Office of Vice-President (University Affairs)
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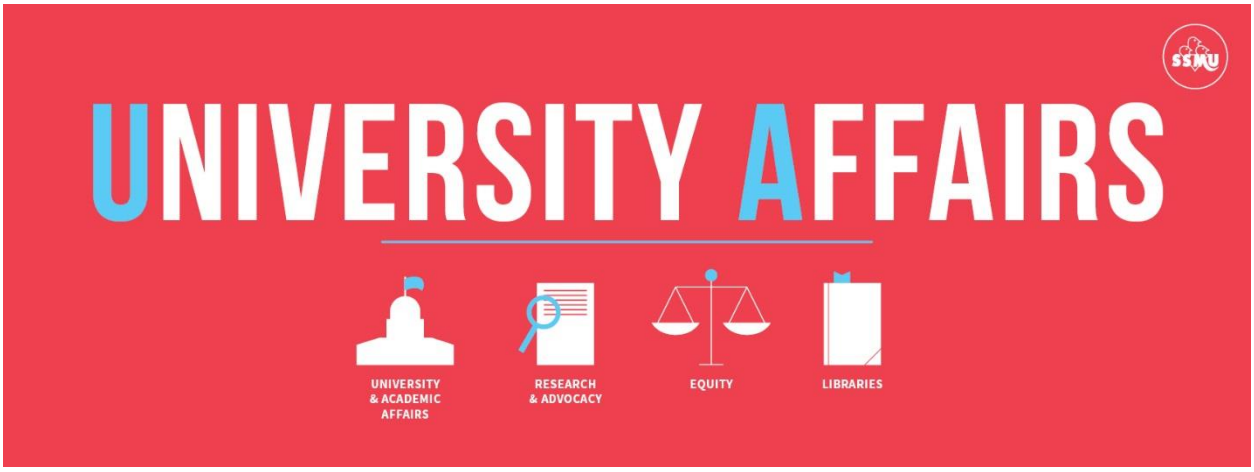
Located on unceded, Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory

REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT (UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS)

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a new school year! My name is Erin Sobat and I'm incredibly excited to be serving as your SSMU VP University Affairs for 2016-2017. The UA team is responsible for university representation and academic affairs; research, advocacy, and policy development; equity programming and complaints; and the Library Improvement Fund. You can always get in touch via email (ua@ssmu.mcgill.ca) or drop by my office hours on Thursdays between 10:00AM-12:00PM. Read on to find out what we've been up to!

UNIVERSITY & ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

SENATE

Senator Orientation

- Conducted retreat trainings on university governance & administration, Senate structure, Senator role & responsibilities, advocacy skills, University Affairs portfolio, etc.
- Currently organizing make-up trainings, compiling project-specific resources, scheduling individual goal-setting meetings, etc.

Senate & University Committees

- Received over 30 applications for remaining committee seats! Making selections this week & holding first committee rep training this Thursday, September 15th
- First Senate meeting next Wednesday, September 21st at 2:30PM (Leacock 232)

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

Office of the Deputy Provost Student Life & Learning (DPSLL)

- Meeting this week to discuss issues for year including building, mental health training, experiential learning & equity education
- Meeting next week to discuss status of Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) negotiations

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Office of the Dean of Students (ODoS)

- New Dean has started mapping current disclosure & reporting processes for sexual violence
- Working together to form new Medical Notes Working Group under the Enrolment and Student Affairs Advisory Committee (ESAAC)

Office Social Equity & Diversity Education (SEDE) Office

- Collaborating on new French lexicon of social justice terminology
- Supporting SPF application for Community Projects Manager (Racialized & Ethnic Students)
- Advocating for senior administrative support of community engagement programming

STUDENT SERVICES

Service Harmonization & Wellness Strategy

- Initial communications on Mental Health/Counselling integration released in Whatsnewstudents
- Formally requested student seats on Wellness Steering Committee & project groups
- Working with VP Student Life to organize focus groups for students with lived experience

Academic Matters Working Group

- Conducting environmental scan of McGill academic support resources
- September meeting cancelled; next meeting on Wednesday, October 5th
- Also sitting on Undergraduate Skills Program Steering Committee (Teaching & Learning Services)

Student Services Funding

- Wrote feature article on Student Services funding issues & inflated overhead charges
- Possible next steps: open letter to administration, new cost-sharing negotiations, strengthening Internal Regulations around FIOs & referenda, provincial level advocacy

LIBRARIES

Library Improvement Fund

- Extended LIF Committee application until this Friday, September 16th @ 5:00PM
- Meeting with Communications Librarian & new Open Access Researcher this Thursday
- Will be meeting with Library administration regarding operating budget & projects for year

FACULTY RELATIONS

McGill Academic Roundtable (MART)

- First monthly meeting of VP Academics this Tuesday, September 13th
- Discussing goals & priorities for year, event collaborations, Know Your Rights campaign, assessment policies, Student Academic Summit, etc.

University & Academic Affairs Goals – Fall 2016

- ~~Fill all seats on university committees~~
- Train all reps on university committees
- Implement senator alternate pool for committees
- Goal-setting meetings with every senator
- Host 2nd annual Student Academic Summit
- Memorandum of Agreement signed

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ADVOCACY & RESEARCH

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Sexual Violence Policy

- McGill draft *Policy Against Sexual Violence* released on Monday for community-wide feedback
- Joint SSMU-PGSS statement released on Tuesday regarding policy outlook & consultation
- Working with PGSS, SACOMSS & others to organize focus groups for late September

Ad-Hoc Committee for the Review of the Charter of Student Rights

- Next meeting Wednesday, September 21st ; current priorities include strengthening language on accommodations, disability & intersectionality; ensuring consistency with other policies; & improving students' awareness of their rights
- Academic Research Commissioner currently compiling Charter examples from peer institutions

Unpaid Internships Policy

- Phase 1 (background research) completed in August; researcher began drafting policy framework
- Currently completing phrase 2 (environmental scan of McGill practices & issues), including information meeting with relevant internship & career offices
- Hope to present at September 29th Council & circulate proposals for October consultation

McGill Smoking Policy Working Group

- McGill is moving forward with transition to a smoke-free campus, based on consultation results & required steps outlined in SSMU Smoking Policy
- Community consultation planned for late September & early October (e.g. Town Hall)

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Alternative Campus Histories

- Alternative histories timeline will be integrated into new University Affairs website
- Hoping to have all content, citations & images incorporated by end of September

First Generation Student Support

- Awaiting final report from summer researcher; hoping to release before end of September

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Charter Case

- Compiling Charter of Student Rights case on academic accommodations for October submission
- Currently reviewing student testimony from Facebook event & feedback form
- Will be following up with respondents & conducting some further Faculty outreach this month

Know Your Rights

- Re-launched www.ssmu.ca/studentrights!
- Organized Add-Drop awareness campaign including social media promo, new posters & tabling
- Speaking on CKUT's *All Things McGill* show from the SSMU lobby on September 19th @ 11:00AM

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Advocacy & Research Goals – Fall 2016

- ~~Re-launch Student Rights website~~
- ~~Host Add-Drop "Know Your Rights" campaign~~
- Publish Alternative Histories Timeline
- Submit Charter case on academic accommodations
- Sexual Violence Policy approved at Senate
- Fall Reading Break approved at Senate
- Unpaid Internships Policy approved at Legislative Council

EQUITY

SSMU EQUITY

Equity Policy Revisions

- Currently drafting revisions for September 29th & October 13th Legislative Councils
- Addressing inconsistencies, accessibility, conflicts of interest, assessor structure, etc.

Equity Committee

- Received 18 applications for members-at-large! May conduct further outreach to specific groups
- Planned meeting before end of month to discuss goals, committee & advocacy structure, etc.
- Planning to organize roundtable meeting of campus equity groups for October or November

Consent Week Panel

- *Sexual Violence & Power Dynamics in the University Setting*: Thursday, September 29th @ 6:00pm
- Met to discuss vision & determine content; currently finalizing last panelist & discussion questions

Fall Projects

- Accessibility Policy implementation & Universal Design advocacy
- Cultural appropriation campaign & possible workshop around Halloween
- Improved POC student support resources, such as closed WRAP groups & mentorship program
- Implementing baseline equity training through Minerva Academic Integrity Tutorial

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Indigenous Solidarity Policy

- Task Force on Indigenous Education launching on September 22nd at relocated Hochelaga Rock
- Meeting with VP External & Indigenous Affairs Commissioner regarding collaborations
- Assisting with response to notice of seizure motion for Fall General Assembly

Equity Goals – Fall 2016

- Establish more representative Equity Committee structure
- Host Consent Week panel on power dynamics
- Host roundtable meeting of campus equity groups
- Equity Policy revisions approved at Legislative Council
- Add UD standards to McGill capital funding criteria
- Consult on POC mentorship network and/or WRAP groups

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SSMU-WIDE

GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Governance Reform

- Reviewed draft of *SSMU Equitable Governance Report* for release this week
- Bringing forward Ad-Hoc Governance Reform Committee with President to this week's Council

Governance Documents

- Bringing updated Committee Terms of Reference & Motion Regarding the Future of the Accountable Leadership Policy to this week's Council meeting
- Working with President, Directors & legal counsel to finalize new Conflict of Interest Policy

Provincial Representation

- Circulated feature article on Student Services funding to AVEQ Executive
- Next Members' Assembly scheduled for October 8th– 9th in Montréal (hosted by CSU)
- Mobilization Camp scheduled for October 21st –23rd in Trois-Rivières (aveqcamp.ca)

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

University Affairs Website

- Finalized website framework, formatting & user guide with developer
- Currently updating page content for late September launch!

University Affairs Social Media

- Like the SSMU University Affairs & SSMU Equity pages for important updates!
- Regularly scheduling posts on committee opportunities, student rights, events & more
- First-ever University Affairs listserv launched August 23rd; second edition will be this week or next

Student Experience Survey

- 2015 Student Experience Survey Report completed in Winter 2016
- Possibility of hiring contract coordinator to develop follow-up survey

SSMU-Wide Goals – Fall 2016

- Conflict of Interest Policy revisions approved
- Accountability Policy & Committee revisions approved
- ~~Launch University Affairs Listserv~~
- 500 like count on SSMU UA Facebook page
- 500 like count on SSMU Equity Facebook page
- Launch new University Affairs website
- Conduct new Student Experience Survey

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Sobat
Vice-President (University Affairs)