



Report of the Vice-President (University Affairs) to Legislative Council September 11th, 2014

Mental Health

- Summer Progress:
 - Mental Health Coordinator was hired in May
 - Mental Health Committee began meeting in August
 - Decision was made to move the SSMU Mental Health Awareness Week from October (around the Students in Mind Conference) to November to coincide with the new Residence Life Mental Health programming scheduled to be spaced out over a week
 - Planning of first annual Cross-Campus Mental Health Awareness Week has been ongoing since May
 - groups collaborating include:
 - Peer Support Network
 - McGill Mental Health & Counselling Services
 - Healthy McGill
 - Unleash the Noise
 - Indigenous Women & Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition
 - Students in Mind
 - SACOMSS
 - Mad Pride (Concordia)
 - First Peoples House (Therapy Dogs)
 - proposed events include:
 - panel on psychosis
 - workshop on harm reduction
 - drop-in therapy dogs
 - social media self-care challenge
 - student art installation and wine & cheese
 - student-developed video series on lived experience of mental health
 - promotion of existing recurring services (PSN, SACOMSS, Labyrinth, MK...)
 - spoken word event
 - workshop on building a support network
 - yoga sessions
- Next Mental Health Week Working Group meeting: September 11th
 - tasks: update schedule, follow up on task assignments (will provide oral update)



- Last Mental Health Committee meeting: September 9th
 - ongoing Committee tasks:
 - confirm committee membership for 2014-15
 - provide committee input to Student Services/PGSS/SSMU Mental Health website
 - revise Mental Health Policy & Five-Year Plan
- SSMU Mental Health Five-Year Plan tasks for 2014-15:
 - hire Mental Health Coordinator (complete)
 - develop collaborative Mental Health website (expected completion: November 2014)
 - develop collaborative Mental Health listserv (expected completion: November 2014)
 - survey students regarding campus Mental Health services & publish data (expected completion: April 2014)
 - introduce SSMU Mental Health Fee to establish SSMU Mental Health Fund on the Winter 2015 Referendum ballot (expected completion: March 2014)

Equity

- Summer Progress:
 - hired and transitioned Equity Commissioners in collaboration with outgoing Equity Commissioners
 - note: due to personal circumstances of one of the originally hired Commissioners, SSMU currently only has one of the two Equity Commissioner positions filled; efforts to fill the remaining position are ongoing
 - corresponded with the Dean of Students Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Bianca Tetrault, regarding SSMU's involvement in the Dean of Students Consent Campaign planned for November 2014
 - began strategizing with the VP Internal regarding creating a more integrated Equity-event planning relationship in the upcoming year

Equity Committee

- Equity Committee recruitment is in progress
- Equity Committee callouts have been submitted to ~25 listservs (Faculty Associations, clubs, ISGs), Facebook event has been created, and callouts have been posted on various FB groups
- Equity Commissioner has begun outreach to Equity Commissioners of various faculty associations to discuss collaboration and share ideas on Equity-events relationships (to be discussed with other VP Social/Events/Internal representatives throughout the year)



Consent Campaign

- Equity Commissioner attended meeting on Thursday, September 4th
- She will be bottom-lining the organization of a panel on consent similar to the Dean of Students Forum on Consent in 2013-14; Equity Committee members will also be offered the opportunity to collaborate in planning
- themes of Campaign include expanding the idea of consent beyond the context of consensual sex to include consent in

Libraries

- Summer Progress:
 - provided input to the Tribune re: Smoke-Free Terrace during late August (article published on September 3rd) expressing my concern regarding the student consultation methods used in the making of the decision and commitment to working with the Libraries to ensure more accessible channels of collecting student input for the Libraries Master Plan in the upcoming year
 - initiated start of year meeting with Diane Koen (Senior Director, Planning & Resources) & Colleen Cook (Dean of Libraries) with Library Improvement Fund Coordinator (LIFC) on September 10th to discuss consultation and projects throughout the year (will report orally)
 - met with LIFC, Erin Sobat, to discuss plans for Library Improvement Fund Committee and Library relationship in the upcoming year
- Note regarding the replacement of Tim Hortons and other vendors with Premiere Moison:
 - this decision was made primarily by Student Housing and Hospitality Services (SHHS) with input from the Libraries, and was part of McGill's shift from using Aramark as their primary food contractor to Bon Appetit
 - no student consultation was conducted by either SHHS or the Libraries
 - primary concerns that I will be bringing up with the Libraries:
 - financial accessibility for students must be a priority in these decisions
 - extensive student consultation beyond the committee level is essential when the Libraries are asked to provide input on the use of spaces used almost exclusively by students
 - SSMU would have been happy collaborate on consultation if we had known the decision was forthcoming; improve Libraries-SSMU communications of upcoming decisions

Senate

- Summer Progress:
 - built new Senate workspace on Vibe for Senators to submit their committee reports, upload Questions and other relevant working documents, and access their Senator workplans
 - revised Senate Welcome Package and created several new document summaries



- contacted the VP Academics of faculty associations regarding a Senator-Academic meet-up to plan collaboration for the year, and discuss the re-starting of the McGill Academic Roundtable (meeting this Friday)
- brought Senate Caucus members in for Question-writing session for September Senate and submitted three questions
 - generally September Senate Question submission is inaccessible for student Senators besides the VP UA and President given the early deadline, but a writing session was held early this year to facilitate non-Executive access to this deadline
- collaboratively developed a non-Senator Committee Training session with the UA Secretary-General, Sam Gregory, to improve accountability and effectiveness of student representatives (scheduled for this Friday)
 - this will be the first year that non-Senator committee members receive formal training in effective committee representation; Senators will also be attending to provide a mentoring role and facilitate student committee member collaboration and collective strategizing

Senate Caucus

- held impromptu question brainstorming & writing meeting on September 3rd to submit questions for September 4th
- held follow-up meetings between Senators to collaboratively write three questions:
 - I) Question Regarding Potential Impacts of the 2014-15 Quebec Budget (Jacob Greenspon (Arts Senator), Chloe Rourke (Arts and Science Senator), David Benrimoh (Medicine Senator), Nabeel Godil (Management Senator))
 - II) Question Regarding Consent and Safer Space Initiatives (Kareem Ibrahim (Arts Senator), myself)
 - III) Question Regarding Follow-up to the Joint Board-Senate Meeting on Mental Health (Chloe Rourke (Arts and Science Senator), myself)
- all questions successfully passed through Steering
- Committee Training session scheduled for the 12th with Senator and non-Senator committee reps; Senate Caucus strategy training scheduled for evening of the 12th following VP Academic-Senate Meet & Greet
- first Senate Caucus was held on Monday the 8th
 - discussed goals for the year, agenda items for the Principal and Deputy Provost Student Life & Learning (DPSLL) caucus visit, and the remainder of the Senator training schedule
 - The DPSLL (Olliver Dyens) & Principal Fortier will be attending the September 15th session of Caucus
 - Andre Costopoulos will be attending the September 21st session of Caucus
- note: the Senators are great—you are very well-represented this year!



Senate Committees

- had first Nominating Committee on September 2nd; discussing composition of *Working Group to Review the Regulation on the Conduct of Research* (membership will be confirmed shortly; note: I am also on this committee)
- was charged in August with filling the Dean Selection Advisory Committees for Management, Libraries, Science, Agricultural and Environmental Science, and Graduate and Post-Graduate Studies
 - all committees completed except for Agricultural and Environmental Science
- have been meeting with the Provost Selection Advisory Committee throughout the summer; next meeting: September 17th
 - it is expected that the new Provost will be announced in December
- had first Steering Committee meeting on September 9th; all student questions successfully passed
- next major committee meeting: Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching Selection Committee (September 18th; this committee required 800 pages of reading!)

Academic Research & Policy Projects

- Summer Progress:
 - worked with Sexual Assault Policy Working Group and the Academic Research Commissioner consistently throughout the summer to translate Sexual Assault Policy Proposal into a working Policy draft
 - discussed Policy progress with CBC in early September
 - co-planned Indigenous Awareness Week Panel with Indigenous Education Coordinator, Allan Vicaire, Academic Research Commissioner, and SEDE Events Intern; theme: "Holding the Academy Accountable: Indigenous Studies and Community Inclusion"
 - participants include: Will Straw (Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada), Karl Hele (Director of First Peoples Studies at Concordia), and Marsha Vicaire (PhD candidate researching Indigenous peoples' sense of belonging in academic institutions)
 - conducted preliminary research on Indigenizing the Academy policy and accountability mechanisms at peer institutions (ongoing project)

Sexual Assault Policy

- met with Dean of Students and Bianca (Sexual Assault Response Coordinator) on August 29th to go through draft Policy and discuss steps moving forward
 - I anticipate we will have two to three more of these meetings before we can begin taking the Policy around to unions and other offices for input and support
- in process of bringing points back to Working Group and translating them into Policy revisions; next working group meeting: Friday, September 12th



Indigenizing the Academy Policy

- SQ; must meet with Subcommittee on First Peoples before taking next steps re: rejection of Hiawatha Belt flag proposal and next steps for Traditional Territory acknowledgment

Holding the Academy Accountable (Indigenous Awareness Week Panel)

- panel description finalized; met with facilitator Molly Swain to discuss questions on September 4th, and met with facilitator and Allan on September 8th to confirm panel and question structure

Faculty Academic Relations

- VP Academic-Senator Meet & Greet schedule for 5:30pm in Gerts on Friday, September 12th
- will be proposing schedule for re-establishing the McGill Academic Roundtable:
 - 1x a month MART meetings
 - 1x a semester Senator/MART meetings
- will be consulting with and collaborating with MART on the following topics:
 - academic priorities in the face of budget cuts
 - input for McGill-SSMU conference on research ethics
 - priorities and consultation preferences for Library Master Plan

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Stewart-Kanigan, Vice-President (University Affairs)