



McGill

Question

TO: Senate

FROM: Mr. David Marshall

SUBJECT: Question Regarding Macdonald Campus Shuttle Bus Service

MEETING DATE: January 20, 2010

PREAMBLE: McGill currently offers a shuttle service to facilitate the transportation needs of students taking courses at both the downtown and Macdonald campuses. On the “McGill In Mind” (admissions) website, the University bills this service as “a free shuttle service [that] makes it easy for students to take courses both at Macdonald and downtown.”

The Macdonald Campus Students’ Society has taken a variety of steps to attempt to rectify the issues with the shuttle service. One such initiative involved conducting a survey of 477 shuttle-utilizing students during the 2008-09 academic year. The survey data show that 66% of those surveyed had been denied access to a Macdonald-bound shuttle due to capacity at least once during the academic year, and 73% of students had been denied access to a Downtown-bound shuttle during the same period. The vast majority of students (approximately 80% of those surveyed) noted that these instances occurred during “peak” periods, from 7:00 am – 9:15am, and again from 4:00pm – 6:15pm.

Additionally, 97% of students indicated that in order to ensure they were able to successfully board a shuttle, they had to arrive at the pick-up location more than 10 minutes in advance, with 33% of those surveyed arriving in excess of 20 minutes in advance.

78% of students surveyed indicated that they were taking the shuttle to commute between classes, using the shuttle as intended.

The inability for McGill’s small fleet of 48-person commuter buses to match growing demand for cross-campus inter-disciplinary programmes continues to have severe academic implications. Many students face long, unproductive wait times and many are unable to get to class on time as a result of the lack of shuttle capacity.

Additionally, the lack of an easily-accessible transportation service between Macdonald and downtown forestalls greater academic integration between programmes at the University’s two major campuses.

QUESTION:

1. What changes does the University intend to take to ensure that the Macdonald shuttle service is, as advertised to prospective & current students, a “free service [that] makes it easy for students to take courses both at Macdonald and downtown?”
 2. What steps will the University take to ensure adequate facilities for students who must wait for shuttles, particularly in light of the increased health risks associated with waiting outside due to the current H1N1 pandemic?
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