

The following questions were submitted for discussion at the AUS Legislative Council meeting on 27 November 2019. All of the questions submitted via the form are included in this document. The individual submitting the question's name is included if they noted in the submission form that they preferred their question not be anonymous. Questions regarding AUS Legislative Council or the process by which questions were submitted may reach out to Marie Fester at speaker.aus.mcgill@gmail.com.

1. To Andrew and Stefan: You both were approached to take this trip because of your positions as student leaders on this campus. If not for your AUS titles and power on this campus perhaps you would not have been tapped to accept this trip. That being the case, how can you say you are taking this trip as an individual and not as an AUS exec? You are only attending this trip because of your identity as a student leader--how can you reconcile this conflict of interest?
2. To Brent (CSAUS): May you explain why you are taking this trip? As a student in the Canadian Studies department I am incredibly concerned that my representative to AUS is going on this trip.
3. Why do certain elected members of the legislative council feel as though they have license to only represent certain members of their constituency? There are many Jewish and Israeli students who are supposed to be represented by the LC, yet they are vilified by certain members of the legislative council, how do members who oppose this trip reconcile the fact that they are engaging with a clear personal bias as opposed to acting with the consideration of all their constituents in mind? Submitted by Teddy Neuman
4. Will there be any repercussions faced by Hillel Montreal?
5. First of all, given that Jewish groups subsidize/sponsor trips to Israel all the time, why is it any of your business if your fellow students make a personal choice to attend Hillel's trip or not? My second question is would you care as much as you do here if this were a sponsored trip to China? How about Saudi Arabia? Iran? North Korea? My third and final question is, more broadly speaking, why are you guys complaining about what others do with their free time when it has absolutely no impact on you whatsoever?
6. There appear to be a lot of claims that the trip is inherently propagandistic in nature, but this sounds to me like conjecture. Have any of the trip's critics seen the itinerary? Do the trip's critics know how the trip will be structured? Do they know who the participating students will be meeting with? Further, the trip's critics argue that it is propagandistic as a way to discredit the trip, without having first-hand knowledge of the trip's contents. Is it the position of critics of the trip that its participants are unintelligent? Is it their position that McGill students are incapable of critically engaging and understanding complexity beyond what may or may not be spoon-fed to them by a trip leader? Is this anything other than condescending and paternalistic towards their fellow McGill students? Finally, on what grounds does the AUS have jurisdiction over where students go in their personal lives during their vacations? Why is this within the purview of the AUS? For those criticizing the trip, why have they not disclosed where they are going over winter break?
7. Why do members of council believe that they should be able to prohibit other councillors from engaging in educational experiences that allow them to gain first hand experiences and come to their own conclusions?
8. Do you think that members of council should be prohibited from visiting Israel in general?

9. For those involved in the trip, do you think that the negative focus on this trip is creating a toxic or unwelcoming environment for Jewish and Israeli students on campus?
10. For those involved in the trip, do you believe that it is related to your position or will influence how you act in your position? Submitted by Nathan Wolgelerenter
11. Do people not have a right to undergo personal vacations during their time away from McGill? As a follow-up, have all members of the AUS Council disclosed your plans over winter break to the rest of the AUS? Submitted by Samuel Mesguich
12. As constituents of the AUS, is it our expectation that our representatives on this Council are unable to critically engage with difficult issues and make independent conclusions, regardless of what biases may or may not be presented?
13. For members of council that have experience with Hillel MTL, have you ever seen bias against Palestinians in any of their programming or expressed by any of their staff?
14. Why do you all hate Israel so much?
15. (for VP finance Stefan Suvajac and any other executives, staff, or similar of the AUS who applied for, or accepted the trip) Why did you accept/apply for the trip, and what do you expect to gain from it in the context of your position? How will you use what you gain from the trip to benefit AUS members? Submitted by Ben Stix
16. What is your response to the fact that many courses that have trips to countries abroad at McGill prohibit students of certain nationalities from visiting the countries, including Israelis yet they are not protested against?
17. For Arts Representative Chase and the VP Finance: Do you believe that any representative accused of accepting inappropriate financial gifts can simply claim that such gift was "personal" and non-related to their office, and immediately be vindicated, even if the very nature of the gift (in this case, a Hasbara trip) is inherently political, and inherently targeted at student leaders? Is it a slippery slope to give our elected officials care blanche to accept gifts from on-campus interest groups, so long as they can frame this gift as coming from a friend? Submitted by Dalton Liggett (HSA VP External)
18. Are you aware of the SSMU policy on conflicts of interest, which stipulates that, "If an external activity or affiliation creates a Conflict of Interest or Perceived Conflict of Interest, the Concerned Individual must disclose it immediately"? Why did the Arts Representatives to SSMU Andrew Chase and Adin Chan, not follow this policy and immediately disclose their involvement in what is evidently a perceived conflict of interest in their council reports? To any member's knowledge, is this violation being investigated by either the AUS or SSMU Secretary General? Submitted by Dalton Liggett
19. For all councillors who have publicly declared their attendance: do you think it is fair for you to attend a trip from which your Palestinian constituents are systematically and inherently excluded? Do you prioritize going on a political trip that targets student leaders for your own benefit, or the feelings of emotional hurting, betrayal, and heartbreak that you are inflicting on Palestinian students whose lands, families, and lives are being actively oppressed by the same institutions from which you are benefiting? Why is it not your obligation as an elected official to prioritize the former?
20. In 2017, when a few students were not ratified onto the Board of Directors due to their involvement with Israel and Jewish organizations, McGill University launched an investigation.

Suzanne Fortier, McGill Principal, shared in a statement: “It is essential for McGill University to maintain an environment where different views and ideas can be expressed and debated with mutual respect.” Do we feel this is an environment where ideas are being expressed and exchanged in a mutually respectful manner?

21. The Executive Director of Hasbara Fellowships Canada, which is an organization that is associated with the trip to Israel being undertaken by Arts Representative Chase and the VP Finance, has recently made public comments condemning the McGill Daily for publishing its opinion editorial and for its definitions of zionism. Do you agree with this organizer of your trip that the Daily is a racist and anti-semitic publication? Are you a supporter of the work the students who run the McGill Daily do; if so, how do you defend going on this trip?
22. Why do members of council believe that they have a right to scrutinize other members of council for programs they are involved in unrelated to their positions?
23. Does AUS believe that individuals on this Council are unable to engage in critical dialogue surrounding the the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without engaging in a conflict of interest? Or is this conflict of interest only present when perspectives are presented that differ from the ideological perspectives held by individual members of the Council?
24. Should AUS members be expected to disclose every single personal vacation they take to the AUS Council, or is the controversy here simply an attempt by individuals to coerce their personal ideological views onto their peers?
25. For those involved in the trip, why do you think that this should not be under the jurisdiction of the council?
26. For people opposed to this trip, can you please explain to the council why you believe that it is a problem that students should have the opportunity to explore the political realities of a conflict on the ground and form their own perspectives on the matter, and why you believe that it is your right to deny them this opportunity?
27. For those involved in the trip, why do you think that Hillel MTL is offering a trip that will not influence you in your role/your position?
28. Do members of this Council believe it is appropriate to publicly shame, intimidate and bully students for the personal decisions they make on their own time?
29. For critics of the trip, why do you believe that this trip is within the purview of the AUS, or how is this relevant in any way to the functionings and mandate of the Arts Undergraduate Society?
Submitted by Ashley Schulman
30. Why does this trip, and all Israel related issues, get such a disproportionate amount of attention by this council?
31. For those involved in the trip, have you spoken to Hillel MTL about the involvement of MTF? If so, have you received any information about the impact that this relationship will have on the program and itinerary?
32. Why is the Israel/Palestinian conflict relevant to the AUS?
33. Specifically, in the statement that was posted by SSMU, it said that the SSMU executives were selected because of their student leadership experience and connections in campus, and that that was the reason the trip would be all-expenses paid, to my understanding. You all cited personal reasons for going [on the trip], which are legitimate, but I would like to know what differentiates you as AUS executives and SSMU executives. What contexts do you feel are different from

SSMU that separated you from not having to follow the same procedures or not having to uphold the same guidelines? [2] To all three of you- you also noted that this was done completely independently and that you have no political reason - but... what's sort of confusing to me is that if you recognize your positions as representatives, did you feel that it was pertinent to share this with your constituents or did you feel it was pertinent to share with the executives? The reason I'm bringing this up is that in your statements, you also say the fact that you recognize how politically charged this is, but if you did recognize the politically charged nature of this, did you not feel that it would be pertinent to perhaps speak to other members of the executive about this or speak to Legislative Council? (from AUS Council Minutes, 13 November 2019, question posed by GSFSSA VP External)