

# Constitution of the McGill Political Science Students' Association

As amended by the Executive November 6 2017

## **Title I – The Association**

### **ARTICLE 1: Name**

1. The organization established by this Constitution shall be known as the McGill Political Science Students' Association, and may be referred to as the PSSA in its abbreviated form (hereinafter the "PSSA"). a. The French language name of the organization is "Association des étudiantes de sciences politiques (AESP)"

### **ARTICLE 2: Aim**

1. The aims of the PSSA shall be:
  - a. To represent, promote, and defend the interests of all students in the Department of Political Science of McGill University through a non-partisan capacity.
    - i. In the case that students wish for the PSSA to represent a stance on a particular **political** issue, a 15% quorum must be reached at a General Assembly or forum, wherein voters will reflect the voice of the Political Science constituency.
  - b. To provide activities and services to enhance the educational, cultural, and social aspects of the lives of PSSA members that will respect:
    - i. Environmental Sustainability
    - ii. Equity
    - iii. Tolerance
  - c. To disseminate information and opportunities of interest to PSSA members.
  - d. To promote professor-student relations.
2. The PSSA shall be recognized by its members, the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS), the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU), the Department of Political Science and the Faculty of Arts as representative of all undergraduate students registered in the Department of Political Science at McGill University.

### **ARTICLE 3: Membership**

1. The membership of the PSSA 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 Political Science.
  - a. Membership in the PSSA confers the right to participate in all activities as well as the right to attend general meetings.
2. Non-members of the PSSA shall be known as Observers.
  - a. Observers may attend a meeting of the Executive unless there is dissent by at least two members of the Executive.
  - b. Observers shall have full speaking rights at any and all Executive meetings but under no circumstances may exercise a vote.

## **Title II – Organization**

### **ARTICLE 4: Voting Members**

1. The governing body of the PSSA shall be known as the Executive and as such shall:

- a. Recognize the supremacy of this Constitution and be bound by it.
- b. Be empowered to make all decisions and take action on behalf of the PSSA.
2. The Voting Members shall make up the PSSA Executive and shall consist of:
  - a. The members of the Executive, as defined in Article 7.3.

#### **ARTICLE 5: Mandates of the Executive**

1. The Mandates of Executive should be in accordance with the aims of the PSSA.
2. All members of the PSSA are responsible for ensuring that the following Mandates of the Executive are met:
3. The following Mandates of Executive shall be enacted at the minimum on an annual basis:
  - a. PSSA Social Event Mandate.
    - i. ~~For example, PSSA's Welcome Back Party~~
  - b. ~~Interdepartmental Event Mandate~~
    - i. ~~For example, PSSA's Ménage a Trois (2013) or Fourplay (2014)~~
  - c. Political Science Semi-Annual Research Brunch Mandate
  - d. Political Science Charity Event Mandate.
  - e. McGill Journal of Political Studies Mandate.
  - f. PSSA Sweaters Mandate.
  - g. Undergraduate Teaching Award Mandate.
  - h. PSSA Mentorship Mandate
  - i. Field Trip Mandate
  - j. Elections PSSA Mandate
    - i. To be administered by Elections AUS in accordance with Elections AUS by-laws.
4. The 'Constitutional and By-law Review' Mandate shall be enacted on a biennial basis, beginning with the passage of this Constitution.

#### **ARTICLE 6: Meetings**

1. The PSSA shall hold, at minimum, one general meeting a year
2. The PSSA shall hold, at a minimum, one executive meeting a week
  - a. Taking into consideration extenuating circumstances, religious and national holidays
3. Quorum for any PSSA meeting shall be at least five Executives.
4. Majority needed for passage of a binding decision is a simple majority of four (4) out of seven (7) executives.
5. Notice of general meetings shall be given to the PSSA members at least three days in advance.
  - a. In pressing and substantial cases, the Executive may decide to hold an executive meeting as soon as possible.
6. All general meetings shall be open to all PSSA members and observers.
7. All executive meetings shall be open to all members of the PSSA Executive.
8. All those present at any PSSA meeting shall be subject to removal if their behaviour becomes disruptive and/or inappropriate or offensive to other members or persons.

#### **ARTICLE 7: The Executive**

1. The Executive shall govern the PSSA in a manner consistent with policies set out by the Constitution.
2. The Executive shall be composed of:
  - a. The President
  - b. The Vice-President Internal

- c. The Vice-President External
- d. The Vice-President Academic
- e. The Vice-President Finance
- f. The Vice-President Events
- g. The Vice-President Communications

**ARTICLE 8: Powers and Duties of the Executive**

1. All members of the Executive shall:
  - a. Inform all other members of the Executive of any actions taken or decisions made with respect to their portfolios.
  - b. Be responsible for planning and running events and activities, providing political representation for Political Science students during the course of the academic year.
    - i. Be responsible to make sure the events and activities of the PSSA, to the extent possible, are environmentally sustainable.
  - c. Be held accountable for the successes and failures in their Mandates as Executive, and be commended or censured by the Executive as such.
  - d. Be responsible for the keeping of adequate records of their actions in order to ensure a smooth transition from one year to the next.
  - e. Provide a detailed exit report upon completion of their term and have a transition meeting with their successor.
  - f. Commit to ensuring an equitable and reasonable distribution of work among the Executive.
  - g. Miss no more than two Executive meetings per semester. Should a member of the Executive miss more than two executive meetings per semester without good cause, the remaining executives must take steps to investigate and if necessary replace the Executive member.
  - h. Create an application process to select committee members in the Fall semester.
  - i. Every member of the Executive should hold regular office hours.
  
2. The President shall:
  - a. Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the PSSA.
  - b. Coordinate and ensure the success, of the Executive and Representatives, of the PSSA.
  - c. Ensure that PSSA members are well served by the PSSA.
  - d. Call and preside over meetings of Executive
    - i. Should he or she be unable to attend a meeting of Executive, the President shall designate from the Executive a replacement to call and preside over the meeting.
  - e. Ensure quorum at meetings of Executive.
  - f. Monitor progress in all policy and project areas in a consistent but non-intrusive manner, and report any concerns to the rest of the Executive.
  - g. Be the official spokesperson for the PSSA in a manner consistent with the policies set up by the Executive.
  - h. Coordinate with other departmental-, faculty-, or university-level student societies to lobby for changes that advance the interests of PSSA members and to organize events of common interest.
  - i. Be a signatory, along with VP Finance, on all financial matters.
  
3. The Vice-President Internal shall:
  - a. Assist, coordinate, and supervise the affairs of the PSSA
  - b. Ensure consistent progress in the various portfolios within the PSSA, including but not limited to:
    - i. The Events Portfolio

- ii. The Academic Portfolio
    - iii. The Publicity Portfolio
  - c. Act as an ombudsperson for PSSA executive members
  - d. Be responsible for logistical tasks such as:
    - i. Agenda-Setting for Executive Meetings
    - ii. Room Bookings for Events
    - iii. Catering for any and all events
  - e. **Coordinate the PSSA Mentorship Program**
4. The Vice-President Events shall:
- a. Ensure consistent progress in the various events, academic and non-academic, within the PSSA, including but not limited to:
    - i. Bi-annual PSSA Wine and Cheese
    - ii. The PSSA Annual Charity Event
    - iii. The PSSA Field Trip
    - iv. The PSSA Social Event
      - i. ~~Such as 'Welcome Back Party' at St Sulpice~~
    - v. The PSSA Inter-Departmental Event
      - i. ~~Such as 'Ménage a Trois'~~
  - b. Shall set-up, oversee and chair the Events Portfolio
    - i. Which will be assembled and appointed by the VP Events
5. The Vice-President External shall:
- a. Be the representative of the PSSA at the Arts Undergraduate Society's Council meetings.
  - b. Sit on one AUS committee.
  - c. Coordinate initiatives affiliated with but external to the PSSA
  - d. **Manage McGill's Delegation to the Jeux de la Science Politique (JDSP), as outlined in Article 15, including:**
    - i. **Overseeing the activities of the JDSP delegation and ensuring they comply with AUS bylaws.**
    - ii. **Facilitating the selection/appointment of the Head Delegate as stipulated in Article 15.5.**
    - iii. **Working with the Head Delegate to appoint a Whip for the delegation.**
    - iv. **Acting as a liaison between the executive and the JDSP leadership (Head Delegate and Whip)**
  - e. Represent the PSSA within the larger McGill and Montreal communities.
    - i. This includes frequent communication and active collaboration with the Political Science Master and PhD students, PSSA Concordia.
6. The Vice-President Academic shall:
- a. Be responsible for all educational and curricular concerns of the PSSA.
  - b. Be a liaison between the Political Science Department and the PSSA.
  - c. Coordinate academic events included but not limited to:
    - i. **Semi-Annual Research Brunch** with professors
    - ii. Annual Excellence in Teaching Awards
    - iii. **Political Science Internship Event**
  - ~~d. Coordinate the PSSA Mentorship Program~~
  - e. Coordinate the McGill Journal of Political Studies

- i. Coordinate the selection of Editors-in-Chief and editors with the other members of the Executive.
        - i. The McGill Journal of Political Studies Editor/s -in -Chief/s shall be selected based on the hiring process that is highlighted in Article 14.4**
      - ii. Be the liaison between the MJPS team and the PSSA.
    - f. Shall set -up, oversee and the Academic Portfolio
      - i. Which will be assembled and appointed by the VP Academic
7. The Vice-President Finance shall:
- a. Advise the Executive on all financial matters of the PSSA.
  - b. Prepare and administer the budget of the PSSA.
  - c. Keep proper accounts and records of the PSSA's financial dealings.
  - d. Within the realm of possibility, be consulted before any purchase made on behalf of the PSSA by an Executive.
  - e. Be a co-signatory for all financial powers.
  - f. Ensure the prompt repayment of expenses he or she deems advantageous for the goals of the PSSA.
  - g. Have the authority to refuse to refund, either in full or in part, any Executive's expenses if he or she believes them to have been excessive or superfluous and explain this decision at the next meeting of the Executive.
    - i. This decision can be overruled by two-thirds majority vote of Executive members.
  - h. Coordinate all funding application for the PSSA, including but not limited to: Arts Undergraduate Improvement Fund, SSMU Funding, FMC Funding, AUS Funding.
  - i. Shall be responsible for coordinating apparel orders for political science members a minimum of one (1) time per semester.
8. The Vice-President Communications shall:
- a. Ensure communication between the Executive and the members of the PSSA.
  - b. Set up and maintain the following:
    - i. ~~PSSA-Dropbox~~ **PSSA documents and archives**
    - ii. PSSA Website
    - iii. PSSA listserv
    - iv. Social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn account)
  - c. Search out and maintain new opportunities and methods of increasing the visibility of the PSSA; of encouraging the participation of the membership in PSSA activities; and of promoting the attendance of PSSA members in general.
  - d. Remain available to aid in the communications and promotions aspects of the various PSSA events.
  - e. Maintain minutes and attendance of all general and executive meetings.
  - f. Shall set-up and oversee and chair the Publicity Portfolio
    - i. Which will be assembled and appointed by the VP Communications
9. The Portfolio members shall:
- a. ~~Follow the directives of their affiliated portfolio chair~~ **Assist with the initiatives of their affiliated portfolio chair.**
  - b. Liaise between the PSSA Executive and the greater Political Science community.
  - c. Assist with the planning and implementation of PSSA events.

- d. Coordinate and ensure the success of the PSSA General Meetings.
- e. Be invited to attend meetings of the Executive

### **Title III – Elections**

#### **ARTICLE 9: General**

1. All members of the PSSA shall be eligible to vote in PSSA elections.
2. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with this Constitution and with any applicable PSSA by-laws.
  - a. The elections shall be conducted in accordance with AUS Departmental Association Electoral By-Laws
- ~~3. Elections are passed by a plurality.~~

#### **ARTICLE 10: Eligibility**

1. Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution, all ~~members of students in the PSSA~~ **Political Science** shall be eligible to stand for election to the positions of President, Vice-President Internal, Vice-President Events, Vice-President External, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Finance, and Vice-President Communications.
  - a. ~~It is advisable, but not necessary, that candidates have at least one (1) year experience with the PSSA or another student association or group.~~
  - b. ~~It is required that those seeking the position of the President have at least 1 year of experience as an AUS departmental association executive or as a committee member.~~
    - i. ~~In the event that there are no eligible members running for the position of president, as stipulated above, nomination for the position shall be open to all political science students~~
2. All elected individuals must remain members of the PSSA throughout their mandate.
  - a. Should a member be scheduled to graduate mid-year they are not eligible to run for a PSSA position in the previous years ~~Winter~~ **winter** semester.
3. No member of the PSSA may simultaneously accept nominations for two Executive positions on the PSSA.
4. No member of the PSSA may simultaneously hold an Executive position on any other Departmental or Faculty association.

#### **ARTICLE 11: Procedures**

1. Elections for the Executive positions shall be held between March 1 and April 1 of every year.
2. 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**

#### **ARTICLE 12: Removal**

1. Any member of the Executive may be dismissed from their functions for impropriety, violation of this Constitution and its by-laws, delinquency of duties, or misappropriation of funds.
2. A motion to remove an Executive must be presented in writing to the President and signed by at least four (4) members of Executive.
  - a. Should the motion pertain to the President, it shall be presented in writing to the Vice-President Internal and signed by at least four (5) of the Executive.
3. Quorum for a motion to remove must be ~~one-half~~ **two-thirds** of the Executive.
4. Passage of a motion to remove an Executive shall require ~~a two-thirds majority vote of Executive members.~~ **five (5) members of the executive.**

### **Article 13: Succession and Replacement**

1. Should the office of President become vacant due to resignation, removal, or death, the title of Acting President and the duties of President shall devolve down the Executive list in Section 7.3 to the next member Executive. The same procedure is to be followed if the office of Acting President should become vacant.
2. Should a Vice-Presidential position become vacant ~~due to resignation, removal, or death during the Fall semester~~, a replacement shall be nominated by the President and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Executive. The nominee must be eligible for the vacant position as prescribed by Article 10.
3. Should a Vice-Presidential position become vacant due to resignation, removal, or death during the Winter semester, the duties of this position shall be divided among the remaining Executive to be carried out until the regularly scheduled election and accession to office of the following year's Executive. a. In case of extenuating circumstances, a member of the PSSA can be nominated to a vice-presidential position by the President and ratified by two-thirds majority.
4. Other than the position of Acting President, no member of the PSSA may concurrently hold two Executive positions on the PSSA.

### **Title V – Additional PSSA Programs**

#### **ARTICLE 14: McGill Journal of Political Studies**

1. Every year, there shall be a mandate called the McGill Journal of Political Studies.
2. The McGill Journal of Political Studies may be referred to as the MJPS.
3. The MJPS shall be environmentally friendly and shall conform to the following guidelines:
  - a. Print on 100% recycled paper; if possible with a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification.
  - b. Find a local supplier to limit greenhouse gases emissions.
  - c. Publish an online version of the journal on the PSSA website.
4. **The MJPS Editor in Chief will oversee the operations of the MJPS. There may also be a second Editor in Chief for the MJPS should the Vice-President Academic and/or the rest of the executive deem it necessary**
  - a. **The MJPS Editor in Chief will be selected through an online application process followed by an interview to be conducted by a hiring committee comprised of:**
    - i. **Incoming VP Academic**
    - ii. **Outgoing MJPS Editor/s-in-Chief**
  - b. **The incoming VP Academic may select other members of the incoming executive to sit on the hiring committee.**
  - c. **The selection process of the MJPS Editor in Chief will take place following PSSA Elections and before the conclusion of the academic year.**

#### **ARTICLE 15: McGill Delegation to the Jeux de la Science Politique**

1. Every year, there shall be a mandate called the McGill Delegation to the Jeux de la Science Politique.
2. The Jeux de la Science Politique may be referred to as the JDSP.
3. The McGill Delegation shall be lead by the Head Delegate.
4. **The Head Delegate will be selected together by the VP External and the outgoing Head Delegate, in consultation with the previous year's delegation.**

5. **The Head Delegate for the following year must be selected no later than March 31 of the year preceding the conference.**
6. **The Head Delegate shall be supported by a deputy referred to as the Whip.**
7. **The Whip shall be selected by the VP External and the incoming Head Delegate.**
8. **The JDSP budget must be included in the budget of the PSSA.**

#### **Title V – The Constitution**

##### **ARTICLE 1516: Superseding Clause**

1. This Constitution repeals and supersedes all previous constitutions.

##### **ARTICLE 1617: By-laws**

1. Appended to this Constitution are a set of by-laws which may be adopted by the Executive as it sees fit, providing that such by-laws conform to the principles embodied in this Constitution.
2. Quorum for a motion to enact, amend, or rescind a by-law shall require a two-thirds majority vote of Executive members.
3. Passage of a motion to enact, amend, or rescind a by-law shall require a two-thirds majority vote of Executive members.

##### **ARTICLE 1718: Constitutional Amendments**

1. Amendments may be proposed piecemeal by individual Executive members or as the product of the biennial constitutional review procedure mandated in Section 5.4.
2. Quorum for an amendment to this Constitution shall require a two-thirds majority.
3. This Constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of Executive members.

##### **ARTICLE 1819 – Review**

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

##### **ARTICLE 1920 – Citation**

1. This Constitution may be cited as the ‘PSSA Constitution’.