

# Memorandum

**To:** SSMU Legislative Council

**From:** By-Law Review Committee

**Prepared by:** Janina Grabs, Committee and Senate Secretary General

**Date:** March 8, 2012

**Re:** Motion for Revision of Bylaw Book I-7 – Undergraduate University Representation

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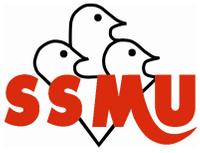
## Context and Rationale

In undertaking the revision of the bylaws on undergraduate university representation, we had several goals. Firstly, it was important to clean up and standardize all stipulations within and across bylaw books. We thus tried to align all requirements both internally and externally in order to clear up any repetitions or contradictions. We also reorganized the order of many Articles to make it flow more logically. Now, Section II concerns Student Senators in particular while part III covers all representatives to University Committees. Sections IV and V then detail procedures and practices of the SSMU Representative to the Board of Governors and of SSMU Senate Caucus, respectively.

Secondly, it was necessary to reflect the changes we made to the manner of student representation on university committees and Senate this year. In reaction to misgivings about the accountability and effectiveness of student representatives over the last years, we included stricter requirements about attendance and feedback from committees. Article 5 specifies the conditions in which unaccountable or unreliable student representatives could have their seat forfeited. In order to create long-lasting institutional memory, all student representatives are now required to submit reports from their committee meetings to the University Affairs Secretary General, who organizes these reports centrally. This new mechanism is reflected in Article 8.2. These changes also contribute to the realization of the recommendations of McGill's Student Consultation & Communication Work Group on "Improving the Quality of Student Representation", to be found under:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/deputyprovost/consultation/recommendations>.

Thirdly, we made the appointment procedure more accountable by including Nominating Committee as a checks-and-balances mechanism that oversees all appointment decisions made by the VP University Affairs (see Articles 7.3, 7.5, 8.4, and 9.1.3). We also clarified the procedures for the removal and replacement of Senators or representatives that have been unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties included in their mandate in Article 5. Furthermore, in order to ensure the broadest representation of university students possible, there is now a maximum of 3 Senator seats per faculty (as outlined in Article



4.4.1), and we included the possibility that Faculties organize their own Senate elections if they have a higher turnout in Faculty elections than in SSMU Elections in Article 4.1 and its subpoints.

We believe that these changes better reflect the purpose and mission of undergraduate student representation than the current bylaws, and hope that they will be received favorably.

Respectfully,

Emily Yee Clare  
SSMU Vice-President University Affairs

Janina Grabs  
SSMU University Affairs Secretary General