

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

- 1. In its report submitted to the Board of Governors for approval on December 12th, the Nominating, Governance and Ethics Committee proposed a review of the terms of reference of the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR). One of the proposed changes is a decrease in the frequency of such review of the terms of reference: from every three years to every five years.**

**What was the rationale for the initial frequency agreed upon and what are the reasons behind the proposed changes?**

The model of the current terms of reference of all Board Committees was adopted in 2007 and regular reviews of all Committee terms of reference have been conducted since then. The proposed change is intended to align the review cycle of the CAMSR terms of reference with the review cycle in place for all Board Standing Committees. In other words, all other Board Committee terms of reference are subject to a review at least once every five years and the same frequency of review is proposed for the CAMSR terms of reference.

- 2. Will McGill be undertaking a comprehensive university-wide accessibility audit that will address the physical (i.e., ongoing property construction at McGill) barriers?**

Audits have been conducted on both the downtown campus and Macdonald Campus in recent years, mostly focusing on accessibility to the busiest buildings. Some of the priority accessibility issues identified through these audits have since been addressed thanks to the special funding McGill reserves for projects aimed at enhancing the physical accessibility of McGill facilities, generally \$400,000 a year. Outstanding accessibility issues are being reviewed. This year, an additional \$4M received from government will allow the University to launch projects that will improve the accessibility of the Redpath Museum and of the Currie gym.

In addition, whenever a construction and renovation project is planned in a building or an exterior space, McGill takes the opportunity to make permanent accessibility improvements in that building or space. During the work itself, the University puts in place temporary measures, if needed, to ensure that access to campus or to its buildings is not impeded. This includes collaboration with the City of Montreal to ensure the City's construction projects around the downtown campus do not hinder accessibility to the campus and its buildings, and regular meetings and communications long before the start of projects, as well as throughout the work.

Finally, McGill also offers a free adapted transport service to students and staff with impairments or injuries that compromise mobility.



- 3. Will the Board of Governors entertain a formal request for Course Lecturers and Instructors to have a seat on most, if not all, bodies, committees, and councils, so as to be able to fully participate in the governance of the university?**

The University's governance bodies (Board of Governors and Senate) are not responsible for determining the composition of all university bodies, just those that fall within their respective purviews. The Secretariat will bring this request to the Board of Governors and the Senate when they decide to review their membership.

- 4. Why is it that McGill remains invested in companies such as RE/MAX, which rents and sells property in Israeli settlements in the Palestinian West Bank – settlements that are deemed illegal by international law and the United Nations? McGill claims to be committed to equity and inclusion, yet investments such as these systematically silence Palestinians, forcing them to pay their tuition dollars to the continued occupation of their land. Why does McGill have such strong ties with Israeli universities that do military research that directly harms Palestinians?**

Due to its political dimensions which concern the broader question of the Israeli-Palestinian situation, the first part of the question cannot be addressed by the Board. The Board does not see it as its role to express political views on behalf of the entire University community on matters that are not directly linked to the University's mission. The second part of the question touches on core elements of the University's values and mission. The ability of universities to engage freely in scholarship and teaching is a fundamental value of academic freedom. Thus, the free exchange of knowledge and ideas is a foundational element of McGill's mission, which requires that links with the academic community worldwide be protected from political considerations.

**QUESTIONS REFERRED TO CAMSR**

- 1. In its report submitted to the Board of Governors for approval on December 12th, the Nominating, Governance and Ethics committee proposed the following addition to the mandate of the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility: "to refrain from using the University's resources to advance specific social or political causes".**

**Could a definition and examples of what is and is not considered a "specific social or political" cause be provided?**

Upon review, this question was referred to the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility. The Committee is in the process of further considering revisions to its terms of reference and will consider this question in the context of its review.

- 2. CAMSR was originally set up explicitly to address political, social and moral questions such as apartheid and tobacco sales. My questions are:**
  - 1. Will the suggested clause "to refrain from using the University's resources to advance specific social or political causes" not prevent CAMSR from fulfilling its mission?**
  - 2. Does retaining financial interest in a corporation not constitute an explicit political endorsement (of the status quo)? More specifically, are not investment and divestment equally political actions?**

Upon review, these questions were referred to the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility for consideration. The Committee is in the process of further considering revisions to its terms of reference and will consider these questions in the context of its review.