

**Subcommittee on Women  
Annual Report to the Joint Senate-Board Committee on Equity  
2007-2008**

(Submitted by Professor Abby Lippman, Chair)

**Membership 2007-2008**

Abby Lippman , Chair	Medicine
Kathleen Cullen	Physiology
Rhonda Amsel	Psychology
Gloria Tannenbaum	Medicine/Pediatrics
Grace Fong	Arts/East Asian studies
Roe-Min Kok	Music
Lynn Butler-Kisber	Education
Svetlana Komarova	Dentistry
Natalie Amar	MCRTW
Gwenda Wells	Student Services/Chaplaincy
Susan Czarnocki	Libraries/Alumnae
Edith Zorychta	Pathology/MAUT
Sarah Turner	Science (Geography)
Patrician Kirkpatrick	Religious Studies/MCRTW
Elizabeth Wood	Education
Colleen Sheppard	Law
Veronica Amberg	SEDE
Raisa Mirza	SSMU
Allison Gonsalves	PGSS Equity
Shree Mulay	Medicine
Kathy Maclean	Macdonald
Anne Kosowski	MUNASA
Jacqueline Bede	Macdonald (Plant Sciences)

**Mandate of the Subcommittee**

The mandate for the Subcommittee on Women (SSCOW) was under review during the year as part of the overall review of the JSBCE and its subcommittees. Pending approval of the recommended changes in mandates, SSCOW continued to work in 2007-08 in accordance with existing guidelines that required it to make recommendations as appropriate and as resources allowed on the following topics:

1. Advocacy of Women's Rights and Promotion of Women
  - Providing positive action regarding the employment and promotion of women at McGill University
  - Promoting equity for women in salary and pension issues
  - Monitoring representation of women on University committees and in administrative positions
  - Monitoring policy and practices affecting women
  - Providing advocacy for the problems of obtaining research funding
  - Advancing women's studies issues

## 2. Initiation and Consolidation of Women's Activities

This aspect of our original mandate has been assumed in large part by the MCRTW, and SSCOW currently deals mostly with offering advice and support as appropriate. SSCOW also supports the activities of women students and all staff.

## 3. Liaison and Networking for Women

- Assisting in the sponsorship of conferences on issues pertinent to women in academic and workplace contexts
- Facilitating contact with other women's groups at the University as well as regional and national organizations

### **Meetings**

SSCOW met monthly from September 2007 through the end of May 2008, with work carried out by e-mail between these gatherings on the items identified at the first meeting as priority issues (e.g., salary equity, employment equity, campus safety, sexual harassment, ensuring women's recognition in awards, etc.). (Agendas for each meeting were pre-circulated, and minutes of each meeting were recorded, with copies going to the JSBCE Chair.) On average, 12-15 members attended a meeting, and all decisions were made by consensus.

### **Overview**

SSCOW was active throughout the year primarily in the first and third of its mandated areas of activity. It continued to focus on issues that affect equity for women at McGill University and in this regard participated in the revisions of the JSBCE mandate and membership document to ensure the diversity of representation on the subcommittees. We maintained our attention to issues of pay equity for women and strategies to support their hiring and promotion through the ranks, but were limited in our own initiatives to follow up on the new policies by the absence of University reports with the information needed. This year it was also actively engaged in discussing the sexual harassment and discrimination policy with a view to advancing the date on which this would be reviewed. It also supported other initiatives to make the campus "women-friendly" with a specific focus on "student parent" and safety issues. For the first time, SSCOW took part in the new faculty orientation in August, an activity we plan to make a regular part of our networking work.

### **Pay Equity**

SSCOW had expected a report (originally due in 2004) on progress made and issues still needing to be addressed with regard to the steps taken at McGill with regard to pay equity. A formal request was made at Senate for the completion of this review, and a report was promised for May 2008. This has not yet been provided, and so SSCOW continues to be unable to comment on the current situation on pay equity.

SSCOW welcomes the steps towards transparency undertaken by the University in publishing the range of salaries according to professorial rank. Nevertheless, and as it was last year, it remains concerned with pay equity for *part time* and *non-tenured staff* as well as for *non-academic staff*.

### **Conciliation Work/Study/Family**

Balancing their multiple commitments remains difficult for women students, staff and faculty, and the lack of affordable and local daycare remains a serious concern, especially for McGill students for whom study/work/childcare conciliation is especially

difficult. This year, SSCOW supported the Student Parent Network in its activities, and was delighted with the success of the full-day workshop the group carried out in May. Several specific issues were raised that will need attention. If the University is to recruit and retain women staff, and provide an equitable experience to women students, serious support of “conciliation” policies and childcare arrangements is likely to be essential.

### **Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination**

SSCOW repeated its offer to help develop possible measures of “success” to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the policy and suggesting improvements to it. The SSCOW chair, as the representative of the JSBCE, is now a member of the group reviewing this policy.

### **Employment Equity**

Following the deposition of Kathy Cullen’s report on the employment of women academics well over one year ago, SSCOW has tried to continue her work in two ways:

- (a) by requesting detailed annual statistics on hiring and promotion of women. However, no formal response has been received as yet.
- (b) SSCOW has partnered with the Alumnae to invite an outside expert on diversity/equity matters, Evelyn Hammonds of Harvard, to come to McGill and to speak on experiences of other institutions and best practices for ensuring campuses do become more inclusive.

### **Varia**

- 1. SSCOW is aware of the absence of coordination in the nomination of women for various external (and internal) awards and began discussions to set up some regular mechanism to facilitate this. This work will continue.
- 2. SSCOW helped stimulate an on-campus safety walk/safety audit that was held in July 2008, and plans continue to make this an annual commitment.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

SSCOW notes that despite over a decade of concern, obtaining information to monitor diversity on campus remains difficult. Thus, the majority of its recommendations this year are regrettably similar to those of previous years.

### **SSCOW recommends to the JSBCE**

- (a) the establishment of a University-wide task force to specifically address the issues of diversity and equity as they affect faculty. The goal of this task force would be to make concrete recommendations to address: (i) issues related to implementation of an effective structure and allocation of resources for collecting and tracking data on an annual basis; (ii) issues related to faculty recruitment; and (iii) issues related to faculty retention, professional development and academic advancement.
- (b) a survey of the gender-related pay equity issues for part time and non-tenured staff as well as for non-academic staff be undertaken so that if any anomalies become apparent, they can be adjusted over a three-year period. These analyses of data on non-academic staff, which are legally required, should be reported to the university community to ensure public accountability.
- (c) a process be put in place to monitor ongoing progress on these issues and to provide an annual review that is made available to the JSBCE.
- (d) that mechanisms to promote and coordinate nominations of women for internal and external awards and honors be established.

Finally, SSCOW **requests** that the University take steps to ensure the appropriate acknowledgments of the events of 6 December and 8 March that have major significance to women and all others at McGill.