



Report of the Equity Committee to Council
2011-2012 Report
April 12, 2012

1. Outreach & Education

a. Strategic Summit

- i. A Strategic Summit on Equity and Diversity at McGill was held on November 4, 2011.
- ii. The Summit provided an opportunity for open discussion on issues of equity, diversity, inclusion, representation, acceptance, and accommodation on campus.

b. Workshops

- i. Intersectionality
- ii. Through Slanted Eyes: Anti-Asian Sentiment on College Campuses in North America

c. Equity Potlucks

- i. Two potlucks were held over the course of the year as the pilot for a project aimed at creating Safer Spaces for racialized and Indigenous students

d. Collaboration

- i. Follow-up Study to Mr. Mendelson's Fall 2009 Diversity Survey
 1. Dr. Lisa Spanierman is interested in understanding racialized students' experiences of racial discrimination/microaggressions.
- ii. "Equity and Institutional Racism at McGill" Meetings
 1. We met with other campus equity offices and student services, including First Peoples House, Black Students Network, Graduate Collective Against Racism for Equity, Racialized Students Network, Social Equity and Diversity Education Office...

e. Equity Social

- i. The PGSS and SSMU Equity Committees organized an Equity Social at Thomson House on January 30, 2012. The Social was an opportunity for McGill equity organizations and offices to meet and network with the aim of creating a stronger equity community at McGill.
- ii. The Social was very successful as it raised awareness of the various offices and groups on campus, which led to attendees connecting with one another about potential collaboration on future related projects.

2. Initiatives



- a. Equity Award**
 - i. This Award would recognize faculty, staff, and/or students who have demonstrated a commitment to equity and diversity at McGill.
 - ii. This Award was developed based on recommendations from the Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence, and Community Engagement.
 - iii. The JBSCE unanimously supported the Proposal, and it will be presented to Senate on April 18, 2012.
 - b. Equity Policy**
 - i. We revised the Policy to increase clarity, accountability, and transparency in the investigative and decision-making process of complaint resolution. We also included an appeals process.
 - ii. The Policy was ratified by SSMU Council on March 1, 2012.
 - c. Policy for Accommodation of Pregnant Students and Students Caring for Dependents**
 - i. The Equity Commissioner participated in a working group that developed a Policy for the Accommodation of Pregnant Students and Students Caring for Dependents.
- 3. Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity (JBSCE)**
- a. The Subcommittees on Race and Ethnic Relations, First Peoples, and Persons with Disabilities were revived this year.
- 4. Five-Year Plan**
- a. The SSMU Equity Committee has created a Five-Year Equity Plan that outlines changes and improvements to implement on campus within the next five years. These changes include, but are not limited to:
 - i. An improved HR policy for SSMU staff
 - ii. The inclusion of an equity statement on class syllabi
 - iii. Equity training for SSMU Exec
 - iv. An annual undergraduate conference
 - v. All SSMU events as accessible (mobility, translation, childcare, etc.)
 - vi. All buildings with gender-neutral washrooms
 - vii. A full-time Equity position akin to the Sustainability Coordinator
 - viii. More collaboration with equity offices and organizations, such as SEDE, FPH, BSN, QM, UGE, and SACOMSS
 - ix. Establish a relationship with McGill residences
 - x. Consult with faculties regarding frosh
 - xi. Include a race component in Rez Project
 - xii. Support KANATA in establishing an Indigenous Studies minor



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xiii. Further develop the Canadian Ethnic and Racial Studies minor

Sincerely,

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Report of the Equity Committee to Council September - November 2011

November 17, 2011

1. Committee Membership

- a. We selected our Committee in mid-September. Our membership includes: Cassandra Zawilski, Equity Commissioner, Co-Chair; Ryan Thom, Equity Outreach Coordinator, Co-Chair; Emily Yee Clare, VP University Affairs, Equity Officer; Carol Fraser, VP Clubs & Services, Equity Officer; Shyam Patel, VP Finance & Operations, Equity Officer; Radney Jean-Claude, Councillor (Social Work); Azzura Lalani; Justin Morein; Kevin Paul; Shaina Agbayani; Victoria Song; Zina Mustafa.

2. Meetings

- a. Anyone is welcome to attend our non-confidential meetings. Our meeting time has varied in an attempt to accommodate the Committee members' schedules. Generally they have been held in the SSMU Office on Wednesday evenings, Thursday evenings, or Friday afternoons. Please contact the Equity Commissioner if you would like to attend a meeting.

3. Outreach

- a. This is SSMU Equity's third year in perpetuity; as such, much of the work we've done thus far is laying and strengthening the groundwork for strong working relations with the rest of campus. This year, Equity is focusing much of its time on increasing its presence, so that the many advocacy and support groups on campus – for example, First People's House, SEDE, and student groups such as Queer McGill and BSN – are aware of the Equity Policy and services SSMU Equity offers. We hope to connect these groups, serving as a network center so that anti-oppressive and social education projects may be carried out with a greater level of solidarity. As such, some of our specific projects include:

- i. Participation in the form of a workshop at Rad Frosh and Culture Shock
- ii. A series of outreach meetings with each of the cultural students' associations, First People's House, SEDE, and other equity-related campus groups to explain the Equity Policy, the function of the Equity Committee, and the Equity Complaint procedure, and to discuss possible collaborations
- iii. A series of monthly networking events (potlucks) which will also serve to create an equitable safer space on campus



- iv. A collaborative workshop series on equitable subjects such as Indigenous rights, anti-racism, decolonization, feminism, anti-ableism, and gender diversity so as to increase understanding of equity amongst the student body
- v. Increasing accessibility and visibility of Equity outreach materials, including the creation of an Equity brochure, the implementation of Equity Facebook and web pages, and a poster campaign
- vi. Liaising with student activist groups, such as the Mob Squad, in order to facilitate equitable relations within the activist community and to increase accessibility of the McGill student activist movement
- vii. Liaising with faculties (re: equity policies) and residences (re: Rez Project)
- viii. Participating and consulting in the development of various equity-related projects on campus, including follow-up studies to Mendelson's Diversity Survey that was conducted in Fall 2009
- ix. Revising the current Equity policy for greater clarity and ease of interpretation

4. Other Projects

a. Coyote Ugly

- i. Cassandra and Ryan addressed the Coyote Ugly misunderstanding with the following response in the McGill Tribune:
<http://www.mcgilltribune.com/opinion/letter-to-the-editor-1.2616339>

b. Equity Statement for myMcGill/myCourses

- i. We are working with SEDE, OSD, and FPH in creating an Equity Statement that will appear on myMcGill/myCourses as a way of publicizing the policy, the complaint process, students' rights, and resources.
- ii. Emily Clare, VP UA, will discuss the statement with Morton Mendelson.

c. Equity Policy Revisions

- i. Policy, for grammar and to include an appeals process
- ii. Committee Terms of Reference
- iii. Commissioner By-Laws



d. Equity Award

- i. Presented a first draft of an Equity award proposal to JBSCE;
- ii. This Award would recognize faculty, staff, and/or students who have demonstrated a commitment to equity and diversity at McGill.
- iii. This Award was developed based on recommendations from the Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence, and Community Engagement.

5. Events

a. Strategic Summit on Equity and Diversity at McGill

- i. Friday, November 4, 2011, 12-5pm, Clubs' Lounge
<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=194164933989246>
- ii. This Summit is an opportunity to discuss issues of concern regarding equity, inclusion, and diversity with faculty, staff, students, and McGill equity groups. We will discuss the current state of equity at McGill, our successes and challenges with equity, and ways we can address these challenges.
- iii. Although the Summit runs 5 hours, you can come and go as you please. All are welcome. We ask that you RSVP to equity.outreach@ssmu.mcgill.ca.

b. Academic Undergraduate Conference

- i. With the success of our 1st Equity Academic Conference in March 2011, we plan to organize another tentatively for February 2012.
- ii. The conference is an opportunity for undergraduate students to share their research on issues related to equity.

Sincerely,

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