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TO: Students' Society of McGill University

FROM: Dr. Rose Goldstein, Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations)

SUBJECT: Strategic Research Plan

DATE: January 9, 2012

PURPOSE: Consultations are underway to refresh McGill's Strategic Research Plan (SRP). The Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations) will discuss the purpose of the SRP, identify its goals, structure and draft Priority Research Areas. She will dialogue with members of the SSMU Council, and respond to questions and concerns with the aim of generating ideas on how to improve:

- the SRP consultations and document, with particular emphasis on principles and priorities;
- student research experiences at McGill;
- the nexus between research and the student experience at McGill;
- activate and realize the plan once it is finalized.

BACKGROUND The SRP is a requirement of federal and provincial funding agencies. The SRP outlines the priority areas where the University will put added emphasis and extra resources to improve its research enterprise.

The overall goal of the SRP is to increase and enhance McGill's transformative research initiatives and to support the excellent research talent at the University in service to the various sectors of society. The final plan must reflect the University's strategic direction as well as the needs and aspirations of its faculties, departments, students and staff. It must guide decision-making and resource allocation to help ensure that McGill remains a world leader that strives to understand and respond to some of the most pressing and complex questions of our time.

At McGill, the SRP and the Provost's academic plan *Achieving Strategic Academic Priorities* (ASAP 2012) are being developed in parallel to ensure that goals and strategies are aligned. For example, Priority Research Areas identified in the the SRP will also feature in ASAP 2012.

We aim to develop an SRP that fosters an environment that maximizes research and training opportunities. At McGill the nexus between education and research should produce an engaging and productive environment for students, post-doctoral fellows, professors and research support staff. A well-constructed SRP also encourages an environment for independent stakeholder contributions and through partnerships locally, nationally and internationally.

The SRP will showcase specific and strategic priority research areas while continuing to support excellence across the University no matter where it is found. A dialogue with the community will allow us to tap into a range of expertise and experience to shape a plan that is aspirational and inspirational.

The SRP will also be operational and will explain how McGill's strategic priorities are identified, how research needs can be met, how success is measured, and how new priorities will be developed or current ones revised.

CONSULTATION:

Due to the importance of this initiative, and in order to properly develop the plan in support of achieving its goals, the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International Relations) [OVPRIR], led by Dr. Rose Goldstein, has been engaging in and will continue widespread consultation regarding the SRP with McGill stakeholders, as well as with external advisors from industry and government.

Faculties initially provided updated research priorities in spring/summer 2010. These priorities were reviewed in May 2011 and are continuing to be updated alongside the institutional SRP consultation.

Draft interdisciplinary and transformative research areas have been identified using Faculty-based priorities, the current SRP, the update for the Provost's academic plan, and interdisciplinary clusters data that was also generated by the Provost's Office. To identify strengths, OVPRIR also reviewed sponsored research outcomes captured in the OVPRIR database, recent internal decisions for the allocation of funds (such as centres and special research partnerships) and grant applications where the University could endorse only a limited number of proposals (ex. CFI, CERC).

Since September 2011, the following groups have participated in consultations and events have occurred:

- Open Forums (open to all McGill stakeholders)
 - Researcher consultations
 - Faculty Council and Hospital Research Institutes
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- Student Council Meetings
- Student Consultation Fair
- SRP website
- Research Advisory Council
- Deans Working Group
- SRP Advisory Committee
- External VPRIR Advisory Committee
- VPRIR Leadership Team
- Senate
- Board of Governors

Up-coming in January and February 2012:

- Additional Faculty Council Meetings
- Additional researcher consultations
- Informal discussion and networking events
- Increased web activity

Return to executive and leadership bodies

DRAFT

PRIORITY

RESEARCH AREAS:

Draft Title:

Strategic Research Plan: Understanding and Improving the Human Condition in the Globalized World

Draft Priority Research Areas:

- Identity and Humanity

Who are we?

- Public Policy and Social Transformation

How do we organize our societies, and how can we create better ones?

- Health Research and Healthcare Delivery

How can we live longer and healthier lives?

- Neurosciences and Cognition: Their Implications for Society

How can McGill unravel the mysteries of the brain and the entire nervous system to unlock their full potential?

- Towards a Sustainable Future

How does McGill develop approaches and technologies that utilize knowledge for a cleaner, efficient, and more equitable future?

- Capitalizing on the Biosciences Revolution

How can we deliver solutions for complex life science problems using specialized methods and tools from engineering?

- Information and Communications Technologies

[Overarching question to be written]

- Technology and Human Expression

How does technology enable us to perform, organize and share?

- Matter

What are we made of, how do we control it and how can humanity benefit?

- Innovation, Commercialization, Entrepreneurship and Return to Society

How do we translate ideas in to action?

TIMELINE:

Priority Research Areas will be identified for inclusion in ASAP 2012 in **winter 2011**, with the research portion to be drafted in early **winter 2011**.

The SRP document will be circulated for revisions and fine-tuning to the SRP Advisory Committee and senior administration (P7, deans and ADRs, as well as other academic and research planning advisers) in **winter 2011-12**.

The goal is to have the Strategic Research Plan and ASAP 2012 ready for approval in **winter/spring 2011-12**, and presentation to the Principal, P7, Senate, and the Board of Governors.

Institutional implementation of the SRP and the broad communication of its objectives will commence in **spring 2012**.
