**Constitution**

**Constitution of Syrian Students’ Association of McGill University**

**Ratified by Club’s Membership on: 2019-2020**

**Ratified by SSMU Council on: 2019-2020**

1. **Article I:Name**
	1. Syrian Students’ Association of McGill University also referred to hereinafter as the Club.
2. **Article II: Ideology**

SSA McGill supports events and activities brought in accordance with its vision and mission. This means that, whether the SSA has a certain position on some issue or not, we accept difference in opinion, encourage dialogue and promote tolerance, in aim of achieving the true unity of our community.

The Club is not affiliated with any political entity or any ideology whatsoever; rather, it supports the struggle of the Syrian people for freedom and dignity and attributes the same basic rights and freedoms we benefit from as students living abroad to Syrians back home.

1. **Article III: Vision**

SSA McGill aims to be a benchmark student club that brings together the Syrian community of McGill University and Montreal, and provides them with essential services. It is a platform that facilitates the intellectual and social growth of its members in their efforts to benefit their country in these times of hardship.

SSA McGill is a safe and inclusive space that respects cultural and religious sensibilities.

**4 Article IV: Mandate**

**4.1 The Club’s mandate shall be to**

4.1.1 Benefit and bring together all Syrian students at McGill University as well as the growing Syrian community in Montreal.

4.1.2 Bring together McGill University students, as well as the greater Montreal community, to
 plan and host events intended to raise awareness about the Syrian conflict, and to fundraise
 in order to support charities and organizations that provide humanitarian aid to the Syrian
 community, whether local or abroad.

4.1.3 Create an environment for discussion of any topics related to the ongoing situation in Syria.

Allowing members of the McGill community to exchange ideas freely in a non-judgmental
 environment that respects all opinions, so long as they do not violate the Code of Conduct
 outlined hereinafter.

4.1.4 Collaborate with charities organizations that provide humanitarian assistance to Syrians in need.

4.1.5 Promote Syrian culture across campus.

4.1.6 Advocate for the importance and right to education for displaced and newly settled Syrians alike.

*

**4.2 Code of Conduct**

4.2.1 The Club shall carry forth its mandate from an anti-oppressive and equitable standpoint and equal respect shall be given to all members, including those of disadvantaged backgrounds, regardless of but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexuality or sexual orientation, mental or physical abilities, language, or social class.

* + - 1. No member shall make personal profit from the club.
		1. Any executive member who fails to fulfill their responsibilities shall be subject to the expulsion procedure outlined in this constitution.

**4.3 Student Group Civility**

4.3.1 The club will maintain cordial and respectful relations with all other clubs, services and independent student groups.

4.3.2 The club will not use SSMU resources and/or their club status to prevent other clubs, services or independent student groups from fulfilling their mandate, including but not limited to their acquisition of resources and pursuit of activities.

4.3.3 If problems arise between groups, a member of the executive committee and/or collective of the club shall be responsible for contacting the SSMU Vice President of Clubs and Services and attempt to remedy the problem in a collegial fashion.

**4.4 Environment**

4.4.1 The club shall make attempts to regularly monitor the environmental impact of all its events and operations.

4.4.1.1 Clubs must attempt to utilize the services and resources available at SSMU in order to maximize capacities for equitable decision-making and environmental stewardship. These include but are not limited to the use of the plate club, green events guide, applications for the SSMU Green fund, assistance of the SSMU environment commissioners, environment committee and green events coordinators.

* + 1. The club must attempt to find sustainable alternatives to the non-recyclable #6 plastic, effective waste management, providing vegan and vegetarian options, purchasing clothing which is ethically sourced and environmentally-friendly, purchasing local and sustainable alcohol, fair trade coffee and tea, and local and/or organic foods.

**5 Article V: Membership**

5.1 Membership for a club under the Students’ Society of McGill University is open to all SSMU and PGSS members, including those of disadvantaged backgrounds, regardless of but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexuality or sexual orientation, mental or physical abilities, language, or social class.

5.2 Only Students’ Society of McGill University (SSMU) and Post Graduate Students’ Society (PGSS) members are eligible to be elected as officers and to hold voting privileges.

5.3 Associated non-voting membership is open to all others.

**6 Article VI: Executive Committee**

6.1 The Executive Committee (EC) shall administer the Club and oversee its events.

6.2 The EC is composed of the following nine portfolios:

1. President
2. Vice President External
3. Vice President Internal
4. Vice President Finance
5. Vice President Education
6. Vice President Logistics and Events
7. Vice President Media (can be combined with communication)
8. Vice President Communication (can be combined with media)

6.3 The EC shall meet as frequently as it deems fit.

6.4 At least one third of the EC must be present at an EC meeting in order for quorum to be met and for the meeting to proceed.

**7 Article VII: Portfolios**

7.1 The **President** shall:

7.1.1 Be the chief executive officer, chief representative, and chief spokesperson of the Club.

7.1.2 Oversee all aspects of the club.

7.1.3 Ensure the smooth running of the Club as a whole through facilitation of, and mediation with, the various EC portfolios with a vision that is consistent with the Club mandate.

7.1.4 Chair all EC meetings or delegate responsibilities accordingly.

7.1.5 May cast the deciding vote in the event of an EC deadlock.

7.1.6 Review the constitution annually and suggest amendments if necessary

7.1.7 Co-sign all financial transactions with the VP Finance.

7.1.8 Ensure that the Club is abiding by the Constitution, By-laws and Policies of the Students’ Society of McGill University.

7.2. The **Vice President External** shall:

7.2.1 Promote the club as an active and mature pillar in the (Syrian & broader) community.

7.2.2 Reach out and collaborate with clubs and institutions with similar goals and mission.

7.2.3 Plan large(r) scale events, same calibre as OneSyria,

 integrating different parts of the community, solidifying the above mentioned points.

7.2.4 Update and Improve our lists of sponsors.

7.2.5 Be the main point of contact between the Club and the community within and outside of the University.

7.2.6 Be the main liaison with the Syrian Students’ Association of Concordia.

7.3 The **Vice President Internal** shall:

7.3.1 Take minutes at EC and general meetings, and ensure proper distribution of all minutes. This task is interchangeable with the VP Internal.

7.3.2 Be responsible for maintaining a healthy environment within the EC, ensuring and establishing effective communication among the EC.

7.3.3 Be the main point of contact between the SSMU VP Clubs and Services and the Club.

7.3.4 Be responsible for communication within the EC and with the SSMU.

7.3.5 Maintain the membership list of the club through MyInvolvement.

7.3.6 Overlook Club finances and audit with President and VP Finance.

7.4 The **Vice President Finance** shall:

7.4.1 Oversee and coordinate funding for the activities and events of the Club.

7.4.2 Manage all of the Club’s incoming funds and auditing.

7.4.3 Ensure the funding and financial stability of the Club.

7.4.4 Maintain full transparency of the Club’s finances by undergoing a monthly review with the EC of all Club transactions and pertinent audit information.

7.4.5 Keep track of all financial transactions and receipts pertaining to the Club.

7.4.6 Prepare the biyearly audits for the SSMU as well as all funding applications to SSMU.

7.4.7 Be responsible for third party transactions with non profit organizations and charities that the Club supports according to the Club’s mission.

7.4.8 Be responsible for the smooth annual transition of signing officers.

7.4.9 Be responsible for finalizing sponsorship deals, and writing grants to potential sponsors, along with the VP External and VP Outreach.

7.4.10 Be responsible for instructing the EC on financing and passing on the knowledge to the new VP Finance yearly.

7.5The **Vice President Education** shall:

7.5.1 Assist the President in maintaining the focus of the Club on its humanitarian educational vision.

7.5.1.1 Contribute to the intellectual growth of the Club’s board members through thought-provoking discussions at EC meetings.

7.5.2 Act as a peer-supporter to newly arrived Syrians by responding to messages and requests on email, social media and the Club website, meeting with them if necessary, offer support and guidance.

7.5.3 Benefit from the expertise of professors and other student clubs or local organizations in an
 effort to expand the scope of the educational topics covered and enrich their content.

* 7.5.4 Ensure that members of the community, both Syrian and non-Syrian, are provided with
 adequate awareness opportunities and suitable settings to learn more about the Syrian
 Refugee Crisis, and subsequently act on it.
* 7.5.5 Lead and handle the Peer-Mentorship program offered by the Club, assisted by the
 President *(Only if requested from SKF)*

7.5.6 Ensure that members of the community (both Syrians and non-Syrians) are provided with adequate awareness opportunities and suitable settings to learn more about the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and subsequently act on it as well as learn about the culture and heritage of Syria through presentations, talks or small scale events.

7.5.7 Facilitate opportunities that encourage Syrian students to contextualize the knowledge they are gaining at university and channel it towards the rebuilding of Syria.

7.6. The **Vice President Logistics and Events** shall:

7.6.1 Be in charge of executing events that project the Club’s mission and vision such that the Club’s purpose remains unambiguous throughout, by committing to the undersigned tasks;

7.6.2 Be in charge of all room and table bookings.

7.6.3 Creating a task list for each event.

7.6.4 Organize committees within the EC and with volunteers specific to each event and campaign.

7.6.5 Be in charge of all logistical planning, which include distributing tasks, reserving venues, communicating with venue managers, budgeting food and props, setting ticket prices for events, and arranging transportation for members if needed.

7.6.6 Be responsible of any bake sales on McGill campus to donate to the
 humanitarian organizations that support Syrians.

7.7 The **Vice President Media** shall: (can be combined with communication)

7.7.1 Along with the VP Communications, be responsible for promoting the image of the Club to
 the community within and outside McGill University.
7.7.2 Be in charge of graphic design related to the Club, e.g. Club logo, event posters, flyers, Club
 theme, banner, event tickets, and web design.

7.7.3 Be in charge of photography at all of the Club’s events (Interchangeable with VP
 Communications).

7.7.4 Maintain aesthetic theme of Club, by ensuring continuous, relevant media output and
 uniform design per campaign.

7.7.5 Create a plan to boost social media performance along with VP Communications.

7.7.6 Track and assess social media influence throughout the year, and set goals for online
 campaign reach. Communicate this to the EC.

7.8 The **Vice President Communications** shall: (can be combined with media)

7.8.1 Along with the VP Media, be responsible for promoting the image of the Club to the community within and outside McGill University.

7.8.2 Create a plan to boost social media performance along with VP Communications.

7.8.3 Write all posts and promotional material for the Club on platforms including Instagram, Facebook, the online newsletter, and Club’s website, to maintain, improve and expand the Club’s social media presence.

7.8.4 Respond to all Facebook messages and website requests and direct specific requests
 to the relevant VP. i.e. volunteering requests to VP Logistics, peer mentorship requests.

7.8.5 Be responsible for communication between the EC and the Club’s members, by sending
 weekly online newsletters containing relevant and updated information, and adding
 members to the listserv.

*

**8 Article VIII: Fees**

8.1 There shall be no membership fee associated with the Club.

**9 Article IX: Finances**

9.1 The Executive Committee or Collective shall examine the financial records, and prepare an audit, complete with records of all transactions and receipts, to be submitted to the SSMU at the end of each semester before May 31st of each year.

9.2 All club bank accounts must be kept at Scotiabank as subsections of the SSMU account

9.2.1 Each account must have a minimum of two and maximum of three signing officers.

9.2.2 In order to receive funding of any kind from the SSMU, the club must have a Scotiabank account.

**10 Article X: Meetings**

10.1 The EC shall decide on a meeting time at the beginning of each semester.

10.2 The EC shall respect the meeting time and hold a meeting weekly or bi-weekly.

**11 Article XI: Electoral Procedures**

11.1 The President of the Club shall be the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) with final authority over electoral procedures and validity of results.

11.2 Elections are to be held internally (i.e. within the EC) and are for the purpose of electing a new president. In this regard, the next president of the Club must come from within the EC.

11.3 Elections are to be held once a year; specifically in the beginning of the calendar year.

11.4 The EC may designate Deputy Electoral Officers (DEOs) to assist the running of elections in consultation with the CEO.

11.5 Elections are to be conducted by secret ballot.

11.6 The election of a new President shall proceed as follows:

11.6.1 Each EC member will nominate at least one person and at most two persons, via secret ballot, as candidates for the new President.

11.6.2 The current President/CEO will tally the nominations.

11.6.3 The two EC members who attain the most votes will be notified by the CEO and will become the potential candidates for President, if they so choose to accept the nominations.

11.6.4 If the two nominated EC members both accept the nominations, the EC team will proceed to vote, via secret ballot, between the two candidates.

11.6.5 If one nominated EC member declines their nomination, the other nominated EC member requires a vote of confidence to be elected (50%+ majority).

11.6.6 If there is a tie, the CEO retains the right to break the tie at their own discretion.

11.7 Ballots must be kept in a secure place for 5 weeks after the date of voting.

11.8 The Vice-President (Clubs and Services) should be notified immediately in the event of contested electoral results.

11.9 As for the rest of the EC, at the beginning of every calendar year, the positions for EC will be open for general members to apply to.

11.10 Current EC members are allowed to re-apply for the position they currently hold.

11.11 The application process for the VP Portfolios will proceed as follows:

11.11.1 The EC will form an “elections committee” consisting of up to 3 current EC members.

11.11.2 Online applications for the positions will be distributed to the Club’s general members approximately one month into the calendar year.

11.11.3 All candidates will be interviewed by the elections committee.

11.11.3 The elections committee members will bring their feedback to the rest of the EC team, and together the EC will decide on who to appoint.

11.11.4 The newly appointed EC members will join the team for the semester as “shadow executives” to ensure an effective transition of roles and responsibilities within the portfolios.

11.11.5 By the end of the winter semester, the shadow executives will have officially become the new members of the EC.

**12 Article XII: Affiliations**

12.1 The Club is not affiliated with any national or international organization, nor any political institution.

**13 Article XIII: Constitutional Amendment Procedure**

13.1 Any member of the club may propose an amendment to the Constitution. In order to amend the constitution consensus on the proposed amendment must be reached at a General Meeting

13.2 All amendments shall be submitted to the Interest Group Coordinator, will be reviewed by the Interest Group Committee and ratified by the SSMU council before they take effect.

**14 Article XIV: Bylaws and Policies**

14. 1 The club shall create and maintain bylaws that cover the operations of the club which are not specified in the Constitution.

14.2 The club’s bylaws shall not contravene the Constitution.

14.3 The club by laws must be available to any member of the SSMU when and if requested.

**15 Article XV: SSMU Constitution, By-Laws and Policies**

15.1 In case of any inconsistencies between the Club Constitution and the SSMU Constitution and By-Laws, the SSMU Constitution By-Laws and Policies shall take effect.

15.2 If there are any areas not covered in this Constitution, the SSMU Constitution, By-Laws and Policies shall take effect.