

**Subcommittee on Women
Annual Report to the Joint Senate-Board Committee on Equity**

2008-2009

(submitted by Professor Abby Lippman, Chair)

Membership

Abby Lippman, Chair	Medicine
Kathleen Cullen	Physiology
Rhonda Amsel	Psychology
Gloria Tannenbaum	Medicine/Pediatrics
Lynn Butler-Kisber	Education
Ji Zhang	Dentistry
Sema Borlas	Management
Natalie Amar	MCRTW
Edith Zorychta	Pathology/MAUT
Kim Brooks	Law
Dora Koop	Management
Lara Braitstein	Religious Studies
Natalie Oswin	Geography
(Sarah Turner	Geography: on sabbatical)
Jacqueline Bede	Macdonald (Plant Sciences)
Susan Czarnocki	Libraries/Alumnae
Veronica Amberg	SEDE
Jane Everett	Dean of Students
Kay Turner	SSMU
Joanna Bougie	PGSS
Adwoa Afful	WSSA/Art History
Marie-Eve Veilleux	Cont Ed Students' Association
Jana Luker	Student Services
Erin McDonagh	Student Services
Kelly Murphy	Occupational Health
Diana Lee	McGill Women's Network Group
Anne Kosowski	MUNASA and Earth/Planetary Sciences)

Mandate

The Subcommittee on Women (SCOW) continued to work in accord with existing guidelines that required it to make recommendations as appropriate and as resources allowed on the following topics:

1. Advocacy of Women's Rights and Promotion of Women
 - Providing positive action regarding the employment and promotion of women at McGill University
 - Promoting equity for women in salary and pension issues
 - Monitoring representation of women on University committees and in administrative positions
 - Monitoring policy and practices affecting women
 - Providing advocacy for the problems of obtaining research funding
 - Advancing women's studies issues

2. Initiation and Consolidation of Women's Activities.

This aspect of SCOW's original mandate had been assumed in large part by the McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women and now by the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies (IGSF) that has replaced it. SCOW has offered its willingness and desire to collaborate with the IGSF when there are issues of mutual interest. As well, SCOW will continue to offer its own advice and support as appropriate; moreover, we will continue to support the activities of women students and all staff.

3. Liaison and Networking for Women

- Assisting in the sponsorship of conferences on issues pertinent to women in academic and workplace contexts
- Facilitating contact with other women's groups at the University as well as regional and national organizations

Meetings

SCOW met monthly from September 2008 through June 2009, with work carried out by e-mail between these gatherings on priority issues (e.g., salary equity, employment equity, sexual harassment, ensuring women's recognition in awards, etc.). SCOW also had an end-of-year social gathering to thank all members and others who had supported it during the year. It was especially satisfying to see the large number and wide range of people who took part in SCOW meetings; these individuals represented all McGill "constituencies."

Overview

SCOW was active throughout the year primarily in the first and third of its mandated areas of activity. It continued to focus on issues that affect equity for women at McGill University and in this regard we maintained our attention to issues of pay equity for women and strategies to support their hiring and promotion through the ranks. We were pleased that the long-awaited response from the Provost on academic salary equity was finally submitted to Senate in the late spring. (The SCOW was privileged to have a session with Michael Smith about the study in January prior to his presentation to Senate.) We will be continuing to review the ways in which recommendations are carried out now that this material is available.

SCOW also supported other initiatives to make the campus "women-friendly" (see below) and worked collaboratively with other units on campus. It also took part in the new faculty orientation in August 2008, an activity SCOW plans to make a regular part of its networking work.

Pay Equity

SCOW welcomes the steps towards transparency undertaken by the University to study and assess salary equity for academics, and we will continue to monitor the range of salaries according to professorial rank. A continuing concern remains the matter of pay equity for *part time* and *non-tenured staff* as well as for *non-academic staff*. Unfortunately, SCOW was unable to move forward on this in 2008-09.

Conciliation Work/Study/Family

Balancing their multiple commitments remains difficult for women students, staff, and faculty, and the lack of affordable and local daycare remains a serious concern. SCOW looks forward to providing input to the working groups set up by the Principal to ensure that policies and practices are in place that will enhance the capacity of the University to recruit and retain women staff, and to provide an equitable experience to women

students. In this regard, serious support of “conciliation” policies and childcare arrangements is likely to be essential.

Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Discrimination

The SCOW chair was the representative of the JSBCE on the group that reviewed this policy. Recommendations for change were discussed in SCOW and it is pleased that a document will be presented to the Senate at an early fall (2009) meeting.

Inclusive Language Guidelines

SCOW worked collaboratively with Student Services and the SEDE Office in helping draft “Language Equity/Inclusive Language Guidelines.”

Employment Equity

Following the deposition of Kathy Cullen’s report on the employment of women academics over 2 years ago, SCOW has tried to continue her work by requesting detailed annual statistics on hiring and promotion of women. However, no formal response has been received as yet.

“HERstory” project

SCOW has initiated a project “HERstory” with the goal of compiling the history and evolution of SCOW including the creation of McGill Daycare space, the "liberation" of the cloakroom in the Faculty Club and much else. A student intern is being sought to work on the project which SCOW now hopes to have completed for International Women's Day 2010.

Varia

1. SCOW was a co-sponsor of visit of Lennard Davis for the mini-Beatty organized by the Office of Students with Disabilities. This was a great success and the SCOW hopes it will be only the start of more concerted attention to disabilities studies and all those on campus with disabilities.
2. SCOW is aware of the absence of coordination in the nomination of women for various external (and internal) awards and continued its efforts to set up some regular mechanism to facilitate this. This work will continue.
3. The recommendation from the SCOW for formal recognition by the University of 6 December and 8 March, important days for women and women’s rights, appears to have been accepted: announcements did appear on the McGill website on both days. We will be working for even greater recognition in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

As has been noted in previous reports, SCOW continues to give attention to issues raised in recommendations summarized for the past three years in the SCOW Annual Report reflecting how, "despite over a decade of concern, McGill has made limited progress towards establishing a genuinely diverse faculty and that obtaining information to monitor the situation remains difficult." Specifically, SCOW has been recommending to the JSBCE – and this year’s group continues to support, in particular -- the need for the process called for in recommendation (a) below.

As well, SCOW reiterates its request that McGill undertake a "Climate Survey" among all staff, academic and non-academic, to collect baseline information against which any future changes might be measured.

In this regard, SCOW notes once more that there has been no further word on the status of what are supposed to be publicly-available annual reviews of hiring. The SCOW is hopeful that this process will not stall, and we will continue to discuss the best ways for us to contribute to this process, especially to ensure it is being implemented.

SCOW notes that despite over a decade of concern, obtaining information to monitor diversity on campus remains difficult. Thus, the majority of its recommendations this year are regrettably similar to those of previous years.

SCOW again **recommends to the JSBCE**

- (a) the establishment of an effective University-wide process to specifically address the issues of diversity and equity as they affect faculty, in particular;: (i) collecting and tracking relevant data on an annual basis; (ii) faculty recruitment; and (iii) faculty retention, professional development and academic advancement.
- (b) a survey of the gender-related pay equity issues for part time and non-tenured academic staff, and administrative and support staff be undertaken so that any existing anomalies can be adjusted over a three year period. These analyses should be reported to the university community.
- (c) a process be put in place to monitor ongoing progress on these issues and to provide an annual review that is made available to the JSBCE.
- (d) that mechanisms to promote and coordinate nominations of women for internal and external awards and honors be established.