**AGENDA**

LSA Council - 3 avril 2019

Speaker: Call to order, 1:15pm Friday March 22, anything to add to discussion?

Steve: add the bylaw to point of discussion, also valedictorian

Speaker: are we going to be talking about skit nite donations? Or has it been resolved?

Stever: Gabrielle is not here, so I think we should wait.

Speaker: ok.

Bianca: the document I put on facebook, please go through it and we will discuss.

Speaker: Chair will now entertain motion to approve agenda.

Steve, seconded by Stephanie. All agree.

Motion to table the approval of last meeting’s minutes to next meeting.

🡪 Proposed by Alec seconded by Kat. passed.

Steve and Bianca discussing the rules regarding campaigning.

Steve: good news, the 2016-17 audits are complete, not even really audits anymore, been downgraded because the level of audit doesn’t meet the knowledge we have. But they are adequate for our school’s needs. We are now only 1 year behind.

The basement project is late underway, but the subcommittee for the basement is creating a proposal for the Class of 98 (?) who are giving a substantial donation for improvements. The idea/ proposal right now, which is still being approved by levels of bureaucracy: the lounge will become a quiet space students can go to relax and unplug from stress as recommended by Healthy Legal Minds a few years ago. To accomplish this the plan is to close off the lounge, and put a door next to the LSA beer room. Put a new rubber surface on the ground, repaint to give an ambient vibe like a yoga studio. The only real issue is shutting off the room, but it’s worth it because it can also double as a prayer room for anyone who wants to. The other side of the basement is the “pit”, want to remove at least half the lockers on the wall because a lot were unused, and make half a game room and add other games (other than foosball), and the other side we would put the LSA lounge TV in the pit with smart lighting, turn it into a media chill spot. Tie it all together with LSA provided iPad to control the TV, wifi-connected lights etc. to make a more inviting space. Get some student art and fake greenery on the walls. The glass room would stay similar, with new more efficient tables and stay largely like the current room for uses.

This proposal will have consultation with students for about a week, for feedback on proposal and after that we would adjust as required and submit to the space committee who seems quite on board. Then McGill needs to approve etc.

Bianca: As you may have seen, Gabrielle and I are running again, this isn’t about campaigning I just want to mention we are really conscious of the importance of continuity in ideas and projects, to ensure when the teams get back for next year that the ideas from previous years are followed through on.

Speaker: I’m going to caution you as a candidate, I think Steve has a comment

Steve: I made it clear to the space committee that these ideas and projects will have continuity, the projects will still go on regardless of our individual involvement.

Jenna: I am excited for this, but during the construction time what will the access to the basement be like.

Steve: well, once we get these ideas approved McGill Special Projects gets involved and needs to sign off on it, so some of these issues are out of the Faculty’s hand once the school takes over after approval. The timeline is unclear, but it’s been said it would be disappointing if this project took over a year, so it seems logical this could be done within less than a year. But we are also considering doing the work in stages to be less problematic.

Jenna: Yes, it sounds like it will be great in the end, just want to make sure it won’t be problematic in the interim.

Speaker: mentioned issue of scent sensitivity if aromas are included.

Steve: include all this feedback in the student feedback period next week.

Bianca’s presentation:

Working on consultation about Language Consultation committee, they searched all the rules of McGill regarding language rights, to see what already exists. We want to initiate a discussion, and there is a survey emailed in the brief, and responses are very important. Because in 2014 the Dean adopted a resolution but the rules are not necessarily respected. So we need to know why students may not take a course in their second language, are there barriers we can fix. The Dean has seemed very receptive. And also want to determine if there have been instances where you feel you have been treated unjustly with regard to the use of English or French. Also questions about why perfectly bilingual professors are not teaching a class in French. So please fill out the survey.

🡪 for Integration, the supplemental assignment was meant to be 1500 words, but the new professor decided to add 500 words for every class missed or assignment late, but since you need to miss 3 sessions minimum to have to do this assignment, people are starting at 3000 words. So we have argued this, and we won.

🡪 if there is any interest, I said that the LSA did not do anything towards the Climate Change Strikes, the SAO want to know how many were involved. I know a couple of professors in first year were encouraging of it. Also for the unpaid internships SAO wants to know about students feelings towards it.

🡪 we are also sending out a form to have votes on the best professor this year.

Speaker: ok, moving past Gab, we will hear from VP Clubs

VP Clubs: everything I do is on a rolling basis, so not much new to report but I am happy to be here.

Speaker: Marie?

Marie:

* lots of complications and work with clothing orders, now putting them all in bags to give out
* participated in the last 2 SSMU council, an increase in the ssmu fee is wanted to adapt the building, improve Gerts so it is a café not just bar. Long term plan
* Bianca was speaking about Internship strikes, this touches the students of the Bar, there is a huge discrepancy between paid and unpaid internships.
* I feel the next step is to consult the other law faculties, and also in collaboration with Jeunes Barreau.
* A student asked about the possibility of a strike on the 15th, under the LSA it’s quite difficult in terms of steps. Referendum etc. So if ever we do want to do a strike in April (because of time it takes to conduct referendum etc.) we would have to prepare now.
* Finally, Cahier de Rapport (?) of the LSA, to explain the roles of the LSA (?), I will do consultations next week but I also welcome your feedback. Objective is to have it voted on in the last LSA Council.

Speaker: Stephanie?

Stephanie: Cabane a Sucre yesterday went really well, last events are Habs game (sold out in 4 hours) and the Grad Ball, with the help of Grad Ball committee.

Speaker: VP Internal?

VP Internal:

* I get the sense our candidates are super excited about the future of Coffeehouse, and I am working to leave a good portfolio to help for next year’s continuity.
* Also translating the constitution

Speaker: Reggie is not here, so moving onto the Faculty Council

Faculty Council:

* Dean Peebles holding Townhall on sustainability initiative
* Big topic of JD designation: last faculty council meeting there was no additional movement, had been voted and passed by the Curriculum Committee, basically this is internal politics of the professors, the Dean doesn’t want to upset the faculty or make them feel their opinions are not considered. We are waiting for a motion to come back from the curriculum committee so we can make a motion to table it again. Asking Dean questions like would it be available for this convocation etc. But we are trying to get this tabled at the next meeting.

Steve: April 10 right? Should I have a conversation regarding this vote.

Bianca: From my memory I believe the curriculum committee has not voted or seen this topic yet. Peebles is

Patrick: well Dean Peebles has tabled it and left it open to professors to email him for feedback, adding 2 months to the previous 5 years they’ve had to discuss it.

Bianca: the Professors have said it feels very rushed. That is the principle issue, has the Professors been consulted sufficiently.

David: Why do the Professors care? What is their stake in this? This seems to me to be by far an issue that affects students, so what is the pushback for?

Steve: Some of the Profs have been here a very long time, and have an interest in the uniqueness of our tradition of McGill law would be lost in this transition. Some profs would no longer want to teach here, some donors don’t want this. A lot of this is about money, so the Dean is treating this carefully.

Alec: although yes, it is students affected, I also see why Professors who were here when they began the transsystemic curriculum, that they would be hesitant to equivocate our degree with others. But UVic does do it, which is an argument students should make, but I do see how this affects the Professors and they also have a stake in it as well.

Patrick: Some of it is summarized in Peebles’ email.

Alec: the JD change also originated in the U.S. which is potentially a factor

Speaker: Jenna?

Jenna: Is it possible that we can move this motion to be voted on this year? For the Dean’s position, has he made it clear his own position?

Patrick: We could push for it to be tabled this year, but it may come across badly as pushing it through too quickly and people on board may reneg.

Steve: the Dean has made no specific statement, but he seems to be receptive to the change.

Jenna: and if the Student Faculty Council is not able to push for this on behalf of students, is there room for open student consultation?

Speaker: any other comments or questions on JD?

By law amendments?

Steve: motion to amend the bylaws pursuant to the document shared with the legislative council on march 21, 2019.

Steve mover, seconded by David.

Steve: the clock is ticking on our ability to amend bylaws. The changes are mainly updating the titles of various positions, ex. VP Admin -🡪 VP Internal. Updating executive team titles to new ones. Also modified the deadlines for budgets from VP finance, to be more in line with the flow of work. Also modified to having Class Presidents provide 2 events per semester rather than 1, based on the increase in their budget. Requirement to inform students of their opt-out fees.

Related to donation for skit nite, I removed the pre-approved listed charities, so that all donation choices must be passed by LSA rather than giving 3 charities special status. All changes are done with track changes in the previous document provided.

Speaker: any comments?

Motion:

All those in favour: unanimous.

Steve: next time the plan is to draft bylaws for VP Communications and the content of the position, moving some things of VP Internal to this role, and a few new responsibilities. As well as small updates to other positions. I would also, in my opinion, like to add to the Bylaws regarding what happens when a position is unfilled to start, versus when it becomes vacant at some point. So there should be some sort of temporary vacancy the LSA council can vote on, to allow someone to temporarily fill the position until the next election.

* I have been hoping to amend the process for valedictorian at the faculty. I feel the current process is very self-serving, it is odd that people nominate themselves and campaign. I don’t think this is a true reflection of what a valedictorian is. I would like to draft a new bylaw to amend this process, so that it can become somewhat peer nominated to the CRO, CRO tabulates nominations based on various criteria, then approach an individual nominated, and if they accept it then the top nominees would make the ballot and then a final vote. I do welcome your thoughts on this subject.

Alec: I say we do it. Full support.

Patrick: Echo that, just make sure whatever system we choose we need to ensure that people out of town (ex. Exchange) would be able to submit these nominations.

Jenna: it’s a good idea, we can also consider what other schools do.

Steve: yes, I have looked into it, and there are a variety of options, some of which are very faculty-driven or resume-driven.

David: I guess the danger is to have 2 elections, first the hopeful valedictorians are campaigning to be nominated, then nomination period and then the final vote on top nominees.

Steve: another possibility is that this council plays a role, but I think that introduces politics into it.

Jenna: I feel like the easiest way to move it away from what we have now, self-nomination, is to move it to peer-nomination.

Patrick: does the Faculty have any approval power? Yes, at Mac Campus the Dean had to approve the valedictorian, and check the speech is half French half English, and appropriate.

Speaker: Bianca, the thing from the SAO?

Bianca:

* briefly, we’d like to implement by Fall 2020
* looking for how to improve the

Marie: I think 2020 is very optimistic.

Alec: my worry is that to move these dates earlier, students out of town would need to pay an extra month of rent. I think we could either make classes longer, or take the bullet and avoid a fall reading week.

Steve: Frosh starts the last week of August, so it already bleeds into August

Stephanie:

* If we add time to the class, it should be 5 minutes instead of 4, because that is strange.

Bianca: so to clarify, both Alec and Stephanie are suggesting we add time, rather than start classes earlier?

🡪 Yes.

Because the faculty decides focus week dates, they have discretion to change it to be closer to other dates off to give a longer break, and make travel home etc. easier.

Marie: the poll did ask if we would be ok with starting earlier to get a fall reading week, and the mcgill wide community seemed to say yes. This issue affects more than just law faculty.

Speaker: next topic, planet takes mcgill university?

Bianca: does anyone have questions or comments? The SAO wants to know how many students participated.

Speaker: most of Dedek’s section of contracts went to the march, partially because he said he wouldn’t take attendance that day

David: most of Jukier’s section was in class, but she does not take attendance.

Patrick: are there any practical differences between a walkout or a strike?

Speaker: a strike gives students more protection and rights in terms of markdowns

Marie: a walkout is a more individual decision, a strike is collective.

Speaker: entertain a motion to table setting the last meeting date to facebook.

Motioned by Patrick, seconded by Beatrice

Passed unanimously.

Motion for adjournment:

Patrick, seconded by Jasmin

Unanimous.