March 30, 2015

Dr. Phil Smith
Associate Director
Cyclical Unit Review Office
Office of the Provost

Dear Dr. Smith,

Our response to the Cyclical Review report provides feedback on the observations and suggested recommendations of the reviewers. Additional information that was not discussed in the preparation of the report is also included.

The Cyclical Review Committee report identified eight strengths of the School and five weaknesses. The comments received from faculty members indicated their agreement with the strengths that were identified, and the weaknesses related to space infrastructure and classroom space.

- **Affiliation Agreements**
  In relation to the comments on affiliation agreements, I would note that formal agreements with the institutions to provide placements or clinical preceptors are subject to availability. They are not limited in number and McGill students have priority until all their placements are found. This actually provided more flexibility to the process. The contract agreement was determined by the Faculty and applies to all the Schools in the Faculty of Medicine.

- **Comprehensive Strategic Planning Exercise**
  A major concern of the Committee was the need to have an updated comprehensive strategic planning exercise and to suspend work on the curriculum reviews. The issue of when the plan would normally take place was pre-empted by the Dean's obligation to request a cyclical review in order to put a new Director in place. This procedure was required as the second mandate of the current Dean is over in 2016.

  - The current Strategic Plan was completed in 2012 and reviewed in 2013. It was revisited during the Self-study which was completed in 2010. A Strategic planning exercise should certainly take place to allow the new Dean to share ownership of the process.

- The recommendation to halt the curriculum reviews that are already underway will not be pursued as it was not deemed acceptable to faculty members across the board.

- **The Structure of the Operating Budget**
  The structure of the School's operating budget has had a deficit each year over the past 10 years that is covered each year by the Faculty of Medicine. This deficit is incurred by a large number of sessional teaching contracts across the programs and across the academic years. This approach has resulted in a steady increase in the sessional contracts that need to be found three times each year.

- **Enrolment**
  While the dramatic increase in enrolment in the past has generated funds for the University, it has not been accompanied by funding for full time CAS faculty positions from the Faculty of Medicine. In addition, the number of tenure-track faculty has also remained unchanged. The review committee suggested that a plan for recruits be put in place, however, a request to plan for TT recruits over five years was not accepted. While we had agreed to hold enrolments constant, we will be contacting enrolment services to significantly decrease enrolment this spring.

- **New Space**
  Acquiring new space remains a major financial issue that has kept the School hostage in a building that continues to deteriorate, with a new and major leak that has just occurred into the roof and walls of the office of one of the Assistant Directors. Cost is one major factor that the University is reluctant to address.

- **Support Staff and Academic Centers of Excellence**
  As mentioned in the report, the increasing enrolment has had an impact on morale for both faculty and support staff. The School has some concerns that the Administrative Excellence Centers will not bring the additional support that would address the needs of the teaching mandate of the School which has already been underserved over many years, as no additional support will be provided by the AEC. (The premise is that the new processes will be more efficient and will address all current needs .)

- **Salaries**
  The School's budget is ~ 95% faculty salaries. The Alumni and Director's discretionary funds are the only, and most important, source of independent funding for the School.

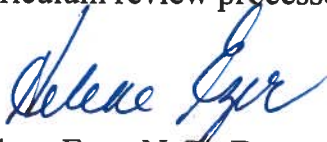- <u>Implication of tenure track faculty in teaching</u>
  Regarding recommendation No. 9, reviewers questioned the lack of involvement of tenure track faculty teaching in the undergraduate programs. While this was not described in detail in the report, there is some clarification required related to the teaching of TT faculty in undergraduate education.

  - Three tenure-track faculty members co-ordinate and teach a full course in the undergraduate programs;
  - Four tenure-track faculty have FQRS salary awards that limit their teaching to 25% of their time;
  - TT faculty teaching of Masters and doctoral courses and supervision of students was not taken into consideration by the Review Committee.

Additional Notes related to the Committee's Recommendations

- A business plan for enrolment that was prepared under the assumption that the Bachelor's degree would be a requirement for practice was already prepared and sent to the Faculty of Medicine. There was no indication that the committee saw this document (which was located in the Appendices on DropBox). Another business plan for coming years that does not address the demand for Bachelor's degree for nurses will need to be submitted. It is not clear whether there is the funding capacity, within the Faculty of Medicine and the University to allocate the funding requirements, in either scenarios.

- Recommendation No. 8 for an autonomous budget within the Faculty of Medicine, or by becoming an independent faculty, is a lofty and desirable goal. This should be discussed in the next strategic planning exercise of the School.

- It should be noted that the School has embarked upon funding initiatives to support further developmental initiatives. This was presented to the Review Committee.

Most of the remaining lettered points under Recommendation No. 9 are already addressed in whole or in part, and will be re-examined as the School continues with the curriculum review processes currently underway.

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Ingram School or Nursing
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