



Report of the Equity Committee to Legislative Council

December 3rd, 2015

The mandate of the Student Equity Committee is to confront historical and current inequities at McGill through active engagement and public education in agreement with the Student Society of McGill University's policy on equality and social justice.

Ongoing Initiatives

The main task that the Equity Committee has been working on thus far is to more clearly define and rebrand 'equity' on campus. The first few Committee meetings focused on creating a clear and accessible definition of 'equity' and equity-related discourses that would be used to frame the development of new materials and events on campus. The intention behind this effort has been to engage a larger demographic of students with equity-related issues, and to raise awareness about how these play-out on campus and in our communities at large. Recently, the committee has focused more explicitly on how to put these ideas into effect through publishing materials, rebranding our website, and organizing events and long-term projects.

Currently, the committee has been organizing a semester long project inspired by the Humans of New York photo series, that aims to showcase the various experiences and/or thoughts students and clubs/organizations have in relation to equity on campus. Every two weeks, the photos will be shared online, alongside additional information about the equity issue(s) being discussed and how to get involved. For example, if the image showcases an experience of gender-based discrimination, the photo would include additional details on this issue and share related posts and events (i.e. references to SACOMSS). In conjunction, the committee will also be spearheading a TVM film project centered on the question "what does 'equity' mean to you?", which will feature students and club/organizations on campus.

Additionally, the committee has been working on revisiting the design of the SSMU Equity Website, including the development of a new logo and branding design. A part of this effort involves redoing the "SSMU Guide to Equity" pamphlet, increasing our online presence through our Facebook page (e.g. sharing equity-related articles, videos and upcoming events).

Upcoming Events:

For next semester, the committee has started to organize various panel and speaker-series events tackling social justice and equity-related issues. Currently, the committee has developed a timeline that includes a film screening and panel event focused on sexism and gender-based violence, a 'healing space' event, and a large-scale speaker series event featuring an intersectional artist (spearheaded by the two equity commissioners). For the final speaker series



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event, the committee will be responsible for the promotion of the event, alongside the organizing the question & answer period of the event and the booking signing. Finally, the committee also plans to support the additional efforts and events the two equity commissioners have planned for the winter semester, including a film screening and panel event focused on disability and sexuality, and hosting a reconciliation event for Indigenous Awareness Month in partnership with SEDE and the Indigenous Affairs Coordinator. The Equity Committee is also supporting a panel event that will explore employment equity and the experiences of Faculty with marginalized identities at McGill.

Challenges this Semester:

Due to the fact that the 'call-out' for Equity Committee members was sent out relatively late, the committee has had a slow start this semester. In the future, an earlier call-out would be beneficial and would help ensure a successful fall semester. However, we will be doing a second call-out for membership for the winter semester over the break. In addition, unfortunately due to the limited amount of applicants, we were unable to hold interviews for the committee. This is something to be considered as worthwhile for next year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chloe Rourke on behalf of Marilyn Verghis and Julia Hensley