

April 20, 2007

Academic Career Advancement at McGill

Joint Open Forum
McGill - MAUT

Facilitator

Anthony Paré

Integrated Studies in Education

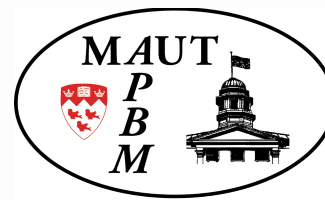
Organizing Team

Ian Strachan - Natural Resource Sciences

Kathleen Cullen - Physiology

Ralph Harris - Mining, Metals and Materials Engineering

To be recorded and available for replay at <http://www.maut.mcgill.ca>





Agenda

- **Introductory Remarks** 12:00 - 12:05
Anthony Paré, Integrated Studies in Education
- **What if it were a perfect world?** 12:05 - 12:13
Victoria Talwar, Educational and Counselling Psychology
- **Research Success - Why do it any other way?** 12:13 - 12:21
Jean Gotman, MNI
- **Institute Director** 12:21 - 12:30
Antonia Maioni, McGill Institute for the Study of Canada
- **Balance over time** 12:30 - 12:39
Martin Lechowicz, McGill School of the Environment
- **What is the role of teaching in a research intensive university?** 12:39 - 12:47
Cynthia Weston, McGill Teaching and Learning Services
- **What *is* an Academic Career Path?** 12:47 - 12:57
Ralph Harris, Mining, Metals, and Materials Engineering
- **McGill's landscape and options for academic staff** 12:57 - 13:10
Anthony C. Masi, Provost
- **Panel Discussion** 13:15 - 13:55
- **Wrap Up** 13:55 - 14:00
Anthony Paré, Integrated Studies in Education



Introductory Remarks

Anthony Paré

Integrated Studies in Education



- A continuation of the Joint-Open Forum Series:
 - *Open Forum on Planning* (March 09, 2006)
 - ⇒ Institutional: Planning / Trajectory / Mission
 - *Open Forum on Academic Career Advancement*
 - ⇒ Individual: Planning / Trajectory / Mission

Background

The idea for this forum was born at a Committee on Academic Salary Policy (CASP) meeting when the question of salary trajectories was raised and answers found difficult to come by ...

- An examination of salary data found that a salary trajectory was not obvious. It was also found that a career trajectory was not obvious.
- Indeed, it was found that few academics had ever reflected on the idea of a career trajectory. But upon reflection, people saw the idea had merit because, among other things, it might lead to a better salary trajectory.
- In this light, the organizing team came up with an open joint forum which starts with five brief case studies, followed by a bit of theory and then Provost Masi detailing the landscape and the paths for success at McGill.
- We will then have opportunity to discuss things.

Sit back and enjoy...



Case 1: What if it were a perfect world?

Victoria Talwar

Educational and Counselling Psychology

Academic Career Path - Perfection?

- Tools/Resources
- Support
- TIME
- Communication
- Recognition
 - Career Paths
 - Achievements
 - Work/Life Balance
 - Diversity



Case 2: Research Success - Why do it any other way?

Jean Gotman

Montreal Neurological Institute

Subtitle:

How did I plan and carry out what has been and is still primarily a research career at McGill?

First - have a plan !?

- I did not plan it; it happened.
- I had a good time and I still do.
- I am in the relatively special environment of the Faculty of Medicine and the Montreal Neurological Institute.
- I started a medical equipment company in 1986 and I am still involved in it.
- It was not fashionable then, but it is now.

How did I deal with the three criteria, research, teaching and service?

- I did mostly research.
- I only taught graduate students and research fellows; only a few lectures here and there (things were a bit different around 1985).
- I took one “service” responsibility (oversee a laboratory in the hospital) that was related to my research activity.
- I never volunteered for any committee work, and took part in very few committees.

A few facts about my career ...

- Until recently, I did not make any efforts to “promote” myself‡.
- In 30 years as academic staff, I never had a meeting with a Department Chair or MNI Director at their request, to discuss my career, my research, my space, my problems ...
- One exception: At some point I decided to leave McGill and went to inform them. They became interested to talk to me and even offered a salary increase
- ... I stayed 😊

‡This was a mistake because nobody else has promoted my career.



Some lessons

- Decide what you like to do and put all your energy in that.
- If possible, select other responsibilities so that they can contribute to your activity of choice.
- Promote yourself - even though nobody may tell you spontaneously, you are good, important, and you know your stuff better than anyone else.
- Discuss salary with colleagues and with chairs
- Protest if you think your salary is unfair.



Some more lessons

- Rely on MAUT. It has been my main, or only, source of information regarding university policies and staff issues.
- I have not needed MAUT counsel, but I know they have been there for others who have received good service when they had problems.



Case 3: Institute Director

Antonia Maioni

McGill Institute for the Study of Canada



Case 4: Balance over time

Martin Lechowicz

McGill School of the Environment



Proactive collegiality – *Take control of your academic life*

- Develop and promote ideas that matter to you
- Good ideas from the bottom up will garner support from the top
- The best ideas suit your purposes but also those of others and of the university



Shifting balance over time: Self-centered vs altruistic motivations

Self-centered motivations dominate pre-tenure, but gradually one realizes that altruism can be self-serving in a collegial environment



Early Career: McGill University Phytotron

- 1976:** Inadequate controlled environment facilities, individual hegemony over existing equipment
- 1983:** Convince colleagues and administrators of the value of a shared facility
- 1984-86:** Convince NSERC and a private foundation to invest \$2 million
- 1987-1988:** Plan and build a phytotron, hire and train personnel

...enjoy 20 years research in a world-class facility, and the pleasure of interactions with colleagues attracted in part because of access to the facility.



Mid-Career: McGill School of Environment

- 1994:** Accept responsibility as FacSci liaison to FAES for coordinating courses and programs in environmental sciences*.
- 1995:** Convince Deans and VP(Academic) structural change was needed†.
- 1996-97:** Create the concept of the McGill School of Environment‡.
- 1997-98:** Retreat into the background and let others carry the idea forward to implementation
- 1998-99:** Create “The Evolving Earth” (ENVR 202) core course, a stimulating change after 20 years teaching pre-meds in Biol205 core.
- 2002:** Win a national award for innovative team-teaching in ENVR 202

...and enjoy research and teaching interactions across disciplines with an amazing mix of young colleagues attracted to McGill by the MSE and allied programs.

* Find this task hopelessly frustrating and way too time-consuming in the existing academic structures.

† Get appointed to chair a task force to decide what could be done.

‡ Lead the fight for Faculty approvals of the MSE concept, along the way raising serious discontent among various entrenched interest groups



Late-Career: Gault Nature Reserve

- 1976:** Teach the ecology field course at Mont St. Hilaire, and discover an extraordinary 500-year old forest
- 1976-1994:** Carry on individual and team research at the site, which was not managed with research as a priority.
- 1995:** Object to a decision by the Director that led to destruction of a long-term research plot; end up becoming Director
- 1995-2004:** ♦ Keep doing research at the site; ♦ Wipe out a \$500K operating deficit and get the operating budget back in the black; ♦ Reorient staff to academic and conservation missions & reinvigorate academic use of the reserve; ♦ Tap CFI funds to build long-term environmental research and monitoring programs; ♦ Rebuild the Mont St. Hilaire Nature Centre; ♦ Win recognition of the Gault Nature Reserve as a protected area under Québec law.
- 2005-2010:** Expand the Nature Centre as a regional force for conservation and teaching that builds on university research.

... 2012: Retire and start a 2nd career with a conservation NGO?



Case 5: What is the role of teaching in a research intensive university?

Cynthia Weston

Director, Teaching and Learning Services &
Professor, Dept of Educational and Counselling Psychology



Career path

Appointed - 1983

- 50% Dept and 50% Teaching Center

Research

- Profs' teaching; students' learning

Teaching

- Love it!!

Committees

- Too many!! (~35)



Career path

Administration

93-98 Director, CUTL – 50%

91-93 Assoc Dean (Acad), Faculty of Education

85-87 Director, Instr. Services, Faculty of Education

Progression - it took longer

- 1989 Associate Prof
- 2002 Full Prof

Work/life balance - Not great

Now - Director, TLS – 100% - **why?**

Teaching is important

As Director of TLS

- For the university

As a teacher and researcher

- For the students &
- For you



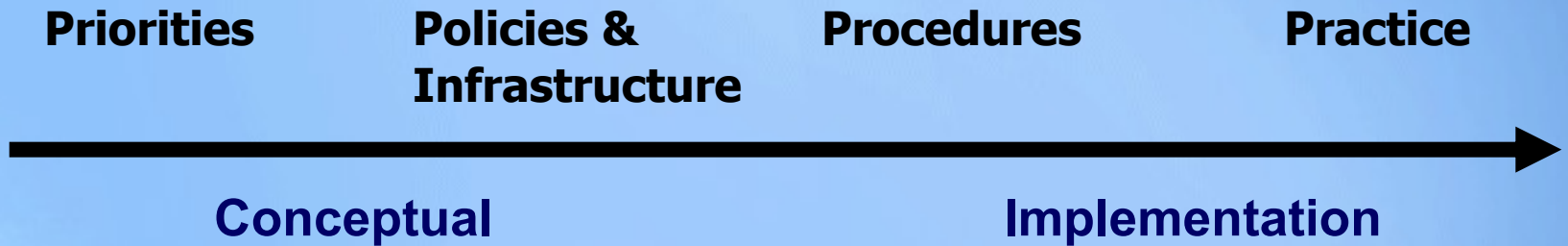
Valuing of teaching at McGill

Significant changes over 25 years - mostly in the last 5

- Priorities
- Policies
- Infrastructure



Valuing teaching at McGill



Weston & Timmermans, 2007.

Adapted from : McAlpine, L., Weston, C., Timmermans, J., Berthiaume, D., & Fairbank-Roch, G. (2006). Zones: Reconceptualizing teacher thinking in relation to action. *Studies in Higher Education* 31(5), 601-615.

Teaching is important

- For the university
- **For the students &**
- **For you**

For the students

- Most memorable university experiences: Caring teachers
(Carson, '97)
- Learners who see their teachers as caring, tend to be more motivated, and perform academically better
(in press, '07)
- Most important predictors of success: Meaningful relationships with faculty and peers (Astin)

For you

Affinity

Professors say caring about students is the most important aspect of university teaching: *“it’s not how much you know, it’s how much you care”*. (Charles Roth, McGill Mathematics, quoted in Weston & McAlpine, ‘98).

Learning

The more we teach, the more we learn.



What is the role of teaching in a research intensive university?

“McGill is only as great as what it can offer to students, to society and to the advancement of knowledge; and in that respect, the life and learning that each of our students experiences while at the University is a measure of its success”.

Principal’s Task Force on Student Life and Learning, 2006, p.5

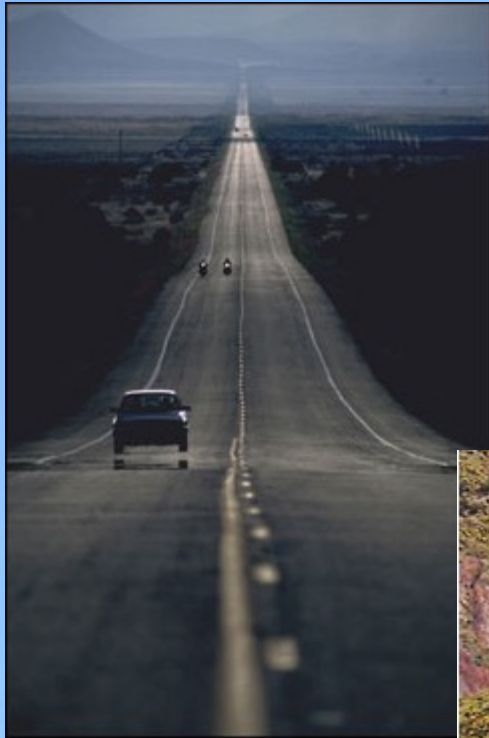


Theory: What *is* an Academic Career Path?

Ralph Harris

Mining and Materials Engineering

A road to success?



<http://www.tfhrc.gov/pubrds/03sep/images>

New appointee: looking back, *15 to 20 years from now*

Senior academic: looking back, *today*



http://www.sylviauurman.nl/stories/cabo/dag7/IMG_2420.jpg

Is the **GPS** feature on my phone going to help!?



Unfortunately not - we need to use old technology...

to construct an academic career path map

What do you have to work with?

- What you know
- Who you work for
- Who are the students
- What society wants

How do you know how you're doing?

- Salary
- Invitations
- Responsibilities
- Title (position)

Academic Career Path

What do you want?

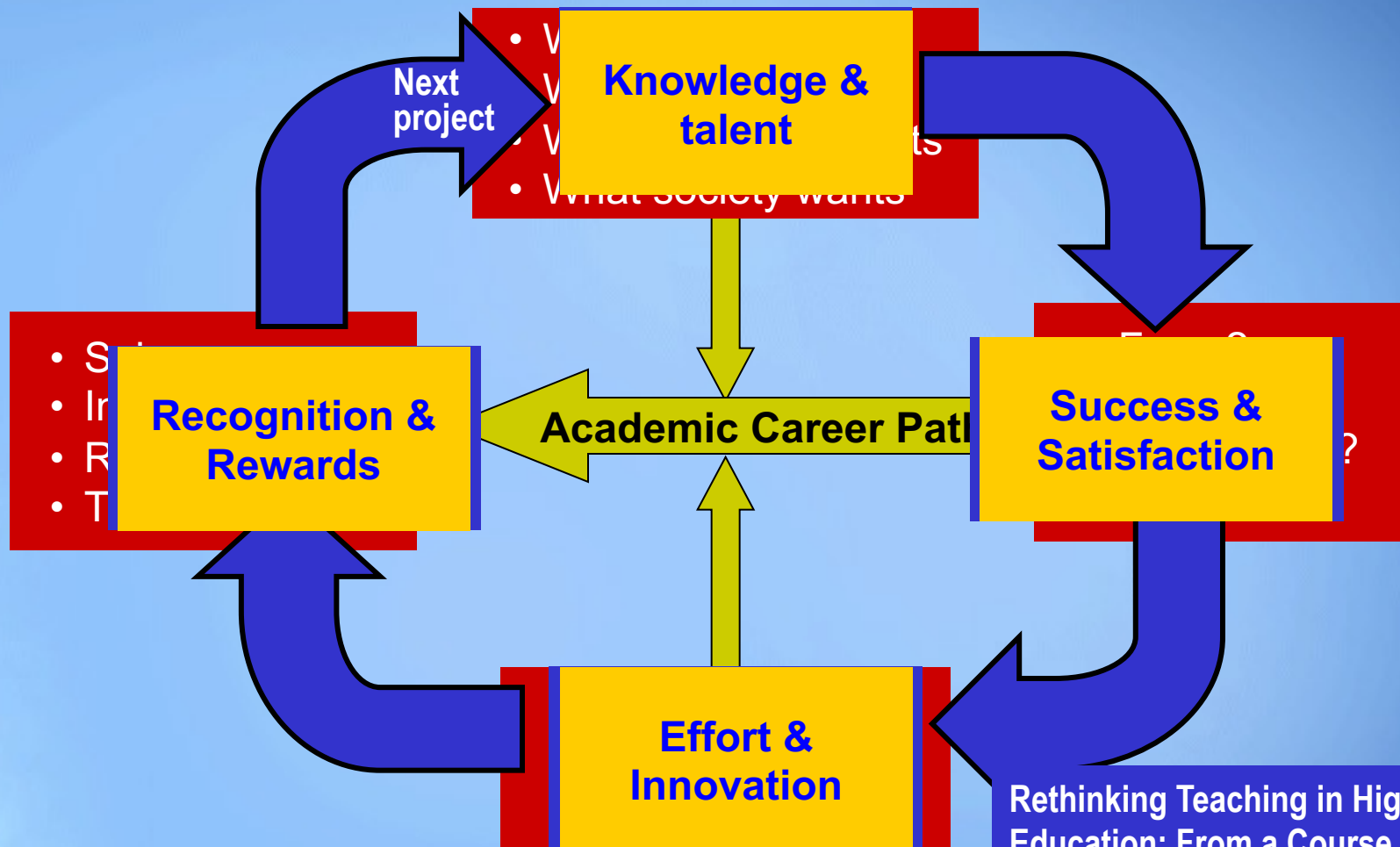
- Fame?
- Rewards?
- Satisfaction?
- All three?

How are you going to do it?

- Teaching
- Research
- Contributions



Academic career path software



Rethinking Teaching in Higher Education: From a Course Design Workshop to a Faculty Development Framework, Saroyan and Amundsen, Stylus Publishing, 2004





So - What *is* an Academic Career Path?

- *A reflective design process* used to meet one's personal objectives using one's body of knowledge and skill set.
- Likely to be much less straight than envisaged due to obstacles and growth
- Can be viewed of a series of sequential projects ...

From personal experience, meaningful rewards follow from the journey, not just the destination.



McGill's landscape and options for academic staff

Anthony C. Masi
Provost

Stages of an academic career

- recruitment to tenure
- mid-career advancement
- mature career to retirement
- post-retirement engagement

Academic duties

- research and scholarship
- teaching and contributions to educational programs
- service to the university and scholarly communities

A trajectory to success

- truth in advertising: is McGill the place for you?
 - publicly funded
 - research intensive
 - student centred
- clarity in expectations
 - mentorship
 - collegiality
- provision of appropriate levels of support
 - start-up funding: bridge to competitive grants, not support for life

Obligations and responsibilities

- collegial governance and administration is a two-way street
- the University must:
 - protect academic freedom
 - provide continued employment & economic security
 - provide appropriate institutional support for teaching & research

Obligations and responsibilities

- the professor is expected to:
 - carry out teaching duties professionally
 - consistently endeavour to produce high quality scholarly research
 - participate in the life of the academic community and the University and public life
 - behave ethically in all professional dealings

Tenure

- Principles, policies and procedures: university-wide;
 - Separate regulations for Librarians
- Expectation that you will be *superior*, not just above average
- Issues:
 - due process
 - natural justice
 - equity
 - fair play
 - substantive justice



Transition to mid-career

- supporting and educating the next generation of scholars and researchers
- stable research funding or participation in scholarly activities
- increasing involvement in the administration and governance of the Department, Centre, School, Institute, Faculty, and University
- sabbatical leaves
- secondments to research labs, industry, and public service

Professorial career maturity

- affirmed in his or her discipline or field
 - recognised and rewarded as appropriate
- promotion to full professor is qualitatively different from achieving tenure
 - international recognition for scholarly productivity and impact of research activity
 - continued contributions to teaching and service at least at levels for which tenure was awarded
- respected mentor and advisor to colleagues, younger and older
- advice and counsel on governance and administration at all levels
- preparing for retirement
 - a different kind of engagement with the University



Post-retirement engagement

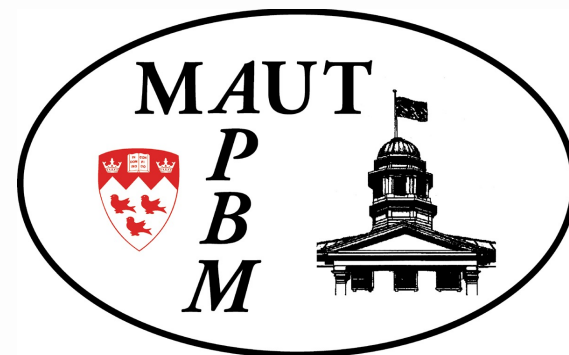
- retirement options
 - financial
 - normative
- promotion to emeritus status
 - present status and proposed changes
- valued and valuable service to McGill is and should be encouraged, recognised, and rewarded
 - identity
 - affiliation
 - space and resources

Panel Discussion till 13:55

- Anthony C. Masi
- Jean Gotman
- Martin Lechowicz
- Antonia Maioni
- Victoria Talwar
- Cynthia Weston



McGill



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Concluding Remarks Anthony Paré

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