



**MEDICAL STUDENTS' SOCIETY** *of McGill University*

**L'ASSOCIATION des ÉTUDIANT(E)S en MÉDECINE** *de l'Université McGill*

## **MSS 2021-2024 Strategic Plan**

### **Task Force Members:**

Rami Habib, Executive President  
Yseult Gibert, Executive Vice-President  
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### **Editors:**

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*Submitted to referendum on February 17th, 2020*



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## **Mission**

- To represent its members and promote their views in all dealings with the Faculty of Medicine of McGill University, McGill University, professional organizations and the community at large;
- To promote activities serving to encourage interaction between its members;
- To facilitate and promote the formation and functioning of Society organizations, clubs, and committees;
- To disseminate information pertinent to the academic, professional, and cultural enrichment of all Society members;
- To act as a positive leader in the McGill University community and the community at large.

## **Values**

- Representation
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Sense of belonging

## **Objectives**

- Communication and transparency
- Promoting student belongingness and wellness
- Advocating for better medical education



## **Methodology:**

### Task force members:

- Rami Habib (MSS Executive President, 2019-2020)
- Yseult Gibert (MSS Executive Vice President & Corporate Affairs, 2019-2020)
- Anna Davidson (MSS Secretary, 2019-2020)

### Initial planning and assessment:

An assessment of the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan (SP) was done by going through every direction and sub direction and marking their completion as of September 2019 (Annex A). Given that many items need annual accomplishment, completion by the 2018-2019 MSS was used to assess the action item.

Action items were set for the development of the upcoming strategic plan as follows:

- Reading the strategic plans of other medical student groups such as Canadian Federation of Medical Students, Association des étudiantes et étudiants en médecine de l'université de Montréal and Association générale étudiante de médecine de l'université de Sherbrooke.
- Identifying themes that fall under the responsibilities of the MSS to guide directions and make sure they are relevant.
- Reading the Independent Student Assessment report from the last accreditation cycle to identify large gaps in UGME's curriculum and organization.

A timeline was created to ensure completion of the 2021-2024 SP for timely adoption ideally before the end of the 2019-2020 MSS council mandate. The hard deadline to complete this SP was by the end of the current SP period which is December 31st, 2020.

### Focus Groups:

The goal of the focus groups is to obtain an assessment of the needs of medical students by inquiring about their problems, interests and priorities.

A questionnaire for focus groups was built with open ended questions which would allow an assessment of the student body's needs (Annex B). These questions were based off of other strategic plan building designs. Questions were focused on the roles and responsibilities of the MSS. These were based off of the 2017-2020 SP focus group questions with slight modifications.

To increase diversity of voices heard during this consultation, a random selection of students was used for the different class focus groups with the exception of Class of 2020 as buy-in to selection was minimal.



- Focus groups held:
  - MSS Council, 2019-2020 (at the Fall Retreat)
  - Medical Education Committee, 2019-2020
  - Class of 2020 → Selected 5 students as buy-in by random student selection was minimal.
  - Class of 2021 → Randomly picked 7 students to increase input diversity.
  - Class of 2022 → Randomly picked 10 students to increase input diversity.
  - Class of 2023 → Randomly picked 8 students to increase input diversity.
  - Club representatives → All clubs were contacted and invited to the focus group with not much success as only 4 club representatives were present.
- All meetings were recorded and minutes were documented.

A summary of points brought forward was made based on recordings and minutes from focus groups. Positive aspects of the MSS were noted to be maintained and negative or poorly accomplished points were set aside for reevaluation by the SP survey and task force members.

#### Survey:

The primary goal of the survey is to guide the selection of the directions by the Strategic Plan Task Force. In order to broaden the pool of consulted students, a survey was created based on the summary of points gathered during the focus groups. This survey was held on the MSS website to ensure members had to sign-in to vote and only one submission was permissible per student. Data was collected for a total of 3 weeks where the opportunity to vote was shared on the Murmur (MSS Newsletter), through class Facebook pages, class announcements (Med1 and Med4s) and through a blurb added to the end of the spring election ballots. These results were analyzed by assessing the overall rating or vote count for different items. This gave a quantitative measure of points brought forward during the focus groups.

#### Selection of SP Directions:

The SP Task Force in conjunction with the MSS Past President, MSS VP Wellness and MSS VP Education used the data collected throughout this process to create and set the directions for the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan. These individuals were selected since the data put emphasis on education and wellness advocacy. They also have some of the best understanding of their respective portfolios and of the MSS in general, therefore assuring that directions would be more relevant to implementation in the future.

#### **Methodology for Strategic Direction #7: Anti-Racism Advocacy**

##### Consultation

The MSS consulted two main documents: “[Experiences of Black Medical Students At McGill](#)”, which was presented at the last General Council meeting on June 4, 2020, and “[Recommendations to Canadian Faculties of](#)



[Medicine](#)”, which was sent to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences on June 23, 2020 by the Black Medical Students' Association of Canada (BMSAC). Afterwards, an Anti-Racist Advocacy Gantt Chart was created through collaboration between MSS council members, the BMSAC Quebec Regional Director, and Black medical students at McGill to list specific actions that can be taken by the MSS. Following this, a decision was made to include the anti-racist advocacy in the MSS' Strategic Plan. Finally, during the MSS Fall Retreat on September 26, 2020, a focus group composed of the MSS General Council (GC) members was consulted. The goal of this focus group was to inquire about the priorities for anti-racism advocacy within individual GC members' roles within the MSS.

#### Selection of SP #7 direction

MSS President, MSS Executive VP & Corporate Affairs, GAAC Officer, MSS VP Wellness, MSS VP Education, Equity Commissioners were selected, as these individuals have been working on anti-racism advocacy within the MSS, and have a good understanding of the MSS in general.

#### Officializing the SP:

To make the SP officially adopted by the MSS, it has to be adopted either at the Winter 2020 GA, Fall 2020 GA or by referendum before December 31st 2020.



**Results:**

Focus group results:

Number of participants: 82 students.

Question	Summary topics or answers
What is one thing that the MSS does well and one thing that the MSS could improve?	<p><b>PROS:</b> Pre-clerks appreciate the website and how the MSS tries to centralize everything on it, especially for events, sales and communication. They also value students' representation at the MSS and the emphasis put on diversity and equity. Clerks share those thoughts, but also appreciate inclusive events, financial aid opportunities like conference funding, MedEd workshops and the level of advocacy and political involvement of the MSS. Clubs and Committees are more happy about communication and blinding of club candidates.</p> <p><b>CONS</b> Pre-clerks were mostly concerned about the election process, the overload of information, clubs and overlapping deadlines, accompanied with a paradoxical lack of website use : they worry about transparency. Clerks were more concerned about the educational tools/help like preparing for electives and CaRMs , but also concerned about alcohol-centered events and the disconnection within the cohort. Clubs and committees were also concerned by transparency, but also students' representation (Med-Ps vs non-Med-Ps) and funding.</p>
Do you feel represented by the MSS? How can the MSS make you feel more represented?	Communication needs work, under involvement of students, unsure of MSS workings, use of more french, representation with social issues and strike could be improved, appreciate equity rules for clubs, need more transparency, inclusivity in events. Pre-clerks feel like even if the MSS seems to be trying to be more inclusive, it is still hard and tedious to get involved if you are not already connected in a way to the MSS (friends, experience, etc), they would need a clearer communication of governance and structure of the Society. Clerks feel represented through the MSS' educational advocacy but not necessarily within the MSS' other pillars of activity (social events and clubs opportunities) or social advocacy especially during GAs where decisions are rushed. They also like the idea of getting documents notarized and CaRMS pictures taken by the MSS.
Hypothetically speaking, if the MSS has 50 000\$ of surplus money, how would you like to see the MSS use it?	Three things were unanimous amongst the different student groups when asked that question : improve sustainability of the MSS, availability/price of coffee, and financial help with educational tools (USMLE, electives CaRMs, clinical equipment). Overall everyone preferred initiatives which could touch as many students as possible (increase Class Council funding vs conference funding). Pre-clerks are leaning more towards social events and wellness initiatives, whereas clerks are more leaning towards helping out students financially especially in the education and wellness sectors (CaRMs,

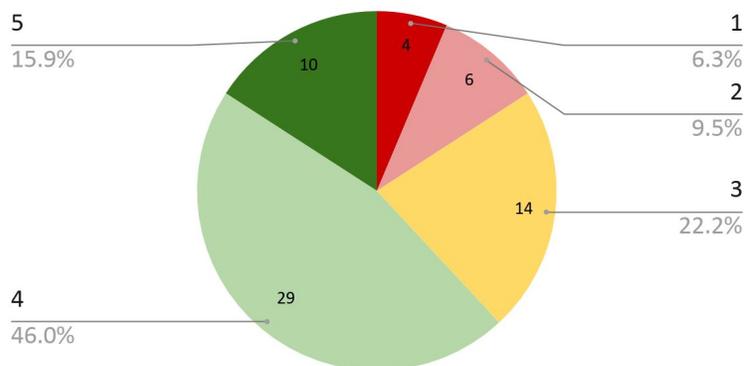


	electives, gym memberships). Clubs and committees want more funding for their activities.
In the next 3 years, what should be the main advocacy avenue for the MSS be?	All students groups except for clerks mentioned sustainability and wellness as top priorities. Clerks and Med-2s were more concerned about medical education, curriculum improvements, clerkship preparation and mistreatment. Clubs and committees were concerned about mistreatment and club funding.
What was your greatest frustration with your experience in medical school?	Pre-clerks are worried about the curriculum, how small groups are not achieving what they should be, of the great variability and inconvenience of other academic experiences like Osler Groups, LFME, CHAP, essays, etc., and of the lack of longitudinal wellness initiatives. Clerks are more worried about wellness (mistreatment more particularly) as well, but also denounce poor communication with administration and poor organization/relevance of the clerkship non-clinical components of the curriculum.
How do you feel the MSS can be more relevant to you and help you the most?	Only Med-2s and Med-3s answered this question and here are the points they brought to the table by order of priority: promote inter-cohort cohesiveness, helping clerks in notarizing their documents and take picture for CaRMs, Clubs Day is too early and maintenance of the website (keep pages uptodate).

Survey results:

Number of participants: 63 students.

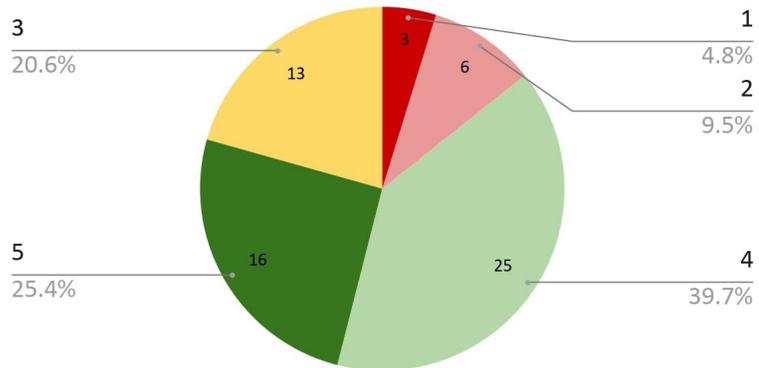
- Q1: Do you feel represented by the MSS? (i.e does the MSS advocate for your needs) (1 = not at all; 5 = always)





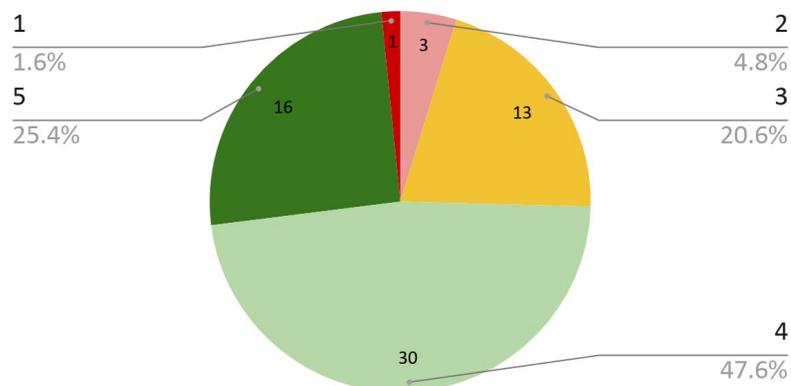
Mean score: 3.55

2. Q2: Are opportunities (funding, advocacy, social events) accessible to all? (1 = not at all; 5 = completely)



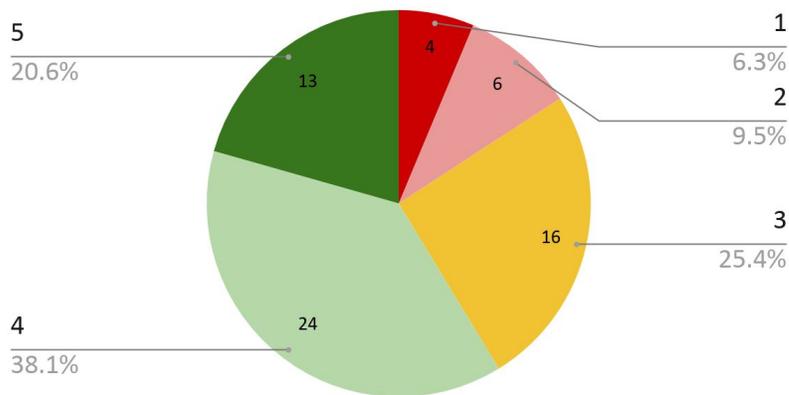
Mean score: 3.71

3. Q3: Rate the MSS website (mcgillmed.com) (1 = Needs a complete makeover; 5 = Completely satisfied with it)



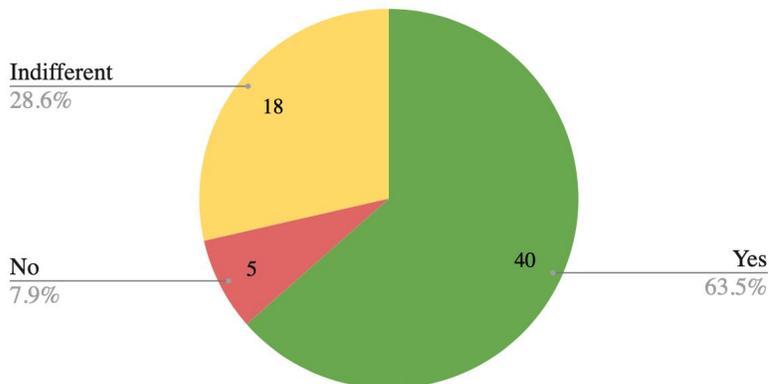
Mean: 3.90

4. Q4: Do you feel that the MSS as an organization is transparent? (1 = Never, 5 = always)

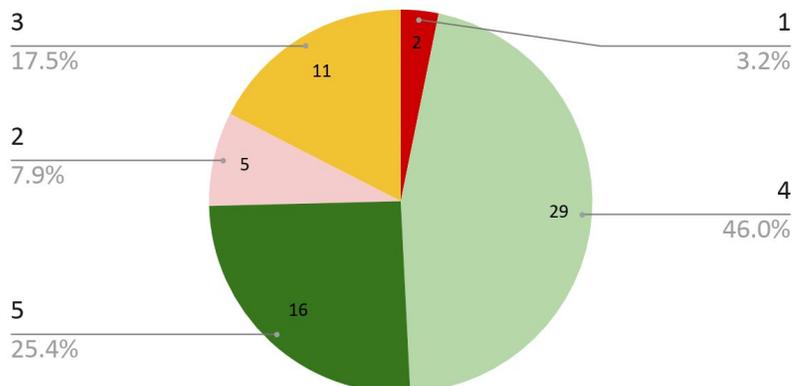


Mean: 3.57

5. Q5: Would you like to see more cohesion within cohorts? (ie interclass events)



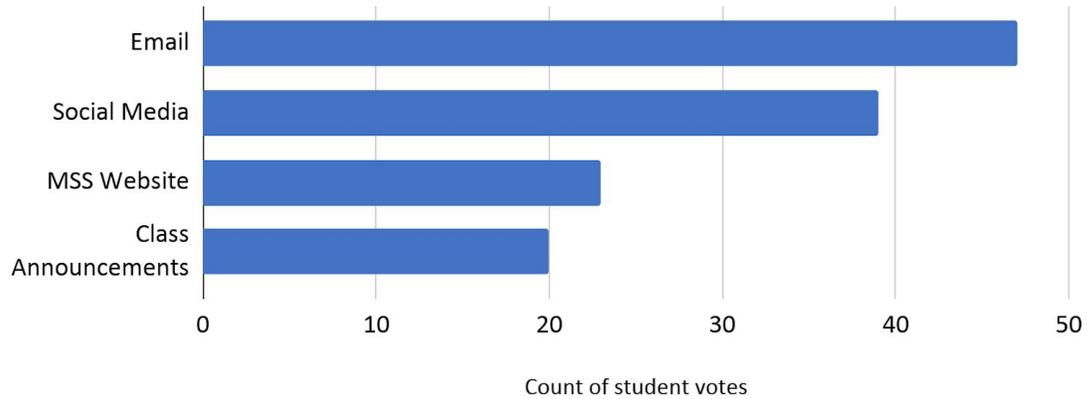
6. Q6: How well does the MSS communicate to you? (1 = very poorly, 5 = perfectly)



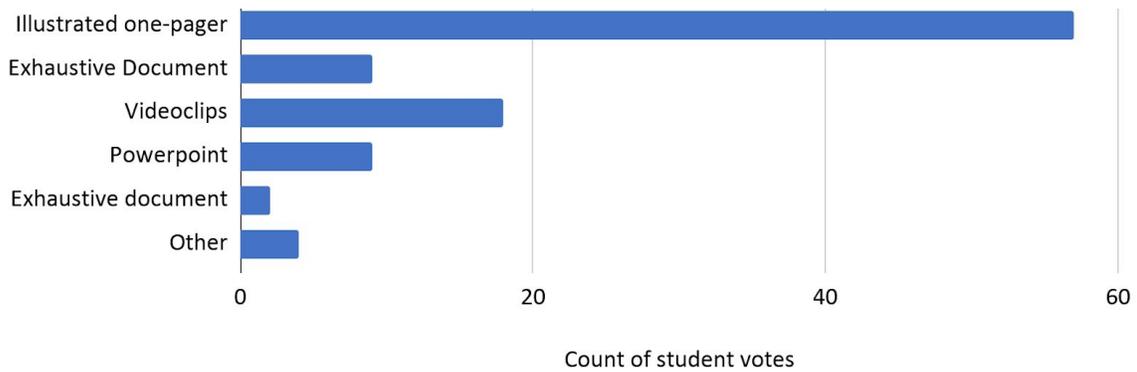


Mean: 3.83

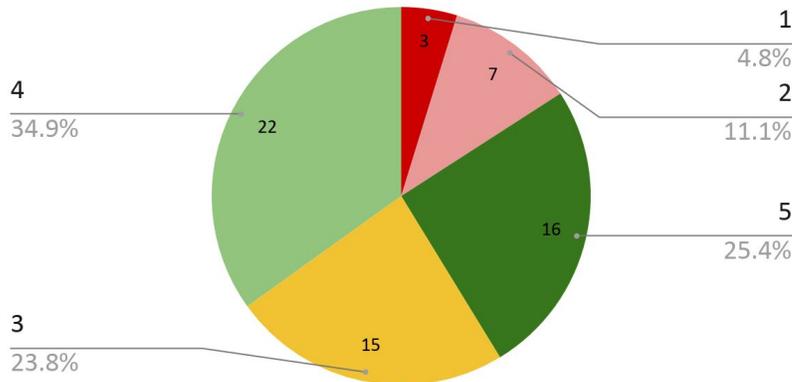
7. Q7: Where do you want to be made aware of what the MSS does? (Choose at least one)



8. Q8: How do you want to be made aware of what the MSS does? (Choose at least one)



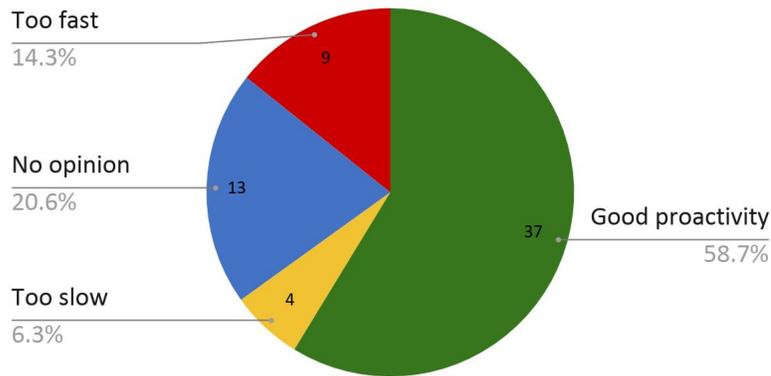
9. Q9: Do you understand how the MSS works and its responsibilities? (1=not at all; 5=I understand everything)



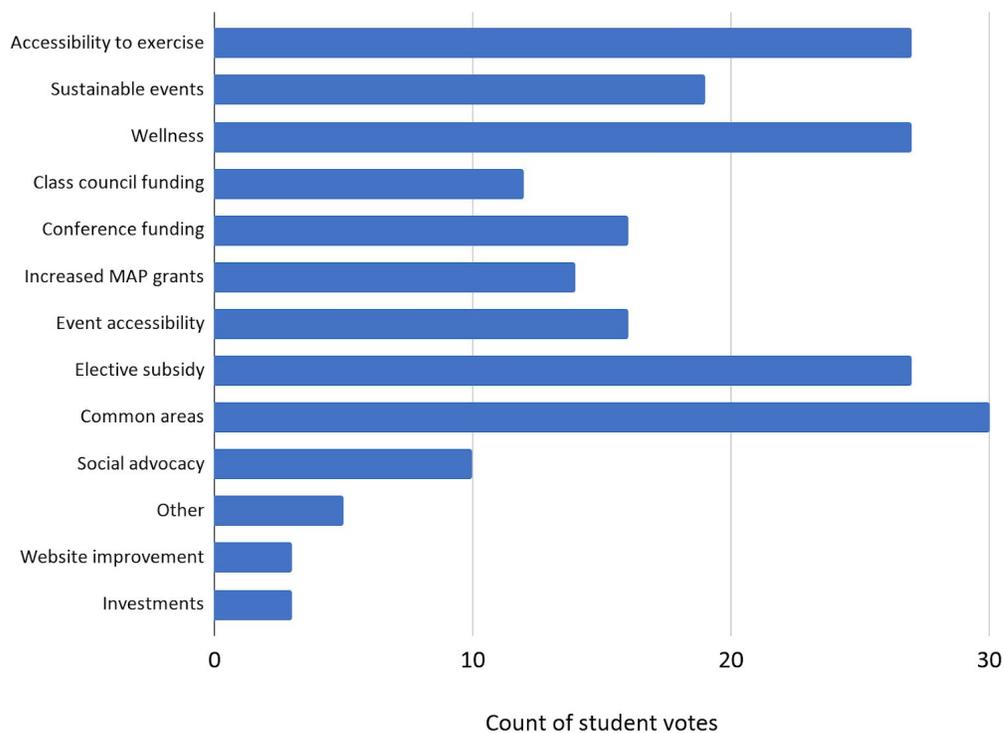


Mean: 3.65

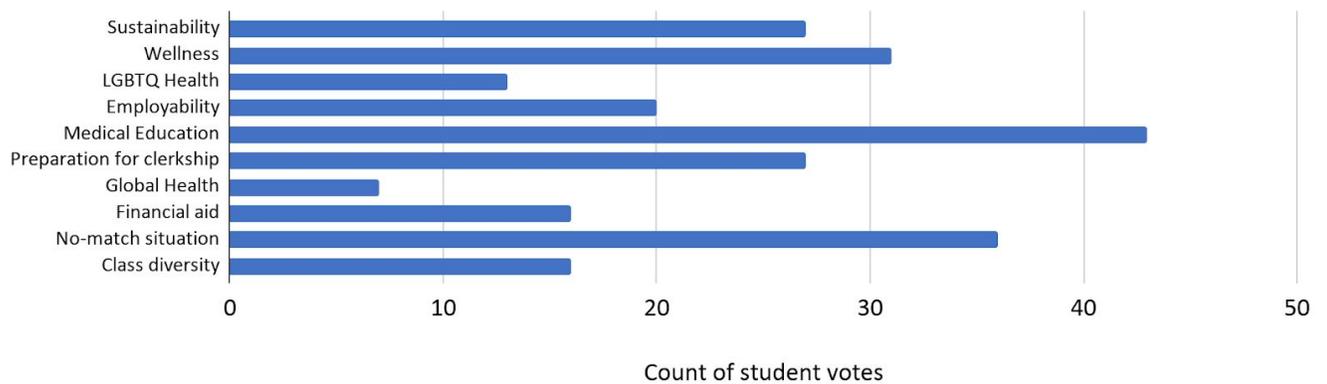
10. Q10: How would you rate the MSS' proactivity to social advocacy callings?



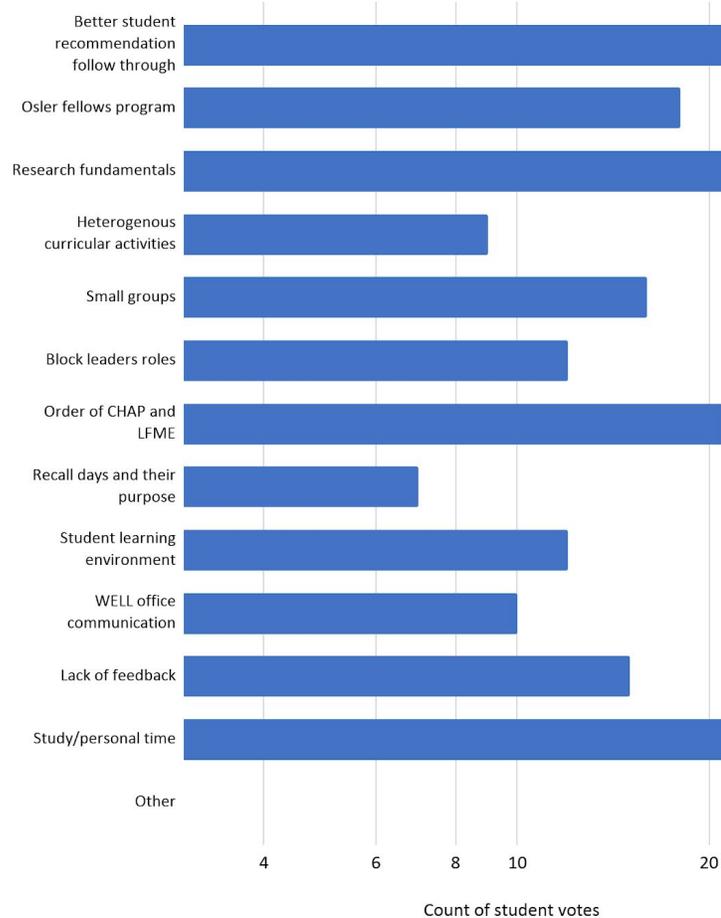
11. Q11: Where should the MSS increase funding? (Choose all that apply)



12. Q12: What are the most important social advocacy avenues for the MSS in the coming years?  
(Choose all that apply)

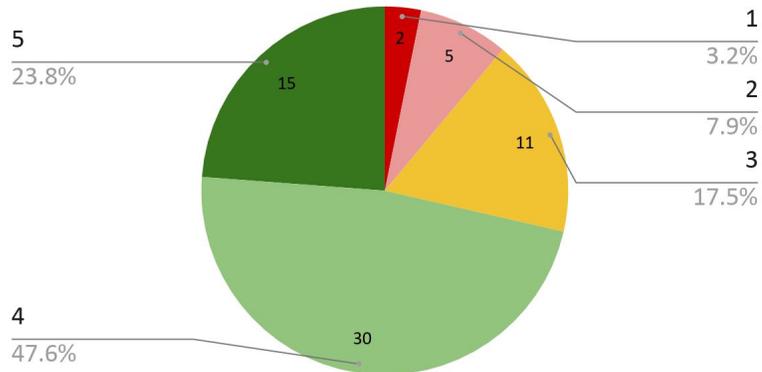


13. Q13: What would you like to see changed in your undergraduate medical education? (Choose all that apply)



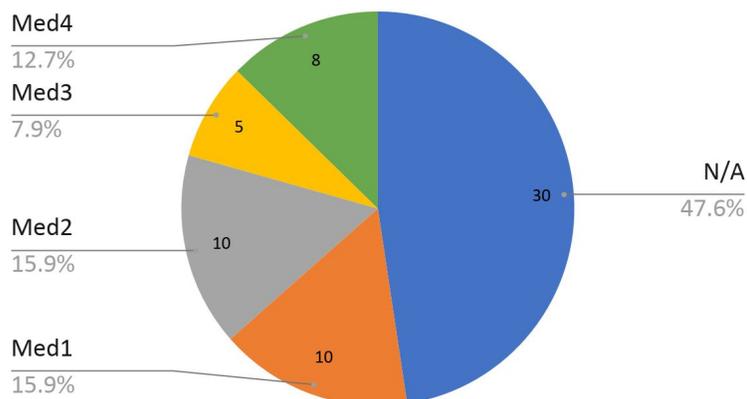


14. Q14: How happy are you with the MSS' structure and its way of working? (1= extremely disappointed; 5= completely satisfied)



Mean: 3.81

15. Q15: What class are you in?





# Strategic Plan

## 2021-2024

- Strategic direction #1: Transparency and communication with members
- Strategic direction #2: Integrating the Campus Outaouais (CO) into the MSS
- Strategic direction #3: Increase accessibility and sustainability of events and opportunities
- Strategic direction #4: Improve and maintain student spaces
- Strategic direction #5: Medical education advocacy
- Strategic direction #6: Wellness advocacy
- Strategic direction #7: Anti-Racism Advocacy

### **Strategic direction #1: Optimizing transparency and communication with members.**

1. Review the MSS Communication Strategy document annually and raise awareness among the General Council and Clubs / Standing Committees about the Communication Strategy by presenting it at the MSS Fall Retreat and at the Club / Standing Committees biannual Meet & Greet.
2. Ensure continued centralization and publication of all events, opportunities and projects on the MSS website and calendar.
3. Create infographics of each MSS Executive and Officer position detailing their role and responsibilities. Share these infographics once yearly and make them available on the website.
4. Communicate the General Council, Executive Council and Board of Governors decisions through infographics sent to the student body with each bimonthly update.
5. Communicate and make available bimonthly updates from each MSS Executive and Officer through infographics sent to the student body.
6. Add a section to the Murmur for a weekly MSS update on latest projects, medical education and advocacy goals.



7. Explore the possibility of having an impartial mediator, such as an ombudsman, when needed.
8. Evaluate and optimize the MSS website yearly to facilitate its navigation for the students, as well as ensuring it is kept up-to-date at least bi-annually.

### **Strategic direction #2: Integrating the Campus Outaouais (CO) into the MSS**

1. Create and build the necessary organization structure to support CO students (including but not limited to creating positions in the MSS and modifying the internal regulations and constitution for their needs).
2. Review CO students' needs on a yearly basis given their increasing campus size.
3. Translate all current and future MSS documents and communication in both official languages (French and English).
4. Implement policies as necessary to ensure that all opportunities (ie social, advocacy, extra-curricular, clubs, etc) are accessible to CO students.
5. Ensure that CO student representative(s) is / are present at all relevant MSS and Faculty meetings.
6. Provide the MSS with suitable video conference resources in the Annex to allow meetings and club events to be attended by CO students.

### **Strategic direction #3: Increase accessibility and sustainability of events and opportunities**

1. Use blinded applications with minimal identifying information to ensure that opportunities and club positions are accessible to all students.
2. Review the procedure to rank candidates for MSS opportunities and awards, for example by offering training to students who will be evaluators or outsourcing evaluations to remove peer-student bias.
3. Advocate for the implementation of compost on McGill grounds.
4. Enforce and communicate the Equitable events and Sustainable events policies to all MSS event organizers.

### **Strategic direction #4: Improve and maintain student spaces**

1. Build a repertoire of all student spaces accessible to medical students near lecture rooms and clinical settings.
2. Acquire and maintain adequate student spaces for students at Campus Outaouais.
3. Advocate to install lockers in the McIntyre Medical Building
4. Take the necessary steps to relabel "Resident Rooms" to "Resident and Medical Student Rooms" in all McGill affiliated hospitals.
5. Ensure appropriate resting spaces and oncall rooms at different hospitals and locations to better accommodate students who are in night shifts.

### **Strategic direction #5: Medical education advocacy**



1. Create an advocacy tracking platform accessible to both students and the faculty to solve recurrent problems in the curriculum.
2. Advocate to decrease application costs for out-of-the-province electives and consider creating a fund to subsidize them for clerks through McGill's Financial Aid Office or the WELL Office.
3. Develop a sustainable and transparent communication strategy to keep students informed and increase the relevance of the Medical Education Committee to the student body.
4. Institute an annual "Medical Education Retreat" to improve students' knowledge of medical education curriculum development and increase accessibility to medical education reform, with the goal of empowering students to be informed partners within the UGME educational governance.
5. Advocate for the development and improved availability of tools to optimize student preparation for clerkship and LMCC preparation.

#### **Strategic direction #6: Wellness advocacy**

1. Work towards a uniform workload policy on the provincial level.
2. Ensure local, provincial and national wellness representative roles be focused on policy change to create long-lasting change rather than on punctual events such as wellness days or weeks.
3. Develop, in partnership with the WELL Office and the UGME administration, systematic communication protocols between each party to ensure confidentiality, and context-dependent urgency with topics such as mistreatment, academic difficulty/failures and personal issues.
4. Ensure a stepwise protocol for delivering wellness resources and follow up to students with expressed needs.

#### **Strategic direction #7: Anti-Racism Advocacy**

1. Commit to critical anti-racist education of future physicians with the goal of culturally competent and safe health care by offering mandatory anti-racism and anti-oppression training to all elected MSS officials, which would also be open to all MSS members. (BMSAC recommendation 5)
2. Review, in partnership with the WELL Office, the student mistreatment protocol to ensure microaggressions and overt racism are operationalized appropriately.
3. Advocate for the identification and reduction of the barriers to medical school admission that underrepresented groups in medicine face, e.g., Black, Indigenous, and Filipino students and students from rural and low SES backgrounds.
4. Advocate for Faculty development with regards to cultural competency and safety in the teaching environment and in the course material



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## Annex A:

Items assessed as complete by the SP Task Force team as of September 2019 were highlighted.



# Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Strategic direction #1: Optimizing transparency and communication with members  
Strategic direction #2: Increase accessibility and sustainability of clubs and events  
Strategic direction #3: Make the MSS relevant to clerks  
Strategic direction #4: Improve and maintain student spaces  
Strategic direction #5: Enhance MSS organizational effectiveness  
Strategic direction #6: Advocacy goals

### Strategic direction #1: Optimizing transparency and communication with members

1. Review the MSS Communication Strategy document yearly and raise awareness among the General Council about the Communication Strategy
2. Merge the Murmur and the MSS Communiqué into a single well-organized email communication
3. Raise awareness and promote the MSS Website to all cohorts
4. Make available to students General Council and Executive Council meeting minutes on the MSS Website
5. Keep members informed about relevant behind-the-scenes of the councils through weekly MSS updates on the MSS Website
6. Produce and make available to students an executive summary of the yearly budget
7. Make available to students club funding distribution
8. Produce and make available on the MSS Website reports for each provincial and national level meeting/representation event
9. Produce and make available on the MSS Website a flow chart indicating to students where and who to go to with issues, concerns, and comments.
10. Raise awareness about the role of council members and standing committees
11. Actively minimize the amount of paper mail received by the MSS and create an efficient system for managing paper mail received by the MSS

### Strategic direction #2: Increase accessibility and sustainability of clubs and events

#### Clubs



1. Publish terms of reference for all existing and new Clubs outlining the mandate, executive members roles, and recruitment methods
2. Establish that all club opportunities should be systematically communicated through the MSS Website
3. Determine with clubs a procedure to ensure equitable accessibility of limited spots events
4. Review how the MSS clubs report back to the General Council
5. Review the clubs application form
6. Ensure appropriate visibility for clubs through their website space, the MSS calendar, MSS Facebook page advertisement, and newsletter advertisement

#### **Events**

1. Review the process for internos tickets sale
2. Centralize communication of available teams for MedGames

#### **Strategic direction #3: Make the MSS relevant to clerks**

1. Establish annual talks to support clerks in transitioning to new steps of medical school
  - i. M2: Networking workshop/how to make the most out of clerkship rotations
  - ii. M3: Elective Planning/AFMC Portal
  - iii. M3: CaRMS talk
  - iv. M3: PREM/PEM talk
  - v. M4: Interview skills workshop
  - vi. M4: LMCC talk
  - vii. M4: USLME Step 2 talk
2. Ensure reserved spots for clerks for relevant MSS events
3. Organize a minimum of one Chez Meredith per month with adequate advertisements to all cohorts
4. Create a network McGill Medicine alumni across Canada who are willing to be contacted by current students
  - i. Creation of the MSS Alumni Liaison role (to be assigned to a MSS Executive each year)

#### **Strategic direction #4: Improve and maintain student spaces**

1. Review the need to advocate for student spaces in the hospitals
2. Take the necessary steps to install lockers in the McIntyre Medical Building
3. Assess the needs of students regarding the 5th floor computer room and act accordingly
4. Establish ways to maintain order and resources in the Lady Meredith Annex

#### **Strategic direction #5: Enhance MSS organizational effectiveness**

1. Centralize recruitment for clubs, standing committees, projects leads, and student representatives into a period during the Fall and a period during the Spring
2. Ensure the use of the MSS Recruitment Policy for recruitment of Standing Committee members and student representatives
3. Gathering yearly organized feedback from students about the MSS (ex: town halls and focus groups)
4. Improve communication and collaboration in the MSS General Council, especially between Class Councils and the Executive Council
5. Organise one Standing Committees meeting per semester



6. Establish adequate funding for Standing Committees and review the need to fund food for some meetings
7. Improve communication and accountability of Standing Committees
  - i. Publish standing committee yearly goals and end-of-year reports on the MSS Website
  - ii. Receive periodic reports from Standing Committee Liaisons (specific MSS Executives) at MSS Executive Council meetings to be included in the meeting minutes
8. Publish yearly goals, mid-year reports, and end-of-year report for all MSS Executives on the MSS Website
9. Improve efficiency and reduce delay of reimbursements and fund distribution for clubs, standing committees, class council, MSS council members and individual members
  - i. Implement webforms for applications and reimbursement requests on the MSS Website
10. Optimize MSS council members turnover and transition
11. Create and continuously maintain a MSS Task Matrix which ensures the continuity of MSS Projects and follow-up of Strategic Planning goals
12. Use and maintain the MSS Drive to facilitate collaboration between MSS Executives and for efficient archiving of MSS documents.
13. Review the need for a board of governors of the MSS General Council

**Strategic direction #6: Advocacy goals**

1. Students need appropriate feedback for exams and written assignments
2. Student input through surveys, student representatives, and other means need to be valued and considered
3. Students need appropriate assessment during clerkship (progress test or other)
4. Students need accessible, clear, and centralized schedules
5. The AFMC Portal is extremely expensive for students at the moment

Consultation Notes:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bz\\_sIOXwm60lbTR5T1hPQkZTRkk/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bz_sIOXwm60lbTR5T1hPQkZTRkk/view?usp=sharing)

- Class of 2020
- Class of 2019
- Class of 2018
- Class of 2017
- Executive Council
- Clubs
- Standing Committees



## **Annex B**

### MSS Strategic Planning 2021-2024 Student Consultation Guidelines

*During the session, try to take in as much information as possible using active listening and without replying or adding much information, unless absolutely necessary. We want to get as much input as possible from the students.*

*Two MSS members will facilitate the session, while one of the two will take detailed notes.*

1. Introductions (5min) *Tour de table*
2. MSS Governance (5min) *Quick explanation of what the MSS encompasses*
  1. Executive council
  2. Class Council
  3. Standing committees which span: medical education, student wellness, health advocacy, equity, professionalism, social media, global health, and community involvement.
3. Focus group questions (10min x 5)
  1. Please name one thing that the MSS does well and one thing that the MSS could improve.
  2. Do you feel represented by the MSS? How can the MSS make you feel more represented? *If needed explain: this means that the MSS is presenting your interest with other groups like the Faculty and that the MSS is attentive to your needs and answers them.*
  3. Hypothetically speaking, if the MSS has 50 000\$ of surplus money, how would you like to see the MSS use it? *Suggest to students that we might want this money to be used over many years and not in one shot*
  4. In the next 3 years, what should be the main advocacy avenue for the MSS be?
  5. What was your greatest frustration with your experience in medical school?
  6. M3M4 question: How do you feel the MSS can be more relevant to you and help you the most?
  7. Any other point that you would like to bring up?
4. Thank the students, the first draft of the strategic plan will be sent out for review when it's ready so please stay on the lookout for this.