

McGill Biology Student Union Constitution



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1. Name

1.1. The organization shall be named the 'McGill Biology Student Union' (MBSU).

2. Aims

- 2.1. To provide a friendly environment for Biology students
- 2.2. To provide academic services to students including but not limited to NTC's
- 2.3. To encourage expression of student opinion
- 2.4. To enable student representation to the Biology Department and to the upper-level McGill administration
- 2.5. To organize and work in conjunction with the administration concerning student activities and rights
- 2.6. The activities of this organization are solely for its declared aims and not for the profit of its members

3. Powers

- 3.1. Powers of the Student Union are delegated to it by the Chairperson of the Biology Department and all decisions are subject to their approval
- 3.2. By virtue of the University Law, the Chairperson is responsible for the management of the department and, accordingly, all decisions are subject to their approval
- 3.3. The McGill Biology Student Union has complete control over its monetary affairs

4. Loans and Donations

- 4.1. Any other union or associated that wishes to borrow money from the MBSU must apply in writing to the Union, submitting a tentative budget

5. Membership

- 5.1. The Biology Student Body shall consist of all part-time or full-time students who are in Faculty, Major, Honours, and Minor Biology programs
- 5.2. The MBSU shall consist of the Biology Student Body and shall be administered by an executive and representatives, which will be known as its 'Council'

6. The MBSU Council

6.1. The council shall include an Executive consisting of:

- 6.1.1. President
- 6.1.2. Vice-President Academic
- 6.1.3. Vice-President Administration
- 6.1.4. Vice-President Communications
- 6.1.5. Vice-President External
- 6.1.6. Vice-President Finance
- 6.1.7. Vice-President Internal
- 6.1.8. Vice-President Equity and Sustainability
- 6.1.9. Vice-President NTC

6.2. All members of the Executive must be either elected by the Biology Student Body or acclaimed to their position in accordance with Section 13

6.3. Individuals of the U1, U2, and U3 Biology Student Body shall be appointed to the positions of U1, U2, and U3 Representative (at least one of each), respectively

6.4. U1, U2, U3, and the Biology-Physical Sciences Representatives shall be appointed by a minimum of five members of the Executive in September of the academic year during which they will serve

6.5. The Executive shall assume office for a period of one year beginning and ending on the first day in May

6.6. The U1, U2, U3, and the Biology-Physical Sciences Representatives shall assume their position for one academic year, beginning on the first day of classes in September and ending on the first day in May

6.7. All members of the Executive may be re-elected for successive terms as long as they are full or part-time Biology students for the entire academic year

6.8. All members of the MBSU Council must complete their office hours as assigned by the Vice-President Administration

6.9. Each Vice-President Executive position may be held by two Co-Vice-Presidents, including President

6.10. All members of the MBSU council must submit an exit report at the end of their term

6.11. An Internal Committee chaired by the VP Internal and VP Academic and consisting of 3-4 members (be they council members or members of the Biology Student Body) shall help with the planning of large events (i.e. wine and cheese, end-of-year gala, halloween, etc.)

7. Duties of Officers

7.1. President

- 7.1.1. Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the MBSU
- 7.1.2. Call and preside over meetings of the MBSU
- 7.1.3. Make an agenda for every meeting
- 7.1.4. Represent the MBSU to the Biology Department
- 7.1.5. Sit on the Biology Department Communications Committee, unless otherwise delegated
- 7.1.6. Together with the VP-Communications, coordinate the email list and the Facebook
- 7.1.7. Together with the VP-Finance, assume financial responsibility from previous year's council as soon as possible (prior to first day of class)
- 7.1.8. Coordinate annual elections for the Executive and interviews for UReps
- 7.1.9. Serve, with up to four other Council members, as a member of the Department of Biology General Assembly

7.2. Vice-President Academic

- 7.2.1. Represent students in academic concerns regarding biology courses, including resolving complaints from students with professors and in exceptional cases bringing complaints to administration (e.g., Department Chair, Dean, etc.)
- 7.2.2. Organize academic events with assistance from VP Internal, including one Wine and Cheese per year directed towards the Biology Student Body, ensuring Biology professors, staff, and graduate students are invited
- 7.2.3. Contact professors regarding available research positions and share information with Biology students via VP Administration on the MBSU website
- 7.2.4. Chair the MBSU Internal Committee together with VP Internal
- 7.2.5. Sit on the Biology Department Curriculum Committee, unless otherwise delegated

7.3. Vice-President Administration

- 7.3.1. Record the minutes for every meeting and make them accessible for council members and constituents
- 7.3.2. Maintain a supply of all resources needed in the office
- 7.3.3. Set up office hours for council members at the beginning of each term, taking into account availabilities
- 7.3.4. Organize the ordering of MBSU council merch throughout both terms

- 7.3.5. Coordinate with the President and VP Finance to handle locker rentals each year
- 7.3.6 Maintain and update the MBSU website
- 7.3.7 Work with the council to facilitate department-wide student services as needed, such as intramurals

7.4. Vice-President Communications

- 7.4.1. Send a weekly listserv to the Biology Student Body to advertise events and general affairs using 'mbsu.communications@gmail.com' email
- 7.4.2. Organize the MBSU contact list (names, emails, phone numbers, and titles) at the beginning of both terms
- 7.4.3. Advertise MBSU events and services using forms of social media including, but not limited to, Instagram and Facebook
- 7.4.4. Together with the President, act as administrator for the emailing list, Instagram, and Facebook
- 7.4.5 Organize the recruitment of a graphic designer at the beginning of the academic year and ensure their activities are carried out according to their contract
- 7.4.6 Collaborate with VP Finance to ensure proper payment of the graphic designer

7.5. Vice-President External

- 7.5.1. Represent the MBSU at all SUS General Council Meetings and report back to the MBSU
- 7.5.2. Coordinate the involvement of MBSU in making donations to charities
- 7.5.3. Coordinate sponsorships for events, bursaries, etc.
- 7.5.4. Update the constitution as needed
- 7.5.5 Oversee the Peer Mentorship program
- 7.5.6 In collaboration with the department, coordinate outreach to high schools and CEGEPs as needed
- 7.5.7 Organize the ordering, promotion, sale, and distribution of McGill Biology merch

7.6. Vice-President Finance

- 7.6.1. Together with the President, assume financial responsibility from previous year's council as soon as possible (prior to the first day of class)
- 7.6.2. Make a budget with the MBSU council and SUS VP Finance of the expected yearly expenses

7.6.3. Keep good accounts of MBSU finances including monthly expense reports presented to Council

7.6.4 Handle reimbursements for all council members

7.6.5. Coordinate deposits, withdrawals, and cheque-writing

7.6.6. Assume responsibility for all cash and cheques left in the office

7.6.7 Collaborate with VP Communications to ensure proper payment of the graphic designer

7.6.8 Facilitate the distribution of field bursaries according to established protocols together with VP Equity and Sustainability, and with Departmental oversight

7.7. Vice-President Internal

7.7.1. Organize social events such as Halloween, end-of-year gala, welcome back BBQs, movie nights, and/or other events

7.7.2. Coordinates with VP Finance for proper budgeting of events

7.7.3. Coordinates with VP External for collaborations with other student organizations and/or local businesses regarding events

7.8. Vice-President Equity and Sustainability

7.8.1. Ensure that the MBSU activities are eco-conscious. This may include (but is not limited to) the use of recycled paper, limiting disposable products and/or finding reusable options (e.g. McGill Plate Club)

7.8.2 Sit on the Biology Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) committee, unless otherwise delegated

7.8.3. Act as an external liaison with on-campus environmental sustainability groups, such as the SSMU Environment Committee, and match, reflect, and/or join in with their initiatives

7.8.4. Monitor and maintain sustainable initiatives

7.8.5. Coordinate sustainability related events such as a clothing swap or trash pickups

7.8.6. Share sustainability tips with Biology Student Body using a listserv

7.8.7 Ensures the council maintains equitable practices, including in hiring, event planning, and field bursary distribution

7.8.8 Assist VP Finance with field bursary selection

7.9. Vice-President NTC

- 7.9.1. Organize the recruitment of NTC writers and editors for the selected classes at the beginning of each term based on course structure and interest level from students, writers, and editors. One or two NTC writers and editors will be assigned to each class (be they council members or members of the Biology Student Body)
- 7.9.2. Ensure the duties of the writers and editors are carried out according to their contracts
- 7.9.3. Organize electronic NTC sharing via Google Drive and communicate with the SUS shop manager to ensure they are available for purchase
- 7.9.4. Collaborate with VP Communications and U1, U2, and U3 Representatives to advertise NTCs
- 7.9.5. Collaborate with VP Finance to ensure proper purchases of NTCs and payment to Writers/Editors

7.10. U1, U2, and U3 Representatives

- 7.10.1. Make announcements of MBSU activities in major classes and social media channels with students from their respective year
- 7.10.2. Represent the needs and opinions of students in the respective classification
- 7.10.3. Host one event for their respective year each semester
- 7.10.4. U3 Representatives should additionally plan a celebration and/or gift for graduating Biology Student Body

7.11. Biology-Physical Sciences Representative

- 7.11.1. Must be enrolled in Biology and Computer Science Joint Major, Biology and Math Joint Major, Biological Physics, Biophysical Chemistry, or Quantitative Biology
- 7.11.2. Must have completed at least one year at McGill, but may be U1, U2, or U3
- 7.11.3. Organize communications between the MBSU and integrative physical science/biology program students
- 7.11.4. Plan at least one academic or social event per semester for all students in an integrative physical sciences/biology program
- 7.11.5. Coordinate with the Quantitative Life Sciences (QLS) Program to organize events as needed

8. Meetings

- 8.1. The President shall chair every meeting
- 8.2. Meetings shall be held once a week

8.3. Any member of the Biology Student Body may attend the meetings, unless otherwise announced

8.4. Members of the Executive and Representatives must attend all meetings unless prevented by exceptional circumstances, in which case members must notify the President in advance

9. Intracouncil Voting

9.1. Each member of the Council under Section 6 entitled to one vote. The president votes only to cast the deciding vote when a deadlock occurs. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise stipulated by the President.

10. Amendments

10.1. Amendments to the Constitution must be approved by the Council by a seventy-five percent vote in favour, and are to become effective as soon as they are approved by SUS GC.

10.2. Members of the Biology Student body may propose amendments to the Constitution by obtaining a petition signed by twenty-five biology students and presenting this petition at a regular meeting of the Council

10.3. A notice of motion of amendment must be given at the Council meeting at which the amendment is to be voted on.

11. Elections

11.1 All candidates must submit a written description of their experience and intents by the deadline specified by the Chief Electoral Officer

11.2 Elections for the Executive shall be conducted no later than April 15

11.3 The campaign period must run for a minimum of three days

11.4 The Chief Electoral Officer of the elections shall be the outgoing President. If they are running for an Executive position, another graduating executive shall serve as the Chief Electoral Officer

11.5 The candidates for the President position must first be approved by the outgoing President, on the basis of having at least one year of experience on council

11.5.1 If no candidates with previous experience presents themselves, then other experience with student government may be considered

11.6 The candidates for the VP Finance position must first be approved by the outgoing President and VP Finance, on the basis of suitable experience

11.7 In the case of an unfilled position as of September 1st the council may appoint individuals to positions with a majority vote

11.7.1 The President may not be appointed. In the case the President position is unfilled, the VP External would take on the role of the Chief Electoral Officer and conduct an election to fill the vacant position

11.8 All members of the Biology Student Body are eligible to vote in MBSU elections (see clause 5)

12. Resignation

12.1 In the event that any Council officer resigns, any student from the Biology Student Body can be appointed to serve for the remainder of the term by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council

13. Impeachment

13.1 Any member of the council who fails to carry out their duty properly or who ceases to execute the tasks entrusted to them shall be brought to the collective attention of the Executive. If such conduct continues, the member may be impeached. The impeachment procedure shall be the following:

13.1.1 Impeachment may be requested by two thirds of the members

13.1.2 The impeachment procedure may proceed only if the affected member is present to defend their actions. Such absence must be justified by good cause including sufficient documentation of attempting to contact member for impeachment procedure

13.1.3 After debating on the impeachment, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot. A majority of two-thirds of those present is required to pass the motion of impeachment

13.1.4 When a member has been impeached, a replacement member shall be appointed to serve for the remainder of the term by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council

14. General Assembly

14.1 A General Assembly can be called by a two thirds majority of the MBSU council

16.1.1 Should a member of the Biology student body wish to call a General Assembly, they can email the MBSU President, and the item will then be voted upon by the MBSU council

14.2 General Assembly requires a quorum of 10% of the Biology Student Body, including

Majors and Minors (see clause 5)

14.3 Voting on motions is limited to those in attendance at the GA and requires a majority of attendees to pass

14.4 The Speaker of the General Assembly shall be the SUS General Council Speaker. If this is not possible, then it can be any unbiased (nonvoting) member of the SUS Executive team.

15. Bylaw

15.1 The McGill Biology Student Union is a Student Council under the Science Undergraduate Society, and by that claim no candidate may run for executive position whilst running for an executive, equity, or accountability position on SUS allowing for office during the same year