



# Memorandum

**To:** Anthony C. Masi, Provost

**CC:** Robert Comeau, Director, Employee Relations  
Maud Boyer, Employee Relations Advisor  
Anna Campana, Human Resources Advisor  
Fabrice Labeau, Electrical and Computer Engineering

**From:** 2011-2012 SSMU Legislative Council

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011

**Re:** Letter in Support of AGSEM's Teaching Assistant Bargaining Demands

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Dear Prof. Masi:

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, SSMU Council was mandated by its constituents to pass a motion in support of AGSEM's bargaining demands in light of the current negotiations with the McGill Administration. After considerable consultation with our members, it was clear that undergraduate students strongly support the presence and continued contribution of Teaching Assistants to the McGill community and our academic development.

It is in the University's interests to meet AGSEM's TA demands. To quote the Principal's Taskforce on Student Life and Learning, "The quality of a university education depends in significant part on a student's experience with peers and within the classroom; it also depends on the quality of relations with faculty and staff, and of the academic and other services delivered to students."

More specifically, paid pedagogical training for TAs ensures that students have access to better prepared educators. Lowering student-to-TA ratios by increasing the total number of TA hours provides the resources and support necessary for effective undergraduate academic growth. Limiting the size of discussion-based conferences and laboratory sections facilitates the development of interpersonal relationships and extends the learning environment beyond the classroom itself. Moreover, TAs deserve a wage that rises with inflation to support their cost of living.

We urge the McGill Administration to pay heed to AGSEM's bargaining demands; Teaching Assistants must be empowered to fulfill their commitments to the best of their abilities. This requires pedagogical and financial support, and will require that the University allocate resources to ensure that more TA-ships comprising a greater number of hours can be offered to the student body.

Regards,

Emily Yee Clare  
VP University Affairs

On behalf of the 2011-2012 SSMU Legislative Council