

McGill



Principal's Report

SEPTEMBER 2007

Achievements

AND

aspirations

It is with a firm sense of optimism that I deliver this report to the McGill community. As I prepare to undertake my second term as Principal, I appreciate more than ever the honour of serving McGill, an institution of infinite breadth, vitality and distinction. I am enormously proud of our outstanding faculty, students, administrators and support staff, and of the important role our University plays in Quebec, Canada and the world beyond.

I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to all of our new students and to wish them well as they join this great community of learning. I also want to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to ensuring that McGill remains an outstanding university providing opportunities for superb students and scholars to pursue their dreams. My thanks go to each student, faculty member and member of the administrative and support staff, as well to those most closely involved in the administration of the University, including the Provost, the Vice-Principals, the Deans, and all those who support them. I would also like to express my profound appreciation to our volunteers, particularly the members of our Board of Governors and our Senate, who give their time and talents to the governance of McGill.

Each day that I serve, I am reminded of McGill's history of achievement. But history alone will not propel us forward.

As we build on the remarkable legacy we have inherited, I believe that, as a public institution, we must maintain the

highest standards of quality, transparency and accountability. For this reason, I am committed to submitting regular reports on our progress. Benchmarking our performance serves several purposes. It helps promote better management of the University and more accountability to those who sponsor us. It sharpens our focus on how we allocate our resources and it allows us to measure how we compare with other universities that compete with us for resources and talent.

All of the University's activities require accountability. Our credibility depends on doing what we say we will do, and doing it well. We promised to improve services to undergraduates. Are we delivering on that promise? It is important that we have concrete goals, that we measure our progress and that we report our results to our Board of Governors, our Senate, the McGill community and the public at large. We have no right to claim that we are Canada's premier university unless we can demonstrate it.

In this report, I will provide a snapshot of where McGill is today, sketch briefly how we got here and outline where I see us going.

Building on a remarkable base, we have come a long way in the past four-and-a-half years. We have made significant progress and we have been more effective at communicating McGill's achievements. However, there is much more that we can do in this regard. We are privileged to be part of an exceptional community of teachers, scholars and researchers and I am determined to ensure that we continue to highlight the outstanding contributions of our colleagues.

Exceptional quality

What I am most excited about is the quality of our people. By every measure, our students rank among the top in the world. They are community-minded: a great many are engaged in volunteer work of one form or another. They participate in athletics, whether varsity sports or intramural. They are well-rounded, brilliant people who are primed for leadership in society across all fields. The academic record of our entering undergraduates is the best in Canada. And they receive tremendous benefits from their experience at McGill.

Reflecting on the value of her education in the Faculty of Arts, one of our valedictorians, Hillary Brenhouse, said in her speech at last June's convocation:

"We are not in Arts because we are unsure [of what to do in life]. On the contrary—we are here because we are certain. Certain

that we want to appreciate and improve the human condition. Certain that we want to engage in intercultural exchange and topple social boundaries through discourse. We are different, and our courses of study distinct, but we have a common objective: to understand humanity in all of its manifestations."

She was one of more than 6,000 students who graduated from McGill this year.

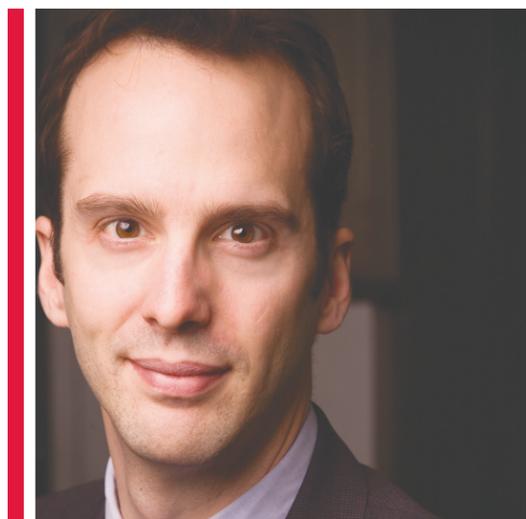
Notwithstanding the tremendous strengths of universities across Canada, the distinctive character of our student body at both the undergraduate and graduate levels makes us unique. For most city-based universities in Canada, a large majority of undergraduates come from their local metropolitan area. At most public universities in the United States, their dominant responsibility is to their local jurisdictions. McGill, almost since its inception, has had a significant pan-Canadian and international student population. In the 2006-07 academic year, 19 per cent of our 33,000 students came to us from more than 150 countries. Fifty-seven per cent came from Quebec, of whom more than 6,000 were francophone, and 24 per cent were from across Canada. This geographic distribution of students, this exceptional diversity, builds bridges to the rest of the world. These bridges become strategic links which bring our city, our province and our country the social and economic opportunities offered by internationalization.

The commitment of our faculty and our administrative and support staff to McGill is remarkable. It is my perception that McGill's people care deeply about this institution—beyond what I have seen elsewhere. Again and again I have heard colleagues speak about McGill with uncommon affection and dedi-

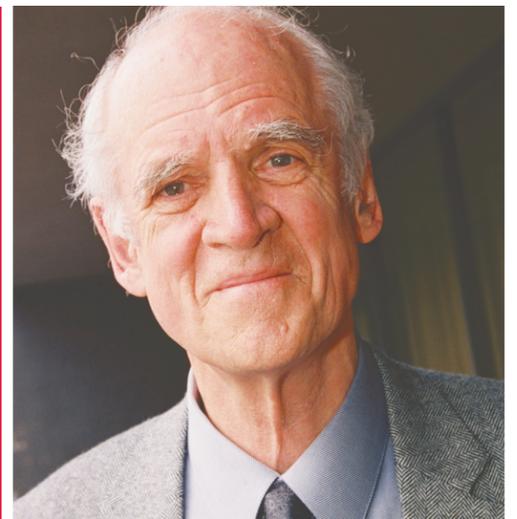
cation. There is a strong sense of community here.

Week after week I continue to be impressed by the extraordinary range and breadth of the research and scholarship conducted at McGill. It is impossible to single out all of our superb scholars and scientists, but let me mention just a few:

- Professor Frédéric Bachand in the Faculty of Law has been awarded prizes for his doctoral thesis on the role of Canadian judges in international arbitration and recently won a Canada Foundation for Innovation award to develop new technological tools to ensure access to international jurisprudence in his field.
- Professor Emeritus and graduate Charles Taylor (Department of Philosophy), recently won the prestigious Templeton prize



Professor Frédéric Bachand



Professor Emeritus Charles Taylor

for his work on the disconnection between modern societies and spirituality.

- Professor Roger Prichard, the James McGill Professor of Parasitology, has recently carried out a groundbreaking study on the development of drug resistance in the parasite that causes river blindness.
- Professors Moshe Szyf, Department of Pharmacology, and Michael Meaney, James McGill professor of Medicine and professor in the Departments of Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery, are pioneers

in the new field of epigenetics, the study of the impact of our experience and environment on genetic expression.

- Professor Victoria Kaspi, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Observational Astrophysics, won the 2007 Rutherford Memorial Medal in Physics from the Royal Society of Canada.
- Professor Khalid Medani in the Department of Political Science has won a scholarship from the Carnegie Corporation to work on “Joining Jihad: A Comparative

Political Economy of Islamist Militancy and Recruitment.”

- Professor Nathalie Tufenkji, who holds the Canada Research Chair in the Department of Chemical Engineering and is Professor at the Brace Centre for Water Resources Management, is conducting internationally recognized research into the contamination of fresh-water supplies.

It is a privilege to be part of a community with so many distinguished scholars.

Research-intensive *and* student-centred

These achievements are remarkable and spring from the unique character of McGill. Not only have we been a deeply international and pan-Canadian institution over our distinguished history, we also have the highest proportion of graduate students among research-intensive universities in Canada, with nearly a quarter of our students engaged in graduate work. Given the historical and current limitations to our funding, this is a significant achievement: it is well demonstrated that those with a graduate degree are prime drivers of community success and economic productivity. This, and our research intensity, put us in the same class as leading American public and private universities.

On a per-capita basis, our faculty members are exceptionally competitive in obtaining merit-based grants to pursue their research. It is part of the culture of this institution, which has enjoyed a worldwide reputation for almost two hundred years. We were founded from a college of medicine, so from the beginning

we valued breakthroughs in science and we have harboured a deep commitment to quality by world standards in our scholarship. Six Nobel Prize winners, and many current international leaders in their respective research fields, have been associated with McGill.

Our researchers also belong to myriad Quebec- and Canadian-based inter-university networks in fields as varied as language, neuroscience, law, climate change, music, media and technology, advanced materials and leading-edge communication systems. These collaborative efforts are a high priority for us. McGill is one of the most important medical research establishments in Canada and indeed in the world. Along with our affiliated teaching hospitals, the University now obtains in excess of \$400 million in research funding every year, over 60 per cent of which goes to support research in the health and life sciences.

Remarkably, at the same time, we are, by design, increasingly student-centred and determined to excel in this regard. McGill

is proud of its tradition that all professors, including those holding Canada Research Chairs, both teach and do research. Many universities in Canada are pursuing a different model—separate faculty streams for teaching and research. At McGill we continue to believe in the immense value that comes from exposing our students to professors conducting world-class scholarship and inquiry.

One area where we rank consistently high on the National Survey of Student Engagement is the degree to which our students are engaged in the research conducted by their professors. Perhaps because of this, or because of the impact of professors’ research on classroom teaching, our students also see the positive effect that their professors’ research has on their education. We continue to develop the nexus between research and teaching, to promote in our students a spirit of inquiry and a problem-solving approach to learning and life. Gifted professors become role models for gifted students. That does not change.

Renewing the professorate

We are attracting new faculty—100 per year over the past eight years—who come to McGill knowing they will be required both to teach and conduct research. What is exciting is their conviction that there is merit in integrating these practices, which contribute to McGill’s international reputation. We support our professorate with the most merit-driven compensation policy of any Canadian university—a decision led by our faculty—which underscores individual accountability and helps us compete with the best in the world. The commitment to individual accountability is an integral part of living up to the standards of institutional accountability to which McGill aspires.

Make no mistake, in spite of a funding gap that has reached dramatic proportions, we compete successfully with North America’s and the world’s best universities. If we compare McGill to our peers in Canada, on a size-adjusted basis, our annual funding is tens of millions of dollars short. Look south of the border and that funding gap increases significantly as we compete against the great public and private universities in the United States. And yet we manage to attract outstanding professors from places such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, Oxford, the Pasteur Institute and the Max Planck Institutes.

There is something about our reputation, our culture and our city that draws great professors here. Montreal attracts creative people because of its beauty, its rich culture and its quality of life. Once they arrive at McGill, new professors are engaged by the talent of their colleagues and of our students, and they are enchanted by Montreal. The challenge is to keep them here and to help them accelerate their success and their contribution.

One of the tools we have used to our advantage is the Canada Research Chair (CRC) program. McGill, from the start, was the only institution to recruit CRC candidates exclusively from outside the university. This was a strategic decision by Principal Emeritus Bernard Shapiro and his administration; it has helped us fill more than 130 positions and reinforced the international diversity and standing of our faculty. It has also enabled us to bring back to Quebec and Canada outstanding Canadians who had been lured elsewhere. We have also put a premium on recognizing and retaining those already here. With this in mind, we have developed programs, such as the James McGill Chairs and the William Dawson Scholars, to reward our most exceptional faculty members.

Ottawa’s significant new investments in research programs over the past several years have also given us new impetus. Without the federal government, we would not be the McGill we are today. The more that Ottawa invests in research and talent, the more it plays to our strengths, because federal programs are predominantly driven by merit. Where provincial and federal resources are allocated on the basis of merit, McGill does well. We welcome that challenge because we are confident that we can compete with the best and we urge our governments to continue to invest in competitive programs that foster excellence.

We should feel good about

our accomplishments, but not at the risk of complacency. There are enormous challenges ahead as we pursue our commitment to excellence. McGill operates in a highly competitive, global environment. The competition with other universities around the world is fierce and continues to intensify as other jurisdictions invest more aggressively in research and higher education. We must continue to address our challenges in a disciplined and strategic fashion. We will move forward or we will fall back. There is nothing in between. We have created within the University a framework for major change. While we have not yet achieved all of our goals, the wind is clearly in our sails. What we must do now is steer with a very firm hand and discipline, and not lose sight of our purpose.



Professor Alain Pinsonneault, Imasco Chair of Information Systems in the Desautels Faculty of Management, chats with PhD student Salman Nazir.

Governance a priority

Governance was one of the first issues I examined when I arrived at McGill. In all fields of activity today, whether corporate or public, expectations have risen with respect to institutional governance. Considering the financial support we receive from the public purse, and our commitment to excellence, we are determined to govern ourselves effectively and transparently.

When I arrived, we had overly large Board meetings, attended by 45 Board members, as well as up to two dozen other dedicated volunteers. Our effectiveness was encumbered by a long-standing conflation of administration and governance. We needed to streamline the process and the structure so that we could

respond to governance issues with speed and vigour. Since then we have gone to a leaner 25-member Board of Governors, and we have adopted a progressive framework for understanding the purposes and roles of our Board, including issues such as succession planning.

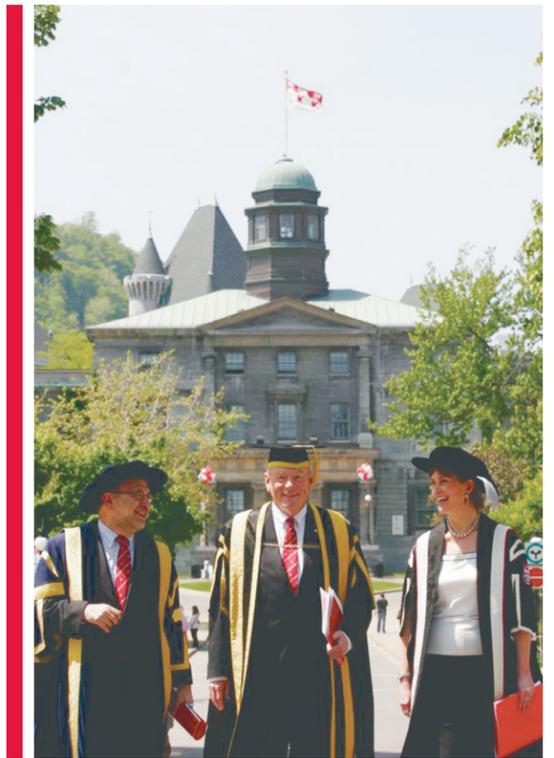
We have developed a new forum to encourage and receive the active contributions of our Governors Emeriti. We have also been working hard to separate governance from management and administration. And now, in the spirit of responsibly reviewing governance, we are examining the roles and mandates of Senate Committees to optimize their function and impact.

Strengths and aspirations

Once governance issues were moving in the right direction, the next major undertaking was to develop an up-to-date academic plan. As noted, we have hired nearly 800 new professors in the last eight years, thereby renewing more than half our full-time tenure-track professorate. This renewal is unprecedented in McGill's history. That said, the hiring had been proceeding somewhat haphazardly. We realized that if McGill was to sustain existing areas of national and international excellence and also grow new ones, we needed a plan with short-to medium-term goals that could rank us near or at the top in the world in specific fields in which we are uniquely positioned to excel, and for which there will be clear societal benefits. This ambitious planning exercise, un-

dertaken faculty by faculty, brought together both academic achievement and public purpose. It allowed us to identify within faculties and at the intersection of faculties, key transitional disciplines and several interdisciplinary areas that we will focus on. Our priorities include neurosciences, bioengineering, pain research, environment, computation and statistical modelling, nanoscience and advanced materials, integrative systems biology and human therapeutics, literatures and culture, languages and public policy.

The academic plan was our response to a world around us that is changing profoundly. Some of the biggest problems facing society today cannot be confined to narrow research disciplines. The frontiers of research on health, environment and public policy, for ex-



Heading to convocation

ample, almost invariably require collaboration across disciplines. Breakthroughs increasingly come at the interface of disciplines and fields. Mathematicians work with neuroscientists on ways to calibrate brain imaging; geographers collaborate with atmospheric and oceanic scientists on climate change; legal scholars interact with management professors on intellectual property issues.

The federal government recognized this reality when it created the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and tied infrastructure funding to collaborative research and interdisciplinary research networks. This was a visionary achievement of which Canadians can be proud.

Building galaxies

While a pioneer in some interdisciplinary domains such as law and neuroscience, McGill was not adequately prepared for this paradigm shift, with the consequence that some of our results in the CFI and other government research competitions fell short of our expectations and our potential. While we have world-class scholars and scientists who successfully pursued funding for their own projects, they too often sought funding in isolation. Accordingly, we are reorganizing our approach, focusing on our fundamental strengths and the imperative to better

express the outstanding work we undertake at the intersection of faculties and strong core disciplines. In the past, research funding was about supporting stars. Today it is about building constellations and galaxies.

As we advance these interdisciplinary and interfaculty initiatives, we are linking the academic plan to student and faculty recruitment as well as to resource allocation. The Provost, the Chief Academic Officer after the Principal, has taken on additional responsibility for allocating the budget, so that our budget priorities can be directly aligned with

the academic plan. We are now budgeting on a multi-year basis so as to best support our priorities in a disciplined and accountable fashion. Because it is profound, some of this change has been wrenching.

For example, the previous assumption at McGill, as elsewhere, was that if a professor in a given department retired, he or she would be replaced. Now, the position might go to another faculty altogether. That is part of the competitive process, as we build a strategic academic enterprise that plays to our special strengths and impact.

Campus plan

McGill has not previously had a formal plan for the development or renewal of its infrastructure. Therefore, we

launched a process to create a Campus Master Plan that would constitute a living document, clear in its definition of the University's vision and principles, but flexible enough to respond to changing needs and resources. Reflecting our sense of public citizenship, we have long recognized our role as stewards of an important urban space linking Montreal's downtown core with Mount Royal. And although we are a university and not a park, we are nonetheless committed to preserving our downtown and Macdonald campuses as welcoming green spaces for all.

Together, our campuses comprise the largest green space under one institution on the island of Montreal, and respect for the environment and sustainability are uppermost in our minds. A joint Senate-Board meeting this fall will further explore the ways in which we can address preservation of McGill's environ-

ment and sustainable development, consistent with our academic and societal mission.

The McGill campuses are home to a wonderful collection of older buildings with incalculable architectural and aesthetic value. Although expensive to maintain, these buildings must be preserved. This is an enormous responsibility, especially given the limited funding we receive. The insured value of our buildings exceeds \$2.5 billion, yet the provincial government provides us with only \$14 million a year to maintain our physical plant. As a direct consequence of our under-funding, we estimate that our deferred maintenance costs are now in excess of \$250 million. We will require a significant infusion of funds from governments and other sources to allow us to renew and effectively maintain our irreplaceable infrastructure and to develop sorely needed new facilities.



The largest single-institution green space on the island of Montreal

As we manage our buildings, it is important that we rethink the entire notion of university space, including classroom and laboratory space—and we are doing just that. We need university spaces, not faculty spaces. In line with the academic plan's emphasis on growing distinctive strengths and interdisciplinary

research and teaching, our most recent proposal for a new building is a five-faculty collaboration linking bioengineering, biomedical engineering, bioinformatics, high-performance computing and advanced materials. When reactive elements are combined in a single environment, great things can happen.

Student life and learning

Among our most important initiatives were the Principal's Task Force on Student Life and Learning and the appointment of a Deputy Provost whose primary role is to advance student life and learning at McGill by ensuring that the interests of students are appropriately considered in University decision processes. Early on, it became clear that one of the most troubling consequences of our under-funding had been our inability to provide students with the level of services they deserve, including sufficient learning space and personalized academic advising.

While the University offers a wonderful menu of exciting interdisciplinary and core programs and courses, when the time comes for students to make choices, we often do not have people who can effectively counsel them on their options and how best to achieve their objectives.

Students love their experience at McGill, but they generally have to be independent individuals to succeed here. When students have to wait weeks—or even months—for decisions about advanced standing or transfer credits, they feel stalled by bureaucracy. This is in part a problem of resources. Students need more and different kinds of support, and they need these in a timely fashion.

We are moving on several fronts. We are improving the quality of advising, reviewing how we classify advisors, the academic backgrounds they require and the in-house training they receive. We are in the process of collecting and analyzing data about the various kinds of advising offered to get a better

picture of what we do and what we need to do. Advising can mean many different things. Sometimes it is answering questions at a service counter, sometimes it is giving extended advice about programs and courses to take, access to financial assistance, how to apply to graduate programs or how to make career choices. As we get a better understanding of our students' needs, we are introducing new services. We are committed to reducing bureaucracy and to enhancing McGill as a community that is responsive to students.



Morton Mendelson, Deputy Provost, Student Life and Learning, with student representatives

Simplifying regulations

One way we are addressing the problem, besides increasing the supply of advising, is to reduce the demand for it. We are working toward simplifying procedures and regulations and harmonizing these across different units, to make them easier to understand and practice.

A critical communications tool for students is the undergraduate course calendar. Many have found it unfathomable. Starting next year, modern technology will be used to offer a more effective calendar that is web-based only. Interactive links are being set up to connect relevant information that will go a long way to facilitate access to what students need to know.



The McGill Student ID Centre

Class size

The other big issue affecting our students is large class size. The range of class sizes at McGill is somewhere in the middle, when compared with other large universities in Canada. Where classes are excessively large,

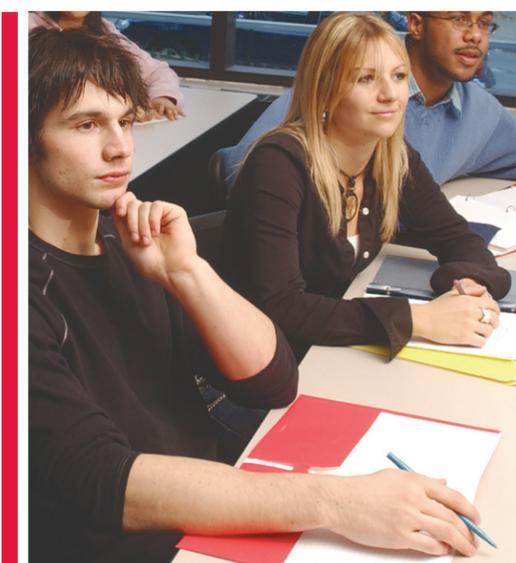
we are taking steps to deal with the problem. But classroom size is not always an indicator of quality. At McGill, we have chosen to increase students' exposure to tenure-track faculty. We have not gone to a model where small classes are taught primarily by graduate students. In general, where a choice must be made, we would rather see students in a large class with one of our best professors than deny them the opportunity to learn with a great teacher. That is not to say we think all learning should be in large classes. But large classes can be effective in some situations provided they are done well.

We are also investing money and effort on improving teaching methods. We are introducing new approaches and new technologies to enhance student engagement and thereby improve learning. One of our challenges, for example, is to develop ways to engage students who are enrolled in large introductory courses. The Biology Department is conducting a major redesign of four of its courses, which will now include, among other improvements, the use of personal response technology to augment stu-

dents' learning experiences. We are helping professors to use the new technology effectively to increase students' engagement with the material, with each other and with their professors. This holistic approach to course design has already generated a lot of interest elsewhere at McGill, and we are now extending its implementation to courses in other departments and faculties.

But teaching is not just standing up in front of a class. It is guiding undergraduate research and supervising graduate students. It is mentoring one-on-one and in small groups. The counterbalance to concerns over big classes is how many undergraduate students are actually engaged in independent research projects and seminars, fieldwork and international exchanges. At McGill, students have access to many kinds of learning opportunities focused on the individual student. We are proud of this feature and aim to make participation in such learning experiences the norm.

Progress is underway in many areas. Let me now turn to some of the challenges we face.



Enhancing student engagement

Strengthening our finances

Achieving many of our aspirations is dependent on strengthening our financial position, which has been compromised by more than a decade of under-funding and by the tuition freeze implemented in Quebec in 1994. The Quebec government's grants to its universities are currently the most generous in Canada on a per-student basis. Nevertheless, low tuition rates have severely handicapped Quebec's efforts to attain excellence in higher education.

The evidence demonstrates convincingly that the low-tuition policy has neither improved accessibility nor the rate of degree completion in the general population. University enrolment rates in Quebec are lower than the average for the 30 nations in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. And the gap is dramatic when one looks at the proportion of the population obtaining a university degree: 38.2 per cent in Ontario versus 29.3 per cent in Quebec (2004 figures).

Clearly, the low-tuition policy has not enabled Quebec to meet its societal goals. It is time for a change. In that respect, it is encouraging to note that the three major provincial political parties now recognize the need for higher tuition fees. The Liberal government has taken a cautious first step by raising fees by \$100 a year. While we support this move, much more will have to be done. By 2011, tuition fees for Quebec undergraduates will still be only \$2,168—less than half the current Canadian average of approximately \$5,000.

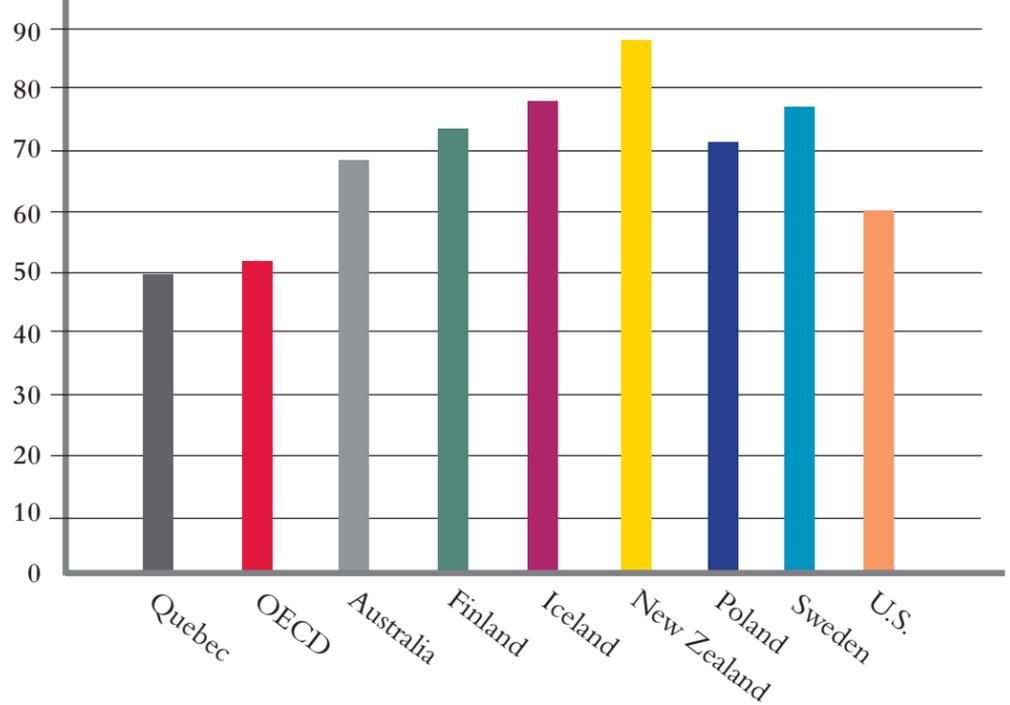
If McGill were able to charge and retain fees equivalent to the Canadian average, the University would have \$46 million more in revenue this year to meet its needs. Without comparable funding, we still have to compete with other universities on infrastructure, student services and competitive salaries to attract and retain great faculty. This required us to budget for a deficit of approximately \$15 million this year. By no means is this an example of fiscal irresponsibility on our part. The Quebec government is fully aware of our fiscal constraints and our need for deficit financing. The government also understands that the situation is not sustainable and requires a lasting solution.

We have advocated raising tuition fees to the Canadian average within three years, and, through our Board of Governors, McGill has committed 30 per cent of net increases in tuition to providing support for students. This is an equitable approach in light of the long-term financial benefits that accrue to university graduates. It is also a matter of social justice that those who can afford it should pay a reasonable share of the costs of their university education and that those who cannot should receive the financial support they require. We owe it to our young people and to our society to increase both accessibility and degree completion.

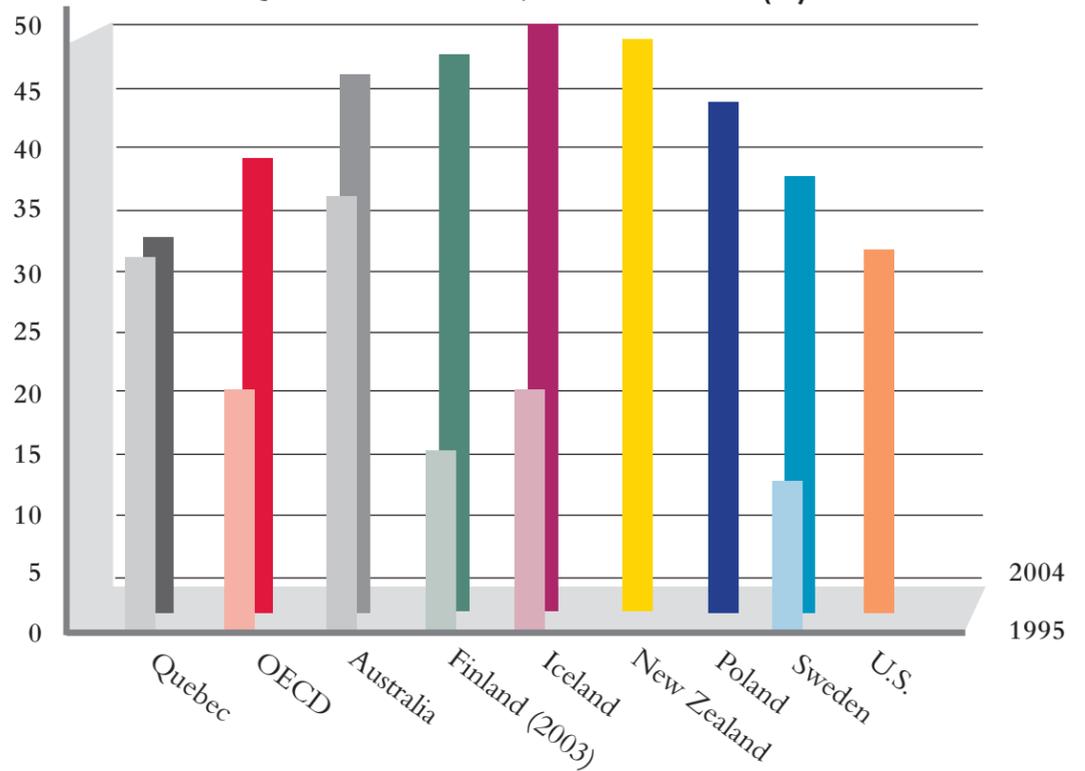
The achievement of Quebec's ambitions depends on the excellence of its educational institutions and the attainment of a highly educated citizenry. That must be a widely-supported social goal if the province is to advance socially and economically.

Quebec enrolment lags

University Access Rates, Québec and OECD, 2004 (%)



Graduation Rates, Bachelor's Level, Québec and OECD, 1995 and 2004 (%)



McGill Adjustment

On the financial front, I am pleased to report that we have achieved a satisfactory resolution of the "McGill Adjustment," a long-standing and significant disagreement we have had with the Quebec government.

When Quebec developed its new university funding policy in 2000, the new for-

mula would have resulted in McGill's grant increasing by approximately \$16 million a year. The Ministry of Education decided to increase McGill's grant accordingly but to do so over a 15-year transition period. The \$16 million gap was consequently to be reduced in 15 equal increments, with the full amount being payable only in 2014-2015. McGill was

the only university which did not receive its full funding immediately.

The new Minister of Education, Madame Michelle Courchesne, has now agreed to end the "McGill Adjustment" next year rather than in 2014 as originally scheduled. As a consequence of this decision, McGill will receive an additional \$25M between 2006-2014.

Comprehensive campaign

While governments must continue to invest in post-secondary education, we cannot depend on governments alone to fulfill our mission and to reach our goals. To strengthen our financial position, McGill will therefore launch a comprehensive private fundraising campaign this fall.

This campaign will be the most ambitious in McGill's history, and it will be absolutely critical to growing our success and sustaining our contributions as a great university. McGill has been successful not only because of our competitiveness in attracting research funding, but also because of our alumni and friends, who are loyal, generous and care deeply about their University. We have an academic plan that orders our priorities and structures our investments, but without the support of individual donors, as well as government, we cannot reach our goals.

To bolster those efforts, we have urged the Quebec government to introduce significant matching programs that would enhance the impact of private dollars. Such programs have been extraordinarily productive in other jurisdictions for newer and small regional

universities, as well as for older and large, city-based universities. Indeed, major gifts to universities today are often made with the expectation on the part of donors that governments will follow suit. Before they write a cheque, potential donors want to know that governments will insist on quality and accessibility, that they will sustain significant public funding, provide incentives for philanthropy and set reasonable tuition fees—and thereby ensure that universities have the resources they require.

A stable, secure and more diversified funding base will best equip McGill to support its students and faculty and contribute optimally to the communities we serve.

One immediate priority is to increase the number of graduate students enrolled at McGill and to provide them with funding commensurate with what other outstanding universities can offer. Another goal is to increase the economic diversity of our undergraduate student body. McGill aims to be an elite university, not a university for the elite. I hope and plan to see the day when we can say that no qualified student will be denied access



An investment in teaching, learning and changing the world

to a McGill education because of insufficient financial means. We are not there yet, but I am determined that, with the help of people of means and vision, we will get there during my time as Principal.

An international presence

A critical objective is to increase our international footprint. McGill is Canada's best-known university on the international stage. But to compete globally, Quebec and Canada need to have several universities that attract worldwide attention for their excellence and for the impact of their programs and professors in key fields. Governments now recognize the value of universities not only in building a knowledge-based society but also in raising the visibility of regions and nations. Local success depends on global success, and global success cannot come without global recognition. McGill is a Quebec and Canadian treasure in this regard.

As international competition increases, no sector is more important in advancing

competitiveness than post-secondary education. All the research shows that having high-quality universities and a well-educated citizenry is critically important for the economic health and productivity of a society and for its social well-being. A university education is a predictor of civic mindedness and community engagement, as well as of the health status of individuals. Quebec and Canada face unique challenges, but also unique opportunities. Quebec has been a leader in the breadth of its university system and its university research strategy. Canada as a whole is a world leader in academic and scientific networking; it developed centres of excellence before many in the world did so. McGill has been a lead player in many

of these successes—biomedical and clinical research and neurosciences being obvious examples.

A change of culture is required if we are to fully exploit our potential in this new era of collaboration and knowledge sharing. McGill has done this in science and now we are doing more of it in the humanities, social sciences and professional faculties. The impact of international collaboration depends less and less on individual researchers and more and more on interdisciplinary teams. Consistent with our overall strategy, we are becoming more focused in our mobilization of these opportunities and accessing the funding that comes with them.

India a focus

Both Ottawa and Quebec City have been devoting considerable attention to scientific and industrial cooperation with India. Early in that process, we identified an opportunity for ourselves. When we challenged our faculties to come forward with research proposals that would involve Indian collaborators, the response was overwhelming. The quality was so good, we had to turn away some excellent proposals for lack of funding. McGill ended up providing seed funding for 14 projects in conjunction with Indian partners. They represent the very best of the Indian research establishment, including such prestigious institutions as the Indian Institutes for Technology, the Indian Institute of Science, the National Centre for Biological Sciences, the National Brain Research Centre and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research.

Our success in partnering with India provides us with a template that we are using to advance action plans with other countries. For example, we are building on programs of the Desautels Faculty of Management to create a McGill initiative with Japan that is just getting underway, promoting an exchange of scholars. We have substantial research and related educational and service activities with organizations in an array of African countries.

Action plans for China and the European Union are on the way.

McGill is also increasingly strategic in advancing its presence in the United States. We play a leading role in the Canada-California Strategic Innovation Partnership, a broadly based collaboration of academic institutions, business and public organizations. This umbrella group promotes cooperation in several research areas such as stem cells, infectious diseases, information and communication technology and platforms, advanced materials, energy, the environment and nanotechnology. In Washington, we are collaborating with several public policy institutions on issues of mutual interest to Canada and the United States. Our large international base of McGill alumni also serves as an ongoing asset to the University, to Quebec and to Canada.

Collaboration is vital to our research enterprise, as the federal and provincial governments have highlighted. This is particularly important for Canada, a country that has produced few multinational corporations and therefore relies far more on its university sector for science, technology and innovation. Among Canadian universities, McGill is a leader in the number of American patents issued. Some three dozen active companies are spinoffs of McGill research, but there is



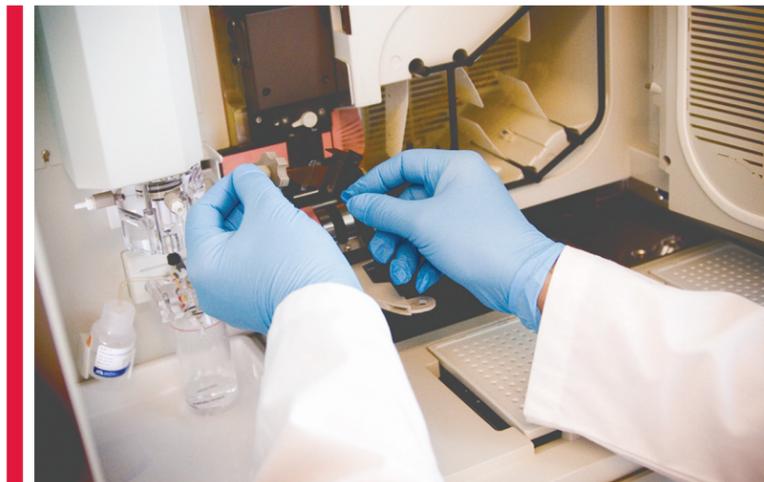
Students Sunny Malhotra, Electrical Engineering, and Shilpa Sitaram, Chemical Engineering, at the Canadian High Commission, New Delhi

much more that we can and will do. We aim to triple the number of spinoff companies, while significantly growing our collaboration with private industry and not-for-profit organizations.

Public citizenship

As we look abroad, we do not ignore our responsibilities at home. McGill is an important asset for Quebec and we embrace our role as citizens of this province. For example, the McGill University Health Network is responsible for 63 per cent of the territory of Quebec through the Réseau universitaire intégré de santé (RUIS), which provides better access to tertiary health care in Quebec's regions. Our affiliated teaching hospitals—the McGill University Health Centre, the Jewish General, the Douglas and Saint Mary's—are at the centre of both research and health-care delivery. The new MUHC complex, along with the CHUM project at Université de Montréal, will significantly modernize the delivery of health care and reinforce Montreal's position as the leading biomedical centre in Canada and a leading biomedical enterprise on the North American stage. These are initiatives in which all Quebecers can take pride.

Our joint programs with other universities in Quebec are of great importance as we expand our horizons in this province. While some are new, many of these programs have been ongoing for decades and are becoming more robust. For example, our collaboration with the Université du Québec at Chicoutimi (UQAC) allows our students to work with students and professors at UQAC in the National Research Council laboratory adjacent to their campus, investigating the impact of freezing temperatures on electri-



A DNA capillary sequencer at the McGill University and Genome Quebec Innovation Centre

city. And I am proud to say that this year we launched a joint Executive MBA program with Montreal's École des Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC).

Within a strong and dynamic Quebec university system, McGill makes a distinctive leadership contribution. More than one of every five PhD candidates in the province is enrolled here. At the undergraduate level, McGill has the highest percentage of full-time student enrolment: approximately 80 per cent of our students are full-time compared with an average of 61 per cent at the other universities in Quebec. While part-time studies can serve an important role, we know that full-time

students are more likely to complete their degrees. The high proportion of full-time students at McGill contributes to our strong performance on degree completion—the highest in Quebec, and among the leaders at the national level.

Many members of the McGill community serve in influential leadership roles in their fields within the broader communities in Montreal, Quebec, Canada and beyond. As your Principal, I serve on

the Internationalisation Committee of the Association of American Universities; I serve on the Board of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and chair its Standing Advisory Committee on University Research.

I have also begun a two-year mandate as President of the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities (CREPUQ). At a time of rapid political and societal change, it is more important than ever that we exercise our leadership on issues affecting higher education, university research and inter-institutional cooperation and strategy.

Public policy and community outreach

Universities play a public policy role on the vital issues that affect society, particularly in relation to higher education and the potential for graduates and university research to contribute to the well-being of all citizens. There are many other areas where universities can make a profound difference, and McGill is aiming to do just that. For example, we can help immigrants resolve some of the difficulties they face in getting their professional credentials recognized in Canada.

This is a problem that will affect us more as our population ages and we face shortages in key professions. Universities also need to think more precisely about what we can do to prepare young people for a future in our globalized world, whether it be greater flu-

ency in foreign languages, better understanding of the major religions and cultures of the world, more extensive international experience, greater appreciation of diversity and of our impact on the environment, scientific literacy or technological fluency.

As part of our mission, McGill provides opportunities for academics, students, politicians, government officials and members of the broader community to discuss issues of the day through the major conferences that we organise every year. Last fall, for example, McGill hosted a conference marking the first anniversary of a controversial manifesto by a group of leading Quebecers from the academic, business, cultural and media milieus. Their manifesto, "Pour un Québec lucide," warned that Quebec faces a demo-

graphic and financial crisis and challenged many aspects of current policy, including low electricity rates and low university tuition fees. We were proud to host this important conference, which presented voices from all sides of the political debate. Many participants told us that McGill was well placed to stage such an event because of our substantial reputation for academic rigour and objectivity.

The McGill community contributes to the broader community in many ways: through the green spaces provided by our campuses, the hundreds of performances that are given in our concert halls every year, our dental clinic and the 'Minis'—the public lecture series offered each year in Medicine, Law, Science, Music and now Management—to name but a few.

Core value

We are pressing ahead with a full agenda as we identify our goals, implement our plans to reach them and secure the financial means necessary to fulfil our mission. I am optimistic that we will obtain the cooperation we need from all of our partners to translate our plans into reality. I express here my deepest appreciation to all of you who work with us to achieve our aspirations. After 20 years in which health care has been the predominant issue on the public agenda, Canadians are now beginning to reaffirm higher education as a core value. For all of the reasons canvassed in this report, I am convinced that, as remarkable as our history has been, our best years lie ahead.

As the sixteenth Principal of McGill University, it is my privilege to submit this report to you.



Reaffirming education as a core value