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& Indu
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Sarah SA prez.

Hola!

(I have only met or contacted some of you this semester, but we should try to all meet together or discuss SOON!)

(I got these e-mails from Lynne Champoux-Williams and Nadya Wilknison)

Briefly:

For ENVR:401 this semester, a group of us were assigned to design a Sustainability Report Card for McGill, collect data, and start evaluating McGill's performance.

Quite the task!

Here's the "Physical Operations Section", which includes:

- Land Use and Grounds
- Green Buildings and Maintenance
- Conservation (Nature and Culture)
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gas emissions
- Purchasing, Waste and Recycling
- Paper Use
- Hazardous Waste
- Food Services
- Transportation

-Jake Itzkowitz

-mainstream newspapers - Gazette, alumni contacts

-And Water (but not really as you will see...)

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Other sections on "Governance/Finance, Education, and Social Responsibility" have also been started. Future work in these sections will be crucial to have a coherent Sustainability program at McGill.

We received a lot of help for this project from people at University Services (Jim Nicell was our client), but also from some student groups. Still, we haven't reached out enough to students who have a direct interest in campus sustainability, especially the people at Mac, but even those close by.

Please read, and give feedback! All is still in flux. To be meaningful, evaluations need to include all interested parties! Some Sections are very complicated (like Food, which receives no grade for now), and will need more help in the long term.

We'd like to present some of this at the next Sub-Committee on the Environment meeting in January. But most importantly, at the next Rethink conference in March. (this should happen annually!)

There's a lot we can start planning for NOW, (like next semester).

If you can, please reply to the entire group

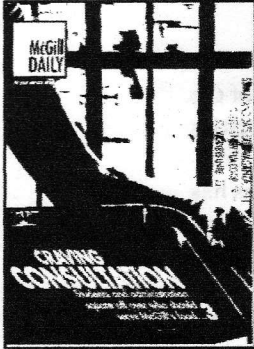
hope all is well,

Alexandre Poisson



Thursday, March 11th, 2004 | Volume 93, Number 39

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Food services on campus to be overhauled

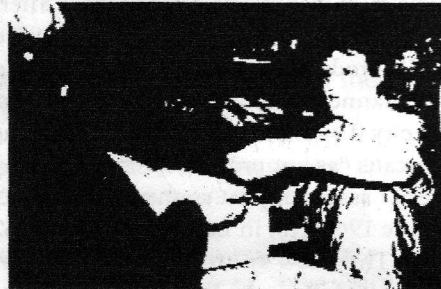
Admin backtracks on plans for a single provider; students and staff demand more consultation

By Sarah Colgrove and Ira Dubinsky, The McGill Daily

The administration has backtracked on its plan to contract out all campus food services to a single provider, following weeks of intense pressure from students, faculty, staff, and the media.

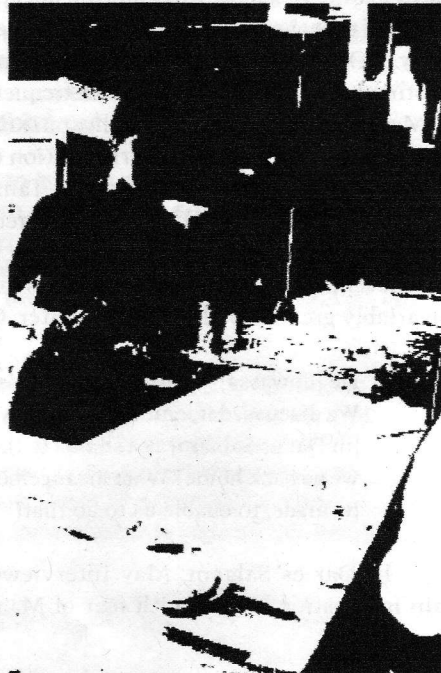
In a statement provided to The Daily last month, the University announced it would be seeking a single food service provider that could manage all of McGill's 16 cafeterias when contracts with current providers expire in the spring. But according to Associate Vice-Principal Communications Jennifer Robinson, a decision on the number of providers has not yet been made.

"We're currently considering all the options. One of the proposals is a single provider. We're also looking into other options.... It might be preferable to have two providers, it might be preferable to have 10,"



Karen Beliveau works in the Burns side cafeteria. The caf could face major changes depending on how the University proceeds.

Elizabeth Wagner



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she said.

Over the past few weeks, various groups on campus have raised concerns about the University's plans to alter food services. The Coalition for Action on Food Services (CAFS), made up of students, staff, and faculty, wants to ensure that all members of the McGill community have a say in how food services on campus are managed.

Law student Jeff Roberts, one of the organizers of CAFS, believes that McGill still intends to turn over all cafeterias to one provider despite their recent backtracking.

"They just have to make it to late April and then they can do whatever they want," he said. "They're going to try to wait it out and stall us."

According to **Sam Noumoff**, Political Science professor and Senator, the plan to amalgamate the administration of the cafeterias represents a serious threat to the culture of the University.

"This proposal is tragically yet another illustration of the assault on diversity within the University," he said.

CAFS is also advocating for local businesses and student-run operations to have a place on campus.

"We're against one corporate provider. We want local businesses and student initiatives," explained Jess Dennis at a CAFS press conference on Monday. Besides being an organizer behind CAFS, Dennis is a representative of the Midnight Kitchen, a group that serves free vegan lunches twice a week in the basement of the Shatner building.

Pino Abruzzo, whose family runs concessions in the Stewart Biology Building, Law Faculty Building, Athletics Centre, and the Arts Building, is also concerned about small entrepreneurs being pushed out.

"I don't have the money to bid on all the cafeterias, so it won't be me running them next year," said Abruzzo, who was featured in an article in The Gazette earlier this week. "I think [the amalgamations are] a done deal. They took away my vending machines... they made me take the McGill label off my truck."

Although a monopoly may not be imminent, Robinson maintains that changes are coming. She stressed that McGill's goal is to improve quality and service at all establishments on campus. She said that changes to current establishments will address issues of safety, environmental concerns, and improvement of cafeteria management.

Robinson pointed to problems with current providers:

"The University's experience with some of the food providers has not been very positive.... The University has discovered

that one of its operators was running a catering service out of one of the buildings.... There are food services providers that have done renovations to buildings without getting approval, and the renovations were very poorly done.... The University is responsible for providing food services and it will insist that whoever is operating the facilities will have to meet certain guidelines."

All stakeholders must be heard

One of CAFS' primary goals is for McGill to listen to input from all members of the McGill community. They are demanding that students and staff have a place somewhere in the decision making process that determines what changes could be made to food services.

"I think it's really important for students to be able to express themselves and for the administration to be receptive to what they have to say," said Celia Kutz, another organizer of CAFS.

Noumoff echoed Kutz's concern.

"When a member of the McGill constituency has such strong feelings on an issue, it is only appropriate that the rest of the community listen very carefully."

According to Robinson, students are already an important part of the decision-making process.

"There are many ways for students to voice their concerns," she said. "Through comment cards and surveys.... The administration also meets regularly with all student associations on campus."

But Roberts claims that McGill has not taken student concerns seriously.

What is to be done?

- A **press conference** on Monday kicked off a two-week campaign organized by CAFS, which will culminate in a presentation to the administration on March 19. By that time, **petitions, letter campaigns, and a boycott** of Chartwells establishments will have taken place.

- A **petition** urging the administration not to outsource all McGill food services has been circulating for two weeks. According to Roberts, the group has obtained close to 4,500 signatures and is hoping for 10,000.

- CAFS has also organized a **boycott** of the Chartwells-managed cafeterias in Redpath, McConnell, and Bronfman that will take place next Tuesday and Wednesday. **Volunteers from the Midnight Kitchen and other groups will be serving free food to students at those locations.**

- A **roundtable discussion** featuring presentations and discussion about food services on campus will take place next Tuesday. Although CAFS has invited representatives of the McGill administration to attend, CAFS have yet to receive a response.

- **Six faculty societies, a multitude of student clubs, two employee unions, as well as several professors and University administrators have**

"They've consulted us in bad faith," he said. "They consult us to provide useful covering fire so they can do what they wanted to do all along."

openly endorsed the CAFS initiative. Professors have contacted the administration to endorse CAFS, and alumni support is expected.

Michal Wozny, president of the Engineering Undergraduate Society (EUS), points to recent changes at the Engineering Café as part of a trend that does not serve students' interests.

"The prices are higher and the serving sizes have decreased...we no longer have direct input into our issues."

The café is one of several cafeterias on campus recently contracted out to Chartwells Educational Dining Services Inc. Chartwells also runs the cafeterias in the basement of the Redpath Library, New Residence Hall, and a variety of other locations around campus.

Robinson acknowledged that employees in the ancillary services department ultimately make decisions about food services and agreed that student representation on a future committee could be a good idea.

"If the current consulting process is not really working well, which we think it is, then the University would want to consider other options."

Exclusive rights to our bellies

According to some campus leaders, new food service contracts could mean exclusive rights for one company to sell food anywhere on campus, spelling major problems for student groups that want to engage in fundraising activities or start their own initiatives.

Reverend Gwenda Wells, director of McGill Chaplaincy services, warns that student projects could end up being stifled if the University isn't careful.

"Those opportunities are axiomatic at a university like McGill that cultivates student entrepreneurship and experience for the real world. It's not just about getting good quality food on campus – it's about getting credentials."

Robinson says that even with one food service provider, fundraising wouldn't be an issue.

"The University will not agree to any kind of exclusivity arrangements that would stop students from raising money. The University is always clear on that; we do not enter into those kind of agreements."

But according to EUS representatives, University officials prohibited the McGill chapter of Engineers Without Borders from selling food as a fundraising activity in the lobby of the McConnell building last Friday.

Wells sees other campuses currently under exclusive contracts as an ominous warning.

"The stories are amazing. At one school, the culture club was not allowed to bring chips and drinks to its own meetings.... Professors had a habit of making coffee in turns and bringing muffins, and of course that was not allowed. They had to go downstairs and line up. At other schools with exclusivity contracts, they weep to hear what we can do at McGill in terms of fundraisers and publicity. We can do it because we can put food out there."

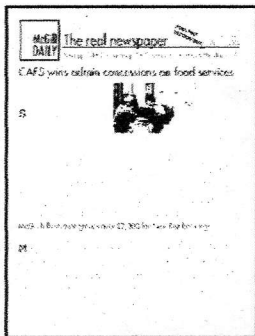
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Thursday, April 1st, 2004 | Volume 93, Number 45a

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CAF S wins admin concessions on food services

McGill agrees to delay bid process, strike inclusive advisory committee

By David Wachsmuth, The McGill Daily

Student leaders are declaring victory in the campus food struggle after the administration announced Monday it would delay its decision on who will manage McGill cafeterias and establish a joint student-faculty-staff committee to advise the University.



Members of CAFS enter the James building for their meeting with VPs Luc Vinet and Morty Yalovsky on March 19.

Jack Sanford

Monday's announcement followed weeks of pressure from the Coalition for Action on Food Services (CAF S), a student-led group that collected more than 7,500 signatures for a petition, initiated a successful SSMU referendum, and organized a boycott of three cafeterias in opposition to the monopolization of campus food services.

"I think we have a big victory," said SSMU President Kate Rhodes, who worked with CAF S. "It's a real victory for the CAF S movement, not just only in the results they got from the University but also how they went about getting them. The ability to mobilize such a diverse community that strongly is an incredible accomplishment of which they should be proud."

McGill's contracts with the operators of its 16 downtown cafeterias were set to expire on May 31, 2004, but the University is now offering to extend these by one year to allow itself "more time to gather information and consult with students, faculty, and staff on how to improve food services across its downtown campus and establish an integrated food services plan," according to Monday's press release.

This delay will mollify one of CAF S' chief fears with McGill's plans to reorganize food services, namely that the

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administration might have conducted negotiations with potential food providers over the summer, a time when students are largely absent and therefore unable to lobby or demonstrate.

Also, McGill's decision to create a food advisory committee satisfies another of CAFS' demands: for student representation in the cafeteria decision-making process.

But CAFS could not convince the administration to commit to not pursuing the monopolization of campus food, a possibility Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance) Morty Yalovsky said is still on the table.

"[A single provider] is going to be one of the options that will be considered. We did not rule out any options; that's why we are forming a committee."

McGill has been inconsistent in its position on consolidating cafeteria operators. An associate director of Ancillary Services, the McGill unit overseeing the changes to campus food administration, told The Daily unambiguously in mid-February that the University was seeking a single provider for all cafeterias. And although they deny backtracking, a few weeks later members of the senior administration began saying that no decision had been reached.

No committee consensus

CAFS organizer Celia Kutz said the group does not plan to concede on food service monopolization, and she hopes that the yet-to-be formed food advisory committee will give students the opportunity to propose alternative models for cafeteria management.

"As corporatization and monopolization become an easy option for the administration, they're going to keep going back to it, and there needs to be a committee that says, 'wait a minute, there are other options, and let's explore them.'"

Details on the committee are slim. According to McGill's press release it will be named the Dining-at-McGill Advisory Committee and "will make recommendations by January 31, 2005 to the University on how best to provide improved service, better choices and quality, more convenient hours, more uniform standards and pricing, better environmental practices, reasonable prices and pleasant surroundings." The composition has not been determined, although there will be administration, student, faculty, and support staff representatives.

Students and the administration disagree sharply over what should happen to the committee after it presents its recommendations next January. According to Associate Vice-Principal (Communications) Jennifer Robinson, the committee is only intended to provide input into the restructuring of food services next year.

"It will be short-lived.... After it makes recommendations, its job will be complete."

But Rhodes, who has already drafted a rough proposal for the mandate and composition of the committee along with SSMU Faculty Relations Commissioner James Grohsgal, believes that the time is right for a permanent food advisory board.

"What I am pushing for is a permanent food board structure, because this is something that universities all over North America have established."

Rhodes wants the food committee to continue to provide guidance and oversight to food service operations at McGill even after it submits its January report. She pointed to numerous universities, including the University of Waterloo, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and New York University (NYU), that have permanent food advisory boards, claiming that such boards allow for more community feedback and ultimately better cafeterias.

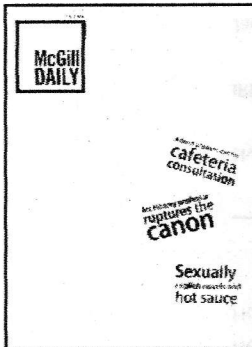
Robinson said that a final decision on the structure and composition of the committee is expected to be made within two or three weeks.

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Thursday, October 14th, 2004 | Volume 94, Number 11

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Administration promises CAFS consultation

By Sarah Grynvas
The McGill Daily

Vice Principal Administration and Finance Morty Yalovsky responded on Tuesday to a letter from the Coalition for Action on Food Services (CAFS), claiming that the long-awaited permanent advisory committee on McGill food services is on its way.

The letter was sent to him in late September by CAFS, a student-run organization intent on preventing the monopolization of campus cafeterias by a single service provider. CAFS also advocates the inclusion of students in the decision making-processes about Food Services on campus. The letter reiterated CAFS' complaints and demanded that the administration act on its March 2004 promise to create an advisory committee.

The organization had demanded a response from Yalovsky by Friday October 8.

According to Yalovsky, the proposed Dining-at-McGill Advisory Committee will offer its recommendations by January 31, 2005.

SSMU Vice President Community and Government and CAFS member Daniel Friedlaender, who was invited to sit on the committee, said that while Yalovsky's response is promising, he would not be satisfied until the committee is put into action.

"The letter is trying to show that the administration is working on this with students. So far, we have yet to see that, but we hope that they will," said Friedlaender.

Friedlaender said that it is still not clear which other students will sit on the committee, or what form the committee will take. He also said that a concrete date has not yet been set for the committee to convene.

"I'm aware that, ultimately, it's simply an advisory committee and we will have no direct control. I do not know who else will be on it or when we will meet," he said.

"Will this committee advise on what providers we will have next year, on what exclusivity contracts we'll have? A lot

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more detail is needed for us to be satisfied with the response," he added.

In addition to reiterating the administration's promise to create an advisory committee, Yalovsky also addressed a number of other issues raised by CAFS about the corporatization of campus cafeterias and the diminishing rights of student-run food sales on campus.

Yalovsky claimed that student fundraising sales, which are "quasi-permanent in nature or location," would still be allowed on campus. However, Friedlaender said that he is not satisfied with that response.

"I'm not sure what, exactly, quasi-permanent means. Besides, there's precedent for Chartwells having control over student activities," he continued, citing a controversy last year when Engineers Without Borders were told to stop selling food on campus.

Jennifer Robinson, Associate VP (Communications) said that fundraising is one of the issues she hopes the committee will address.

"I certainly think we should allow student fundraisers, just not on a permanent basis," she said. "In previous years, the various student organizations were paid large amounts of money for the control of their cafeterias, and we're holding up our end of the deal."

Robinson also said concrete details about the committee have not yet been released because they are still in the planning stages.

"We didn't send out the final details yet, as we are still determining who will serve on it ourselves. We wanted to wait until the school year began, because so many students are away during the summer."

Furthermore, she felt that the CAFS open letter was an excessive measure.

"We feel that an ultimatum from the students is unreasonable and unnecessary. Why are they demanding a response to a letter by a certain date? We responded at what we felt was an appropriate time when we had all the information."

According to Friedlaender, the letter was meant to reiterate the extent of student concerns about campus food issues.

"The quality of food on campus is an important part of student life. Right now we have four different companies. But their contract extensions run out at the end of the year. Food service is an important part of McGill, and we want to ensure that students will continue to have a say in it," he said.



Thursday, November 4th, 2004 | Volume 94, Number 17

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Admin still not listening on food services: students

By Ryan Hicks
The McGill Daily

The long-awaited Dining at McGill Advisory Committee [DMAC] has finally been formed. But according to some student leaders, it is flawed.

In response to demands last year from students involved with the Coalition for Action on Food Services (CAFS), McGill Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance) Morty Yalovsky struck the nine-member committee late last month. The committee will make recommendations to the University on the provision of food services on campus.

However, many students have questioned the structure of the committee, and whether it will actually be as representative of the McGill community as they hoped.

"There are not enough members of the community-at-large," said Daniel Friedlaender, SSMU VP Community & Government, and a founding member of CAFS.

The committee is comprised of students, staff, and faculty members of the McGill community.

All three student members of the committee were selected by the administration, and are executives of various student societies. In addition to Friedlaender, Management Undergraduate Society President Jason Paseli, and Post-Graduate Students' Society VP Finance, Alex Bourque are members.

Celia Kutz, another founding member of CAFS, said that the committee was not structured according to the committee's advice.

"We gave recommendations as to how [the committee] should look, and said that there should be students and student representation chosen by students, rather than the administration, and they really never responded on those key recommendations from us," said Kutz.

She was also disappointed that even though CAFS was the impetus behind the creation of the committee, Friedlaender is the only coalition member represented on the committee.

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"We feel as though [Friedlaender] is their token concession to us, one person on a nine person committee," said Kutz.

Kutz is concerned that, because committee members were handpicked by the administration rather than those involved in CAFS, they might not be fully aware of all of the issues surrounding food services.

"[The administration] pursued handpicked individuals that they see will glide in," she said.

As the DMAC gets underway, CAFS plans on gathering student opinion about food services issues to present to the committee.

"I hope that we can make a strong enough case on our side to listen to what the students say, because the students have shown support, and shown that they don't want an exclusivity contract on campus, and they don't want one corporate monopolization on campus," said Kutz.

Yalovsky had promised, in a March 2004 press release, to create the committee, but no action was taken until last month, when CAFS issued a letter to the administration requesting that it fulfill its promise.

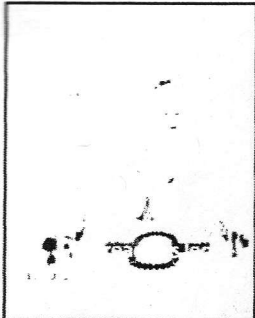
He declined to comment on the structure or activities of the committee, as not to pre-empt the work of the Advisory Committee, which will be receiving submissions from all interested members of the McGill community.

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Student input scuttled: senators??

By Erika Meere
The McGill Daily

At yesterday's Senate meeting, Arts Senator Max Reed challenged the terms of the new Dining at McGill Advisory Committee (DMAC), which is mandated to examine issues related to food at the downtown campus.

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In its current structure, the DMAC is a confidential body comprised of nine members, including three students. All members are hand-picked by the administration.

Reed was concerned that confidential discussion on the issue would not allow for sufficient community consultation.

"More worrying is the fact that the recommendations of the Committee are, to quote its terms of reference, 'confidential, until made public by the Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance), along with the decisions taken following receipt of the report of the Committee,'" said Reed.

VP (Administration and Finance) Morty Yalovsky reiterated that while the DMAC is open to input from all members of the University community, its deliberations would be kept private.

"I have asked [to keep the report confidential] so as not to have the report of the committee discussed in public prior to the final recommendations," he said.

Reed also asked why Yalovsky had chosen to circumvent traditional governance procedures by having student members of the committee handpicked by the administration rather than allowing student societies to appoint them.

"Yes, there are representatives of SSMU and PGSS on the committee," said Reed, "but the fact that they were not chosen by the societies themselves undermines the principle of student representation."

Yalovsky replied that because food services are related primarily to university operations and administration, members of the DMAC do not necessarily need to be appointed by their representative bodies.

"This is not a governance issue, but an administrative one," he said.

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Easy Video Converter Free
Converts all popular video
formats Upload to web or
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Wedding Music Band
Live Music for Your Wedding
Gigmasters has 16,000 Bands
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Science, stressed that food services should indeed be viewed as a matter of University governance, much like the selection of a new principal.

"Food and who the principal is are the two most important issues at McGill," she said.

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Addressing Student Needs in the Management of Food Services at McGill

**Submission to the Dining at McGill Committee
from the Coalition for Action on Food Services (CAFS)**

*For a complete list of the individuals and organizations that
make up CAFS, please turn to the end of this document.*

November 19, 2004

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1.0 Introduction

The availability of food on campus represents an important part of life at McGill. It is a critical non-academic service that affects all McGill students and staff.

Food preferences and requirements are deeply personal and individual; therefore it is crucial that decisions relating to the provision and management of food services at McGill be made in consultation with all members of the University community. We are pleased to provide this document to the Committee that outlines some of the key concerns and requests of McGill students. While we appreciate the work of the ad-hoc Committee, we do not believe there exists an adequate permanent forum for consultation on food services. This issue we will be further addressed later in this document (see section 2).

This submission is the result of intense debate and discussion among students from across the McGill community. Input was solicited from all student associations, all clubs and services, student groups, and individual students via a mass email. Open meetings and workshops were also conducted to help generate suggestions for this submission. In soliciting feedback from students and drafting the recommendations in this document, we have focused mainly on the food services provided in McGill's academic facilities, as opposed to those provided in residence.

We approach the committee fully cognisant of McGill's difficult financial situation and its desire to generate new and creative revenue sources. However, sometimes the quest for these new sources of revenue adversely affects the very quality of life that they were designed to improve. Rather than fostering the sense of community that is so vital to the success of the University, the quest for revenue may alienate members of that community. This paper tries to strike a balance between the valid and necessary quest to "grow the resource base" of the University and the need to maintain and enhance the qualities of McGill that make it so dear to us.

2.0 The importance of consultation

When asked to think about what is most important to them with respect to food on campus, the range of responses from students was impressive. Many care more about food quality than anything else, making comparisons between what they eat in the cafeteria and what they cook at home, or what their parents cook. Some students cite nutrition as the most important factor; they want to be able to buy healthy food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner anywhere on campus at any time. Other students talk about diversity and wanting more choices of food on campus, and still others talk about affordability of food. And finally, many students are concerned about their dietary restrictions and requirements, for health or religious reasons. This is perhaps one of the most important issues since McGill has such a vast and diverse population. Any food service provider must be able to meet these needs if McGill is going to retain its reputation as an inclusive and tolerant school. If it wants to continue to attract the best and the brightest students and the most respected professors from around the world, McGill must be flexible in terms of catering to their needs.

Suffice it to say that everyone has a different opinion when it comes to what they want to eat. It is

therefore unrealistic to assume that a small group of managers should be able to predict the food preferences and requirements of 18,000 undergraduate students, 7000 graduate students and thousands of academic and non-academic staff. Permanent consultation with all members of the University community on food services is of paramount importance. We suggest that this be achieved with a permanent University committee on food services with representatives from across the McGill community. We have included a proposed terms of reference for such a committee in appendix A of this document. We believe an important issue like food services must benefit from the same collegial decision-making process that governs academic, health, financial, safety, and equity issues at McGill. The importance of food to the members of the McGill community and the issues of policy that surround it make food services fundamentally a governance issue and not one to be dealt with by administration alone.

In order for consultation to be most effective and to optimize the ability of food service provider(s) to respond to the needs of the community, the committee should have input into every stage of the process from filtering through the various proposals to giving advice on day-to-day operating procedures.

Requests for proposals (RFP) must solicit submissions from as many companies as possible and this process must not have an implicit predetermined outcome. Our research indicates that there are several companies not currently operating on the McGill campus that would be in a position to bid on food service contracts. A broadly circulated RFP will yield the best possible deal for McGill in terms of the service and the revenue it receives.

While we recognize the importance of maintaining confidentiality in contract negotiations, members of the committee must be able to review contract terms in order to ensure that the interests of their constituents are being addressed.

Should the administration, in consultation with the members of the permanent committee, choose to have one provider (a position we do not support, see section 3) then several other concerns arise.

Due to the lack of dining options in the McGill area, the students and staff of McGill represent a lucrative and reasonably captive market. If one company obtains a contract to provide all the food at McGill, they will more or less be in a monopoly position with respect to the campus. This would allow them to repeatedly raise prices over the term of their contract, without fear of significant competition. Alternatively, they would also be able to lower quality in a similar manner. Obviously, both of these are undesirable, making the need for strong and representative oversight even more crucial.

Any food provider on campus exists basically to do two things: generate revenue for the University, and provide a service. We strongly feel that it is the latter that is most crucial and that it must be responsive to the needs of the community. As such, the permanent committee should have input into general management issues, including: hours of operation, cleanliness, menu choices, and prices. We lay out some of the specific feedback we have received from students on these issues in the next section.

First, though, it is illustrative to turn to Concordia University for an example of where consultation

has been put into practice with much success. After over 25 years with one food provider, the Concordia community decided that its needs were not being met. The administration formed a committee comprised of students, faculty, nutritionists, health professionals, and staff that issued an RFP for a new provider. The committee then examined all of the proposals and a contract was concluded that was amenable to all parties. That committee was then transformed into a permanent one that advises the Food Service Director on issues as they arise. The general principle is that the provider should be responding on a continuing basis to the needs of the community. If students don't like a menu item then the provider is obliged to change it. If it does not, there are strict enforcement clauses in the contract that were insisted on by the committee in the tendering process. As a result, the students we talked to said that they were generally quite happy with the way food service is managed at Concordia. In addition, upon the signing of the contract the food service provider agreed to give \$30,000 to an emergency food program, which was met with high praise from students, faculty, and staff.

3.0 Food service specifics: quality, diversity, hours, etc.

3.1 Menu choices

This topic is not complicated; essentially students want good food and lots of choice. They want the choice of both hot and cold meals, different ethnic styles and tastes, a wide variety of snack foods, vegan and vegetarian options, and a good selection of beverages. Students enjoy the diversity of food currently available on campus; today they can buy a Tim Hortons bagel, tomorrow a Jamaican patty, and the day after, a piping hot serving of shepherd's pie. Students like that there are dozens of different kinds of tea, coffee, juice, and soft drinks across the campus and they can choose the one they want. **A distinction must be made between variety and choice: while it is easy for individual food locations to provide a variety of products, if every location offers the same selection, true freedom of choice does not exist.**

No matter how food service is configured on campus, the diversity of products available must be a priority. It is not acceptable to provide identical offerings in every cafeteria. Options must be available to accommodate the variety of eating habits and requirements of the community. For example, there must be vegan and vegetarian options at as many locations as possible and it is essential that all kosher or Hallal food be labelled properly. Also it is imperative for food providers to have a list of ingredients and nutritional information available, so community members with allergies or other health concerns can identify foods they can or cannot eat.

3.2 Hours and locations

Generally students seem happy with the location of food providers however hours of operation remain a problem. Students routinely stay on campus late working in the libraries or labs. The cafeteria in the basement of the Redpath Library closes too early, especially during the period leading up to finals when students are often working late. Also, nowhere on the east side of campus can you eat or buy coffee late at night, something that should be remedied especially during the period leading up to finals.

3.3 *Atmosphere & cleanliness*

It is important to students that they not be bombarded by marketing materials when they go to buy food on campus. Generally this does not seem to be a big problem but the committee must keep this in mind when reviewing plans for expansion. We are aware of situations at other universities where large marketing campaigns from food companies have become eye-sores at campus food locations (e.g. giant coke and pizza pizza posters or displays).

3.4 *Management policies*

It is fully reasonable that any food service provider will make a profit from the contract they sign with McGill. In return, we feel they have a particular social responsibility to contribute and improve the quality of life at McGill.

During our consultations students told us that having an environmentally friendly campus is important to them. In keeping with McGill's commitment to environmental sustainability, any food service provider operating on campus must make every effort to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials. To that end, food providers must install multi-use recycling bins at all locations, must use materials that are recycled and are recyclable as much as possible, and must reuse wherever possible. Environmental standards should be enshrined in contracts between McGill and any food service provider.

Students also expressed concern about helping their peers who are in financial difficulty. This means that any food provider must make an effort to hire students. This is especially important for international students, who are not permitted to work off campus.

Another possibility would be for the food provider to give money or supplies to the food bank called Food for Thought operated out of the Yellow Door facilities. In addition to helping needy students, this would give the food provider excellent publicity, which would help to convince the McGill community of its good intentions.

Not surprisingly, students care about social justice. During our consultations we were told repeatedly that any food provider must respect the rights of its employees and must not actively discourage attempts to unionize.

3.5 *Other amenities*

There should be microwaves at all food service locations so that students can heat up their own food and eat it. As well, students should not be required to purchase food in order to occupy space in a food service area, for example if they want to eat their own food or study.

4.0 Concerns about exclusivity/monopoly

4.1 *Effect of monopoly on university community*

We are firm in our opposition to the creation of a campus-wide monopoly on food services. This means that we do not want one company to operate all food services on campus. As noted above, we believe that a monopoly will increase prices and/or decrease quality in the long run. There will also be damaging effects on the sense of community here at McGill.

Unlike their larger counter-parts, the small food providers on campus know their students and staff by name, and contribute to a community experience at McGill. They have an emotional attachment to the university and share the ups and downs of the campus life with the rest of us. This attitude contrasts sharply with that held by certain large purveyors, and with other campuses whose food providers are marked by high staff-turnover and an indifference to the students that they serve. For example, Pino and Mateo, a family run business in the Law Faculty, routinely provides personalized service to various faculty events.

It may seem inconsequential but this sense of community is an intangible that cannot be quantified, nor can the cost of losing it be so easily counted in dollars and cents.

4.2 *Effect of exclusivity on student fundraising*

Perhaps most worrisome to us is the prospect of an exclusivity clause in any contract with a food provider that might suppress student fund-raising initiatives. By exclusivity clause, we mean any guarantee by the University that a particular provider will be the sole source of food in any building, group of buildings, or the entire campus. The selling of muffins, samosas, or other small food items by students is not a trivial activity. These activities provide an essential source of funds for a range of extra-curricular student initiatives.

Part of what makes the McGill experience special for many students is the large number of extra-curricular activities that give students a chance to diversify their interests or concretely apply what they learn in the classroom or the laboratory. For example, a student who studies political science has the opportunity to apply their knowledge through model United Nations or a campus political party. Likewise, the engineering student can use what they have learned to help people in developing countries through participation in a project sponsored by Engineers Without Borders. The fact is that to feel a part of a large university like McGill a connection to a smaller community is necessary; extra-curriculars, no matter what form they take, provide this connection. They are where students complement their academic studies by learning valuable life skills. If academics provide the intellectual facet of a student's life at McGill then extra-curriculars provide its heart and soul.

It is a common misconception that these organizations receive the majority of their funding from student fees paid to the SSMU. In fact, this funding accounts for only 10% of the total money spent by undergraduate clubs and services. The rest is acquired through various activities, selling food being the most widely employed strategy. One need only walk down the hallways of the Leacock or McConnell Engineering buildings to see student groups selling samosas, pizza, and other food

items to the student, professor, or administrator who is rushing between classes and meetings.

A prime example of this phenomenon is Engineers Without Borders (EWB), a group that raises money through weekly pizza and doughnut sales. They send McGill students overseas to apply the knowledge learned in class to help the less fortunate. In 2003 alone EWB McGill raised over \$6,000 through sales of pizza and doughnuts in the hallways of the McConnell Engineering Building. This money went to send two of its volunteers to the Philippines to work on the Scala Project. The Scala Project, which recently won an award from the United Nations, organizes EWB volunteers to establish information technology infrastructure and train Filipinos in its use.

Recently though, all groups (including EWB) using the McConnell kiosk were indirectly informed by Ancillary Services that they could no longer sell dairy or meat products without a fridge or a stove because it would be in violation of Quebec health regulations. This was the first such mention of a violation of health code. After students did some research on these laws it was found that there is a time frame in which food can be sold without refrigeration or a stove. What EWB and other groups were doing was not actually violating the health code, as it permits for hot food to be left out for over an hour. Ancillary Services, themselves misinformed (although it is difficult to rule out ulterior motives), did not make students aware of this particular detail surrounding the Quebec health code, instead preferring to simply inform student groups (indirectly) that they were breaking the rules. We also question why, when this health policy has not changed since 1987, student groups have only recently been informed that they are violating the Quebec health code.

We found the rationale for this sudden enforcement in a recent letter to students; Vice-Principal Yalovsky stated that fundraising "will continue to be allowed. However, it must be understood that these activities cannot be quasi-permanent in nature or location, nor offer product in direct competition with offerings in the food facility in the building." In some ways we appreciate this assurance, but we are not exactly sure what constitutes "quasi-permanent." Do different student groups selling samosas each day constitute something that is "quasi-permanent"? Are weekly pizza sales offering direct competition to the food facility in the building? What about the convenience stores operated by various student associations on campus? These issues need to be clarified and student groups' unrestricted ability to fundraise, in a manner in accordance with a proper application of the health code, must be enshrined in any contract.

Surely a large multinational corporation is able to compete with 3 students selling samosas out of a box. If they cannot, we fail to see any of the advantages that such a monopoly provides in terms of price and or quality.

Feedback from our consultations indicates that students eagerly support fundraising initiatives because they know the money goes to a good cause: the strengthening of the extra-curricular community at McGill. They are less willing to pay an outsider for food when they have no clear idea of whether their money will benefit the McGill community in the long run.

McGill alumnae are often asked to talk about memories from their undergraduate years. Many make vague and passing mentions about a class or two, but their key memory is usually from the newspaper, the debating club, or whatever extra-curricular they participated in. The point of this is not to wax nostalgic, but to realize that extra-curricular activities are an important part of what

builds alumnae allegiance to McGill. To speak in financial terms it is this allegiance that brings in donations from alumnae in the future.

For us, the importance of extra-curriculars to McGill students is indisputable. The fact is that these activities flourish largely on account of food sales. This must not be hindered in any way shape or form by plans to generate more revenue from food service on campus. The real cost would be to limit the resource base of a set of activities that represents a significant portion of a McGill education and an even more significant contribution to the feeling of community at McGill.

4.3 Food and beverages for campus events and activities

Besides fundraising, the other issue that relates to exclusivity is the procurement of food and beverages for campus events. We believe it is critical that students and other members of the McGill community be permitted to obtain food and beverages for their events from whatever source they like or to provide it themselves. This is important because it also allows for them to practice cost efficiency and balance an already limited budget accordingly.

We have heard from students across Canada and the United States telling of the unfortunate situations that can result from exclusive arrangements with food service companies. At Memorial University in Newfoundland students from the Faculty of Music were unable to host their own reception following a concert because they couldn't afford to cater from the university's official food service provider and weren't allowed to bring in their own food.

Another issue is the availability of religious or cultural items that are needed for special events on campus. Access to these is crucial for McGill to maintain its international reputation.

4.4 Student-run cafeterias

Student clubs and services are not the only groups that use food to generate revenue. Faculty associations, such as the Engineering Undergraduate Society (EUS), the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS), the Science Undergraduate Society (SUS), and the Music Undergraduate Students' Association (MUSA) all used to receive income from cafeterias. When EUS managed the cafeteria in the McConnell Engineering building, it was renowned across campus for the quality food they served and their low prices. Any time a new menu item was to be introduced, or prices were to change, it had to get approval from the EUS which held surveys to evaluate prices and assess whether changes were necessary. In this way the community had direct control over what was sold at the cafeteria and, in general, everyone was satisfied with the situation. EUS also benefited from cafeteria revenue which went directly into subsidising services for students, funding the engineering intramural sports teams, the Plumbers Ball, Infosys (the engineering computer network), various publications such as the Plumbers Faucet and Output, educational conferences and departmental trips. EUS's total expenditures in 2002-03 were \$162,000. The profits from the cafeteria accounted for one third of the operating budget revenue (\$54,400 in 2002-03). In the fall of 2003 the cafeteria in the McConnell Engineering Building was turned over to Ancillary Services and the EUS was given a subsidy of \$45,000 per year for the next 5 years to compensate for this.

The AUS and SUS both lost control of their cafeterias (in the Arts building and Stewart Biology building, respectively) in 2001. According to Jennifer Sloan, the AUS President at the time both student associations “were denied their student fees until they signed [the latest letter of agreement].” Also, “the student associations were led to believe we would have representation on a Cafeteria Advisory Committee.” Only now, three years later, this promise has still not been fulfilled.

Both student associations were given compensation, much like EUS in 2003. Their most recent memoranda of agreement indicate explicitly and in writing that it was the University’s intention to continue making the compensation payments even after the expiry of those memoranda. Despite that, the latest draft of the new SUS memorandum of agreement does not contain a provision for the renewal of this funding and the administration has indicated that it intends to discontinue it. In addition, many of the faculty associations on campus run convenience stores that are also a key source of revenue.

Without the revenue from their food operations, the important work that these student societies carry out would suffer. No reorganization of food services at McGill can be completed without directly addressing this issue. The right for student associations to operate independent food services on campus must be protected.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This submission has outlined some of the key concerns of undergraduate students at McGill with regard to food services on campus. We have identified a number of important topics that we believe must be taken into consideration in planning the future of food services at McGill.

Our concerns can be summarized in the following 4 recommendations:

- 1. That a permanent university committee on food services be established through regular university governance procedures and be comprised of students and staff (both academic and non-academic). This committee should be charged with reviewing the terms of contracts, helping to set prices, locations, and hours of operation, and have input with respect to menu choice, environmental, and staffing issues.**
- 2. That in any contract signed by McGill, all types of student fundraising, including food sales of all types and the operation of student-run convenience stores be explicitly protected.**
- 3. Any reorganization of food services must respect the right of students and staff to choose where they obtain food for any on-campus events and activities.**
- 4. That any food provider selected be required to exhibit corporate social responsibility on campus by making significant contributions (financial and otherwise) towards worthwhile university projects.**

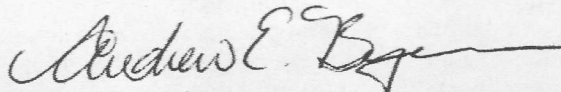
We do not object to the concept of private businesses providing food services on the McGill campus. In fact we imagine that there are several companies that would welcome the opportunity to sell food to such a lucrative market. In delivering this market to food providers, we must remember that these companies should be providing a service and such services must preserve and enhance the sense of community that is so vital to life at McGill.

We thank you for your time and attention. We all know this decision will be difficult, however, we hope all recommendations will be thoroughly discussed and all avenues considered before a final recommendation is made. We look forward to the opportunity for further dialogue at our presentation to the committee.

Respectfully submitted,
The Coalition for Action on Food Services

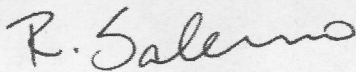
On behalf of:

Students' Society of McGill University



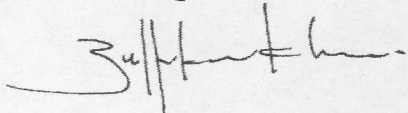
Andrew E. Bryan
Vice-President (University Affairs) & Acting
President

Arts Undergraduate Society



Rob Salerno
President

Science Undergraduate Society



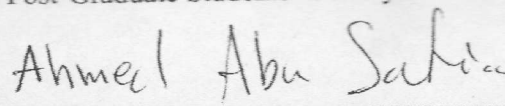
Zulfikar A. Khan
CEO

Law Students' Association



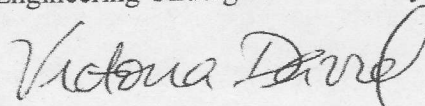
Andres Drew
Vice-President (External)

Post-Graduate Students' Society



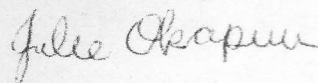
Ahmed Abu Safia
Vice-President (External)

Engineering Undergraduate Society



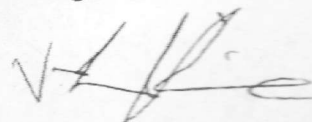
Victoria David
President

Medicine Students' Society



Julie Okapuu
Representative to SSMU

Management Undergraduate Society



Josh Lebovic
Representative to SSMU

Appendix A:

Permanent committee on food services

Proposed Structure

Preamble

Food service at McGill University is an important non-academic service that affects all members of the McGill community. The University aims to provide a wide range of quality, nutritious, affordable food at a variety of locations on campus. Recognizing the individual nature of food preferences and requirements and the importance of food service on campus, the University will take into consideration the opinions, concerns, and suggestions of various stakeholders in the University community.

Terms of Reference

The Committee on Food Services will:

1. Oversee the management of food services at McGill by providing direction to the Food Services Administrator on issues related to the operation of all food service locations, including but not limited to:
 - a. variety and pricing of products available
 - b. hours of operation of locations
 - c. cleanliness, customer service and other related issues
 - d. hiring and labour policies of vendors, including policies on the hiring of students
 - e. environmental policies of vendors
2. Oversee the planning and provisioning of new food service locations and vendors at McGill, and oversee renovations and changes to food service locations, by providing direction to the Food Services Administrator on issues such as:
 - a. location, size, and style of new services or changes to services
 - b. requirements to be included in Requests for Proposal (RFP) or other similar tender documents
 - c. contract terms with vendors
 - d. policies of vendors on environmental issues, labour standards, etc.
3. Act as a forum for students, staff (academic and non-academic), and administrators to bring forward complaints, suggestions or other comments related to food services. The committee will address these comments by working with the Food Services Administrator and directly with food service providers.
4. Organize an open forum for members of the McGill community to provide input on food services, at least once per academic year.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a relevant background to the presence of Chartwells (a subsidiary of Compass Group PLC) on the McGill University campus. Items reviewed include: an overview of Cara, Compass Group PLC, and food service operations in various North American universities and colleges. Also included is a review of the food service offerings and situations on the downtown McGill University campus as at January 2003.

This document culminates in a resolution for change to build an infrastructure of consultation for food and beverage services on the McGill campus.

CARA

Cara is a publicly held Canadian company based in London, Ontario with several divisions encompassing its restaurant brands, airport food services and education food services (Beaver Foods). It was founded in 1883 in order to operate newspaper stands in railway stations in Western Canada. The company then expanded into railway car food services. Cara started to operate catering and dining services in hotels, amusement parks and steamships following a 1902 headquarter move to Toronto. With the boom of the airplane age, Cara was one of the first operators inside airport terminals (Montreal's Dorval Airport, 1941). Recently from the late 1970s through the 1990s, Cara has made several advances by purchasing well-established Canadian chain brands such as Swiss Chalet, Winco Steak N' Burger, Harvey's, Kelsey's and Second Cup.¹

In November 2000, Compass Group acquired Beaver Foods. At the time the acquisition represented over 1,000 accounts in high schools, colleges and universities as well as business and industry and annual revenues of \$200 million (US dollars). The thrust of the agreement was that Compass Group was to continue use of Cara's wholly owned subsidiary, Summit Food Service Distributor, to supply Beaver's operations and in turn Compass would introduce the Harvey's and Swiss Chalet brands in contract foodservice locations throughout Canada.²



Compass Group PLC, headquartered out of England, is the world's largest foodservice company. Currently operating in over 90 countries its annual revenues are on the order of 170 Billion pounds per year. The Group has over 360,000 employees worldwide.³

Compass Group PLC's role as a dominating force in the industry is actually rather recent. Its origins are similar to that of Cara, starting small in 1941 as a provider of canteen food for British munitions workers. The firm itself was not relatively dominant in England until the late 1960s with the introduction of various divisions for roadside, educational and hospitality food services. Compass Group has undergone various restructurings and mergers in precursor companies. One of the forms was GrandMet, which had one of the largest management buy-outs in UK history in 1984 only to be posted as a public company in 1988. In 1992 a new strategic focus outlined the strategy seen in the following ten years: 'The Right Direction' a wholly client-driven strategy – using sector focused subsidiaries and the innovative use of foodservice branding, at the same time introducing a program of expansion through organic growth and acquisition. From that point onwards, the company underwent various mergers, demergers and consolidations at enormously fast pace. The most important consolidations included Eurest (associated with Nestle) and Select Service Partner (formerly part of SAS Airlines) with the result of becoming the largest foodservice company to date.³ Compass Group entered North America in 1994 with the purchase of Canteen Vending and went on to differentiate into the restaurant business in Canada with Restauronics, which was later renamed Compass Group Canada. With the acquisition of Beaver Foods it tripled its revenue volume to become the largest food service operator in Canada.⁴

The group currently has local, national and international brands in the sectors of Business and Industry, Fine Dining, Specialized Services (correctional institutional and armed forces dining), Education, Health Care, Retail, Travel and Leisure, Vending and Sports and Events.⁵

Compass Group PLC's Mission

To deliver great service and results through our people - to achieve leadership in our chosen foodservice markets through the constant pursuit, in association with our clients and partners, of superior levels of service, efficiency and quality.⁶

Compass Group PLC's Vision

To be the highest quality and most profitable owner and operator of the world's top foodservice & hospitality businesses.⁶

The group currently states that its five key areas of strategic focus are: Customer and Client Satisfaction, Market Leadership, Operational Excellence, Preferred Employer and Financial Performance.⁶

Compass Group PLC is a member of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. It highlighted areas of effort for attaining their goals stated on their corporate website include: waste reduction, water conservation, the use of environmentally friendly cleaning products, wide-ranging re-cycling and energy saving, and the efficient use of machinery and transport.⁷ Compass "in the community" also runs various programs in countries aimed at youth employment, employee training and volunteering.⁸

Compass Group was selected as the foodservice caterer for two recent major North American events – the 2002 Winter Olympic Games and the Summer 2002 World Youth Day in Toronto.⁹



Compass Group became a major force in the North American educational foodservice sector in 1997, with the introduction of the Chartwells brand from the UK for both the Higher Education (post-secondary institutions) and the K-12 markets.¹⁰ The North American market share of Chartwells soared with the 2000 acquisition of Beaver Foods (Canada).¹¹

Chartwells feels it is unique in the North American foodservice industry and is poised to become a leader. Their technique is described as:

Chartwells can tailor a profitable partnership to dramatically enhance the dining service operation. In fact, Chartwells can completely transform your educational dining operation into a vibrant, profitable enterprise. The Chartwells recipe is simple: responsive branding; interactive programs; quality food; unparalleled service; and friendly, caring people. Consistently delivering quality foodservices, Chartwells makes a profound impact at colleges and universities throughout the world. With Chartwells customer-driven approach, campus dining thrives as an integral part of the higher-learning experience.¹⁰

Compass Group North America promotes the following program to educate its customers about food choices. "The Nurture Our World grows out of Compass Group's sincere interest in acting as a conscientious and concerned corporate citizen. Through Nurture Our World, we intend to make significant, positive contributions to the lives of our employees, customers, and the communities we serve. To nurture is to nourish, to foster, to care for, to improve. Nurturing entails what we eat, how we live, how we interact, and the quality of our surroundings. To Nurture Our World requires that we understand the vital interdependence of all these relationships. We Nurture Our World when we take care of ourselves, our families, our communities, and our environment."¹²

Branding of foodservice locations has become a large part of why Chartwells has become so dominant so quickly in North America. "Rather than emphasizing one brand over another, Chartwells listens each client's unique requirements to develop a plan that makes sense for the individual campus. Local culture, student demand, off-campus alternatives, and other factors influence the portfolio of brands that work for a given campus." Chartwells promotes its in-house brands of Upper Crust, Café Ritazza and Not Just Donuts as well as its partnerships with strong American fast-food brands such

as: Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Burger King, Starbucks, Sbarro, TCBY and Subway. In Canada Chartwells aligns itself with popular Canadian food service brands such as Tim Hortons and Pizza Pizza. Chartwells even offers a convenience store concept on some university campuses called Stop Gap.¹⁰

Chartwells also highlights and is very proud of its active involvement with university and college communities in creating dining atmospheres. An excerpt from their corporate website:

Chartwells provides colleges and universities with responsive foodservice that meets the precise requirements of each campus. By actively seeking input from campus communities worldwide, Chartwells appreciates the unique needs of students, faculty, and staff. Such interaction enables Chartwells to deliver what customers want: exceptional value-including today's popular brands-at a reasonable price. Chartwells also understands the operating requirements of higher learning institutions.¹⁰

In August 2000, Chartwells rolled out a vegetarian menu selection featuring over 200 items. It represented a partnership with *Vegetarian Times* magazine and their nutritionists. Chartwells developed the program in response to trends that indicated that although approximately 5 –10% of university and college students are vegetarian, 15% of students select vegetarian options when they are available.^{14,15}

Chartwells in the United States

Chartwells has grown steadily in the United States by winning bids for universities and colleges as they arise instead of taking over or merging with local or national groups as was done in Canada with Beaver Foods. The competition for university food service contracts is rather fierce because nearly all universities have residences with contracted full meal plan food services and there are very few non-contracted sites left. Due to the degree of competition usually winning contractors include extra services such as debit card systems and nutritional planning / on site nutritionist for residence students in their bids in order to be awarded contracts. The industry has local and national players but is dominated by major international players in the education food service market include Sodexo Marriott, Aramark and now Chartwells.

The below cases are post-secondary institutions who currently have/ previously had Chartwells as an on-campus food service provider. This list is not fully representative of all the Chartwells clients.

Louisiana State University

December 1997 – Louisiana Board of Ethics advised on the propriety of foodservice workers at LSU receiving incentive awards in the form of cash or merchandise provided by Chartwells, to the LSU foundation, which would establish award criteria.¹⁶

April 2000 – Expired food found at Mini Mart, a Chartwells run campus convenience grocery store. Article also noted that students felt the prices were quite high.¹⁷

State University of New York – Stoney Brook

In spring 1998 a committee composed of student staff parity underwent the RFP process after continued dissatisfaction with Aramark, especially with shortened hours, removal of differentiated service from certain sites and price increases. The committee set the maximum set at \$1100/student/semester declining balance meal plan; however without consulting the committee the University allowed the winning bidder, Chartwells (whom all the students on the committee voted against) raise the declining balance arbitrarily to \$1200 for a 2-3% increase in food Chartwells was projecting.¹⁸ Currently, Chartwells, with sponsorship from Vaad HaKashrut & Hillel Foundation, has sought open consultation on the Kosher Cafe/M meal Plan with Hillel and Jewish students of SUNY Stoney Brook.¹⁹

Jacksonville University

In Fall 2001 the university actively sought input from all members of the university community, including students, by making all the presentations by Aramark, Chartwells and Sodexo-Mariott open to all.²⁰

Florida Atlantic University

Chartwells is listed in the 2000-2001 "Roll of Honor" for donors in the \$100,000 to \$999,999 US dollar range.²¹

Ithaca College

Students held a sit-in in 2001 refusing both the current food service operator Sodexo-Mariott and any possible change of food service provider to Chartwells.²²

Saint Louis University

In a recent December 2002 article in the student newspaper it was stated by university administration that the Chartwells pay scale is comparable to other food service companies. However, when speaking with two anonymous employees they felt Chartwells was "cheap" by running out of food at the end of residence meal periods, had problems communicating with their staff and did not have any allowance for pay on sick days. The Chartwells employees are not unionized. All employees spoken to did show a great satisfaction with their job due to their interaction with the students.²³

University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

In October 2000 the student union voted to lobby for an oversight committee on food services on campus due to dissatisfaction with Chartwells – mostly in the sectors of quality and the lack of reception management and serving employees have shown to individual students. As one student put it "many people were dissatisfied with the food service last year from Chartwells because of the long lines, lukewarm food and lack of variety. In addition to those problems, Chartwells would run out of the "good" food and they were not open all day."²⁴ In February 2001 the university and Chartwells mutually agreed to abandon their contract because mounting losses by Chartwells would have resulted in having to increase residence food prices by \$200 per semester. However, when the switch was made to rival Sodexo-Mariott the following fall many students on

campus felt that the situation was worse while they were paying increased prices and actually considered lobbying the administration to get Chartwells back.²⁵

University of Houston

The announcement of a 4.26 million investment in foodservice equipment was made by Chartwells for University of Houston just after it was made public that they were the winning bidders the fall 1998 request for proposal process.²⁶ However, in Spring 2000 hours of operation for nearly all sites on campus were severely cut back²⁷ and in spring 2001 many amendments to the contract were made²⁸ before both parties finally agreed to abandon the arrangement in Fall 2001. Although the abandonment was mutual, the reasons cited were that Chartwells was and would continue to mount increasing debt to sustain the same level of service for the university cafeteria system.²⁹

Southwestern Texas State (SWT)

During the Fall 1997 request for proposals process Chartwells (who was the current food service provider at the time) set up a website for students to voice their opinion on the current services and suggestions for change directly for the purpose of integrating it into Chartwells' proposal.³⁰ The main dining hall of the university was closed for several months in 1998 for \$3 million in renovations paid for by Chartwells.³¹

Chartwells in Canada

Chartwells first entered Canada under the brand name Restauronics. The early history of Restauronics was mostly in B.C. and western Canada. There are several unsettling labor issues associated with Restauronics, including a strike by workers at Langara College in Vancouver³², workers at Canadian Airlines having to take a 20% cut in pay³³ and several employees who sued Restauronics over severance pay³⁴. Many more allegations of poor transitions between prior contract holders and Restauronics have also surfaced but the above cases are well documented. In August 2000, Compass Group PLC acquired Beaver Foods, who at the time had US \$200 million in revenues and over 1000 secondary, post-secondary, business, industry and remote site accounts in Canada. The purchase of Beaver tripled Compass's operations in Canada.³⁵

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), one of Canada's strongest unions, notes on its issues that Compass Group is a large concern for the labor community because Chartwells has no known history of recognizing labor groups, save one case in New York where Chartwells, upon receiving a contract for a university, recognized a union representing workers who formerly worked for Sodexo-Mariott. "We will find ourselves in bargaining with this group increasing as their Beaver contracts come due. We will also be competing with them as they lobby aggressively to privatize food services in our public institutions."³⁵

The below cases are post-secondary institutions in Canada currently (unless mentioned otherwise) with Chartwells Canada and Beaver Foods/CARA.

Carleton University

7-year contract with Beaver Foods (subdivision of CARA) announced in November 1997. \$60,000 donation made by CARA directly to the University; the University announces it will be used as matching funds to support grant projects currently supported by the Canada Foundation for Innovation.³⁶ Currently there are nine sites across campus operated by Chartwells including Coney Island Hot Dogs, Tim Horton's, Pizza Pizza, Harvey's, Mr. Sub, Arrriba, Market Grille and one residence. Vending machines across campus are operated by Chartwells and accept "Student Card Cash". Incentive program in place to encourage students to place amounts greater than \$400 on their card per semester.³⁷

Carleton University also features the "Garden Spot", a vegan food collective started in January 2002. It formed in resistance to the exclusivity granted by CU to Chartwells and operates daily in university space and is supported by a student levy (referendum in Spring 2002).³⁸

The President of the Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA) openly stated in July 2002 that Chartwells has over-saturated Carleton to the point that they are competing with themselves and non-for-profit student run businesses. His solutions/demands:

1. Review the operation and management of the food service in light of the severely adverse comments that have been made about the quality, price, diversity and service.
2. Adhere to the non-competition act when thinking of selling alcohol in the newly purchased "Chez Chartwells"
3. Take responsibility and don't force Rooster's to break their liquor license by shutting down in the summer and early in the academic year when Rooster's is required to serve "light meals" during hours of operation.
4. Be accountable to the Food Services Committee where students have input and not treat it as lip service or window dressing.
5. Be prepared to take appropriate action to remedy the situation.³⁹

In August 2002, seven employees from Chartwells outlets went on a 20-minute walkout for solidarity with a worker who had been treated poorly (pay a week late and moved around different campus outlets without notification) by Chartwells. Four were immediately suspended and actually had to be escorted out by Carleton security.⁴⁰ Chartwells fired the so-called "ringleader" while the three other suspended workers were reinstated. Chartwells contested an IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) union drive and paperwork filing by the so-called "ringleader" prior to the walkout incident.⁴¹

Simon Fraser

Beaver Foods returned to SFU in the summer of 1998, much to the dismay of student newspapers. Students who has previously been at other "Beaver Universities" (Capilano College and Trent) noted the poor vegetarian menus and "old" selection of

food. Beaver Foods had been at SFU up until 1992. The contract was set for 10 years.
42

Many members of the Board of Governors, including a faculty member, protested the continued tradition contracting out of food services (arguing instead for the creation of in-house services). They cited the lack of time to review the contract and that SFU would become even more homogenized in its food services. However, many members of the BOG were satisfied that many independent eateries, such as the "Renaissance Café" would continue to operate (but would not be able to expand).⁴³

An article appeared in the student newspaper alleging the links between Nestle coffee and Chartwells (only Nestle coffee is used at Chartwells) because Nestle financially supports (donates) to Chartwells. The article also noted that local Chartwells administrators were not friendly to the idea of selling Fair Trade coffee in their locations but all independent food service outlets do, either as an initiative or due to student pressure.⁴⁴

Memorial University

In January 1998 Beaver Foods made a \$125,000 donation to the Memorial University Opportunity Fund and the University openly stated that the funds were earmarked for improvements to the University Centre and Athletic facilities.⁴⁵

Waterloo

Bursary of \$500 per term is provided by Beaver Foods to residence students at Renison and St. Jerome's Colleges (of University of Waterloo) who demonstrate financial need.
46, 47

Nova Scotia Agricultural College

\$4000 in scholarships per year to "outstanding students with high academic performance, who, for one reason or another, have not qualified for significant awards. Preference will be given to students who live in residence."⁴⁸

Concordia University

Concordia held a long-term contracts with Sodexho-Mariott (totaling over 25 years) until June 2002, when, after a formal request for proposals process, selected Chartwells to operate food service outlets on the Concordia Loyola and Sir George Williams campuses. The operation of food services is under Vice-Rector Services Michael Di Grappa.^{49, 50} Although it is unknown whether the Concordia Student Union (CSU, the body representing undergraduate student interest on campus) had any official stance on food service providers other than anti-Sodexho, The People's Potato, a non-profit vegan food collective, was very favorable to Sodexho keeping their contract with Concordia

because the food service employees would most likely be faced with job uncertainty with a changeover in management.⁵¹

At the Loyola Campus residence students are now very frustrated that a meal plan attached to residence accommodations is now mandatory (being previously an option on residence accommodations) starting in Winter 2003 (as reported in the Link). There are also allegations that Chartwells representatives "hid" the information from residence students until it was already too late for them to protest.⁵²

The Concordia Student Union (CSU) has held many demonstrations and awareness events concerning the 2nd floor space "the Mezzanine", a space that was approximately 40' x 40' and was used for student groups and events, especially the People's Potato, to hold bake sales, cultural events, fundraisers, speakers and the Concordia Blood Drive. The CSU also has a stake in a coffee outlet and a bar on the Sir George Williams campus and their future, although not explicitly stated, could remain uncertain in the future.⁵³

The Concordian reported the unionized employees with Sodexo reported difficulty in their transition to Chartwells. Some reported not being offered equivalent pay (pay cuts) and some employees were not hired back or interviewed for placement by Chartwells *whatsoever*. Note: Chartwells is a non-unionized company.⁵¹

A large article in the CFS-Q (whose constituency is made up of a majority of Concordia students) publication *Ruckus* in fall 2002 highlighted Compass Group PLC's current contracts, such as its armed forces, prison, and oil drilling site (Chevron and Texaco) contracts. Although not extensively researched the article did highlight some of the similarities between Compass Group PLC and Sodexo-Mariott, who was the cause of many student uprisings at Concordia (and other universities across North America) prior to the change in contract.⁵⁴

Langara College

Chartwells bursaries available to students with "economic need."

Sir Francis Fleming College

Chartwells makes available two bursaries of \$1,100 each year, one to each of the college's campuses. Second and third year students are eligible and they are evaluated upon their financial need, scholarship and community involvement and initiative.⁵⁵

The downtown campus of McGill University has various sites of food operation as of Winter 2003:

Building	Brand/Operator	McGill Group
University Centre	Veggirama/ Groupe MTY	SSMU
	TK Ming/Groupe MTY	SSMU
	Franx Supreme/ Groupe MTY	SSMU
	Caferama/Groupe MTY	SSMU
	Pita Pit	SSMU-Gert's
	Midnight Kitchen	
Redpath Library	Tim Hortons (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
	Pizza Pizza (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
	Delicious (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
	Outtakes (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
	Hot Dog Stand (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
Bronfman	Cafeteria (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
	Hot Dog Stand (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
MACES (Peel St)	MACES Cafeteria	MACES
Thompson House	PGSS pub/café	PGSS
MacDonald Harrington	Architecture Café	ArchUS
McConnell Engineering	Good Bytes (Aramark)	EUS
Wong Engineering	Cafeteria (Aramark)	EUS
Burnside Hall	Snack Stand (Residence)	Residences
McIntyre Medical	Snack Stand (Residence)	Residences
Chancellor Day Hall	Pino & Matteo	Ancillary Services
Arts Building	Veggirama (Groupe MTY)	Ancillary Services
Strathcona Music	Veggierama (Groupe MTY)	Ancillary Services
Education Building	Veggierama (Groupe MTY)	Ancillary Services
Leacock	AUS SNAX (Sadie's/ Pino & Matteo)	AUS
Royal Victoria Hall	Residence Cafeteria	Residences
Douglas Hall	Residence Cafeteria	Residences
Bishop Mountain Hall	Residence Cafeteria	Residences
Strathcona Dentistry	Snack stand (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services
Stuart Biology Building	Pino & Matteo	Ancillary Services
Currie Gymnasium	Pino & Matteo	McGill Athletics
Wilson Hall	Snack stand (Chartwells)	Ancillary Services

History of Food Services at McGill

There are nearly 23,000 undergraduate and continuing education and over 6,000 graduate students at McGill. The university community is also comprised of at least another 5,000 academic staff and over 2,500 administrative and support staff. ⁵⁶

Food Services at McGill were started in the 1930's with a small snack bar operated and owned by students in the Strathcona Music Building. Full consolidation of food services under one provider occurred in the 1985 with Beaver Foods/CVC with the negotiating of the contract done on behalf of faculty associations by the SSMU. For SSMU's services faculty associations allowed SSMU to retain a small portion of the royalties they received. Since then the SSMU has engaged Scott's Foods, Marriott, Miraval and most recently MTY Group for cafeteria/food court management. Every round of proposals and tenders is carefully reviewed by a student-run committee under the SSMU ("Food and Beverage Committee") as well as all faculty associations involved. This committee also acts as a sounding board for student complaint and praise, the developer for concepts for future agreements and tenders as well as the governor of relationships with faculty associations with cafeteria rights. ⁵⁷

Group MTY is a Montreal-based franchisor (based in St-Laurent) who manages and operates food court style restaurant concepts and outlets most concentrated in Québec but as well across Canada. Their services are found under the following brand names: Veggierama, Sukiyaki, TK Ming, Franx Supreme, Chick 'n Chick, Panini, Caférama, la Crémère, Croissant Plus and aux Vieux Duluth Express. ⁵⁸

Ancillary Services

Starting in 2000, it became apparent that various locations across campus were to be consolidated under university administration control. Ancillary Services, formerly called "Business Operations", has "the mandate to reorganize the University's commercial and service operations to maximize benefits and to better serve the McGill Community." The groups administered under Ancillary Services include: Alcohol Permits Administration, Bookstore, Computer Store, Courier Services, Course Pack Services, Customs and Traffic, Faculty Club, Food Services, Mail Services, Parking Services, Photocopier Services, Purchasing Services, Room Bookings and Special Events, and Travel Services. ⁵⁹ Ancillary services 2001-2002 net revenue to the university operating budget was \$24,921,000. ⁵⁶

A timeline of formerly controlled student food and beverage spaces reclaimed by the University administration is as follows (the list is not exhaustive):

March 2000 – SSMU Referendum on Cold Beverage Agreement (CBA) Failed

2000 – Redpath Library (SSMU) and Bronfman Cafeteria (MUS)

The MUS was offered a payout and took the university administration offer without much debate.

Redpath Library cafeteria, under the domain of SSMU, was forcibly removed from the SSMU. Administrators offered bottom-of-the-barrell prices for food service equipment and no severance package. Pepsi Cold Beverage machines were forcibly removed. Kevin McPhee, Vice President Operations, offered in exchange for the cafeteria an advisory committee that would represent student concern to university administration on food and beverage issues and it was rejected.⁶⁰

2001 – Arts Building (AUS and SUS), Strathcona Music (MUSA), Education (EdUS), outdoor hotdog card (SSMU).

The saga of AUS, SUS and MUSA losing cafeteria rights was tragic. According to AUS president Jennifer Sloan "The AUS (Arts Undergraduate Society) and SUS (Science Undergraduate Society) were denied their student fees until they signed [the latest Letter of Agreement]." Christa Lowry of the Music Undergraduate Student Association stated, "At the time of signing the Letters of Agreement, the student associations were led to believe we would have representation on a Cafeteria Advisory Committee."⁶¹

Claude Smith, the proprietor of Hot-Dog Mobile, was reportedly told by an employee of Chartwells Quebec (not McGill Ancillary Services) that his services were no longer welcome after fall 2001. He stated that the Chartwells representative told him that Chartwells had the opinion that hot-dog carts were unhygienic and ruining the look of the McGill campus.^{62, 63} Hot-Dog Mobile was offered in March 2002 a contract with the SSMU to operate outside the William Shatner University Centre. In summer 2002, Chartwells, contrary to their previous statement, constructed two "hot-dog tents" at the Redpath Library and Bronfman Building. The fate of Hot-Dog Mobile is uncertain because a public consultation took place in December 2002 by the Borough of Ville-Marie (city of Montréal) to formally remove all hot-dog carts on public areas (like the sidewalk outside the Shatner Building).

2002 – Chancellor Day Hall (LSA), signed 10-year Coca-Cola Contract, Cold Beverages in Rutherford Physics (MPSA).

The LSA Cafeteria, operated by Pino & Matteo, and its revenues were signed over to McGill after a summer 2002 through a letter of agreement renegotiation. LSA in return received a guarantee of severance of \$75,000 over three years. LSA is an accredited student government.⁶⁴

MPSA derived nearly 90% of its revenues from Cold Beverage commissions prior to being sent a letter from McGill Administrators informing them as of Fall 2003 they would no longer have the rights to the commissions.⁶⁵

2003 – *intention*: McConnell and Wong Engineering Buildings (EUS)

The EUS cafeterias, operated by Aramark, bring in over \$50,000 per year in revenue to the Engineering Undergraduate Society. The Wong Engineering Site, built in 1996 to accommodate a student cafeteria, would be directly adjacent to a proposed

"Thomlinson Square" cafeteria in the basement of the new Trottier Information Technology Building. EUS, during the last Cold Beverage negotiation for their cafeteria sites, agreed chose Coca-Cola (over Pepsi) in hope of satisfying McGill administration concern on EUS management. To date, meetings between McGill administrators and the EUS have not come to any agreement. One hope is that because the EUS is an accredited campus government that tactics such as those employed with SUS and AUS cannot be repeated.^{66, 67}

One recurring theme about these negotiations is that they are timed specifically to occur over the summer when faculty executives are either not in Montreal and /or are too green at their new jobs to fully understand the issue and control negotiations. Furthermore, the approval of these agreements occurs without any student consultation with their respective councils.

Spring 2003- McGill signs Cold Beverage Agreement (CBA) with Coca-Cola for non-exclusivity in cafeteria sites and exclusivity in vending. No revenues are to be returned to student associations or Athletics, rather they are to be used to make improvements to Upper Residence Cafeterias.⁶⁸

The above list of sites claimed by McGill Ancillary Services is certainly not static: McGill is undergoing a vast expansion plan over the next five years to allow for more lecture and research space. An additional "mega-cafeteria" site is also planned for the planned Bellini Life Sciences Building, acting as the central food court for the Stuart Biology – Law – Medicine corner of campus. Currently it has been heard that MTY Group has been negotiating with Chartwells for Chartwells to manage the remaining Veggierama locations across campus.⁶⁹

Architecture Café

One of the most unique spaces on the McGill campus is the Architecture Café. In 1993, undergraduate students in Architecture opened a café-pub in the basement of the MacDonald-Harrington Architecture Building. It is a co-op between three parties: employees, ArchUS and a grad committee. It was designed (and continues to run) as a sustainable and alternative space promoting and serving whole, healthy and fairly traded foods for both architecture and non-architecture students.⁷⁰

Vegetarian, Kosher and Vegan Services

There are no on-campus Kosher options, either in residence or in food outlets. The residence food accommodations are as follows: "The vegetarian menus are designed to meet the need of lacto-ovo vegetarians; vegans may find it difficult to satisfy their dietary requirements. As well, there are no provisions for special religious or other diets or food allergies."⁷¹

Montreal Hillel and Chabad House Montreal both offer kosher food services for lunch.⁷²

Residence Food Services

Meal plans are mandatory at McGill and are not of the typical "all you can eat" found at most North American university campuses. McGill does not break down residence costs into food and room costs but recent increases in residence prices have been due to 1) cost of residence food 2) mortgage on Solin Hall 3) aggressive purchasing of downtown area houses and apartment buildings for MORE residences.⁷³

There are three sites of residence catering at McGill – Bishop Mountain Hall, RVC and Douglas. Douglas is the smallest of the three and the food services as a result are rather limited and the hours are much smaller. However, any student may patronize whichever location he/she prefers. RVC is used as a lunchtime cafeteria, serving the majority of BMH and Douglas residents during the lunch hours.⁷¹

Residence Foods Services also has a large catering business, which helps subsidize residence operations for residence students. This catering business used to be one of the more preferred caterers on the McGill campus and for 2003/2004 is budget to bring in \$21,000 in profit. Residence Food Services also operated 2 cafeteria sites: McIntyre Medical and Burnside Snack Bar. They bring in \$24,870 and \$11,034 (2003/2004 budget) to residences, respectively.⁷³

Residence Food Services should be commended for its efforts to make their operations more sustainable. This includes the hiring of an Environment Coordinator for McGill Residences that, among many projects, worked with Food Services in order to bring a composting project to Douglas Hall. Now all compostable kitchen waste is composted at Douglas itself using large outdoor composting bins. A team of student volunteers both from the McGill School of the Environment and Douglas Hall residents tend the bins.⁷⁴

It has been rumored that Residence Food Services are to be integrated into Chartwells McGill starting in Fall 2003.⁶⁶ In examining the recent budget for McGill Residences Ancillary Enterprises the profitability of the McIntyre Snack Bar has gone from \$39,089/year (2001/2002 actual) to \$13,834 (2002/2003 budget) to a current budget for 2003/2004 of a mere \$11,034 per year.⁷³

The Future of Chartwells at McGill

Clearly, the signing of a food service agreement with Chartwells Canada was done without student consultation.

Chartwells, being a private corporation, acts in its shareholders best interest. Although several programs are in place (Nurture Our World, Compass in the Community) to ensure some social and ethical responsibility the modus operandi of the majority of corporations is to maximize shareholder wealth. Compass has clearly shown this through its history of aggressive market share grabbing through consolidations, mergers

and buy-outs. However, this trend of corporate consolidation has been seen throughout the food service market, including Sodexho-Mariott and Aramark.

Many are concerned that Chartwells has allied itself with market sectors such as remote (oil drilling), correctional and armed forces food services. However, in the global scheme supporting (through patronage) of the average food outlet on a university will not add to the extension of food services into these sectors. These sectors are supplied because they are quite profitable; in fact, on the whole they are more profitable than educational or hospitality food services and patronage of university food services does not subsidize the exploitation of environmental resources or prison workers.

Chartwells has also proven itself to be innovative and to be actively concerned about its customers' opinions. Though the effectiveness of the "Talk to US!" websites and displays⁷⁵ may be questioned, the gesture of caring is certainly present. Chartwells seems in the past open to working with student groups to find appropriate dietary solutions (for example, SUNY StoneyBrook) and public consultations (Jackson University).

However, complaints such as menu selection, prices and environmental/fair trade concerns are such wide concerns that they are unable to be dealt with by individual managers. Concerns such as employee behavior and cleanliness appear to be dealt with in an efficient manner by on-site management.

Chartwells does provide food concepts accepted by many students; however, vast amount of work can be done to alter their offerings in terms of vegan, healthy and culturally sensitive foods, especially if residence students are to be faced with an "un-opt-outable" meal plan.

The relationship between a university and any corporation on a university campus is bound by contract. A contract defines what the corporation may and may not do, and what is expected in terms of payment and service. Therefore, the perceived initiative / benevolence of a corporation on a campus may be a direct result of the pre-determined constraints, financial or otherwise, under which they are placed. The host institution puts these constraints into force; therefore, it is the institution itself, not the contracted companies, which create or break a feeling of cooperation between a campus community and the corporation.

Granted, many McGill students, staff and faculty have very valid concerns about Chartwells/ Compass Group PLC as an ethical corporation. Their alliances with Nestlé, operations in remote camps, military and correctional sites and their labor practices are very valid as complaints. The resolution of these issues should not be to mandate an abrupt change ultimatums but to work with local management to find local solutions whenever possible. There are constraints that comes along with the branded food concepts desired by many students that cannot be changed and an evaluation of the ability to have input into the system should be examined at the Request for Proposal process. Furthermore, one should look to the root of why these services were contracted out in the first place and how the process of consultation and governance

work. Often time, services are contracted out for financial reasons, one that relevant student groups and staff and faculty unions do not feel very strongly about.

Ultimately, if a university food system is to work with all members of the community, there should be no exclusivity. Styles of service, food and location should vary to provide the cultural and social hubs of campus that cafeterias offer. Consultations should take place with all relevant campus groups, whether or not they receive revenues, at all levels of food service contracts. These groups should have rights to veto the wording of request for proposals, evaluate food tenders, attend open forums, and create committees that garner opinion from their constituencies. This framework should not be as a result of a mandate put forth by campus groups but a product of a university atmosphere that wishes to build consensus and satisfaction of everyone.

The McGill community does not have the luxury of entering contracted food services for the first time. Campus groups are being denied rights that are inherent in a cooperative situation. As it stands at this moment there is a real lack of understanding on both sides each other's situation and the standing misconceptions have only bred more confusion.

1. The Students' Society of McGill University believes that faculty associations and student societies have an inherent right over all other stakeholders to spaces within the University used for food and beverage sales and condemns the past, present and future appropriation of said spaces to University Administration.

Furthermore, the SSMU demands that University Administration reconsider the recent consolidation of food and beverage services under Ancillary Services and to expropriate the spaces and negotiating rights to faculty associations and the SSMU through addendums to the outstanding relevant Letters of Agreement.

2. The SSMU demands immediate representation on a binding oversight committee:

- a. The membership would include representation from: building managers, staff, faculty and faculty associations of relevant food and beverage sites, the PGSS, the SSMU, Ancillary Services and two student members-at-large.

- b. The committee would be charged with reviewing all contracts and negotiations, appropriating commission and rental revenue to appropriate stakeholders, holding public consultations with members of the McGill community, and to act as a conduit of relations between contract service partners and the McGill community.

3. The SSMU reaffirms its commitment to faculty associations and students by offering its consulting services in any development of food and beverage sites managed by student groups.

4. The SSMU shall make all its meetings and documents with food and beverage contracts (notwithstanding confidentiality) open to all students and urges the University Administration to do the same.

5. The SSMU recognizes that not all members of the McGill community can be served best under exclusively contracted food and beverage services and will promote and support independent and unique food and beverage services whenever possible and urges the University Administration to do the same.

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Report of the Dining-at-McGill Advisory Committee

Submitted to Morty Yalovsky, Vice Principal (Administration and Finance)
January 31, 2005

Committee membership

Alex Bourque
François Carrier
Alan Charade
Martha Crago
Daniel Friedlaender
Martin Grant (Chair)
Jim Nicell
Jason Paseli
Jonathan Rousham
Linda Jacobs Starkey

Summary of recommendations

Food services at McGill are a patchwork quilt of different providers, different qualities of offerings, and different philosophies of management. We make four recommendations, which are discussed in the text.

1. To best provide food services, the University must develop a set of performance indicators and monitor those services with a broad and representative committee of stakeholders.
2. The University must develop a detailed and rational multi-year plan for food services on campus. Such a plan requires optimal integration with existing and to be developed facilities and a structured and inclusive decision-making process.
3. Contracts should be non-exclusive so as to allow, at least, fund-raising activities, as well as catered and special event functions from any source.
4. Food services in Residences should involve a distinct review process addressing the role of food and dining related to all aspects of Residences.

1. Review of mandate and actions taken

The Advisory Committee was formed on October 25th, 2004, its mandate terminating with the delivery of this report. The terms of reference are given as an appendix. The mandate is:

The Advisory Committee will advise the Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance) on how best to provide for food services on the downtown campus. It will consider: choice of locations, quality of food, variety of food offerings, convenience of operating hours, uniformity of safety standards, consistent pricing within the marketplace, environmental practices, and pleasant surroundings. Within this context, it will also advise the Vice-Principal on the optimal number of service providers.

The Committee solicited written feedback from the community, with a deadline of November 19th, 2004. Over 100 submissions were received, some formal, some very informal. Of the individuals and groups who provided feedback, we have included the formal submissions as appendices. The informal feedback is not included, and is instead discussed discursively in Section 3.

Based on these submissions, the Committee determined it would be worthwhile to meet with several of these individuals and groups to follow up on their submissions. Presentations with informal questions were held with representatives of the Post-Graduate Student Society (PGSS), the Coalition for Food Services (CAFS), the Chaplaincy (Student Services), Residences, the Law Student's Society, and McGill Food Services (Ancillary Services). The VP (Administration and Finance) also met with the Committee.

In addition, the Committee sought advice from knowledgeable colleagues and conducted "road-trips" to various cafeterias.

2. Historical background and present situation

Some background is given in the enclosed briefs, which we now summarize. Cafeteria services on downtown campus have been and are run by a variety of different groups, summarized below. The main recent change has been the University decision to terminate memoranda of understanding allowing certain student organizations to take on food service operations. Grants were provided to these organizations to offset the subsequent loss of revenue. Existing contracts with subcontracted providers (in particular, with the MTY group, and with Pino and Matteo) were taken over by Ancillary Services. The motivation was to improve

"... quality food and service in first-rate on-campus facilities that foster a sense of community and enhance overall learning through the free exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas by patrons from different disciplines in welcoming surroundings". The University partnered with Chartwells to do this in the short term, with the intention of food services being of course subject to public tender in a timely manner. The Committee recognizes the valuable hard work of Ancillary Services in restructuring the contractual agreements and monitoring the numerous providers.

Now the downtown campus has a patchwork quilt of providers. There are self-operated providers: Thomson House (operated by PGSS), the Faculty Club (operated with unionized McGill staff by the Faculty Club Council), the Continuing Education Social Centre (operated by the McGill Association of Continuing Education Students), cafeterias in McIntyre Medicine, Burnside Hall, and the Residences (with the exception of New Residence Hall) (operated with unionized McGill staff by Residence Administration), and the Architecture Café (operated by Architecture students). There are subcontracted operations in the following locations: the Student Union Building (operated by the MTY group under the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU)); Leacock (operated by Snax Depanneur under the Arts Undergraduate Society); the Bookstore, Bronfman, Redpath Library, Wong, Genome, Trottier, Wilson Hall, Lyman Duff, McConnell, and New Residence Hall (operated by Chartwells under Ancillary Services); Arts, Education, and Music (operated by the MTY group under Ancillary Services); and Law, Stewart Biology, and Athletics (operated by Pino and Matteo's under Ancillary Services). There is also an ice cream store and depanneur run by the Engineering Undergraduate Society, a café and the midnight kitchen run by SSMU, and of course many "bake-sale" activities on campus.

Ancillary services has proposed to rationalize these services and move towards a primary food provider (the brief argues for a single provider, but the subsequent presentation to the Committee more precisely calls for a primary provider). This provoked a strong reaction on campus: in particular, a petition opposing the single provider model for food services was signed by over 7,000 people at McGill.

3. Discussion of feedback received

Broad feedback was solicited and received from the community.

The informal feedback the Committee received addressed various issues, typically championing or opposing present or proposed services. In that sense, it was not different in kind from the formal feedback received from organizations such as, for example, CAFS or the Inter-Residence University Council. However, there is

a common element in the informal feedback not evident in the briefs from groups. Beyond the natural impulse to vent a bit, the informal feedback was used to provide constructive feedback, and to suggest new ideas and improvements. Like all new ideas, some were good, some less good. They included the following: expand common spaces so that people can work near food services, expand summer terrace food outlets, introduce ethnic food choices, bring back the hot-dog guy, introduce sit-down dining for non-academic staff, provide services for those with religious requirements. Indeed, more new ideas were presented in these informal submissions than in all the formal briefs. The Committee was struck by the community's determination to be involved and to be heard. In particular, the Committee saw unrealized potential that could be harnessed to improve our food services.

Formal briefs are included as appendices. Common was the insistence on high standards for McGill with regard to safety, sanitation, nutrition, quality, for reasonable pricing, access and locations, extended hours of operation, diversity of choice (interpreted in terms of providers and food choices by most groups, and as only food choices by Ancillary Services), sound environmental practices, and good communication with the community.

Differences emerged on the issue of the number of food providers. The arguments were that, on the one hand, the present diversity in providers properly reflected the diversity on campus. Indeed, many submissions argued for the status quo, pointing out what is worthy of preservation at McGill. On the other hand, it was argued that economies of scale, and the track record of Ancillary Services to date in the re-organization of food services, favored a model where there was a primary food provider.

Views were expressed on the deleterious effect of exclusive food contracts on campus life and activities. In fact, no representation on behalf of exclusivity was made by any group. In particular, arguments were advanced for the continuation of student fund-raising activities, including bake sales.

Representations on behalf of Residences contrasted the two business and operational models being used at present. New Residence Hall provides a new model for running food services in the Residences. Food services are contracted out to Chartwells. Flexibility exists for eating times and there are a variety of food offerings. However, food services are not well integrated into student life. At the other Residences, food services are run by Residence Administration, and are tightly integrated with all aspects of student and resident life. Menus and eating times are however more restrictive. Coordination of food services across all Residences was agreed to be impractical by Residence Administration and by

Ancillary Services. Nevertheless, concern was expressed by Residence Administration that necessary refurbishment was being delayed, as no final decision on coordination, or not, of food services among all Residences had been made.

Finally, it should be noted that there was a strong element of mistrustfulness in much of the community's reaction towards the University's proposed plans for food services. Concerns with the University's commitment to various elements were expressed: to the grants to student organizations described above, to the reinvestment of revenues from food services into those operations, to fair treatment of bake-sale-like activities and the parsing of the words permanent and quasi-permanent, to student employment, and to facilitate insurance for student organizations providing food services. For our part, the Committee was convinced that the University presently looks at all these issues in a fair-minded way, and will continue to do so. The Committee welcomes this commitment on behalf of the University. Our recommendation below, the establishment of a broad and representative committee, will facilitate this process.

Other issues are more completely discussed in the included briefs themselves.

4. Recommendations

In our view, the University's approach to food services must be informed by our core values and attributes: that is, our academic mission of education and scholarly research at an international University with a collegial and diverse community. Student and staff involvement in our decisions follow from our academic mission. As a research-intensive University, rigorous arguments form the basis for decisions. These principles lead to our recommendations.

1. To best provide food services, the University must develop a set of performance indicators and monitor those services with a broad and representative committee of stakeholders.

Whether or not the University or some group in the University contracts out for services, it cannot contract out responsibility. There is no economy of scale in responsibility, which will always rest with the University. As such, we need University-wide standards for food services, including sanitation, safety, nutrition, and environmental practices. A useful guide to sanitation is provided by, for example, the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association booklet which the Committee studied, and which is referred to below. In addition, we need to have University-wide coordination of feedback on services, whether concerning quality, value, atmosphere, location, or hours of operation. This is best accomplished by

a broad and representative committee. One model is proposed in the enclosed CAFS submission. The continuous assessment and monitoring of food services, in essence the bench-marking of food services, will give the community a voice in the improvement of those services.

2. The University must develop a detailed and rational multi-year plan for food services on campus. Such a plan requires optimal integration with existing and to be developed facilities and a structured and inclusive decision-making process.

The two main views promulgated were, in essence, support for the status quo, or a move to a primary provider model. The first view underestimates the spirit of innovation and creativity on campus, evident in the informal feedback the Committee received. The arguments for a primary provider rested largely on only the anecdotal evidence of the success of the University partnership with Chartwells for the refurbishment of several cafeterias; the Committee was not provided with evidence of community consultation, or a business plan. There is ample energy on campus for innovation in food services, and room for consideration of plans going beyond the comparison of the status quo to a single or primary provider.

This is a well-trod path in higher education because it is a polarizing issue. One example of an approach is provided by the Council of Higher Education Management Associations (CHEMA) booklet on structured decision-making process, referred to below. The major components of the process are simple common sense: such a process must identify and involve key participants, develop an analytic framework assessing the current situation, and provide meaningful comparisons in terms of several detailed scenarios. After an executive decision of the preferred alternative, there must be a process of continuous assessment and improvement. Such a decision-making process may be tedious, but it is the way to obtain reasoned input from the community, and to obtain the broadest advice to inform an executive decision. It is the way to build consensus through the decision-making process — at the least, the consensus that a fair and inclusive process has been undertaken. An eventual decision may be popular or unpopular, but it will then be recognized as being based on the fair and rigorous consideration of all alternatives.

3. Contracts should be non-exclusive so as to allow, at least, fund-raising activities, as well as catered and special event functions from any source.

No arguments were advanced for exclusivity in food service contracts, including those favoring a single or primary provider. In any case, the Committee does not see exclusivity well representing our diverse University culture or the diverse culture of our city. Non-exclusive contracts would, in particular, permit student fund-raising through bake sales, permit choice in catering services, choice in special events food services, and so forth, without necessarily involving, e.g., a primary provider.

4. Food services in Residences should involve a distinct review process addressing the role of food and dining related to all aspects of Residences.

With the exception of New Residence Hall, food services in the Residences are tightly integrated with all other aspects of residence life, and so food services cannot be dealt with in isolation. The different business and operational models of New Residence Hall from the other Residences preclude rationalization of, for example, food services without major changes to one or the other model. No argument for that rationalization was in fact made by Ancillary Services, Residence Administration, or student groups. Having said that, for completeness, we note that the Committee found no compelling advantage to either method of providing food service, and in fact found something to recommend in the complementary approaches of the two models. As such, we saw no reason to further delay the refurbishment of facilities under Residence Administration.

5. Selected documentation reviewed by the Committee

The Committee found it useful to review approaches to standards for sanitation, and for decision making in this context. Two publications are listed below and referred to above.

- *Food safety code of practice for Canada's foodservice industry*. Published by the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association (Toronto, 2003).
- *Contract management or self-operation: a decision-making guide for higher education*. CHEMA, the Council of Higher Education Management Associations. Published by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers (Virginia, 1993).

6. Appendices

The terms of reference of the Committee, and the formal submissions received from various groups are enclosed as appendices.