

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

1 June 2013 – 31 May 2014
(submitted by Professor Sarah Turner, Co-Chair)

Membership 2013-2014

Susan Gaskin, Co-Chair	Civil Engineering and Applied Mechanics
Sarah Turner, Co-Chair	Geography
Amberg, Veronica	SEDE
Amsel, Rhonda	Psychology
Baum, Shari	School of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Bede, Jacqueline	MacDonald Campus
Benedetti, Andrea	Medicine
Braitstein, Lara	Religious Studies
Butler-Kisber, Lynn	Education
Czarnocki, Susan	Libraries/Alumnae
Davis, Linda	School of Social Work
Hnatchuk, Darlene	Director, Student Services
Hyde, Sandra	Anthropology
Jones, Julie	Library (Social Science)
Kok, Roe-Min	Music
Koop, Dora	Management
Lee, Diana H.	McGill Women's Network
Lippman, Abby	Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Occupational Health
Lord, Francis	Law (Graduate student)
Luker, Jana	Executive Director, Student Services
MacDonald, Mary Ellen	Dentistry
Narain, Vrinda	Law
Strong-Wilson, Teresa	Education
Stewart-Kanigan, Claire	SSMU rep
Tannenbaum, Gloria	Pediatrics
Tozer, Angela	History
Van Lierop, Dea	Urban Planning (Graduate student)
Yu-Yun (Mercedes) Shiue	PGSS
Yuen, Tracey	PGSS
Zorychta, Edith	Pathology/MAUT

Our Mandate

The Senate Subcommittee on Women (SSCOW) makes recommendations to the Joint Senate Board Committee on Equity (JSBCE) 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 - Supporting research and teaching on women

2) Initiation and Consolidation of Women's Activities

Will collaborate with the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies (IGSF) when there are issues of mutual interest. As well, SSCOW will continue to offer its own advice about and support to 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

Activities during the year:

SSCOW was active on a broad number of issues this year. It has been observed that most direct discrimination of women has now been removed at McGill, however indirect discrimination or undervaluation of women's achievements remains. The issues covered this year are summarized below.

The Subcommittee on Women (SSCOW) met in person three times during the teaching year with significant amounts of work carried out by e-mail between these gatherings. Agendas for each meeting were pre-circulated, and minutes of each meeting were recorded. Between 4 and 10 members attended the meetings and all decisions were made by consensus. Other members were consulted by email on substantive issue to gain broader representation.

Focus for the year - Day care facilities for McGill faculty, staff and students.

We initially decided to focus on one core project for the year, namely to improve access to daycare for faculty, staff and students at McGill. SSCOW members gathered a range of literature and data on day care both at McGill and across Canada. It generally points to the sorry state McGill is in regards to the institution supporting access to daycare, with a waitlist of over 700 children for McGill daycare facilities. We invited guest speakers from the PGSS Family Care Caucus to come and talk to us about their work to advocate on behalf of graduate students needing to find daycare facilities. From this research and meetings we wrote a proposal to gain funds from the McGill Sustainability Fund for a 2 year position (in the first instance) of a 'Family Resources Co-ordinator'. This person would be based at SEDE and would have the mandate to:

- seek out fundraising for daycare on campus (e.g. alumni, Board of Governors, agitate re Royal Vic.)
- liaise to different day cares in Montreal and try to build good relations to get spots for McGill-linked children
- provide information and guidance for McGill folks with children [hopefully extending in future to those with elder care and sick relative concerns too]
- undertake research on best practice from other universities and institutions.

Letters of support were gained from:

- SEDE office (Veronica Amberg)
- Associate Provost, Policies, Procedures and Equity (Lydia White)
- Dean of Graduate Studies (Martin Kreisworth)
- Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) (Ollivier Dyens)
- Executive Director, Services for Students (Jana Luker)
- Students Society of McGill University (SSMU)
- Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS)
- McGill Assoc. of University Teachers (MAUT)
- McGill University Non-Academic Staff Association (MUNASA)

While the rather time-consuming proposal itself was unsuccessful at McGill Sustainability Fund, it appears that our activities and discussions has gone some way to convince the University to create a one day a week position in Human Resources to help support faculty to find daycare. This position will start in late 2014. SSCOW will decide in early Fall 2014 whether to reapply to SPF for a revised position, given that there is still no centralised support for staff and students to find suitable daycare.

Class timetabling policy change

New regulations were implemented regarding timetabling of classes in Fall 2013. These raised considerable concerns with regards to a lack of flexibility around the childcare and other care needs (e.g. elderly parents) of faculty. There was protest and discussion from many sectors of the University and SSCOW added our voice regarding our concerns. Sarah Turner spoke at a MAUT Council meeting in Nov, where Deputy Provost Dyens, Kathleen Massey (Registrar) and Anne Walsh (Assoc. Registrar) were present; as well as having constructive meetings with these individuals privately. A revised, more family-friendly policy was adopted later in the semester, based on this wide ranging feedback.

Nomination for honorary awards

SSCOW submitted a nomination for Dame Sylvia Cartwright. Background: Previously served on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Played a major role in the drafting of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Appointed to sit as one of two international judges in the Trial Chamber of the Cambodia Tribunal by Cambodia's Supreme Council of Magistracy.

Our proposal was rejected (with no feedback). Perhaps because Dame Cartwright is not Canadian.

Sexual harassment posters and flyers

Given on-going concerns regarding sexual harassment, a poster was designed with information detailing the Downtown and MacDonald campus support/resources available regarding harassment, rape or sexual assault. Two hundred laminated colour posters have been distributed around the campuses. Another 200 coloured flyers were distributed at the University's Forum on 'Consent', in February 2014. We also lobbied to have an email go to all students and staff on this matter from the Dean of Students, but to our knowledge this was never done (despite repeated requests).

SSCOW Website revamp and communications

- Our website has been extensively revamped, moved over to the central McGill web system, and updated with relevant material and upcoming meetings or seminars of interest. <https://www.mcgill.ca/senate-subcommittee-women/senate>
- We designed two informal logos for our new site.
- Media releases for sent for March 8. International Women's Day.
- We provided RA support for the student parents website to be updated: <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/studentparents/>

Women in Academic Leadership

Research was undertaken as to what resources and workshops were available across North America for women academics to progress and gain support in academic leadership roles (listed now on SSCOW website). Discussions have been initiated with Associate Provost, Policies, Procedures and Equity (Lydia White) and Associate Provost Budget & Resources (Ghyslaine McClure) with regards to a possible seminar series for tenured women.

Sarah Turner
22 August 2014