

OPERATING PROCEDURES REGARDING DEMONSTRATIONS, PROTESTS AND OCCUPATIONS ON MCGILL UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

These operating procedures provide the framework for determining whether or not action or intervention is necessary in the case of demonstrations, protests, occupations, and actions that contravene internal policies or the law. In general, tolerance is expected for the expression of dissent, and for a certain degree of inconvenience arising from the means by which dissenting opinions may be expressed. At all times, decisions will be sensitive to context and will reflect the exercise of sound judgment by those in charge.

These operating procedures explain how the University will manage a range of situations, with a view to defusing potentially unsafe situations before they get out of hand. The operating procedures do not constitute disciplinary procedures and they do not replace policies such as the *Charter of Student Rights*, the *Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures*, or the *Statement of Principles Concerning Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*.

Demonstrations, assemblies, protests and occupations are deemed to be peaceful if they involve no use of physical force, threats, intimidation, harassment or other forms of assault, and if their intensity, duration and location are such that, given the circumstances surrounding them, they:

- allow the University to maintain a safe and secure environment for all members of the McGill community and for visitors to our campuses;
- permit the conduct of University activities, such as learning, teaching, research, support services, administration, or of meetings and events which have been duly authorized by the University;
- allow members of the University to attend to their activities on University premises;
- occur in spaces or rooms that are generally accessible to all members of the University community, but not in classrooms, laboratories (including farm fields and animal facilities at Macdonald Campus), libraries, staff or administrators' offices, or the reception areas of such offices;
- allow access to, or egress from, buildings or spaces inside them;
- avoid unreasonable risks to persons, University property or assets.

Demonstrations outside a class or meeting (including silent or symbolic protests) that do not substantially interfere with the communication inside or impede access to the class or meeting are an acceptable form of dissent.

Intensity, duration and location will be assessed with a view to ensuring the safety of members of the University community, in terms of criteria such as the degree of disruption of University activities, the suitability of the location relative to the number of participants, the length of the disturbance relative to its location, the level of disturbance created by noise, tone of discourse, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The University has a responsibility to uphold the *Statement of Principles Concerning Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*, balancing this responsibility with the need to maintain a safe environment that reasonably provides for members of the McGill community to conduct their activities. The University's decisions must involve the exercise of sound judgment, taking into account all relevant circumstances.

Demonstrators, protesters, and occupiers are responsible for their actions. Depending on the circumstances, certain behaviours may lead to measures (including disciplinary measures) being taken under McGill regulations, policies and employment-related agreements, covering faculty, students, and administrative and support staff, or under civil or criminal law.

Demonstrations, protests and occupations will be monitored as appropriate. If such activities go beyond the parameters described here, and if demonstrators, protesters or occupiers refuse to comply with instructions from Security Services personnel, acting wherever possible under the direction of the Vice-President (Administration and Finance), such as requiring demonstrators to reduce the level of noise, to identify themselves, to leave a particular location, to move to a more suitable location or to disperse, appropriate actions will be taken, including calling civil authorities, if necessary.

Prior to taking such action, University representatives will, whenever reasonable, issue a clear warning to the effect that the activities have gone beyond the parameters described here. Such warning may include a statement concerning their intention to refer some of the activities to the attention of appropriate authorities (such as disciplinary officers) for them to determine whether disciplinary measures should be imposed.