

December 8, 2011

**Questions submitted for the Principal?**

"...community engagement remains a crucial part of the McGill University identity." - <http://www.mcgill.ca/about/welcome> yet a culture of community giving among staff groups is not fostered beyond the annual Centraide appeal for cash donations. How do you think the university could better support participation by staff in activities that benefit our community? Do you believe the university has a role to play in this regard?

1. Recently, there seems to have been an increase in requests for "more consultation" by staff, students and professors and a desire by some to be more engaged in the decision-making processes of the university. Could you please comment on how well you believe the current consultation processes work and if you have any recommendations on how improvements, if any, could be made? 2. The recent strike by MUNACA members had some very bitter moments. Now that it looks as if a settlement has been reached, what are some ways in which we can help heal the wounds that have occurred on both sides of the "fence"? 3. You have been criticized by some who believe you are leading a "corporatization" of the university. What comments, if any, do you have on this characterization of your leadership? 4. Regardless of our points of view, many of us have felt both sympathy and admiration for you over the last few months as you have undergone many difficult trials and tribulations. Can you tell us how you have felt about this and how you are now?

1. Academic dress dates back to the middle ages. It embodies the ideas---radical then and now---of egalitarianism and meritocracy, since distinctions in dress reflect measured academic accomplishment, not social rank, class, or lineage. Academic dress is an important symbol that reflects what I think are our university's goals and aspirations. That is how I see things. How do you see the meaning of academic dress, such that it could be appropriate to introduce a variant form for individuals of a certain ethnic background (i.e. North American aboriginal)? [2] Does McGill feel like a community? This question is extremely important; it is our shared commitment to common goals that allows us to do excellent things in the face of challenging circumstances; and we rely on the financial support of our alumni. I am disturbed by a use of the "us" which is by turns inclusive and exclusive. Senior administration uses the name "McGill" to mean all of us when the spin is positive. On the other hand, in damage control mode or when preoccupied by the liability bogey-man, Senior administration appropriates the name "McGill" for itself, setting that name appositionally to our constituent groups, such as unions and student groups. I know that there are legalistic reasons for this on/off approach to nomenclature, but consider the bigger picture, that of the McGill community. Imagine that you could only use your family name when someone assuming a leadership role decides that you've been good, but not when you're deemed to have been embarrassing or awkward. In particular, how can communiqués refer to McGill negotiating with MUNACA, as if MUNACA weren't a vital part of McGill? In general, how can you expect all MEMBERS of the McGill COMMUNITY to really feel that way, and not just a part of a department or faculty or union or academic program, when our common affiliation is selectively granted and withheld? [3] Why are the Campus Community events entangled with DAR? Don't you think this trivializes the importance of cultivating our community?

1. Have you read the Preliminary Report of the Student Enquiry into November 10, and what do you think of it? 2. Will you commit to ensuring that the access to information request submitted to McGill in section 8.2 of that Preliminary Report will be expedited in a timely manner?

## McGill Managers Matters with Principal Heather Munroe-Blum

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1. What is the University doing regarding succession planning and promoting from within? I am a firm believer in internal recruitment and promotion. While recruiting external candidates has its own well valued pros, such as the opportunity to pick from a large pool of talented and experienced applicants, promotion from within, if carefully planned for, in some cases far outweighs the advantages of external recruitment. We may save on money, time and effort in recruiting individuals who already have an intimate knowledge of the organization and culture. This is also a great motivator for employees, a value not easily quantifiable in dollar terms, but extremely important for the fabric of the organization. We have to put effort and pride in training those with potential and great interest in development. A good initiative is the Leadership Development Program, which I believe deserves more visibility as it can be a good breeding ground for Managers and Leaders in the University. Such a program needs to be supported by well-crafted succession plans at department or unit level to accommodate graduates of such developmental efforts, and these succession plans have to at the very minimum be visible to employees.

2. Employment Equity What is the University doing for the employees that were denied an opportunity for advancement for reasons unrelated to their capabilities? Is there a process in place for these employees to request a review/ an appeal from this unjust treatment? Preferably not from the HR department, since they were part of the root cause of this problem initially. Minorities are usually afraid of retaliation or intimidation by isolation, etc... They may not ask for a review of their cases. Will the University go back to their applications for the positions that they have applied and have been discriminately denied(perceived by them in all fairness)

As a manager I would love to see more formal structures that bridge McGill staff and McGill students. Student internships, student research that uses the campus as a living lab, and a more public process to recruit student committee representatives are some ideas that our team at the Office of Sustainability have successfully been putting into place. They have built trust, strengthened mutual understanding, and united us all toward a shared vision for a better future. Do you see ways in which such strategies could be encouraged in other areas of the university? What do you see as the barriers and opportunities to such student-staff collaboration?

As our top level Executive can you describe your management style with your direct reports? What effect do you think your personal style of decision making and leadership might have on managers throughout the University?

As part of the Principal's Task Force on Diversity and Equity, what strategies will be implemented to support the hiring and promotion of managers in these populations through the ranks? Too often the excuse is that the candidate lacks the relevant experience to advance, but it is a catch-22 situation if a person is never given an opportunity to grow into SENIOR management positions. For example, the Senate Committee on Women has requested detailed annual statistics on hiring and promotion of women according to their 2008-2009 annual report: it is unusual that the University has remained silent on the subject on what is purportedly an important issue.

As per the title of these forums, if managers matter why is this the first time you are meeting with us as a group to answer our questions and discuss issues of concern to us? More specifically, given the timing of this meeting, why should this forum be perceived as a real desire to hear and address our concerns versus being a part of an overall PR strategy?

Can you elaborate on the phrase written in the notice sent to all by HR: For those of you who are not covered by overtime provisions (e.g. M-3 and M-4), and have worked an excessive number of overtime hours on a continuous basis, Deans or unit heads can submit requests for additional compensation to Human Resources (Total Compensation unit). These requests must be documented and authorized by the Dean or unit head and will be reviewed once the strike is over. Will manager Level 3-4 be fully monetary compensated for their efforts over the strike period?

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Dear HMB: Recently at a Management Forum meeting, Michael di Grappa showed us some statistics on the changes in the various branches of McGill staff in the last few years. We looked at it briefly, and I'd like to see it again--what especially caught my eye was, I believe, a 42% increase in the HR staff. I wonder if you would comment on this.

Dear HMB: Recently at a Management Forum meeting, Michael di Grappa showed us some statistics on the changes in the various branches of McGill staff in the last few years. We looked at it briefly, and I'd like to see it again--what especially caught my eye was, I believe, a 42% increase in the HR staff. I wonder if you would comment on this. Thank you.

Does she feel that "merit pay" with a fixed envelope within each unit really allows for a fair expression of a Managers contribution to McGill? Why do we not have a fixed cost of living increase across the board so that everyone can benefit and pay increases are not subjective and based on limited dollars within a department.

Does the University have any plans to increase the number of male employees in M jobs? or perhaps changing the equity subcommittee on women into the subcommittee on gender?

During my short stay at Macdonald Campus, I have noticed a decrease in facilities where students can actually sit down and do their work. I understand the strike had an impact on hours of operations especially the Library. However, the library computers do not meet the students needs from having specialized software to do their work or homework and the fact that the library has priority access to their computer rooms. Today, the students at Mac are left with one computer lab with nearly 20 computers to work with. The other labs were turned into teaching rooms which are booked all most all week. The university focus has been shifting from teaching and research oriented to research oriented. Is this the right direction that we should be going through? Without students we have no one to assist in research or prospective researchers.

During your recent webinar you stated that on November 10 McGill administration did not call the police, Security did. Isn't Security a part of your administration?

escalating costs of McGill MBA program: pros and cons

Even before the strike, employee morale seemed to be at an all time low. A contributing factor seemed to be the various high level appointments your administration has created where, historically, there were none before. The consensus is that McGill now has a more "corporate" like climate were it was more "academic" before, complete with all the "have" vs. "have not" baggage that comes with it. Would you say this is a fair assesment of how things are, or is this perception way off ?

Given that the strike has interfered with much of our usual managerial work, slowing down or halting progress vis a vis our S.M.A.R.T. objectives, the merit exercise will be problematic for many offices. In the interest of equity and practicality, would the University be willing to implement across the board increases for 2010-2011, rather than the usual ranked scale?

Hello Principal Munroe-Bloom, I appreciate the 4 extra days holidays at Xmas but I wouldn't call them a thank you for the hard work I did to support the University during the strike. Many of my manager colleagues were not legally allowed to do striker work loads but yet are also benefiting from the days off. I also wonder if the strikers are going to get the 4 extra days off also if they come back to work before week's end.

How do you suggest we re-establish trust amongst all members of the McGill community, following the tension that arose during the fall 2011 semester as a result of the MUNACA strike, student demonstrations and police intervention on campus?

How does an organization that supposedly has so much local knowledge about labour relations get so far out of touch with its employees that it failed to get its info out to them before they could be 'brainwashed' by the union?

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How does the 5 year contract with MUNCA impact compensation, benefits and pensions for M? Will M be affected positively or negatively by the MUNACA contract.

How has the MUNACA strike impacted the SRI projects? Can you please provide an update and revised timeline for these projects?

How will McGill identify, reward and promote the true managers who work hard and often aren't appreciated properly due to the lack of a coherent and streamlined performance evaluation system?

In difficult times, why does the University not rescind non-critical budget items from units, including but not limited to, travel/conference attendance?

In our department we have a lot of new parents. Is there a way we could improve the balance between work and family at McGill?

In recent months, students have complained about the university administration's priorities: many assert that students are in fact our last priority and that we put matters like our international reputation before the student experience in our initiatives. How can those of us who interface with students daily possibly argue with this when our website offers an institutional "Ten Points of Pride", in which # 2 is Our Students, and #1 is Our Reputation?

It is clear that the University was not budging on several major labour issues which led to the MUNACA strike. Do you fully understand to what extent the strike has affected us all not only in terms of the work load but especially, the morale of the organization. What are some of the conditions that will improve for Managers after these negotiations with MUNACA, with the hopes they will also increase morale?

Just wanted to say I appreciate the efforts and energy that has been placed on transparency these days. The strike has had positive benefits as well and I hope to keep building the community with the sort of spirit the Principal is bringing forward.

Last year McGill University spent \$33 million on contract services and professional fees. What efforts does senior administration make to see if certain competencies exist within McGill before outsourcing work and is there a way to give McGill employees short-term projects (apart from the so-called development positions that are posted on HR) to develop their own competencies and to save money on consultants.

Many managers at McGill often feel like second-class citizens. Many of us have advanced degrees and training and are experts in our own areas: we know about finance, or management, we can write, we supervise staff, we make things happen. What ideas do you have to value managers more in the eyes of faculty members and, more generally, in the eyes of the university?

Many McGill employees classified as M's are not "true" managers in the sense that they do not supervise any staff. I've heard that MUNACA is going to pursue this fact and ensure this class of employees end up in MUNACA. Is this true and what is your opinion in this matter ?

Many people have been told that their Merit increase was reduced because part of the available merit funds were redirected in order to bring someone up to the mid-point of their salary grade. Is this practice part of the Pay-for-Performance scheme envisioned by the Principal?

My questions relates to career advancement and planning of HYPO employees. I am curious to know if there will be a mandate in the future to support high performing employees to map out the various career opportunities within McGill.

Now that MUNACA has successfully negotiated a pay increase for its members will that have an impact on M salaries?

Since the strike I have found that I have too many staff. - What now? We are spending salaries on people we do not need.

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Since the strike is starting its fourth month, many, if not most managers, have been unable to concentrate their efforts on meeting the objectives outlined on their performance dialogue for the reference year of January 2011 to December 31, 2012. Since our merit is in essence 'pay for performance' and measured by the results of our performance dialogue, how will not meeting our objectives affect the merit process this year? Will merit be distributed across the board under these unusual circumstances or will the additional responsibilities that so many of us carried during the strike be weighed into the distribution of merit?

There are many "term" employees hired at the M level whose positions eventually are posted on the positions available listing which, more often than not, result in being false / misleading postings; i.e., the position was intended for the "term" employee all along and current M staff apply only to find out that the application process was a waste of their time. The position was going to the "term" employee" right for the get go. What can/will the Principal do to curb this practise as it prevents growth and development opportunities for current full-time M staff.

This year we have witnessed the proliferation of smaller bargaining units on campus. I wonder if you feel that this reflects a broader feeling of insecurity among University employees, and how you think that it will affect university governance in the future.

Training for Ms so they can advance their careers. Can you do something to make sure that all managers have opportunity to participate in training and that their supervisors do not continually block them under the guise that they cannot be spared?

Washrooms at McGill - the question may sound funny but it is important for the overall international and national picture of the University to have washrooms in good condition. This is a place used by students, staff and visitors; it is our business card towards the world. The washrooms in majority of buildings across the campus are in catastrophic shape. Is there any plan to change this picture?

We have seen a number of senior administrative positions go to external candidates in the recent past. Is there a mandate from senior administration (to human resources) to develop McGill's non-academic staff for positions of leadership and senior posts, and if so can you state explicitly what that mandate is and how you see it is being manifest currently?

What are or could be meaningful responses from those who are in the top income brackets both here at McGill and outside of McGill to address high salaries and corporate greed? Are there ways the public can motivate those who have power and wealth to really work toward achieving better conditions for the middle and lower classes that do not include giving bonuses to those who already make 6 figures or more?

What are the University's plans for Managers to reintegrate MUNACA employees?

What is the University doing to retrain and promote young managers (ie those under 35 years old, and particularly those that are McGill alums). HR seems to block any ability our managers have to redefine M job categories and promote from within (ie the policy that we are restricted to 6% increases ONLY, but that new hires are able to negotiate from scratch within the broad job category? My supervisor has recommended that I quit, and then reapply for my job in order to get an increase on par with my JUNIOR colleagues, who are new hires). Our HR is a laughingstock.

What measures are being put into place to ensure a stable work environment for all McGill employees? (future strike prevention plan)

What processes or regulations are you planning to put in place in order for a three-month strike not hinder the University's day to day activities? Unions and its members have a right to strike, but a three month strike is almost a historical event, can we instill time limits for strikes whereby you can legislate back to work employees with full pay until a proper settlement is reached?

What role will you take to help heal the relationships, within McGill, after this long strike.

What steps will you take to honor the special recognition (time off, compensation, recognition) for the M's who held the fort during the MUNACA strike be honored, as the strike is likely over, to prevent that they fall by the wayside. Too often, M's have been taken for granted and have unjustifiably had bad press.

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What would you most like to see happen at McGill in terms of making this a great place not only to study but also to work for faculty and staff?

When changing jobs within McGill (and changing grades) is there room for salary negotiation?

When the MUNACA strike began managers were initially informed that for the duration of the strike no vacation would be permitted, even if pre-approved, and that a medical note would be required for each incidental illness day. Why did the university choose to implement these confrontational and socially irresponsible (in the case of medical notes) measures, which were clearly not based on trust and an acknowledgment of the valuable contributions and cooperation managers have always demonstrated?

Who's decision was to offer the extra 4 days to ALL MCGILL EMPLOYEES and why? Also does AMUSE receive the 4 days since they are considered McGill Employees? Thank you for your time.

Why are some student groups being asked to remove McGill from their names? It's been suggested this was to minimize embarrassment if a group engaged in inappropriate behaviour. Is that the case? If so, rather than disengaging many students (and alumni) couldn't we look at having groups agree in principle to mediation if in conflict with another group (be it another student group or the administration in general) if they include McGill in their name? I feel that would keep the emphasis on the community working together to resolve problems, rather than preemptively excluding parts of our community. The student group I've been most embarrassed by is the football team (and past hazing activities), and they haven't dropped McGill from the team name. I hope all new and future team members will do the McGill name proud.

Why are the Managers level 3-4 not compensated in the same manner as level 1-2 for overtime?

Why are we not given the cost of living each year? The merit system applied does not work and is generally considered sanctioned favoritism. Considering a 1% deficit is "not a deficit" as per the Provost, why have our benefits been cut by a million? Why is there no effort to achieve parity for all staff with those holding similar positions at other institutions?

Why do management employees not receive an annual cost of living increase?

Why McGill as a higher education institute does not offer better opportunities to its staff for continuing their education in Masters or PhD level compare to the other companies?( A good number of companies who value education cover the education expenses while McGill covers only the tuition fee). Why McGill does not offer longer leave of absence for continuing education in graduate level(degree programs) to its staff? Why McGill allows hiring supervising managers who don't have a university degree. If we don't value education who will?

Will new Ms ever obtain job security in the future?

Will the University investigate the provision of an early retirement scheme for M employees?

Will you ever consider whether uniforms should be implemented for the Management staff? Or would you prefer to establish a dress code for all Managers such as business casual?

You keep referring (for instance in your emails of November 13 and 21 to the McGill community) to Dean Jutras' investigation into the events of November 10 as being "independent". But Dean Jutras reports directly to the Provost, who was involved in the events of November 10, and you will be the Chair of his decanal reappointment committee. Bearing these things in mind, will you acknowledge that his investigation cannot be independent?