
TO: Senate

FROM: Senators Adrienne Tessier, Brooklyn Frizzle, & Angela Campbell

SUBJECT: Motion Regarding Queer History Month

DATE: May 12, 2021

DOCUMENT #: D20-65

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE The celebration of Queer History Month, though marked in recent years through events and programming, has not been formally recognized by the McGill Senate.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The Queer Community, throughout its history, has experienced a multitude of oppressions in everyday life to the present day. These are reproduced within institutions and society at large, including at McGill. McGill University has a long history of Queer activism. Groups such as Gay McGill (now known as Queer McGill) were instrumental in bringing Queer rights to the forefront of academic discussions at the University. Gay McGill, originally an association started by McGill professors, was one of the driving forces behind queer conversations not only at McGill, but more importantly in a greater Montréal context.

Queer History Month (QHM) has been celebrated annually in October at McGill since 2018 and is the first initiative of its kind in Canadian universities. Led by the Equity Team in the Office of the Provost, it has been a collaborative effort across units in the campus community. Engagement and support has been provided by Queer McGill, the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies (IGSF) McGill, the JBSCE Subcommittee on Queer People, the McGill Library, the Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education (OSVRSE), Queer McGill, the Queer Grad Club, PGSS Equity & Diversity, the Union for Gender Empowerment (UGE), the Office of Social Accountability and Community Engagement in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, and many other McGill and community partners. Events have included screenings, panels, performances and featured speakers. Every Queer History Month to date has centred BIPOC and Two-Spirit voices to create increasingly diverse and respectful spaces here on campus.

The stated goal of QHM is to “raise awareness, advance education, and increase visibility of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities by recognizing their history and contributions, building bridges, and bringing together McGill students, staff, faculty, and alumni and Montréal community members.”

**PRIOR
CONSULTATION**

Community groups in support:
Dr. Kenneth Melville McGill Black Faculty and Staff Caucus
First People's House
Joint Board-Senate Subcommittee on Equity - Racialized and Ethnic Persons Subcommittee
Joint Board-Senate Subcommittee on Equity - Subcommittee on Queer People
MAUT
McGill Black Students' Network
PGSS Equity & Diversity
Queer Engineer
Queer McGill
SSMU - Indigenous Affairs
Social Accountability and Community Engagement - Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Union for Gender Empowerment

**SUSTAINABILITY
CONSIDERATIONS**

Financial sustainability of events and programming; environmental sustainability and universal accessibility of the events themselves.

**IMPACT OF
DECISION AND
NEXT STEPS**

Identify resources and coordinated approach for future annual recognition and celebration of Queer History Month.
Identify strategic priorities for expanding Queer-affirmative outreach, enrollment, mentoring, and curricula and community partnerships across the university.

**MOTION OR
RESOLUTION
FOR APPROVAL**

Whereas McGill has already demonstrated leadership in being the first Canadian University to celebrate QHM as of 2018

Whereas, to date, QHM has benefited from leadership within the Equity Team of the Provost's office with support from central administrative units and Faculties, and would benefit from formal endorsement and engagement across McGill's campuses;

Whereas, in the past, QHM has been celebrated at McGill University by students, staff, faculty, units, associations, and other groups without formal endorsement of the McGill Senate;

Whereas Queer community experiences and accomplishments in Montreal and Canada are often overlooked and neglected in terms of historical, cultural, social, and economic importance;

Whereas celebration of McGill's Queer community is essential to the wellbeing of its members;

Whereas, Queer History Month programming engages staff, students, faculty, and community members and organizations in Montreal;

Be it resolved that Senate endorse the formal recognition and promotion of October as Queer History Month by McGill University and support the University's plans to provide resources for the annual celebration of Queer History Month;

Be it further resolved that Senate endorse McGill University exploring additional opportunities to support (a) academic initiatives that highlight the contributions and scholarship of the Queer community; and (b) facilitate the enhanced representation of Queer community members on campus.

APPENDICES

None
