



## **Report of the Vice-President (University Affairs) to Legislative Council October 21st, 2014**

### **Mental Health**

#### **Mental Health Portfolio Updates:**

- Attended McGill Wellness Website Steering Committee on Oct. 8th; conflict on mental health models (medicalized v. wellness-based model) is ongoing
  - Student Services is still stating students were involved at every step of the way, but it seems that the Mental Health Advisory Board was the primary site of student feedback, and the degree of their involvement remains unclear (have requested clarification)
  - Have requested more info on alternative self-assessment tools (research was done last year)
  - Have been speaking with campus media re: questions; see responses to initiative here:
    - <http://mcgilltribune.com/opinion/mental-health-questions-answers/>
    - <http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2014/10/upcoming-wellness-portal-to-feature-mental-health-self-screening/>
  - Also several general mental health-related articles in the papers recently:
    - <http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2014/10/students-deserve-a-better-mental-health-framework/>
    - <http://mcgilltribune.com/student-living/beating-midterms-blues/>
- Last Mental Health Week Working Group meeting: will update
  - Next Mental Health Committee meeting: will update

### **Equity**

#### **Equity Portfolio Updates:**

- Equity Commissioners and I met with SSPN members (Harm Reduction/Equity coordinators, event coordinators, and VP Internal) on Oct. 16th re: Equity/anti-cultural appropriation plans for 4Floors
- Equity will be bottom-lining forum on cultural appropriation prior to event plus collaborating on anti-cultural appropriation poster campaign and FAQ, and holding a workshop for SSPN members on recognizing and addressing cultural appropriation at the event

#### Equity Committee

- First meeting of Equity Committee: Oct. 17th
- Committee members have begun to task themselves to variety of projects proposed by Equity Commissioners, including planning a discussion/workshop series for the year, and assisting with the 4Floors training



### Consent Campaign

- Consent Campaign happening now!
- Equity Commissioner Sidnell-Greene bottom-lined panel on consent; Equity Committee provided feedback to panel questions at last meeting

## **Libraries**

### **Libraries Portfolio Update:**

- met with Steven Spodek (Libraries Development Officer) on Oct.15th with LIFC re: fundraising for Extended Hours; found out that a significant portion of the Parents Fund (discretionary funding donated by parents of current student yearly) is used for collections expansion
- will meet with Dean of Libraries on Oct.22nd to discuss possibility of Extended Hours being included in this fund (will report orally)
- meeting the line that “fundraising for extended hours is essentially impossible” plus \*consider Extended Hours as an operational expense (Provost meeting last week confirmed this)

### Library Improvement Fund Committee

- last meeting: Oct.16th
  - discussed plans for larger scale consultation and feedback collection from students and faculty associations
  - looking to do more in-person non-tabling surveying + create online survey

### Library Master Plan

- had first meeting of Communications Working Group on Oct.15th
- underlined need for cross-faculty student consultation on space use priorities
- considering creating survey to distribute to faculty associations to gather data on space priorities & why students who don't use the libraries prefer to study elsewhere (possibly could be the same as LIFC survey)

## **Senate**

### Senate Caucus

- New Science Senator was elected!
- submitted two questions to Oct. Senate re: campus safety and the Off-Campus Fellows Program

### Senate Committees

- significant committee updates:
  - First meeting of the *Working Group to Review the Regulation on the Conduct of Research* scheduled for Oct.23 (will report orally)



- withdrawal policy will be coming to Academic Policy Committee (APC) on October 30th for approval
  - major proposed change: withdrawals for a whole semester due to excusable reason (physical or mental health issues, family crisis etc.) will be stricken from the student's public transcript (no 'W' or course visible)
  - student issue: having this policy only apply to whole semester withdrawals rather than individual course withdrawal pushes students to drop a whole semester; a more supportive approach would be to have it apply to individual courses as well to allow students to remain part of the campus community as much as they are able to
    - contacted the Secretary of APC with a request to have students from Enrolment and Student Affairs Advisory Committee (ESAAC) present these points at the next APC

## Academic Research & Policy Projects

### Portfolio Updates:

- Held "Weapons Development on Campus: Open Forum on McGill's Research Regulations" for *tomorrow* from 3-5pm in Madeleine Parent to inform SSMU's stance on the *Working Group to Review the Regulation on the Conduct of Research* with the VP External on Oct. 16th
  - lower turnout and faculty diversity than hoped; strong anti-weapons stance expressed by students present
- read articles here:
- "Students Call on SSMU to Formally Condemn Weapons Research": <http://bullandbearmcgill.com/ssmu-formulates-a-stance-on-weapons-development-at-mcgill/>
- "Students Speak Out on Weapons Development at McGill": <http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2014/10/students-speak-out-on-weapons-development-at-mcgill/>
- "Students Debate Military Research on Campus at Policy Reform Forum": <http://mcgilltribune.com/news/students-debate-military-research-campus-policy-reform-forum/>

### Sexual Assault Policy

- Academic Research Commissioner (ARC) and SAP Working Group completed second draft of SAP
- Dean of Students meeting re: SAP delayed because of football controversy
  - DoS reluctant to meet until after Consent Week; scheduling meeting for after
- SAP Working Group met with PGSS on Oct. 16th to discuss collaboration
  - very interested in collaborating

### Indigenizing the Academy Policy

- SSMU Traditional Territory Acknowledgment passed!
  - Arts Senator Ibrahim has been lobbying other faculty associations to adopt acknowledgement statements as well



- working with Subcommittee on First Peoples re: University-wide consultation on statement (i.e. more vs. less inclusive etc)
- met with Indigenous Access McGill on Oct.7th re: ongoing decolonization efforts
  - need official confirmation, but it seems that the Hochelaga Rock will not be moving; McGill wants to build a path/benches around it instead
  - Dec.2014=last year of funding for IAM Aboriginal Field Course; will contact Dean of Arts/McGill to follow up on this
  - discussed possibility of student researcher in Indigenous accountability structures at peer institutions; will ask Subcommittee on First Peoples to confirm
  - IDS is now allowing Indigenous course content/thesis themes (met with students pushing this earlier in the semester to assist)

## Faculty Academic Relations

- gave University budget update to VP Academics at the last McGill Academic Roundtable suggesting that they return to their faculty associations to gather priorities for presentation at the two University open forums on the budget (**Oct.27 -Monday, October 27th at either 10:30 - 12:30 in the Thomson House Ballroom or 15:00 - 17:00 in Leacock Building, Room 232**)
  - followed up on Oct.21st to ensure they have the support and information they need to bring these priorities forward
  - also offered to have written submissions sent to me after which I could forward them directly to the Provost for consideration
- emailed Engineering Undergraduate Society VP Academic re: strategies to engage Engineering students in research regulation review (weapons development etc.) following low Engineering presence at Open Forum; awaiting response

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