



## **Report of the Vice-President (University Affairs) to Legislative Council**

**Sept 17, 2015**

*The work in this report is a summary of all areas of the University Affairs Portfolio. All activities are the product of the hard work of many people including, but not limited to, other Executives, Senators and student staff*

### **Summer Updates**

- Selected and allocated student representatives to over 50 Senate & University Committees
  - This process was very confusing and time-consuming due to SSMU's poor records of University Committees
- Spent significant time reading documents, visioning, laying groundwork for projects and adjusting to the administrative and supervisory responsibilities of the role
- Attended the Student Union Development Summit at UBC with the VP Clubs & Services
  - A summary report is being written to be shared with Council
- Meeting regular with the Deputy Provost of Student Life and Learning along with the President
- Attended an Enrollment Affairs Advisory Committee (ESAAC) Subcommittee meeting to design a framework for fair and evidence-based assessment
  - Research will hopefully lead to revisions of the University Student Assessment Policy that is in line with best practices

### Frosh

- Attended Harm Reduction Taskforce meetings and recommended additional trainings for Coordinators, Leaders and O-Staff
- Liaised with MUS and student groups regarding equity concerns surrounding the "Froshafari" theme. Facilitated a training on cultural appropriation with MUS President and the SSMU Equity Commissioner

## **University & Academic Affairs**

### **General**

#### Fall Reading Week

- The results of the survey sent out in the winter semester showed that approximately 70% of students were in favour of a Fall Reading Week after reviewing the tradeoffs. A



proposal is being brought forward suggesting a 5 day break in conjunction with Canadian Thanksgiving.

#### Identification Status

- Meeting with Enrollment Services to discuss changing gender identification to be non-binary and to explore the possibility of allowing students to self-identify as a minority (e.g. sexual orientation, disability, student parent or other dependents, etc)

#### **Senate**

##### Senate

- Student Senators submitted 3 questions to the September 24<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting:
  - Question regarding McGill's Alleged Bill 100 Violation
  - Question regarding McGill's Response to the Truth & Reconciliation Report
  - Question regarding Physical Accessibility on Campus

##### Senate Caucus

- Organized training for all incoming Student Senators at the SSMU Retreat. A makeup training will be scheduled next week

##### Senate & University Committees

- Allocated Senators, Executives and students to over 50 Senate & University Committees with student representation
- Provided training, including SSMU's expectations, to all committee representatives to better prepare them for their role. A makeup training will be scheduled next week
- We will be following up to ensure representatives are regularly reporting and improving SSMU's institutional memory with respect to these committees
- Attended Senate Nominating, Senate Steering and Committee on Student Services (CSS) meetings
- Enrollment Affairs Advisory Committee met to discuss the University Student Assessment Policy revisions and Fall Reading Week

#### **Memorandum of Agreement Negotiations**

- Reviewed the recommendations and research completed by the previous Executive team
- We are compiling a list of negotiables to submit to McGill by the end of September to begin negotiations as soon as possible and compiling additional research



## **Library Relations**

- Initial meeting scheduled to touch base with the Libraries for the start of the year
- Reaching out to VP Academics of faculty and departmental associations and encouraging them to develop their own Library Improvement Fund applications

## **Faculty Relations**

### McGill Academic Round Table (MART)

- First meeting Thursday, September 17

### Student Academic Summit

- First professional development and networking event planned for VP Academics of faculty and departmental associations, Student Senators and any other interested student representatives. Topics of presentation include accessibility, libraries, McGill's organizational structure, improving learning environments and student academic rights.

**University & Academic Affairs Projects/Goals to Complete in Fall  
2015**

- Present MoA negotiables to the University
- Organize the Student Academic Summit for VP Academics and Presidents of Faculty and Departmental Associations
- Re-establish the McGill Academic Round Table (MART)
- Launch the SSMU Know Your Rights Campaign
- Compile a binder of committee reports at the end of the semester

## **Advocacy & Research**

### **Policy-Work**

#### Sexual Assault Policy (SAP)

- The SAP working group was less active over the summer however the policy had some minor revisions made in May and a list of groups to consult was created
- We had our first meeting of the year on Wednesday (16<sup>th</sup>) and created a timeline for consultation. Currently it is planned to bring the SAP to Senate at the beginning of next semester.



## Research Projects

- Three student research projects were passed on to me from my predecessor
  - Alternative History Timeline: project providing alternative narratives of McGill's history
  - Equitable Hiring: examining ways to improve employment equity within both SSMU and McGill
  - Indigenizing the Academy: comparing McGill to peer institutions and looking at ways in which McGill can better support Indigenous students

### Advocacy & Research Projects/Goals to Complete in Fall 2015

- Re-establish the University Affairs Committee
- Re-establish the Policy Advisory & Resource Committee (PARC)
- Provide training to PARC co-chairs and assist in training the committee members
- Host a Society Research project competition
- Increase the visibility of student research projects
- Work with the SAP working group to incorporate stakeholder feedback and intersectionality into the policy

## Mental Health & Well-Being

### Student Services

*A Mental Health Strategy Consultant has been hired, many of the Services have undergone internal and external reviews recently and the Student Services unit as a whole is scheduled to be reviewed in November. Many changes are being proposed that would transform Student Services and potentially simultaneously increase efficiency and quality of service provision. It is important to ensure that student needs and the student voice is the primary driver behind these changes.*

- Meetings with multiple stakeholders (Student Services directors and administrators, the Office of the Deputy Provost of Student Life and Learning, Health McGill) to discuss changes and the ways in which the work of student groups and peer support services can be integrated into new models
- Focus on proactive and preventative health promotion to reduce number of crisis
- Proposing a 'Steering' Committee (name TBD) to develop and implement a cohesive, integrated vision for Student Services moving forward.



- Meeting with Mental Health Services to discuss changes to the Service including plans to implement elements of the Stepped Care model and discussing ways in which peer support services and student groups can work collaboratively with Mental Health Services to support student mental health

## **SSMU Mental Health Initiatives**

*Includes updates on the implementation of SSMU's Mental Health 5 Year Plan*

### Website & Social Media

- The Bell Grant website developed by Mental Health Services in collaboration with SSMU was named the McGill Mental Health Hub and should be launched soon (see preview at [mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca](http://mcgillmentalhealthhub.ca))
  - Goal was to be a one-stop spot for mental health information and resources

### Mental Health Committee

- It was decided to change the committee structure to include more members at large and divide the committee into two main working groups
  - The Outreach Working Group will focus on raising awareness for mental health and mental illness through social media, events, tabling and other creative means.
  - The Advocacy Working Group will focus on advocacy based on research and student consultation and will draft documents to propose changes to existing McGill policies and practices.
- Call-outs will be going out next week.

### Mental Health Awareness Week

- Organized a MHAW working group meeting. Next one is this Friday
- Brainstormed the objectives of the week and possible events
- Planning to create a tentative schedule and have a draft branding/design for promotional materials by early next week

#### **Mental Health & Well-Being Projects/Goals to Complete in Fall 2015**

- ~~Revise the Mental Health Committee structure~~
- Plan a successful 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mental Health Awareness Week
- Liaise with Mental Health & Counselling Services
- Expand current mental health awareness outreach
- Establish a SSMU 'Happy Lights' rental program



## Equity

### General

- Brainstormed ways in which SSMU Equity can better engage students in conversations surrounding equity in creative ways
- Will be recruiting members for Equity Committee soon

### Consent Education

#### #ConsentCampaign

- SSMU is collaborating with other groups across campus to plan the second annual #ConsentCampaign. I have been meeting throughout the summer with Bianca Tétrault to discuss SSMU's contributions
- SSMU is hosting a trivia night at Gerts, holding booths at the front kiosk of our building and planning a panel event titled "Creating an Inclusive Dialogue: Consent Education and Sexual Violence" on Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>

### Indigenous Affairs

- Meeting with FPH, SEDE to discuss current initiatives as well as identify gaps in the University including the need for the University to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan
- Submitted motion to strike an Ad-Hoc Indigenous Affairs Committee

#### Indigenous Awareness Week

- SEDE's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Indigenous Awareness Week is next week! Check out the lineup of events here: <http://www.indigenoumcgill.ca/events/>. SSMU will be unveiling a dream catcher in our building in honour of Indigenous Awareness Week.

### Accessibility

- Met with Office for Students with Disabilities to discuss accessibility barriers on campus and how to encourage the incorporation of universal design for learning into the classroom



**Equity Projects/Goals to Complete in Fall 2015**

- Liaise with organizers of #ConsentCampaign and host a panel as part of the week-long event
- Expand the diversity of SSMU equity event programming beyond typical education events such as speaker series and workshops
- Strike an Ad-Hoc Indigenous Affairs Committee

## SSMU

### Outreach & Communications

#### Social Media

- Brainstorming branding for the UA portfolio and the structure of the UA website
- Will be launching the University Affairs Facebook and Twitter page soon (stay tuned)

**SSMU-Wide Projects/Goals to Complete in Fall 2015**

- Present detailed workplan and provide updates tasks completed through Council reports
- Increase social media presence through Twitter and Facebook
- Create a University Affairs website with a 'Senator's Corner' tab to include information and updates about the UA portfolio
- Update all SSMU website content related to the UA portfolio
- Collaborative workplans with all student staff
- Improve institutional memory particularly with respect to Senate and University Committees

Respectfully Submitted,

Chloe Rourke, Vice-President (University Affairs)