



Memorandum

Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning)
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TO: Senate

FROM: Professor Ollivier Dyens, Deputy-Provost (Student Life and Learning)

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Student Life and Learning (SLL)

DATE: January 22, 2014

DOCUMENT #: D13-41

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: 2012-2013 Annual Report on Student Life and Learning

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE: The Annual Report on Student Life and Learning is meant to provide Senate with an update on the activities of this important area of the University. The report focuses on a number of initiatives recently undertaken to improve services to students at McGill.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: N/A

PRIOR CONSULTATION: N/A

NEXT STEPS: N/A

APPENDICES: Appendix A: 2012-2013 Annual Report on Student Life and Learning

Annual Report on Student Life and Learning 2012-2013

Some highlights

- McGill Food and Dining Services and University Residences and Student Housing were merged into the newly created Student Housing and Hospitality Services. Under the leadership of the Director, Food and Hospitality Services, the reorganization is intended to ensure that students receive the same services, while reducing administrative costs.
- McGill implemented the Mastercard Scholars program. The program “enables African youth who are academically gifted, deeply committed to giving back to their communities and nations, yet economically disadvantaged, to be able to complete a university education and become leaders of change for Africa.” In this first year, 13 students, from Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda were admitted to McGill.
- The Office of the Deputy-Provost (Student Life and Learning) held the 2013 Consultation Fairs in February with the undergraduate, graduate and continuing education student government bodies. The Fair focused on the the proposed statement of values and operating procedure, which is a Statement of Values on Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Assembly
- The Dean of Students implemented many new initiatives, such as The Academic Advisers’ Forum Steering Group or the advising sessions offered in McGill residences, to improve advising.
- Food services were awarded second prize, Silver category - Education for the project entitled “McGill Feeding McGill” during the IPAC/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Award Gala
- The new uApply graduate admissions system was implemented by Enrolment Services.
- An outreach program was developed and expanded through a partnership between the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office, Enrolment Services, Kahnawake Survival School and the Lester B. Pearson Board of Education.
- Phase one of the Co-curricular Record (CCR) was launched in time for the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year
- A number of improvements in course evaluations were implemented.

Ongoing projects:

1. Draft the SLL narrative
2. Draft the SLL plan
3. Develop a structure in SLL that is conducive to innovation
4. Draft a plan for internship initiatives for all students
5. Develop the pre arrival advising structure
6. Develop the Personal Automated Virtual Assistant
7. Revise Frosh with the new student leadership in May
8. Devise long term plan for residences' real estate
9. Administer NSSE survey
10. Put together SEM/student engagement conference
11. Develop the 2014 École d'été en pédagogie universitaire with Université Laval and Université de Bordeaux

Office of the Dean of Students

Several strides have been made to help facilitate and encourage communication among academic advisors at McGill:

- The Academic Advisers' Forum Steering Group (AAFSG) and the Subcommittee on Undergraduate Student Advising (SUSA) merged for efficiency's sake. Members of the merged body opted to meet monthly and operate under the title SUSA with the following terms added to the mandate:
 - To advocate for the recognition of academic advisors.
 - To review professional development needs on a regular basis and liaise with other committees/units to help develop relevant training and meet identified needs.
 - To act as a liaison between SUSA and reporting faculty/unit and as such, communicate accordingly.
- The Academic Advising website (www.mcgill.ca/students/advising) was restructured and content was added based on feedback from the University community. The site was also translated into French.
- The need for a central hub where advisors could easily communicate and share resources was identified. The Office of the Dean of Students created a virtual space wherein advisors can interact and share information through discussion forums, blogs, wikis, etc.
- **Advising in Residences:** Advising sessions offered in McGill residences by several faculties every fall have always been well-received by students. Sessions are now held in March as well. In-residence advising brings advising directly to students and also generates awareness about academic advising at McGill.
- **Aboriginal Outreach Administrator:** Reporting to the Dean of Students, the Aboriginal Outreach Administrator works collaboratively with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada, both on- and off- reserve, in an effort to connect with youth, prospective university students and their families to promote higher education and McGill University. This outreach extends to high schools, school boards, band education centres and career fairs across Canada. The Administrator is also a resource person with whom Aboriginal students can discuss a range of issues, including program selection, admission requirements, career options and Montreal life.
- **Aboriginal Pathways Program:** McGill's Aboriginal Affairs Work Group, the School of Continuing Studies and First Peoples' House collaborated to design a series of 3-credit summer courses for members of Aboriginal communities. Piloted in summer 2011, an intensive writing course was offered in a supportive environment and an engaging curriculum that reflected both Indigenous and Western knowledge traditions. This inaugural course was intended to be the first step toward building a transition program, however it was determined that a single summer course offering does not compatibly fit within existing band post-secondary funding guidelines. Thus, it is currently under development to be more broadly accessible through being offered on a full-time schedule during the academic year.

Athletics and Recreation

- The **Fitness Centre** was expanded by another 30% during summer 2012 to help ease the demand from students and members for aerobic and weight training exercise.
- The signing of a long-term agreement with the Montreal Allouettes allows students to benefit from the use of a facility (Percival Molson Stadium) that conforms to the standards of the Canadian Football League.
- The refrigeration system (ice plant) at the Macdonald Campus area was completed during the summer 2012.

International Education

- **Improvements in service:** The website continues to be upgraded to connect students, partners, researchers and alumni to relevant international initiatives at McGill. The site will point both students and partners to the appropriate pages on the study abroad website. Exchange opportunities have been expanded at popular destination schools, allowing more students to get their first choice for an exchange.
- Services for students planning to study abroad are under review this cycle. Improvements were made to the application form and other improvements are anticipated following the completion of the review this spring.

Student Housing and Hospitality Services

- **Student space:** Food and Dining Services (MFDS) is continuing to improve locations to enhance student space, with the establishment of rue McGill Deli in the Trottier building and renovation in the seating area at Bishop Mountain Hall Dining Hall (are the most recent improvement).
- MFDS has introduced **student internships** in their locations.
- MFDS expanded purchases of **food from the Macdonald Campus Farm**, providing locally sourced food, which students have requested, and supporting the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.
- Sustainability was at the forefront of our initiatives for 2012-13 as well as cultivating long-standing relationships with other units and departments in the University. Our successful attempt to breaking the Guinness World Record for the largest fruit salad brought unprecedented camaraderie and teambuilding which mobilized students, staff, faculty, friends and family members in creating 11,197 pounds (5,078.88 kg) of delectable fruit salad. The charitable event was about community and raising awareness on sustainability as more than half of the fruit was harvested locally from McGill's Macdonald campus. We donated the fruit salad to community organizations—Moisson Montréal, The Old Brewery Mission, Dans la Rue, Welcome Hall Mission, Meals on Wheels—which feed Montrealers in need.
- The Marine Stewart Council (MSC) certified four of our dining halls. The initiative has positioned McGill University as a front-runner and the first public institution in Canada to become certified. The move reflects the level of commitment Food and Dining Services is willing to undertake in terms of sustainable purchases and safeguarding natural resources. The result of the project is a joint effort led by a passionate group of students from the McGill ENVR 401 Applied Student Research

who, supported by McGill's Sustainability Projects Fund, worked diligently to see the certification through to completion.

- On Thursday, February 21st, 2013 the **IPAC/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Award Gala** took place in Toronto where McGill University was awarded the **second prize, Silver category - Education for the project entitled “McGill Feeding McGill.”**
- The IPAC/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Awards program recognizes organizations that have demonstrated outstanding leadership by taking bold steps to improve Canada, through advancements in public policy and management. For more details, visit www.ipac.ca
- In July 2013, we were awarded the Gold Medal in Education and Outreach category of the NACUFS Sustainability Awards which recognizes and honors member institutions that have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the promotion and implementation of environmental sustainability, specifically as it relates to campus dining operations. Our submission was on “McGill Feeding McGill.”
- Every year, the Canadian Cancer Society organizes the Gala des Grands Chefs, a fundraising event at the Marché Bonsecours featuring 5-6 Chefs of note. McGill’s Executive Chef, Oliver De Volpi, participated in the November 2012 event along with 10 MFDS staff members who donated their time. The event raised \$240,000.00.
- The **Faculty in Residences** Series offers University faculty and first-year students living in McGill Undergraduate Residences various opportunities to interact—giving students contact with professors in a comfortable, familiar setting (e.g., over meals in Residence dining halls or in common rooms) and opportunities to learn in different ways.

Professors from across the University join students in Residences to give short and casual lectures on a topic of interest—e.g., recent developments in their field or a particularly quirky or little-discussed aspect of their discipline. They might also discuss their own personal academic training and how they found themselves at McGill. By the end of 2011-2012, over 24 sessions will have occurred.

- In its second year, the **Off Campus Fellows Program** continues to grow in size and quality. Nearly 30% more students have participated over last year, and further growth is planned, so that McGill’s off-campus first-year students, both local and new to Montreal, can experience some of the same benefits that students in Residences receive.

Students who join the program participate in a unique community, led by Off Campus Fellows and the Off Campus Council centered around:

- Learning and sharing: Getting through the first week at McGill and in Montreal as a University student, orientating to a new environment, and sharing along the way.
- Exploring the city: Finding new cafes, libraries, museums and many other hidden gems that the city offers.
- Engaging with the community: Building strong relationships with the city of Montreal, the larger McGill Community and each other.
- Suiting student interests: customized activities ranging from rock-climbing to camping to potluck dinners.

- **Target McGill** is a Residence preview and leadership development weekend that aims to give a taste of the upcoming residence experience and is intended to familiarize students with McGill, life in Residences and the city of Montreal. The program is meant to help students acclimate to McGill and Residences. It also models student leadership, given that the majority of facilitators are current student leaders who have the opportunity to serve as teachers and mentors for this incoming group.
- **Rez Project**, a workshop program coordinated out of Residences with other partners on campus, is part of a major effort to promote inclusivity, respect and appreciation for diversity within Residences. The workshops are led by senior students and are offered in September to the 3,200 students in Residences, with 85% of students taking part.

Enrolment Services

- A number of **improvements in service** have been implemented:
 - The new uApply graduate admissions system has been implemented, providing an enhanced, online application service for prospective graduate students. Applicants apply, submit supporting documentation, and communicate with McGill online. Referees are prompted automatically to submit reference letters online. The evaluation of the full admission file occurs online, without the need to print any part of the file. This permits the evaluation of the admission file from anywhere in the world with internet access.
 - Phase II of Service Point planning: As in Phase I, the goal is to reduce student run around by consolidating services in one location, delivered by cross-trained front-line staff who are empowered to make decisions on a broad range of services. This will include collaboration with Student Housing and Hospitality Services to integrate some front line services.
 - Improved consistency in international credential evaluation, province-wide: McGill's Enrolment Services has provided international credential evaluation training to admissions officers at all universities across Quebec in two annual workshops. A third workshop will be provided to colleagues in the 2013-14 year. Also, software designed to support automated grade point average calculations for institutions in Canada and across the world, a key element of admission decision-making, was shared with all Quebec universities at no cost.
- An **outreach program** has been developed and expanded through a partnership between the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office, Enrolment Services, Kahnawake Survival School and the Lester B. Pearson Board of Education. The goals of the program are:
 - To create opportunities for students from underrepresented groups to engage with McGill, in the hope that it will inspire them to pursue learning opportunities and perhaps admission to McGill.
 - Introduce current McGill students to the diverse communities that are served by the Lester B. Pearson School Board and Kahnawake Survival School, providing them with an opportunity to engage in community-based learning to enrich their McGill experience.
 - The McGill Science Award program is extended to all Quebec high schools, inviting them to nominate one exceptional science student to receive the award. A plaque is given to each student at the high school graduation ceremony and a \$300 registration award is given to students who register at McGill, following their completion of CEGEP. In 2013, dignitaries from McGill attended the graduation ceremonies in person to offer the award to the students, forging closer ties to the high schools and their students.

Student Services

- **Consolidated service:** The GPS Fellowships Office merged with the Scholarships and Student Aid Office to streamline processes and reduce the number of offices that graduate students need to visit regarding financial matters.
- Phase one of the **Co-curricular Record (CCR)** was launched in time for the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year. A student's CCR is an official summary or attestation of participation in University activities outside courses. Students can use their personalized official CCR to highlight their complete University experience. Student Services had planned the implementation of CCRs at McGill since 2010, consulting with student groups, internal units, and other universities. Phase two was launched in time for the beginning of the 2013-14 academic year. The project is now in the second of four phases, which includes launching the online platform (myInvolvement) with select units, working with a criteria committee to respond to University needs and to continue testing the tool to ensure seamless integration with other University systems.
- The position of Manager, Student Leadership Initiatives, was created in August 2011. The Director is responsible for creating a comprehensive leadership program, with the ultimate goal of helping students develop as citizen leaders, prepared for professional and community responsibilities in a global context regardless of differences in academic discipline. The leadership program will provide opportunities for students to develop the competencies required for effective leadership and will involve a diverse range of community partners in its planning, delivery, and assessment.
- Initiated during the 2011-2012 year in Mental Health Services, the **Eating Disorder Clinic** is having an important positive impact on campus. Students can access the Clinic to receive the following services:
 - Multidisciplinary assessments by a psychiatrist, nurse and dietician
 - Treatment plans tailored to meet the needs of the individual.
 - Individual psychotherapy offered by both Mental Health and Counselling Services
 - Nutritional Counselling offered by a dietician
 - Nursing/Medical follow-up provided by the Eating Disorder Program nurse and, as needed, the family physicians at McGill Health Services

In addition, the Eating Disorder Program offers group support, including:

- Psychoeducational Groups offered for 8 weeks each semester.
- Meal support available on a weekly basis to students being seen at the EDP. Open support groups available for students participating in the Eating Disorder Program to get together at weekly meetings
- Nutrition groups offered weekly to provide nutritional education
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Group offered each semester for 10 weeks

Teaching and Learning Services (TLS)

- A number of **improvements in course evaluations** have been implemented, including:
 - Teaching Assistants are now included in course evaluations.
 - Evaluations can run the exam period, at the choice of the academic unit.
 - Improved response rates on course evaluations are being sustained, and TLS continues to work closely with student associations to maintain this trend.
- TLS has continued to run **SKILLSETS**, an initiative designed by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and TLS to complement the research training provided by the academic experience at McGill. SKILLSETS program is building on its strong start – measured in terms of attendance, satisfaction, partnerships and comprehensiveness – and continues to improve. The program now more fully addresses the nine themes identified by the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies as important to training High Quality Personnel.
- TLS is expanding the **Project on the Nexus between Teaching and Research/Scholarship**, which addresses a University-wide priority – as evidenced at the Joint Board Senate meeting on Nov 1, 2011 – to promote the links between undergraduate teaching, learning and research/scholarship. The Program has four objectives:
 - Provide instructors support to promote the links between teaching and research/scholarship to enhance student learning.
 - Focus efforts at the departmental and faculty levels to promote students' engagement with research/scholarship using curricular and co-curricular strategies.
 - Institutionalize undergraduate research by creating University-wide, interdisciplinary structures that support the integration of research into the undergraduate experience.
 - Provide leadership at the local, national and international levels in the integration of research into the undergraduate experience.
- The **Law Teaching Network (LTN)** project was a three-year partnership (2010-2013) between the Faculty of Law and TLS. The project aimed to generate a shared commitment to excellent, innovative and engaging teaching and learning practices. Over the past three semesters, the vast majority of faculty members have participated in one or more of the program initiatives including Faculty Learning Communities, Experiential/Active Learning Fund, curriculum inventory and mapping exercises, as well as the development of undergraduate program outcomes that are intended to ensure a more coherent student experience.
- The **Teaching and Learning Spaces Working Group**, chaired by the Director of TLS and vice-chaired by the director of Campus and Space Planning, continues to identify teaching and learning space needs, set priorities and recommend funding for improvements to teaching and learning spaces at McGill. In 2011, a total of 206 projects were undertaken (47 renovations with IT, 10 renovations without IT, and 149 IT-only projects). Many more rooms now have flexible collaborative learning and teaching functionalities, writeable walls, moveable podiums, new furniture and AV installations where there were none before. In addition, ICS is now able to provide support remotely, greatly improving direct support to classrooms.