521st REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE TO SENATE
on the APC meeting held on October 26th, 2023.

I. TO BE APPROVED BY SENATE

(A) NEW TEACHING PROGRAMS REQUIRING SENATE APPROVAL – *none*

(B) ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ISSUES / POLICIES / GOVERNANCE/AWARDS

Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)
Policy on Research Entities - *appendix A*

APC reviewed and approved the proposed Policy on Research Entities and its related procedures that are intended to succeed the Policy on Research Centres. The Policy was called for revisions as it was last reviewed in 2013. The purpose of the revised Policy is to highlight the evolving need for an oversight of research entities and core facilities across the University. It aims to establish University-wide principles that provide clear guidelines on the operation and review of all research entities, along with the development and implementation of Faculty-based guidelines and directives for all facilities. While consistency in nomenclature is the ideal, it is not generally achievable and there is high variability across the University. The Policy therefore aims to recognize the importance of a functional-oriented approach to nomenclature instead of a prescriptive approach. This is intended to emphasize the unique attributes that define a research entity and to provide greater adaptability in the classification and categorization of such entities within the University. Appended also are the Procedures for Research Centres (D23-16A2), and the Procedures for Core Facilities (D23-16A3), which are presented for information.

Be it resolved that Senate, on the recommendation of the Academic Policy Committee, approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors for approval, the repeal of the Policy on Research Centres.

Be it further resolved that Senate, on the recommendation of the Academic Policy Committee, approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors for approval, the Policy on Research Entities, as presented in Appendix A.

(C) CREATION OF NEW UNITS / NAME CHANGES / REPORTING CHANGES – *none*

(D) CHANGES IN DEGREE DESIGNATION – *none*

(E) INTER-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS – *none*

(F) OTHER– *none*

II. TO BE ENDORSED BY SENATE / PRESENTED TO SENATE FOR DISCUSSION

Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL)
Recommendations from STL on the use of generative AI – *appendix B*

APC reviewed the proposed recommendations from STL relating to the use of generative AI within the University. On January 18th, 2023, the STL mandated that a working group be formed to examine the potential effects of general AI on teaching and learning. The working group had two recommendations to APC. Recommendation one is that APC endorses five principles (education on AI tools, usage to support academic mission, autonomy of the instructor regarding the choice of tools used to teach, responsibility of the instructors to uphold the highest standard of academic integrity and responsibility of the students to maintain academic rigor) constituting a framework applicable to different units and contexts within which AI could be integrated to the University's academic mission. Recommendation two is that the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) provide a clear mandate and resources to develop and implement these principles. The working group's recommendations are necessary to ensure that the use of these technologies in higher education align with the University's Mission and Values, uphold academic rigor, and address privacy and academic integrity concerns. APC approved the proposed recommendations and endorsed the principles and the focus on education, pedagogical support, and continuous research on generative AI. APC discussed and suggested that Senate discuss the scope of instructor autonomy and equitable access to generative AI tools.

Be it resolved that Senate, on the recommendation of the Academic Policy Committee, endorse the recommendations included in the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning's Report on the Use of Generative AI, as presented in Appendix B.

III. APPROVED BY APC IN THE NAME OF SENATE

(A) DEFINITIONS – *none*

(B) STUDENT EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS / CONTRACTS / INTERUNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Office of the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) – International Education Student Exchange Partnerships

At a meeting on October 26th, 2023, APC reviewed and approved the following university-wide Student Exchange Partnerships:

- Between the Luiss Guido Carli University in Rome, Italy
- Between the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Peru
- Between the University of Porto, Portugal

(C) OTHER

Office of the Provost and Vice Principal (Academic)
Policy on Academic Freedom - *appendix C*

APC discussed the implementation of the new Policy on Academic Freedom. As mandated in the Policy, APC will nominate a standing Subcommittee on Academic Freedom (SAF), every year before June 1st. The SAF will be comprised of five APC members including three members of academic staff, one member of the senior administration and one student. A Chair was nominated by the Chair of APC. The membership for the SAF was approved by the Senate Nominating Committee on October 23rd and will be presented to Senate for approval on November 15th as part of D23-15 (Report of the Senate Nominating Committee).

IV. FOR THE INFORMATION OF SENATE

I. ACADEMIC UNIT REVIEWS – *none*

II. APPROVAL OF COURSES AND TEACHING PROGRAMS

1. Programs

a) APC Approvals (new options/concentrations and major revisions to existing programs)

i. New Programs - *none*

ii. Major Revisions of Existing Programs - *none*

b) APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP) Approvals
(Summary Reports: http://www.mcgill.ca/sctp/documents/)

i. Moderate and Minor Program Revisions

Approved by SCTP on September 14th,2023; reported to APC on October 26th, 2023

Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
B.Sc. (Ag.Env.Sc.); Major in Agro-Environmental Sciences (42 cr.)
B.Sc. (Ag.Env.Sc.); Honours in Agro-Environmental Sciences (54 cr.)

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Schulich School of Music
M.A. in Music; Musicology (45 cr.)
Ph.D. in Music (Composition, Music Education, Musicology, Music Technology, Sound Recording, Theory, Interdisciplinary Studies, Applied Performance Sciences) (0 cr.)

Desautels Faculty of Management
M.M. in Analytics; Non-Thesis (45 cr.)
B.Com.; Honours in Investment Management (84 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Accounting (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Business Analytics (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Finance (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Information Technology Management (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in International Management (81-87 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Managing for Sustainability (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Marketing (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Mathematics and Statistics for Management (69-72 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Retail Management (69 cr.)
B.Com.; Major in Strategic Management (69 cr.)

ii. Program Retirements
Approved by SCTP on September 14th, 2023; reported to APC on October 26th, 2023
Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Schulich School of Music
Ph.D. in Music (Composition, Music Education, Musicology, Music Technology, Sound Recording, Theory, Interdisciplinary Studies) (0 cr.)

2. Courses

a) **New Courses**

Reported as having been approved by SCTP on May 11th, 2023: 43
Faculty of Arts: 1

School of Continuing Studies:19
Faculty of Medicine and Oral Health Sciences: 1
Faculty of Education: 4
Faculty of Engineering: 2
Faculty of Law: 1
Desautels Faculty of Management: 1
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences: 7
Faculty of Science: 7

Reported as having been approved by SCTP on September 14th, 2023: 9
Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: 1
School of Continuing Studies:1
Faculty of Engineering: 2
Desautels Faculty of Management: 1
Schulich School of Music: 4

b) **Course Revisions**
Reported as having been approved by SCTP on May 11th, 2023: 77
Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: *2*
Faculty of Arts: 6
School of Continuing Studies: 49
Faculty of Education: 6
Faculty of Engineering: 3
Faculty of Law: 1
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences: 6
Faculty of Science: 4

Reported as having been approved by SCTP on September 14th, 2023: 6
Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: 1
School of Continuing Studies: 2
Faculty of Engineering: 1
Schulich School of Music: 2

c) **Course Retirements**
Reported as having been approved by SCTP on May 11th, 2023: 44
Faculty of Arts: 2
School of Continuing Studies: 36
Faculty of Education: 2
Faculty of Engineering: 4

Reported as having been approved by SCTP on September 14th, 2023: 2
School of Continuing Studies: 2

III. OTHER

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Proposal to rename the Division of Experimental Surgery to the Division of Surgical and Interventional Sciences and to rename the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery to the Division of Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery - *appendix D*

APC reviewed and approved a proposal from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences to rename the Division of Experimental Surgery to the Division of Surgical and Interventional Sciences, and to rename the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery to the Division of Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery. These changes will more accurately reflect the two Division's contemporary research and

clinical practices. The renaming is representative of the multidisciplinary approaches to surgical and interventional medicine that will continue to evolve, and the advances in repair and ablation technologies, diagnosis and imaging, innovations in care delivery and other areas of surgical sciences.

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D23-16 Appendix A

Memorandum
Note de service

Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)

Date: October 26, 2023

To/Destinataire(s): Christopher Manfredi, Provost and Vice-Principal Academic, Chair of APC

From/De la part de: Martha Crago, Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)

c.c. Katharine Tiitson, Academic Program Officer

Subject/Object: Policy on Research Entities

For: Decision

Purpose:
The proposed *Policy on Research Entities* and related procedures are presented to the academic Policy Committee (APC) for approval. The three documents will replace the *Policy on Research Centres*.

Background:
The *Policy on Research Centres* was initially established in 1995 and last reviewed in 2013. A working group composed of four Faculty Associate Deans (Research) was tasked by the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in 2019 to initiate the Policy review and provide recommendations. Consultations were conducted with Faculty Deans in 2020 and 2021. Updated documents were presented to the Research Advisory Council (RAC) in December 2022 for consultation and approved by RAC at the following meeting in February 2023. P7 approved the Policy in September 2023. The Policy has undergone a significant refresh to meet evolving needs for oversight of research entities.

Key updates are:

- Alignment with the University's *Policy for the Development and Review of Governing Documents* (2017).
- Strengthening governance
- Strengthening review and accountability
- Keeping Faculty oversight while harmonizing the procedures for creation, review, and sunsetting of research entities across the University
- Clarifying nomenclature and decoupling naming from function
- Including a Procedure for Core Facilities (shared research platforms for equipment and services)
- Clarification of oversight of Research Entities regarding the responsibilities of the VP (RI) versus Faculty Deans. Research Entities report to a lead Faculty while VP (RI) oversees the Policy and related Procedures. Wording has been added that Faculties will provide an update of Research Entities under their purview to the VP (RI), who in turn will provide an annual report on the status of Research Entities to the Senate and the Board.

- Clarification on the process for closure of a Research Entity adding that a Research Unit's governance body may recommend to the Lead Faculty to close voluntarily.

Prior consultations/approvals

- Initial Working Group: 2019 – 2020
- VP (RI) Leadership: 2019 – 2022
- Legal Services: January 2023
- Research Advisory Council: December 2022 and February 2023
- Faculty Deans: 2020 – 2021 and March 2023
- P7: April and September 2023

Next steps:

- Senate: November 15, 2023 (tentative)
- Board of Governors: December 14, 2023 (tentative)

Attachments

1. Policy on Research Entities
2. Procedures for Research Units
3. Procedures for Core Facilities

POLICY NAME	POLICY ON RESEARCH ENTITIES
Approving Body	Senate Board of Governors
Initial Approval Date	TBD
Date of last review	
Date of next review	
Executive Sponsor	Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)

Related Documents	- Procedures for Research Units - Procedures for Core Facilities - Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets

1. Preamble

McGill University proudly supports the advancement of stimulating and collaborative research environments through the establishment of formally recognized research entities. Such entities play a central role in the University's research mission while supporting institutional and Faculty strategic priorities. Research entities have clearly defined research goals and objectives and are established to serve compelling, strategic research priorities and needs that have been identified through planning and consultation with stakeholders.

Research entities contribute to academic life at McGill by complementing and enhancing the University's academic organizational structure. Whereas departments and Faculties are enduring academic units that offer for-credit educational programs with provincial oversight, research entities are accountable to the University to address specific current or longer-term research priorities. They may be housed within a specific Faculty or span multiple Faculties and focus on a targeted research area. Research entities increase the visibility and reputation of the research mission of the University, nationally and internationally, and contribute to its measurable output and impact. They are overt expressions of the University's research strengths and priorities, and are instrumental to securing research funding, attracting and retaining expertise via leading researchers, highly-qualified specialised staff and trainees, providing training opportunities for students, promoting collaboration with other entities, partnership opportunities with industry, and disseminating knowledge to stakeholders and the public.

The *Policy on Research Entities* ("Policy") provides a framework to guide the establishment, oversight, review, and operations of research entities, while ensuring accountability and clear governance. This Policy aims to decouple nomenclature from function, placing emphasis on the distinguishing features of a research entity and allowing flexibility in the categorization of research entities.

2. Scope

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to set University-wide general principles for two categories of research entities, hereby designated as Research Units and Core Facilities.

2.2 Specific protocols with regard to the establishment, governance, leadership, membership or usership, resource allocation, reporting, review and termination for each category of research entity are found within the *Procedures for Research Units* and the *Procedures for Core Facilities*.

2.3 Existing research entities previously under the scope of the *Policy on Research Centres* will keep their McGill recognized status and will follow the protocols outlined in the *Procedures for Research Units.*

2.4 Informal research groups or research labs are not within the scope of this Policy.

2.5 Non-research entities that may use the nomenclature of centre or institute are not within the scope of this Policy.

3. Categories of Research Entities

The two categories of research entities that are within the scope of this Policy are outlined below.

3.1 Research Units

Research Units, generally categorized as research centres or research institutes, are approved by University governance bodies and are established to bring together relevant researchers and increase focus on a specific area or topic. They enhance research and training activities through clearly defined objectives while providing a structure to support their activities that complements the academic goals of Faculties. They foster partnerships both nationally and internationally with academic and industry stakeholders and may promote interdisciplinary research and knowledge translation. Research Units are expected to have and sustain external funding to support their activities and serve as vehicles for fund-raising campaigns of the University and other strategic initiatives. They are initiated by researchers within a single Faculty or multiple Faculties, in which case a Lead Faculty is selected to ensure accountability.

3.2 Core Facilities

Core Facilities are research platforms that provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, training, services, technologies, and scientific and technical personnel that are accessible to multiple investigators. Core Facilities are meant to foster collaborations, maximize the use of equipment and services and lead to increased scientific productivity, while aiming to facilitate cost efficiency of operations and management. Generally, a Core Facility is housed within a Faculty and is accountable to a Lead Faculty, however, there may be some exceptions.

4. General Principles

The following general principles will apply to both categories of research entities that fall within the scope of this Policy.

4.1 Research entities uphold the University's mission and principles and group the collective efforts of multiple researchers.

4.2 Research entities aim to interact with scholars at other universities and/or institutions and, when relevant, create collaborations with non-academic stakeholders including industry and community groups.

4.3 Research entities endeavour to enhance research training of highly qualified personnel including post-doctoral fellows and students at the graduate level.

4.4 Research entities are expected to have a life cycle extending beyond the term of a single grant and are established with long-term research objectives.

4.5 Research entities will receive designation as one of either a Research Unit or a Core Facility. In cases where a Core Facility may be associated with a Research Unit, the designation as a Core Facility will be a separate designation.

4.6 Designation as a research entity does not allow for the hiring of faculty members or the offering of for-credit courses. However, a research entity may contribute to undergraduate, graduate, or other training, including through seminar series, specialized workshops, and internships, related to ongoing research programs. For-credit courses could result from the activity of a research entity. In such cases, these would become part of an existing Department or Faculty's course offerings, following established University protocols.

4.7 Research entities and their members shall conform to all applicable University policies and procedures.

5. Naming and Nomenclature

5.1 Subject to governance approval, research entities may use nomenclature to name or refer to themselves that is best suited to their unique goals and objectives but are formally classified either as a Research Unit or Core Facility according to their distinguishing features as outlined in Section 3.

5.2 Only research entities formally approved under the provisions of the present Policy and its Procedures may use the McGill name and/or logo in combination with their name and/or logo.

5.3 Research entities may be named honorifically following the protocols of the *Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets.*

6. Establishment, Oversight, Review and Termination

6.1 Research Units

6.1.1 A proposal to establish a Research Unit must be reviewed and approved by the Lead Faculty, Research Advisory Council, the Academic Policy Committee, the Senate, and the Board of Governors.

6.1.2 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) is responsible for:

(i) reviewing proposals prior to their submission to the University's governance bodies to ensure suitability and fit with the present Policy;

(ii) determining the representation of the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in the governance of the Research Unit; and

(iii) providing an annual report on the status of Research Units to the Senate and the Board of Governors.

6.1.3 The Lead Faculty Dean is responsible for:

(i) receiving requests and making a determination on proposals seeking provisional status prior to seeking full governance approval as defined and described in the *Procedures for Research Units;*

(ii) establishing a governance body to oversee a Research Unit once it has been established;

(iii) determining resource allocation such as space, human resources, and financial support to Research Units;

(iv) requesting and receiving annual reports, determining performance metrics, and performing reviews of scientific productivity and financial operations to assess the relevance and impact of Research Units against their stated objectives and fit with the present Policy; and

(v) submitting annual reports to the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

6.1.4 Research Units will receive their designation for a six-year term. New Research Units will undergo a midterm review at three years, followed by a final review at six years, following the protocols outlined in the *Procedures for Research Units*. After the initial term, reviews will take place every six years to coincide with any external assessments as appropriate.

6.1.5 Following consultations with the Lead Faculty Dean, the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) may elect to terminate the activities of a Research Unit following review.

6.1.6 A Research Unit's governance body may recommend to the Lead Faculty Dean to close voluntarily, following protocols in the *Procedures for Research Units*.

6.2 Core Facilities

6.2.1 A proposal to recognize a Core Facility must be reviewed by and receive approval from the Lead Faculty.

6.2.2 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) is responsible for:

(i) providing an annual report on the status of Core Facilities to the Senate and the Board of Governors.

6.2.3 The Lead Faculty Dean is responsible for:

(i) establishing a governance body to oversee a Core Facility once it has been recognized. The extent of the oversight is decided by each Faculty Dean, taking due regard of the Faculty context and the Core Facilities under its purview;

(ii) determining resource allocation such as space, human resources, financial support and ensuring that the Core Facility has sound management and operations of any assets under its responsibility; and

(iii) requesting and receiving annual reports, determining performance indicators, and organizing formal reviews of Core Facilities to assess their relevance and impact against their stated objectives and fit with the present Policy.

6.2.4 The Lead Faculty Dean can terminate the activities of a Core Facility following review.

6.3 A Lead Faculty Dean may request that the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) conduct an arm's length review on the status of any research entity within the scope of this Policy at any time.

6.4 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), following consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean, reserves the right to terminate a research entity at any time due to institutional risks such as those involving financial exigencies, non-compliance with regulations, or any other serious concerns, with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

7. Procedures

The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) has the authority to establish and amend Procedures associated with this Policy.

8. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed following five years of its approval by a working group established by the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) with broad representation from Faculties and the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic). The working group may make recommendations for modifications to this Policy.

PROCEDURE TITLE	PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH UNITS
Executive Sponsor	Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)
Initial Approval Date	(Date that the Procedure was originally approved by Executive Sponsor)
Date of Last Review	(Date that the Procedure was last reviewed)

Related Documents	- Policy on Research Entities - Procedures for Core Facilities - Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 In support of the *Policy on Research Entities* ("Policy"), the *Procedures for Research Units* ("Procedures") set out protocols with regard to the establishment, governance, leadership, membership and/or usership, resource allocation, reporting, review and termination of University Research Units.

1.2 The Procedures are to be read in conjunction with the Policy. All items identified in these Procedures will have the meaning given to them in the Policy.

1.3 Research Units are generally categorized as "research centre" or "research institute" depending on the nature and context of the Research Unit in question. However, in these Procedures, the term Research Unit is used throughout this document and will be understood to include all entities that meet the description herein, whether identified as a research centre or research institute.

1.4 Research Units are expected to have a life cycle extending beyond the term of a single grant and are established with long-term research objectives. Certain provincial or federal programs may fund multi-institutional entities using similar nomenclature such as research centre, which do not fall within the scope of the Policy and these Procedures unless a proposal has been submitted for its establishment as a Research Unit. In such cases, only the McGill portion of these multi-institutional entities will be covered by the Policy and these Procedures.

2. Definition

2.1 As established by the Policy, Research Units are approved by University governance bodies and are established to bring together relevant researchers and increase focus on a specific area or topic. They enhance research and training activities through clearly defined objectives while providing a structure to support their activities that complements the academic goals of Faculties. They foster partnerships both nationally and internationally with academic and industry stakeholders and may promote interdisciplinary research and knowledge translation. Research Units are expected to have and sustain external funding to support their activities and serve as vehicles for fund-raising campaigns of the University and other strategic initiatives. They are initiated by researchers within a single Faculty or multiple Faculties, in which case a Lead Faculty is selected to ensure accountability.

2.2 Research Units must:

- focus on research topics, whether fundamental or applied, where McGill researchers have demonstrated strength relative to peer groups in Canada and internationally,
- group a critical mass of McGill faculty members (e.g., 10+), building on complementary strengths,
- designate a Director with oversight of the research program and administrative responsibility for the Research Unit,
- have a designated Lead Faculty,
- maintain an appropriate level of research funding over time through a possible number of funding sources,
- demonstrate a sustainable annual budget for operations relative to size and scope.

3. Faculty Guidelines

In line with the Policy, each Faculty must develop guidelines to implement processes for the establishment, operation, review, and termination of Research Units. These guidelines will be adapted to the scope, needs and particularities of each Faculty.

4. Establishment

4.1 All faculty members interested in creating a new Research Unit will have a pre-planning meeting with the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), who will ensure other stakeholders, such as the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), are consulted as needed. The key stakeholders will be brought into a pre-planning meeting to allow for a more seamless process of approvals and for a discussion around required templates and documents.

4.2 Faculty members interested in creating a new Research Unit have two options:

4.2.1 If they do not yet meet the full criteria outlined in Section 2.2, they may first seek provisional status as explained in Section 4.3 or

4.2.2 If they already meet the full criteria outlined in Section 2.2, they may seek full governance recognition without going through provisional status according to Section 4.4.

4.3 Provisional Status

4.3.1 Provisional status will be granted at the discretion of the Lead Faculty Dean upon receipt, at any time, of a short proposal (2-3 pages) that outlines details such as: Research Unit mission and objectives, research program and training, Faculties involved and membership, fit with the Faculty's or Faculties' strategic plan, governance model, secured and anticipated funding, and a financial plan.

4.3.2 Provisional status will be granted for up to 36 months (non-renewable), by the Lead Faculty Dean, and other Faculty Deans involved as applicable, who will inform the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

4.3.3 A group of faculty members who obtained provisional status of a Research Unit must then seek approval and prepare a proposal in consultation with and under the guidance of the Lead Faculty and other Faculties involved, before the 36-month provisional time period.

4.4 Full Governance Recognition

4.4.1 To guide prospective new Research Units, the Lead Faculty will provide a proposal template with required headings and instructions. A generic proposal template to support Faculties will be available through the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

4.4.2 In addition, letters of support from all involved Faculty Deans that outline resource allocations for space and operations must be appended to the proposal.

4.4.3 All proposals must be submitted to all Faculties involved for approval. Following approval, the Lead Faculty will submit the proposal and all supporting documents to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation). Proposals can be submitted at any time during the year.

4.4.4 The Proposal will be reviewed by the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) according to the criteria in Section 2.2 and to:

- ensure suitability and fit with the purpose and scope of the Policy and the present Procedures,
- determine the representation of the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in the governance of the Research Unit,
- check Faculty commitments of resources and space,
- validate a sustainable financial plan,
- ensure that the performance metrics proposed to assess progress and impact against the Unit's stated research objectives are appropriate.

4.4.5 The Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will present all new Research Unit proposals to the Research Advisory Council once a year for assessment and approval.

4.4.6 Once approved by the Research Advisory Council, proposals will be submitted to the Academic Policy Committee, the Senate, and the Board of Governors for approval.

5. Governance

5.1 A Research Unit will be under the purview of the Lead Faculty Dean.

5.2 For Research Units associated with more than one Faculty, the Deans will decide, in consultation with the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), which Faculty shall be the designated Lead Faculty. The Deans may agree that the designated Lead Faculty may be changed or alternated at any time.

5.3 Each Research Unit must have a governance body, named and adapted to its size and scope, that provides strategic direction, management guidance, and ensures accountability of the activities of the Research Unit.

5.4 The Lead Faculty Dean is responsible for forming, chairing and appointing members to the governance body, which shall be composed at a minimum of: the Lead Faculty Dean or delegate as Chair, Deans or delegates from each of the Faculties involved, the Director, two Regular Members of the Research Unit, and at least one member from every other membership category in section 7.1 as applicable.

5.5 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) or delegate will serve as a member of a Research Unit's governance body.

5.6 The governance body must meet annually at the invitation of the Lead Faculty Dean to review activities and membership, assess progress and performance, approve the annual report, the annual budget for operations, and provide guidance for any issues that may arise.

5.7 Research Units must have a website with information about their mission statement, research objectives, membership and research activities.

5.8 As per Section 4.7 of the Policy, all Research Units must follow all applicable University policies and procedures. In addition, they must have written by-laws that align with the Policy, Procedures and their Lead Faculty's guidelines for matters such as:

- the mandate of all the Unit's relevant governance bodies,
- nominations and appointments to the Unit's governance bodies,
- appointment and length of service of Director, and if relevant, the Associate Director,
- management and operations,
- resources,
- classification and terms of members,
- financial matters such as budget and allocation of funding,
- reporting and review,
- termination process.

5.9 Research Unit governance documents will be included as part of the institutional approval process for full governance recognition as outlined in Section 4.4. Subsequent modifications will be submitted to the Research Unit's governance body for approval.

6. Leadership

6.1 Research Units will be led by a Director, who is appointed by, reports to, and is accountable to the Lead Faculty Dean, for a fixed term of 4 years, renewable.

6.2 The Director must hold a tenure-track/tenured academic faculty appointment at McGill University. Any terms and conditions of employment related to this mandate such as, but not limited to, a stipend or teaching release, is determined at the discretion of the Lead Faculty Dean. It is recommended that such terms and conditions are confirmed in writing in a letter to the Director.

6.3 The search for a Director may involve external recruitment and will follow all established University policies, procedures, and protocols.

6.4 The Director is responsible for the overall direction of the Research Unit and is accountable for its operations and financial management to the Research Unit's governance body as described in Section 5.3 under the purview of Lead Faculty Dean.

6.5 Research Units may also have Associate Directors, if deemed relevant, and shall follow the same protocols under sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

7. Membership

7.1 Research Units will adhere to the following classification of membership:

- Regular Member is a McGill academic faculty member who conducts most of their research within the scope of the Faculty Research Unit.
- Associate Member is a McGill academic faculty member who collaborates with Regular Members of the Faculty Research Unit.
- Affiliate Member* is an external member (non-McGill) from other institutions, whether academic or non-academic.
- Trainee Member is a McGill undergraduate student, graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, postdoctoral scholar or postdoctoral researcher.

*As per section 1.3, if the Research Unit is a multi-institutional entity, only the McGill portion will adhere to these membership categories. As such, affiliate members that are external to McGill may also be considered as regular members within the overall scope of the multi-institutional entity.

7.2 A Research Unit will submit an updated list of its membership to the governance body annually as part of their annual report.

7.3 Membership in a Research Unit will be for a stated term as determined by its by-laws, as indicated in section 5.8.

7.4 All Research Units will make their membership publicly available, for example via their website.

8. Resource Allocation

8.1 The Lead Faculty Dean will determine the level of Faculty financial support and space allocation to the Research Unit. If applicable, Deans of other Faculties involved will determine their level of contribution.

8.2 Research Units must maintain an appropriate level of sponsored research funding and revenues for collaborative research activities.

8.3 Research Units must have a budget for operations that covers costs associated with support staff salaries and other operational expenses, relative to size and scope. The operating budget must be tracked and reported separately from the research budget.

9. Reporting

9.1 Research Units will submit an annual report (May 1 to April 30 of previous year) to their governance body to ensure the scientific and financial accountability of their activities and progress of their mission.

9.2 While the overall format of annual reports is at the discretion of the Lead Faculty, the annual report must contain an appendix with information related to the Research Unit's finances and performance metrics which is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in July each year. The appendix will be available through the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

10. Review

10.1 The Lead Faculty is responsible for conducting all reviews of Research Units that fall within its purview and will have specific protocols in place in terms of frequency of and process for review, in accordance with Section 3. The Lead Faculty may choose to collaborate with the Office of Academic Reviews within the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) pursuant to the *Regulations on Academic Reviews.*

10.2 Research Units will receive their designation for six-year terms.

10.3 New Research Units will undergo a mid-term review in the third year to allow for an assessment of the Unit's research mission, objectives, priorities, activities and achievements, progress on its performance metrics, capacity to leverage external funding and to allow for a comparison to equivalent units in peer institutions, with a view to improving quality and maintaining research excellence, followed by a review in the sixth year to assess progress.

10.4 After the initial six-year term, reviews of Research Units will take place every six years to ensure progress of the Research Unit's research objectives and to offer guidance to the Research Unit in the development of any new goals and objectives.

10.5 Review assessments and any recommendations will be submitted by the Lead Faculty to the Research Unit's governance body, which will determine a course of action to address any points raised during the review. A copy of the report and recommendations will be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

10.6 To facilitate Faculty planning for reviews, the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will maintain a schedule for the review of all Research Units and will communicate with Faculties which Research Units are scheduled for review.

10.7 The Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will provide an update on the status of all Research Units to the Senate and Board of Governors annually.

11. Termination

The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) has the ultimate authority to terminate the activities of a Research Unit. Termination may take on one of the following forms:

11.1 Voluntary Closure

11.1.1 A Research Unit's governance body may recommend to the Lead Faculty Dean to close a Research Unit voluntarily.

11.1.2 The Director will inform the Lead Faculty Dean in writing, who shall make a recommendation to the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

11.1.3 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will provide written confirmation of the closure to the Director in writing, with a copy to the Lead Faculty Dean and Deans of other Faculties involved, as applicable.

11.2 Following Review

11.2.1 The Lead Faculty Dean may make a recommendation to the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) to terminate the activities of a Research Unit following review.

11.2.2 The decision to terminate a Research Unit will be communicated in writing by the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) to the Director, with a copy to the Lead Faculty Dean.

11.3 Non-compliance

11.3.1 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), following consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean(s), reserves the right to terminate a Research Unit at any time due to institutional risks such as those involving financial exigencies, non-compliance with regulations, or any other serious concerns, with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

11.4 A reasonable phase-out period from the termination end date may be granted to conclude affairs with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

Procedure Title	**PROCEDURES FOR CORE FACILITIES**
Executive Sponsor	Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)
Initial Approval Date	(Date that the Procedure was originally approved by Executive Sponsor)
Date of Last Review	(Date that the Procedure was last reviewed)

Related Documents	• Policy on Research Entities • Procedures for Research Units • Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Across the University, research infrastructure, such as equipment, tools, and laboratory facilities, has been acquired for use by multiple researchers, normally housed together and managed as shared research platforms, herein referred to as Core Facilities. Such Core Facilities are essential to McGill's research and training resources and provide access to equipment and services to multiple researchers and research groups. Research funding agencies are now mandating institutions to foster a culture and practice of shared equipment to avoid duplication, enhance access to shared infrastructure for research and training, and to optimize cost efficiency and financial sustainability of infrastructure. The present Procedures serve to implement the formal designation requirements for Core Facilities.

1.2 In support of the *Policy on Research Entities* ("Policy"), the *Procedures for Core Facilities* ("Procedures") set out the procedures for McGill Faculties to recognize, oversee, manage, and operate Core Facilities and to develop and implement Faculty-based guidelines and directives.

1.3 The Procedures are to be read in conjunction with the Policy. All items identified in these Procedures will have the meaning given to them in the Policy.

1.4 The *Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities* ("Handbook") sets out protocols related to financial best practices, staffing, maintenance, and equipment.

2. Definition

2.1 As established by the Policy, Core Facilities are research platforms that provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, training, services, technologies, and scientific and technical personnel that are accessible to multiple investigators. Core Facilities are meant to foster collaborations, maximize the use of equipment and services and lead to increased scientific productivity, while aiming to facilitate cost efficiency of operations and management. Generally, a Core Facility is housed within a Faculty and is accountable to a Lead Faculty, however, there may be some exceptions.

2.2 Core Facilities at McGill University have the following general characteristics:

- Physical location on McGill downtown campus or Macdonald campus or a virtual resource managed by McGill,
- Utilized by researchers and their trainees (i.e. more than 10) to conduct their research,
- Accessible either to any McGill researcher (unrestricted) or to a defined group of researchers (restricted or privileged access), their immediate collaborators and external (non-McGill) partners, including industry and private sector,
- Provide services on a fee-for-service basis,
- Led by a Director and supported by a governance structure appropriate to their scope, size, and complexity
- Have dedicated support staff for operations and maintenance, such as a manager, highly qualified and specialized personnel, and technical and administrative support appropriate to their scope, size, and complexity.

2.3 Research laboratories and services are not considered to be Core Facilities if they have the following characteristics:

- Departmental shared service facilities,
- Individual researcher labs,
- Non-research resources (e.g., teaching units or units holding collections not for research purposes),
- Facilities outside of campus at affiliated hospitals or field stations.

3. Faculty Guidelines

In line with the Policy, each Faculty must develop guidelines present to implement processes for the establishment, operation, review, and termination of Core Facilities. These guidelines will be adapted to the scope, needs and particularities of each Faculty.

4. Recognition

4.1 Recognition as a Core Facility aims to facilitate institutional planning, organization, visibility, and applications for external funding by encouraging a culture and practice of shared equipment that avoids duplication, enhances access to unique infrastructure for research and research training, and optimizes cost efficient sustainability of infrastructure.

4.2 To obtain recognition, faculty members in charge of a facility will prepare and submit all relevant and detailed information as required by the Lead Faculty, such as scientific and research mission, description of the services offered including an availability analysis for similar services, space planning, detailed equipment list, staffing information including roles and duties, performance indicators, usage statistics, business model and user fees, budget projections, financial and sustainability plan and governance structure, in accordance with the relevant Faculty Guidelines.

4.3 The Lead Faculty will assess and approve each request for recognition as a Core Facility based on the criteria outlined in sections 2.2 and 2.3, and any additional requirement outlined in the relevant Faculty Guidelines.

4.4 The Lead Faculty will submit a Core Facility Checklist for each recognized Core Facility, which will include information on services offered, business model, types of equipment, and number of staff, to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) to ensure alignment with the Policy and for record keeping with the objective of planning for research infrastructure funding opportunities as well as supporting the promotion and visibility of Core Facilities. The Core Facility Checklist, with required headings and content, will be available through the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) to facilitate the guidelines and processes.

5. Governance, Management and Operations

5.1 A Core Facility will be under the purview of the Lead Faculty Dean.

5.2 A Core Facility must have a governance structure appropriate to its size and complexity in order to provide strategic guidance in terms of operational needs and quality of service delivery as well as overall direction of the Core Facility.

5.3 A Core Facility must be led by a Director, who is appointed by, reports to, and is accountable to the Lead Faculty Dean for the overall direction of the Core Facility.

5.4 The Director of a Core Facility will hold an academic appointment at McGill with conditions of employment determined by the Lead Faculty Dean such as, stipend and teaching release, if any. If the appointment of a Director involves external recruitment, it will follow all established University policies, procedures, and protocols for such recruitment.

5.5 The Director is responsible for forming and appointing members to the governance body, which shall be approved by the Lead Faculty Dean.

5.6 The governance body must meet as needed, and at least annually, to receive the annual report (Section 8), review activities, users and finances, and provide guidance for any issues that may arise.

5.7 A Core Facility must have a public website with information about their mission statement, research activities, offered services, and fee structure.

5.8 A Core Facility must have written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed by the Director and approved by the governance body that align with this Policy and these Procedures for matters such as:

- management and financial matters such as business model, user fees, billing, budget, and allocation of funding, safety and classification of users
- operations of equipment and other assets;
- governance matters such as mandate of governance bodies as applicable, nominations and appointments to governance bodies as applicable;
- reporting and review.

5.9 A Core Facility may also have Associate Directors as needed and will follow the same protocols under sections 5.3 and 5.4.

5.10 Personnel for operations and maintenance of a Core Facility, such as a manager, technical and administrative staff are hired by the Lead Faculty and report to the Director.

6. Cost Model

6.1. A Core Facility must have a business plan with a cost model in place that ensures that the Core Facility is financially sustainable over time with secured revenues to cover the costs.

6.2. The cost model must consist of cost-recovery in the form of fee-for-service such as user fees or membership fees. In addition, the cost model may also include a diverse nature of additional sources of cost-recovery, such as external grant funding including equipment grants, donations, and philanthropic support and/or Faculty and institutional support (see Section 7).

6.3. The fee-for-service structure must be publicly available and follow all established University policies, procedures, and protocols as well as federal Tri-Agency regulations.

6.4. The *Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities* sets out protocols related to financial best practices, including fund management, usage logs, overhead rates on service contracts and billing records.

7. Resource Allocation

7.1 The Lead Faculty Dean will determine the space allocated and level of Faculty financial support to the Core Facility as well as criteria for such funding and, as relevant, performance metrics. If applicable, Deans of other Faculties involved will determine their level of contribution.

8. Reporting

8.1 The Director of a Core Facility will submit an annual report (May 1 to April 30 of previous year) to the Lead Faculty Dean and the Core Facility's governance body to ensure accountability and progress of the research activities of the Facility.

8.2 While the overall formats of annual reports are generally at the discretion of the Lead Faculty, each annual report must contain an appendix with information related to finances and research activities that is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in July of a given year. The appendix will be available through the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

9. Review

9.1 The Lead Faculty is responsible for conducting regular reviews (minimum of one every five years) of Core Facilities that fall within its purview in order to ensure sound operations and sustainability of finances and cost-recovery. The Lead Faculty may choose to collaborate with the Office of Academic Reviews within the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) pursuant to the *Regulations on Academic Reviews.*

9.2 Review assessments and any recommendations will be submitted by the Lead Faculty to the Facility's governance body with a copy to the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

9.3 The Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will provide an update on the status of all Core Facilities to the Senate and Board of Governors annually.

10. Termination

10.1 The Lead Faculty Dean, in consultation with other Deans of Faculties involved, can elect to terminate the activities of a Core Facility following a review.

10.2 The recommendation to terminate a Core Facility will be communicated in writing by the Lead Faculty Dean to the Director, with a copy to the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

10.3 A reasonable phase-out period from the termination end date based on a phase-out plan prepared by the Lead Faculty may be granted to conclude affairs with due consideration to human resources, assets, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

10.4 The Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), following consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean, reserves the right to terminate a Core Facility at any time due to institutional risks such as those involving financial exigencies, non-compliance with regulations, or any other serious concerns, with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

McGill

Teaching and Learning Services
Telephone: 398-6648
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To:	Members of APC
From:	Laura Winer, Chair, Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning
Subject:	Recommendations from STL on the use of generative AI
Date:	28 September 2023
Document #:	
For:	☐ **Information** **x Discussion** ☒ **Decision**

Issue:	With the launch of ChatGPT in November, generative AI or Large Language Models (LLMs) have become a topic of discussion across institutions of higher learning. The STL AI Working Group (STL AI WG) recommends that their use be guided to ensure that the use or non-use by instructors, students, and staff supports McGill's Mission and Values, respects academic rigour, and address privacy and academic integrity considerations.
Background:	At its meeting of January 18, 2023, STL mandated that a Working Group on the Implications of Generative AI (STL AI WG) be formed to examine the potential impacts of generative AI on teaching and learning, specifically assessment and learning outcomes, but leading also to the broader reflections on the goal of a university education. The STL AI WG met on eight occasions between February 22 and June 6, 2023. Draft recommendations were presented to STL at its meeting of June 13, 2023.
Motion or Resolution for approval:	STL recommends that APC approve the recommendations and that they be forwarded to Senate for discussion and approval.
Rationale:	The recommendations, if adopted, will provide the University community with clear direction for appropriate, thoughtful, and decisive actions in support of the academic mission.
Prior consultations & approvals:	Recommendations were approved by STL at its meeting of June 13, 2023
Next steps:	Approval by APC Discussion and approval by Senate
Appendices:	Recommendations on the use of generative AI at McGill University

STL AI Working Group recommendations to STL

Preamble

Generative AI or Large Language Models (LLMs) are systems that can be used to create new content, including audio, code, images, text, simulations, speech, and videos (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Although tools using these models came to most people's attention with the public launch of ChatGPT in November 2022, generative AI tools have for some time been supporting and enhancing existing ways of doing tasks in society as well as extending human capabilities and opening new possibilities. The ready access of generative AI tools presents a societal disruption with far-reaching implications. Given the magnitude and potential of the technology in all aspects of our lives, these implications naturally include the academy. Given the diversity of the academy, it is not surprising that there is a continuum of opinions from experts and thought leaders as to their potential impact on teaching and learning in higher education.

While ChatGPT has become shorthand for a wide range of tools, the STL AI Working Group (STL AI WG) recommends using the term generative AI to encompass the technology in all its forms. For a clear and concise overview of the potential uses of generative AI tools in higher education, see the UNESCO-produced "Quick Start Guide" on ChatGPT and AI in higher education, published in April 2023, which includes a consideration of their accompanying challenges and ethical implications.

Some early comments and questions from McGill instructors indicated a desire to make the University a "ChatGPT-free zone." Given the potentially negative implications of integrating generative AI into the classroom, and indeed into the University culture itself, this desire may be understandable. However, even if this were a shared desire, it would be an extremely difficult vision to implement. AI detection tools like GPT-Zero are probabilistic and cannot reliably determine if content is AI generated, resulting in both false positive and negative reports, with the former having a potentially harmful impact on students. As more tools become available (such as Google Bard), detection will become yet more difficult because GPT-Zero is specifically geared to detect content generated by OpenAI. Human inspection, especially with practice, may be able to flag content that is likely generated by AI by identifying false references and acute differences with other writings by the author, but this puts a significant burden on instructors and teaching assistants. In short, detection and enforcement will be a major challenge. Whatever policies are adopted will be enforced largely through self-compliance. Additionally, as Peters (2023) highlights in a University Affairs article, the rise of generative AI tools is encouraging universities to take a holistic approach to the concept of academic integrity.

Given anecdotal evidence suggesting that generative AI tools are already in heavy use by the University community, the STL AI WG recommends that their use be guided to ensure that it supports McGill's Mission and Values, respects academic rigour, and addresses privacy and academic integrity considerations. Further, during its discussions, the STL AI WG noted that the use of generative AI will not be limited to the classroom and identified administrative functions that may be impacted by their use.

How the STL AI WG proceeded

The initial discussion, held at the January 18, 2023, meeting of the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL), resulted in the identification of two avenues to follow. The first, requiring attention in the short-term, is how generative AI tools may impact the disciplinary framework that is based on the concepts of plagiarism and cheating. The Office of the Dean of Students, responsible for academic integrity and the student disciplinary process, will manage this aspect. The Office has commented that the Code of Student Conduct requires that work submitted for evaluation by students is their original work unless clearly indicated otherwise. Software that flags submitted work for potential plagiarism or cheating has been available for many years, but this is not sufficient evidence alone for a finding that the Code has been violated. The Code of Student Conduct requires that evidence is clear, convincing, and reliable, and this must be evaluated by a disciplinary officer. As mentioned, the likelihood of false positives with generative AI tools is higher than with previous text matching software, but the process of assessing a potential violation is the same.

Academic Integrity is paramount to the quality and legitimacy of our students' education, and generative AI use will increasingly influence how we define academic integrity. Importantly, as generative AI evolves in the coming months and years, its use will become more difficult to discern regardless of instructors' familiarity with their students' work. Given these conditions, the disciplinary route is not privileged. Rather, instructors are encouraged to enhance their knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses, augment approaches to instruction that incorporate meaningful interactions between the students and the instructor, and build assessment practices that take the use of generative AI into account. Explicit discussion of when and how generative AI can be used is part of that education. If an instructor becomes aware that generative AI has been used to complete an assignment, exam, or other assessment on which the instructor has explicitly prohibited its use, instructors are encouraged to bring an allegation of misconduct to the disciplinary officer. Above all, however, our focus is on the integrity of the education itself and not on punitive approaches to the use of generative AI.

The second avenue involved forming the STL AI WG to address the implications of generative AI tools for teaching and learning at McGill. The STL AI WG was mandated to examine the potential impacts of generative AI on teaching and learning, specifically assessment and learning outcomes, but leading also to broader reflections on the goal of a university education. The STL AI WG was expected to submit a report with recommendations by the end of the academic year. Given the tight timeline, the STL AI WG established an expedited plan for exploration and consideration of the issues. The goal was to gather information about the technology and establish a guiding framework for our recommendations. The STL AI WG met on eight occasions and engaged in productive discussions that included:

- A presentation by Prof. Joelle Pineau on the current and future capabilities and limitations of LLMs based generative AI tools. Prof. Pineau is a Professor and William Dawson Scholar at the School of Computer Science at McGill, and Vice-President, AI Research at Meta, where she leads the Fundamental AI Research team.
- Two discussions on ethical considerations of generative AI tools led by working group members Prof. Jocelyn Maclure and Prof. Lindsay Holmgren.
- Discussion and resources sharing an MS Teams group; see Appendix II for selected resources.

The discussions on ethics led the STL AI WG to adopt the 2018 Montréal Declaration for a Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence as our reference point. The ten principles they articulate are: 1) Well-being, 2) Respect for autonomy, 3) Protection of privacy and intimacy, 4) Solidarity, 5) Democratic participation, 6) Equity, 7) Diversity inclusion, 8) Caution, 9) Responsibility, and 10) Sustainable development. Note that the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted by UNESCO on November 2021, is wider-reaching in scope and provides an additional guide to inform reflections on the integration of generative AI in education in general.

During the course of the STL AI WG meetings, the question emerged about the potential utility of McGill issuing a clear set of learning outcomes for our graduates. In other words, what are the skills, knowledge, and values that are targeted by a McGill education? Such a discussion goes far beyond the mandate of this working group, but the members did want to signal that the time may be right for such a discussion at the University level. Specifically, to what extent is the development of both original thought and critical thinking understood to be a primary goal of a McGill education?

Recommendations to APC

The STL AI WG makes two recommendations.

Recommendation 1 **is that APC endorse the following five principles that constitute an operational framework for McGill to integrate generative AI tools into the academic mission.**

> **First principle**: **The University community is educated about what generative AI tools are, how they work, and the opportunities and challenges they entail**. Educational programming will be developed and delivered centrally and be provided for staff, students (beginning in their first year), and instructors, as well as at the Faculty level. The educational offerings may take the form of self-paced modules, for-credit courses, or other modalities. The educational options will ensure that students and instructors are able to:
>
> - explain the ethical implications of the use or non-use of such tools,
> - identify when the use of generative AI tools is appropriate,
> - identify the biases and normative tendencies inherent in generative AI tools,
> - identify the affordances offered by generative AI tools,
> - respect intellectual property, academic integrity, and privacy considerations if using the tools.
>
> **Second principle**: **University leadership and instructors ensure that when used, generative AI tools play a positive role in the accomplishment of the academic mission.** The leadership ensures that conditions are in place for the development of guidelines and resources to support instructors with addressing generative AI in their teaching. Instructors avail themselves of these guidelines and resources. As the appropriateness and nature of use will vary according to the discipline and course level, Faculties provide specific guidelines for their instructors.
>
> The leadership responsibility extends to the development of guidelines for use in other contexts such as research and administrative uses. For example, questions related to the use by faculty of generative AI tools for the drafting of teaching portfolios, reference letters for students, and research proposals will need consideration by the appropriate offices.

Third principle: **As with all approved learning technologies, instructors have autonomy to decide whether they will use an approved generative AI tool for their teaching and assessments.** The quality of the learning experience is the most important consideration when choosing to use generative AI tools. Potential benefits for instructors are also important considerations if the use of such tools lightens the instructor workload without negatively impacting the student experience.

Fourth principle: **Instructors remain responsible for comporting themselves according to the highest standards of academic integrity in their use of generative AI tools.** Instructors maintain responsibility and accountability for all of their instructional materials whether independently created, third-party generated, supported by generative AI tools, or derived from other resources. Instructors must be explicit in course outlines about the expectations for use of generative AI tools and may set limits on their use in assessment tasks.

Fifth principle: Students remain responsible for maintaining academic rigour. This involves both verifying the accuracy of information generated and acknowledging the use of generative AI tools, if applicable. Students are responsible for informing themselves about and complying with instructors' explicit expectations and must respect limits established about the use of generative AI tools in assessment tasks.

Recommendation 2 **is that the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) (OPVA) provide clear mandates and resources to identified units and groups to develop and implement roadmaps to operationalize the principles.** The Libraries and Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) will be mandated to scale up existing programming and develop new offerings and resources for students and instructors. Other stakeholders will collaborate with the identified units or lead other aspects of the implementation. The allocation of additional resources will be made to ensure timely delivery of the programming.

Specific mandates include:

1. **Education:** The development of an ongoing University-wide education and awareness program. This program will have a variety of offerings and be updated regularly to keep pace with the evolution of the area. Considerations around equity, access, and individual privacy are highlighted in all actions. Members of the McGill community are provided with resources so that they fully understand what the tools do, how they work, and their potential opportunities and challenges. A module along the lines of It Takes All of Us, the Sustainability Module, or the Academic Integrity Tutorial would be an important first step. In parallel, Faculties and programs develop in-depth courses and other resources that are more closely focused on their disciplines. Specifically, instructors will need opportunities and support in learning about generative AI tools in general, with specific consideration of their potential use in teaching, including assessments. Instructors will need to be able to engage in discussions with students about the ethical impacts of generative AI, academic integrity, and where the two overlap. Individual Faculties are encouraged to complement the University programming with discipline-specific offerings.

2. **Pedagogical support**: Instructors will need access to training, additional time, access to tools, and ongoing support so that they may consider and implement appropriate approaches to the use of generative AI tools in their teaching. Uses may be wide ranging--in the articulation of

learning outcomes, the design process, the creation of materials and instructional strategies, or the creation and grading of assessments, including formative feedback. Additionally, those instructors who do not wish generative AI tools used in their assessments will be supported in adapting their assessment practices in consideration of the prevalence of these tools. TLS will construct and maintain a knowledge base of effective ways of using generative AI tools as part of the teaching and learning process. This work will be informed by research on the current knowledge and use of the tools by McGill students and instructors. Once the knowledge base is created, TLS will provide a variety of educational opportunities for instructors including resources, workshops, webinars and learning communities to offer multiple points of support for the instructor community. The University becomes and stays aware of students' and instructors' evolving knowledge of and attitude toward the use of generative AI tools. A preliminary survey undertaken by SSMU indicated that students believe that generative AI will be a constant presence in the future, and it is essential to embrace it and try to incorporate it into teaching to aid student learning (see Appendix III for report). Many students are already using these tools and would like clear guidelines for using generative AI for assignments and study aids, as well as general guidelines on how to properly and efficiently use AI to help their learning. It is also important to outline what would constitute academic dishonesty. By having this information clearly articulated, students would be able to use generative AI tools to their advantage while learning without compromising their respect for academic integrity principles.

3. **Research**: Given this emerging field in higher education, it is of great importance to better understand the pedagogical applications, benefits, and risks of implementing generative AI tools in teaching and learning. The University community should be engaged in building evidence as to how best to adapt to the advent of AI. For this purpose, research projects, interdisciplinary collaborations, quality improvement initiatives, and knowledge dissemination related to AI in higher education should be supported.

Discussion of educational components

The question of depth and breadth of the educational offerings for the University community will need to be addressed with clear learning outcomes articulated for the mandates. However, as a start, students, instructors, and academic leaders will need to be educated about the factual aspects of generative AI tools and their potential implementation at McGill. Briefly, these are:

- To respect the University's Cloud Directive, all tools must be vetted for student and instructor use. Vetting the specific tools allows the University to ensure that all legal responsibilities are addressed (e.g., intellectual property rights, privacy of information). As with all tools, vetting applies to free software, as well as licensed tools.
- There is not yet a clear research-based understanding of how student use of these tools may impact the development of critical thinking skills. Would the use of generative AI tools enhance critical thinking skills? Could they diminish such skills? What would the impacts be of removing student-generated writing as a task on the development of critical thinking and analytical skills, especially in the humanities and social sciences disciplines? If generative AI is being used, how do we ensure that students are developing those intellectual abilities that are tacitly considered foundational to a university education?

- Using generative AI tools will change the learning activities for students, so consideration should be given to the impact of what is added as well as removed from those activities. The impacts should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, as the specific context (discipline, learning outcomes, etc.) will make generalizations fruitless. What constitutes appropriate instructional use must be discussed to generate norms, likely by discipline and/or department.
- Generative AI technology is not neutral. The normative nature of these tools may restrict original thinking. Depending on the datasets used to generate the output, different biases may be inherent and not explicit. The community must be educated on identifying the biases (political, normative, etc.) and develop strategies to mitigate them.
- This technology is changing rapidly, and constant updating and upgrading of knowledge about how existing tools work and what new tools are available is necessary.

Once students, instructors, and academic leaders are educated about the factual aspects of the nature of generative AI tools and their potential implementation at McGill, a next step is to educate them about the many creative opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning. These include (but are not limited to):

- Creating new types of teaching and assessment strategies,
- Creating personalized student learning experiences,
- Creating instructional materials,
- Providing opportunity for increased diversity and inclusion.

Conclusion

It is abundantly clear that the arrival of generative AI tools is an inflection point in societal thinking around creativity, intellectual property, academic integrity, and responsibility and accountability for our collective and individual intellectual productions. The University has a responsibility to ensure that all tools used in attaining a McGill education play a positive role and respect the highest ethical principles. McGill should invest in research and capacity building and actively engage in deciding on the roles of generative AI in teaching and learning, research, and administration. It is incumbent on us to provide both education and guidelines to the community as well as guardrails which will create a roadmap for the responsible and positive integration of generative AI tools. The recommendations of the STL AI WG, if adopted, will provide the University community with clear direction for appropriate, thoughtful, and decisive actions in support of the academic mission.

Appendix I

Terms of reference – STL AI Working Group

Mandate and duration

The STL AI WG will provide recommendations for supporting instructors, students, and academic administrators regarding the appropriate use of AI-generative tools in teaching and learning at McGill. These will include:

- Informing the community about the current capabilities of AI-generative tools.
- Provide guidance on using such tools as part of instructional strategies.
- Provide guidance on using such tools in assessments of student learning.
- A proposed plan of activities for such support, including informational and community building. These may include:
    - Publishing documentation (e.g., Teaching and Learning Knowledge Base articles); blog posts
    - Producing instructional videos.
    - Offering consultations (e.g., review course outlines; design rubrics/rating scales).
        - For individual instructors
        - For departments/units/Faculties.

The STL AI WG will be expected to work until May 2023, with monthly reports to STL at meetings or by email.

Composition

The STL AI WG is designed to be a core team that will contribute their own expertise as well as consult with different stakeholders, as appropriate.

Chair: Laura Winer, Chair of STL and Director of TLS
Membership:
Dorian Bandy, Schulich School of Music
Lindsay Holmgren, Desautels Faculty of Management
Jocelyn Maclure, Faculty of Arts
Catherine-Anne Miller, Ingram School of Nursing
Tina Piper, Faculty of Law
Robin Beech, Dean of Students
Sandy Hervieux, Libraries
Carolyn Samuel, Associate Director, Faculty Teaching and Development, TLS
Scott Patterson, Graduate student
Kerry Yang, Undergraduate student
Secretary: Nancy St-Pierre, TLS
Resource person: Adam Finkelstein, Associate Director, Learning Environments, TLS

Appendix II

Selected resources

The following list is not intended to be exhaustive or even representative. Rather, members of the Working Group have suggested resources (articles, blogs, videos, etc.) that they found particularly helpful in educating themselves about the tools, framing the discussion, and/or thought-provoking. Note that some may require access through the McGill Library system.

Anselmo, L., Kendon, T., & Moya, B. (2023). *A first response to assessment and ChatGPT in your courses.* Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, University of Calgary. https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/first-response-assessment-and-chatgpt

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Appendix III

Report on Student Opinions and Usage Regarding Generative AI

Kerry Yang

Students' Society of McGill University's Vice-President University Affairs

April 2023

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the finding of a survey conducted from March 6th, 2023, to April 26th, 2023, to gauge student opinions and usage of generative AI technologies such as ChatGPT. This report is intended to shed light on current student usage of generative AI and provide an overall view of the different uses of these rapidly developing technologies at McGill University.

Context

With the rapid rise in the usage of generative AI, a working group was established to create a framework around its usage in an academic context at McGill. This report seeks to provide the working group with an overview of how students currently use generative AI, and their opinions surrounding its usage.

Methodology

A survey was created on March 5th, 2023, to ask undergraduate students about their thoughts regarding generative AI. It consisted of 9 questions divided into three sections. The first section was to collect demographic data of the respondents. The second set of questions pertained to usage rates and opinions, while the third section asked for direct examples of generative AI usage. The survey was open from March 6th, 2023, to April 26th, 2023 and was distributed using Student Society of McGill University (SSMU) email blasts to all students, along with email blasts from student-faculty associations, student promotion, and word of mouth.

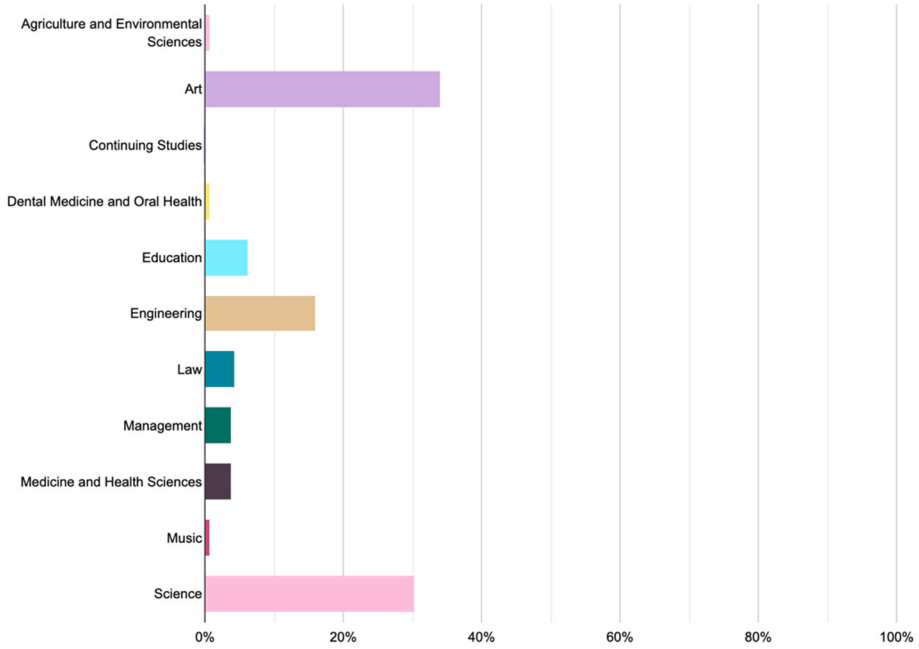
Results

A total of 162 individuals responded to the survey. 98.1% (n=159) of the respondents were undergraduate students, 1.2% (n=2) were graduate students, and 0.6% (n=1) responded other.

Respondent Demographics

2. What faculty are you in?

Answered : 162 , Skipped : 0



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Agriculture and Environmental Sciences	0.6%	1
Art	34%	55
Continuing Studies	0%	0
Dental Medicine and Oral Health	0.6%	1
Education	6.2%	10
Engineering	16%	26
Law	4.3%	7
Management	3.7%	6
Medicine and Health Sciences	3.7%	6
Music	0.6%	1
Science	30.2%	49

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Figure 1.1 Students by faculty of the respondents

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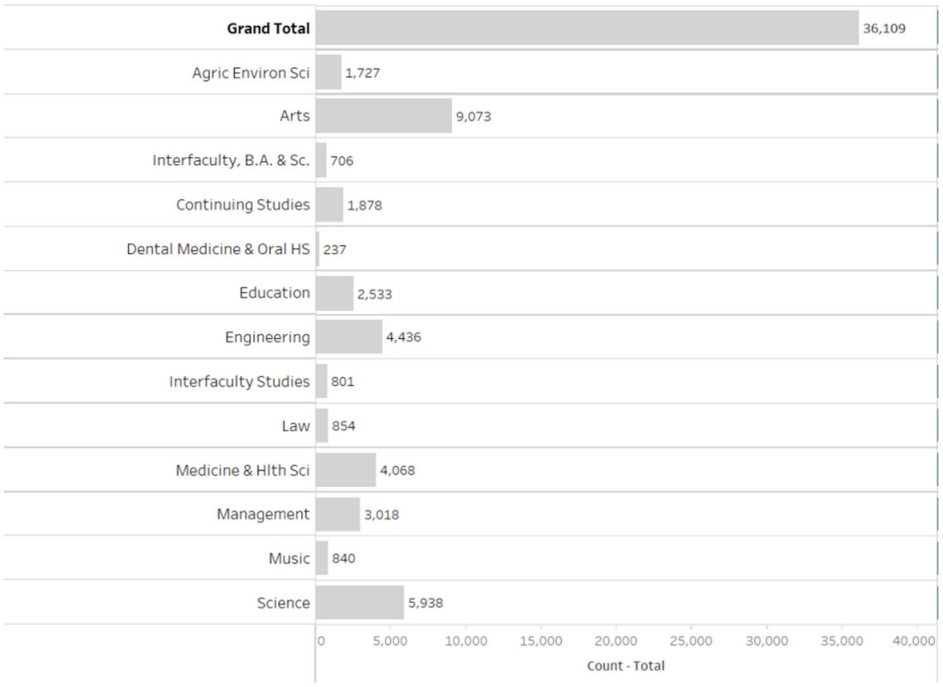
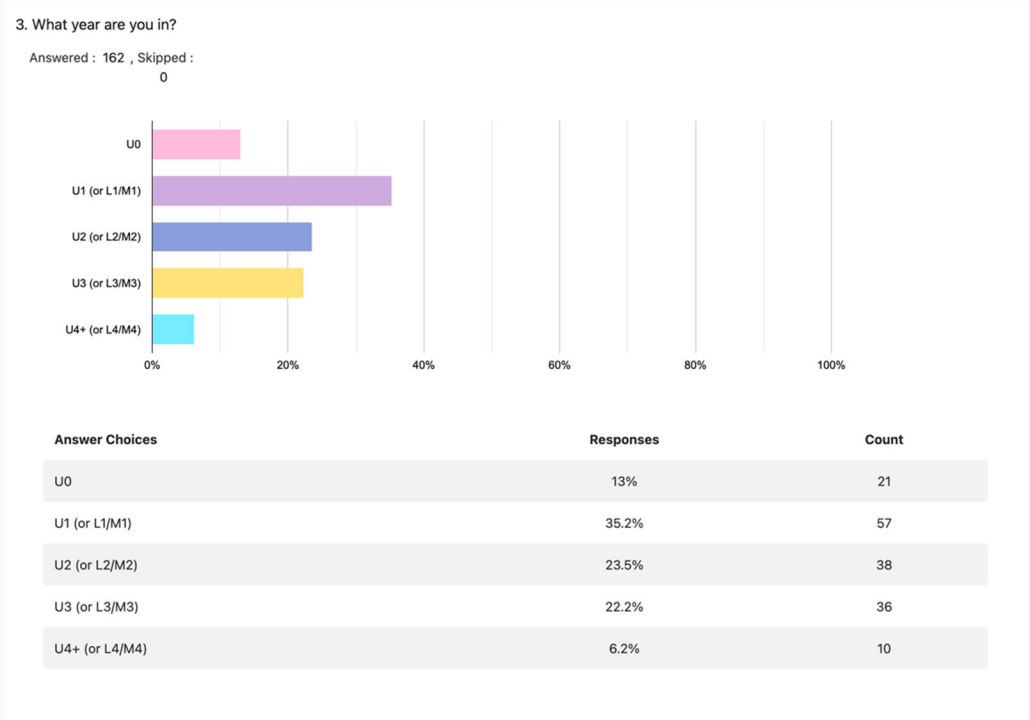


Figure 1.2 Students by faculty at McGill (taken from the Student Census Report of Biennial Data to Senate – April 2023)

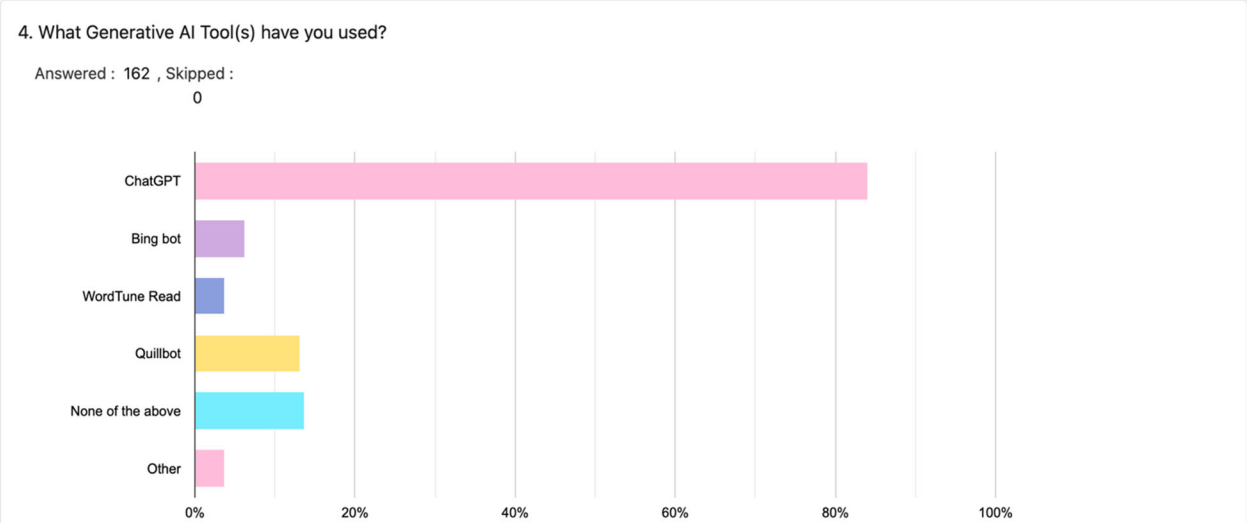


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
U0	13%	21
U1 (or L1/M1)	35.2%	57
U2 (or L2/M2)	23.5%	38
U3 (or L3/M3)	22.2%	36
U4+ (or L4/M4)	6.2%	10

Figure 1.3 Students by year of the respondents

Comparing the response to the current student faculty demographics at McGill as of April 2023, there are over- and under-representations of student respondents in the survey data. Science represents 30.2% of respondents, although it represents 16.4% of the student population. Several of the smaller faculties are underrepresented. This has influenced the examples provided by students, which should be noted.

Generative AI Usage Rates



Answer Choices	% of Respondents	% of Responses	Count
ChatGPT	84%	67.7%	136
Bing bot	6.2%	5%	10
WordTune Read	3.7%	3%	6
Quillbot	13%	10.4%	21
None of the above	13.6%	10.9%	22
Other	3.7%	3%	6

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Figure 1.4 Usage rates of different Generative AI technologies

In terms of usage rates by students of the various types of generative AI, the overwhelming majority of students have used ChatGPT (85%). Other generative AI technologies used include Quillbot (13%) and Bing (6.2%), with 13.6% of respondents saying that they have not used any of the technologies as mentioned above. Other technologies that students have used include the OpenAI API, MidJourney, DeepL translate, stable diffusion, GitHub copilot, AOC and Microsoft GODEL.

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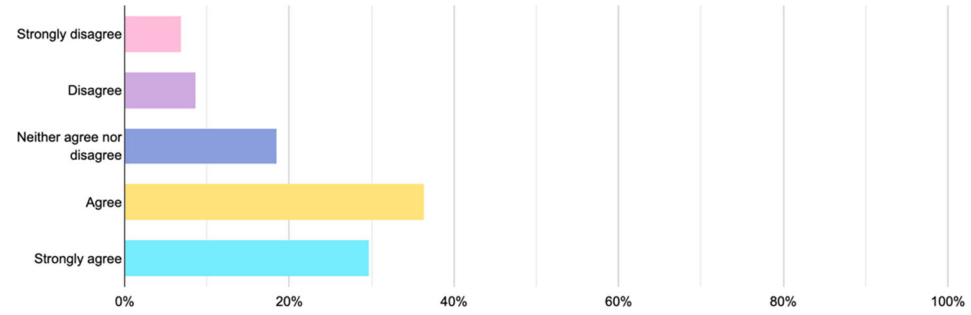
Respondent Opinions and Usage of Generative AI

Respondents were asked if they thought generative AI tools had aided their learning. While the majority of respondents believe that generative AI has helped with learning (66.0%), 18.5% of respondents were neutral. In comparison, 15.4% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that generative AI has aided their learning.

5. Do you believe Generative AI Tools have aided your learning?

Answered : 162 , Skipped : 0



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Strongly disagree	6.8%	11
Disagree	8.6%	14
Neither agree nor disagree	18.5%	30
Agree	36.4%	59
Strongly agree	29.6%	48

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The respondents were then asked to provide specific examples of how they have used generative AI to aid their learning. Of the 162 respondents, 92 answered. Although there was a significant degree of variation, there were some common ways respondents used generative AI for learning.

The most common use for generative AI is to summarize or simplify class material. Many respondents have been asking AI to summarize material from class textbooks, readings, and articles, and to simplify class content in an easily digestible manner. The summaries created by generative AI can help clarify different arguments and concepts of various texts or be used to reword and provide a more precise understanding of course content. It is also quite useful for students who are absent and have very limited information on what was taught in the classes they missed. For students who are short on time, generative AI can help create concise summaries or take out the key themes and messages of readings to help aid comprehension.

Students have used generative AI to help create bullet point notes and flashcards to aid studying and review, along with generalizing course content to develop overviews that help students understand the big picture of a class. Generative AI also helps students with learning disabilities who find it difficult to

read large amounts of text. It helps them keep focus and read the course material in digestible chunks. Students have used generative AI to summarize scientific articles when doing research or writing papers. Another way they used these technologies was to summarize readings in an assignment instead of reading them. After getting the summaries, they picked their favourite article to do their assignment on.

Another widespread use of generative AI is to explain concepts, ideas, and definitions that are complex or hard to grasp. It allows students to get explanations while studying in an easy-to-digest manner, making learning more personalized and efficient. This is particularly useful when readings get technical and use much complex academic jargon, shortening the time needed for a student to grasp an idea and improving retention. Not all instructors are adept at explaining complex topics, and generative AI, like ChatGPT, can help cover gaps in understanding. Generative AI can also improve understanding of different concepts by generating examples or explaining ideas from different perspectives and lenses, including in visual forms, allowing students to have a more holistic understanding. For students who are more introverted and less active in class, AI can aid comprehension, explain assignments, and answer simple questions.

Generative AI has played an important role in helping students approach essays and assignments. They have proven to be useful for students in creating templates or starting points for brainstorming. Generative AL can be used to create prompts or generate ideas and mind maps that can then be used as the basis for writing assignments. Many students need help finding an initial direction or approach to an essay or assignment, and AI is a valuable tool to help them start and bounce ideas. It can streamline thought processes and be used as a search engine to provide ideas quickly and efficiently. It can also suggest academic sources and articles that help with researching for an assignment. It can also provide insight into the links between readings and assignment prompts or suggest academic sources, providing students with a direction to explore further. Its usefulness is wider than just word-based tasks. Students have also used it to provide a starting direction for calculation-based assignments. For respondents who tutor or teach, AI has aided in generating ideas for lesson plans. It has also been a useful tool for those who struggle with executive function and can help organize thoughts clearly and coherently.

Along with brainstorming ideas and creating outlines, generative AI can be used to provide feedback on writing. It can help find areas of improvement, brainstorm new ideas, suggest better vocabulary, and help make more coherent arguments. Many students who have English as a Second Language find the feedback from generative AI particularly useful in the writing process. It greatly aids in their ability to improve their language skills. AI is quite good at changing the writing style to match what the student requires, whether embellishing the writing to make it more academic-sounding or simplifying the text to make it more coherent to the reader. It can be used as a thesaurus to find synonyms, or rewrite sentences so they do not sound repetitive. Students can save time with generative AI for situations when they know what ideas they want write about but are stuck on how to phrase them. It can also help generate summaries and abstracts for reports and papers.

Students who code are also avid users of generative AI. Generative AI can help generate solutions to coding problems, find bugs, and write boilerplate code. A big benefit AI provides is that it can explain errors in detail in an easy-to-understand manner and propose multiple solutions that can be further explored. It can also help students understand snippets of code, teach syntax, and explain coding concepts learned in class to give them a deeper understanding. It can be quick and content-specific and helps students remember and retain the information and skills that they have learned. Generative AI,

such as GitHub copilot and AOC, can also recommend functions and syntax that students can learn more about, promoting active learning compared to more passive forms of knowledge, such as reading code or textbooks. Students have found generative AP to improve recall and comprehension due to its ability to provide suggestions, advice, and real-world examples while coding.

AI has proven to be a very useful tool for active learning. It does an excellent job at creating practice questions with their corresponding solutions. It can take a set of notes and turn them into a quiz that students can go through or scan pdfs and create appropriate exam questions based on the readings assigned in class. Students can use it for active recall and personalize their learning by seeing what concepts they are confused about. Although it struggles to answer more complex questions and has caused students confusion due to its hallucinations, many students like that it can provide solutions. Students strongly prefer practice questions with answer keys so that they can determine whether they are solving problems correctly. Generative AI can provide students with the solutions and feedback they need to enhance their understanding of the material.

Some students enjoy using generative AI to increase their knowledge base and understanding of various topics they are interested in that are outside their fields of study. Generative AI can help break down topics into smaller, more digestible bits, and can also be used to generate stimuli for laboratory research.

The usefulness of generative AI extends beyond the academic realm. Several respondents have mentioned using generative AI to draft emails or build a basic template for cover letters. Some students find cover letter and email writing difficult, so generative AI is useful for improving the written communication abilities of students and can help students save time on these activities. Students have also used it to write reference letters for themselves that professors have asked them to write for them and have also used generative AI to create interview questions for guest speakers during panel events.

Although generative AI has many usages, some respondents have raised concerns about its ability to hallucinate. Some students have tried using generative AI before discovering it provides inaccurate information. Some students found that they had to go back and verify all the information generative AI had told them, causing it to be more time-consuming to use rather than not using it. It has made some students unwilling to use these technologies in the future. When deciding on a framework around generative AI, it is essential that students are provided with proper education and awareness of its potential pitfalls and drawbacks so students know well in advance what to expect when using these technologies.

When respondents were asked about how their friends and classmates used generative AI technologies to aid their learning, 59 responses were received. Many answers were quite like the uses provided by the respondents themselves. Students use generative AI to help explain different concepts in class, improve writing skills, provide summaries of class presentations and notes, and provide feedback on their writing. Respondents also said their friends and classmates found it helpful to reduce the time it takes to make teaching plans, plot and image generation, and connect different readings. Other people have also used generative AI to explain mathematical proofs to them, work on hackathon projects, develop ideas for assignments, and generate responses with different styles to help with brainstorming.

It is also important to note that a significant number of respondents mentioned that their friends and classmates often use generative AI to cheat. Although cheating was not mentioned when respondents

were asked how they used generative AI, cheating was a common response for how friends and classmates used generative AI. Students have used AI to write essays for them, search for assignment solutions - similar to how Chegg is used by students - and write assignment code for introductory computer science classes. Cheating with generative AI is prevalent across most faculties and is an important consideration when deciding on a framework.

Respondents were also asked about how instructors were using generative AI to aid learning. 49 responses were received. Several respondents said that professors were not using it or banning its use in class. Other professors used generative AI to aid student learning. Some instructors have used AI to answer students' questions in class, write formal conclusions about data, and use it to generate code that could be compared to sample code. Several instructors have shown the benefits and drawbacks of generative AI and helped raise awareness around major issues, such as hallucinations.

One instructor that has been receiving strong positive feedback is Professor Andrew Piper. In his BASC 201 course, he has incorporated generative AI into the course. Students were appreciative of the fact that he has explored the uses and the limitations of generative AI. The professor would ask generative AI questions, analyze the response, and then use that as a teaching opportunity. ChatGPT provided definitions and generated examples that taught students about AI and language models. The limitations of generative AI were explored, such as showing that ChatGPT is a poor creative writer. Generative AI was also permitted for the writing assignments in BASC 201. A marking rubric was created, and a guide was created so that students could learn how to cite AI in their writing correctly. Students were very appreciative of the approach Professor Piper took and found his course quite educational.

Respondents were also asked to provide any final thoughts regarding the use of generative AI in an academic setting. A few of the respondents did not support the use of generative AI. They found the negative implications of generative AI, such as privacy, intellectual property, and academic integrity, more significant than the immediate benefits it might bring. There is skepticism around its reliability, and it was raised that there could be significant drawbacks if it replaces critical thinking and creativity. Some students also believe that evaluation mitigation strategies should be used to ensure student learning can still be appropriately tested.

Most respondents believe that the university needs to embrace generative AI. They believe that generative AI will be a constant presence in future, and it is essential to embrace it and try to incorporate it into teaching to aid student learning. Students believe there needs to be clear guidelines for using generative AI for assignments, study aids, and just general guides on how to properly and efficiently use AI to help learning. It is also important to outline what would be permitted (e.g. active learning, writing feedback, explaining concepts) and what would constitute academic dishonesty (e.g. copying material generated, not properly citing). By having this information laid out, students would be able to use generative AI to their advantage while learning.

Concluding thoughts

Although generative AI has only been widely used for a few months, it is already beginning to completely transform the post-secondary learning environment. Students are finding many different uses of generative AI and discovering the risks posed. Although many students are using it in a manner that is not in line with academic integrity, its potential as a transformative tool for learning has barely been explored. This report can hopefully shed light on the opinions students have regarding generative AI and provide deeper insight into how students are currently using these technologies to aid their learning.

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE PRINCIPAL (ACADEMIC)
James Administration Building
845 Sherbrooke Suite West, Suite 504
Tel: (514) 398-4177

TO: **Academic Policy Committee (APC)**

cc: **Katharine Tiitson, Secretary of APC**

FROM: **Prof. Christopher Manfredi, Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) – Chair of APC**

RE: **Subcommittee on Academic Freedom composition and membership for the 2023-2024 academic year**

DATE: **October 24, 2023**

The 2023-2024 composition and membership of the Subcommittee on Academic Freedom (SAF) – for information only.

The 2023-2024 membership was approved by the Senate Nominating Committee on October 23rd, 2023. The 2023-2024 membership will be presented to Senate for approval on November 15th, 2023.

The Subcommittee on Academic Freedom membership consists of:

- Professor Michael Fronda, Faculty of Arts (appointed as Chair for 2023/2024 academic year by the Provost) - member of academic staff
- Professor Axel Hundemer, Faculty of Science - member of academic staff
- Professor Guylaine Beaudry, Trenholme Dean of Libraries – member of senior administration
- Professor John-Paul Ferguson, Desautels Faculty of Management – member of academic staff
- Student Representative – TBA

Members of the Subcommittee on Academic Freedom shall hold their positions for one academic year. The Academic Policy Committee is responsible for nominating new members to the Subcommittee on Academic Freedom and shall complete the nomination process before June 1st of each year.

McGill | Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

MEMORANDUM

Office of the Vice-Principal, Health Affairs and Dean of Medicine and Health Sciences
3605 de la Montagne, Room 117
Montreal, QC H3G 2M1
Phone: 514-398-3524 Fax: 514-398-4423

TO: Professor Christopher Manfredi
Provost and Vice-Principal Academic
Chair of Academic Policy Committee (APC)

CC: Liane Feldman, Chair Department of Surgery

FROM: Dr. Lesley Fellows MDCM, DPhil
Vice-Principal (Health Affairs)
Dean of Medicine and Health Sciences

DATE: August 7, 2023

SUBJECT: **Request to change the name of divisions within the Department of Surgery**

FOR: information discussion decision action

Dear Professor Manfredi:

This request is made on behalf of the Department of Surgery, for the Academic Policy Committee (APC) to consider and approve a change in the name of two divisions:

1- **Current Division Name**: Experimental Surgery
New Suggested Name: Surgical and Interventional Sciences

2- **Current Division Name**: Cardiothoracic Surgery
New Suggested Names: Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery

Background and Rationale/issues to address.
The Division of Experimental Surgery is the research arm of the Department of Surgery and has been a degree granting body since 1929. As part of a recent strategic planning process for research, it was recommended to rebrand the research division and associated graduate programs. The purpose of this rebranding is to have a division title that reflects our contemporary research and clinical practices. It was concluded in the strategic planning process that the name Experimental Surgery does not accurately convey the breadth and scope of work that we do now in the Department and may in fact be misunderstood. The proposed new division title is *Surgical and Interventional Sciences*.

In addition, we have identified another outdated term in the existence of a division of “cardiothoracic surgery”. This has not been a single specialty at McGill for many decades. In fact, we have a Division of Cardiac Surgery and a Division of Thoracic Surgery with no overlap in faculty, different division directors, different training programs etc. We propose to divide this into (1) Division of Cardiac Surgery and (2) Division of Thoracic Surgery.

Alignment with mission and strategic priorities
The name Experimental Surgery has served us well for almost a century. However, surgery and the science of surgery have evolved considerably, and in almost all areas is unrecognizable from that practiced a century ago. Barely a day goes by without another news-making technological advance that impacts or soon will impact our work and indeed our careers. These are exciting times for all of us lucky enough to be engaged in research or innovation in surgery. For example, data science is being transformed by advanced computing which is making the promise of personalized health a reality. Robots are transforming from simple extensions of our hands and eyes to semi-autonomous devices that have AI at their very core offering not only equivalence but enhancement of manual surgical performance and decision making. The advent of next-generation sequencing provides unprecedented insight into the molecular complexity of cancers and predisposing hereditary risks and has led to the emergence of biomarker-driven treatment paradigms. The needs of our increasingly informed and involved patients have also evolved as they enjoy longer and more active lives and seek therapies aligned with what they value most.

As surgery has transformed to become safer, more personalized, and less invasive, the interfaces between surgery and other disciplines starts to blur and the list of interventional specialties continues to grow as technology and imaging make this feasible. Simple examples include the widespread use of catheter-based therapies, radiologic guided procedures, endovascular therapies, and endoscopic approaches that have expanded the definition of surgery.

To better represent these trends, and align with our Strategic Plan, we would request to change the name of the Division of Experimental Surgery to the Division of Surgical and Interventional Sciences (SIS). The new name is representative of the multidisciplinary approaches to surgical and interventional medicine that will continue to evolve, and the advances in repair and ablation technologies, diagnosis and imaging, innovations in care delivery and other areas of surgical sciences.

Regarding the change in name from Cardiothoracic Surgery into Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery, this simply represents the way the divisions are in fact organized. There is no division director in cardiothoracic surgery because this is not a clinical division. The faculty lists are incorrect. The budget centers are incorrect. There are also issues in maintaining confidentiality for example in handling evaluations from students and trainees as the evaluations are continually sent to the wrong people, or we need to avoid this by manually separating reports into the correct divisions.

Consultations
The name change for Experimental Surgery was the result of a formal strategic planning exercise for the Department of Surgery’s research mission. This included efforts to have broad participation including on-line surveys, a moderated in-person retreat attended by researchers and clinician scientists, and broad circulation of the report for comments.

It was also subsequently approved by the Department's executive committee.

The name change was felt to be an important part of being able to recruit talented students to the graduate program. With the name change approval, the Faculty would be facilitating the Department of Surgery's mission to be Canada's leading academic surgical department, improving outcomes and quality of care through impactful research, innovation, and training.

Risk factors
We believe there are no risks associated with this request. Conversely, we believe that not updating the nomenclature will increase the risk that our research mandate is misunderstood, as it suggests a lack of innovation within the Department of Surgery.

Impact of Decision, next steps
The change in name will bring McGill into alignment with other Departments of Surgery nationally and internationally, and potentially improve recruitment to our educational programs. Separating the Divisions of Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery will align formal structure with current practice, streamlining operational issues.

Following approval by APC, then Senate and the Board of Governors, the Department of Surgery will immediately adjust all internal and external communication media (including website and faculty letterhead, etc.) to reflect the new division status. We will ensure communication of a succinct but impactful supporting statement as to the purpose and intent of this change.

Formal and final approval of the name changes of these divisions will be announced at the first Faculty of Medicine Faculty and Health Sciences Faculty Council meeting scheduled for fall 2023 and communicated via med-E news and other news media within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

On behalf of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, I hope that the APC will be favorable to our request.

Sincerely,

Lesley Fellows MDCM, DPhil