**Constitution**

*This is the updated constitution as voted on by MESS in April, 2019.*

**McGill Environment Students’ Society (MESS) McGill University**

Initial version was presented to SUS, AUS, and BASiC on January 28, 1999

Revised: January 12, 2005 (Presidents presiding: Shiri Noy and David Brodkey)

Revised: January 22, 2012 (President presiding: Lindsay Toth)
Revised: January 28th, 2014 (President presiding: Aaron Eger)
Revised: March 22, 2015 (President presiding: Rachel Gould)

Revised: March 26, 2018 (Presidents presiding: Tuviere Okome and Peter Garber)

Revised: March 21, 2019 (Presidents presiding: Miranda Hunter and Hana O’Neill)

Edited by: Alessandro Bisagni (February 19, 2005)
Edited by: Emily Coffey (January 23, 2012)

Edited by: Aaron Eger (February 4, 2014)
Edited by: Rachel Gould (March 22, 2015)
Edited by: Miranda Hunter, Hana O’Neill (March 26, 2018)
Edited by: Miranda Hunter, Cristina Venegas and Hana O’Neill (March 21, 2019)

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**Article I: Definitions**

1.1 The organization shall be called the McGill Environment Students’ Society (MESS), herein referred to as “MESS”.

1.2 MESS shall be governed by an Executive Council of elected officials, herein referred to as the “Executive.”

1.3 The MESSy Lounge constitutes any space provided by the McGill School of Environment for MESS students to use, herein referred to as the “MESSy Lounge”.

1.4 The Coffee Co-op is a co-operative student-run coffee bar dedicated to serving ethical, sustainable and affordable specialty coffee and tea, herein referred to as the “Coffee Co-op”.

1.5 The Campus Crops Collective Garden is a student-run urban gardening initiative that grows food on campus, by students, for students. The Campus Crops Collective Garden is located behind the McGill School of the Environment building, herein referred to as the “Campus Crops Collective Garden”.

1.6 The Science Undergraduate Society of McGill University will be herein referred to as the “SUS”.

1.7 The Arts Undergraduate Society of McGill University will be herein referred to as the “AUS”.

1.8 The Students’ Society of McGill University will be herein referred to as the “SSMU”.

1.9 The Bachelor of Arts and Science Integrative Council will be herein referred to as the “BASiC”.

**Article II: Aim and Purpose**

2.1 The aim of the Executive shall be to represent MESS members and to promote their interests through cultural, educational, recreational, and social activities.

2.2 The Executive shall promote environmental awareness and exhibit environmental responsibility.

2.3 The Executive shall promote an inclusive environment through, but not limited to,

2.3.1 Providing resources in both French and English, which will both be considered

official languages of MESS.

2.3.2 Getting informed and actively resisting (neo) colonialism in the many forms it takes, and supporting the diversity of forms that resistance can take. Specific actions include, but are not limited to,

2.3.2.1 Saying a land acknowledgement at the beginning of each meeting of the Executive.

2.3.2.2 Including a land acknowledgement in the listserv, and on the official Facebook page and website.

2.3.3 Ensuring that physical and financial accessibility are taken into account when planning and picking venues for all events.

2.4 The Executive shall ensure the longevity of the MESSy Lounge in the basement of the McGill School of Environment building (or any other space it might relocate to), as well as two MESS initiatives: The Coffee Co-op and the Campus Crops Collective Garden.

**Article III: Membership**

3.1 MESS shall consist of all students currently registered in the McGill School of Environment. This includes students pursuing degrees of B.A., B.Sc., B.A.& Sc., B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.), Diploma of Environment, or a minor in Environment.

**Article IV: Membership Fees**

4.1 The organization fee shall be collected from each member by the Office of Student Services of McGill University and shall first be forwarded to the Arts Undergraduate Society of McGill University (AUS) and the Science Undergraduate Society of McGill University (SUS), and then to MESS from said societies.

**Article V: Financial Restrictions**

5.1 Control of all monies belonging to MESS is under the jurisdiction of the Executive and its use must be agreed upon by:

5.1.1 The VP Finance and the Co-Presidents (or, President) for amounts less than $50; 5.1.2 A majority of the executive (50%+1) for amounts that exceed $50;

5.1.3 Unanimous approval by the Executive in the case of sponsorships and endorsements from/to sources outside of McGill University.

5.2 The spending of money shall reflect the aims of MESS and its constituents

5.3 Any member of MESS shall have access to the financial records of MESS within a reasonable time after a request is made.

**Article VI: Executives of MESS**

6.1 The executives of MESS shall be:

a) Co-Presidents (or, President)

b) VP Finance

c) VP Events

d) VP Student Life

e) VP Communications

f) VP External – AUS

g) VP External – SUS

h) VP External – Macdonald Campus

i) VP Academic

j) VP External – BASiC

k) VP External – SSMU

l) First Year Representative – Macdonald Campus

m) First Year Representative – Downtown Campus

6.2 MESS executives shall act as representatives of MESS, and shall act in the best interests of MESS.

6.3 All executives of MESS must be elected by the members of MESS in the spring prior to the academic year in which they will hold office.

6.4 All elected executives of MESS are required to submit an exit report to their successor. This report will outline the duties of the position as well as provide any information deemed useful for the operation of the following year’s executive​*.*

6.4.1 The exit report of the VP Finance shall include the actual expenditure of the previous year and the predicted provisions for the following year’s contributions to Campus Crops Collective Garden and the Coffee Co-op.

6.5 The Co-Presidents (or, President) shall be responsible for the general organization and administration of all MESS activities and shall reside as the co-chairs (or, chair) at executive meetings. It is the ultimate responsibility of the Co-Presidents (or, President) to ensure representation within AUS, SUS, BASiC and the Macdonald Campus Students’ Society (MCSS).

6.6 The VP Finance shall be responsible for all monetary flow into and out of the MESS bank account and for keeping a record of financial transactions in a ledger kept for that purpose. The VP Finance shall oversee the Coffee Co-op’s finances by maintaining long-term records of the

Coffee Co-op’s end of term financial reports produced by the Coffee Co-op Finance Coordinator.

6.7 The VP Student Life shall be responsible for liaising relevant communications between the Executive, the Coffee Co-op and the Campus Crops Collective Garden. This representative shall be responsible for engaging MESS students in the Campus Crops Collective Garden and the Coffee Co-op. They shall be responsible for communicating and enforcing space rules to users of the MESSy Lounge. They shall be the designated as the point person to communicate with the McGill School of Environment Building Administration.

6.8 The VP Events shall be responsible for coordinating the logistics of events. Whenever necessary, they will delegate tasks associated with event planning and execution to the rest of the executive. They shall also organize those members outside the executives who wish to plan and help with MESS events. For academic events, the VP Events shall collaborate closely with the VP Academic.

6.9 The VP Communications shall be responsible for maintaining communication with MESS members and the public through all social media outlets and publicity materials. They shall be responsible for maintaining the MESS website and any interactions with external media. They shall be responsible for taking meeting minutes and communicating with members of MESS through the listserv.

6.10 The VP External – AUS shall represent MESS’ interests before the AUS and attend AUS meetings. They shall represent the interests of B.A. Environment, and Minor Environment students to the MESS executive. When appropriate, they shall consult with their respective constituents regarding matters pertinent to AUS Council.

6.11 The VP External – SUS shall represent MESS’ interests before the SUS and attend SUS meetings. They shall represent the interests of B.Sc. Environment, and Minor Environment students to the MESS executive. When appropriate, they shall consult with their respective constituents regarding matters pertinent to SUS Council.

6.12 The VP External – Macdonald Campus shall represent MESS’ interests before MCSS when required. They shall represent the interests of B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc) Environment students to the MESS executive. The VP External – Macdonald Campus must be taking a minimum of half the credits of a full course load at Macdonald campus during their year in office.

6.13 The VP Academic shall represent MESS’ academic interests to the McGill School of Environment. They shall sit on and attend the McGill School of Environment Faculty Roundtable any other academically relevant committees, councils, summits or consultations. The VP Academic shall conceptualize academic events for students and collaborate with the VP Events to coordinate the logistics of these events.

6.14 The VP External – BASiC shall represent MESS’ interest before BASiC and attend BASiC meetings. They shall represent the interests of B.A. & S.c. Environment, and Minor

Environment students to the MESS executive. When appropriate, they shall consult with their respective constituents regarding matters pertinent to BASiC Council.

6.15 The VP External – SSMU (MESS Representative to SSMU) shall represent the interests of environment students to the Students’ Society of McGill University. For a full description of the portfolio, refer to Article 12.

6.16 The First Year Representative – Macdonald Campus shall represent the interests of first year environment students at Macdonald Campus to the Executive. They shall be responsible for organizing advertising campaigns in 200-level environment classes at the Macdonald Campus.

6.17 The First Year Representative – Downtown Campus shall represent the interests of first year environment students at the Downtown Campus to the Executive. They shall be responsible for organizing advertising campaigns in 200-level environment classes at the Downtown Campus.

**Article VII: Elections**

7.1 All members of MESS shall be eligible to vote for the Executive.

7.2 All positions, except for First Year Representative - Macdonald Campus, and First Year Representative - Downtown Campus, are filled through elections. These two positions are to be filled through appointment (Article VIII).

7.3 Eligibility to run

7.3.1 All members of MESS are eligible to stand for elections to the MESS executive, except under the following cases

7.3.1.1 To run for the position of Co-President, the candidate must have served on the Executive for at least one year.

7.3.1.2 To run for the position of VP External – Macdonald Campus, the candidate must be a member of the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Science.

7.3.2 All candidates must remain members of MESS throughout their mandate, should they become elected.

7.4 Nominations:

7.4.1 Nomination period

7.4.1.1 The nomination period shall being in the winter semester prior to the academic year in which the candidates will hold office, and last for a minimum of six (6) days.

7.4.1.2 In the case of at least one vacant position at the end of the nomination period, the nomination period must be extended by two (2) business days.

7.4.2 Nomination Procedures

7.4.2.1 The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) appointed through a vote of 50% +1 by the Executive will establish nomination and election deadlines, enforce campaigning rules, and choose a voting system from the available options.

7.4.2.1.1 The CRO must not be a member of MESS.

7.4.2.2 Candidates must collect a minimum of ten (10) nominations signatures from MESS members during this nomination period in order to run for a position. These must be submitted to the CRO during the nomination period.

7.4.2.3 Candidates may not campaign during the nomination period, or they will become ineligible to run, as determined by the CRO.

7.4.2.4 All candidates who comply with the above articles will be included on the election ballot.

7.4.2.5 For the position of Co-Presidents, the Executive will nominate two members of the Executive. These nominations will appear on the election ballot. These members must also collect ten signatures from MESS members.

7.4.2.5.1 In the event that only one candidate is eligible, and willing to run for the position of Co-Presidents, the presiding Executive will only nominate one person.

7.4.2.5.2 In the event that no person is eligible to run, or those eligible are unwilling to run for the position of Co-President, the category will be opened to all members of MESS. Nomination by the Executive will follow the nomination guidelines outlined in Article IX. The selected candidate(s) will appear on the election ballot.

7.5 Election Procedures

7.5.1 Elections shall take place the spring prior to the academic year in which they will hold office. Polls must be opened for at least three business days

7.5.2 Votes will be counted by the CRO and at least one other person, chosen by the CRO. Alternatively, if votes are collected by an unbiased third-party organization, the count must only be verified by the CRO.

7.5.3 Elections are passed by plurality.
7.5.4 In the event that there is only one candidate for a position, the candidate shall assume the position if a confidence vote of 50% +1 is achieved in the election.

7.5.5 Quorum is 10% of MESS.

7.6 Vacancies after election period

7.6.1 In the event that a position is not filled, the position may be filled by appointment through a 2⁄3 vote by the newly elected Executive. The appointment will take place at the same time as the appointment of the First Year Representative. A person who ran for an

executive position in the most recent election, who was the only candidate, and did not receive a confidence vote of 50% +1, is not eligible for appointment by the Executive that year.

**Article VIII: Appointment of The First Year Representatives**

8.1 Eligibility

8.1.1 To run for the position of First Year Representative - Downtown Campus, the candidate must be a enrolled in the Faculty of Arts or the Faculty of Science, and must be enrolled in the Downtown campus section of three of the four 200-level ENVR courses.

8.1.2 To run for the position of First Year Representative - Macdonald Campus, the candidate must be enrolled in the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Science, and must be enrolled in the Macdonald campus section of three of the four 200-level ENVR courses.

8.1.3 The 200-level course enrollment eligibility criteria may be waived, based on the judgment of the presiding co-president (s) on a case by case basis.

8.2 Appointment Procedure

8.2.1 An appointment application will be released in September or October of the given academic year. Applicants will be given a minimum of eight (8) days to complete this application.

8.2.2 The applications will be reviewed by the VP-Academic and two VP-Externals. When there are fewer than five (5) applicants, all applicants meeting the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 8.1 will be interviewed. In the case that there are more than five (5) applicants, a minimum of five (5) must be interviewed.

8.2.3 The VP-Academic and two VP-Externals will recommend a selected candidate for each position to the Executive. They must be approved by the Executive by a 2⁄3 vote.

8.3 Vacancies

8.3.1 In the event that one of the positions is not filled, the position may be filled by an applicant from the other campus.

8.3.2. In the event that the position can still not be filled, the position may be left vacant and its duties may be fulfilled by a sitting Executive

**Article IX: Vacancies**

9.1 In the case of a vacancy in a position in the Executive during their term, other than Co-President, the position will be filled by appointment.

9.1.1 This appointment must be approved by a 2⁄3 vote of the current Executive.

9.1.2 The appointed member must satisfy the eligibility requirements as defined in Article 7.3.1 and Article 8.1

9.2 In the case of a vacancy of one or both of the Co-Presidents, the current Executive shall nominate a member (s) to the position from the current Executive. These vacated positions will then be filled by appointed, as outlined in Article 9.1.

**Article X: Impeachment**

10.1 A member of the Executive is eligible for impeachment for, but not limited to:

10.1.1 Having neglected the duties of their position through their behaviour, words, and/or actions.

10.1.2 Having failed to uphold the mandate and values of both MESS and the MSE.

10.1.3 Having been absent from 25% + 1 scheduled meetings during the school year without valid reasoning or explanation submitted to the President(s).

10.1.4 Having bolstered an unsafe, toxic, and/or harmful environment amongst the Executives and/or between themselves and MESS constituents.

10.1.5 Having mismanaged and abused the funds and finances of MESS council.

10.1.6 Having generally committed actions of ​impropriety in violation of this Constitution.

10.2 Impeachment Process

10.2.1 A motion to remove a member of the Executive must be presented in writing at a council meeting by a sitting Executive. This motion must be signed by 1⁄3 of the Executive.

10.2.3 Both the accused and the accuser(s) will be given one (1) week before presenting their case at the upcoming council meeting.

10.2.3 A vote to remove will occur at that council meeting.

10.2.4 Approval of a motion to remove someone from office shall be two-thirds (2⁄3) of the Executive, not including the accused.

**Article XI: Changing the Constitution**

11.1 Any changes must be passed by a referendum of MESS, with a majority (50%+1) vote. Changes may require approval of other governing student bodies.

11.2 All changes to the constitution must reflect the aims of MESS as specified in Article II​**.**

**Article XII: Support and Opposition of Causes**

12.1 MESS executives may issue statements and opinions on behalf of MESS regarding various issues that affect Environment students.

12.2 When time permits, appropriate means of student consultation shall be employed, including but not limited to online polls, social media and personal communication.

12.3 MESS executives shall choose the degree to which they will pursue an issue, ranging from neutrality, written support/opposition, promotion of stance to members or direct participation in demonstrations and movements.

12.4 MESS shall take a stronger stance on issues directly related to the environment or directly affecting a large number of MESS members.

12.5 MESS executives may voice personal opinions regardless of MESS’ stance on an issue but they must make clear that these opinions are solely their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of MESS.

**Article XIII: MESS Representative to SSMU**

13.1. Environment Representative to SSMU shall be accountable to the MESS and shall: 13.1.1 Be elected and hold one (1) vote on the Executive.

13.1.2 Be a voting member of the SSMU Council and be bound by the SSMU Constitution and By-Laws.

13.1.3 Represent the views of MESS to the SSMU Legislative Council.

13.1.4 Report on all relevant decision and discussions of the Executive to SSMU and of SSMU to the Executive if needed.

13.1.5 Serve as a liaison between MESS and the SSMU.
13.1.6 May not run or hold AUS, SUS, or BASIC SSMU Representative Position

**Article XVI: Regulations Regarding the MESSy Lounge**

14.1 The Society shall manage the MESSy Lounge in the McGill School of the Environment building basement as outlined in 2.3.

14.2 The communication and enforcement of space use shall be the full responsibility of the members of the Executive.

14.3 The management and aesthetic maintenance of the lounge shall be the full responsibility of the members of the Executive.

14.3.1 However, all members of MESS who use the lounge are responsible for cleaning up after themselves in accordance with common courtesy.

14.4 The Executive shall seek to make lounge improvement a priority through either physical renovation, by the addition or replacement of furniture, equipment, and/or other improvements.

14.5 All feedback, complaints, suggestions or space use requests shall be directed towards to the VP Student Life.

**Article XV: MESS Initiatives**

15.1 The Coffee Co-op

15.1.1 The Coffee Co-op is a co-operative student-run coffee bar dedicated to serving ethical, sustainable and affordable specialty coffee and tea. The Coffee Co-op seeks to build a network of partnerships by supporting student vendors and other student groups. It's a central hub for environment-minded students to meet and relax while enjoying the company of great people.

15.1.2 The Coffee Co-op shall be an entity of MESS and when appropriate, shall receive support, financial or otherwise, to ensure the longevity of the initiative.

15.1.3 The Coffee Co-op’s finances shall be overseen by the Coffee Co-op Finance Coordinator, who shall produce end of term financial reports for the MESS VP Finance.

15.2 Campus Crops Collective Garden

15.2.1 The Campus Crops Collective Garden is a student-run urban gardening initiative that grows food on campus, by students, for students. The Campus Crops Collective Garden is located behind the McGill School of the Environment building.

15.2.2 Formerly an independent student-run garden, the Campus Crops Collective Garden shall be an entity of MESS and when appropriate, shall receive support, financial or otherwise, to ensure the longevity of the initiative.

**Article XVI: Conclusion**

16.1 This constitution has been written to document the activities and workings of MESS. It has been written by the 1998 MESS constitutional working group, who officiate it with the following signatures.

Meaghan Obee

Nadia Cavallin

Raissa Marks

Louanne Rioux

Hannah Shenkar

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