to provide menstrual hygiene products free of charge on campus. This is still a work in progress and the name is still under debate, but I have high hopes that it will benefit many McGill students.

VP UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

University & Academic Affairs

Student Services Harmonization

The VP Student Life and I are working to ensure student consultation on the integration of Mental Health and Counselling, Health Services, and the Office for Students with Disabilities. This involves a new centralized intake system; stepped care approach; space & technology investments; and a University Wellness Strategy.

Ancillary Fees

McGill students pay the highest mandatory institutional fees (FIOs) province-wide, but the administration redistributes restricted funds away from support services using overhead charges. I will combat this through student knowledge sharing; Senate advocacy; and provincial advocacy with the VP External.

Student Academic Summit

The 2nd Annual Student Academic Summit will be an opportunity for Department and Faculty association reps to develop new knowledge and advocacy skills. This includes sharing resources on Faculty mental health initiatives; Library Improvement Fund projects; Department student assessment policies; and much more.

Advocacy & Research

Sexual Violence Policy

We are working collaboratively to ensure that survivor voices are central to consultation on a university policy and comprehensive review of

What does the VP UA do?

The VP University Affairs (UA) is responsible for coordinating university representation and advocacy; overseeing Society research projects and McGill policy development; providing leadership on equity programming, advocacy, and complaints; and consulting students on the distribution of the Library Improvement Fund (LIF).

The VP UA also coordinates the student Senate Caucus and the McGill Academic Round Table (MART), and sits on the Equity Committee, Equity Complaints Investigation Committee, Library Improvement Fund Committee, and University Affairs Committee.

existing procedures. Our priorities include sufficient and accessible resources; an intersectional support approach; interim measures for disclosures; targeted staff training; and a strong, accountable mandate for the review process.

Academic Accommodations

Our team is gathering student testimony in order to build a formal case against McGill's discriminatory accommodation practices. I am also working with the Dean of Students to develop a proposal for university improvements.

Fall Reading Break

Past progress on implementing a Fall Break stalled in Spring 2016. I will work with Enrolment Services to revise the project proposal and advocate for Senate approval before the end of the Fall 2016 term (with changes to be implemented for the 2018-2019 calendar).

Unpaid Internships Policy

A researcher was hired to help develop a policy based on our GA mandate against unpaid internships. Consultation will be done based on the proposals before a Policy is brought to Council for approval in the Fall 2016 term.

Equity

Equity Committee Restructuring

In order to improve representation in our advocacy, SSMU Equity is piloting dedicated committee seats for marginalized students; subcommittees for identity-based initiatives; and advocacy skills training for equity groups. We will also be hosting semesterly meetings with equity groups across campus.

Equity Policy Revisions

We will be proposing revisions to clarify the scope, definitions, conflict of interest protocols,

complaints officer appointments, and other elements of the Policy. These changes will be brought to Council for approval in Fall 2016.

Indigenizing the Academy

I will be collaborating with the Indigenous Affairs Commissioner and the Executive to carry out consultation and advocacy on our Indigenization mandates. This includes monitoring development of the new McGill Indigenous Education Taskforce vis-à-vis community priorities and working towards an increase in Indigenous course content.

Universal Design (UD)

I will be collaborating with the Equity Commissioners and the Executive to support implementation of our new Accessibility Policy mandates. This includes working with student reps to build UD standards into McGill funding committees and supporting the implementation of a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) toolkit.

Racialized Student Resources

SSMU Equity will be advocating for the creation of a dedicated McGill position for racialized and ethnic student support. We will also be working with Mental Health Services to establish Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) groups for racialized students and exploring support for a new mentorship program through the Student Services Innovation Fund (SSIF).

Baseline Equity Training

We will be advocating for the development of a basic equity training workshop to accompany the Academic Integrity Tutorial on Minerva, while ensuring that this training reflects student and community priorities.

Student Engagement

Know Your Rights

This September we are re-launching our student rights website as an accessible resource for understanding McGill's academic policies. Add-Drop campaigns in September and January will include website promotion and student education in order to build a culture of peer advocacy across campus.

University Affairs Listserv & Website

A monthly listserv will be delivered to representatives from SSMU, Faculty, and Department associations in order to provide updates on involvement, feedback, and collaboration opportunities. The new University Affairs website will act as a centralized hub for project updates, committee reports, research publications, and advocacy resources.

Student Experience Survey

The VP University Affairs will be developing a streamlined survey that builds off of the 2015-2016 Student Experience Report. This involves polling students on specific advocacy priorities, student life, operations, space uses and more.

VP INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Communications

Listserv Redesign

For the 2016-2017 school year I aim to increase the number of students that read the listserv to an average of 40%. To reach this goal, I've decided that a redesign of the current format is necessary by making it simpler and more appealing As it stands, listserv have an open rate of only 15-25%, which suggests that the current design is not engaging the student body. A minimalist design with bolder visuals and less text will result in a more user friendly experience for students and better facilitate the distribution of relevant information.

Website Redesign

This year, we are undergoing a major website redesign to streamline the user experience for students. As it stands, the website contains all of the relevant information but is incredibly difficult to navigate. Our modernizations aim to create a more functional and user friendly menu, centralized landing page, and consistent design. A clean cut website will reflect the mentality of the SSMU during this new school year.

McGill App

Working in collaboration with the administration's mobile development team, I believe that the McGill app should enhance our student experience. Some of the most promising features are the new event functions, through which event tickets can be purchased

What does the VP Internal Affairs do?

The VP Internal Affairs oversees the Society's communications, student engagement, events, and first year outreach activities. They support the First Year Council (FYC), lead the organization of major events like 4Floors, chair the Students' Society Programming Network (SSPN), and sends out a listserv containing everything that's happening on campus each week,

electronically. This would allow us to transition from paper tickets and third-party systems to a unified events platform. The app can also help our clubs and services to better reach their members providing new alternative mediums for the propagation of pertinent information.

Social Media

Our current social media approach uses social media primarily as a promotional platform for events and initiatives. I firmly believe that by making our use of social media more relatable to the average McGill student, we will see a greater interest in the initiatives that the SSMU has. Specifically, the SSMU Instagram account has a lot of potential. As it stands it has about 400 followers and by posting more casual photos in tandem with useful informational posts, we will allow for students to be more engaged in what the SSMU does on a day to day basis.

Events

Diversification

The events portfolio currently contains many drinking focused events that do not cater to the full range of our membership. However, SSMU already hosts over 230 clubs that do serve diverse interests in our student population. I believe that the events portfolio should provide support and resources for these groups, as well as have collaborations with other student associations in order to increase our appeal.

First Year Involvement

FYC & FUN Restructuring

The First Year Council (FYC) was moved to the VP Internal portfolio at the end of the 2015-2016 year. We will be combining the functions of the FYC Executive with the Freshman Undergraduate Network (FUN) to create an assembly of all first year groups at McGill. This will better integrate the first year voice, streamline outreach and programming, and improve overall accountability of the elected first year team.

VP OPERATIONS

Building

Indigenous Art in the Building

Following the mandates set out by the Indigenous Solidarity Policy I'll be working on several different initiatives to prioritize Indigenous presence in the building. This includes collaboration with Indigenous students and artists in the Montreal community in order to display art for sale in our building. This initiative represent an opportunity to promote Indigenous art throughout the McGill Community and beyond.

Off-Campus Student Accessibility

Commuter students represent a significant portion of the student body, presenting a major inclusivity issue for various events and activities. Metro stations close at 12:30am and many districts in Montreal are much more difficult to reach. Rather than commute home late at night, students often choose to not participate in student life.

This year, SSMU has created a space in our building for off-campus students during Frosh. This Crash Pad program is designed to facilitate student involvement and access to support services like MSERT or Walk-Safe.

What does the VP Operations do?

The VP Operations oversees the Society's operations (Gerts bar & the Student Run Cafeteria (SRC), the Univeristy Centre and its tenant management, as well as the Sustainability Portfolio. They chair the Building and Operations Management Committee (BOMCOM) and sit on the Environment Committee.

Operations

Increase Gerts Revenues

In the past year, profits at Gerts fell from 9K to 3K. This coming year, I'd like to reverse this trend. Once again, this will require working closely with Faculties to increase the number of events that are held at Gerts. I'd also like to host recurring events such as bi-monthly open-mic nights or weekly movie nights.

Reduce SRC Deficit

Even though sales at the SRC tripled (from 30K to 90K) over the past year, the expansion of the SRC resulted in a significant deficit. It's my goal this year to guide the SRC towards financial sustainability.

However, continued construction and the high level of competition in the area means that this operation needs some distinguishing. To accomplish this, I'll be implementing new branding and marketing strategies to attract folks from across campus. I'm also hoping to work more closely with Faculties to get our food to students.

In general, I would like to see the SRC used for more events and meetings in order to increase the amount of catering that is done in our building.

Expand Mini-Courses

I plan on working to improve Mini-Courses by ensuring that they are well organized, effectively marketed, and consistently open to student feedback this year. I am currently working on offering study skills workshops for first-year students, bartending courses through Gerts, and cooking lessons through the SRC.

VP FINANCE

Finance

Socially Responsible Investment Fund

Working with Desautels Capital Management students and professors to create a public investment fund with a socially responsible mandate. In the Fall of 2016, a request will be made to Board of Directors to move $1-1.5M from SSMU's current investment portfolio to use as start-up capital to create this new fund, the first of its kind among student societies in Canada.

Balance the Operating Budget

Working closely with all relevant staff including: the VP Operations, President, the Food and Beverage Director, the SRC Manager, Events Manager, and Sponsorship Coordinator to set realistic weekly, monthly, and yearly sales goals to ensure that SSMU's operations remain profit positive for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17. Following the net deficit of SSMU operations for FY 2015-16, there will be more outreach and collaboration with McGill Faculty associations and student groups to drive sales across Gert's, the SRC, and SSMU events. In addition to focusing on our internal operations, the Office of the VP Finance shall consult students on different budgetary options (i.e. continued cuts to internal operations and services provided to students, a new base fee campaign, or a re-allocation of existing SSMU fees).

Budgetary Accessibility

Reviewing all financial information currently available to students, assessing what is missing, and summarizing long documents into concise snapshots of Society's financial standing. This includes more frequent budget, fee, and funding updates to students through the SSMU website and campus media. I will work with SSMU's in-

What does the VP Finance do?

The VP Finance is in charge of the financial stability of the Society as a whole including setting the annual global budget and performing the Fall and Winter budget revisions. They chair the Finance Committee, and sit on the Building and Operations Management Committee, Funding Committee, and Services Review Committee. They also oversee the SSMU's student health plan.

The VP Finance also deals with Human Resources and works with the President on staff relations and management.

house Graphic Designer to make all summaries visually appealing and relevant to students.

Streamlined Funding Applications

Working with our Funding Committee Commissioners to review current funding structures and identify inefficiencies within the funding process.

I will coordinate closely the Funding Committee and SSMU's Accounting Department in order to ensure that cheques are processed and issued in a timely manner. This includes further standardizing the funding application template for clubs and student groups in order to improve ease of completion, consistency among submissions, and speed of review.

VP EXTERNAL

Community & Francophone Affairs

Further Community Engagement

This year I hope to facilitate involvement in off-campus events regrouping other student associations – be it a demo, conference, etc. – by organizing McGill contingents and advertising them. The Provincial Representation committee will help me carve a space for the Society within student politics in the province, in an effort to affect public policy as much as we can as a lone student society. This will involve interacting with student federations and other student associations to our fullest possible capacity in an effort to present a unified voice and set of demands to provincial legislators regarding educational policy in Quebec. We will also perform direct, in-person outreach to students across campus to both inform them of relevant happenings that will affect their education and inquire about the issues they care about.

Milton-Parc Community Relations

This will largely involve working with the Community Engagement and Francophone Affairs Committee to solidify the already existing relationship with the permanent residents of Milton-Parc by, among other things, fulfilling the goals outlined in the Community Action and Relations Endeavor (CARE) agreement, signed by the Society, the McGill Dean of Students, and the Milton-Parc Citizens Committee. We will also work to create social events and volunteer opportunities catered specifically to francophone students and those who want to improve their French in an effort to promote and support francophone culture on campus. I plan to work closely with faculties to organize events such as French conversation and reading circles. Over the Fall semester, I will create a website that will act as a central resource for both McGill

What does the VP External Affairs do?

The VP External Affairs coordinates the Society's external relations (municipal, provincial, and federal representation), political campaigns (e.g. Divest McGill), community and francophone affairs, and Indigenous Affairs.

They sit on the Community and Francophone Affairs Committee, the Indigenous Affairs Committee, and participate at the table of provincial student federations where they have a mandate to do so.

students and permanent residents of Milton-Parc.

Political Campaigns

Increased Campaign Presence

The Society is mandated to take position against fossil fuels, military research on campus, and threats to the accessibility and quality of our education. I will offer support to student volunteers who work explicitly to, among other things, promote a campus free from fossil fuels and from harmful military research. I will also be working hard to increase dissemination of information concerning austerity measures that directly affect our education.

All of this involves organizing event series throughout the year, such as Fossil Free Week (organized by Divest McGill) in September, anti-austerity week in the Winter semester (organized by McGill Against Austerity), and other relevant workshops/events that are in line with the Society's mandates.

Indigenous Affairs

Promoting Indigenous Initiatives

I will work closely with existing Indigenous groups on campus – such as the First Peoples' House and the Indigenous Student Alliance – to promote events that promote indigenous culture and awareness of Indigenous issues. I will also work to instigate a consultation process whereby as many Indigenous students as possible are consulted regarding any message that is being shared in their name – be it a perspective on a political issue being expressed by an Indigenous person; a claim of support for any group, people, or cause; etc. The Indigenous Affairs Commissioner will sit on at least two university committees specifically designed to address Indigenous issues on campus and report back to the Society so that any relevant

information can be spread throughout the student body.

Provincial Representation

Association for the Voice of Education in Quebec (AVEQ)

As per the mandate given to the VP External by Council last semester, I will continue to sit as an observer and try to influence its direction and evolvement in a way that reflects the policies and values of the Society. I will work within at least two working groups of the Association to keep tabs on all internal affairs and actively report back to the Society on all relevant happenings. I will perform direct outreach to faculty councils to report on provincial matters that directly affect McGill students, including all public policy that will affect the cost, quality, or accessibility of our education.

Miscellaneous

Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG)

This year I plan on increasing the amount of work and communications done between QPIRG and my office. This will involve helping successfully organize Culture Shock and Social Justice Days in an effort to create spaces for critical discussion of topics not necessarily addressed in the classroom setting.