



MAUT Newsletter: McGill Association of University Teachers

September 2017

President's message

Colleagues,

I hope you all had a memorable and relaxing summer. Let me take this opportunity to welcome you back and wish you a stimulating and fulfilling academic year ahead.

From the email traffic this summer, I can assure you that MAUT will be very active this year in a number of fronts. Highlights of planned MAUT activities in 2017-18 include: a forum on academic freedom, ongoing surveillance of and discussions concerning academic salaries and benefits, involvement in the revision of policies and regulations that affect academics (e.g., Employment Regulations, Conduct of Research, Pay Equity, Service Portfolio), work toward redressing increased non-academic workload, workshops for pre-tenure colleagues and for mentors, expansion of our presence using social media to more effectively communicate with our members, recruitment and membership, and last but not least, organizing activities that strengthen our community including social events. I hope each of you will step forward and express your willingness to contribute to dossiers and initiatives that interest you most.

The relevance of MAUT to faculty depends on your direct and indirect involvement in our association. You can do this by participating in MAUT committees and working groups, attending Council open meetings, and sharing with MAUT Council and Executive members your concerns. It was through the vigilance of our members that we were alerted and were able to reverse imposed policies on the use of U-Print, the restriction to use University designated travel agencies for research-related travel, and the exclusion of computer related expenses from the list of eligible expenses for our professional development fund. Please continue to let us know what your concerns are and help us strengthen our faculty association by getting actively involved in issues that matter to you.

MAUT vs. social media

Just as a quick update concerning MAUT's social media presence, our Facebook page is [here](#), our Twitter feed is [here](#), our LinkedIn is [here](#), and our YouTube channel is [here](#). Since the launch of our Facebook and Twitter feeds earlier this year, they have grown to over 700 and 350 followers, respectively, with each account sharing daily posts related to faculty recognition and development as well as post-secondary policy and equity issues at the institutional, provincial, and national levels.

Whether sharing published content on how to better promote your research on [social media](#), mentor graduate students about [career options](#), or by providing timely updates on implications of the [Naylor Report](#), these feeds aim to serve as a useful MAUT-curated news and professional development resource for online audiences interested in post-secondary issues. In showcasing the accomplishments of McGill faculty (e.g., our summer [teaching snapshot](#) and [supervision award](#) series), [announcements](#) and highlights of MAUT events (e.g., photos from the [2017 Welcome Gathering](#)), and McGill faculty statements on topical issues (e.g., [Andrew Potter and academic freedom](#)), these feeds also provide a face and a voice to McGill academic staff in an online forum.

So instead of asking you to "like" or "follow" us online, I'm asking all interested members to please email (nathan.c.hall@mcgill.ca) if you have a new paper, upcoming talk, or initiative we can promote, a new award or grant we can congratulate you on, or any student accomplishments you feel is deserving of public mention. Please also feel free to share relevant posts (e.g., full video coverage of our June [Naylor Report Forum](#)), comment on anything in our feeds to provide context or perspective, contact us directly via each platform as needed, or recommend articles, blogs, or other online resources you think would be of interest to our audiences. And if you happen to miss an upcoming general meeting, simply email to request a YouTube link for personal online viewing.

Alenoush Saroyan
MAUT President

“#SupporttheReport”: Nothing more than a “tweet storm”?

Are you on Twitter or other social media? Many of us are as are many of our students. Even better, most of the government ministers are on as well- and we've used this as a way to engage them. For some time, there has been a strong push (especially on Twitter), where a “Tweet storm” tagged with “#SupportTheReport” has raged to implement the recommendations of the Naylor Report (see links below):

- [The Naylor Report Executive Summary](#)
- [The Naylor Report in full](#)

As you know, the Naylor Report comes out strongly in favour of funding basic research through the tri-councils, SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR. MAUT organized a panel discussion in June broadly centered on three aims:

1. **How can researchers engage federal politicians and ministries to see this report implemented?**
2. **How can we better engage the public to see the value of basic research?**
3. **What skillsets are needed for us to see aims 1 and 2 accomplished?**

The panelists were chosen from across the research spectrum and at different career stages. A lively discussion was held and it was clear that a central point of engagement with the Trudeau government would be a focus on the consequences for students and to a lesser extent on Canada's existence as a knowledge-based society. The silence from the government since it released the report has been deafening and there is concern that only the low hanging fruit (in terms of monetary commitments) would be picked in the budget coming this fall. One of the outcomes of the MAUT meeting was strong support for protecting the next generation of Canadian scientists - and many of us wrote to the Science Minister and our MPs and encouraged each other to publicize the issue on [social media](#). The students who attended our forum were also strongly present on social media with other op-eds from attendees appearing in [La Presse](#) and [The Suburban](#).

Department Chairs from the basic science

We hope you find our online social media presence interesting and useful (or at least not too irritating) and welcome any suggestions for improvement. See you online :)

Nathan C. Hall
MAUT VP Communications

Membership dues reduced

As VP Finance it gives me great pleasure to remind MAUT members that, starting this month, our membership dues decrease from 0.65% of salary to 0.58%. We have recovered from the financial impact of our support of a legal challenge to the dismissal of an MAUT member from the university in 2009, and we are now in a position to reduce the membership dues rate, which had been increased in 2010/11 to meet the needs of that case. While on the subject of dues I would also like to remind you that MAUT dues are partly tax deductible. This is handled differently on the federal and provincial income tax returns, and the precise details depend on your overall tax situation, but for many MAUT members the deductions are expected to amount to ~25% of the amount paid.

Ken Hastings
MAUT VP Finance

Meet MAUT's new staff member Jo-Anne Watier

A new MAUT staff member, Membership Engagement Officer Jo-Anne Watier, started work on August 24. Jo-Anne comes to us with 25 years experience in membership activities in a mining industry umbrella organization in Montreal. The search and selection committee identified Jo-Anne as the top candidate in a very impressive short-list and we are very pleased to welcome her aboard. Member recruitment, retention and engagement are critical to MAUT's ability to represent and act on behalf of the academic staff at the university and we believe that Jo-Anne's work will help us move to the next level of relevance, visibility and impact.

Ken Hastings
MAUT VP Finance

departments at McGill and the University of Montréal sent a joint letter to the Prime Minister advocating strongly for the Report's recommendations. It was also clear that we had to push for the engagement of the university leadership and it is clear that our incoming VP Research and Innovation, Dr. Martha Crago (one of the authors of the Naylor Report), has picked up the torch (e.g., [RDI Économie](#)). She is also arranging meetings between MPs and researchers and students here at McGill with - another key outcome discussed at the MAUT forum. Our principal, Dr. Suzanne Fortier has also been lobbying for implementation of the Report's recommendations. Op-eds from the Principal of McGill and the Rectors of Université Laval and Université de Montréal have appeared in [La Presse](#) and the [Montreal Gazette](#), with an op-ed from the Principal of McGill and the Presidents of the University of Toronto and UBC additionally appearing in [The Globe and Mail](#).

The time to push for implementation of the Naylor Report is becoming critical. CIHR has almost 4000 registrations for its Fall 2017 Project Competition - so funding success rates are likely to be less than 10%. After several already cancelled competitions this is a recipe for disaster. Similar pictures will probably emerge at NSERC and SSHRC. If nothing is done, we can expect people to lose their jobs and labs to close - some of which contain employees who have been at their jobs for a long time. The real cost, the one the government even shows some concern about, is what this is doing to our students and their expectations regarding careers in a knowledge-based society. They doubt the government is really interested in this and it is chasing them away from research as a profession.

The ultimate costs of this will be staggering and generational. For an additional 1.3 billion dollars (<0.1% of GDP and <0.5% of government revenue that increased by \$13B last year alone), the recommendations of the Naylor Report could be implemented in full. Voices we still need to hear from are from industries who benefit from fundamental research, people who represent such interests on McGill's Board of Governors or the board of the MUHC.

As "Tweet storms" go, this one has not gone away. But without some clear commitment from the federal government, I fear that cynicism will eventually take hold of us, our colleagues, and worse, our students. Why is the government waiting? Why are you waiting? Engage us and engage Dr. Crago and Dr. Fortier. Write your industrial partners and get them to engage. Write your MP or speak with them



Membership Engagement Officer Jo-Anne Watier

MAUT social circle

Welcome Gathering 2017



Thank you to all those who joined us at our annual Welcome Gathering held on September 7, 2017!

MAUT's recent Welcome Gathering was the first social event of the season with over 125 attendees making the evening a splendid and successful venue. The ambiance in the Ballroom was filled with the warmth of old and new acquaintances conversing as the [Mason String Quartet](#) infused their enchanting music throughout the evening while guests were offered an array of delectable delights and cocktails. Youngsters assembled in the Heritage Room where they were captivated by and interacted with [exotic creatures](#) from around the world. MAUT's President, Alenoush Saroyan and Membership Committee Chairman, Stefano Algieri, extended their salutations in a brief address where they expressed their contentment and commitment

directly in Ottawa on Parliament Hill Day (Nov. 23) as part of the MAUT contingent (register with CAUT [here](#) and please email maut@mcgill.ca to confirm attendance). Get on Twitter and [#SupporttheReport!](#)

Terry Hébert
MAUT Past President

Travel Management Program update

I am happy to report that the VP of Finance and Administration, Professor Yves Beauchamp, recently issued to all deans a revised directive on the university's travel booking policy. The revised policy is effective immediately, and deans have the responsibility of distributing this information to their faculty and staff.

The memo states that 'regardless of the source of funds, travel by McGill academic staff, including librarians, for academic research and teaching purposes is not subject to this requirement [to use the University contracted Travel Company, Vision]. This exemption extends to travel arrangements for academics, including students, visiting the University (other than those coming as job candidates).'

The other part of this policy regards travel for administrative purposes: 'Subject to the best price guarantee provisions of our contract with Vision Travel, all flights for travel related to administrative purposes must be booked using Vision Travel. Air travel for the purpose of inviting job candidates to the University is included within the definition of "administrative travel".'

The VP notes that this revision to the previous policy (of only exempting 2F and 2M funds) responds to feedback received from administrative and academic staff. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the faculty and staff members across the university who sent me emails or communicated in other ways with me about this issue since last summer. Your input was invaluable to the effective representation of your concerns and interests in the Steering Committee of the Travel Management Program, as well as in communications with the upper administration.

Catherine Lu
MAUT Representative
Steering Committee of the Travel Management Program

in being part of the MAUT community. A special thank you to MAUT organisers and the Faculty Club in making the evening most amiable and memorable!

Jo-Anne Watier
MAUT Membership Engagement Officer

Ongoing campaign to reduce administrative overload

In preparation for the 'Death by Forms' segment of last Spring's General Meeting, then President-Elect Alenoush Saroyan called on members to submit examples of excessive or unnecessary administrative tasks faculty members are made to take on. We received a large number of responses describing a wide range of annoying administrative complications that we can well do without. Following up on the 'success' of this initial call for examples, and the lively 'Death by Forms' segment that followed at the Spring General Meeting, MAUT is preparing a survey of our members, which will be repeated periodically, to solicit more examples of administrative overload, and, whenever possible, suggested solutions. The ultimate goal is to create a permanent joint working group consisting of representatives from the administration, MAUT, MUNACA and MUNASA. This working group would function as a permanent gathering point to which people can report seemingly unnecessary administrative practices and whose job it will be to collect such complaints and suggestions on a regular basis and to come up with solutions wherever possible or more convincing justifications than we have so far received where needed. So please help us reduce the administrative burden for all of us by sending us your complaints and suggestions in response to our upcoming survey.

Axel van den Berg
MAUT President-Elect

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. Check the [MAUT website](#) for the latest news, events, kudos and other happenings of interest.

