

# Constitution of the Quebec Studies Students' Association of McGill University

as ratified by Council, November

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## Title I - The Association

### 1. Name

- 1.1. The association shall be known as the Quebec Studies Students' Association

### 2. Aim

- 2.1. The aims of the QSSA shall be:
  - 2.1.1. To represent all students in the department of Quebec Studies of McGill University and to promote their welfare and interests.
  - 2.1.2. To provide activities and services to enhance the educational, cultural, environmental, and social aspects of the lives of its members.
- 2.2. The QSSA shall be recognized by its members, the Arts Undergraduate Society, the Students' Society of McGill University, the department of Quebec Studies and the Faculty of Arts as representative of all undergraduate students registered in the department of Quebec Studies of McGill University.

### 3. Membership

- 3.1. The membership of the QSSA shall include all undergraduate students currently registered at McGill University in any of the major, double major, honours, joint honours, and minor programs of the department of Quebec Studies Studies. This membership shall be accorded "Member" status.
- 3.2. Membership in the QSSA confers the right to participate in all activities organized by the QSSA as well as the right to attend Council meetings and to exercise full speaking rights during all in-camera sessions, when in attendance.
  - 3.2.1. The right of Members to attend meetings is subject to Section 5.4 (exclusion during closed meetings).
- 3.3. Non-members of the QSSA shall be known as "Observers".
  - 3.3.1. Observers may attend a meeting of Council with the assent of one member of Council (as defined in Title II, Section 4.2).
  - 3.3.2. Observers shall have full speaking rights at all in-camera Council meetings (exclusion during closed meetings).
    - 3.3.2.1. At any one meeting, the speaking rights of an Observer may be revoked by a three-quarters majority vote of Council members in attendance.
  - 3.3.3. Rights of observers are subject to section 5.4 (closed meetings).

## Title II - Organization

### 4. The Council

- 4.1. The governing body of the QSSA shall be known as the Council and as such shall:
  - 4.1.1. Recognize the supremacy of this constitution and be bound by it.
  - 4.1.2. Be empowered to make all decisions and take action on behalf of the QSSA.
  - 4.1.3. Establish new Mandates of Council (tasks) to be led by individual Executives (as defined in Title II, Section 6).
- 4.2. The Council shall consist of:
  - 4.2.1. The members of the Executive, defined as the then-current, non-vacant positions listed under sections 6.4 and 6.7.
  - 4.2.2. The Councillors, a status being extended to Members described in Title II, Section 4.5.

- 4.3. Each Member of Council has full speaking rights and may exercise one vote in decisions of Council.
- 4.4. Each Member of Council must remain a member of the QSSA throughout their mandate, unless removal is required as described in Title IV.
- 4.5. Attendance at two meetings of Council by an QSSA Member shall be sufficient for said Member to trigger a vote at the start of the second such meeting with the intent of extending Councillor status to said Member.
  - 4.5.1. Councillor status shall be granted by majority vote of the Executive.
  - 4.5.2. The new Councillor may from that point exercise a vote on decisions of Council.
  - 4.5.3. Councillors shall be given the title of representative of their class year (e.g. “U1 Representative”).
  - 4.5.4. The number of possible Councillors is unlimited.

## 5. Meetings of Council

- 5.1. Quorum for a meeting of Council shall be at two-thirds of the members of the Executive.
- 5.2. Council shall hold regular meetings at least once per month when classes are in session during the Fall and Winter semesters.
- 5.3. Notice of all meetings shall be given to the QSSA membership in general and members of Council in particular at least three days in advance.
  - 5.3.1. In pressing and substantial cases, the Executive may decide to hold a meeting of Council as soon as possible. Such a meeting shall be called an “emergency session”.
- 5.4. The Council may, when it deems necessary, conduct a “closed meeting” wherein non-Council members may be excluded, individually or collectively, from attendance.
  - 5.4.1. A decision to exclude Members will require a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive.
  - 5.4.2. Minutes of such a meeting must be made available in such a situation within two months of the date of the closed meeting.
  - 5.4.3. A closed meeting must be followed by a non-closed meeting to be held within 1 week following the date of the closed meeting.

## 6. The Executive

- 6.1. There shall be a special committee of Council called the Executive, which shall govern the QSSA between meetings of Council in a manner consistent with policies set out by Council.
- 6.2. The Executive shall be a non-hierarchical body, with all members of the Executive equal to each other.
- 6.3. No Member may occupy two Executive positions at any one time (unless the office of President has become vacated as described in Title II, Section 6.5.1).
- 6.4. The Executive, which shall be elected yearly in the manner described under Title III, must at least be composed of:
  - 6.4.1. The President
  - 6.4.2. The Vice-President of Finance
  - 6.4.3. The Vice-President of External Affairs
- 6.5. Should the office of President become vacant, the title of Acting President and the duties of the President shall be granted to the Vice-President of Internal Affairs. If this position is also vacant, it shall pass to the Vice-President of Finance.
  - 6.5.1. The title of Acting President may be held concurrently with any Executive position.
- 6.6. If the position of Vice-President of Finance or that of Vice-President of External Affairs becomes vacant, it shall be filled by another member of the Executive.
  - 6.6.1. The newly appointed Executive must give up the title, but only if it is in the best interests of the QSSA, not the duties, of their previous position.
  - 6.6.2. If multiple Executives wish to assume the same position, said position will be filled by means of a majority vote of Executive members present at the meeting in which the assumption of the position is being discussed.

- 6.6.2.1. In the case of a vote involving more than two candidates for the same position, the candidate receiving the fewest votes will be rejected and a new vote will occur immediately with the remaining Executives until only two candidates remain.
- 6.6.2.2. In the case of a tie in a vote involving only two candidates, a coin-flip will decide the winner.
  - 6.6.2.2.1. The coin shall be tossed up into the air and shall fall to the ground.
  - 6.6.2.2.2. It must be called before the toss.
  - 6.6.2.2.3. Either candidate has the option of declaring “best two out of three” while the coin is in the air. The flip will then be decided in this manner.
- 6.7. Other Executive positions that must be included in QSSA elections as described under Title III are:
  - 6.7.1. The Vice-President of Events
  - 6.7.2. The Vice-President of Internal Affairs
  - 6.7.3. The Vice-President of Academic Affairs
  - 6.7.4. The Vice-President of Communications
- 6.8. If no Member stands for election in any one of the positions in Title II, Section 6.7, the position in question shall be declared vacant and its attendant duties divided up amongst the non-vacant Executive as is deemed beneficial to the QSSA.
- 6.9. If at any point, a Councillor exists and any positions indicated in Title II, Section 6.7 are vacant, a Councillor may assume any one of these positions by declaring an intention to do so at a meeting of Council.
  - 6.9.1. If multiple Councillors wish to assume the same position, the procedure for selection shall follow those outlined in Title II, Section 6.6.2.2.

## 7. Powers and Duties of the Executive

- 7.1. All members of the Executive shall:
  - 7.1.1. Submit to the greater authority of Council and execute its decisions even if they conflict with the Executive's views on matters within their jurisdiction.
  - 7.1.2. Submit any actions taken or decisions made between meetings of Council to be ratified at the following meeting of Council.
  - 7.1.3. Be held accountable for the successes and failures in their Mandates of Council, and be commended or censured by Council as such.
  - 7.1.4. Be responsible for the keeping of adequate records of their actions in order to ensure a smooth transition from one year to the next.
  - 7.1.5. Commit to ensuring an equitable and reasonable distribution of work among the Executive.
  - 7.1.6. Miss no more than two meetings of Council per semester.
    - 7.1.6.1. Should an Executive miss more than two meetings of Council per semester, Council must take steps to investigate and if necessary strip the Executive of their position by the means described in Title IV of this constitution.
- 7.2. The President shall:
  - 7.2.1. Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the QSSA.
  - 7.2.2. Ensure that QSSA Members are well served by the QSSA.
  - 7.2.3. Call and preside over meetings of Council.
    - 7.2.3.1. Should the President be unable to attend a meeting of Council, the Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall call and preside over the meeting. If the Vice-President of Internal Affairs position is vacant, the President shall designate a replacement from within the Executive to call and preside over the meeting.

- 7.2.4. Monitor progress in all policy and project areas in a consistent but non-intrusive manner, and report any concerns to Council.
- 7.2.5. Be the official spokesperson for the QSSA in a manner consistent with the policies set up by Council.
- 7.2.6. Co-ordinate with other departmental-, faculty-, or university-level student societies to lobby for changes that advance the interests of QSSA members and to organize events of common interest.
- 7.2.7. Attend departmental meetings as the undergraduate representative where he or she shall:
  - 7.2.7.1. Be the official spokesperson for the QSSA in a manner consistent with the policies set up by Council.
  - 7.2.7.2. Take account of the proceedings and report back on them at the next meeting of Council.
  - 7.2.7.3. If the President is unable to attend a departmental meeting, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs shall attend in their stead. If the latter position is vacant, the President shall designate a suitable replacement from within the Executive.
- 7.3. The Vice-President of Finance shall:
  - 7.3.1. Advise Council on all financial matters of the QSSA.
  - 7.3.2. Prepare, present to Council for ratification, and administer the budget of the QSSA.
  - 7.3.3. Keep proper accounts and records of the financial dealings of the QSSA.
  - 7.3.4. Within the realm of possibility, be consulted before any purchase made on behalf of the QSSA.
  - 7.3.5. Ensure the prompt repayment of expenses they deem advantageous for the goals of the QSSA.
  - 7.3.6. Retain the right to refuse to refund, either in full or in part, any Executive's expenses if the Vice-President of Finance believes them to have been excessive or superfluous.
    - 7.3.6.1. This decision must be explained at the next meeting of Council, where it will be put to a majority vote of the Council.
- 7.4. The Vice-President of External Affairs shall:
  - 7.4.1. Attend Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) council meetings, and not be absent at more than two such meetings per semester.
  - 7.4.2. Be responsible for representing the interests of the QSSA at said council meetings.
  - 7.4.3. Report back to QSSA Council about the activities of the AUS.
  - 7.4.4. Serve as the QSSA representative and as such will act as the liaison with the AUS.
  - 7.4.5. Seek, if possible, opportunities to expand the scope of the QSSA to include international institutes and programs.
- 7.5. The Vice-President of Events shall:
  - 7.5.1. Organize all events to be hosted by the QSSA.
  - 7.5.2. Be responsible for efforts to promote QSSA events and fundraisers.
- 7.6. The Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall:
  - 7.6.1. Assist the President in coordinating and supervising the affairs of the QSSA and its Council.
  - 7.6.2. Be responsible for taking minutes during Council meetings.
  - 7.6.3. Be responsible for forwarding these minutes to all Executive members, all Councillors, and all others who wish to receive them.
  - 7.6.4. Ensure the minutes are accurate.
  - 7.6.5. Be responsible for finding a replacement minute-taker should the Vice-President of Internal Affairs not be able to attend a meeting for any reason or if they are presiding over the meeting.
  - 7.6.6. Manage internal communications (e.g. if an Executive is absent from a Council meeting, the Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall send the Executive an e-mail to tell him or her what transpired, and what is needed of them).

- 7.7. The Vice-President of Academic Affairs shall:
  - 7.7.1. Promote the academic interests of members of the QSSA to all relevant organizations and faculty.
  - 7.7.2. Make attempts deemed necessary by Council to gauge these academic interests.
  - 7.7.3. Act as a peer academic advisor to Members and potential Members.
  - 7.7.4. Create programs, as deemed necessary by Council, to enrich the academic life of QSSA Members.
- 7.8. The Vice-President of Communications shall:
  - 7.8.1. Draw up a listserv in their native language (either English or French), with a translation in the other, and send it to QSSA members.
    - 7.8.1.1. If he or she is not comfortable writing in both languages, a second Vice-President of Communications may be appointed by majority vote amongst the Councillors by the Executive to serve primarily as the translator. Until such time as a second Vice-President of Communications is appointed, the listserv may be sent out in English only.
      - 7.8.1.1.1. If the incumbent is uncomfortable writing in English, the listserv shall be sent out by the Vice-President of Internal Affairs or any capable Executive.
    - 7.8.1.2. The listserv shall be sent out within one week of every meeting of Council, unless a majority vote of the Executive decides that this would not be in the best interests of the QSSA (reasons may include, but are not limited to, lack of items for inclusion).
  - 7.8.2. Take note at all Council meetings of what items are to be included on the listserv, then include them.
  - 7.8.3. Manage the Internet presence of the QSSA, including, but not limited to, its website, blog and e-mail account.
  - 7.8.4. Reply promptly to all messages, electronic and otherwise, directed to the QSSA.
  - 7.8.5. Coordinate the dissemination of information to various classes via consultation with the year representatives/Councillors and/or any Members and Observers.
  - 7.8.6. Co-supervise the affairs and needs of Orientations with the Vice-President of Academic Affairs.
- 7.9. Any other duties that may arise in the course of the year shall be divided up amongst the Executive as is deemed beneficial to the Association.

### **Title III - Elections**

#### **8. Definitions**

- 8.1. "Working days" shall refer to any scheduled day of classes as defined by McGill University.
- 8.2. "Unsolicited e-mails" shall refer to e-mails received by an individual, who does not normally receive e-mail correspondences from the sender.

#### **9. Period of Service**

- 9.1. The newly elected members of the Executive shall come into office on May 1 of the year in which they were elected and shall leave office on April 30 of the following calendar year.

### **Title IV - Removal from Office**

#### **10. Removal**

- 10.1. A member of the QSSA Council shall only be removed in extreme circumstances, such as impropriety, delinquency of duties or misappropriation of funds.
- 10.2. Assent to a motion to remove a member of QSSA Council shall require a vote cast in agreement at a Council meeting by three-quarters of the "full Executive," that is, this ratio shall also include Executives not present at the meeting.

## Title V - The Constitution

**11. Superseding Clause**

11.1. This constitution repeals and supersedes all previous constitutions of the QSSA.

**12. Amendments**

12.1. Amendments may be proposed piecemeal by individual members of Council.

12.2. Assent to a motion to amend the Constitution of the QSSA shall require a vote cast in agreement at a Council meeting by three-quarters of the full Executive (as defined in Title IV, Section 16.2).

12.2.1. If assent is granted, the amendment must be forwarded to the AUS

**13. Review**

13.1. This Constitution shall be read by all members of Council before the first Council meeting of every school year.

13.1.1. If a Council member joins Council mid-mandate, it shall be read by them within one week of joining.