



TO: Senate

FROM: Emily Yee Clare, Student Senator (SSMU)

SUBJECT: Question Regarding the Re-evaluation of the McGill Governance Structure

MEETING DATE: December 7th, 2011

PREAMBLE

The University has worked to implement several of the recommendations from the Student Consultation and Communication Work Group including the appointment of the Student Life Coordinator, looking into student co-chairs for University level committees, and having a Consultation Fair. Presently, the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU) is actively working to reform its By-Laws and Policies to ensure that student representation is responsible and accountable. To quote the Student Consultation & Communication Work Group:

“More consistent training of new representatives including information on the time commitment and their responsibilities in the position and mechanisms for satisfying those responsibilities (i.e. ideas on how to consult constituents, when to report to student body or governing body, how to solicit feedback).”

However, improving the quality of student representation is insufficient in addressing structural barriers to students. Students representatives should not merely look to provide feedback and to serve as a liaison with the student body; students ought to be actively involved with decision-making processes. Indeed, such participation is part of their education in becoming responsible citizens. There is a difference between the number of people representing a constituency and the power that these representatives have to effect change within the McGill University structure.

QUESTION:

How does the university currently engage staff and students in processes of governance and decision-making (Senate, committees)?

Does the university see opportunities for more effective, or additional, mechanisms for engagement at any level of governance (Senate, committees)?
