



NEWSLETTER

McGill Association of University Teachers
Association des Professeur(e)s et Bibliothécaires de McGill

www.maut.mcgill.ca

Vol. 35, No. 1. July / juillet 2009

Overviews

The looming presence and implications of Bill 107 (reintroduced in the current legislature as Bill 38) have occupied much of the MAUT Executive's energy over the past several months; the **MAUT and MUNASA Statement of Principles on Bill 107** reflects the outcry that is being expressed by universities and academic associations throughout Quebec. See the "Current Concerns" page of the MAUT website (<http://maut.mcgill.ca/CurrentConcerns.php>) for links to documents and websites with additional information on Bills 107 / 38 and related issues.

Update: Legislative debate on Bill 107 was suspended due to the provincial election last November, but it has been re-introduced — with minor changes — as Bill 38 in June 2009.

February's **MAUT Forum on University Governance** provided thoughtful discussion of both broad and specific issues, and the article by Brendan Gillon and Terry Hébert on page 5 points out the increasing degree of government involvement in the distribution of research funds, and how this could threaten "blue sky" research.

Presentations from MAUT's annual **Tenure and Mentoring Workshop** and **Retirement Forum** have been posted on our "Archives" webpage, <http://maut.mcgill.ca/archive.php>. Questions and Answers from the Retirement Forum appear on page 4, and summaries of the reports from the **Spring General Meeting** appear on pages 6-9 of this *Newsletter*.

In this issue

<i>Overviews</i>	1
<i>Statement of Principles on Bill 107</i>	2
<i>Retirement Forum</i>	4
<i>Universities, Governments and Society</i>	5
<i>Notes from the Spring General Meeting</i>	6
<i>Report from the Librarians' Section</i>	9
<i>Reflections on the Salary Freeze</i>	10
<i>Executive and Council</i>	11

The **salary** implications of McGill's budget cuts are outlined on page 10; MAUT will be examining various aspects of finances and priorities over the summer as well as keeping an eye on other current issues and watching for new ones that may arise.

Recently, MAUT has been sponsoring pre-Board of Governors' meetings, to improve communication and ensure that our views are understood.

Speaking of improved communication, a new website for retirees is under development and ...

MAUT BLOG - coming soon!

Watch for the listserv announcement within the next couple of weeks!

MAUT Forum on University Governance,

The keynote speaker, William Bruneau, expressed amazement at the healthy attendance at this full-day event at the Faculty Club — especially since it was held on February 27, the last Friday of Reading Week. Dr. Bruneau, Provost Anthony Masi, Principal Heather Munroe-Blum, and panelists that included McGill faculty, staff and students all spoke passionately about many aspects of governance, especially in the looming context of Bill 107. An expanded report on this unique Forum will be published as a special issue of the *MAUT Newsletter*.

The following Statement of Principles has been approved by MAUT Council and MUNASA Council. It was worked on by MAUT President Richard Janda, and MAUT Vice-President (External) Brendan Gillon, along with MUNASA President Ron Critchley and MUNASA Vice-President Assaad Zakka.

[Note: This statement was prepared before the introduction of Bill 38. Two notes are introduced into the statement to indicate relevant changes].

MAUT and MUNASA Statement of Principles on Bill 107

The prospect of Bill 107 being re-introduced is a matter of utmost concern to the entire Quebec academic community. MUNASA, which represents McGill's non-unionized non-academic staff, and MAUT, which represents McGill's academic staff, have together identified a set of four key principles that Bill 107 fails to respect — principles that they will continue to press upon the government if and when a successor Bill is introduced:

1. The University is a free, autonomous community of learning that is not part of the Government of Quebec;
2. Models of good governance drawn from the corporate sector emphasizing the independent Board oversight of senior executives on behalf of shareholders and Board oversight of performance criteria to ensure a return on investment are not directly relevant to a free community of learning;
3. The bodies governing the University, notably its Board of Governors and Senate, must adequately represent and give voice to all its internal academic, non-academic and student constituencies that form its community of learning; and
4. Each university in Quebec has its own vocation, culture and tradition and thus its own mode of governance and ways of identifying the appropriate representative balance among constituencies.

Bill 107 restricts academic freedom

[Note: Bill 38 clarifies that the government-appointed Board member must not be an employee of MELS.]

Bill 107 would effect a major change in the governance of McGill University by placing a government appointee on our Board. Furthermore, under the legislation the Board, which is dominated by members from outside of McGill, would gain in significance, displacing further the role of the McGill Senate, since it would be up to the Board "to adopt measures to evaluate the institution's effectiveness, efficiency and performance." Currently, McGill's Senate, which has broad representation from across the University, exercises general control and supervision over the academic affairs of the University. It is our main self-governing body and a guardian of academic freedom at McGill.

A more powerful Board operating under the watchful eye of a government appointee would erode the self-government of McGill's community. It is worth recalling that the Supreme Court of Canada, in the *McKinney decision*, has emphasized the autonomy of universities in relation to provincial governments:

The legal autonomy of the universities is fully buttressed by their traditional position in society. Any attempt by government to influence university decisions, especially decisions regarding appointment, tenure and dismissal of academic staff, would be strenuously resisted by the universities on the basis that this could lead to breaches of academic freedom.¹

In a word, these are not government decisions. Though the legislature may determine much of the environment in which universities operate, the reality is that they function as autonomous bodies within that environment.

Whereas it is entirely legitimate for the government of Quebec to seek accountability from universities for the spending of public funds, it is another thing altogether for the government, through a Board representative, to seek to influence university decisions and indeed to place limits on our internal self-government. Throughout its successful history, McGill University has maintained high academic standards and accountability without the presence of government appointees on our Board. We can see no rationale for departing from what has worked well.

Furthermore, by having the Board recommend performance criteria for the university which are then to be negotiated with and established by the Minister, Bill 107 departs significantly from the idea of a self-governing academic community. This is of concern to the McGill community in particular, since we are both part of the Quebec university network and situated in a national and international academic network. Our strategic planning and pursuit of excellence needs to remain autonomous, though accountable for its performance.

1. *McKinney v. University of Guelph*, [1990] 3 S.C.R. 229

Bill 107 imposes an inappropriate corporate governance model

By ensuring that our university Board will be even more dominated by external, "independent" members, and by limiting the presence of internal members on key committees — Governance and Ethics, Audit and Human Resources, to which no more than one internal member may be named — the government is applying holus bolus a model of good governance applicable to for-profit corporations. The key problem faced in the corporate context is that the agents of shareholders — senior executives — might not act in the best interests of shareholders. Thus, governance reforms aim at strengthening Board independence and separating "internal" members who have potential conflicts of interest from the work of key committees.

This is not the situation facing universities. Constituency representatives on the Board — students, academic staff, non-academic staff and indeed senior administrators — do not have the conflicts of interest facing corporate executives who can enrich themselves at shareholder expense. Furthermore, the corporate goal of setting performance criteria so as to ensure high returns on investment does not apply to the task of fostering excellence in research and pedagogy. Most importantly, we reject the notion that members of the internal community should be excluded from key decision-making at the University.

Bill 107 diminishes representation of the internal community

[Note: In an apparent response to the lobbying of MAUT, MUNASA and other groups, Bill 38 has reduced the proposed proportion of "independent" members to 60%. It also specifies that at least 25% of members must come from the university community. Thus, the current proportion of internal members on the Board could be maintained or reduced.]

Bill 107 would entail that one member of McGill's internal community currently on our Board would have to be excluded from it. Our Board has the Bill 107 maximum number of members: 25. The legislation would also provide that at least two-thirds — 17 members — must be "independent," namely not management personnel, faculty members, other employees or students. Currently in addition to the Principal we have eight internal members on our Board: two representatives of Senate; two representatives of the academic staff; two representatives of the administrative and support staff; one representative of the Students' Society of McGill University; and one representative of the Post-Graduate Students' Society. In essence, Bill 107 would require that one member of the internal community be dropped to meet the quota set by the Bill. We find this unacceptable.

McGill's Board reflects a delicate and carefully established balance. Since we have three members of the alumni association as well as the Chancellor on our Board, our Board reflects a balance of 13 "stakeholder" members and 12 members-at-large. We can discern no rationale for disallowing the balance that McGill has struck. It would be unacceptable to exclude a representative of the student associations now represented — indeed the fact that Continuing Education and Macdonald Campus students have voice and not vote is already a compromise with respect to their level of representation. The exclusion of administrative or support staff representation would severely prejudice the legitimacy of Board decisions that will often touch directly upon them. A key part of the governance structure of McGill has been the direct coordination between our Senate and Board of Governors through the presence of three Board representatives on Senate and two Senate representatives on the Board. Representation-at-large from the academic community has been critical to maintaining the responsiveness of the Board not only to its counterpart body the Senate, which has academic representation based on Faculty affiliation, but to representatives whose mandate comes from the entire community. In short, there is no internal member who should be dropped from our Board.

Bill 107 is one size fits all

With the exception of a special provision governing the Université du Québec system, which is in any event governed by its own legislation, the Bill 107 governance model would be imposed equally upon all Quebec universities. Our sister universities have shared concerns with Bill 107 and we support the expressions of opposition to the legislation from the FQPPU and CACPUQ. We emphasize in addition that McGill University, like other universities, has its own governance culture, its own modes of representation for internal constituencies, and its own balance of authority among the governance institutions it has spawned. It is contrary to the specificity of Quebec's universities — which together provide a rich diversity of academic strengths — to imagine that one governance model will fit all of them equally well. Indeed, our foregoing concerns have sought to emphasize sources of McGill's strength in its current governance structure and how Bill 107 would force us to depart from it. A piece of legislation that is touted as a response to an accounting scandal at one university is in fact placing all universities in an unacceptable governance straightjacket.

MAUT Retirement Forum, April 3, 2009

Deanna Cowan

deanna.cowan@mcgill.ca

Edith Zorychta, MAUT Past-President and Professor of Pathology, opened the forum by describing shifts in life expectancy and demography—we have reason to anticipate a long and relatively healthy life, with a long and relatively healthy retirement. William Foster, Associate Provost (Policies and Procedures) then spoke very briefly about McGill's new retirement incentives. Rosella de Stefano (HR, Accounting), John D'Agata (Director, Pension Administration) and Kathleen Tobin (HR, Benefits) outlined various options concerning finances (taxes, annuities, LIFs etc.) and benefits (health, dental, etc.) to consider in retirement planning. The presentations have been posted on the "Archives" page of the MAUT website, see <http://maut.mcgill.ca/archive.php>

Q: What is the procedure, if you want to take advantage of the retirement incentives?

A: You just need to inform the Provost, with copies to your Dean / Chair, by e-mail or in hard copy. Be sure to mention your intended retirement date. The Provost's Office will arrange for a formal agreement to be completed.

Q: Will incentives apply to staff on sabbatical?

A: You're still eligible, and you won't need to return for the usual year afterward; however, your sabbatical may be shortened in order to meet the fixed end-date of the offer. As of next year, applications for sabbatical leaves will not be accepted from academic staff who are 64 or older.

Q: What if faculty have research grants that extend past the retirement incentive eligibility date?

A: Post-retirement appointments should solve this problem.

Q: Given the instability of the market, how guaranteed is an annuity from McGill?

A: Annuity money is kept separate, and McGill guarantees it as long as McGill exists and is solvent.

Q: Is there a McGill LIF?

A: We have been trying to establish a McGill LIF. The Federal government will allow it but the Québec Régie des rentes hasn't agreed yet. If you take an external LIF, you could repatriate it to McGill if McGill LIFs ever become available.

Q: How do the pension plans benefit survivors?

A: Annuities: employees who have a spouse must take the "joint and last survivor" option — pensions continue for the life of the spouse. The "guaranteed period" option ensures that pensions continue for a specified period; this can apply to all beneficiaries, including spouses (it can be added to the "joint and last survivor" conditions).

LIFs: the balance of the account goes to the spouse/beneficiary. Taxes apply to both options.

Q: If you have family health coverage and you predecease your spouse, can a surviving spouse continue health insurance coverage?

A: Yes. The surviving spouse will be contacted, and there are time limits for making the decision.

Q: How secure are current post-retirement privileges (library, e-mail, parking, health insurance, insurance for spouses etc.)? Could the Administration remove or reduce them in the future?

A: This hasn't been discussed, but it's conceivable that some privileges could be reduced.

Note on ABCP

MAUT devoted considerable effort this past year to addressing the financial problems related to non-bank Asset-Backed Commercial Paper (ABCP). These had a AAA rating from Dominion Bond Rating Service at the time of purchase, and in August of 2007 they constituted 30% of the assets in the Money Market Fund but were frozen across the country due to massive devaluation. At that time a number of our members had moved most or all of their pension funds into the MMF. The University administration clearly stated that they had no obligation regarding the MMF, but they ultimately provided assistance by exchanging supplemental funds for the ABCP, thereby reducing the maximum loss from 30% to 11%. Seven members of MAUT believe they should have received total compensation and are investigating legal action in this regard. The MAUT Executive and Council have concluded that MAUT will not itself explore legal action against the University or the Pension Administration Committee. We have been asked to inform our members that information on potential legal action can be obtained from james.hanrahan@mcgill.ca

Universities, Governments and Society

Brendan Gillon and Terry Hébert

brendan.gillon@mcgill.ca, terence.hebert@mcgill.ca

Universities play an important role in society at large and in the economy of the society of which they are a part, though their original and principal function is to preserve and to purvey society's culture and knowledge, regardless of any short-term economic value. However, one of the distinguishing features of the university — free inquiry by its academic members — also produces and sustains long-term economic benefit, through the development of new ideas, inventions and knowledge.

Today's politicians and business leaders see the university **primarily** as a cog in society's economic engine, to be harnessed in a way that maximizes its contribution to the economy in as short a time-frame as possible — the planning horizon of politicians and business leaders often extends only as far as the next election or financial report. This viewpoint manifests itself as an overarching concern with research that has immediate applications, and academic goals that create economic benefits. Chronically underfunded universities are obliged to constantly attempt to profit from the inventions and intellectual property created by their academics.

Despite the fact that the business community in general and the financial sector in particular bear much of the blame for the current economic situation, our federal and provincial governments seek to impose a business model for the management of universities and to increase their involvement in the direct and indirect financing of university activities. For example:

- The Harper government has increased dramatically the number of non-academic members on the board of governors of the SSHRC.
- In the most recent federal budget, research funds for SSHRC were increased only for research proposals that are business-related.
- In the next-to-last federal budget, the same government (with the approval of the opposition) used its own evaluations when granting research funds to institutions, bypassing the funding agencies.

- Governments have funded industry-favoured large-scale infrastructure projects at the expense of operating grants to individual researchers, creating well-provisioned research facilities — with no resources to operate them.
- Closer to home, the Charest government is about to table Bill 107, designed to reform university governance by reducing the ratio of academic to non-academic members and possibly including government appointees on Boards of Governors.

This trend threatens to eliminate those features of the university that do not directly serve the short-term demands of economic growth. The aspects of the university that bear on free inquiry and research as well as its role as steward of culture and knowledge are completely ignored by any of these developments.

A natural corollary of viewing universities as cogs in society's economic engine is to view units within the university as smaller cogs in the same engine and to treat them in the same way. Imagine if each unit had to generate its own funding and cover its own costs, from salaries to light bulbs. What units would survive? Certainly not those units concerned with the preservation of culture and non-applied knowledge.

It is more apparent than ever before that the fundamental role of the university and its place in society are widely misunderstood and misinterpreted outside academia. As academics, we must all take more responsibility for our reputations and indeed our futures. Each of us can contribute individually by contacting members of parliament, signing the FQPPU petition against Bill 107 (see links at <http://maut.mcgill.ca/CurrentConcerns.php>) and by taking advantage of every opportunity to defend university autonomy and academic freedom. MAUT is an excellent way of speaking collectively with a louder voice; participate and encourage your colleagues to join too.

Notes from the Spring General Meeting, April 17, 2009

compiled by Deanna Cowan

deanna.cowan@mcgill.ca

OPENING NOTES

President Malcolm Baines welcomed members and visitors, presented the members of the current Executive and Council, and announced the 2009–2010 Executive, elected by acclamation:

- President: Richard Janda
- Past President: Edith Zorychta
- V-P Internal: Ian Butler
- V-P External: Brendan Gillon
- V-P Communications: Deanna Cowan
- Secretary-Treasurer: Hamid Etemad

The President-Elect is still TBA.

Because the ballots for the election of 2009–2010 Council members were sent out late, the deadline for returning them has been extended to April 27.

Update: Council for 2009-2010 includes elected members plus two co-opted members to balance representation across faculties:

- Helen Amoriggi, Education
- Madeleine Buck, Nursing
- Julie Cumming, Music
- John Dealy (Retired Professors), Professor Emeritus-Chemical Engineering
- Terence Hébert, Pharmacology & Therapeutics
- Joan Hobbins (Chair, Librarians' Section), Library
- Craig Mandato, Anatomy & Cell Biology
- Audrey Moores, Chemistry
- Meyer Nahon, Engineering
- Petra Rohrbach, Parasitology
- Filippo Sabetti, Political Science
- Alvin Shrier, Physiology
- Gloria Tannenbaum, Pediatrics / Neurology & Neurosurgery
- Maria Zannis-Hadjopoulos, Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Centre

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Malcolm Baines

malcolm.baines@mcgill.ca

The CAS (Contract Academic Staff) Committee has submitted reports, but recent progress has been “less than stellar” due to the Administration's preoccupation with finances, the retirement policy

etc. Financial implications of the proposed CAS policy need to be considered, and Chapter One of the “Gray Book” needs to be revised.

Workshops and events held over the past year — Tenure and Mentoring, Retirement, Governance — were well-attended and generated good questions. The new retirement policies warrant another workshop in the not-too-distant future. A report of the Governance Forum will be produced, and William Bruneau is also writing an article on university governance.

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Edith Zorychta

edith.zorychta@mcgill.ca

The CASP (Committee on Academic Salary Policy) mandate is being expanded to include total compensation — benefits, pensions, sabbaticals, etc. — as well as **salary policy**. A notable achievement last year was the negotiation of a three-year policy: a 3.15% increase in 2008–2009, 4.15% in 2009–2010, and 5.15% in 2010–2011.

As one of the measures for managing the current financial crisis, all university employee groups agreed to a six-month delay in the next rounds of increases: the 2009–2010 increase (4.15%) will be applied in June 2010 rather than in December 2009, and the 5.15% increase will begin in June 2011. The six-month delay will provide \$6.2 million to address McGill's \$15 million shortfall.

The salary goals are still in place, and catch-up increases will occur when circumstances permit. We need to be vigilant about long-term planning, and allow for fluctuations.

The **Gender Equity** study has finally been completed, and Michael Smith made an excellent presentation to Senate.

Update: The Provost responded in May, see <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-70AdminresponsetoCASonAcademicSalaryDifferential.s.pdf>

The **Provost's Task Force on Economic Uncertainty** welcomes suggestions for money-saving and/or revenue-generating initiatives; links are at <http://www.mcgill.ca/economictaskforce/>.

Q: How does the six-month delay in increases affect the final salary of people taking retirement?

A: No special provisions are being made for people who retire before the increases are applied. If you are retiring in December and are hoping for the usual December increase to boost your final salary, it will unfortunately not be there for you.

Q: Were there any discussions about reducing the number of senior administrators?

A: Senior administrators' salaries were cut by 3%, and travel budgets etc. have been reduced.

Q: Is there any retroactivity to this six-month delay?

A: No. There will be no increases (merit, etc.) until the six months have passed, so effectively everyone is losing six months' worth of increase — thereby saving the university \$6.2 million.

New **retirement incentives** are finally in place. Phase One ends on June 30, 2009, and Phase Two takes effect on July 1. Information is at <http://www.mcgill.ca/apo/academic-staff/policies/retirement-incentive-program/>

The long-awaited changes to the **Emeritus** (or **Emerita**) **designation** have finally been approved, and will come into effect after this June's Convocation. Academics who retire after five years or more at the rank of Full Professor will normally be awarded the "Emeritus" title. The title "Past Professor" has been replaced by "Retired Professor."

In spite of financial problems, our **pension plan** is still one of the best in the country. E. Zorychta praised Tony Deutch's contribution to the plan, lending his academic expertise and guiding us through difficult situations such as the recent ABCP crisis.

The University recently decided to stop its share of **pension contributions for employees over 69 years of age**. MAUT's view is that University contributions are part of the total compensation package, and should not be based on the age of the employee. On behalf of MAUT, Me. Julius Gray represented these employees in court, and we are waiting for the judgment.

Update: the initial ruling was not in our favour, and an appeal is being considered.

E. Zorychta briefly outlined various policies that MAUT has helped formulate or revise. The **policy on harassment and discrimination** has been reviewed, and a report will soon go to Senate.

Q: How does a now-retired professor become an emeritus professor? Is there any retroactivity?

A: It has been proposed that the title "Emeritus" be awarded to currently-retired professors who meet the current criteria.

Q: What if Deans are unwilling to approve a retroactive awarding of the title?

A: This is not expected to be a problem, but will be monitored carefully.

REPORT OF THE V-P INTERNAL

Edith Zorychta for Ian Butler

ian.butler@mcgill.ca; edith.zorychta@mcgill.ca

Ian Butler is collecting information on **benefit packages** at other universities, to compare with McGill's, and also to obtain ideas for improvement to our programs.

Q: A benefit that is being withheld from new hires is access to the minimum pension. Is this true?

A: The Board of Governors has had its eye on the pension plan for some time, and can basically decree these changes if it wants to. MAUT can argue, but can also be ignored. In theory, new hires have many years before they face retirement, and will have time to strategize.

REPORT OF THE V-P EXTERNAL

Brendan Gillon

brendan.gillon@mcgill.ca

The next CAUT Council meeting will take place on April 24–26. FQPPU has recovered from the disorganization it faced a couple of years ago. Its study of finances in Quebec Universities was so thorough that the Auditor-General and the Ministry of Education have requested presentations about it.

A few examples of the growing problem of **government interference in university activities** via targeted funding were described:

2007:

- the Federal budget restricted all new SSHRC funding to research in management, business and finance.

2008:

- the Federal budget provided increased funding for NSERC only for research in the automotive, manufacturing, forestry and fishing sectors.
- SSHRC's new funds were limited to research on the impact of environmental changes on Canadians and to the examination of the economic development needs in northern communities.

2009:

- the Federal budget allocated \$87.5 million for new Canada Graduate Scholarships but specified that SSHRC scholarships will be "focused on business-related degrees."
- the bulk of infrastructure money given to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation is for future priority projects identified by the Minister of Industry.
- \$50 million was allocated directly to the Institute for Quantum Computing in Waterloo, for a new research facility "that will contribute to achieving the goals of the Government's science and technology strategy," again bypassing the usual peer-review process.

Governments also exercise control by influencing the composition of Boards of Governors of universities and granting agencies; SSHRC now has far more non-academics on its Board than it used to.

B. Gillon then spoke about **Bill 107**, which is yet another example of a government attempt to micromanage. Chronic government underfunding over the past several years has led universities to explore creative funding possibilities, such as Private-Public Partnerships. When these fail, such as in the UQAM Voyageur debacle, the government feels it has to implement cookie-cutter controls and impose profit-making models on universities.

Bill 107 has been opposed by everyone in the university community, at all levels (academics, support staff, students, etc.) FQPPU has prepared an online petition (see <http://www.nonacourchesne.com/>) and everyone is encouraged to sign it. There are links to this petition and to several other documents related to Governance issues on the MAUT website, see <http://maut.mcgill.ca/CurrentConcerns.php>

Q: How can we protest things like SSHRC policies?

A: B. Gillon will ask CAUT for suggestions, but in the meantime, letters can be written and members of committees can be contacted.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Estelle Hopmeyer

estelle.hopmeyer@mcgill.ca

Despite the global financial situation, MAUT is still fairly healthy. A few of our investments are not doing especially well, but we are getting good advice. We have been able to spend some money on important things like expert legal opinions and subsidizing retiree lunches. E. Hopmeyer thanked MAUT's finance committee and H. Kerwin-Borrelli for their support, and extended best wishes to the incoming Secretary-Treasurer, H. Etemad.

REPORT FROM THE LIBRARIANS' SECTION

See full report on page 9.

REPORT FROM THE RETIREES' SECTION

John Wolforth for John Dealy

john.dealy@mcgill.ca; john.wolforth@mcgill.ca

There are now 144 retired members. A questionnaire sent out to these members identified Benefits as a priority, particularly relating to the drug plan and residency requirements for full health and dental insurance coverage.

- A retirees' website is being developed.
- The upcoming retirees' lunch speaker will be Dr. Doug Watt (Physiology), who will answer the question, "Are we ready to go to Mars?"
- The second issue of the Retired Members Bulletin was recently sent out.
- Retirees no longer lose their library and other privileges for the month following retirement.
- Senate finally passed the new policy on awarding the Emeritus Professor title.
- Members can now join CARP at a reduced rate. Home and auto insurance at special rates is available through both CURAC and CARP.
- An improvement in dental insurance coverage was reported, as well as the availability of the 2008 annual report of the McGill Pension Plan.

FACULTY CLUB

Edith Zorychta

edith.zorychta@mcgill.ca

The Faculty Club continues to thrive and is under excellent management, but a potential threat has arisen. Academic staff divert a small amount of money to support the Faculty Club; we chose to divert .04 of our salary mass for this purpose in

1982, and reaffirmed this choice in a MAUT referendum in 1997. The university administration may try to claim this money for other purposes during these financially stressful times.

A lively discussion followed; several members lamented the closing of Ole's Bistro with relocation of the express menu to the dining room. E. Zorychta explained that the Faculty Club staff costs are higher than those at many other dining areas: the employees are unionized, with salaries and benefits determined by their collective agreement. Also,

almost all university buildings now include cafeterias of some sort and there is a trend for faculty to just "grab a sandwich and work through lunch-time." E. Zorychta also accepted responsibility for the short notice that preceded the closing of Ole's.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. Malcolm Baines thanked Honore Kerwin-Borrelli and Joseph Varga for their excellent work over the past year.

Report from the Librarians' Section

Jim Henderson

jim.henderson@mcgill.ca

Since my report to the Fall General Meeting, there has been little change; the background in my November report remains valid.

The CAUT Ad Hoc Investigatory Committee to examine the situation for librarians at McGill is writing its report. According to CAUT, a large number of librarians and faculty members reported on possible violations of academic freedom and other academic staff rights. Once the report has been completed and reviewed by CAUT, it will be sent to those named in it, with a 20-day response period. It will then be sent to the University administration and the Trenholme Director of Libraries for review, followed by a meeting. The response at this point will determine what follows. At most other universities that have been reviewed, the faculty association and the university administration resolved the situation through discussions and changes without making the report public. Only one-third of past reports have been published. I hope that this process together with internal discussions will lead to progress in the Library.

All McGill librarians received notification in July 2008 that the vacation policy for librarians had been revised. Edith wrote to the University noting that the process used to develop and implement this policy was not collegial. CASP is working to resolve this situation. A number of meetings have been held between representatives of the University administration, the Library administration, the Section, and MAUT. The content of the meetings is

confidential and no results can yet be reported. I wish to thank Edith and Malcolm for their time and assistance in this process.

It was hoped that the introduction of the new Regulations for the Employment of Librarians in September 2007 would lead to a new and vigorous time of progress in the Library. However, progress has been accompanied by continuing issues in the Library that have led to some tensions within MAUT. Changes in the way librarians participate in MAUT have been proposed and discussed in some contexts. It is important to note that most librarians are members of MAUT. I have been reassured by a number of MAUT colleagues that MAUT will continue to recognize the valuable role that librarians play; however, I also felt it was necessary to mention the tensions that have arisen.

I wish to thank the Librarians' Section Executive, especially Karen Jensen, Past Chair, and various members of the Section for their work through 2008/09. John Hobbins has been a constant source of support and information, and Marc Richard has contributed significantly. I also wish to thank MAUT, especially Edith, Malcolm, and Honore, and MAUT Advisors for their work and time. Mike Smith and Gowri have given much solid support to librarians. I wish Joan Hobbins, incoming MAUT-LS Chair, the best and hope that she can make progress in improving working conditions and expanding the academic role of McGill librarians in this era of rapid change in libraries and new opportunities for librarians.

Reflections on the Salary Freeze

Richard Janda, MAUT President

richard.janda@mcgill.ca

We reported to members at our Spring Annual Meeting that the University would be proceeding to delay by six months the implementation of our agreed salary increase, 4.15%, thus postponing its implementation until June 1, 2010, and initiating a June 1 cycle for subsequent increases. The context of this decision was a budget exercise requiring the University to cut about \$17 million so as to meet budget targets set by the Quebec Ministry.

The 2009–2010 Budget, now released on the McGill Senate website (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-66UniversityBudget2009-2010DraftforSenate.pdf>) states, "It remains McGill's commitment to position total academic compensation to be competitive with top performing institutions within to so-called G13 research-intensive universities." We have fallen below the G13 mean and our objective is to be among the top three, commensurate with the goals we set for ourselves for academic and research performance. The salary freeze will of course mean that we drift further behind.

The relative erosion of McGill salaries is of great concern. It is true that as academics, we have chosen a vocation for which the rewards are primarily free inquiry, engagement with brilliant colleagues and students, and participation in a vibrant community. If the maximization of salary had been the impetus for our work, the vast majority of us would have oriented our lives in other ways. Nevertheless, we all have a stake in ensuring that McGill's overall package of compensation — including benefits and working conditions — remains capable of retaining our current colleagues as well as attracting the finest minds into our midst. It is also of critical importance that compensation be — and seen to be — equitable across the community. In the past our members have endorsed the notion of merit exercises. But we have also insisted that such exercises never become punitive and always include across-the-board cost-of-living adjustments.

Notionally, therefore, the salary increases arrived at collegially through discussions at what is now called the Committee on Academic Staff Compensation (CASC), chaired by the Provost, are meant at minimum to cushion increases in the cost of living and then to provide a basket that recognizes merit. Since we have great confidence in the quality of our colleagues, we know that merit exercises should translate into significant, widely shared improvements in our collective compensation. That is, we do not imagine that the way to remain "competitive" in the G13 setting is by reserving funds to attract and retain a small firmament of stars. Rather, we look around the campus, see a vast array of stars and want to ensure that they are well done by.

We will therefore be looking to the University to address the serious erosion of academic salaries and benefits in upcoming budgets. If we have agreed, with misgivings, to the salary freeze, it is in the name of doing our part to right McGill's finances. It also gives us a direct stake, therefore, in monitoring the budget model of the University and ensuring that it remains sustainable into the future. Over the summer, MAUT will be establishing its own Finance Working Group to do an analysis of the university's budget and to generate proposals partly with a view to getting us to the salary objective reiterated in this year's budget. We would welcome your views and participation.

We also welcome the transparency shown by the Provost and the Principal in conducting the budget exercise with us. We fully expect that the projected increases for December 2009 and December 2010 will indeed be implemented, though delayed by six months, and that we will be endeavouring thereafter to render McGill's overall compensation regime commensurate with our goals as Canada's leading international centre of learning.

MAUT EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL May 2009 - April 2010

EXECUTIVE	NAME	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
President	Richard Janda (Law)	5097	8197	richard.janda@mcgill.ca
President-Elect	TBA			
Past President	Edith Zorychta (Pathology)	00494	7446	edith.zorychta@mcgill.ca
V P Internal	Ian Butler (Chemistry)	6910	3797	ian.butler@mcgill.ca
V P External	Brendan Gillon (Linguistics)	4868	7088	brendan.gillon@mcgill.ca
V P Communications	Deanna Cowan (Library)	09669	3890	deanna.cowan@mcgill.ca
Secretary - Treasurer	Hamid Etemad	4018	3876	hamid.etemad@mcgill.ca

COUNCIL	NAME	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
	Helen Amoriggi (Education)	2474	4529	helen.amoriggi @mcgill.ca
	Madeleine Buck (Nursing)	4155	8455	madeleine.buck@mcgill.ca
	Julie Cumming (Music)	398-4535 x 00290	8061	jcumming@music.mcgill.ca
Retired Professors	John Dealy (Chemical Engineering - Emeritus)	4264	6678	john.dealy@mcgill.ca
	Terence Hébert (Pharmacology & Therapeutics)	1398	6690	terence.hebert@mcgill.ca
Chair, Librarians' Section	Joan Hobbins (Library)	4796	8919	joan.hobbins@mcgill.ca
	Craig Mandato (Anatomy & Cell Biology)	5349	5047	craig.mandato@mcgill.ca
	Audrey Moores (Chemistry)	4654	3797	audrey.moores@mcgill.ca
	Meyer Nahon (Engineering)	2383	7365	meyer.nahon@mcgill.ca
	Petra Rohrbach (Parasitology)	7726	7857	petra.rohrbach@mcgill.ca
	Filippo Sabetti (Political Science)	4812	1770	filippo.sabetti@mcgill.ca
	Alvin Shrier (Physiology)	2272	7452	alvin.shrier@mcgill.ca
	Gloria Tannenbaum (Pediatrics / Neurology & Neurosurgery)	(514) 412-4400 x 22753	(514) 412-4331	gloria.tannenbaum@mcgill.ca
	Maria Zannis-Hadjopoulos (Rosalind and Morris Goodman Cancer Centre)	3536	6769	maria.zannis@mcgill.ca

OFFICE STAFF	NAME	PHONE	FAX	E-MAIL
Administrative Officer	Honore Kerwin-Borrelli	3942	6937	maut@mcgill.ca
Professional & Legal Officer	Joseph Varga	3089	6937	jvarga.maut@mcgill.ca

The MAUT / APBM Newsletter is published periodically during the academic year to keep members of the McGill Association of University Teachers informed of concerns and activities.

Postal Address: McGill Association of University Teachers
3495 Peel Street, Room 202
McGill University
Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1W7

Telephone: (514) 398-3942

Fax: (514) 398-6937

Editor: Deanna Cowan (Library)

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