

Question

TO: Senate

QUESTION FROM: Senators Sobat and Rourke

RESPONSE FROM: Senator Dyens, Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning)

SUBJECT: Question Regarding the Impact of International Tuition Deregulation on McGill's International Student Community

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2015

PREAMBLE: Whereas, at Senate's Open Discussion on McGill's International Strategy, the International Student Community was identified as a key strategic pillar of the University;¹

Whereas, the Principal cited the diversity of this community as a point of pride, stating that "a richer learning environment is created when you can bring together different perspectives, which comes from having people of different cultures, ethnic backgrounds and so on";²

Whereas, in response to the Question Regarding McGill's Stance on the Deregulation of International Tuition Fees at the Senate meeting of January 21, 2015, the previous Provost indicated that in government discussions "McGill has argued that international tuition should be deregulated for all programs," and that international tuition rates would be determined based on "careful assessment of market conditions and implications for the McGill experience as Canada's most national and international university";³

Whereas, every academic program at McGill that has been deregulated has seen a significant and immediate increase in international tuition rates;⁴

Whereas, statistics suggest that significant and immediate increases to tuition rates decrease access and socio-economic diversity in post-secondary education, even when accompanied by increases in financial aid programs;⁵

¹ "Consultation Document for the Development of McGill's International Strategy,"

www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/4_d15-06_open_discussion_on_mcgills_international_strategy_web.pdf

² "Senate discusses plans for internationalization," www.mcgilltribune.com/news/senate-discusses-plans-for-internationalization-9019231/

³ "Question Regarding McGill's Stance on the Deregulation of International Tuition Fees,"

https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/2_question_regarding_international_tuition_with_response.pdf

⁴ "Deregulation of programs results in tuition increases for international students,"

<http://mcgilltribune.com/news/deregulation-of-programs-results-in-tuition-increases-for-international-students/>

⁵ "Tuition fee regulation: Who pays?" <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2006001/9183-eng.htm>

Whereas, the University has committed to allocating 30% of net new tuition revenues to financial aid programs;

Whereas, in 2013-2014 McGill financial aid covered 54% of tuition for international students in *regulated* programs (excluding ancillary), and 23% of the total cost of attendance (up from 19% in 2007-2008);⁶

Whereas, in 2013-2014 McGill financial aid covered only 25% of tuition for international students in *deregulated* programs (excluding ancillary), and 15% of the total cost of attendance (down from 20% in 2007-2008);⁷

Whereas, the McGill MasterCard Foundation Program funds a total of 91 international students from Sub-Saharan Africa over a 10-year lifespan;⁸

QUESTION:

1) Is the University's stance on international tuition deregulation compatible with the desire for a diverse international student community?

2) Is the University willing to make sacrifices in terms of educational accessibility and/or revenue generation in the context of its International Strategy?

3) What measures can the University establish to achieve balance between educational accessibility and international tuition rates and how will members of the community be involved in achieving this balance?

RESPONSE:

The Quebec government has permitted deregulation of tuition fees for international students in some programs (Law, Science, Engineering, and Management). McGill has raised the tuition in these programs to the levels of peer institutions in Canada. The provincial government provides no grant support to the University for students registered in these programs, but neither does it collect the difference between the international tuition and the base Quebec-resident tuition, as it does for regulated programs. The funds collected from international, regulated tuition are redistributed across the Quebec network of Universities, with the result that McGill is a net contributor to this system. With deregulation, the tuition paid by international students stays with the University.

To answer each of your questions directly:

1. The short answer to this question is, yes. McGill University is committed to being one of the most internationally diverse institutions in the world, as we currently are, because this enhances the McGill experience for the entire McGill community. Decreases in government support make this a constant challenge,

⁶ Statistics from McGill Financial Aid Program, 2014-15

⁷ Statistics from McGill Financial Aid Program, 2014-15

⁸ "About the Program," <https://www.mcgill.ca/mastercardfdn-scholars/about-program>

but we are committed to growing our financial aid program and to constantly look for more and better ways to address our students' financial needs. Each student's financial needs are carefully assessed to determine an appropriate level of financial assistance. To allow students and their parents to budget, as well as to increase accessibility, McGill freezes tuition for international students in deregulated programs once they are accepted.

2. Consultations on the University's international strategy have only just begun; consequently, it is premature to speculate on what choices might be made in the context of that strategy. Nevertheless, the University community can be assured that the strategy will not entail any sacrifices with respect to the quality of its academic programs or the core principles of its mission, including equity and inclusiveness.
 3. McGill endeavours to remain as accessible as possible, and to do so the University has increased its financial aid program substantially, from \$10M to \$26M between 2004 and 2014. The McGill financial aid program is meant to support as many students as possible and to be as generous as possible. McGill makes financial assistance available to all students regardless of geographic origin or fee residency, and this constitutes a very strong financial commitment to support international students and advance our international mission. Expanding the availability of student financial aid, especially for international students, is among the highest priorities of the University's philanthropic fundraising efforts.
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