



McGill

## Memorandum

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**TO:** Senate

**FROM:** Jane Everett, Dean of Students  
Chair, Senate Committee on Student Affairs (CSA)

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Motion: French on Course Outlines

**DATE:** 18 November 2008

**DOCUMENT #:** D08-22

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  INFORMATION  DISCUSSION  APPROVAL / DECISION

**ISSUE:** This is a notice of motion to amend articles 10.2 and 15 of the Charter of Students' Rights (required content of course outlines and students' right to submit written work in English or in French)

**BACKGROUND & RATIONALE:** At its meeting of 21 May 2008, Senate approved an amendment to article 10.2 of the Charter of Students' Rights, making it mandatory to include a reference to article 15 – the right to submit essays, examinations and theses in English or in French – on course outlines. At the same time, Senate recommended that CSA revisit the language of article 15, because there appeared to be some confusion as to what types of written work are included or excluded (e.g., What is the minimum length of an 'essay'? Does the term 'examinations' include midterms and quizzes? Why are lab reports and similar written assignments excluded? etc.).

At its first meeting of fall 2008, CSA duly examined articles 10.2 and 15, and approved amendments to both. The principal change to article 10.2 remains the addition of the requirement to mention article 15 on course outlines; the principal change to article 15 is the explicit extension of the right to all written work that is to be graded. Please note that, because of procedural errors<sup>1</sup>, the amendment to article 10.2 approved at Senate in May was invalid, so CSA revised the original article 10.2, not the amended version.

**MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL:** *Be it resolved that Senate approve the following amendments to articles 10.2 and 15 of the Charter of Students' Rights:*

See Appendix (over).

**PRIOR CONSULTATION:** Senate, 21 May 2008; CSA, 10 September 2008; APC, 13 November 2008.

**NEXT STEPS:** Motion to be brought to Senate, 21 January 2009.

<sup>1</sup> Article 32 of the Charter states: "Except for amendments to Division B of Part VIII [irrelevant in the context of this Motion], any amendment to this Charter shall require written notice to all members of Senate two weeks before the meeting at which it is to be considered. To be adopted, an amendment shall require a two-thirds majority vote." The amendment to article 10.2 was circulated only one week prior to the meeting and the votes were not counted.

## APPENDIX:

### *Current version*

10.2 Every instructor shall provide students during the first week of lectures with a written course outline. This information should include, where appropriate:

- (a) A description of the topics to be considered in the course,
- (b) A list of required and recommended readings and other materials,
- (c) A description of the means of evaluation to be used in the course,
- (d) The instructor's office hours for students, office location and telephone number for office appointments.

15. Every student has the right to write essays, examinations and theses in English or in French, except in courses where knowledge of a language is one of the objects of the course.

### *Proposed version*

10.2 Every instructor shall provide students during the first week of lectures with a written course outline. This information should include, where appropriate:

- (a) A description of the topics to be considered in the course,
- (b) A list of required and recommended readings and other materials,
- (c) A description of the means of evaluation to be used in the course,
- (d) A statement regarding the right of every student to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded (not applicable to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives).
- (e) The instructor's office hours for students, office location and telephone number for office appointments.

15. Every student has the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.