



Spring 2019 President's Annual Report

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What a difference a year makes! When I took over the MAUT presidency from Alenoush Saroyan on April 20th, 2018, we were in the middle of the crisis triggered by the SSMU's open letter accusing the Faculty of Arts of systematically mismanaging allegations of sexual violence against professors. I knew then that it was going to be an eventful year. But I didn't know it would be *this* eventful!

There have been three major contentious issues that have required a great deal of our attention during the past year: the sexual violence policy revisions, renaming of the Redmen varsity teams, and Quebec's Bill 21. The principal issues having to do with salaries and benefits this year have been: long-term salary policy, the proposed Amendment 25 to the Pension Plan, and our health insurance benefit package. There were also three major outstanding governance questions that have continued to preoccupy us during the past year: revisions to the regulations governing dismissals, strengthening protection of our academic freedom, and reforming the Dean selection process. I will briefly report on each of these below.

The New Policy Against Sexual Violence

The MAUT has been quite actively involved in the discussions about how best to revise our policies against sexual harassment and violence. Two members of our executive committee, VP-External Janine Mauzeroll and President-Elect Petra Rohrbach, have been active members of the Working Group to develop proposals for a revised policy. From the start, the MAUT's principal concerns have been twofold: that policy should effectively combat all forms of sexual misconduct while at the same time ensuring due process dealing with allegations of misconduct or abusive behaviour, as we stated in [our response to the SSMU's Open Letter of April 2018](#).

The students' representatives have forcefully campaigned for a complete university-wide ban on teaching staff-student intimate relations and for the results of disciplinary measures to be included in tenure dossiers. While we have had a number of frank and mutually respectful discussions with representatives of the student organizations, the MAUT remains strongly opposed to both of these demands. The survey we conducted among our members in October 2018 showed that a clear majority was opposed to a university-wide ban, and we must steadfastly resist any attempts to conflate the processes and procedures by which we determine our peers' professional merits with those that deal with matters of misconduct that may be subject to disciplinary measures.

Given these concerns, the MAUT strongly approves of the final version of the revised Policy against Sexual Violence which was approved by Senate at its session of March 27, 2019. It is

the result of an extensive and thorough process of collegial consultation with all interested parties within the McGill community and it constitutes a major step forward in our efforts to combat sexual misconduct and violence. We issued a [public statement](#) to this effect on behalf of the MAUT's executive committee on February 22nd.

Renaming the Redmen

After some discussion, the MAUT's Council decided to back the call by Indigenous students and their supporters for McGill to drop the name 'Redmen' for its male varsity sports teams. We published [a statement to this effect](#) on February 21st, 2019. We are happy to note that the Principal has, after due deliberation about the different arguments that have been brought forward about the issue, agreed to replace 'Redmen' with another name.

Bill 21

The Bill prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols to certain categories of Quebec government civil servants conflicts with our commitment to diversity and tolerance for minorities and potentially has serious implications for those of our students who aspire to careers in the affected occupations. Consequently we have sent a [letter to premier François Legault](#) on behalf of the MAUT's executive committee objecting to the Bill and asking the government and the *Assemblée nationale* to reconsider.

Salaries

Our salary increases in the past 3 years have been quite modest and this coming year's increase of 2.15, though slightly above the 2.00% initially projected, will leave many of us with a salary rise below the level of inflation. In anticipation of the planning of the salary increases of the next three-year cycle and beyond, the MAUT organized an Open Forum on Faculty Salaries on March 13th. It turned out to be one of the best attended gatherings we have organized in recent years. The Forum clearly demonstrated the degree of frustration and dissatisfaction among our members about our comparatively low standing among U15 universities in terms of our salary averages and about the uneven salary increases between 3-year cycles.

A week after the Forum, President-Elect Petra Rohrbach and I met with the Provost and several other senior administrators in the recently formed Strategic Working Group on Academic Salaries to discuss long-term salary policy. The senior administrators were somewhat taken aback by the tone and depth of frustration evident at the MAUT Forum but it did make them recognize that there is much discontent about salaries among our members and that considerably higher raises will be necessary in the near future to help lift our salaries towards the medians of the U15. We also agreed that a long-term policy to even out the salary increases, particularly the merit components, over the years would be desirable and feasible. Finally, we agreed to jointly organize two Forums on salaries, one at the beginning of the academic year and one in the Spring after the announcement of the following year's increases, to maintain open communication between the administration and our members concerning salary issues.

Amendment 25 to the Pension Plan

We all received notice in late December that an amendment to the McGill University Pension Plan (MUPP) was being considered. The proposed Amendment 25 included a proposal to reduce the lump-sum Supplemental Retirement Benefit Value (SRBV) arising from the defined benefit provision of the hybrid Part A of the plan (for those hired before 2009) from 100% to an amount reflecting the degree of solvency of the Plan (currently 86%), while offering an annuity worth 100% of the SRBV as an alternative option. This effectively deprives those of us who would prefer to receive the full SRBV in one, or a few, payments of that option. The MAUT raised serious objections to this proposal and we have been told that it is being reconsidered. To be continued...

Health Insurance Benefits Review

For many years the MAUT's representatives on the Staff Benefits Advisory Committee (SBAC), Edith Zorychta and Al Shrier, have done great work helping to monitor the management of our current plan. But their mandate is not to explore alternatives to the plan. Council has created a Health Care Benefits Monitoring Committee headed by Prof. Sandra Hyde to do just that. Sandra is currently reviewing the health insurance packages of a number of comparable universities in the country to see how they measure up to ours and in what ways ours might be improved.

Ongoing discussions about the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Academic Staff (RREAS)

As I reported in my Fall 2018 President's Report these discussions have been going on for quite some time in the wake of the highly undesirable outcome of the dismissal process of one of our colleagues some years ago. In the course of these discussions the MAUT has succeeded in getting the administration to agree to the insertion of a committee of peers to advise the Principal in cases where dismissals for cause are being contemplated. But we are still at an impasse with respect to the other main MAUT proposal to introduce an internal process of arbitration that would have the power of reinstating the faculty member if his/her dismissal was deemed unjustified. After several meetings with senior administrators failed to move us forward on this issue we have appealed directly to the Principal and Provost to consider our position and we are now waiting to hear what their response will be.

Strengthening Academic Freedom Protection

The so-called 'Potter Affair,' in which Andrew Potter resigned from his position as Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada after an article he published in Mclean's Magazine, caused a storm of controversy. A major issue was the extent to which administrators enjoy the same academic freedom protection as ordinary faculty members do. To clarify the matter and to formulate possible policies that might avoid the sort of uproar that the Potter resignation provoked, the MAUT organized an Open Forum on Academic Freedom in the Fall of 2017. In the meantime, the Canadian Association of University

Teachers (CAUT), of which the MAUT is a member, decided to launch an investigation of the Potter resignation. Its November 2018 report claimed that McGill does not afford its administrators sufficient academic freedom protection and enjoins McGill to adopt the CAUT's statements and guidelines to ensure they will in the future. The CAUT's Council of November 2018 threatened to impose censure on McGill if it fails to follow the report's recommendations by May 2019.

An informal MAUT working group on academic freedom has been working on proposals to strengthen the effective protections of our academic freedom and to clarify the limits, if any, to the academic freedom of McGill administrators. These proposals include entering explicit references to academic freedom in all regulations governing (appeals against) disciplinary measures and dismissals for cause, creating a Senate Committee or Office to review cases involving academic freedom issues, and closely monitoring appointment conditions of newly appointed administrators in Senate. The details of these proposals are still being worked out. Past-President Alenoush Saroyan and I had a meeting with the Provost and the Principal on April 18th to discuss the MAUT's proposals. The Provost and Principal were quite receptive to our concerns and welcomed the more detailed proposals that two informal working groups of the MAUT will develop in the coming months.

We have kept the CAUT abreast of these initiatives on our part and have requested that it postpone any censure until we will have had a chance to find out how much progress can be made along the lines of our proposals. The CAUT's executive director, David Robinson, informed us that no motion to censure McGill is currently being contemplated and that the CAUT is looking forward to hear about our progress on the Academic Freedom file in the coming months.

Reforming the Dean Selection Process

The MAUT's Council has twice voted for proposals to reform the Dean selection process with a view to increasing the democratic input of faculty members of the Faculty in question. A motion to this effect submitted in the Fall to Senate was withdrawn after some discussions with the Principal who objected to some parts of it. The MAUT's Collegiality Committee has decided to resubmit the reform proposal to Senate for discussion rather than as a motion to be voted over so that Senators will have an opportunity to thoroughly discuss the matter before any proposals for concrete changes will be put up for a vote.

Update: Conversion of Endowed Chairs to Limited Term (Renewable) Appointments

At the end of May 2018, holders of endowed chairs received a letter from Provost Manfredi informing them that their Chairs would forthwith be converted from unlimited to limited-term appointments. The MAUT vigorously supported the campaign led by Prof. Paul Yachnin to persuade the Provost that such a sudden and unilateral decision, *without extensive consultation with the MAUT*, was unfair and contrary to the principles of collegial governance. After several discussions the Provost accepted our arguments in part and decided that those who were recruited to McGill from elsewhere to occupy endowed chairs of indefinite duration would be grandfathered out of the new limited-term regulation.

Advising

During the past year, MAUT's advisors, led by our legal officer Joseph Varga, have taken on 113 cases. Of these, the most frequent (≥ 5) related to conflicts of interest, harassment, discipline, tenure, benefits, reappointments, salary, tenure appeals and grievances.

Workshops and Fora

The MAUT organized or helped organize several events this year to help members and prospective members find their way through the University's sometimes perplexing regulations and procedures. These included Orientation for New Tenure-Track Academic Staff (August 30th, 2018; 50 participants) and MAUT's Guide to the Univers(ity) (November 8th, 39 participants). On April 24th, right before the Spring General Meeting, MAUT's 18th annual Tenure and Mentoring Workshop for Non-Tenured Academic and Librarian Staff will take place. This is the eighteenth time (!) this extremely popular event is organized by Past-President Alenoush Saroyan. From participants' reactions it is clear that these events are greatly appreciated.

Social Events

In addition to these serious concerns and occasions, MAUT organizes several highly successful social events for members and prospective members every year. The MAUT Welcome Gathering on September 13th, 2018 drew a crowd of 101 participants. No fewer than 253 participants showed up for the popular Octoberfest Apple Picking event on September 30th. The Winter Brunch drew a crowd of 105 on January 27th, and 13 parents and children participated in Family Discovery Day at the Redpath Museum on April 7th.

General Overview of the MAUT's Activities 2018-2019

The detailed written reports posted by members of the Executive and by MAUT Standing Committee Chairs provide a better sense of the depth and scope of activities that have kept us busy this year. The list below provides just a superficial glimpse.

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| Advising | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 113 cases – Most frequent (≥ 5) related to: harassment, tenure, workload, conflict of interest, benefits, reappointment, discipline, salary, grievance, lab space, and research misconduct. |
| Agreements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Contract with Kids & Co. guaranteeing daycare spots for members was discontinued because of lack of member interest |
| Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 Newsletters (most recent)• Social media presence (Website, Facebook, Twitter feed, and YouTube channel)• New MAUT Homepage |

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| Consultation with Administration Regarding Regulations and Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies against sexual violence and harassment • Employment Regulations – Dismissal Process • Academic Freedom improvements • Dean Selection Process |
| Fora and Workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Forum on Academic Salaries - March 13, 2019 (101 Participants) • Tenure and Mentoring – 18th edition - April 24, 2019 (67 registered participants) • MAUT’s Guide to the University - November 8, 2018 (39 participants) |
| Membership Initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social events – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Welcome gathering (101 participants) ○ Octoberfest Apple picking (253 participants) ○ Winter Brunch (105 participants) ○ Discovery Event (13 participants) • 2 Orientations for new faculty (organized by the Administration) (total 53 participants – 12 joined MAUT) |
| Motions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4000 Donation to the CAUT Academic Freedom Fund • Increase the term of MAUT-LS Secretary-Treasurer to 2 years • Additional \$3000 to support Records Management Project • Revisions of Constitutional Bylaws: reduction of General Meetings to one (Spring) meeting per year • Creation of a Health Care Benefits Committee • Donation of \$500 to LGBTQ+ graduation event |
| Parity Committees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on Academic Salary Compensation (CASC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual merit and ATB increase ○ Gender pay equity ○ Travel Management ○ Professional Development Fund • CASC Working Group on Academic Salaries • Staff Benefits Advisory Committee (SBAC) • McGill Employees’ Groups meetings |
| Pro-active initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of members on teaching staff-student intimate relations • Statements in support of revisions of the Policy against Sexual Violence • Letter objecting to Bill 21 to premier Legault • Statement supporting Redmen name change |
| Relationship with External Organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FQPPU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership on the Executive, Strategic Planning, and Financing • CAUT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participation in workshops on equity, governance, grievance ○ Membership in Academic Freedom Committee |
| Work environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings with VP Beauchamp and others about the management of and disruption caused by ongoing construction ○ Regular meetings with McGill Community Council |

Acknowledgements

In short, MAUT has been extremely active on a great variety of fronts to help improve the working conditions of its members, and to maintain the collegial culture and governance practices that make McGill the great university that it is. But all this activity would be impossible without the rock-solid support of our tiny but immensely hard-working staff: Honore Kerwin-Borelli, our Administrative Officer, Joseph Varga, our Professional and Legal Officer and Jo-Anne Watier, our Membership Engagement Officer. And last but not least we need to thank all the members who have volunteered to take on a variety of roles, from advising to serving on committees to sitting on Council, without which we cannot function as a voluntary organization. I just want to remind all our members that working for MAUT is not just working on behalf of your colleagues. It is also something to proudly put in your service dossier for tenure and merit!