



MAUT Newsletter: McGill Association of University Teachers

September 2015

## Message from the President

A belated welcome to the new academic year at McGill! This time of year always seems to bring that feeling of renewal as the University returns to its core functions after the summer. New and returning students seem to invade the campus and new colleagues arrive to begin their careers with us. MAUT has been active through the summer and has many events planned for its members ranging from the Apple Picking at MacDonald Campus to forums on MOOCS, Compensation, etc. We hope to see a lot of you coming to these events.

In addition, each year brings its new challenges and on the table for this year are the usual discussions with the administration on the salary structure for next year and the start of negotiations over staff compensation for the following three years. Work is also progressing on proposed changes to several of the regulations ranging from the "Policy on Safe Disclosure" through to the "Regulations Relating to the Employment of Tenure Track and Tenured Academic Staff". Finally, through SBAC (The Staff Benefits Administration Committee) MAUT will be involved in discussions related to possible benefits package changes. As always, there is a lot of work to be done by a relatively small number of people on the Executive and Council. We always appreciate extra help so if you are interested in finding out what MAUT really does and how you can get involved, please contact me and we will give you something to do. This is your Association and it is working for you, so get involved!

Wishing all of you and your families a great semester.

*David Lowther, MAUT President*

## MAUT fall social events

## Do you want a fall study break? Coming MAUT survey

MAUT will shortly be inviting you to participate in a survey to get your input on a student-initiated proposal to implement a fall study break surrounding the Canadian Thanksgiving. This very short survey will help MAUT Council formulate a formal response to our administration based on your preferences.

*Alenoush Saroyan, MAUT Vice-President Internal*

## CAUT and FQPPU updates

### CAUT

The July issue of CAUT's Facts and Figures is available on-line in the [members only](#) section of the CAUT website (id: MAUT; pw: #Mcg11l). This edition provides an overview of the current bargaining climate, summarizes recent settlements in the post-secondary education sector, and includes updates to a model clause approved at April 2015 CAUT Council.

The CAUT has waded into the federal election fray with a special Get Science Right! Election Kit containing the main points of its ongoing campaign to improve science funding and organization in Canada. It can be accessed online by logging in to the [members only](#) section of the CAUT website (id: MAUT; pw: #Mcg11l).

The CAUT is holding its 5th Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff in Winnipeg on November 6-7. In light of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (TRC) this year's Forum will allow participants to collectively consider: the implications of austerity measures on Aboriginal academic staff and Indigenous Studies programs; what academic staff associations can do to promote Indigenous Knowledge and support Aboriginal academic staff; and how to build inclusive academic cultures. MAUT members interested in attending this forum can find more information on the CAUT website at <http://events.caut.ca/aboriginal-2015/>.

The CAUT has issued a memo warning members of the possibly harmful effects of commercial course content websites such as OneClass and Course Hero which sell course materials, without permission of the professor, to students. This practice raises serious copyright and quality issues that university administrators will have to address. The CAUT memo is accessible at the [members only](#) section of the CAUT website (id: MAUT; pw: #Mcg11l).



### Fall MAUT welcome gathering a big hit!

On September 17th, MAUT held a Welcome Gathering for all faculty and librarians and their families. Following on the success of last year's event- both members and non-members alike could talk about something other than problems with the pension plan and cutbacks in provincial funding for the university! As last year, the Welcome Gathering was held at the Faculty Club downtown, and 134 people attended. A jazz quartet provided a lively background and once again special activities amused the children and gave parents a chance to meet and greet their colleagues.

As usual, the boundless energy of Honore Kerwin-Borrelli, MAUT's Administrative Officer was an essential ingredient for success and our legal officer, Joseph Varga, took pains to capture the event with his camera.

The membership committee of MAUT (Stefano Algeri, Ken Hastings, Tara Mawhinney, Debra Titone and myself) would also like to thank Nicholas Zrihen and Adrien Chu at the Faculty Club for hosting us and for their years of continued support.

MAUT remains the voice of the academic staff at McGill, so its efforts on behalf of its members affect and benefit all. We recognize that the social component has become a key pillar of our activities - members and non-members alike see this as a tangible benefit.

*Terry Hébert, MAUT President Elect*

### Octoberfest apple picking October 4, 2015 a sellout!

This year we are repeating our highly successful Octoberfest event inaugurated last fall. The event will be held from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm at Tadjia Hall, Macdonald Campus Faculty Club, 21082 Lakeshore Road, Ste. Anne de Bellevue. Included are food and drink, roundtrip bus service and each family can pick a bag of apples from the orchard. The event is free for MAUT members and their families, while for prospective members there is a nominal charge of \$10 per family. Due to the success of the event last year, the 2015 Octoberfest has already sold out and there is a waiting list. Be sure to reserve early next year!

### FQPPU

The FQPPU will hold an all-day Forum on Research on Friday October 23rd. Issues to be discussed will include research funding and proper working conditions for the conduct and dissemination of research with a view to identifying strategies for action to influence the Quebec government. Registration to participate is open until October 16th. For interested MAUT members here are the [program](#) and the [registration](#) form.

On November 27th the FQPPU will conduct a day-long workshop on issues relating to accommodating co-workers returning to work from a leave. MAUT members who are interested in attending the forum should contact Honore Kerwin-Borelli at [maut@mcgill.ca](mailto:maut@mcgill.ca).

*Axel van den Berg, MAUT Vice-President External*

## Report: CAUT Forum for Chief Negotiators

(Ottawa, 27-29 March, 2015)

The theme for this annual CAUT forum was 'Talking about money in a time of austerity.' While compensation for academic staff has always been a central concern at the negotiating table with university administrations, global economic uncertainty since the 2008 financial crisis has continued to place budgetary pressure on virtually all aspects of university operations. Given this broader context, negotiating salary compensation has become more complex in a period of dwindling federal and provincial budgets that have witnessed severe cuts to higher education, particularly universities.

Through a series of presentations (on 'Equity in total compensation,' 'Monetary Strategy,' 'Costing the Association's Proposals,' 'How do we Judge Compensation Improvement?,' and 'Creative Salary Negotiations') and workshops this forum aimed to explore the discourse of austerity, its implications for academic salary bargaining, and how it might be challenged by academic representatives involved in negotiations on compensation. However, the overarching theme of the forum was set by Angella MacEwan (senior economist for the Canadian Labour Congress) and Sylvain Schetagne (CAUT Associate Executive Director for Research & Advocacy). In their presentations MacEwan and Schetagne argued that governments and media present the concept of austerity as a purely technical or financial exercise focused on balancing budgets and "getting the economy back on track." They went on to note that this needs to be countered, as the actual aims and objectives of the discourse on austerity are deeply implicated in a neoliberal agenda aimed at cutting public expenditure on education, health and welfare, while also intensifying social and economic inequalities that ultimately benefit the wealthiest in society (e.g. through tax cuts). Thus, challenging the discourse of austerity is as much about defending employees' rights to fair and equitable compensation for their work, as it is about refusing a political agenda that continues to insidiously undermine the provision of public services in the lives of Canadians.

*Terry Hébert, MAUT President Elect*

## Basic science funding in Canada: a threat to McGill that needs a university response

McGill researchers understand that we have reached a critical juncture in the idea of curiosity-driven research. This may be particularly true for the biomedical sciences. The drive and desire to understand things for their own sake is being altered, shaped and pushed toward the application of such discoveries. Critical to an understanding of disease and to the development of new therapies and preventive measures, basic biomedical science is deeply rooted in the history and success of modern medicine. The need for continued curiosity-driven research is essential to future discoveries as well. However, the push to apply discovery not only interferes with a desire to understand, it also means we end up applying our discoveries too early. In this article, we explore several problems associated with the push to apply research at the expense of basic science.

Read the full article [here](#).

See also the CAUT update by Axel van den Berg

*Terry Hébert, MAUT President Elect  
Radan Čapek, Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics*

## MAUT tackling issues around students selling course material

MAUT is concerned about the impact of the classnotes marketplace on McGill professors. Students selling their classnotes and other course material has become a multimillion-dollar business. Accessible course material may assist in students' studies but these days it can help their wallets as well. Professors at least can engage students directly in these issues. It is more difficult for professors to deal with the companies that are benefiting from professors' content. We want your views on the subject and any personal experiences you may have had with classnotes companies. What would you hope to see MAUT do about this issue? Send these thoughts to [maut@mcgill.ca](mailto:maut@mcgill.ca).

Read the full article [here](#).

See also the CAUT update by Axel van den Berg

*Renee Sieber, MAUT Council Member*

*Steven Jordan, MAUT Advisor*

## MAUT new faculty profile

**Dominique Labelle**



MAUT would like to welcome Dominique Labelle as a new member. In Fall 2014 Dominique became the Schulich School of Music's newest voice professor. A soprano trained at McGill and Boston University, Dominique has pursued a highly successful opera career internationally, to [glowing reviews](#). Dominique is committed to sharing her musical and performance knowledge with young singers and has taught master classes at Harvard, McGill, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts. You can learn more about Dominique at her website [www.dominiquelabelle.com](http://www.dominiquelabelle.com).

## Kudos

A significant number of our MAUT colleagues have recently received distinctions that include:

### Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada

Michel Biron, Langue et littérature françaises (Arts)  
William Caplin, Schulich School of Music  
David Davies, Professor, Philosophy (Arts)  
Suzanne Fortier, Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
Erin Hurley, English (Arts)  
Nada Jabado, Pediatrics (Medicine)  
Maggie Kilgour, English (Arts)  
Hans Larsson, Redpath Museum  
Claudia Mitchell, Integrated Studies in Education  
Catherine Potvin, Biology (Science)

### Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS)

Dr. Laurie N. Gottlieb, Ingram School of Nursing

### Promotion to Full Professor

Hassan Benchekroun (Economics)  
Fabien Gélinas (Law)  
Juliet Johnson (Political Science)  
René Provost (Law)

Have an event to promote on the MAUT e-Newsletter? Send all details, including date, time, location, event title and contact information at least 10 days prior to the event to: [maut@mcgill.ca](mailto:maut@mcgill.ca). Check the [MAUT website](#) for the latest news, events, kudos and other happenings of interest.

