

# Memorandum

**Secretariat**

845 Sherbrooke Street West, Room 313  
Montreal, Quebec, H3A 0G4  
Tel: 514-398-3948 | Fax: 514-398-4758

**TO:** Senate

**FROM:** Ms. Edyta Rogowska, Secretary-General

**SUBJECT:** Open Discussion on the Recommendations of the Report of the Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life (Mission, Trust and Governance)

**DATE:** November 21, 2018

**DOCUMENT #:** D18-12

**ACTION REQUIRED:** ☒ INFORMATION ☐ APPROVAL/DECISION

**ISSUE:** Background documents and discussion questions in support of the open discussion are provided.

**BACKGROUND & RATIONALE:** Following a review of potential topics, the Senate Steering Committee selected to focus the November 21, 2018 Senate open discussion on the recommendations in the report of the Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life. A Working Group was struck to frame the open discussion.

## CONTEXT

The Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life was created in November 2017 and mandated "to recommend a set of concrete measures by which the University may ensure the full and effective operationalization of its core principles across all University activities but with particular consideration paid to student life at McGill."

The Task Force's work was informed by broad consultations with the McGill community and its final report was shared in May 2018. Members of the McGill community were asked to give the report a careful reading, to reflect on its proposals and think about how to build a more respectful and inclusive University.

The recommendations in the report are set out around five themes: Mission, Trust, Governance, Communications, and Space. The Senate Steering Committee and the Working Group suggested focusing the November 2018 open discussion on the themes of Mission, Trust and Governance. Subsequent to the meeting, in order to address the remaining two themes of the Task Force's report, the Steering Committee will discuss the possibility of having an open discussion in the winter on the themes of Communications and Space.

The Working Group reviewed the recommendations and associated action items for each of the three themes and agreed to frame the open discussion by focusing on key areas and questions that would benefit from Senate's input. As the Principal assigned a member of the administration as the lead for each theme, the Working Group thought it would be valuable for each lead to be present and share their key takeaways from the open discussion.

## **DISCUSSION FORMAT**

### **Theme 1: Mission (15 minutes)**

- Introduction by the Chair
- Discussion:
  - o The Task Force recommends that the breadth and depth of services made available to the McGill community be assessed to verify how well they map on to the University's Mission.
  - o Action item (d) related to this recommendation identifies the need to clarify the University's role in providing health and social services/programs. As such, the following question is presented to Senate for discussion:
    - **What is the role of the University in providing health and social services and programs?**
  - o Action item (e) supports the idea of creating structures to promote/facilitate conversations within the community on challenging or contentious issues. As such, the following question is presented to Senate for discussion:
    - **Should the University encourage and support the creation of fora to promote and facilitate a broad range of conversations around contentious issues? What form should these fora have?**
- Closing remarks/takeaways for lead (Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic))

### **Theme 2: Trust (15 minutes)**

- Introduction by the Chair
  - Discussion:
    - o The Task Force recommends that individuals in leadership positions across all sectors and in all spheres of the University (students, staff, and faculty) strive to lead by example in promoting a culture of openness. Based on the action items identified in relation to this theme, the following question is presented to Senate for discussion:
      - **How could those in leadership positions across all sectors and in all spheres of the University (students, staff, and faculty) promote and implement a culture of openness and trust?**
  - Closing remarks/takeaways for lead (Principal and Vice-Chancellor)
-

### **Theme 3: Governance (15 minutes)**

- Introduction by the Chair
- Discussion:
  - o The report indicates the need rearticulate the value that participation in collegial and collective decision-making has in all sectors and at all levels of the University. The Task Force recommends that the origins of accessibility and attitudinal barriers to University engagement should be identified and governance structures reformed accordingly.
  - o Action item (a) related to this recommendation identifies a need to do more to recognize/incentivize service-oriented contributions. As such, the following question is presented to Senate for discussion:
    - **What more could be done at McGill to recognize the value of service-oriented contributions and encourage students, staff and faculty to participate in University decision-making activities in all sectors and at all levels?**
- Closing remarks/takeaways for lead (Secretary-General)

---

<b>PRIOR CONSULTATION:</b>	Senate Steering Committee; Senate Open Discussion Working Group
<b>SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	N/A
<b>IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS</b>	Follow-up action may result from the Open Discussion.  An open discussion on the themes of Communications and Space may be scheduled in the winter. This is to be determined by the Steering Committee.
<b>MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL:</b>	N/A
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Appendix A: Summary of Recommendations and Associated Action Items for the themes of Mission, Trust and Governance  Appendix B: <a href="#">Report of the Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life</a>

---

**Senate Open Discussion on the  
Report of the Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life  
(November 21, 2018)**

An extract from the Report (summary of the recommendations of the Task Force and the associated action items for the themes Mission, Trust and Governance) is available below.

<b>THEME 1: MISSION</b>
-------------------------

The mission of McGill University is the advancement of learning and the creation and dissemination of knowledge, by offering the best possible education, by carrying out research and scholarly activities judged to be excellent by the highest international standards, and by providing service to society.

In fulfilling its mission, McGill University embraces the principles of academic freedom, integrity, responsibility, equity, and inclusiveness.

Recommendation:

The breadth and depth of services made available to the McGill community should be assessed to verify how well they map on to the University's Mission. This assessment will inevitably identify successful initiatives that can serve as a model, as well as identify missing services and programs.

Specific action items include, but are not limited to:

- a. Creating an inaugural "Realizing McGill's Mission" Day (a designated 'pedagogical day') in Fall 2018 where students, staff and faculty can participate in workshops, policy and program reviews and evaluations, and strategic planning. These would identify how initiatives further McGill's Mission and Principles and what commitment of financial resources is required to support them.
- b. Building the capacity of Human Resources to respond to the needs of staff with disabilities.
- c. Revising the format and content of Residence Life workshops and modules with an emphasis on experiential learning, and enhancing students' ability to navigate reasonable expectations of respectful behaviour when living together.
- d. Clarifying the role of the University in providing health and social services and programs.
- e. Encouraging and supporting the creation of fora to promote and facilitate a broad range of conversations around contentious issues.

## **THEME 2: TRUST**

### **Recommendation:**

Those in leadership positions across all sectors and in all spheres of the University (students, staff, and faculty) should strive to lead by example in promoting a culture of openness.

Specific action items include, but are not limited to:

- a. Using effective communication channels in order for those in leadership positions to share their experiences and how they approach the challenges of value-based decision-making in their roles.
- b. Creating opportunities for members of senior administration to articulate their understanding of McGill's Mission and Principles to the broader community.
- c. Due to the special nature of the role that University Advancement plays in the support of the Mission, the Vice-Principal of University Advancement should regularly create opportunities where the nature of Advancement's work can be discussed openly with members of the entire McGill community. This would serve to promote a greater understanding of the nature, challenges, and impact of fundraising on the realization of the University Mission.
- d. Responding to feelings of exclusion among administrative and support staff by addressing the problematic "non-academic" designation and creating more inclusive naming practices.
- e. Making accessible information about the evolution of policies and practices related to respect and inclusion at McGill (e.g., creating timelines and designing infographics to illustrate what, when, and how past changes have been implemented).

## **THEME 3: GOVERNANCE**

### **Recommendation:**

There needs to be a re-articulation of the value that participation in collegial and collective decision-making has in all sectors and at all levels of the University. The origins of accessibility and attitudinal barriers to University engagement should be identified and governance structures reformed accordingly.

Specific action items include, but are not limited to:

- a. Doing more to recognize the value of service-oriented contributions and incentivize participation in University life.
- b. Providing institutionalized leadership training for students, modelled on the programming of the Academic Leadership Forum (ALF), to widen the participation pool for inclusive governance.
- c. Establishing formal training for student Senators to equip them to engage meaningfully in the workings of Senate and University governance as a whole.
- d. Communicating processes and outcomes of policy decisions related to proposals advanced by student associations to the community at large, in person, in print, and online.

- e. Promoting regular exchanges and identifying key channels of communication between senior members of the McGill leadership and members of student government at faculty and departmental levels.