**Report of the Vice President (University Affairs) to
the Legislative Council of the Students' Society of McGill University
Meeting of October 15th, 2009**

"I loathe the expression, "What makes him tick." It is the American mind, looking for a simple and singular solution, that uses the foolish expression. A person not only ticks, he also chimes and strikes the hour, falls and breaks and has to be put together again, and sometimes stops like an electric clock in a thunderstorm"- James Thurber

For Information/Discussion:

Research
A. Technology and Assessment Research Project: Will be completed for your viewing by the next Council. The project highlights ways to improve technologies and systems already in place as well as making out-of-the-box recommendations for future options such as open-source projects and new Learning Management Systems.

SSMU Affairs
B. Undergraduate Student Taskforce to the SSMU: "The McGill We Want". The Principal doesn't get to have all the fun. We will be striking a Taskforce. See Appendix 1 for further details. I encourage you all to look over the proposal thoroughly, then get back to me with your suggestions. We will hold elections of councillors at the next Council. I recommend that if you are thinking of joining the Taskforce you are prepared to make a serious commitment. To get this done in a year will be a big task… however it is the best course of action to see this to its completion.
C. Council Retreat: Was very productive to my portfolio. I encourage you all to continue to ask questions and inform me of issues that you identify within your respective areas.
D. Choose Life Event: A lot of time last week was spent on this issue. I will not go into details, as the Executive's Open Letter highlights the concerns coming out of this in terms of our relationship with the University.
E. McGill Academic Round Table: meeting on Friday! Will discuss the Taskforce as well as issues and priorities for the year.

University Governance and Administration
F. Senate: October 14th.
    a. Questions asked: Course-outline clause and Aboriginal Representation in the Medicine Faculty, **will report orally.**
        i. Course Outlines: There was a lot of concern about the clause suggested as an add-on to course outlines as a result of H1N1 planning. The clause stipulates that course evaluations or examinations are subject to change in "extraordinary circumstances" outside of "the

University's control". This is of concern to student's having the right to be informed of all course responsibilities well in advance.

    ii. Aboriginal Representation in Medicine: This question was asked by the SSMU Senator from Medicine, Hana Thomas. She raised concerns about the accessibility of McGill's medical program to Aboriginal identified students.

  b. Potential issues that arose: **will report orally.**

  c. Senate Caucus: Engineering Senator, **will report orally.**

G. Meeting with the Principal and Professor Mendelson: Topics discussed were the MBA tuition increase, Undergraduate and Graduate student priorities, the Principal's new Taskforce, Combating student apathy, and the new Secretary General. We meet with the Principal twice a year. This is a good opportunity to discuss overarching priorities and concerns. While it is nice to meet with her, Professor Mendelson is more of our go to guy on most matters. Several initiatives that came out of the meeting--GA motion Re:Self-funded tuition model and preparations to make a submission to the Principal's Taskforce.

H. Meeting with Professor Mendelson: Topics- Lease and MoA, Tribune, "Informing University of student concerns" **will report orally if necessary.**

I. Inflationary Increases for Ancillary fees: **will report orally.**

J. Student Advisory Council on IT: This is a small group that advises the CIO and others on student priorities for learning and teaching technologies. We set our areas of concern for the year and emphasized the importance of interactive learning (most specifically engagement of laptops in large classes), integration, and intuitive systems (especially class scheduling). David Marshall and I sit on this committee, we will be guiding ourselves with the report on IT, and will be coming to you for input on these different topics as we address them throughout the year.

K. Committees: appointed students to some remaining Services Advisory Boards.

L. Controversial Events Town Hall: At the Town Hall, several students expressed concern that Professor Mendelson has no intention of instituting a policy. There is potential for making such a recommendation in our submission to the Principal's Taskforce, or through lobbying at the Joint-Senate Board Committee on Equity. I do not foresee the University being receptive at this time. It is an important consideration.

H1N1: The Preparation Continues…

M. Personal Pandemic Plan: http://www.mcgill.ca/health/personalplan/

N. Vaccine: We have not had success (as of yet) in getting a vaccination station set up at McGill. I will keep you posted on this as I learn new information. Check the Pandemie Quebec website for information about when and where the government will be distributing vaccines for your area. It is highly recommended that everyone get the H1N1 and the seasonal flu vaccine. The vaccine will be made available to the province-identified "high risk" groups first. These include pregnant women, people with existing health conditions, and people who are immuno-compromised.

Sustainability

O. Sustainable Projects Fund: The University has agreed to make a matching contribution contingent upon the passing of the undergraduate student fee levy. See Appendix 2 for more information on the what, why, and how.

Meetings

P. Past 2 weeks: Caucus, Pandemic Contingency Planning, Program Delivery Subcommittee of PATFDEU, Morton Mendelson (2), Student Advisory Council on IT, Provost, APC, Senate Nominating, SCPD

Q. Important upcoming: Leadership Summit, Teaching and Learning Spaces Workgroup, Advisory Committee for the Selection of a VP RIR, General Assembly

For Approval:

R. Sustainable Projects Fund fee question

Please do not hesitate to contact me about any topics discussed in this report or relating to my portfolio

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Dooley
VP University Affairs 09-10

Appendix 1

Undergraduate Student Taskforce to the SSMU: "The McGill We Want"
DRAFT
Rebecca Dooley, Vice President (University Affairs)

Goal

Produce a comprehensive, consultative, report that paints a picture of the ideal McGill University experience in the eyes of undergraduate students. The report will set priorities that will guide the internal and external lobbying efforts of the SSMU to ensure the relevancy and accountability of those efforts to the undergraduate student population. The Taskforce will also strengthen lines of communication between the SSMU and other major student groups on campus, especially the Faculty student associations.

What would the report of the Taskforce look like?

The report will be broken down into categories of student life and learning at McGill. The Taskforce Working Group will decide on a set of categories/areas of interest. A suggested breakdown could be: Teaching and Learning, Physical Future, Student Services and Student Affairs, Student Life, Research and Programming, Tuition and Accessibility. Within this framework, the Taskforce will begin to paint a picture of "The McGill We Want" through widespread consultation and research.

The report will be supported by official submissions from each Faculty student association and other interested major student groups, data from surveys and anonymous student consultation, and past mandates from general assemblies and referenda. A significant effort will be made against homogenizing the needs and priorities of students across Faculties and personal backgrounds.
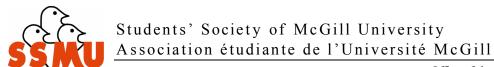
Membership*

The Taskforce Working Group will be composed of 9 student representatives:

3 representatives from SSMU:
-The SSMU Vice President University Affairs (responsible for chairing and reporting to Council on the Taskforce's progress)
-1 SSMU Councilor
-1 SSMU Senator

4 representatives from Faculty Student Associations:
-3 Representatives from a Student Association in Arts, Science, Engineering, Management, and Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
-1 Representative from a Student Association in Medicine, Dentistry, Music, Education, Social Work, Nursing, or Law

-2 students are large

-Resource people when necessary (non-voting)

Note: In the selection of Faculty Student Association representatives, Faculties that are not already present through the SSMU representatives will be prioritized.

Projected Timeline*

  I. Draft a terms of reference: NOW

 II. Strike the Task Force: November 1st, 2009

 III. Compile existing mandates and documents: November 12th, 2009

 IV. Set categories, Approve consultation methods, Launch information campaign: November 12th, 2009

  V. Consultation: November 2009- February 2010
      - Faculty Student Associations- informal consultation, submissions
      - Widespread consultation- student groups, anonymous comment forums, etc.

 VI. Set objectives and priorities: March 1st, 2010

 VII. Research: March- May 2010

VIII. Compile and Finalize: by May 31st, 2010

 IX. Adopt: September, 2010

* Up for discussion.

Appendix 2

A Student Vision of the Sustainability Projects Fund

Prepared by Rebecca Dooley and Jonathan Glencross

Introduction

With a new sustainability policy slated for presentation to Senate in the fall of 2009, it is clear that McGill is committed to sustainability. In recent years, McGill has made a significant amount of progress with the opening of the Office of Sustainability in early 2009, strengthening student involvement of the nearly 25 student-led environmental groups, and a growing number of community wide sustainability initiatives such as the McGill Farmers Market and the McGill Food Systems Project.

The need for united and comprehensive leadership toward sustainability at McGill is becoming increasingly evident. While 2009 saw increased levels of collaboration between students and administrators in this field, it was primarily due to improved individual relations rather than an institutionalized change in practices. But that change is coming.

In order to institutionalize collaboration between different university entities, it is proposed that a Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) be established, enabling McGill to bring together its diverse resources in order to more effectively plan, finance and implement sustainable practices on our campuses. This fund would be composed of contributions from students on a per credit basis with matching funds from other sources, under the responsibility of the University administration. Fund monies would be dedicated to a wide variety of projects, ranging from the purchase of an industrial composter, to the coordination of applied student research, as well as long term energy-efficiency projects.

The process of administering this fund is just as important as the projects it will finance. By creating an official channel for future projects to go through, and sharing the responsibility of consensus-based decision making among all actors, the fund will help consolidate the existing knowledge and potential of all actors in the McGill community.

In this proposal you will find a detailed profile of what the fund will look like, as well as guidelines and a proposed structure for the management of the fund. The terms and suggestions put forth in this document reflect input from student representatives collected in various interviews and discussions.

Fund Profile

It is proposed that a Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) be created for a trial 3-year period in support of sustainability projects at McGill University. The intent of this fund is to fully fund or provide seed capital for dynamic, innovative projects, allowing for projects to be implemented sooner and more effectively than they might have through existing

channels. The goal is for this fund to provide a basis for enhancing the culture of sustainability of our community, and to encourage broader involvement in this important endeavour. The SPF will be established based on the following annual sources of funding:

- o Part 1: Student contributions: This will consist of a $0.50 per credit "non-opt-outable" fee for the duration of a three year trial period.

- o Part 2: Matching funds - Including, but not limited to, possible contributions through internal and external donations, from centrally managed capital and operating budgets of the University, and grants from external agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The estimated annual value of the total fund, including the matching component, is $840,000, based on the 2008-2009 enrolment levels of undergraduate and graduate students.

The three year period was selected since it is the maximum amount allowed for Ancillary fees before return to referendum for review. This is outlined in Article 1 of the SSMU Constitution. These initial years should serve as the basis for future increases, or decreases, of the contribution to the fund. The $0.50 per credit amount has been arrived at based on the fact that the administration is willing to match this amount. It is also the understanding of the writers of this document that $0.50 per credit is enough to mobilize significant change across campus, while remaining a reasonable amount for the three year trial period.

Funds leftover from a previous year will roll over into the current balance of the fund. No money allocated to this fund (from either student fees or matching funds from other sources) can be allocated to any project or undertaking that does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group, as described below.

A portion of the fund monies will be reserved to hire a Sustainability Coordinator (see description in Appendix) for the 3 year term of the fund, as well as 2 to 3 student work study positions in tandem with this position. The Sustainability Coordinator will serve as a resource to the Working Group, and will be primarily tasked with coordinating applied student research, facilitating the application process, ensuring that approved projects are executed as planned and tracking progress on sustainability accomplishments achieved through the SPF.

Decisions about how to proceed after the trial period will be made based on an assessment of the impact that this fund has had in terms of tangible and measureable impacts made over the course of the 3-year period.

Application Process

The overall application process will occur over two stages, as follows:

Generally, applications to the fund must be submitted under a two-stage process, as follows:

- o Stage 1: Applicants submit Statement of Intent (SOI) publicized deadlines - SOI's will be reviewed by the SPF Working Group (as described below). All successful candidates must receive consensus vote from Working Group. Successful candidates will be invited to submit a more comprehensive application and will be given feedback and guidance for full application.

- o Stage 2: Applicants submit full proposal - Proposals should include a detailed up-to-date budget that includes statistics on any anticipated cost savings and other important benefits to be incurred through the project. The proposal should also acknowledge additional benefits such as community engagement, project visibility, etc.

In order to be considered for funding, projects should meet the general criteria described in the section below. Only applications arising from the McGill community including students, staff and faculty members will be considered.

Projects valued at less than $10,000 will not be subject to full review. Three members of the workgroup will be given oversight over applications for these small-scale projects and this group's recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the larger working group.

Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group

A Sustainability Project Fund Working Group will be established as a parity committee charged with evaluating and prioritizing proposals that come from students and the University. Projects can only be approved with **consensus** from all voting members.

The SSMU President and the Associate Vice-Principal (University Services) will be jointly tasked with the responsibility of calling together the group at the beginning of each academic year (i.e., in September). The group will consist of members, from whom consensus on projects will be sought, and other resource personnel. The voting members of this parity committee will include:

- o 4 students, as follows:
  - o 2 undergraduate students, nominated by the SSMU
  - o 1 undergraduate student from Macdonald Campus, nominated by the Macdonald Campus Student Society
  - o 1 PGSS representative, nominated by PGSS
- o 4 members, nominated by the administration of McGill University.

The group will be chaired by the Associate Vice-Principal (University Services), who will serve as a non-voting member.

Resource people, without vote, will include the Sustainability Coordinator, who is to be hired upon the creation of the SPF, and any other person, as required, at the specific request of the working group.

General Criteria for Candidate Projects

Sustainability projects in which tangible impacts will be made within a shorter term sustainability projects will be prioritized due to the need to assess the success of the program at the end of the 3-year trial period. This trial period will ensure that there is enough interest from all parties in continuing the fund over a longer period of time.

Projects applying for the fund will have to meet general criteria, including:

- All projects should include an element of engagement of students, staff, faculty and administrators

- All applicants must answer and will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions

  - How does the project accelerate the creation of a culture of sustainability on campus?
  - Who are the stakeholders involved, and in what capacity?
  - Have these stakeholders directly affected by the proposed project been consulted?
  - How does this project fit under the purview of the CSF, rather other sources of funding?

- Energy Conservation Projects must have predictable outcomes, with priority given to those with short pay-back periods and/or important reductions in the emission of green house gases or other pollutants,

- If approved, the results or measurable change created by the project must be communicated with the community.

Projects with the following benefits will be favoured:

- Improvement of the coordination, development and implementation of applied student research projects;

- Advancement of existing sustainability initiatives on campus;

- Increases the resources for collaboration between students, professors, staff and administrators, and empowers all stakeholders to *engage* in sustainable initiatives on campus and in the community;

- Demonstrates innovation in design and implementation of sustainable practices.

- Improved infrastructure mechanisms for a reduction in the use and consumption of energy and material resources, in recognition of the limited capacity of the biosphere to accommodate human activities;

- o Transferability of project to other areas of the university, with high project visibility and/or impact; and

- o Use of locally developed and/or sourced products and services

Projects **will not** be considered if:

- o Infrastructure or services which are already part of the already existing operations of the University (e.g. recycling bins are part of the existing responsibility of waste management);

- o Purchasing of everyday materials which are deemed more 'green' (e.g. recycled paper)

- o They are the direct responsibility of an existing individual, group, or faculty;

- o They have already been approved under any other budget;

- o Unjustly favour one section of the community at the expense of another;

- o They are to replace funding normally received through an academic grant.