
Minutes of the meeting of the **Academic Policy and Planning Committee** held on 18th November 2004 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Room 310, James Building

Present: L. Vinet (Chair), B. Arciero, J. Beheshti, L. Butler-Kisber, W. Caplin, M. Crago, R.F. Clarke, J. Feine, J. Galbraith, W. Hendershot, P. Holland, J.C. Hurtubise, A. Kenjeev, A.C. Masi, S. McDougall, M. Nahon, J. Zucchi, H.M.C. Richard (Secretary to the Committee)

Regrets: A. Bryan, M. Dowsley, V. Errunza, A. Husain, M. Mendelson,

Guests: D. Covo (item 4), J. Galaty, T. Kirby, G. Vankeerberghen (item 6), N. Ignatieff, T. Le-Ngoc, D. Plant (item 7)

Additional documents circulated

electronically: *Addendum to 04-APPC-11-19* By-laws to the SYTACom research centre proposal.

at the meeting: *Addendum to 04-APPC-11-21* Letter from Dean of Arts John Hall re. Financial Commitment for Arts Legacy Freshman Option

04.01 Proposed agenda

The proposed agenda was approved with addition of a second item under Business Arising: b) Council on Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) - Dean's response.

04.02 Minutes of meeting held on 4th November 2004

The minutes were approved as circulated.

04.03 Business arising

a) Report on Senate meeting held on 17th November 2004 (364th APPC Report to Senate)

1) Proposed Research Centre Guidelines and By-laws

The Steering Committee of Senate withdrew the proposed Research Centre Guidelines and Minimal By-laws from APPC's 364th Report to Senate, in order for further consultation with MAUT to take place. The proposal will be submitted in the 365th Report to Senate for consideration on December 1st.

2) Centre for Biorecognition and Biosensors

The proposed Centre for Biorecognition and Biosensors was approved by Senate for recommendation to the Board of Governors.

b) Council on Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) - Dean's response

Dean (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) Martha Crago addressed the questions raised by APPC at the previous meeting, which Professor Meyer Nahon as member of the CGPS had relayed. The questions had to do with 1) the time frame for the retention and time to completion working group i.e., when specific recommendations and actions were expected to become available; 2) what the outcome of the guaranteed funding exercise conducted last year was; 3) what the changes to the MGSF allocation formula might be and how the process for recommending these changes would be conducted. Another issue related to the report on SCTP's meeting of September 9, 2004 which included the retirement of the (Thesis) M.A. program in Linguistics with the stated Rationale that "This program has not been offered in many years. Students are admitted into the M.A. in Linguistics Non-Thesis program or the Ph.D. in Linguistics program." APPC's question was whether this may not run counter to general GPS policy to encourage Thesis programs, rather than non-Thesis programs. It was made clear that McGill has no policy privileging the research master's. A number of students begin with a course-based master's and are then fast-tracked to the Ph.D. program, having taken exactly the courses needed.

04.04 CREPUQ CUP/Comité du suivi (CSP) – Report # 13, "Architecture, Design, Development, Urban Planning and Urban Studies", English translation (04-APPC-11-13)

Professor David Covo, Director, School of Architecture joined the meeting. He reported that there has been considerable activity among the schools of architecture and planning in the past two years, but that this activity has not necessarily been driven by the CUP recommendation; they are simply questions that preoccupy the schools. Re. *Recommendation 1* on computer equipment: trends have accelerated and gone beyond the recommendation. Understandably it is more productive for each of the schools to negotiate with its university than with the other schools. Nevertheless opportunities for joint research and teaching are also underway. The situation has changed dramatically: laptop computers are not required but are strongly recommended. By the final year 75% of students are equipped with either desk top or lap top. Students were quick to recognize the opportunity offered by the wireless environment offered in the School and this has been of considerable help. Re. *Recommendation 2* on internships in government settings: this applies less to architecture than to planning and landscape architecture; placements with agencies occur on an *ad hoc* basis. The three schools could be more aggressive about this. Re. *Recommendation 3* on review of professional training: this question is a major preoccupation for all the schools of Canada as well as the licensing bodies. An *ad hoc* committee has been formed and its first agenda item is a review of professional licensure. The difficulty and cost of professional licensure creates odd situations and major disconnects with respect to number of years of practice. Re. *Recommendation 4* on undergraduate student mobility: by 1999 only one of the three architecture schools had converted its professional program to the master's level. Now all schools in Canada offer their first degree at the master's level, through various paths. This phenomenon is related to mobility, and mechanisms are in place for awarding equivalences. Re. *Recommendation 5* on the access to professional masters for UQAM graduates: progress has been made. Given that UQAM's program is not accredited, its students have to be admitted to one of the three professional masters programs. A harmonization of program requirements has been proposed to facilitate UQAM students' access to the architecture masters program. McGill has not yet had a significant intake of UQAM students, due perhaps partly to language, but the School's experience with them has been very good. Re. *recommendation 6* on collaboration between UQAM and the Université de Montréal in Urban Planning: Professor Covo took the opportunity to mention the *entente* between the city of Montreal and the six different landscape architecture, urban design and planning programs, including UQAM. The *entente* provides for a number of initiatives, particularly in joint teaching and research, and has been very stimulating. By and large, much activity is being experienced, not as a direct result of CUP. The current cooperation and collaboration has been unprecedented and has been and will continue to be very productive.

04.05 Course evaluations – update, October 27, 2004 (04-APPC-11-15)

Associate Provost (Academic Programs) Martha Crago presented the update and work plan proposed by the Working group on Course Evaluations that reported to APPC and SCTL in April 2004: 1) the development of a new course evaluation policy; 2) the design of a course evaluation based on online evaluation and permission granting; 3) development of a core set of five questions common to all course evaluations; and 4) development of a communication and consultation plan. Articles in *The McGill Daily*, in *The Reporter*, and an update in the *NCS Newsletter* were mentioned.

04.06 The Arts Legacy (Freshman) option, *Making Modernities*

- Minutes of APPC, November 13, 2003 (04-APPC-11-20)
- Program Committee response to APPC's questions and comments (04-APPC-11-21)
- Revised proposal (04-APPC-11-22)

Professor John Galaty, Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Studies) in the Faculty of Arts, Professor Griet Vankeerberghen from the Departments of History and East Asian Studies, and Professor Torrance Kirby of the Faculty of Religious Studies, joined the meeting.

Professor Torrance Kirby, who has contributed to shaping the program from its outset and has taught in the integrated program at the University of King's College in Nova Scotia, first spoke of his experience as a member of the Senate Committee on Teaching Learning (now APPC subcommittee). One of the topics that came up related to undergraduate teaching, in particular what undergraduate teaching should be in the context of a research-intensive university, taking into consideration the recommendation of the Boyer report. Through the Committee's work on that report and through references and evidence, it was clear that there was wide-spread interest in a Freshman Year curriculum. At the same time, Professor Kirby was invited to join a group focused on developing a new integrated curriculum in humanistic studies. At the outset there was no clear idea as to what McGill might develop. As discussions progressed, what emerged was a sense that there was motivation to address the substance of Freshmen students' experience in a university such as McGill and to counter a certain sense of alienation, a sense of not knowing where they fit or where they belong. Professor Kirby spoke of his experience teaching at the University of King's

College, which is Canada's tiniest university with an enrolment of just over 1000 students and has been offering an integrated first year for the past 32 years, the "Foundation Year Programme" (FYP) which, he stated, gives students a sense of belonging. The McGill group identified substantial pedagogical merits in proposing to students the possibility of undertaking integrative studies at the freshman level; ie. of experiencing a sense of being part of a learning community which shares a common foundation and way in which content is approached. Integration of the disciplines is a direction that has been affirmed in a number of universities; McGill's proposal is to allow a group of students to move towards integrative studies at least at the freshman level. Rather than the current more loosely structured curriculum, the program proposes that its first-year students have 4/5 of their year presented as a prescribed integrated curriculum. This approach has been shown to work well for integrating students into the institution and for engaging faculty members in an exciting curriculum that challenges the boundaries of their disciplines and gives a motivation for exploration of interdisciplinary approaches. The pedagogical approach was considered very important in the working group's discussions: program delivery will include lectures as well as direct engagement in dialogue through seminars and small tutorial sessions. The proposed program and method of learning are held up as something to be sought after and desirable. A year of integrated curriculum and the goals of a research-informed education need not be viewed as different.

Professor Griet Vankeerberghen, who recently joined the Faculty and who will be coordinating the Arts Legacy Option and has collaborated on the preparation of the revised proposal, spoke about the parameters that had been developed: neither a focus on western civilization courses nor the exact opposite, a wish to propose a chronological framework and an intellectually challenging program. Each of the four courses were developed by means of committee meetings and it is expected that enthusiasm on the part of the professors involved is a positive indicator.

Discussion ensued. The Chair extended congratulations for an interesting proposal, and stated that APPC's questions had been addressed. He feared that not enough science seemed to be present in the program, although science is viewed as a significant component in the making of "modernities". Associate Dean John Galaty responded that science is not absent from the courses: each of the courses emphasizes the "social, political, intellectual, scientific and aesthetic innovations" in the particular era focused on. The program will show how science has taken over from philosophy and a science historian, Professor Faith Wallis, will be co-teaching the second course. The program promoters attempted to run a medical/scientific thread throughout the courses. A second concern was about student intake and whether or not the model is scalable. It was noted that out of a freshman intake of 1500 students, approximately 170 would be able to benefit from the proposed Option. That program will not be of interest to all students. Should there be a dramatic expression of interest and should the program attract a significant proportion of freshmen students, one would have to work out with the departments what the impact would be. Asked whether any students were involved in the working group's discussions, Associate Dean John Galaty stated that one student who took part in the Kings' program and is now studying Philosophy at McGill, participated in the discussion but was unable to come to the APPC meeting. Furthermore discussions of the proposed program have appeared in McGill student newspapers. Regarding the management of academic staff, Professor Galaty circulated a letter from Dean of the Faculty of Arts John Hall (15 November 2004) expressing his full support and that of the Faculty of Arts for the program and stating the Faculty's commitments to providing the necessary teaching resources. He clarified that there would be at least six professors involved each term. Regarding the Option title, it was made clear that "Arts Legacy Option" was the name of the program; while the structure would remain, a different set of themes could develop and the "Making Modernities" part could change. Concern was expressed that the wide sweep of each course would lead to fragmented or superficial treatment of topics. Associate Dean Galaty responded that the Option would build on faculty expertise, going deeply into certain issues and places but not attempting to cover everything; while the historical lecture will introduce the times, it will not be a history course; students will write on what they are reading, not sum up the whole era under study. Writing and discussing assignments will be an important component.

Concern was voiced regarding the rigidity of requiring all 24 credits and the difficulty of establishing the basics for studying such disciplines as Economics. It was suggested that one might consider giving students the option of taking only 18 or 12 credits of the proposed Option and allowing exit strategies; the students' first-year would not be fully integrated but there would still be lots of common material from which students could benefit; one might consider relaxing the constraints and be more flexible. Professor Kirby responded that this debate represented two different visions, the communitarian vision and the liberal one which so overwhelmingly dominates undergraduate studies. Moreover student who are not drawn to such an Option do not have to do it; this is not prescriptive for all freshmen. Whether to allow students to select parts of this integrative program is debatable as the courses are integrated over time: which half would one take? Courses build upon one another from beginning to end: they have a line of continuity

and threads that run throughout; there are pedagogical reasons for taking all four courses. He stated that the elective course per term will allow for language training and for taking required courses for specialized programs, although it is not clear that students taking this Option would have met the requirements for the new B.A. & Sc. program. It was reiterated that not everyone will want to take this course and not everyone will. Professor Galaty also responded to concerns about visa restrictions, should a student drop out and lose full-time status. It was noted that University Libraries have been putting more resources to support what the program aims to do.

Given time constraints, it was agreed that **discussion of the proposal would be continued at the next meeting.**

04.07 Research Policy Committee

- Approval of the creation of the SYTACom Research Centre (*04-APPC-11-19 and addendum: By-laws*)

Professor David Plant, Dept of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Professor Tho L-Ngoc, and Mr. Nicholas A. Ignatieff, Administrative Director, Agile All-Photonic Networks (AAPN), joined the meeting. Following a brief presentation by Professor Plant, the Interim Vice-Principal (Research) stated that the research centre is working out well and deserves supporting. It was suggested and agreed that a graduate student (or Post-doctoral fellow) should be added to the Board membership.

With this revision to the Board membership, APPC approved the proposed creation of the SYTACom Research Centre for submission to Senate for approval and recommendation to the Board of Governors.

04.08 Other business

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.