



Memorandum

Office of the Provost

James Administration Bldg., Room 504

Tel.: 514-398-4177 / Fax: 514-398-4768

TO: Senate

FROM: Lydia White, Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures and Equity)

SUBJECT: McGill University Award for Equity & Community Building

DATE: 18 April 2012

DOCUMENT #: D11-58

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: The Joint Board Senate Committee on Equity recommends to Senate the establishment of an award to recognize efforts to advance equity and community building at McGill.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE: The goal of the present proposal is to establish an award to enhance McGill's commitment to equity by recognizing outstanding achievements by students, faculty and administrative and support staff in advancing equity and community building. The proposal draws upon recommendations from SSMU, PGSS, and the SEDE Office and was developed, in part, in response to the Principal's Task Force on Excellence, Diversity and Community Engagement.

Such awards are fairly standard in our peer institutions: McGill University is a member of the Canadian U15, which has 5 member institutions with equity awards, as well as the American Association of Universities, in which 17 out of 18 members have such awards.

The award proposal has been considered by the Joint Board Senate Committee on Equity (JBSCE) and is brought to Senate with JBSCE's unanimous endorsement.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: *Be it resolved that Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors for approval, the establishment of a McGill University Award for Equity & Community Building.*

PRIOR CONSULTATION: SSMU, PGSS, JBSCE

NEXT STEPS: Approval of Board of Governors.

If approved, the intention is to implement the award in time for the 2012-13 academic year.

APPENDICES: Appendix A: Award proposal

Proposal for McGill University Award for Equity & Community Building

Introduction

McGill University includes students, staff and faculty from different communities in Quebec, Canada and abroad. It is essential to promote an atmosphere where every individual feels welcome and does not face discrimination. To quote from the Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence and Community Engagement: "At McGill we aim for an inclusive university community, and to support all members of the community in the achievement of excellence as they pursue their ambitions." An inclusive environment enables students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds to excel to their fullest potential.

The goal of the present proposal is to establish an Equity Award, drawing upon recommendations from SSMU, PGSS, and the SEDE Office. Further, this proposal was developed partly in response to the following recommendation from the Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence and Community Engagement:

"Ensure that mechanisms are in place to nominate excellent candidates representing the full diversity of the community for awards and other types of recognition both inside and outside the University." (Article 3.1.5)

Equity awards at other institutions

McGill University is a member of the Canadian U15 and the American Association of Universities (AAU).

Of the Canadian U15, five universities have equity awards: University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, University of Alberta, Queen's University, and Université de Montréal. Of the AAU, 17 of the 18 member universities have equity awards. Among the peer institutions with established equity awards, the forms of recognition included public recognition, a certificate or plaque, and/or a monetary prize. (See Appendix.)

There is a place for such an award at McGill, which will help enhance McGill's commitment to equity. The proposed award is modelled on existing and well-established University-wide awards at McGill, such as the *Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching Award* and the *McGill University Lifetime Achievement Award for Leadership in Learning*. However, the award is not intended to be limited to teaching.

Recognition

The proposed *McGill University Award for Equity & Community Building* recognizes the work of students, faculty and staff committed to advancing equity and diversity at McGill. Further, the award recognizes efforts to foster a culture of awareness, active representation and inclusivity.

Within this award, there will be three streams of recognition:

- McGill academic staff
- McGill administrative and support staff
- McGill students

The award brings with it a monetary award and an engraved plaque. Up to three awards may be granted per year, one award per stream.

Criteria

Nominations for this award may come from any member of the McGill Community. Faculty members, current and former students, and administrative and support staff are encouraged to bring forward names of colleagues and peers who are actively involved in promoting diversity, inclusivity, and excellence within the McGill community and whose contributions to equity initiatives and community building at McGill are truly outstanding.

Nominees should show evidence of activities such as the following:

- Teaching and/or mentoring, with specific reference to populations under-represented at McGill.
- Promotion of policies and practices that reinforce inclusivity.
- Facilitation of recruitment and retention of staff and students from a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, including but not limited to racialised and indigenous people, queer peoples, women, people of varied socio-economic classes, and people with disabilities.

Nomination Process

Nomination Packages should include:

1. Table of contents.
2. A nomination letter explaining why the nominee should be considered for the award.
3. A list (provided by the nominee) identifying measures taken in regards to equity and community building.
4. Up to four (4) letters of support from students, former students, colleagues, Department Chairs, Program Directors or other persons in a position to comment on the relevant attributes of the nominee.

Submission

Deadline to be determined.

Selection Committee

Candidates will be selected by an Awards Selection Committee, which will be a sub-committee of the Joint Board Senate Committee on Equity (JBSCE). The Awards Selection Committee shall consist of the following members:

- Chair: Associate Provost, Policy, Procedure & Equity, or delegate
- PGSS Equity Commissioner, or delegate
- SSMU Equity Commissioner, or delegate
- One representative from the Social Equity & Diversity Education Office
- Two JBSCE subcommittee chairs (in rotation)

The selected candidates shall be recommended to the JBSCE, for ratification.

Appendix: [Research on Equity Awards at Comparator Universities](#)