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MATRICULATION AND HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING, 1921- 1933

**FILE 488**

**MATRICULATION &  
HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING**



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The Subject of Matriculation in the Arts  
Faculty Survey Report.

In 1921-22 all Faculties in the University were on the same footing. Junior Matriculation admitted to all Faculties at that time. The Medical College offered a preliminary year in the Arts and Sciences, but this has since been discontinued. The situation at the present time, however, has changed entirely. In 1923-24 the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry and Law made two years of preliminary study in the Faculty of Arts a pre-requisite for admission. In the same year the old continuous courses, usually called double courses, leading to the degree of B.A., M.D. and B.Sc., M.D., dating back as early as 1901, were completely reorganized. In 1929-30, however, all these preliminary and continuous courses were wholly discontinued. At the present time, therefore, three standard years in the Faculty of Arts and Science leading to the degree of B.A. or B. Sc., including the basic medical sciences, Biology, Chemistry and Physics, are required for admission into Medicine. The Medical College sparingly admits students after two years of preliminary study, but these cases are exceptional and need not be mentioned here. The requirements for admission into Dentistry are the same as for entrance into Medicine, except that students are more freely admitted into Dentistry after two years of study. The old rule of 1924-25, requiring two years of study in the B.A. course for admission to the study of Law, still remains, but practically all students intending to proceed into Law now complete the work for their B.A. degree, and no rigid rule is, therefore, any longer necessary on this point. All students intending to proceed into Applied Science, now called Engineering, require either Senior Matriculation or one year in the Faculty of Arts and Science, and about eighty students enter the first year each year at present with this purpose in mind. Preliminary courses of two years of work are also given in the Faculty of Arts and Science for students intending to proceed into Domestic Science and Agriculture at Macdonald College, but the number of students registered in this work is small. We may add, too, perhaps finally, that much of the work in the School of Commerce and all of the work in the Royal Victoria College for Women is done in the regular courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science, and all students in the School for Graduate Nurses and the School of Physical Education are privileged to attend classes as they may be advised by the authorities of their own School.



The result, therefore, is that the Faculty of Arts has during these years really undertaken a very heavy burden of work in the interests of the whole University. All students proceeding to the professional or technical faculties are now carefully trained and selected before proceeding to their professional studies and this obviously means a heavy weight of work for this Faculty and corresponding advantages to the University. The Committee need not emphasize the cardinal importance of this preliminary or propaedeutic work. It is an axiom in education that almost everything depends upon the student's preliminary training before he proceeds into the professions. It is obvious, indeed, that by the time the student has come through the high school and his years of preliminary work in the University, his habits and methods of study and work have become so fixed that he is not likely to change them in later years.

#### The Admission of Students

Until 1929 the admission of all students to the University was directed by the Matriculation Board, a body appointed by the University Corporation. Since, however, virtually all students now admitted to the University enter through the Faculty of Arts and Science, this Faculty during last year created an Admissions Committee of its own. This Committee now fixes all rules and requirements for admission to the Colleges. The conduct and supervision of all Matriculation Examinations still remain under the direction of the Matriculation Board.

The University holds a regular matriculation examination in June and September of each year for candidates coming from private schools and for all others who may wish to sit for these examinations. The results of the School Leaving Examinations for the Province of Quebec and all other certificates usually admitting to recognized universities in the other provinces of Canada are accepted as a basis for admission into the Faculty of Arts and Science. Last year, that is in the autumn of 1930, 71 students were admitted into the first year by Matriculation, 163 by School Leaving Certificates from the Province of Quebec and 65 by other certificates. The Faculty of Arts and



Science, however, does not accept for admission all students who held the usual certificates. For example, students who make uniformly low marks in all their subjects or who take their examinations piecemeal over a period covering more than a year are not now admitted. In March 1927 Faculty adopted the policy of selecting its own students for admission, or perhaps we should say of refusing admittance to candidates whose claims or requirements were not satisfactory. It is impossible, however, to say exactly how many candidates are refused admission annually since many applications are made in the form of enquiries and it is impossible to estimate how many would apply if the doors were wide open as in former years. The number of students, however, offering the usual Matriculation Certificate who were not admitted last year was about 150 and this number is normal for the last four years. The practice of refusing admission to students who have failed in one matriculation subject, referred to previously in this report, and the practice of refusing admission to students whose qualifications are not satisfactory has undoubtedly raised the requirements for admission substantially.

The preparation of students for matriculation to the University is an obligation which rests upon the schools and the home and the University, therefore, can do very little to improve the quality of its matriculation candidates without the fullest sympathy and help of the schools of the Province. This subject, i.e., close co-operation between the schools of the Province and the University, is perhaps the most important subject which this Committee considered in its deliberation.

The proposal to form a Twelfth Grade in some of the high schools of the Province was welcomed by the members of the Committee. It need scarcely be pointed out, however, that nearly everything depends upon the students in the schools who are allowed to proceed into this higher grade of work. If the proposed Twelfth Grade is intended for lame or slow students it will not be of any advantage to this University, but if it provides adequate opportunities for the preparation of capital students who might enter the University by an honour matriculation examination it will be of the very greatest advantage in every way. In order, therefore, to meet this proposal, the Committee recommends that an Honour Matriculation Examination be instituted by the University, and that the present Senior Matriculation be discontinued.



## The Subject of Matriculation in the Engineering Faculty Report

The entrance standard was changed in the session 1928-29 to that of Senior Matriculation, or Junior Matriculation followed by the First Year in Arts. This change provides us with students averaging one year older at entrance to our Faculty, which by reason of some greater maturity should be an advantage to the technical student. It also affords an opportunity for broadening their education in important subjects not bearing directly on many phases of their technical work, such as English and languages. Our experience does not convince us that the course in English, either in Senior Matriculation or First Year Arts, is well adapted to the needs of students entering our Faculty. In view of the importance of the ability of an engineer to express his arguments and conclusions in a terse and logical manner, this is a serious defect. We believe that it should be possible to alter the requirements without lowering the standards in English, and we urge that proper consideration be given to this question.

We are likewise not convinced that the entrance requirements in mathematics are equal to those of Junior Matriculation (including advanced mathematics), which applied formerly. Although we recommend that advanced mathematics be offered in Junior Matriculation into Arts by those students who intend to enter this Faculty, it is evident that this course is not followed in all cases, and less ground is now covered in some branches of mathematics, such as trigonometry, than was covered under the former plan by those entering our Faculty direct from the schools, with Junior Matriculation.

It is to be feared that the interest of engineering students in cultural subjects is not great at the outset of their studies, but gains strength as they come to perceive more clearly the relations of such studies to technology, industry and professional life. It is possible that in an effort to reach the substance, we have caught only the shadow. The careers of students entering our Faculty under different qualifications are being followed closely, and while the new system has not been in effect long enough to enable us to judge fully of its effects, there appears to be reason to believe that the possible gain due to cultural studies has been offset to some



extent by less satisfactory preparation in the vital subject of mathematics.

The whole question of matriculation requirements is under review by the Matriculation Board, and their recommendations must be studied carefully in the light of experience of our changed requirements of entrance. The suggestion has been made in informal discussion, and is referred to in the report on the Department of Mining, that some of the cramping influences which appear in our third year courses might be relieved if the present so-called "pre-year" courses were controlled by this Faculty. It is probably true that, given proper teaching personnel, a course could be devised better adapted to the needs of the engineering student than the present First Year in Arts. Such a course, while distinctly cultural in some of its aspects, might well contain work in engineering drawing, which would relieve some of the pressure in the work of the later years. It is recognized, however, that the schools could not give an equivalent training, such as they can now provide as the equivalent of First Year Arts, and the change would virtually amount to the adoption of a five-year college course. The general weight of opinion is not yet favourable to such a change. The Faculty must, however, continue to study all factors which affect the preliminary training of our students, as this determines largely the extent to which knowledge, judgment and character can be developed by the professional training afforded in an engineering school.



The Subject of Matriculation in the  
Survey Report of the Graduate Faculty.

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"No system can rise higher than the men who operate it", and a student cannot be educated more highly than his capacity and previous training permit.

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Education does not consist of separate links, but of a whole chain, or rather of a string of pearls of different sizes and values. The Graduate Faculty can only do its utmost with the best material available - the output of the undergraduate faculties. These in turn are dependent on the High Schools, which derive their students from Elementary Schools. The Graduate Faculty is interested in, and dependent upon, all the other Faculties and Schools.

From the point of view of developing to the utmost the best intellectual talent in the Dominion, it must be admitted that the standard of the Schools is, at the end of a schoolboy's career, a clear two years behindhand, as compared with Western Europe, in such important primary subjects as Mathematics and Classics; nor is it possible at a later stage to make good these deficiencies. The idea that a Graduate School can make good shortcomings in lower schools must be strenuously resisted.

Since, then, all the links in the Chain of Education must be well forged, it is important that McGill, when critical, should not be open to criticism. There must needs be relatively strong and weak departments in every university. There is no need, however, for obvious shortcomings which greatly discourage the enthusiasm of good students. This matter concerns the welfare of the Graduate Faculty, but it is understood that it will be considered by other committees more directly concerned. It would be a mistake to overlook the matter, and a worse mistake ~~the~~ to emphasize



McGill would be well advised to give special training to young men and women who are destined to teach scientific subjects in the High Schools. These teachers must both know their subjects and be able to teach them. Any assistance given by McGill to the High Schools would be repaid a thousandfold in a harvest of young matriculants with enthusiasm and sound foundational training.

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It is interesting to note that there is a general desire on the part of those who are conducting graduate work to raise "in some way the scientific standard of the students who enter McGill". The immediate solution seems to be:

- (1) A twelfth grade in the High Schools
  - (2) Honour matriculation and four years at McGill in the Science Branch in the Faculty of Arts and Science
  - (3) A most careful planning of that four years' course, which cannot be done in a day: it must be evolved!
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Report from Dr. Meakins representing the Departments of Pharmacology, Biochemistry, Anatomy and Bacteriology Survey Group:

"They were all unanimous in the necessity of improving or raising in some way the scientific standard of the students who enter McGill. This, however, is a subject which the central Committee has already had under serious consideration, but I thought it of value to inform you that this was independently reiterated by the Head of practically every Experimental Department in the Medical Faculty.

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the magnitude of the trouble when so much sound and admirable work pervades so large a fraction of the community.

Returning, however, to the standard of the Schools governed by the Junior Matriculation examination, it may be admitted that this is a high enough standard for the normal or subnormal individual, yet it has been strenuously contended for the last thirty years that this standard is too low for the abler students, who, therefore, come to the University too young (sometimes at 16) or continue at school marking time and wearied with repetition.

Either the High Schools must move forward, or McGill, like other universities, requires a school under university control. There is so much wasted effort under present conditions.

There is a movement on foot, worthy of support, to establish a twelfth grade in the High Schools. Successful candidates of this grade might enter the Faculty of Engineering without a year in Arts. Those who entered Arts might proceed at once to an Honours Course, taking four years of undergraduate training.

The SENIOR MATRICULATION MIGHT WELL BE ABOLISHED, AND THERE WOULD BE TWO, AND ONLY TWO, WAYS OF ENTERING MCGILL - (1) ORDINARY; (2) HONOURS MATRICULATION.

At present the Graduate Faculty at McGill is drawing students from all parts of the Dominion, from the U.S. and elsewhere. Many McGill men after a year or two in the Graduate Faculty go to Europe or the U.S. to complete their training. Free trade in students is of the utmost advantage, both to the universities and to students alike. Students have great wisdom in discovering the real leaders in modern thought and progress, and they attach themselves promptly to the best men.



Extract from Report of Dr. Walter:-

"While the individual members are well qualified to do graduate work, The Department as a whole is handicapped in a variety of ways. German, although of obvious utility and, in many cases, necessity to university students, is not taught in our High Schools, and is moreover excluded from the list of subjects prescribed by the Education Council for the Teachers' Certificates. As long as such very unwise regulations are in force we cannot expect a supply of Honour undergraduates, let alone Graduate students, from our own Province. ....In the few cases in which students from outside applied for admission to the Graduate School their application had to be turned down."



The Absence of Properly Qualified Students

The Honour students whom the Department might secure for graduate study are not likely to be of the quality requisite for genuinely advanced work. Two tendencies seem noticeable in regard to the undergraduate student. One is the imperfect cultivation of the student in the various branches of liberal knowledge, the other is his devoting himself rather exclusively to a single department, due, of course, to departmental policies which require the appropriation of all the student's courses. These are only tendencies, and they may have been imperfectly observed. But one thing seems clear that the Honours in a department are not really Honours in quality. To have taken Honours means for the most part that the student has simply concentrated upon one field - it does not signify that the student has felt any responsibility for relating the knowledge acquired in his courses to each other and to the whole subject. This responsibility will not be felt, nor action upon it ensue, until there is required for Honours degrees a comprehensive examination to test the whole of the last two years' accomplishment in the subject. A set of such general examinations would produce Honours students capable of going on to the Master's degree and beyond, either at McGill or at any other first-class university. In this connection it is important to recognise the value of competitive Fellowships and Scholarships. These act as inducements to promising students to think of a career of advanced study, and they raise up the ambition. If they were not limited to McGill or even to nationals they would surely provide a nucleus of first-rate students for the Graduate Faculty.

High School Teaching. The majority of students taking advanced botany in most universities do so with a view to science teaching in schools. Out of this body of students a few take honours and specialize for academic posts. Up to now this inducement has been lacking at McGill University since no botany is taught in the high schools of the Province of Quebec. It seems possible that this will be



rectified in the near future with advantage to the department.

#### The Requirements of the Department of Physics.

As has already been pointed out, the Macdonald Physics Laboratory was designed for about 250 students. With the large increase in number of students and consequent increase in staff, together with the development of a graduate school, the building is greatly overcrowded.

N.B. A good many of these very elementary students should have had this work at school. Indeed it was done not long ago in Quebec schools. C.W.S.

#### Prematriculation training.

This department believes that the standard of prematriculation training in the Province of Quebec as far as physics is concerned should be raised to include elementary electricity, magnetism and light. More extensive mathematical training is also desired in the case of all students intending to specialize in science at the University. More drill in Arithmetic and Algebra should be given in the schools. Memory methods are too prevalent.

#### Matriculation Standard.

This department considers that an honours matriculation should be instituted and that in time it should replace the senior matriculation for all students intending to take honours. The honour matriculants would take four full years. The standard of the ordinary matriculation should also be raised but not until the schools are in a position to meet a further demand of this kind. Attention is called to the fact that time can be gained in the lower school rather than in the high school.

#### Honours in First Year.

In physics it is essential that advanced classes in mathematics and physics should be attended by all students intending to take the honour course. Exemption of the student from one subject in order that more mathematics may be done by prospective physics honour students is recommended.



From the Report of the Faculty of Agriculture

It is regrettable that in the schools, particularly throughout Quebec, comparatively few boys obtain the necessary preparation for college work. School consolidation and the present indication of greater interest in education give some hope for improvement, but it is believed that if a number of scholarships could be arranged, not only would they prove a stimulus but also an instrument by means of which some of the brightest boys available would be attracted to Macdonald College. There is good raw material in the country side; it needs developing, and the best of it should be selected for the kind of work Macdonald is in a position to do.

The objective for Macdonald College must be the highest standard attainable. The standard attainable will depend upon the quality of students, their preparation for entrance, the curriculum, the teaching, and the influences of college life. Under the present University system, the standing of the great majority of students is determined very largely, if not entirely, by examinations. That examinations alone do not constitute a true measurement of either student attainment or student worth becomes increasingly clear. A high standard in marking will add to the value of the degree, but it will not necessarily indicate, much less insure, capacity for service in any chosen field. In other words, examinations may reveal a student's knowledge and his ability to express it, but they are not a complete criterion of what may be called his general fitness to enter the profession to which the University Certificate admits him. In many branches of agricultural service, graduation in agriculture is specified as a requirement, the possession of a degree being regarded as some guarantee of the candidate's qualifications for the position. It would seem, therefore, that, since examinations are only a partial measurement of qualifications, serious consideration should be given to ways and means of supplementing them in determining the eligibility of a student for promotion and ultimately for a degree, if the most satisfactory standard is to be maintained.



Subject of Matriculation in the Faculty of Medicine Report.

Matriculation Requirements: The matriculation requirements have become more and more exacting with the years. Up to the year 1918, these were approximately on a par with the entrance requirements for the first year of the Faculty of Arts, but not equivalent to entrance into the second year. Following upon matriculation, a five years' medical course was demanded, but the first of these years dealt in reality with premedical studies.

In 1919 the medical course was increased to six years, and the pre-medical requirements somewhat stiffened.

In 1922 pre-medical work of a special kind was demanded for one year in the college of arts, the medical course remaining at six years, with the first year devoted to advanced pre-medical work.

In 1924 conditions were changed to the status in which, to all intents and purposes, they exist at present. A minimum of two years' pre-medical work in a Faculty of Arts (including a knowledge of Physics, Chemistry and Biology) or its equivalent, was demanded, followed by five years of a purely medical course. Although this rule still obtains the competition among the number of applicants seeking admission is so great that the standards have in a sense been still further raised, and few students are now received into the Medical School without a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Of the remainder, few have had less than three years of study in a college of arts. This policy was adopted in order to conform not only to the needs of medical education, but also to the requirements of some provincial and state boards.

The McGill Medical Faculty is not in any sense a provincial school. Its scope and functions are national, nay more, its international character is obvious from the very large proportion of students who come to its halls from outside of the country, more especially from the United States.

It is worthy of note that with the increasing number of medical schools in the various provinces of Canada, and their ever greater efficiency, the students



resident in these other provinces will naturally select their own provincial medical schools for the preliminary education, especially in view of the lessened cost and greater convenience of remaining at home. And so the student clientele at McGill is changing year by year. The numbers of students from other Canadian provinces are relatively diminished in comparison with those from Quebec and the United States.

Indeed, the increasing number of applications from the United States has very largely added to the proportion of foreign students in our School, even though preference is always given to the right kind of Canadian.

It is of capital importance to recognize the fact that it will each year become increasingly difficult for McGill to fill its ranks with Canadian students, unless the reputation of the School can offset the great additional expense incurred by students not only in coming very long distances, but in living in a large city like Montreal where the financial demands are greater than elsewhere in Canada.

In a sense the future of McGill as a power in Canadian medicine is to some degree threatened, for, if relatively few Canadian graduates of McGill permeate Canada, our influence will lessen practically and academically. From the medical political standpoint, too, fewer posts may be available for McGill men in other Canadian universities.

A medical faculty is an institution of training for both general practitioners and specialists. Its functions are, we believe, fourfold:-

First, to admit only such students as are qualified to undertake the study of medicine. The method of selection (referred to elsewhere) accomplishes this to a certain extent, but we naturally ask ourselves - "Do we attract enough of the right kind, and do we bring to our School as many Canadians as we have reason to expect?"

Our material facilities are well recognized in laboratories, in equipment and in clinical advantages. That we have, moreover, a number of outstanding



teachers among our personnel is admitted, and a well organized staff. The fact remains, nevertheless, that in the last decade our prestige and importance have not been sufficient to attract Canadians to fill our classes; and it should not be maintained that expense alone deters students, though in many instances it is a factor. If, however, they are aspiring, ambitious and determined, money will often be found by the parents, provided the opportunities and attractions at McGill are sufficiently great, and our Faculty bears the hallmark of supreme excellence.



All nominations for this office shall be sent in writing to the Secretary of the Protestant Committee and forwarded by him to the members of the Protestant Committee a reasonable time prior to the date fixed for the election.

There shall also be a joint board for school leaving and matriculation examinations and the membership of this board shall be as follows:-

- a. The Director of Protestant Education for the Province
  - b. The Professor of Education, McGill University
  - c. The Professor of Education, Bishop's University
  - d. The Dean of the School for Teachers, Macdonald College
- and five other members to be chosen at large by the Protestant Committee.

The five members to be chosen at large shall be selected from recognized authorities or teachers of the following subjects respectively:-

- 1. Greek and Latin
- 2. Moderns
- 3. Mathematics and Physics
- 4. Chemistry
- 5. Biology

and the ex officio members above mentioned shall be responsible for the duties of the board in relation to all other subjects.

It shall be the duty of this board to revise carefully the composition of all examination papers set by the examiners, and the examiners and members of the board should be guided as near as can be by the following rules:-

- a. The board should not substantially change the composition of any examination paper without consulting the examiner.
- b. All members of <sup>a</sup>the University staff on the panel of examiners have the privilege of consulting their University departments on the composition of the examination papers they prepare.
- c. The examiners should wherever possible consult a member or members of



the board on the composition of an examination paper before submitting it to the board for final approval.

d. When all examination papers are returned the board should meet and finally decide on all papers submitted for its revision.

It is impossible at present to fix any exact minimum examination requirement for admission into the joint Faculty of Arts, Science and Commerce in this University. About four hundred candidates are selected each year from five hundred to six hundred creditable applicants. It is not, too, I think, in the interests of the community that any exact minimum standard should be fixed for admission to the University. There is entirely too much aiming at minimum standards in our present system of education in this Province and elsewhere, and the percentage of students who enter the University with a bare pass mark in all subjects is far too large. Much better, therefore, that the schools should be left in some uncertainty as to whether the lame candidates are to be admitted to the University or not. /

We have always, however, in this University treated the school leaving certificate of the Province of Quebec with the utmost fairness and courtesy, and that for the obvious reason that in the past the students who come from this community make a higher average standing in their examinations after entering the University than those coming from elsewhere. We cannot afford, however, to be too severe on students entering by certificates from other provinces and other British communities and that for the wholesome reason that there is clearly room in Canada for at least one University of the premier class where students from all the provinces and elsewhere are encouraged to meet and mingle in their University associations. The danger that the Provinces of Canada may become divided into rigid educational watertight compartments is very real.

To adopt the second alternative, namely, complete separation, would surely amount to a miserable confession of failure to agree on matters of common interest



and of public interest, and the public, I am convinced, would promptly say so; to promote disagreement for that end would be dishonourable. Numerous further difficulties, moreover, would undoubtedly result from adopting this alternative, for example the following:-

a. To compel students admitted to the University to write two separate sets of examinations on the same subjects would be absurd and an obvious cause for public grievance.

b. If the high schools were required to segregate students writing the School Leaving examinations into one class and students intending to write the Matriculation examinations into another class, there would be every year a considerable number of successful students writing the School Leaving examinations who would be creditable candidates for admission to the University, and conversely there would undoubtedly be some students fail in the Matriculation examination who would therefore be disqualified for a School Leaving certificate.

c. If this alternative were adopted the University would be compelled to select all students admitted to write the Matriculation examinations.

d. Students holding creditable School Leaving certificates from this Province would be prejudiced in their applications for admission to other Universities on the ground that the School Leaving certificate of Quebec was not recognized for purposes of admission into McGill University.

Finally, in all matters affecting two joint bodies where differences arise from administrative or clerical causes, these differences should be composed in a friendly way by the method of compromise and averages. The whole system of administrating educational organisations, including even the marking of examination papers, is based upon the method of averages. Small matters of administrative or clerical details in such cases can never amount to a sufficient reason for complete disagreement.

November 21, 1931.



MCGILL UNIVERSITY  
MONTREAL

FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING AND MATRICULATION

There are some postulates which must be kept in mind in problems of this kind:-

1. There are only two possible solutions to problems of this kind, namely, friendly, effective joint-action or complete separation.

2. If two corporate bodies cannot agree to friendly effective joint-action in matters of common interest, the causes of discord are personal and not corporate.

3. Where joint-action is the rule, there is no room for either party to claim the right of final adjudication or decision on any matter of equal common interest.

4. Corporate bodies and their secretaries must keep their own counsel.

5. Where candidates are elected by any electoral method the results of an election are final and there is no room for fault finding or meddling thereafter. Any mistake in an election, if mistake there be, can only be remedied by a subsequent election.

The problem in this case is to elect a panel of examiners for all subjects common to school leaving and University matriculation. I suggest the following tentative plan:-

a. All elections to the office of examiner shall be made by the Protestant Committee of the Department of Public Instruction for the Province.

b. Nominations for this office may be made to the Protestant Committee by (1) the High School Leaving and Matriculation Board, hereinafter mentioned, (2) McGill University, (3) Bishop's University and (4) by any member of the Protestant Committee.



4. Nov 1933

Since the Certificates of the  
Ontario Department do not  
distinguish between students  
who are recommended and those  
who write the Examinations, we  
have been accepting recommended  
students for the past year

J. H. Heathcote.



A. E. PROVOST  
CHAIRMAN OF BOARD  
CECIL BETHUNE  
SEC.-TREAS. OF BOARD



W. D. T. ATKINSON, M.A.  
PRINCIPAL

PHONE CARLING 866

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE,  
GLEBE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

OTTAWA, CANADA

March 3, 1933.

Sir Arthur Currie,  
President,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, Que.

Dear Sir:-

You asked me to remind you of a point I brought up during our conversation last Wednesday.

Under your existing regulation, as expressed in a letter from the Registrar to Mr. Stuart, Principal of Lisgar Collegiate Institute, you will not accept a Matriculation certificate from a student if he has secured his standing on the recommendation of his Principal. As you know, such students must receive at least 66 % in the subjects in which they are recommended. Naturally, then, under this system, a student who has been recommended in, say, seven or eight subjects of Matriculation is a better man than the student who has reached that standard in none.

From our experience here last year, I would respectfully suggest that you are in danger of driving the cream of our students to other universities if this regulation is continued in force. It seems to me that a student would have to have a strong McGill bias in his own mind (or in the mind of someone in his immediate connection) before he would be willing to write an examination on which he felt that he had already taken at least Second Class Honours.

Our experience here is that when teachers have the power of recommendation in this way, they are liable to err rather on the side of severity than on the side of leniency. I have official figures from the Department of Education for the past two or three years comparing our teachers' recommendations with their actual results, and it is in isolated cases only that they are high. I should be glad to show these figures to you or your representative at any time.



A. E. PROVOST  
CHAIRMAN OF BOARD  
CECIL BETHUNE  
SEC.-TREAS. OF BOARD



W. D. T. ATKINSON, M.A.  
PRINCIPAL

PHONE CARLING 866

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE,  
GLEBE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

OTTAWA, CANADA

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Sir Arthur Currie (Cont'd)

I trust that you will receive this suggestion in the spirit in which it is given. I fully realize that the University should be the one and final arbiter of the standards of admission to its classes, and I should want to be the last to advocate any lowering of those standards. I firmly believe, however, that the facts are as I have stated above.

Mr. Wilson tells me that you are favourably disposed towards visiting this school in the near future. In such case, we shall indeed be honoured, and I trust that the occasion will not be long delayed.

Yours very truly,

W.D.T. Atkinson

To Mr. Matthews  
Please let me  
know what  
you think of  
Mr. Atkinson's suggestion  
Matthews



March 6, 1933.

W. D. Atkinson, Esq., M.A.,  
Principal, Glebe Collegiate Institute,  
O t t a w a .

My dear Principal Atkinson,

Thank you very much for your letter of March 3rd with reference to Matriculation matters.

Personally, I have every sympathy with your suggestion. The Registrar tells me that he practically does now what you suggest should be done, although the Ontario schools have not been notified. Such notification as has been sent them was to the effect that those applying for entrance to this University would have to take our Matriculation examinations. But he tells me that the certificate presented does not disclose which of the marks are the result of recommendation and which of examination, and that time does not prevent him seeking the information. He has, therefore, been taking those who present recommendations. He will write to you, and also to Mr. Stuart.

It was a great pleasure for me to meet you the other evening at that most enjoyable gathering of the McGill graduates. What I had to say about the desirability of a National Government at the present time has caused some comment, at least. I have no hope that it will have an immediate result. Professional politicians care too much for the privileges and the prestige that go with supporting a party in power.

Ever yours faithfully,

Principal



March 7th, 1933

W.D.T. Atkinson, Esq.,  
Principal,  
Glebe Collegiate Institute,  
Ottawa, Canada.

Dear Sir,

Sir Arthur Currie has shown me your letter to him concerning our acceptance of marks awarded by High Schools without public examination, according to the Ontario plan.

The decision of the Matriculation Board which I gave to Mr. Stuart in the letter you mention, was based largely upon a desire to treat the schools of Ontario exactly as we treat the schools of Quebec. In practice, when applications from Ontario came in, I found it impossible to hold up these applications until I had discovered whether the marks were awarded by the School or the Department, and consequently was forced to accept both without discrimination. This we shall continue to do at least for a year or two so that the Ontario system will have a fair trial.

Our chief experience of accepting certification by schools has hitherto been in connexion with American High Schools, and has not been very encouraging. As you know, a large number of American schools are approved by various educational agencies and given the power to certify for admission to most of the American Universities. In many of these schools a student's complete record showing an average of 85% or 90% means practically nothing, and students with such records have often had to leave McGill on account of weak scholarship. We now require American students to write the College Entrance Examination Board examinations and find the change a distinct improvement. This unfortunate experience with certification may have been in the minds of the Matriculation Board when it made its previous decision.

McGill has naturally a close connexion with Ontario and particularly with the Ottawa Valley, and none of us wishes to see that connexion weakened. I hope you will be pleased to hear that we are accepting your school marks for entrance, and trust that the Ontario plan continues to work out as soundly as you suggest in your letter.

Yours faithfully,

T.H. Matthews  
Registrar

Copy sent to Mr. Stuart,  
Lisgar Collegiate Institute.



A. E. PROVOST  
CHAIRMAN OF BOARD  
CECIL BETHUNE  
SEC. TREAS. OF BOARD



W. D. T. ATKINSON, M.A.  
PRINCIPAL

PHONE CARLING 866

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE,  
GLEBE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

OTTAWA, CANADA

March 8, 1933.

Sir Arthur Currie,  
President and Vice-Chancellor,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, P. Q.

Dear Sir Arthur:-

I have to thank you for your letter of March 6th. This morning I received a communication from the Registrar, stating that your Matriculation Board has agreed to accept certificates secured by recommendation from our Middle School students. I wish to express my appreciation of the interest you have manifested in this matter and for your prompt action. I feel sure that, so far as this school is concerned, you will have no cause to regret your decision.

Might I repeat that we are looking forward to your visit to this school? We shall be glad to have you at any time that suits your convenience. We have an assembly each morning of over 1200 students (the remainder of our 1480 cannot be accommodated in the hall) and I hope that you will be as interested in seeing our morning exercises as we shall be honoured in having you with us.

Yours very truly,

W. D. Atkinson

Principal.



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ALBANY

JAMES SULLIVAN  
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER  
FOR HIGHER AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

CHARLES B. HEISLER  
ASSISTANT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Feb. 13, 1929.

Principal William A. Currie,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Dear Principal Currie:

For some time this Department has been convinced that our recognition of Canadian universities and colleges has needed revision. We have reached this conclusion because of the difference in the admission requirements. As long as we require our own universities and colleges to establish and maintain a certain admission requirement, it is inconsistent to extend the same recognition to Canadian universities and colleges that do not admit students upon the same basis. Whether your requirement or ours is the better, pedagogically speaking, is an academic question. The fact remains that there is a real difference.

In the State of New York admission to a college course of study is based upon the completion of four years of secondary schooling preceded by eight years of elementary schooling, generally speaking, that is to say, upon the completion of twelve years of study. Unless I am misinformed admission to your university may be obtained by meeting the junior matriculation requirement, that is to say, upon the completion of eleven years of study. Therefore we feel that your admission requirement is not on a par with our own.

Furthermore you admit to your sophomore year the holder of a senior matriculation (Grade XII) certificate thus allowing college credit for the completion of secondary school courses of study, a practice that is not permitted in the State of New York.

Therefore, in fairness to our own students we have deemed it necessary to make the following ruling.



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
ALBANY

JAMES SULLIVAN  
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER  
FOR HIGHER AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

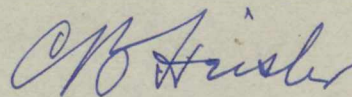
CHARLES B. HEISLER  
ASSISTANT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Principal Currie-2/13/29 - #2

Hereafter this Department will give full credit to a graduate of your university in case he or she has entered the freshman year upon senior matriculation (Grade XII) standing and has completed four full years in residence thereafter. This ruling is subject to one exception. Full credit may be given a graduate of your university who was admitted to the freshman year on less than senior matriculation standing and has thereafter completed four full years in residence provided the record upon which such graduate was admitted was the full equivalent of the New York State four year secondary school course of study preceded by eight years of elementary schooling.

I will be very glad to have your reaction to this ruling. If you think we have erred in any way please say so frankly and advise us wherein you believe our reasoning to be incorrect or the ruling unfair. Our only wish in this connection is to make a ruling that is equitable to your students as well as our own.

Very truly yours



Charles B. Heisler

CBH-K



# EDINBURGH BOND

## MATRICULATION EXAMINATIONS, June 1931

Fees \$4,958.00

Examiners and Invigilation

\$1,044.00	
<u>1,807.00</u>	\$2,851.25

Printing, Answer Book, etc.

Stamps	\$	37.52	
Express		12.75	
Printing papers (Quebec)		109.00	
" " (Cornell)		74.69	
" " "		127.30	
" " (Beatty)		30.00	
Answer Books		361.80	
Blotting paper		4.00	
2 qts. ink		3.50	
Application forms, filing cards, certificates, etc.		<u>90.00</u>	
		850.36	850.36

Total expenditure \$ 3,701.61

Balance 1,256.39

Number of Students	Junior	633
	Senior	128

Extra expense involved if our Matriculation examination was entirely separated from the High School Leaving Examination:-

Printing .....	\$110
Examiners .....	<u>\$260</u>
	\$370.





February 18th, 1929.

Charles B. Heisler, Esq.,  
Assistant in Higher Education,  
The University of the State of New York,  
Albany, New York.

Dear Sir:-

In the absence of Sir Arthur Currie I acknowledge your good letter of February 13th with reference to entrance requirements.

At McGill University we admit to the Faculty of Arts a student who has attained a definite standard (60% on the whole, with a minimum <sup>of 40%</sup> in each subject) on an examination in certain essential subjects. This examination is based on specific work which prepares the student for his first year in college. The time it has taken him to prepare himself, or whether such preparation is in private or public school or by tutor, is immaterial to us. In the State of New York, on the other hand, admission is based on the completion of twelve years of study, with, perhaps, only slight regard to particular subjects. It is just here the real difference lies in our requirements for admission.

Our records at McGill over a number of years shew conclusively that the percentage of failures in the first year is much lower among students who have passed our examination than among those who have entered under the qualification of time spent in preparatory grades and units studied.



Charles B. Heisler, Esq.

.2.

In the same way our senior matriculation examination is based on the attainment of a definite standard in specified work, and a student who has successfully passed this examination is ready for his second year in college.

I hope I have made our position quite clear. I am sure you will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the requirements for admission to our first year are the full equivalent of the New York State four year secondary school course of study preceded by eight years of elementary schooling.

Very truly yours,

Acting Principal.



REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

26 Nov 1931

TO the Principal

FROM J. H. Heathcote

Prof. Clarke told me he had given you some notes on the matriculation question and that he would like me to read them. I obtained them this afternoon from your secretary and have ventured to give you these hurried comments. I am sending a copy of these comments to Prof. Clarke.



COMMENTS BY T.H. MATTHEWS

1. I agree that there must be very effective cooperation between the University and the Department.

Since a number of students in the High Schools are coming to McGill and since the Department wishes their examination to be recognized, it is natural that they should consult us, but I do not think this in any way necessitates cooperation in the actual conduct of the two examinations.

2(a) Why should a joint board responsible for our Matriculation Examination derive its authority solely from the Protestant Committee? Is not this an infringement of the University Statutes? Chapter V, paragraph 7 (g) states that it is a duty of Corporation "to fix all qualifications and requirements for entrance or matriculation".

2(b) Why does Professor Clarke say "the same schools and teaching facilities are concerned in both examinations"? No school that prepares for the High School Leaving Examination also prepares for Matriculation, and vice versa. If, therefore, the courses of study were not identical, and I strongly favour variety in education, there would be no confusion, as there is no confusion in England where eight different authorities conduct school certificate examinations.

3. Professor Clarke says "If Joint Board methods really have failed". They have never been tried. The system for the last three or four years has been one in which the examination has been prepared by the Protestant Committee, and the University has accepted the examiners and the papers without discussion. This I think is a thoroughly bad system which has led to poor papers, and has made it impossible for the University really to assist in improving the School Leaving Examination.



A Joint Board that really was "joint" would be responsible equally to the Protestant Committee and to Corporation and these two bodies would have to have exactly equal powers. This, I am sure, the Protestant Committee will not accept, and that is one reason why I advocate complete divorce, which is also requested by every member of the present High School Leaving Board who know more of the running of the Examination than anyone else.

4. The reconstituted High School Leaving Examination Board is concerned and can be concerned only with the High School Leaving Examination. Our own Matriculation Board also has duties and has very definite obligations to the local private schools and to students in other parts of the Empire.

If Professor Clarke's notes are re-read with the words "Matriculation Board" instead of "High School Leaving Board" or "Board", and with "the Corporation of McGill University" instead of "the Protestant Committee", it becomes clear that what he is proposing is a surrender of our rights and duties.

I suggest that if the question arises tomorrow, it be clearly pointed out that our Matriculation Examination is controlled by the Corporation of the University, and that any suggestions concerning our examination must be approved by that body.

I heartily agree with the general desire of Professor Clarke for more efficient and informed criticism of papers and for a more effective running of the examinations.

His final difficulty concerning the syllabi would disappear if the examinations were entirely separated as I hope they will be.

It appears clear to me that if we draw fully upon the resources of the University we can run a Matriculation Examination that will be a vast improvement upon the present one, and will help the High School authorities



by setting a standard.

At present the only McGill Professors concerned are the examiners and their papers are printed without another member of the staff seeing them except for the two representatives on the Revising Board. The scheme therefore does not use our resources fully.

Every one of the British Examining Boards is a university one, and the papers, of which I have copies in my office, show the very high standards which they maintain.



**DOCKET STARTS:**

"FROM PROF. CLARKE"



(From Prof. Clarke)

Notes on Matriculation and School-Leaving Examinations.

1. Any scheme that works at all must provide for effective co-operation between the Universities and the Department of Education. Complete and absolute separation is an impossibility, and independent arrangements whereby McGill conducted its own Matriculation Examination would still involve very definite relations with the Department of Education.

2. There are two lines of approach to effective co-operation:-

a) A real Joint Board enjoying the confidence of all parties and taking effective control of both Examinations. While deriving its authority from the regulations of the Protestant Committee it would, in fact, set itself to devise and operate machinery that would meet the just claims of all the interests concerned.

or:-

b) Separate conduct of the Examinations, leaving matters of common interest to be determined by negotiation. Since, very largely, the same schools and teaching-facilities would be concerned in both examinations, the area of common interest would still be large. Questions of courses of study, of textbooks, of standards and so forth would continue to arise, and would have to be settled by some kind of machinery. Would this machinery be as satisfactory as an authoritative Joint Board? I imagine that it might well be clumsy, lacking in permanence and precision, weak in authority and more fruitful in causes of irritation than a Joint Board would be.



3. It is better to co-operate from separate centres than not at all and if Joint Board methods really have failed then the other alternative must be tried. But to assert such failure, just when a modified system of joint action that has not yet been tested is about to be tried, is at least, premature. The new scheme must, I think, be given a chance.

4. The reconstructed Board might ~~wrk~~ work reasonably well provided that:-

i. Real responsibility for the efficient conduct of the examination is placed upon it, and the responsibility is genuinely accepted and exercised. A Board that is not empowered to make crucial decisions or that shirks the responsibility of making them, can only increase confusion.

ii. There is good will and a real desire to meet all the ~~inte~~ interests concerned. No adjustment of numerical representation on the Board can compensate for the lack of these. Thus I should hesitate to conclude that because McGill has only two ~~directr~~ representatives on the new Board, only two members of it are prepared to give full consideration to McGill's interests.

iii. The Board acts and continues to act as a whole. There can be no effective action if the Board or any section of it is continually referring beyond itself for authority to act. All parties represented must face and fairly accept the risks involved in guaranteeing the relative independence of the Board. Effective confidence always implies such risks and if confidence proves misplaced, the remedy is a better Board, not a nullification of its authority.



5. Granted these essential conditions a technique of action could be worked out that would meet the main needs. Among them are:-

A. Appointment of Examiners.

The Board should pronounce upon all nominations from whatever source, and should submit its list of recommendations to the Department. This list should be laid before the Protestant Committee along with such comments and alternative recommendations as the Director of Protestant Education wished to offer.

Nominations should be submitted so as to give ample time for consideration by the Board.

B. Approval of Papers.

An important essential here is ample time. The appointment of examiners should be made early enough to allow examinees time for adequate consultation and consideration before submitting draft papers. Also the Board should meet some months before the Examination so as to allow ample time for criticism and revision of the draft papers.

This revision and criticism cannot be effected in a single meeting. The Board should be free to consult any authority it chooses, and should devise machinery such as has been suggested (e.g. Moderators, "Subject"-Committees, and so forth) in order that the Board may have before it, when it meets, an expert and carefully considered report on every paper. Its duty would then be to assess these reports and take action on them.

C. Assessment of Standards.



This may involve:-

i. A group of examiners rather than a single examiner for any one paper, the chief Examiner of the group being concerned mainly with keeping the standard constant.

ii. Some revision and possible amplification of the instructions issued to examiners.

iii. The keeping of records, ~~possibly~~ possibly in the form of Frequency Curves, showing the actual standards in every subject and in the examination as a whole, from year to year.

N.B. This is an office duty and should not be imposed upon examiners.

iv. The adjustment of examiners' marks. This will be of two kinds:-

a) General adjustment, to bring the marks of a whole group of papers into conformity with fair normal standards as judged by the Board. This will have to be done on a clear uniform principle that does not alter relative values of the marks, and does not require reference back to the examiner.

b) Special adjustment of marks of individuals. This should involve, in all cases, reference back to the examiner with, if necessary, a final judgment by a competent referee.

N.B. If the Board accepts full responsibility and functions efficiently as a whole its services would be as valuable and as necessary in revising marks for Matriculation, as in revising those for School Leaving.

D. Syllabuses.



A difficulty arises here as the Board will not be responsible for syllabuses in either Matriculation or School Leaving. The situation calls for effective co-operation between the University Matriculation Committee and any ~~body~~ body to which the Protestant Committee may entrust the drafting of courses of study. There has been already much useful co-operation of this kind and the facilities for it need to be extended and regularised.

6. I do not follow the suggestion that separation of the two examinations would mean that school pupils might be required to take both. Surely McGill would still be willing to accept School Leaving as an equivalent to Matriculation provided the scope and standards of examination were satisfactory. It does not refuse to accept as equivalent examinations taken elsewhere than in Quebec, - even out of Canada altogether-- though the syllabuses differ in content from those of its own Matriculation examination. It could hardly deny to candidates from Quebec what it concedes to candidates from elsewhere.

7. Secretariat. An efficient and reasonably independent secretariat is of vital importance to the working of a Joint Board system. To be efficient it must be very nearly, if not ~~xxx~~ entirely a full-time job. The function of a Board is to take decisions, not to do routine office-work in a scumbled fashion. I suspect that much of our trouble has arisen from the absence of a Secretariat, adequately equipped, with time, and facilities and experience to do the important routine work. The Board is comparable to a Board of Directors and I should



6.

doubt the efficiency of any large business where the Board of Directors attempted to do its own office work.

F. Clarke.



**DOCKET ENDS:**

"FROM PROF. CLARKE"



Nov 26/30

## IS LATIN COMPULSORY IN WESTERN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES?

(Information below is gleaned, in each case, from 1930-1 Calendars)

### University B.C. (Calendar pp. ~~71~~ 73-74)

These pages, carefully read, show that in Arts if the student does not take Latin he must take Greek.

### Univ. Saskatchewan. (Calendar pp. 29-30.)

Latin must be taken if Students have Law in view.  
Greek or Latin.....Arts in view.

### Alberta (Calendar p30)

Expressly warns intending Matriculants that if Latin is not taken there are some Faculties which can not be entered. Even among professional Faculties Pharmacy, Law, Dentistry require Latin. In the Arts course it is made plain that if one does not take Greek it is almost impossible to escape Latin- in fact one can only do it by taking a heavy science course. (These would correspond to our B.Sc. students in Arts) Further these Science students must do both French and German.

### Manitoba. (Calendar p. 23)

Matriculation requirements not stated. But in first year Arts the only way to escape Latin would be to take Greek, Hebrew or Icelandic in addition to French and German, unless one took a very full course in Science, - which again would correspond to our B.Sc. students.

The gist of all this is that (except for the alternative Greek-which alternative Manitoba amplifies for obvious political reasons, only to hedge it around with added difficulties) it cannot be said of the Western Universities, any more than it can be said of McGill, that "they do not require Latin for Matriculation!" One may say, without falsehood, "The Western Canadian Universities do not require Latin for Entrance!" And the same may be said of McGill. But in both cases if one looks into it further it appears that the matriculant who has funk'd Latin can only do certain things.

There is an historical reason for the Greek alternative-the fact that Manitoba and Saskatchewan began by being tied up with theological colleges. The students in these must take both Greek and Hebrew. Now if these men have to carry three ancient languages, it is argued, they can hardly get enough modern education.

McGil, I fancy, would be very willing to accept Greek for Latin, but it would be silly to talk about it, for Greek is extinct in our schools. So also, for the matter of that is German, whereas in these Western universities if you escape Latin as our B.Sc. students do, it is generally laid down, or it appears in the detailed regulations, that you must do both Fr. and Ger.

and at school.



file

November 28th, 1931

NOTES ON THE JUNIOR MATRICULATION EXAMINATION

1. I believe the Junior Matriculation Examination might be strengthened, and the conduct of the examination simplified if the Matriculation Board adopted the following suggestions designed

- (a) to secure a more thorough criticism and revision of the papers before they are printed.
- (b) to make definite the regulations governing the re-reading of papers.
- (c) to make definite arrangements for the revision of examiners' marks where this appears to be justified.
- (d) to make the pass-mark in individual papers 50%.

2. Criticism and Revision of Papers.

The Departments concerned should act as preliminary revising committees, so that a paper set by any examiner would be criticized and approved by all the members of his department before being sent to me.

The department would be expected to satisfy itself

- (a) that the paper was within the syllabus
- (b) that the paper covered the ground fairly and was well-balanced.
- (c) that the standard was a proper one.
- (d) that no question was ambiguous.
- (e) that the paper gave bright pupils an opportunity of showing their brightness.

In the case of Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry, the examiner should be asked for solutions of any problems, and these solutions should be verified by the other members of his department.

3. A Revising Board should be appointed. As members I suggest one member from each of the following departments, Classics, French, History or English, Physics or Chemistry. This Board which would meet in February would give the papers a final revision, compare them with previous years' papers, and finally sanction them.

The original examiner should be informed and consulted if the Board decided to make any material alteration in a paper.

No examiner would sit on this Board and the members should be paid (perhaps \$10 each) for their work. The Registrar (unpaid) should act as convener and be a member of the Board.



4. The proofs of each paper should be read and corrected by the examiner and by at least one other member of his department.

#### The Re-reading of Individual Papers

5. Unjustifiably optimistic but determined parents frequently ask that their child's paper should be re-read, and are a nuisance to me if I refuse, and to the examiner if I grant their request. I therefore suggest

- (a) Any candidate may have his marks checked (i.e. the addition) on a payment of \$1.00. The fee to be returned if the addition is incorrect.
- (b) Any candidate may apply to the Registrar for a re-reading of any paper, stating in writing the reasons for this request, and, if possible, getting a letter from the principal of his school supporting it. A fee of \$5.00 must accompany the request. If the request seems reasonable, the Registrar, in consultation with the examiner, will appoint a second reader and the two examiners will re-read the paper. For this I suggest that each reader be paid \$1.00.

If the original examiner is not available the Registrar should appoint the most suitable man he can obtain.

I suggest that these appointments be made by myself since I am here at the time and may be, and am, consulted in my office by parents and principals.

If re-reading justifies an alteration of marks, the \$5.00 fee should be returned.

#### The Revision of Marks

6. There are two cases

- (a) The student who has passed with high marks in all subjects but one and has failed in this by one or two marks.  
When this happens I suggest that the examiner in this paper be consulted and that if he feels that an extra mark or two should be awarded, the marks be altered accordingly. Such cases are rare.
- (b) The marks of an examiner make the percentage of failures in that subject unduly high.  
The Matriculation Board could not meet to discuss such an event for it would occur in July. I suggest that the Registrar call a meeting of those members of the Board and of the Revising Committee who are available, and discuss the problem with them.  
If the paper is being used by the Department of Education for the High School Leaving Examination, any action should be taken in consultation with the Department.



Change of Pass-Mark

7. To matriculate a student must obtain an average of 60% in ten required papers and not less than 40% in any one paper. The High School Leaving standard of passing is 50% in each paper. This double standard increases the difficulty of examining a paper that is used for both examinations.

I suggest that the pass-mark be 50% in every paper, and that to matriculate a student must obtain an average of 60% in the ten required papers and pass in at least nine of them.



Table showing percentage of those who passed McGill University Junior Matriculation in 1930 and 1931 who would have passed if the passing mark had been changed.

Passing Mark	1930	1931
50% in every paper	59%	58%
50% in each paper with one failure allowed	86%	79%
50% in each paper with two failures allowed	99%	94%
50% in each paper with three failures allowed	100%	100%



Table showing percentage of those who passed McGill University Junior Matriculation in 1930 and 1931 who would have passed if the passing mark had been changed.

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50% in each paper with two failures allowed	99%	94%
50% in each paper with three failures allowed	100%	100%



By the Registrar.

NOTES ON PASS MATRICULATION, HONOUR MATRICULATION, AND HONOUR COURSES IN  
THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

I.

1. These notes were written after the meeting of the Matriculation Board on Thursday October 29th, 1931, to clarify my own ideas and perhaps to provide a basis for further discussion of these topics.

2. I am thinking throughout of candidates for entrance to the University and not dealing with the problems of the majority of school boys and girls who are not coming to the University.

3. I am not thinking exclusively of the High School System of Quebec, but also of the Private Schools, and I have included subjects such as German and Spanish which are not at present taught in Quebec.

II. - PASS MATRICULATION

1. Broadly speaking the present examination forms a satisfactory entrance test for pass students.

2. The syllabus needs some revision, and the papers need more expert criticism before they are printed to ensure their being adequate tests of ability.

3. The pass-mark should be 50% in every paper, but a student who obtained an average of 60% in his ten papers should be allowed to fail in one (but not more than one) paper. If the pass-mark in the High School Leaving Examinations and the Matriculation Examinations were the same, it would be easier for Examiners justly to decide border-line cases.

III.- HONOUR MATRICULATION

1. The aim of this examination would be to prepare gifted students for the



Honour Courses of the Faculty of Arts and Science and to provide the University with a reliable method of selecting students qualified to undertake such courses.

2. This would necessitate a difficult examination with opportunities for the bright student to show ability rather than knowledge. It should be a test of intelligence and technique rather than of memory.

3. To suit our conditions the examination should be more specialized than the Upper School examination of Toronto but less specialized than the English Higher Certificate.

4. I would not aim at a broad examination; the purpose of the post-matriculation year being to intensify foregrounds rather than to broaden backgrounds. This year should introduce bright students to a serious study of a small number of subjects.

5. If, for example, it is felt that after passing the Junior Matriculation examination, the future History specialist needs to study a science, this should not be done in this post-matriculation year, but at the University where pass courses would give the sort of "minor" course in science needed.

Personally I do not believe that such a History specialist derives any value from a compulsory course in science.

6. Similarly the science student who needs German should start this at the University rather than in his post-matriculation year.

7. The post-matriculation year should be devoted to four subjects only, grouped as follows:

A. Arts Honour Matriculation

Compulsory: English

Optional: ~~Three of the following:~~

• ~~Mathematics~~ History  
French



Optional: Three of the following

History  
French  
German  
Spanish  
Latin  
Greek  
Mathematics

B. Science Honour Matriculation

Compulsory: An English Essay  
Mathematics

Optional: Two of the following

Physics  
Chemistry  
Biology

8. In each subject, except the English Essay, there should be two three-hour papers.
9. The actual marks should not be published, but students should be given a "pass" or a "distinction" in each subject (or paper). Thus a certificate might state that <sup>a</sup> candidate had obtained his honour matriculation in English, History, French, and Latin, with distinction in History and Latin.
10. The following difficulties in connexion with the examination occur to me.
- (1) Either it must be a University Examination for which the Protestant High Schools have permission to prepare their pupils (This is the position in England), or it must be run jointly by the University and the Protestant Committee.  
I prefer the former alternative.
- (2) Whatever method of control is adopted, it must be possible for



students from the private Schools to write the examination, and it must be possible to hold the examination in all the usual McGill University Matriculation centres.

(3) It will be difficult to decide what certificates, if any, from other provinces we can accept as equivalent to this new Honour Matriculation, but there must be some clearly defined way in which students from other provinces, who have written the examinations of their own province, can enter our honours courses. We cannot expect schools throughout Canada to prepare candidates for our Honour Matriculation.

(4) Would it be possible to permit the best of the Third- First Year Pass Students, after a year at the University, to enter the First Year Honours instead of the Second Year Pass courses? This would partly solve the problem in (3) above, but might raise new problems if it was recognized that there were two ways of entering the Honours Courses (a) by Honour Matriculation and (b) by Pass Matriculation and a year in Arts and Science.

(5) The converse problem would also arise. I.e. what credit are we to give a student who has taken a Grade XII examination in another province? I can see no reason for altering the present regulations with respect to the Pass Course so that a Grade XII certificate in the proper subjects and with sufficiently high marks would still admit a student to the second year of the Pass B.A., B.Sc., or B.Com. courses. An Ontario student who had taken the Ontario Honour Matriculation in six subjects, and desired to enter our honours course, would however raise a difficult question.

(6) There would be the usual difficulty of the smaller schools which would not be prepared to offer, and should not be allowed to attempt, a post- matriculation



year. The brighter students from these schools would have to spend a year in Montreal attending one of the bigger High Schools before entering McGill.

#### I.V. HONOUR MATRICULATION AND THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

1. First Year students would, from the day of registration, be divided into Honours and Pass Students.

2. Pass Matriculation would be accepted for the School of Commerce.

3. In every First Year Department there would be at least two different courses

(1) The Pass Course

(2) The Honours Course.

The extra labour involved would actually be small since advanced courses or sections already exist in almost every First Year subject.

4. The necessary reorganization would moreover, give the Faculty an opportunity to lessen some of its present rigidity, perhaps to lessen the hours in some courses and increase the reading, and certainly to lessen the present excessive number of examinations each student writes.

Honour students should, I believe, be examined less frequently and more thoroughly.

5. A First Year Honours Student would take the Honours lectures in three subjects and, if required by the Faculty to do so, would take in addition, not more than one pass course.

6. A First Year student should be allowed to take Honours courses in those subjects only in which he had taken Honour Matriculation.



7. The subjects would be grouped as below:

In the Arts Division

Compulsory: English

Optional: Two of the following:

History,  
French,  
German,  
Spanish,  
Latin,  
Greek,  
Mathematics.

In the Science Division

Compulsory: A pass course in French or German (whichever has not been taken in Junior Matriculation).

Optional: Three of the following:

Mathematics  
Physics,  
Chemistry  
Biology

8. The Departments concerned would insist upon further linking, e.g. Physics would demand Mathematics, but these linkings may be left to be discussed later.

9. It has been suggested that the Departments of Economics and Political Science, Philosophy, and Psychology, whose lectures begin only in the Second Year would suffer by the institution of these changes.

The suggestion is that a student who has specialised for two years in three subjects will choose one or two of these for his <sup>final</sup> honours work and will not embark upon a new subject.

10. I do not believe this to be true, but the interests of these departments and subjects must be safeguarded.



11. I would suggest that these departments state very definitely what honour courses in the First Year they require as prerequisites, so that Honour Students may be reminded of these subjects when they are advised at the time of registration.

12. Further, no student should make his official choice of final honours subjects until he enters his second year.

We now say, for example, that Snooks is an honours student in History in his third year, thus coupling student and subject. This appears also upon his registration card.

Under the new scheme this should not be done until the beginning of the Second Year; thus Snooks in his first year might be Arts or Science but not Latin or Chemistry.

13. The departments concerned might possibly wish to commence their lectures in the first year. If they did this, the above problem could not arise. This, is, of course, a matter for these departments themselves.



V. THE HONOUR MATRICULATION SYLLABUS

1. The method of deciding the initial syllabus for Honour Matriculation and of modifying the syllabus in after years must depend upon the method adopted of controlling the examination.
2. Assuming that there will be joint control between the Department of Public Instruction and the University, and remembering that the examination is essentially a University Entrance Examination, and that the University controls its own Entrance requirements, we should proceed as follows:-
3. The Matriculation Board should summon to a meeting the heads of all the University Departments concerned, explain to them the proposed nature of the examination and ask them in consultation with their departments to draw up suitable syllabi in their own subjects.
4. These suggestions should then be considered by the Matriculation Board or a committee appointed by them. Each syllabus would be thoroughly investigated to see that it conformed to the general scheme of the examination and of a proper standard.
5. If the Board wished to modify a syllabus, it would do so in consultation with the department concerned.
6. The syllabus finally approved by the Board should be submitted to the proper authority of the Protestant Committee and joint meetings arranged to settle any final difficulties.



VI - OTHER STEPS TO BE TAKEN

1. Since the scheme involves the abolition of Senior Matriculation for which students in many parts of the world are now preparing, the University would have to give two years' notice of the change, i.e. the examination could not be introduced until 1934, unless we were willing during a transitional year or two, to have transitional regulations, which would be very confusing.
2. Since Honour Matriculation would greatly change the organization of the Faculty of Arts and Science, this Faculty should be consulted as soon as any definite suggestions are ready.
3. The proposed B.Sc. Honour Matriculation seems to me to be a very suitable entrance examination for the Faculty of Engineering. Any suggestions concerning the B.Sc. syllabus should therefore be submitted to this faculty for their approval.
4. If the examination is to be entrusted entirely to the University, the Matriculation Board should consult the teachers of the High Schools and work in close cooperation with them.
5. It would be tactful and possibly might be useful to consult the other major universities of Canada concerning the status of the examination when the plans are definite enough to do so.



Department of Education  
Quebec, P. Q.

HON. CYRILLE F. DELAGE

SUPERINTENDENT

When replying please give  
at the head of your letter  
this number.

No. 25/31

Replies should be addressed  
to "The Superintendent of  
Education, Quebec, P.Q."

LIONEL BERGERON

FRENCH SECRETARY AND  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE  
DEPARTMENT.

W. P. PERCIVAL

ENGLISH SECRETARY, DEPUTY  
MINISTER OF THE DEPARTMENT,  
AND DIRECTOR OF PROTESTANT  
EDUCATION.

May 4th, 1931

Sir Arthur Currie, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., LL.D.,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, P.Q.

Dear Sir Arthur:-

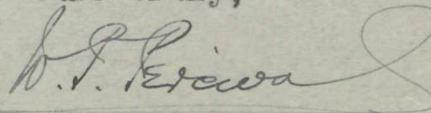
At the last meeting of the Protestant  
Committee a sub-committee was appointed to inquire into  
the relationship at present existing between the McGill  
University Matriculation Examination and the School Leaving  
Examination. This sub-committee consists of four members  
who were asked to confer with representatives of McGill and  
Bishop's Universities and with the Director of Protestant Ed-  
ucation.

I have been awaiting your return to Montreal  
before taking up this matter. I understand that the combined  
system of examinations has worked well for the past forty-five  
years and it is difficult to see any good reason for a change  
at the present time.

If a meeting can be arranged it will be a  
convenience for me if it can be called for Tuesday, May 12th,  
not later than 2.30 p.m.

As I have to advise the members of the sub-  
committee as to the date of the meeting I shall be glad to be  
favoured with an early reply.

Yours truly,



WPP/A

Director of Protestant Education



May 5, 1931.

Dr. W. P. Percival,  
Director of Protestant Education,  
Department of Education,  
Quebec, P. Q.

Dear Dr. Percival,

Let me acknowledge your letter of the 4th May with regard to a conference which it is proposed to hold between yourself and representatives of McGill and Bishop's Universities on the matter of matriculation and school leaving examinations.

The date you mention, Tuesday, May 12th, at 2.30 p.m. will suit us and we shall look for you at that time in my office.

Yours faithfully,

Principal.

*Matthews  
Clark  
Stanley  
Hockey*



Department of Education  
Quebec, P. Q.

HON. CYRILLE F. DELAGE

SUPERINTENDENT

When replying please give  
at the head of your letter  
this number.

No. \_\_\_\_\_

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LIONEL BERGERON

FRENCH SECRETARY AND  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE  
DEPARTMENT.

W. P. PERCIVAL

ENGLISH SECRETARY, DEPUTY  
MINISTER OF THE DEPARTMENT,  
AND DIRECTOR OF PROTESTANT  
EDUCATION

May 7th, 1931

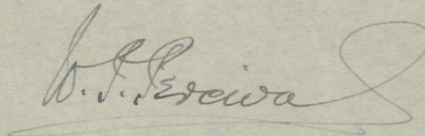
Sir Arthur Currie, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., LL.D.,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, P.Q.

Dear Sir Arthur:-

I have received your letter of  
May 5th in which you inform me that McGill rep-  
resentatives will be present in your office at  
2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12th, to confer with  
representatives of Bishop's University and the  
Director of Protestant Education on the matter  
of Matriculation and School Leaving Examinations.

I have informed the Principal of  
Bishop's University and the members of the sub-  
committee of the Protestant Committee accordingly.

Yours truly,



A/

Director of Protestant Education



Report of Sub-Committee of the Protestant Committee on the relationship between the High School Leaving Examinations and the Matriculation Examinations.

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June 4th, 1931.

Two meetings of your Sub-Committee on the relationship between the High School Leaving and the Matriculation examinations have been held since the last meeting of the Protestant Committee. At the first meeting representatives were present from McGill and Bishop's Universities. The Director of Protestant Education also attended both meetings.

As a result of these conferences your Sub-Committee makes the following recommendations:

Regulation 82 shall be changed to read as follows:

"The examination for the High School Leaving Certificate shall be conducted by the Department of Education as in the case of the other grades. In connection therewith there shall be a Board to approve examination papers, to determine the results of the examination, and to deal with any questions that may arise in connection therewith. The Board shall be known as the High School Leaving Board, and be composed as follows:-

One representative of the Department of Education, who shall be chairman.  
Three representatives of the Protestant Committee.  
One representative of the School for Teachers.  
Two representatives nominated by McGill University.  
One representative nominated by Bishop's University.

These shall be elected for a term of three years. No person can be a member of this Board who is engaged in the preparation of candidates for the examination.

Regulation 84 shall be changed to read as follows:-

"The examiners for the High School Leaving Examination shall be appointed by the Protestant Committee. The High School Leaving Board shall have the power to recommend the appointment of examiners. Nominations for examiners may also be submitted by the Director of Protestant Education.

This regulation shall go into effect on the 1st day of October, 1931.

JAN. 2. 1931



In view of the very difficult position which Protestant Education in the Province of Quebec must continue to occupy, it is highly desirable that the three bodies most concerned with its promotion should work effectively together. McGill University and Bishop's University need the support of the high schools below them, and the Department of Education, responsible for the conduct of these high schools, needs the help of the universities from above.

The High School Leaving examinations intimately concern these three bodies, but unfortunately the existing machinery for the conduct of these examinations does not secure their effective cooperation, and the High School Leaving certificate has not the weight of authority it might attain if the two universities were persuaded to cooperate more seriously in planning the examinations.

To remove present causes of friction and to secure more harmonious and intelligent direction in future, I suggest

- (1) that in all papers, whether Matriculation or High School Leaving, the pass mark be 50%.
- (2) that a new High School Leaving Examination Board be appointed with the following personnel:
  - a. The Director of Protestant Education
  - b. The Professor of Education of McGill University
  - c. The Professor of Education of Bishop's University
  - d. The Registrar of McGill University
  - e. A representative of the Department of Education  
(The chief Inspector of High Schools ?)
  - f. A representative of the Protestant Committee
  - g. Two representatives from McGill University
  - h. Two representatives from Bishop's University
  - i. Two representatives of the High School teachers  
(not to act on revising board)

A total of twelve persons



This board should be given power to recommend the appointment of examiners and both the Department and McGill University should undertake not to depart from these recommendations without further reference to the Board. The Board should also appoint moderators as suggested below and should authorize the papers actually set. No examiner should be allowed to sit on the Board.

(3) Moderators

The examination subjects should be divided into groups - perhaps three groups:-

- (1) English and History)
  - (2) Greek, Latin, and French
  - (3) Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Physical Geography
- (Music and Drawing require, I think, different treatment which I am unqualified to prescribe.)

For each of these groups three moderators should be appointed, one by each university and one by the Department, whose duty it would be to act as experts, carefully to criticize the papers submitted by the examiners, and report upon them to the Board. These reports would take cognizance of standards, wording of questions, divagations from the syllabus, etc.

If the moderators were properly chosen it would not be necessary for each to be an expert in all the subjects of his group.

The Board would authorize a paper only after a consideration of the report from the moderators.

If any paper is entitled to be re-read, this re-reading should be done by the moderators, or one of them, in consultation with the original examiner.

The moderators should be paid and the present fee paid to the High School Leaving/for its revision duties should be discontinued.

No examiner should be allowed to be a moderator.



# The Principal

## HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING AND MATRICULATION

### I

1. The Protestant Committee is meeting in the Medical Building on Friday the 27th of November.
2. So far as I know no real effort has been made since the last meeting to solve the problem of the control of the High School Leaving Examination. No proposals from the Department have been submitted to the University, and, although Mr. Mitchell had an interview with the High School Leaving Board, no definite plan was suggested.
3. The drawing up of a new scheme is clearly a task for the Department and not for the University, and possibly the Department is preparing a scheme for consideration by the Protestant Committee.
4. Whether this is so or not I think it important that the three representatives of the University upon the Protestant Committee should agree at least as to the minimum conditions any solution must satisfy to be acceptable to the University.
5. I suggest that these three representatives meet before the 27th and discuss these conditions carefully, so that, if necessary, they may state them at the meeting.
6. As a possible basis of discussion I submit my own views.

### II

To be acceptable to McGill University any scheme for the joint control of the High School Leaving Examinations and the Matriculation Examination must satisfy the following conditions:

1. A method must be devised of ensuring that the examiners appointed are acceptable to both the Protestant Committee and the University Matriculation Board.



2. This necessitates at least that before the suggested list is put before the Protestant Committee, the University must have an opportunity of discussing it and of vetoing any examiner of whom it does not approve.
3. The examination papers must likewise be revised and approved by the University before they are printed. Recently the University has been accepting papers it has never seen for its own Matriculation Examination. The University should and could appoint a very strong Revising Board.
4. The University wishes to make its Departments responsible for the matriculation papers submitted to the Revising Board, i.e. it wishes every department concerned to sit as a preliminary revising board upon the papers in its own subject, and it would insist upon examiners' solutions of all mathematical or numerical problems in the Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics papers.
5. The syllabus for every subject must be approved by the University. This does not mean that the University wishes to interfere with what is clearly the work of the Protestant Committee and the Department of Education, but the University must approve of every syllabus of its own Matriculation Examinations, and a joint paper implies a common syllabus.
6. If any revision of marks is to be made it must be made jointly by the High School Leaving Board and the University's Matriculation Board. We cannot give the High School Leaving Board power to alter our Matriculation marks.
7. Unless these conditions concerning the Examiners, the Papers, and the Results can be satisfied, the University must conduct its Matriculation Examinations independently of the High School Leaving Examination system.

J. H. Leathland

12 Nov 1931.





MCGILL UNIVERSITY

August 25th, 1932

The Principal.

Dear Sir Arthur,

Probably some of the applicants for admission who have been refused will attempt to worry you with their grievances. I am therefore giving you an outline of the scheme of admitting students adopted by Deans MacKay, Johnson, Brown, and myself.

1. All admitting into the 1st year of the Faculty of Arts, including the School of Commerce is done by me.
2. In doubtful cases I appeal to the Admissions Committee and their decision is announced through this office.
3. All admitting into upper years of the Arts Division of the Faculty of Arts and Science, and the School of Commerce, is done by Dean MacKay. The Registrar's Office collects the information required by the Dean.
4. All admissions into the upper years of the Science Division are dealt with by me. In doubtful cases I consult Dean Johnson. The decision is always announced through this office.
5. All admission into the 1st year of the Engineering Faculty is made by me, Dean Brown being consulted in doubtful cases.
6. All admitting into the upper years of Engineering is done by the Faculty of Engineering. The Registrar's Office merely collects the information the Engineering Faculty requires.

Yours sincerely,

*J. H. Heather.*