



Memorandum

Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning)

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TO: Senate

FROM: Morton J. Mendelson, Deputy-Provost (Student Life and Learning)
Kathleen Massey, University Registrar and Executive Director, Enrolment Services

SUBJECT: McGill SEM Plan: Report on Implementation

DATE: April 17, 2013

DOCUMENT #: D12-62

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: Report on implementation of the McGill SEM Plan

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE: Senators endorsed the six strategic imperatives of the McGill SEM Plan at the March 23, 2011 Senate meeting. A request was made during that meeting to provide Senators with an update on the implementation of the SEM Plan. This report is provided to fulfill that request.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: N/A

PRIOR CONSULTATION: Enrolment management is a widely distributed function that calls on the hard work and dedication of offices and individuals across the University. The work summarized in this report reflects those efforts.

NEXT STEPS: Enrolment management is an ongoing process that must promote the Universities mission, while adapting to changing local, national and international circumstances.

APPENDICES: Appendix A: Senate Report on the Implementation of the McGill SEM Plan

**Report to Senate on the
Implementation of McGill University's Strategic Enrolment Management Plan**

April 2013

BACKGROUND

In 2007, steps were taken by the University to advance strategic enrolment management (SEM) and to establish the foundation for creating a graduate and undergraduate strategic enrolment plan that would identify, address, and position McGill to its best advantage within emerging regional and international trends in post-secondary education. The SEM plan¹, which was developed through extensive consultation across our campuses, articulates six strategic imperatives, endorsed by Senate in March 2011, through which enrolment planning is conducted.

I. Research Intensity, Student and Academic Excellence²

McGill will align enrolment management strategies and activities with its focus on research intensity, on the quality of its students, and on academic distinction.

II. Service to Community and Society

McGill's undergraduate, graduate, professional and continuing education programs will serve and enhance the well being of Quebec, Canada and the world.

III. Engagement in the University Community

McGill will foster and maintain a connected, supportive and dynamic relationship among its students, academic, administrative and support staff, and alumni.

IV. International Stature

McGill will encourage an enrolment profile and a learning experience that aligns with its distinguished international stature.

V. Diversity and Accessibility

McGill will align its resources to enhance accessibility and to encourage the development of a diverse population of excellent students, academic, administrative and support staff.

VI. Financial Sustainability

McGill will ensure that enrolment strategies take into account the financial resources of the University.

The recent, serious budget restrictions highlight the critical need to proactively integrate management of McGill's enrolment with financial planning, while remaining true to the University's academic mission.

Broad Enrolment Goals

McGill's enrolment goals are consistent with these strategic imperatives and include increasing the number, quality, and proportion of research graduate students and improving the time it takes for them to complete their degrees. Further, the University aims to maintain or enhance the quality, retention and graduation rates of its undergraduates. It also seeks to enhance and increase its continuing studies partnerships and offerings.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

The following are examples of actions identified in the SEM plan that have been undertaken during the first two years of the plan's implementation (2011 to 2013). While not exhaustive, the list illustrates the engagement of the McGill community on a variety of fronts to achieve the University's enrolment goals.

¹ Strategic Enrolment Management Plan: 2011-2016 (Senate March 23, 2011, document D10-50: <http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/D10-50StrategicEnrolmentManagementPlan.pdf>)

² Throughout, indicate a quote from the SEM Plan.

Imperative I – Research Intensity, Student and Academic Excellence

Goal I.1

McGill will increase the number and proportion of doctoral, research and professional master's students according to the metrics used by our peer universities, with the goal of maintaining the highest proportion of doctoral students in the country.

1. McGill has maintained the highest proportion of doctoral students in the country, but other universities are striving to increase their graduate enrolment, so continued efforts are needed in this regard.
2. Recruitment materials for future undergraduate and graduate students have been enhanced, including the use of the new virtual tour, multi-media techniques and social media.
3. International undergraduate exchange students, who are selected on the basis of academic performance, have been engaged in McGill's on-campus recruitment activities, which identify the benefits of returning to McGill for graduate studies.
4. The new graduate admission system, *uApply*, is expected to be launched in spring 2013 and will improve admissions processes and technology to render graduate admissions decisions more quickly.
5. University-based student support to aid in the recruitment of graduate research students has been substantially increased. (see Goal V.2, 3. a. below)
6. A number of initiatives have been introduced to aid graduate students in applying for external fellowships and improve the internal adjudication of applications.

Goal I.3

McGill will continue to enrol the best-prepared students for its undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, where best prepared is defined by academic standing and by other predictors of success in the discipline of choice.

1. A coordinated undergraduate, graduate, and continuing studies recruitment plan has been established following pan-University collaboration.
2. In light of the goal to increase the engagement of alumni in local yield activities by 5% annually, Enrolment Services has reorganized to create a position that is accountable for liaising with Development and Alumni Relations toward this end. Alumni have been increasingly involved in international and domestic yield activities, including a telephone campaign to newly admitted students from Toronto and New York and at events in the UK and the US.
3. An Ontario guidance counselor event has been established and will be held every two years in Toronto or Montreal.
4. Research on the market position of McGill was conducted in 2011-12 in order to inform undergraduate recruitment strategy and tactics, including marketing communications such as the website and other recruitment publications.

Imperative II – Service to Community and Society

Goal II.1

Mindful of its unique position in Quebec, McGill will maintain its FTE share of Quebec's undergraduate university students at a minimum of 8.5%.

1. McGill has continued to target CEGEPs across Quebec for recruitment and enhance efforts to improve Francophone students' knowledge about McGill's opportunities and services for them. The Enrolment

Services recruitment team visits every CEGEP in the province. The entire team is fluently bilingual and gives presentations in French and English. On-campus tours are available in French and English.

2. Nominations for the McGill High School Science Award are encouraged from all high schools across, Quebec, including French high schools. Offers have been extended to have a senior McGill representative present at the high-school commencements to hand out the award in person.
3. McGill continues to ensure sustained and meaningful communications with CEGEP advisors through on-campus and in-school visits and through ongoing, routine communication to support applicants and explain policies and information.

Imperative III – Engagement in the University Community

Goal III.1

McGill will provide outstanding teaching, learning and service experiences as well as other opportunities for involvement.

1. *Actions 1a & 1f*: NEXUS between research and teaching
 - a. The nexus between research and teaching is a university-wide initiative³ to improve the links between undergraduate teaching, learning and research/scholarship.
 - b. The Inquiry Network, a cross-disciplinary group of faculty members organized by Teaching and Learning Services (TLS), has developed several innovative teaching and learning opportunities for undergraduate students, including a report entitled *Using Coursework to Enhance Students' Understanding of Research/Scholarship*⁴, as well as a documentary series, *Sowing the Seeds of Inquiry*⁵, a website on Teaching Snapshots⁶, and several University-wide workshops and events.
2. *Actions 1b, 1l and 1m*: Enhancing student engagement through physical and virtual environments and comprehensive support for instructors
 - a. The Teaching and Learning Spaces Working Group and the University Teaching Labs Working Group have overseen the upgrading of classrooms and labs based on pedagogical principles to support active and collaborative learning. Active learning classrooms and laboratories, developed to support innovative pedagogy and improve learning experiences, are now serving hundreds of courses.⁷
 - b. A new Learning Management System has been implemented (Desire 2 Learn), replacing Blackboard.
 - c. Comprehensive faculty support is now available to better promote student learning: Faculty learning communities, just-in-time-support in classes, pedagogical consultations, and support for new technologies for learning (clickers, screen sharing, mobile learning and others).
3. *Action 1d and 1j*: Graduate education initiatives
 - a. SKILLSETS, a comprehensive suite of workshops facilitated by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and TLS, has continued to evolve since 2009. The offerings promote and enhance professional skills development and improve the overall educational and research experience for graduate students and

³ <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/projects/nexus>

⁴ http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/sites/mcgill.ca/tls/files/slapcoff_et_al_using_coursework_to_enhance_students_understanding_0.pdf

⁵ <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/projects/nexus/videos>

⁶ <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/projects/nexus/teaching-snapshots>

⁷ <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/spaces>

post-doctoral fellows, while complementing their academic research training at McGill.⁸ Additional work is now needed to assess the benefits of SKILLSETS.

- a. In January 2013 a parallel survey of graduate supervisors and supervisees was undertaken to gather data about the graduate supervisory relationship at McGill. The results of these surveys are being used to identify areas in need of improvement. Workshops and other initiatives for both supervisors and supervisees are being built to address these areas and are being offered beginning Spring 2013. As well, a Supervision Resource website will be launched June 1, featuring research and advice on supervision, McGill policies and regulations, and resources for professors, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

4. *Action 1e*: Undergraduate learning outcomes

- a. The Undergraduate Learning Outcomes Working Group was struck in collaboration with students to identify, build consensus, and make explicit the core outcomes of an undergraduate education at McGill. This group is unfortunately on hold due to current budget constraints.

5. *Action 1g*: Programs in Residences

- a. Living-Learning Communities (LLCs)⁹ have been created to promote student engagement. In addition to the Fine Arts LLC and Green LLC, which were started in September 2010, three new LLCs were introduced in 2012-2013: Do-It-Yourself LLC, Food LLC, and Health & Fitness LLC.
- b. The Faculty in Residences Series¹⁰ was designed to offer faculty and undergraduate students living in Residences different opportunities to interact—ideally giving students the chance to meet professors in a comfortable, familiar setting (over meals in the Residences dining halls, in common rooms, etc) and to learn in different ways.

6. *Action 1i* : Workshops and resources to help instructors support student learning and improve curricula

- a. TLS has implemented a variety of discipline-specific (e.g., Faculty of Law, Microbiology & Immunology, Engineering, School of Continuing Studies, Environmental Biology, Religious Studies) and multi-disciplinary workshops (e.g., Introduction to Course Design and Teaching, Assessment Workshop Series), accompanying resources and curriculum initiatives; participant feedback – both formal (e.g., questionnaires) and informal (e.g., participants’ e-mails, letters, comments, repeated requests, participation) – has been consistently positive.

Imperative IV – International Stature

Goal IV.1

McGill will continue to enhance its international profile and reputation by enrolling outstanding international students.

The academic and social value of diversity in the McGill student population was endorsed by the Principal’s Task Force on Diversity, Excellence and Community Engagement, which provides additional endorsement of this goal.

1. *Align University recruitment and yield activities and resources to increase the enrolment of international students in deregulated programs.*

⁸ <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/graduates>

⁹ <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/housing/downtown-undergrad/life/communities>

¹⁰ <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/housing/downtown-undergrad/life/facultyinrez>

- a. Yield activities (e.g., information events and personal phone calls) have been expanded in the Middle East, East Asia and the United States (New York, Boston, California) to encourage admitted students to accept offers of admission.
- b. Guaranteed, cohort-based international tuition rates have been developed to provide families with concrete information about tuition rates for the duration of an international student's enrolment in a deregulated program.
- c. The number of students in deregulated programs has increased by 6.2% since Fall 2010 (source: SZRFDREG, December 20, 2012).

2. *Increase the internationalization of the curriculum and student experience.*

- a. McGill has expanded international educational opportunities, focusing on experiences such as exchanges, field semesters and internships. The number of students who have participated in international exchanges has increased by about 5.3% since 2010, which is slightly more than the increase in undergraduate enrolment during the same period, so more needs to be done.
- b. Our goal for exchanges is to ensure that partner universities are research intensive and academically excellent. In 2011-12, seven new bilateral, and six MBA-specific, partnerships were added, eight Faculty-specific agreements were expanded, and 30 exchange agreements were renewed. In 2012-13, one agreement specific to Law and seven specific to Management have been added and, when signed, will raise the total number of University-level and faculty-specific international exchange agreements to 158.
- c. Steps have been taken to promote participation by undergraduate students in international exchanges: addition of clarified information about funding at the website – e.g., collaboration with a new student club focused on connecting students who are going on exchange with others who have just returned; and the improvement of technology processes designed to reduce runaround.
- d. Improvements have been made in the distribution of funding for students to pursue international study abroad (e.g., PBCSE Mobility Award” - Programme de bourses pour de courts séjours d'études universitaires à l'extérieur du Québec), with particular emphasis on ensuring that students who have financial need receive a larger proportion of the funding and that funds are distributed earlier. However, more work is still needed in this area to overcome social barriers to international experiences that students may feel.
- e. Graduate joint-degree and co-tutelles with international partner institutions are being established, starting Spring 2013.

Imperative V – Diversity and Accessibility

Goal V.1

McGill will increase the diversity of the student body by enrolling and supporting more students from historically under-represented sectors.

1. The University continues to offer funding to students through entrance bursaries, having committed to allocating 30 percent of net new revenues from tuition increases to student aid. In recent years, this has amounted to over \$1M dollars each year in additional financial support, bringing us closer to the goal that any student admitted to McGill will not be excluded because of financial need. However, growth of this important initiative has been stalled due to the provincial government's retraction of tuition increases.
2. Nonetheless, McGill's Entrance Bursary Program is unique in Canada. McGill is one of the few universities in North America to make need-based aid available to all accepted undergraduates regardless of their geographic

origin and citizenship. In 2011-12, 21% of entrance bursary dollars were disbursed to non-U.S. international students.

3. In one year, there has been a 42% increase in the number of under-represented students receiving aid, signifying a 73% increase in funding to groups including first generation attending post-secondary education, Aboriginal students, students with disabilities, and students with dependents.
4. In an effort to create outreach programs to reach a diverse range of students at a younger age, two programs for Montreal primary- and high-school students were established to encourage curiosity about Science and persistence in school: (a) the McGill/Gardner High School Science Day and (b) Homework Zone/My Day at McGill. The programs, which are philanthropically funded, are a collaborative effort of Enrolment Services and SEDE and are made possible through additional involvement of several faculties and current McGill students who mentor the primary-school children.
5. SEDE has established a coordination and information-sharing group of McGill units who are involved in the Montreal community in various collaborative projects to bring young students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to our campuses. Through exchanging information, the units are identifying opportunities to share resources, contacts and effective approaches to community collaboration.
6. McGill launched a successful bid to The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program to accept 91 fully-funded students over the coming 10 years. The Program was established to support academically gifted, but economically disadvantaged, youth from sub-Saharan Africa.

Goals V.2

McGill will ensure that financial need is not an enrolment barrier for qualified students.

1. *Ensure that the proportion of its operating budget devoted to scholarships and financial need will match or exceed the general standards set by our peer universities.*
 - a. McGill continues to lead in the category of medical universities in Maclean's annual assessment of the percentage of total expenditures devoted to scholarships and bursaries and ranks behind only Waterloo nationally.
2. *Increase the number and value of entrance scholarships and bursaries for new undergraduate students, to ensure that McGill becomes competitive with institutions of equal stature.*
 - a. Despite the decline in endowment performance in 2011-12, 362 students were offered renewable entrance scholarships, of which 169 registered – a yield of 46.7%.
 - b. Growth in McGill's need-based aid programs has been funded by diverting 30% of the net revenue derived from tuition increases to student aid. The 2011-12 central allocation of \$4.6M represents an increase of 170% over the past 5 years.
3. *Increase the number and value of fellowships for research graduate students, to ensure that McGill can compete with G13 peers and internationally for the best students.*
 - a. Graduate internal fellowships increased 15% in 2011-2012 over the previous year going from \$16,616,167 to \$19,112,349. The funding has been distributed across the university based on graduate admission, enrolment, and international student data. This source of funds is critical to attracting and retaining qualified graduate students.

Imperative VI – Financial Sustainability

Goal VI.1

McGill will align enrolment strategies and activities with budgetary, academic and resource considerations.

1. A preliminary tool has been developed by Planning and Institutional Analysis (PIA) to identify models of student profiles that are consistent with McGill's academic mission and that optimize resources. Significantly, the tool is designed to address adjustments in both the undergraduate and graduate enrolment, while identifying implications for University revenue. The tool will inform the evolution of McGill's approaches to managing its enrolment profile – e.g., proportion of graduate students; proportion of international students; etc. Eventually, the addition of information about the cost of offering academic programs will be added to further refine the analysis of the financial implications of changes to the student body profile.
2. To be transparent about enrolment decisions, detailed information about enrolment and targets in all faculties and schools has been shared with each Dean or Director, to achieve a more holistic and nuanced understanding of how enrolment in one faculty/school affects that in other faculties/schools. Meetings for the annual enrolment target-setting exercise now involve PIA, the Provost's Budget Office, Enrolment Services and each Dean or Director's team, to ensure that annual targets are aligned with the goals and academic plan of the University and the particular unit and with budgetary constraints.

Additional SEM activities - Student Retention and Time to Completion

A McGill SEM conference was held on March 30, 2012, focusing primarily on student retention and graduation rates, to create an opportunity for colleagues to plan for the implementation of the SEM plan at the local level. A second McGill SEM conference was held on November 13, 2012, focusing on academic advising and graduate supervision. A diverse program, including a keynote address, professional development workshops and a forum for action plan development was offered, engaging over 100 colleagues and students from across McGill. Working groups are being organized to develop and implement changes identified by the participants at the conference.

Attention continues to be paid to academic advising and graduate supervision in the current year to enhance McGill students' academic experience. Improving the student experience is critical to improving student retention and graduate time-to-completion rates. We encourage all colleagues to identify current practices and policies that should be changed or enhanced to achieve significant improvements in these areas. For example, early-alert systems and early intervention, according to many studies, have had positive effects on retention and graduation. A monitoring system to better track graduate student progress is also being initiated. Student associations in all faculties and schools have been asked to hold local consultation fairs with advising and graduate supervision as the central themes. These will be held in winter and spring 2013.

Conclusion:

The next phase of implementation of the SEM plan will be further influenced by the challenges that severe budgetary restrictions have placed on McGill. The focus will remain on attracting, retaining and graduating students are academically outstanding when judged in comparison to the rest of the world, while also ensuring that the University remains committed to serving the needs of Quebec society effectively, through the education of its citizens.