

VP Communications' Report for the 2017 Spring General Meeting

Social Media Update

At the Spring General Meeting, I reported on our decision to create a [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter account](#). Since the Fall General Meeting, we have been testing the social media waters with care given their public nature. To date, the main issue we have had is how to specify authorship of posts, e.g., when they include what could be construed as editorial content: This is to avoid posts by individual members of the Executive, Council, the Communications Committee, or MAUT Officers -- all of whom are currently eligible to contribute (in particular on the Facebook page) -- appearing to represent the views of MAUT as a whole. Based on input, we have been signing or initialing our posts to increase transparency in authorship while allowing contributors to post freely. That said, what we would really like to see is member engagement, and we have a long way to go. I still wonder if a Facebook group would have been a more engaging route to take.

That said, to increase visibility and awareness of our social media presence, we have recently added social media links on the [MAUT website](#) as well as in the bottom banner of MAUTFORUM messages. My personal view is that it may be beneficial for MAUT to organize a session for academics on the use of social media.

I would like to thank Terry Hébert (MAUT President), Debra Titone (MAUT Council Member), and Andrea Miller-Nesbitt (Member of the MAUT Communications Committee) for their contributions of content to the Facebook page.

On a final note on this topic, the MAUT Blog – MAUT's first venture into social media -- was fully decommissioned in January 2017. It had not been in use for several years.

Website

The librarians on the MAUT Communications Committee -- Jane Aitkens, Andrea Miller-Nesbitt, and myself -- continued to manage the content on the [website](#), the latter serving in large part as a repository of MAUT's public documents. The website is also used for announcements about upcoming activities and documentation on current issues.

Some examples of documents that can be found on the website include:

- [Council and Meeting minutes](#)
- [Reports presented at the Fall General Meetings and Spring General Meetings](#)
- [Current and past newsletters](#)
- [Documents from previous workshops](#)
- [Information on MAUT's agreement with Kids & Company for childcare](#)

I would like to thank Jane Aitkens and Andrea Miller-Nesbitt for their support with the website over this past year.

MAUTFORUM listserv

The MAUTFORUM listserv remains a unidirectional mode of communication; however, upon request, The VP Communications may post messages on behalf of members.

On an administrative note, messages posted to MAUTFORUM are now archived and can be searched at <http://lists.mcgill.ca/scripts/wa.exe?A0=MAUTFORUM> back to December 2009 (a login is required but it can be set up by listserv subscribers). Subscriber preferences can also be adjusted from that URL.

MAUT Newsletter

Since the Fall General Meeting, two newsletters have been published: One in [November 2016](#) and one in [March 2017](#). We continue to welcome ideas for newsletter items from our members and thank those who have made contributions this past year.

Communications Committee

Since the Fall General Meeting when I last reported on the Committee's activities, a subset of members of the Communications Committee met on March 14, 2017, to discuss the role of the Committee and how the yet-to-be-hired Membership Engagement Officer (a position recently approved by Council) could help support communications, including enhancements, changes, and uploads to the website as well as social media activities. The Committee submitted their year-end report on April 12, 2017, which has not yet been received by Council (pursuant to the Constitution) but which is attached for information (Appendix 1). The Communications Committee was, in addition, consulted regarding the survey on use of out-of-pocket funds to subsidize research at McGill, the results of which were published in the [March 2017 MAUT Newsletter](#), as well as about requests to post messages to the MAUTFORUM listserv.

I would like to thank MAUT -- with special thanks to Terry Hébert (MAUT President) -- for the opportunity to serve as VP Communications this past year. It has given me a much fuller appreciation of all the hard and detailed work MAUT does not only on behalf of members but also on behalf of all academic staff at McGill. I would also like to thank Honore Kerwin-Borrelli for carrying such a heavy administrative burden for us all, and for all her moral support.

Respectfully submitted by Genevieve Gore, VP Communications, on April 18, 2017.

Appendix 1.

MAUT Communications Committee: 2016-17 Report to Council

The members of Communications Committee -- Jane Aitkens, Ahmed Fekry Ibrahim, Genevieve Gore, Andrea Miller-Nesbitt, and Gerbern Oegema -- met once in person on October 11, 2016. The Committee discussed use of the listserv for communications and the potential difficulties in deciding what gets posted to it given the large amount of email that members were perceived to already receive in general. The Communications Committee agreed to establish a Facebook presence to increase opportunities for communication. A [Facebook page](#) has been live since October 2016. Upon the recommendation from Council Member Debra Titone, a [Twitter account](#) was also created.

Three of the five members of the Committee (due to scheduling conflicts) met on March 14, 2017, and discussed the purpose of the Communications Committee: They briefly touched upon the important role in communications (e.g., work on website, social media) of the new, not-yet-hired Membership Engagement Officer and discussed the possibility of **merging the Communications Committee with the Membership Committee**, given the small size of the Communications Committee, its relatively small mandate in terms of Committee work, and the importance of proper coordination with the Membership Committee. A further recommendation discussed by the group was for MAUT Committees to have clearer Terms of Reference, i.e., information on the term of office of Committee members and more detailed information on Committee activities/responsibilities.

Three newsletters were published in the last year: [August 2016](#), [November 2016](#), and [March 2017](#).

Members of the Communications Committee in 2016-17:

Jane Aitkens (Libraries)

Genevieve Gore (Libraries), Chair, ex-officio

Ahmed Fekry Ibrahim (Islamic Studies)

Andre Miller-Nesbitt (Libraries)

Gerbern Oegema (Religious Studies)