



OFS: A Different Kind of Intervention

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A couple of questions:

Did you know that there is an Ombudsperson (Ombudsman in French) for students at McGill?

Do you have some idea about what he does?



Mandate of the OPS

i) provide an independent, impartial and confidential process through which a student may seek the just, fair and equitable resolution of any university-related concern where normal non-adversarial administrative channels for addressing such matters are inappropriate in the circumstances or prove ineffective;

Mandate (cont.)

ii) where appropriate, review University policies, guidelines and procedures affecting students and make recommendations for change normally to the relevant University administrative officer;

Mandate (cont.)

iii) where appropriate, promote discussion of University-wide student related concerns.

Chapter 16 – Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Individuals and Groups Served

Type of requests for assistance	2010-11
Students (Applying, Current/Returning, Former students)	246
Groups	4
Faculty & Staff	5
Community Requests	6
Total	261

Student requests for assistance by educational level

Education Level	2010-11 (% , number of students)
Undergraduate	47.6 (117)
Graduate	48.8 (120)
Fellow / Resident	1.6 (4)
Postdoc	0.4 (1)
UNKNOWN	1.6 (4)
Total	100 (246)

Nature of Student Concerns

Academic	Issue	2010-11
	Admission	9
	Advising	0
	Courses/Program	32
	Examinations	16
	Inter/intra-faculty transfer	2
	Marks/Grades	39
	Practicum/Field Work/Stage	7
	Probation/Exclusion	12
	Other	14
	Subtotal	131

Nature of Student Concerns (cont.)

Inter-personal	Issue	2010-11
	Administrator/academic	3
	Administrator /non-academic	1
	Course Instructor/TA's	6
	Invigilators	0
	Other Student(s)	1
	Research/Thesis Supervisor	34
	Other	3
	Subtotal	48

Nature of Student Concerns (cont.)

Finances	Issue	2010-11
	Loan/Bursary	4
	Quebec Residency fee status	4
	Scholarship	1
	Student Fees	18
	Other	2
	Subtotal	29

Nature of Student Concerns (cont.)

	Issue	2010-11
Student Services		5
University Units		9
Student-run Org.		0
Residence Life		2
Student Discipline	Academic offense	4
	Non-Academic offense	0
	Subtotal	4

Nature of Student Concerns (cont.)

	Issue	2010-11
Procedural Issues		1
Intellectual Property		3
Harassment		3
Safety/Security		1
Other		10
TOTAL		246

Resolution Categories

Resolution Category	Number of Students 2010-11
Information/ advice	148
Intervention/ mediation	98



Recommendations 2012

The recommendations in my last annual report aimed at improving graduate student supervision. In addition I made the recommendation to have a mental health awareness week for the McGill community.



Another question

How many of you deal with students on a regular basis?



How would you deal with a situation like this?

What would you do?

Thomas missed a deadline to drop a course and ended up paying for it, and (worse) will likely get an F grade. In speaking with the student you become aware that he had experienced (or is still experiencing) a difficult situation – the loss or serious illness of a parent or loved one, a family crisis, an abusive relationship etc.

What would you do?(cont.)

As a consequence Thomas experienced a lack of appetite, insomnia, loss of concentration, and depression. The last thing on his mind was the drop deadline for courses. He has a note from McGill's Mental Health Clinic saying that he is being followed by the clinic for anxiety and depression, but the note is dated after the late-withdrawal deadline.

What would you do? (cont.)

The same situation may apply when a student misses an exam because of a mental health issue and he is given a failing grade. Again his medical note is dated after the exam had taken place.

Important to know: Up to this point the student has had an excellent academic record.



A Parting Thought:

Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.

Dr. Seuss



Thank you!
Merci