

NEWSLETTER

MCGILL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Vol. 25, No.5

DECEMBER, 1998

NEWS FROM THE FACULTY CLUB

Renovations have been taking place at the McGill Faculty Club, and Ole's, downstairs, has been transformed. The changes are apparent the minute you enter the staircase, where the old brick has now been exposed, and the area is much brighter. The location of the self-serve buffet has been rearranged, and is much more functional and attractive, and the bar has been redecorated as well. The old covering on the windows has been removed, letting in some welcome sunshine during lunch, and the change has revealed quite a pleasant view. Green venetian blinds match the new color scheme and provide the appropriate touch of privacy.

In addition to the decor, there has been a major improvement in the comfort factor. Gone are the hard benches, and upholstered chairs have taken their place. Things are now very cosy.

Perhaps the most significant change has been in the menu - the daily specials have been changed to a fixed price, so it is no longer necessary to weigh your meal. A good lunch, reasonably priced, can be obtained quickly and enjoyed in a comfortable setting.

Other improvements inspired by the new General Manager, Nick Bourboulakis, include the beautiful selection of plants being rotated

throughout the Club. The business plan is also being revised, and a more efficient scheduling of Faculty Club staff has already taken place.

A major concern to members has been the financial status of the Faculty Club, in view of the attempts by the university administration to withdraw support in the recent past. MAUT intends to closely monitor the conditions related to renewal of the legal agreement with the Board of Governors, as it must be ratified before September 1999. The Faculty Club has always been considered "an integral part of the collegial life of the university...to promote social contacts, friendships, and unity among members of the Staff of the university and associates of the university, and to offer opportunities for free, informal conference on all problems of university life and work." This description from the Faculty Club Constitution is as appropriate today as when it was first ratified many years ago by the Board of Governors, and it is the reason for the financial obligations specified in the agreement.

The Newsletter will provide more information on the Club in the new year. For now, members can rest assured that all is well, and enjoy the holiday festivities.

E. Z.

THE SALARY STORY, continued

The recent Special Edition of the Newsletter, dealing with the status of academic salaries at McGill, contains some very sobering data on the actual values of our salaries and benefits. However, the statistical information will not have surprised anyone who has read the Newsletter for the past few years, or who attended our general meeting in November, and the statistics were accompanied by some very positive information. The framework for a new salary policy is already in place, and the university administration is in agreement with MAUT that our salaries should reflect McGill's position in the Group of Ten (G10) research-intensive universities within Canada. Principal Shapiro has announced the first of a series of steps to increment our salaries, and has recommended that the Board of Governors allow an increase in the deficit within the upcoming budget in order to address this problem further. On December 2 this recommendation was endorsed by Senate, receiving strong support from Senators with administrative positions, including Vice-Principal Chan. To facilitate communication on this matter, MAUT has forwarded a copy of the special edition of the Newsletter to each member of the Board of Governors, including the Emeritus Governors. It goes without saying that we intend to follow very closely the subsequent debates by the Board.

On November 20, Principal Shapiro sent a letter to all of us, listing three actions. The first refers to an immediate increase in the minimum salary for two categories of academic staff, Full and Associate Professors. This will bring the minimum salaries to at least the average of the G10 universities. Minimum salaries for Assistant

Professor, Faculty Lecturer and Librarian were not adjusted, as they are presently equal to or greater than this reference point. The minimum values will therefore be: Professor \$67,000, Associate Professor 52,000, Assistant Professor 43,000, Faculty Lecturer 34,000, and Librarian 41,133.

The recommended allocation for academic salaries in the 1999-2000 budget would result in two components of salary increase. The first would be a cost of living / merit increase at least equal to the average received by academic staff in the other G10 universities, traditionally greater than the McGill value. The second would be phase one of the adjustment necessary to bring our salaries in line with our standing among Canadian universities within approximately the next five years.

In his letter, the Principal also refers to other recommendations from the Academic Salary Policy Subcommittee (ASPSC). Barbara Hales, President of MAUT, is our representative on the ASPSC workgroup that spent most of last year concentrating on ways to revise academic salary policy at McGill, to not only fix the current problems, but to prevent future ones as well. This involves a consideration of several related issues, including benefits, pension, equity, higher starting salaries in some fields due to market forces, and ways in which merit awards are determined (see below). ASPSC is currently considering potential strategies recommended by the workgroup to improve the policies and procedures in all of these interconnected areas.

E. Z.

MERIT AWARDS

In the last Newsletter we asked for information on the merit award process for this year. Do you know how you were evaluated? Did anyone tell you what award you will receive, or are you still in the dark? The results were encouraging compared to last year, but there are still notable holdouts in the communication process. The following is a brief overview of the information we received.

In general, communication has improved. A variant of the positive example of a letter from a chair, published in last year's Newsletter, has been utilized in more departments. Reasonable procedures for performance evaluation were reported from units in Agriculture, Arts, Education, Engineering, Management, and Science, but oddly enough, some departments now communicate the method being used, but supply no information on the results - members have to wait until they receive a notice from payroll. Communication, when it occurred, was usually via a letter from the department chair. The Librarians were very positive about their new method of ranking by committee, using three weighted criteria, followed by a letter from the Director of Libraries notifying each person of his or her award.

Evaluators frequently used weighted criteria, often three, reflecting the year's performance in Teaching, Research, and Administrative/Service

categories. A common weighting system was 40/40/20%, respectively. The evaluations were done in a variety of ways - by committee, either elected or appointed, by chairs alone, by committees of chairs, or by chairs plus the respective dean.

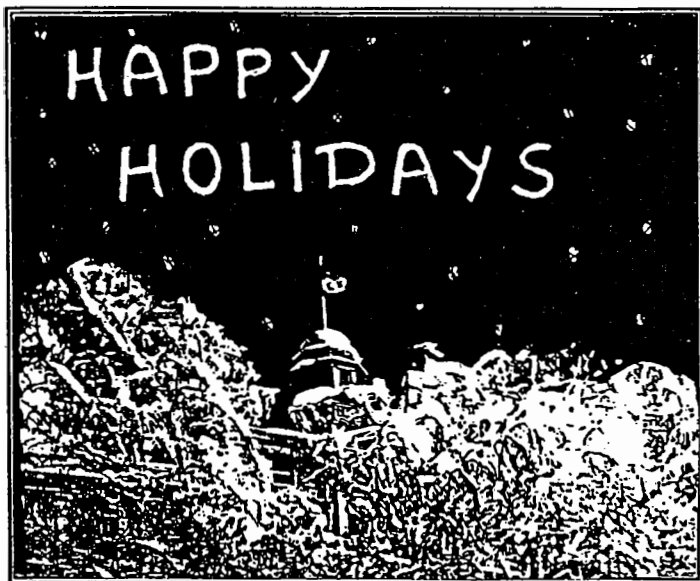
There were faculties, including Medicine and Music, in which some members received absolutely no information whatsoever on any aspect of the merit process. No staff member should have to wonder in silence why they were passed over, or received a low award. Although it is less disturbing, those who do receive substantial awards are also entitled to know how they were judged, and everyone should be notified in time to appeal the decision. The amounts may not be great, but they do count, psychologically as well as financially.

So, our informal survey indicates a change in the right direction, but not fast enough or far enough. Some improvements did occur after MAUT complained about this problem last year, through our representatives on the ASPSC. This year, MAUT will participate in a meeting of all deans with Principal Shapiro and Vice-Principal Chan, to discuss implementation of effective communication throughout the university with regard to merit allocation. This is a problem with a straightforward solution.

FQPPU COLLOQUIUM

McGill will be well represented at the FQPPU colloquium on University Research being held on December 10 and 11 here in Montreal. Speakers include Dan Guitton, Vice-President External of MAUT, who will talk about public financing of

university research. Other speakers from McGill are Alain Beaudet, Bernard Robaire, Nicolas de Takasy, and Barbara Hales. Some reflections on the nature of the proceedings will be published in January.



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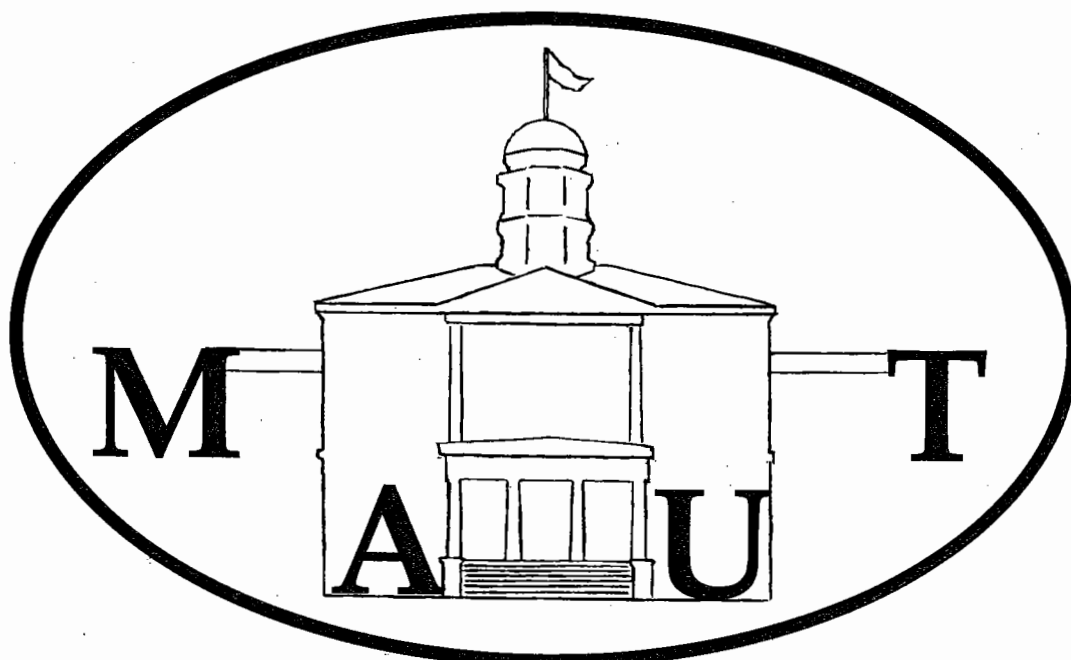
FACULTY CLUB NEWS

MORE ABOUT SALARY

MERIT AWARDS

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