

Constitution of The Biochemistry Undergraduate Society

Land Acknowledgement

McGill University is located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. McGill honours, recognizes and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

We would also like to acknowledge that McGill and its buildings could not operate the way that they do without the support of maintenance staff who are disproportionately racialized and disproportionately women. We encourage the biochemistry community to reflect on how this is the result of the continued oppression and marginalization of people of colour and women of colour in our North American context.

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Title I The Society

Article 1: Name

1.1 The Society shall be known as the “Biochemistry Undergraduate Society of McGill University” or “L’association des étudiants de 1^{er} cycle en biochimie de McGill”, hereafter referred to as “BUGS”;

1.2 The Executive Council of the Biochemistry Undergraduate Society of McGill University shall hereafter be referred to as BUGS Council.

Article 2: Aim

2.1 The aim of the Society shall be:

- a) to represent all students enrolled in the undergraduate McGill Biochemistry and Interdepartmental Honours Immunology programs towards the faculty and the University;
- b) to support the academic and professional pursuits of our members;
- c) to foster a sense of community in the Biochemistry and Interdepartmental Honours in Immunology programs through facilitation of social activities;

2.2 The Society shall be recognized by its members and the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) of McGill University as representative of all its members as identified in Article 3;

2.3 The Society shall strive to be inclusive and equitable in all its endeavors and initiatives.

Article 3: Membership

3.1 Regular members of the Society shall be all students currently registered at McGill University in the Biochemistry undergraduate program, subject to payment of fees prescribed in Article 4, where the Biochemistry undergraduate program consists of all students registered in the liberal, major, or honours programs;

3.2 All students currently registered in the Interdepartmental Honours in Immunology at McGill University shall also be members, subject to payment of fees prescribed in Article 4.

Article 4: Finances of the Society

4.1 The financial year of the Society shall be from the first (1st) of May to the thirtieth (30th) of April of the following year;

4.2 The Society shall not run deficit;

4.3 The accounts of BUGS Council shall be maintained according to standard accounting practices and shall remain public documents at all times.

Article 5: Definitions

5.1 Simple majority: a simple majority is a vote taken where at least 50% plus 1 of the non-abstaining members must vote yes to approve the motion or matter;

5.1.1 Simple majorities are used to pass council motions and to elect candidates during the electoral process of the Society;

5.2 Inclusivity: The council shall actively strive to welcome and be mindful of the needs of all students in its endeavors and planning;

5.2.1 Unless they have violated the McGill University Student Code of Conduct;

Title II Organization of the Society Section I – Members and Responsibilities of BUGS Council

Article 6: Members of the BUGS Council

6.1 The BUGS Executive Council shall consist of:

i) Elected President; ii) Appointed Vice President, Finance; iii) Elected Vice President, External; iv) Elected Vice President, Internal; v) Elected Vice President, Communications; vi) Elected Vice President, Social; vii) Appointed Interdepartmental Honours in Immunology (IHI) Representative; viii) 2 Elected U3 Representatives; ix) 2 Elected U2 Representatives; x) 2 Appointed U1 Representatives; xi) Appointed Director of Student Affairs; xii) Appointed Director of Charity and Fundraising; xiii) Appointed Director of Academic Affairs;

6.2 No member of the Society may hold more than one position of the Council other than the President in the event outlined in Article 6.3;

6.3 If a position on Council is not filled, it is the responsibility of the President to fulfill the duties of that Council member, outlined in Article 6

6.3.1 Should the position of President be vacant, a by-election will be held;

6.3.2 The DOSA will be responsible for running the by-election and filling in as Acting President until the replacement is determined;

6.4 Should any other position on Council be vacant, the President and DOSA will be responsible for organizing the re-appointment of the vacant Council position.

6.4.1 This process may become a by-election, up to the discretion of the DOSA and President.

Article 7: Powers and Duties of the Executive

7.1 The President Shall:

a) act as chair for all meetings or subcommittees, unless another chair is explicitly authorized by

the president;

- b) coordinate all interactions between Council members and resolve disputes as necessary;
- c) be held responsible for ensuring that all members of Council fulfill their respective duties;
- d) serve as primary liaison between BUGS and the faculty of the McGill Department of Biochemistry, the Executive Council of the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS), and the Executive Council of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU);
- e) act as co-signing officer, along with the VP Finance, for the Society;
- f) be given the right to veto a decision should it be made for the betterment of the Society and students;
- g) be responsible for interviewing applicants for the U1 representative appointed positions in conjunction with the acting BUGS VP Internal and a third member of Council, at the discretion of the acting BUGS Vice President Internal and the acting BUGS President;
- h) be responsible for interviewing applicants for the VP Finance, IHI representative, Director of Charity and Fundraising, Director of Academic Affairs, and Director of Student Affairs appointed positions in conjunction with the outgoing member holding position, and a third member of Council, at the discretion of the incoming BUGS President;
- i) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.2 The Vice President, Finance shall:

- a) be given the right to veto a decision should it be made for the betterment of the Society and students,
- b) be responsible for budget preparation and submission of monthly audits to SUS,
- c) be responsible for keeping records of all financial transactions
- d) act as BUGS co-signing officer with the President,
- e) have the right to increase or limit the budget of any event carried out as they shall see fit;
- f) turnover all receipts, invoices, bank information and financial reports to the incoming VP Finance by the end of the term of office, as indicated in Article 8.2;
- g) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.3 The Vice President, External shall:

- a) act as representative to companies external to the University for both business and general

sponsorship for the duration of the Student Society fiscal year,

b) serve as liaison to the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS) and other student organizations within McGill;

c) attend bi-weekly General Council meetings held by SUS and inform Council of updates concerning the Biochemistry department and its students;

d) act as a contact to other universities;

e) organize a clothing order once per semester

f) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.4 The Vice President, Internal shall:

a) act as liaison to the faculty of the Biochemistry Department of McGill University and the Biochemistry Graduate Student Society (BGSS);

b) be responsible for organizing the following events: Research Awareness Day, Career Symposium, U1 Meet and Greet, and information sessions;

c) be responsible for interviewing applicants for the U1 representative appointed positions in conjunction with the acting BUGS president and a third member of Council, at the discretion of the acting BUGS Vice President Internal and the acting BUGS President;

d) be responsible for organizing departmental meetings per semester with the Department via the Academic Advisor;

e) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.5 The Vice President, Communications shall:

a) Be responsible for maintaining communication amongst the members of the Society;

b) be responsible for taking minutes of meetings and keeping contact information;

c) be responsible for publishing all flyers and listservs;

d) be responsible for effectively advertising and publicizing all events;

e) be responsible for maintaining web pages and official social media;

f) be the main responder of the official e-mail address: bugs@sus.mcgill.ca;

g) be responsible for introducing BUGS council to the biochemistry and IHI student body through various channels such as, but not limited to, social media;

h) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.6 The Vice President, Social shall:

- a) be responsible for leading the organization of all social events open to all members of the Society;
- b) be responsible for the organization of Fall Council Retreat;
- c) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;
- d) organize, in addition to the council retreat, a minimum of three social events over the fiscal year;

7.7 The IHI Representative shall:

- a) represent the interests of IHI students within the BUGS council;
- b) represent the BUGS council and promote BUGS events within the IHI community;
- c) collaborate with the program coordinator to organize academic events for IHI students such as the U2 orientation session and the honours presentations;
- d) address the IHI program coordinator to fulfill academic and administrative responsibilities, as needed;
- e) maintain active communication with the IHI representatives from Microbiology and Immunology Student Association (MISA) and Physiology Undergraduate League of Students (PULS);
- f) collaborate with the IHI representatives from MISA and PULS to organize events for IHI students each semester;
- g) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.8 The U3 Representative shall:

- a) represent the interests of U3 McGill Biochemistry and IHI students;
- b) be registered in the following required U3 McGill University courses for biochemistry students: BIOC 450 or BIOC 454;
- c) be responsible for the organization of NTCs for the McGill University courses BIOC 450 and BIOC 454;
- d) organize a minimum of one social or academic event for U3 students per semester including the End-of-Year Formal in the winter semester;
- d) i) coordinate creation of, and co-chair, a subcommittee responsible for organizing the End-of-Year Formal; d) ii) the subcommittee responsible for End-of-Year formal will include the U3 co-chairs, President, VP Finance, and other members of council as determined by the U3 reps;

- e) organize all graduation-based activities for the graduating class of the McGill Department of Biochemistry, as well as to help finance graduation events;
- f) promote BUGS events in U3 classes;
- g) organize course evaluations for BIOC 450 and BIOC 454 with the Director of Academic Affairs;
- h) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.9 The U2 Representative shall:

- a) represent the interests of U2 McGill Biochemistry and IHI students;
- b) be registered in at least two of the following three required U2 McGill University courses for biochemistry students: BIOC 320, BIOC 311, and BIOC 312;
- c) be responsible for the organization of NTCs for the McGill University courses BIOC 311, and BIOC 312;
- d) organize a minimum of one social or academic event for U2 students per semester;
- e) promote BUGS events in U2 classes;
- f) organize course evaluations for BIOC 311, BIOC 312, and BIOC 320 with the Director of Academic Affairs;
- g) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.10 The U1 Representative shall:

- a) represent the interests of U1 McGill Biochemistry students;
- b) be registered in the following required U1 McGill University courses: BIOC 212 and BIOC 220;
- c) be responsible for the organization of NTCs for the course BIOC 212;
- d) promote BUGS events in U1 classes;
- e) organize course evaluations for BIOC 212 and BIOC 220 with the Director of Academic Affairs;
- f) organize a minimum of one social or academic event per semester, specifically before Research Awareness Day for the fall semester;
- g) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.11 Director of Student Affairs shall:

- a) be responsible for the administrative affairs of the office and the surrounding space in the McIntyre Medical Building;
- b) ensure maintenance of office equipment, upkeep of the office, and maintenance of the BUGS bulletin boards;
- c) prepare the agendas and book rooms as needed for such meetings,
- d) run Council meetings in a timely manner;
- e) oversee the appointment of a Chief Returning Officer (CRO) who will organize the elections for Executive positions as per the regulations outlined in Section II - Elections;
- f) fulfill the President's duties in case of absence for short periods of time but will not attain the Presidency position in case of Presidential dismissal;
- g) not run for any departmentally elected position for the following fiscal year;
- h) organize office hours for BUGS Council;
- i) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.12 Director of Charity and Fundraising shall:

- a) organize events during the designated charity period of SUS to raise money for a specific charity chosen by SUS;
- b) be responsible for the acquisition of sponsorship from external companies pertaining to charity month;
- c) organize charitable or community-based endeavours throughout the year as decided upon by the rest of Council;
- d) be responsible for coordinating fundraising efforts for the entire BUGS Council, including coordinating a minimum of two fundraising efforts for End-of-Year Formal with the U3 representatives per fiscal year;
- e) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

7.13 Director of Academic Affairs shall:

- a) be responsible for the Biochemistry Undergraduate Mentorship Program (BUMP) and all events pertaining to the program, with at least one event per semester;
- b) act as liaison between SUS and BUGS for all academic affairs;
- c) coordinate course evaluations for courses of the Biochemistry department;
- d) coordinate internal and interdepartmental academic endeavours and events such as research information sessions;
- e) act to assist the Vice President Internal in coordinating Research

Awareness Day;

- e) meet with the Biochemistry department staff regarding academic endeavours as necessary;
- f) be required to attend the equity training offered by the SUS Equity Committee in the fall semester;

Article 8: Powers and Duties of Council

8.1 The BUGS Council is the governing body of the Society and as such shall:

- a) be entitled to make all decisions on behalf of the Society;
- b) adopt the Society's annual budget;
- c) establish Committees of Council when it deems necessary;
- d) hold regular office hours every week;

8.2 The term of office for members of the BUGS Council shall be May 1st to April 30th;

8.3 Council members are required to compile exit reports and facilitate the transition of newly elected and appointed positions;

8.3.1 Council members are required to turnover financial reports, debriefs, Google Drive passwords and BUGS related files to the newly elected positions no later than the end of the term of office (as per article 8.2). Should the position be unfilled by the end of the term of office, all files should be given to the incoming President.

Article 9: Meetings of Council

9.1 Quorum for a meeting of Council shall be a minimum of 70% of its members;

9.2 All executives must be present at all meetings of Council unless one of the following conditions applies:

- a) Illness;
- b) The meeting interferes with a religious holiday or ceremony;
- c) The member is out of the Greater Montreal Area at the time the meeting is held;
- d) There is a death of a friend or relative;
- e) An exam or test conflicts with the meeting;
- f) In all other cases the member shall contact the President or Director of Student Affairs prior to the meeting and shall be expected to accept the decisions made by Council;

9.3 The Council shall hold regular meetings once a week during the academic year with the exception of the final examination periods;

9.4 Notice of all meetings shall be given at the meeting prior to it, or as soon as possible following determination of the subsequent meeting time, and agendas shall be sent out at least one calendar day prior to the meeting as well as given to all members of Council at the meeting;

9.4.1 Submissions to the agenda must be sent to the Director of Student Affairs a minimum of 48 hours before the scheduled meeting time;

9.5 All meetings shall be open to all current members of McGill University.

9.5.1 They have the right to discussion but do not hold a vote for motions put forth during these meetings.

Article 10: Sub-Committees of the Executive Council

10.1 The Executive may establish sub-committees as deemed necessary;

10.2 All members of the student society are eligible to become a member of a sub-committee, provided requirement 10.2.1 is met:

10.2.1 No conflict of interest exists that would hinder the ability of the member in question to make unbiased and impartial decisions;

10.3 Membership to any sub-committee is attained by appointment of the Executive.

Section II - Elections

Article 11: General

11.1 As per Article 14 of the Constitution, there shall be a Chief Returning Officer (hereafter referred to as the CRO) who shall be responsible for the conduct and execution of the elections according to the articles in the Constitution

11.1.1 The CRO shall be appointed by the Director of Student Affairs and at least two other Executives, who will be graduating in the current academic year, according to the criteria outlined in Article 13.3.1 and 14;

11.1.2 The CRO shall be financially compensated as determined by the Council each year.

11.2 The CRO shall be advised by and communicate with the Director of Student Affairs;

11.3 The CRO shall review all nomination packages and petitions after they have been submitted to the Society;

11.4 In the event that the CRO cannot fulfill their duties, for personal or public reasons, they shall give the Director of Student Affairs notice at least 21 days prior to the nomination period;

11.4.1 In such an event, the Director of Student Affairs shall appoint a new CRO according to the criteria laid out in the Constitution;

11.5 A list of dates regarding the nomination period, candidate meeting(s) and any other dates the CRO deems important shall be announced before the Nomination Period begins. Updated information will be posted thereafter as it arises;

11.6 The CRO and those working directly with the CRO will, to the best of their ability, maintain impartiality and attempt to conduct an election that is fair and just to all candidates;

11.7 Any current executive running in the election shall relinquish the responsibilities outlined below for the duration of the campaigning period, and be treated solely as a candidate in the election;

11.7.1 Office hours

11.7.2 Promotion for BUGS events and initiatives

11.8 In the event that unforeseen circumstances arise that are not addressed by this Constitution, the CRO will refer to the Science Undergraduate Society's (SUS) By-Law I Electoral and Referenda Regulations document;

11.9 All members of the Society shall be eligible to vote in BUGS elections;

11.10 Elections shall be won by simple majority;

11.11 Execution of the elections and referenda shall be the responsibility of the CRO;

11.12 All nominees for an executive position must adhere to "BUGS Campaigning Guidelines", and failure to do so will authorize the CRO to enforce disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate;

11.13 The elected positions are the following: President, VP Internal, VP External, VP Social, VP Communications, U3 Representatives and U2 Representatives;

11.13.1 All other positions (U1 Representatives, Director of Student Affairs, Director of Academic Affairs, Director of Charity and Fundraising, VP Finance and IHI Representative) will be appointed;

11.14 Outgoing Council members, except Director of Student Affairs, are able to hold their positions for more than one term of office given that they follow the same electoral process;

11.14.1 In the case where an appointed member is interested in another term of office, the position will be appointed by the outgoing President, the incoming President and

another member of the incoming Council;

11.15 Candidates must adhere to the election guidelines provided by the CRO and prepare campaign materials according to Article 15 or face the possibility of sanction or disqualification;

11.16 The CRO may define additional rules or provide clarifications on these regulations before the nomination period begins;

11.16.1 The CRO must notify all candidates in writing or via email at the end of the nomination period;

11.16.2 No candidate may be penalized for violating these additional regulations until the CRO has notified all candidates of the regulations.

Article 12: Eligibility

12.1 All members of the Society shall be eligible to run in an election. Exceptions to this are:

a) Class representatives, for which only members in that class year and registered for the required courses associated with that year may run;

b) President, for which only a member with at least one year of prior experience sitting on the BUGS Council may run;

12.2 All elected and appointed individuals must remain members of the Student Society throughout the duration of their mandate.

Article 13: Election and Appointment Procedures

13.1 The general election period, for the purpose of the election of BUGS Council, shall be held between March 1st and April 1st;

13.2 The polling period will be of at least two days' duration;

13.3 Executive appointed or elected positions must be filled by October 1st;

13.3.1 The appointment of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) must be appointed no later than January 31st;

13.4 If a position is not filled through normal electoral procedures, an application and interview process will take place, conducted by the two most senior Council members or one of these two members and the member who currently holds the position. This process will take place once all electoral procedures have taken place up to and including ballot counting.

13.4.1 The SUS Equity Commissioner shall be present for all interviews conducted for appointed positions.

Article 14: Electoral Officers

14.1 The CRO shall be responsible for the conduct and execution of the elections in accordance with Section II - Elections in the Constitution;

14.2 To ensure that the CRO shall fulfill the duties listed in Article 14.1 with the strictest impartiality, the Council shall appoint one individual who shall conform to the criteria listed below:

14.2.1 The student shall not be a full-time or part-time student who is a member of the Society;

14.3 The CRO will report all of their activities, including any incidents, to the Director of Student Affairs, and will submit a formal report at the end of the electoral process to the Council;

Article 15: Campaign Materials

15.1 All campaign material must be approved by the CRO before being made public. Failure to do this will result in a warning or a sanction at the discretion of the CRO;

15.2 The CRO shall have exclusive rights to decide whether material conforms to the guidelines outlined in Article 15 or not;

15.3 No campaign material may refer to or put down another candidate. No campaign material shall be offensive, or degrading to any person, organization, or department of the university or of any outside group, whether affiliated or not affiliated with the university, in any way;

15.4 No handouts promoting or disparaging any candidate (stickers, food, balloons, etc.) may be given out to students or posted at any time during the campaign;

15.5 The CRO shall have the right to prohibit the use of any campaign material if it contravenes the rules outlined in this Constitution and/or the Handbook of Students' Rights and Responsibilities;

15.6 Campaigning shall end at 23:59 on the last day of the election period. All campaign materials must be removed by this time, and their removal is the responsibility of the candidates. Any candidates failing to remove campaign materials shall be subject to a sanction at the discretion of the CRO.

Section III - Referenda

Article 16: General

16.1 All members of the Society shall be eligible to vote in Society referenda;

16.2 Referenda shall be passed by a simple majority;

16.3 The result of the referendum will be effective immediately and binding until future modifications;

16.4 All referenda shall be advertised at least one week prior to polling.

Article 17: Procedure

17.1 A referendum may be initiated by a petition passed by 10% of BUGS;

17.2 Referenda may only be held during the months of October, November, January, February, and March;

17.3 In the case of a referendum initiated by Council, the referendum question must be made available to all members of the Society by the BUGS Council a minimum of 14 days prior to the opening of the polling period;

17.4 In the case of a referendum initiated by a member of the Society, all signatures must be submitted to the President at least 21 days prior to the opening of the polling period. The President must then act in accordance with Article 17.3 in making the question available;

Section IV - Judicial Board

Article 18: Judicial Board

18.1 Members of the BUGS may consult the judicial board of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU), which shall be the final authority on:

- a) the interpretation of the Constitution of the Society;
- b) the interpretation and legality of any motion passed by Council;
- c) the interpretation and legality of referenda;
- d) the legality of any action taken by any member of the Society;

18.2 Upon hearing and appeal, the Judicial Board shall have the power to declare invalid any of the BUGS or the Committees of its Council or decisions of the Executive, which derogate from the Constitution and of the Society;

18.3 All decisions of the Judicial Board shall be binding upon all involved parties;

18.4 All members of the Society shall have the right to petition the Judicial Board on matters falling within its authority set out herein.

Section V – Removal from Office

Article 19: Procedures

19.1 Any member of the BUGS Council may be removed from office for impropriety, violation of the provisions of this Constitution, delinquency of duties such as frequent absences from meetings or slandering of the BUGS name or misappropriation of funds;

19.2 A motion to remove a member of the BUGS Council must be presented in writing at a Council meeting, signed by at least one half of the members of the Council, or one hundred members of the Society and distributed to all members of the BUGS Council at a regular

meeting. The motion to impeach will then be inscribed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the BUGS Council;

19.3 Quorum for a motion to remove a Council Member from office shall be 75%;

19.4 Anyone removed from office shall have the right to appeal to the Judicial Board of SSMU.

Section VI – Miscellaneous Provisions

Article 20: Language of the Society

20.1 English and French are the Official Languages of the Society;

20.2 Members of the Society may use either official language at all meetings and in all documentation of the Society.

Article 21: Freedom of Information

21.1 All documentation of the BUGS Council shall be public, except those minutes and documents described in Article 21.3;

21.2 Requests to see the minutes and documents shall be addressed to the VP Communications;

21.3 No Council member shall be obliged to release confidential information;

21.4 Meeting minutes and other relevant documents can be provided in French upon request;

21.4.1 The translation of documents shall be made available within 28 days of a request

Article 22: Reports

22.1 There shall be permanent documents of the Society known as exit reports in which each executive shall record all activities and policies within their portfolio to aid the following year's executive;

22.2 All events shall be recorded by the executive in charge, describing the purpose of the event, who was involved, attendance, means for improvement, budget, and any other relevant information at the discretion of the executive in charge. This form will then be filed in the appropriate drive.

Title III The Constitution

Article 23: Superseding Clause

23.1 This Constitution annuls and supersedes all previous Constitutions governing

students from the Biochemistry student body.

23.2 In the event that unforeseen circumstances arise that are not addressed by this Constitution, the Society shall abide to the Science Undergraduate Society's (SUS) Constitution.

Article 24: Language of the Constitution

24.1 This document was redacted in English, as requested by the Student Society. Any individual may request that any clause in this document be translated to French. English and French texts of this Constitution are equally authoritative;

24.2 The Constitution shall respect the principles of impartiality and equity between all members of the Society at all times.

Article 25: Amendments to the Constitution

25.1 This Constitution may only be amended by a majority vote by the SUS General Council;

25.2 The existing wording as well as the proposed Constitutional amendment shall be provided at every polling station during the referendum;

25.3 All amendments to this Constitution shall be adopted in both languages.

25.4 The Council shall review the Constitution each fiscal year and modify as deemed necessary.

Article 26: Coming into Force

26.1 This Constitution shall be in effect for the 2020-2021 academic year;

26.2 This BUGS Constitution shall be voted upon at the beginning of each successive academic year.