



Report of the Vice-President (University Affairs) to Executive Committee November 6th, 2014

Mental Health

Mental Health Portfolio Updates:

- The first annual cross-campus Mental Health Awareness Week starts tomorrow (Nov. 7th-17th)! See the website mhweek.ca or the Facebook event (<https://www.facebook.com/events/393103857505275/>) for the full calendar of events!
 - Great collaboration between Residence Life, Student Services, and a wide range of student groups; excited to see this continue
- meetings with Student Services/Mental Health Services are ongoing re: concerns with depression screening tool
 - concerns: the use of depression screening tools has been shown to be ineffective and possibly harmful in recent research (https://www.aacp.com/pdf/%2F1112%2F1112ACP_Letters_Thombs.pdf , <http://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g1253>) and their use by primary care physicians is recommended against by the Canadian Task Force on Preventative Health Care guidelines for Primary Care Practitioners (<http://canadiantaskforce.ca/ctfphc-guidelines/2013-depression/>)

Equity

Equity Portfolio Updates:

- Lots of media attention on anti-cultural appropriation efforts for 4Floors! Dan and I both did at least 3 off-campus media interviews each re: SSMU's proactive measures (<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/offensive-halloween-costumes-won-t-get-passing-grade-at-mcgill-1.2818038>)
- Relatively small number of problematic costumes (~5 required intervention); will be debriefing with VP Internal once Equity Commissioners' report is complete

Equity Committee

- Equity Commissioners and Committee members hosted an anti-oppression/cultural appropriation workshop for SSPN members the weekend prior to 4Floors + hosted a forum on cultural appropriation for the McGill community at large
- Working group to review the Equity Policy will be having its first meeting next week
- Race & Educational Injustice Discussion organized by Committee members held on Nov. 4th (first in Equity Discussion Series)



Consent Campaign

- Equity Commissioner Sidnell-Greene organized and facilitated Panel of Consent during Consent Week—very successful!

Libraries

Libraries Portfolio Update:

- Library Master Plan Feasibility Study Town Hall is **next Tuesday (Nov.11th) from 4:00-5:30pm in Cybertheque**
 - come out to give your input on library space priorities directly to the architects building the feasibility study for a total revamp of libraries on campus
- circulated information blurb to Councillors for constituent consultation re: student funding of 24 hour access; consolidation of feedback to inform Winter 2015 24-hour access funding is ongoing (deadline: mid to late November)

Library Improvement Fund Committee

- conducted first wave of student consultation re: Library space priorities from this Tuesday to Thursday (tabling + roaming surveying in McLennan with free coffee/whiteboards)
- online survey re: Library priorities will be circulated this week for LIF priorities + Library Master Plan priorities

Library Master Plan

- all student focus groups have been completed by the Libraries
- next Communications Working Group meeting will be December 9th to discuss further strategies for seeking community input
- LIFC consultations will also be used to inform the student priorities at Communications Working Group and Steering Committee

Senate

Senate Portfolio Updates:

- Annual Joint Board-Senate Meeting was held on November 4th; theme was promoted as 'community engagement,' but the background readings/questions/panelist information circulated to Senators on Oct.31st indicated a solely business/commercial research-based focus (i.e. engaging with business partners in the Montreal/global community v. engaging with Montreal community members/groups; see documents here: http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/joint_board-senate_meeting_documents_-_nov_4_2014.pdf)



- Concerns:
 - Meeting theme was misrepresented to students and was developed without student consultation (no students invited to join working group)
 - Business partnerships reflect a very narrow definition of community engagement that excludes the practices of groups like SEDE that arguably are more in need of public attention because of chronic underfunding while private partnerships do not have this problems
 - Problematic panelists: a representative from HydroQuebec was invited to participate as a panelist; SSMU has a stance against resource development projects that perpetuate contemporary colonialism by operating on Indigenous territories without their consent (<http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Motion-Climate-Justice-at-McGill-2014-09-25.pdf>); HydroQuebec is one of Quebec's greatest offenders in this regard and their actions have a long history of resistance by Indigenous communities

Senate Caucus

- submitting questions re: McGill's definition of community engagement (re: the Joint Board-Senate Meeting theme) and re: the effect of budget cuts on services used by students

Senate Committees

- First meeting of the *Working Group to Review the Regulation on the Conduct of Research* was Oct.23rd
 - researchers within the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International Relations) will be surveying existing regulation practices at McGill with committee input to priorities for next meeting
- withdrawal policy did not come to Academic Policy Committee (APC) on October 30th for approval as expected
 - student concerns remain re: the exclusion of the possibility of W's being excused for single courses v. full semesters only

Academic Research & Policy Projects

Portfolio Updates:

- Motion for a Campus Free from Harmful Military Technologies passed at the Oct.21st General Assembly; awaiting online ratification

Sexual Assault Policy

- met with Dean of Students and Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) on Oct. 30th with members of SAP Working Group with revised Policy draft
 - very favourable response; the draft is ready to begin being circulated for support to various community members!



- Working Group planning a 'get involved'/info session on the Policy for mid-November to organize student support
- will be meeting with the Dean of Students and SARC to coordinate administration/faculty-level support-building strategies

Indigenizing the Academy Policy

- met with Indigenous Education Coordinator and First Peoples House Coordinator on Oct.30th to discuss further consultation plans for Traditional Territory Acknowledgement
- will likely be proceeding with focus groups next semester

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.27th) + offered to transmit written submissions of faculty priorities to the University
 - received & transmitted faculty priorities from BASiC (Arts & Science)

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