

# NEWSLETTER

**McGILL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS**

Vol. 26, No. 2

NOVEMBER, 1999

## **CURRENT STATE OF ACADEMIC SALARY POLICY**

During the past academic year the Academic Salary Policy Sub-Committee (ASPSC) has worked hard on your behalf to develop a long-range salary plan at McGill. We all agree that McGill must have an attractive and competitive salary structure to attract, retain, and reward excellent staff in order to permit the University to accomplish its academic mission; however, the "means to this end" have not been apparent always. COLA-based increases have not been available for a number of years. Inadequate funds are recovered each year from the base budget as colleagues retire, making the merit pool insufficient as an ongoing base for salary policy. Consequently, we have agreed to "retire" the concept of the merit "pool" (of course, the commitment to the principle of merit pay per se remains unchanged); in its place, there are "commitments" to two categories of academic salary increases: catch-up and maintenance.

### **Catch-up:**

The goal of this commitment is to bring the average of salaries at McGill to the average of those in the G10 universities as quickly as is fiscally feasible. MAUT is applying pressure to have this goal attained within three to five years. However, no commitment to a fixed timetable for complete catch-up has yet been given. You saw the first step in catch-up last spring in the form of a \$2,000 flat amount

increase (based on a budget of approximately 2.5 million). This \$2.5 million was an advance contribution, borrowed from the 1999/2000 budget.

We anticipate that there will be a substantial continued commitment to catch-up in the 2000/2001 budget. Various scenarios for the distribution of catch-up funds have been discussed by ASPSC, from flat amounts, to a catch-up of the merit year we are currently behind, to potential approaches to the correction of salary anomalies within each faculty (involving, for example, a comparison with current salaries of colleagues, at McGill and the G10 universities, at similar career stages with salary history and progression). Your input into this ongoing discussion is always welcome.

### **Maintenance:**

The goal here is not to let salaries at McGill fall further behind those of the other universities in the G10. To accomplish this goal, McGill has made the commitment each year to match the increases received by academics the preceding year in the other G10 universities. The average academic salary increase in the other G10 universities for 1998/99 was 3.1%. On this basis, 3.1% of the academic salary mass has been made available for salary increases in the 1999/2000 academic year.

Next year we will calculate the average percent increase of the G10 universities for 1999/2000 and this amount will be made available for our salary increases in 2000/2001.

ASPSC agreed that the 3.1% of the academic salary mass made available for salary increases this year should be distributed partly as an across-the-board increase and partly as a merit increase. An across-the-board increase of 1% will be paid to all academic and librarian staff who were on the University payroll as of May 31, 1999. The remaining 2.1% (about 2.2 million) will be distributed as merit increases. Merit will be awarded to individuals strictly on the basis of academic performance (during the 1997-98 academic

year) and will be based on five lump sum categories: \$0, \$500, \$1000, \$1500, \$2000. No more than 50% of awards, calculated on a per-faculty basis, may be in any one category. You may have already been or should shortly be informed of your increase. The increase is retroactive to June 1, 1999 and will be reflected in the Dec. 15, 1999 paycheck. In addition, a small amount was set aside for anomaly adjustments.

**Barbara Hales**  
**Past-President, MAUT**

## **STAFF BENEFITS TO COST MORE IN 2000**

The Staff Benefits Advisory Committee consists of 2 MAUT members, David Crawford and myself, 2 representatives from MUNASA, Robert Savoie and Kathleen Tobin from Human Resources, and Pat Farrell as Chair. The committee is currently studying the McGill employees' Dental and Supplementary Health plans, which are both running a deficit. Contribution rates will have to be increased for both plans beginning January 2000, the first time rates have been increased since 1995 (for Dental) and 1996 (Supplementary Health).

Several factors have contributed to make an increase necessary. The first reality is that we are an aging population, needing more medical attention to keep us functioning. Inflation is another factor, as are the Quebec government's cutbacks in healthcare funding and the move to ambulatory care.

The Supplementary Health plan is running a cumulative annual deficit. Claims have been climbing steadily since 1997, when the Quebec Drug Plan stopped paying for many drugs. Hospital closures and ambulatory care have resulted in higher claims for home care services and medications which were previously covered by Medicare when administered in hospital.

The Dental plan had been experiencing small but steady increases with minor fluctuations until 1998, when claims jumped sharply upward. The changes to the plan coverage alone are not sufficient to account for the increase, and while this may be an anomalous year, the deficit must be covered.

The Committee would like to increase rates in 2 stages, a partial increase in January 2000, and the rest in June. This would allow us to

to \$6.00 for single and \$13.25 for family coverage in January, and probably to \$7.50 for single and \$16.25 for family coverage in June (see NOTE above).

A rate increase is the only option we can see for the coming year, although there are other possibilities for the future. One possibility is a cafeteria-type plan where members can select only the services they think they will need; this would become feasible with more flexible personnel computer systems. Another possibility is to change the proportion of benefit contributions from the present 50% University-paid, 50% employee-paid to 60% University-paid, 40% employee-paid; the obvious budgetary implications rule this out for January 2000. The Staff Benefits Advisory Committee will monitor plan performance and design closely and keep staff members informed.

**Jodie Hebert**  
VP Internal

**DENTAL:** The Dental plan currently has 2044 single contributors, who pay \$5.00 per paycheque and 2844 family plan members, who pay \$11.00. This would increase

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Academic Salary Policy

Benefits

## REMINDER

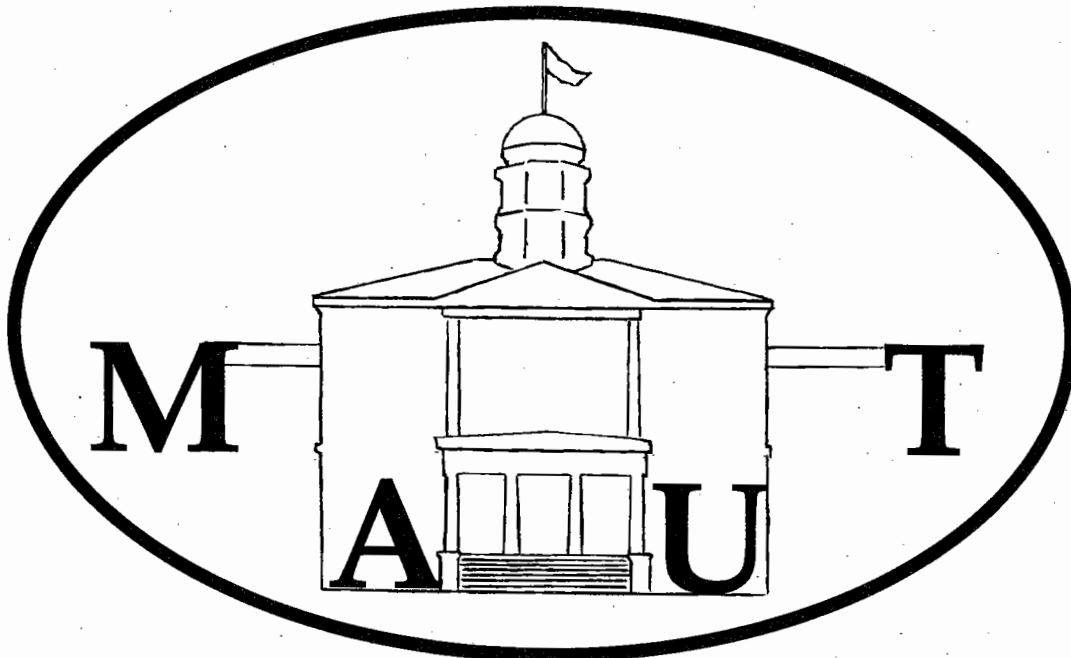
### GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, November 11, 12 noon  
Leacock 232

#### MAUT EXECUTIVE AND STAFF 1999-2000

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Past President	Barbara Hales (Pharmacology)	3610	7120
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