

# **Constitution of the Women's and Sexual Diversity Studies Students' Association of McGill University**

March 22, 2010, updated December 27, 2013

## **Article 1—Establishment**

- 1.1 The association shall be known as the “Women’s and Sexual Diversity Studies Students’ Association of McGill University” (WSSA).
- 1.2 Any undergraduate student currently enrolled in a Minor, Major, Honours or Joint Honours program in Women’s Studies, Sexual Diversity Studies, or enrolled in a class designated WMST or SDST is considered to be a member of the WSSA.
  - 1.2.1 Undergraduate students enrolled in a class recognized by the Women’s Studies Program and Sexual Diversity Studies Approved Classes List may join the WSSA, but will not be permitted to be a member of the Decision-Making Collective (see Article 3.2).
  - 1.2.2 Students not enrolled in the Minor, Major, Honours or Joint Honours program in Women’s Studies or Sexual Diversity Studies shall only be considered members of the WSSA for the duration of the Women’s Studies (WMST) or Sexual Diversity Studies (SDST) class in which they are enrolled.
- 1.3 Membership in the WSSA confers the right to participate in all activities organized by the WSSA.
- 1.4 Non-members of the WSSA shall be known as Observers.
  - 1.4.1 Observers may attend meetings of the WSSA with the assent of one member of the Decision-Making Collective.
  - 1.4.2 Observers shall have full speaking rights but under no circumstances may exercise a vote.

## **Article 2 – Mandate**

- 2.1 The mandates of the WSSA shall be:
  - 2.1.1 To represent the interests of the WSSA membership to the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS), to McGill University and to Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies’ faculty and staff and to promote their welfare and interests;
  - 2.1.2 To foster dialogue among the WSSA membership and between the WSSA and the larger undergraduate student body;
  - 2.1.3 To establish a pro-feminist presence at McGill;
  - 2.1.4 To endeavour to engage critically with multiple forms of oppression, including, but not limited to, those based on gender identity, sexuality, race, class, age, ability, size, ethnicity, language, and religion in the WSSA’s activities.
- 2.2 The WSSA shall be recognized by its members, the Arts Undergraduate Society, the Students' Society of McGill University, and the Faculty of Arts as

representative of all undergraduate students registered in the department of Gender, Sexual Diversity, and Feminist Studies.

### **Article 3 – Administration**

- 3.1 The WSSA shall meet on a routine basis for the duration of the regular class schedule of the Fall and Winter terms.
  - 3.1.1 The schedule shall set by the decisions-making body of the WSSA by the third meeting of each semester.
- 3.2 The decision-making body of the WSSA shall be the Decision-Making Collective, hereinafter referred to as the Collective.
  - 3.2.1 Membership in the Collective shall automatically carry over from the Winter term to the Fall term for all interested members registered in the Fall term.
- 3.3 Quorum for decisions at WSSA meetings shall be two thirds of Collective members.

### **Article 4 – Decision-Making Collective**

- 4.1 The Collective shall run the day-to-day operations of the WSSA.
  - 4.1.1 Attendance at WSSA meetings shall be mandatory for all of the Collective members.
- 4.2 Decisions of the Collective shall be made using a consensus-based decision model.
  - 4.2.1 The consensus-based model shall be agreed upon at the beginning of the year and made available to any interested WSSA member.
  - 4.2.2 In the event that members of the Collective who were not in attendance at the last meeting are in disagreement with any decision, they must notify the Collective of their objection within twenty-four hours of receiving the minutes of that meeting.
- 4.3 To become a member of the Collective, students must:
  - 4.3.1 Be enrolled in the Women Studies Minor, Major, Honours or Joint Honours program and/or a Sexual Diversity Studies Minor program
  - 4.3.2 Demonstrate commitment by attending by attending at least two meetings per month
  - 4.3.3 Commit to all mandates as per Article 2;
  - 4.3.4 Express an interest in joining the Collective.
- 4.4 To remain a member of the Collective, members must:
  - 4.4.1 Demonstrate an on-going and active commitment to the mandates as per Article 2;
  - 4.4.2 Provide input to discussion and decision making twice per month.
- 4.5 Should a member fail to communicate with the Collective for three consecutive weeks during the school year or failure to demonstrate an on-going and active commitment to the mandates as per Article 2, it shall be the responsibility of the Communications Coordinator to ask them/her/him if their it is their intent to remain involved in the Collective and request that they attend the next meeting.

- 4.5.1 Failure to respond to this probing within seven days shall be regarded as a formal resignation.
- 4.5.2 Failure to attend the next scheduled meeting, barring extenuating circumstances, shall be regarded as a formal resignation.

## **Article 5 – Positions**

- 5.1 The Collective shall include the following long-term Coordinator positions:
  - 5.1.1 Communications Coordinator;
  - 5.1.2 External Coordinator to the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies (IGSF), Women's Studies Program, and Sexual Diversity Studies Program;
  - 5.1.3 External Coordinator to the AUS and the University;
  - 5.1.4 Finance Coordinator;
  - 5.1.5 Events Coordinator
- 5.2 In some cases, positions may be assumed by more than one individual.
- 5.3 The positions of Communications and Finance Coordinator for a given year shall be apportioned by consensus during a regular meeting of the WSSA before the end of March in the Winter semester preceding the beginning of their term of service.
  - 5.3.1 The term of service for the positions of Communications and Finance Coordinator shall run from May 1 to April 30.
  - 5.3.2 At least two days prior to the meeting of the WSSA at which these Coordinator positions shall be apportioned, any Collective member interested in assuming either of these positions shall notify the designated meeting facilitator.
  - 5.3.3 Under special circumstances the Collective may consider the interest of a WSSA member who is not yet an official member of the Collective.
- 5.4 The remaining Coordinator positions shall be apportioned by consensus during an extra meeting of the WSSA devoted to this purpose.
  - 5.4.1 This extra meeting shall be held in the Fall term after at least three regular WSSA meetings have taken place.
  - 5.4.2 Any Collective member interested in assuming a Coordinator position shall notify the designated facilitator for the extra meeting at least two days prior to this extra meeting.
  - 5.4.3 Under special circumstances the Collective may consider the interest of a WSSA member who is not yet an official member of the Collective.
  - 5.4.4 If no consensus can be reached on a particular position at the extra meeting, that position will be decided by secret ballot simple majority vote.
  - 5.4.5 Each Coordinator position apportioned in the Fall semester shall be held until the end of the Winter semester of that year.
- 5.5 If a Coordinator position becomes vacant through resignation, a member of the Collective shall assume the position for the remainder of its term.
- 5.6 Coordinators are intended to function as facilitators, and are not expected to assume sole responsibility for all tasks within their portfolio.

- 5.7 The Collective shall include the following short-term roles, which shall be assumed on a rotating and voluntary basis:
  - 5.7.1 Meeting Facilitator;
  - 5.7.2 Minute-taker
- 5.8 All Coordinator positions and short-term roles shall be performed by members of the Collective.

#### **Article 6 – Communications Coordinator**

- 6.1 The Communications Coordinator shall:
  - 6.1.1 Facilitate communication between the Collective and the WSSA’s membership;
  - 6.1.2 Administer the WSSA listserv
  - 6.1.3 Manage the WSSA e-mail and Facebook group;
  - 6.1.4 Coordinate the publicizing of events in conjunction with the Events Coordinator;
  - 6.1.5 Be responsible for sending a probe for intent and membership to members failing to fulfill the requirements of Article 4.4. This probe shall be sent no fewer than five days before the next scheduled meeting of the WSSA.
  - 6.1.6 Report to the Collective at regular meetings.
- 6.2 Assume all responsibility and liabilities of President, as under AUS guidelines
  - 6.2.1 Be responsible for maintaining consensus-decision making at all WSSA meetings
  - 6.2.2 Failure to fulfill duties as mandated by Article 6.3.1 shall be discussed and decided on in a meeting between all other WSSA collective members.
  - 6.2.3 Should the verdict be failure to fulfill the duties as mandated by Article 6.3.1, the individual will be suspended from the Collective. Notification of suspension will be delivered at the next Collective meeting.
  - 6.2.4 A replacement Communications Coordinator shall be appointed within the next three Collective meetings. The position will be appointed by consensus.
- 6.3 Represent the WSSA at AUS President’s Meetings
- 6.4 Be in active communication with all Collective members, helping to coordinate various activities and initiatives.
- 6.5 Facilitate dialogue between the WSSA and other Student’s Associations
- 6.6 Be in active communication with the Women’s Studies Interdisciplinary Journal through out the school year.
- 6.7 Be held liable in the event of misuse of funds as per AUS Financial By-Laws;

#### **Article 7 – External Coordinator to the IGSF, Women's Studies Program, and Sexual Diversity Studies Program**

- 7.1 The External Coordinator shall:
  - 7.1.1 Act as the primary contact between the WSSA and IGSF;
  - 7.1.2 Facilitate dialogue between the WSSA and the Women’s Studies and Sexual Diversity Studies Program faculty and staff;

7.1.3 Report to the Collective at regular meetings.

## **Article 8 – External Coordinator to the AUS and the University**

- 8.1 The External Coordinator to the AUS and the University shall:
- 8.1.1 Act as the primary contact between the WSSA and the AUS;
  - 8.1.2 Act as the primary contact between the WSSA and the University;
  - 8.1.3 Sit as a representative of the WSSA on the AUS Council;
  - 8.1.4 Report to the Collective at regular meetings.

## **Article 9 – Events Coordinator**

- 9.1 The Events Coordinator shall:
- 9.1.1 Facilitate the planning, organization and execution of public and internal events;
  - 9.1.2 Work with the Finance Coordinator to ensure that all events remain within the budget of the WSSA;
  - 9.1.3 Assist the Finance Coordinator in the planning, organization and execution of fundraisers;
  - 9.1.4 Report to the Collective at regular meetings.

## **Article 10 – Finance Coordinator**

- 10.1 The Finance Coordinator shall:
- 10.1.1 Keep proper accounts and records in accordance with the AUS Financial By-laws.
  - 10.1.2 Ensure the long-term financial stability of the WSSA
  - 10.1.3 Draft the annual budget of the WSSA in a manner consistent with the Arts Undergraduate Society's Financial By-laws.
    - 10.1.3.1 The annual budget shall be reviewed and approved by the Collective.
  - 10.1.4 Be responsible for the timely submission of all budgets and financial documents to the AUS VP Finance;
  - 10.1.5 Be responsible for managing the WSSA external bank account and reimbursing funds in a timely fashion
  - 10.1.6 Facilitate the planning and execution of fundraising activities in conjunction with the Events Coordinator;
  - 10.1.7 Ensure that events and activities remain within the budget of the WSSA;
  - 10.1.8 Be responsible in the event of misuse of funds as per AUS Financial By-Laws;
  - 10.1.9 Report to the Collective at regular meetings.
  - 10.1.10 Be responsible for AUIF funding and submission of an application (including other university funding applications)

## **Article 11 – Meeting Facilitator**

- 11.1** At WSSA meetings, the Meeting Facilitator shall:
- 11.1.1** Ensure that discussion adheres to the set agenda;
  - 11.1.2** Ensure an efficient flow and progression of discussion;
  - 11.1.3** Encourage the participation of all WSSA members present and ensure that each member's contributions are addressed;
  - 11.1.4** Take an active role in maintaining a safe and respectful environment.

## **Article 12 – Minute-Taker**

- 12.1 The Minute-Taker shall:
- 12.1.1 Record the minutes at WSSA meetings;
  - 12.1.2 Distribute the minutes to the Collective via e-mail within forty eight hours of the respective meeting and oversee the minutes' approval;
  - 12.1.3 Write and distribute, via e-mail, the agenda for the next scheduled WSSA meeting at least four days in advance.

## **Article 13 – Class Representatives**

- 13.1 Within two weeks after the conclusion of the Add/Drop period, the Collective shall facilitate the designation of one individual from each WMST class offered that semester as an official class representative to the WSSA.
- 13.2 To be a class representative:
- 13.2.1 The individual must be a member of the WSSA as per Article 1.
  - 13.2.2 The individual must volunteer for this position and commit to responsibilities outlined in Article 2.2
  - 13.2.3 Multiple class representatives may be appointed, if sufficient interest is shown.
- 13.3 The class representative of each WMST class will:
- 13.3.1 Attend the first and third weekly Collective meetings of every month
  - 13.3.2 Assist in publicizing WSSA events and concerns to the students in their designated class
  - 13.3.3 Express the concerns or desires of their peers to the Collective
  - 13.3.4 Prepare a page long report at the end of the semester outlining their thoughts on material, professor and design of their designated class.

## **Article 14 – Affiliation**

- 14.1 The WSSA shall operate under the auspices of the Arts Undergraduate Society of McGill University (AUS) as stipulated in the AUS Constitution.
- 14.2 The WSSA is affiliated with the Women's Studies and Sexual Diversity Studies Programs.

## **Article 15 – Finances**

- 15.1 The WSSA shall adhere to the AUS Financial By-Laws.

## **Article 16 – Amendment**

- 16.1 Any member of the WSSA may propose an amendment to this Constitution.
  - 16.1.1 Amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Collective at least one week prior to the next scheduled WSSA meeting.
  - 16.1.2 The proponent of the amendment shall attend the next scheduled WSSA meeting to discuss the proposed amendment.
  - 16.1.3 Within three days following the meeting in question (Article 16.1.2), the Collective shall issue notice of an Amendment Meeting of the WSSA, to be held no sooner than two full weeks after notice has been issued. Notice of Amendment Meeting shall include the text of the proposed amendment.
- 16.2 At the Amendment Meeting of the WSSA, all members of the WSSA shall be entitled to vote on the proposed amendment.
- 16.3 Quorum for majoritarian voting at the Amendment Meeting shall be 20 people.
  - 16.3.1 If majoritarian quorum is reached, the amendment shall be passed by a 3/4 vote of the members present.
  - 16.3.2 There shall be no provision for proxy voting.
- 16.4 If quorum for majoritarian voting is not reached, the amendment shall be decided by the consensus of all WSSA members present as long as quorum for the Collective is reached, as per Article 3.3.
- 16.5 All amendments shall be ratified by the AUS, as per the AUS Constitution and By-Laws.