



Memorandum

Office of the Provost
James Administration Building,
845 Sherbrooke Street West, Room 504,
Montreal, QC H3A 2T5
Tel: 514.398.1438 | Fax: 514.398.4768

TO: Senate
FROM: Anthony C. Masi, Provost
SUBJECT: Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting
DATE: November 10, 2011
DOCUMENT #: D11-23

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: Presentation of the report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting 2011-2012.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE: The Statutes of McGill University state:
6.3.9.1 The Senate and Board of Governors shall hold an annual joint meeting in the fall term. At this meeting, the Principal, the Provost, the Deputy Provost, and the vice-principals, as appropriate, shall present for discussion matters they consider relevant to the University's mission for the ensuing year.

At the Joint Executive Committee/Senate Steering meeting of April 18, 2011, the topic of *Research and Innovation in the Undergraduate Educational Experience* was proposed and agreed upon for the next Joint Board/Senate meeting. At the Joint Board-Senate meeting of November 1, 2011 Teaching and Learning Services delivered a presentation and facilitated the exchange that followed.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: N/A

PRIOR CONSULTATION: N/A

NEXT STEPS: N/A

APPENDICES: Appendix A - Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting of November 1, 2011

Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting of November 1, 2011

The Chancellor welcomed Senators, members of the Board of Governors, Governors Emeriti and guests to the joint meeting, and introduced the meeting's topic, *Research and Innovation in the Undergraduate Educational Experience*.

Attendees heard from the following:

- Dr. Rose Goldstein, Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations), spoke on the profound impact that research has on the undergraduate experience at McGill. She said that 21% of undergraduate students surveyed had participated in research outside their program of study and that the University should strive to raise that number.
- Ms Marcy Slapcoff, Teaching and Learning Services, described the opportunities for research that McGill affords its undergraduate students, including supervised projects, local and international internships, public fairs and publications and coursework.
- Ms Sophie Splawinski, U3 Science, described the processes in which her interest in atmospheric meteorology led to an NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award that enabled her to present at academic conferences.
- Mr. John Watson, U3 Arts, spoke on the opportunity his Arts Undergraduate Research Internship Award gave him to study the impact of technology on rural Canadians.
- Professor Richard Chromik described the increased levels of student engagement arising from the introduction of self-directed research in his Materials Engineering course.
- Professor Chris Buddle, Agricultural and Environmental Science, discussed the benefits of a mandatory field research project in helping his students develop critical thinking skills.

Roundtable discussions addressed the following questions:

1. Given that we want research to be a hallmark of the undergraduate experience, how will we know when we have achieved this goal? What will be the indicators? What will we be doing differently?
2. How do we make this happen? What are some practical steps that each of us could take?
3. How can McGill better communicate to students, faculty and the community the value of undergraduate research experience?

The main themes that emerged from the discussions were:

1. Need to broaden the definition of undergraduate research (in class and outside of class) and emphasize the link to undergraduate learning and overall experience
2. Increased resources, support and incentives for faculty
3. Increased resources, support, incentives and opportunities for students
4. Establishment of indicators of success
5. Need to explain the benefits to community

6. Need for McGill community buy-in, discussion process, consultation process
7. Curriculum transformation/reconceptualization/redesign
8. Focus efforts at individual, departmental, program, Faculty and institutional levels.

The Provost synthesized the discussion and tied it back to McGill University's mission. He pointed out the value-added of inquiry-based learning, noting that research opportunities offer students an interdisciplinary focus that complements the educational grounding of their chosen discipline. Undergraduate research also results in a more innovative university experience, whereby students' own experiences inform new developments. The Principal gave closing remarks underscoring the value of research and thanking the participants for an exhilarating event.