
Minutes of the meeting of the **Academic Policy Committee** held on Thursday 25th September 2008, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., Room 310, James Administration Building

Present: M.J. Mendelson (Chair), W. Caplin, J. Côté, A. DeGuise, B. Dourley, V. Errunza, D. Farrow, W. Hendershot, P. Holland, C. Jastrezebski, M. Kaartinen, D. Klinck, M. Kreiswirth, A. Ling, C. Weston, N. Wilkinson, H.M.C. Richard (Secretary to the Committee)

Regrets: J. Angeles, G. Brown, G. Lane-Mercier, S. MacDougall, A. Masi, R. Rozen, J. Schmidt, M. Szyf

Guest: S. Bond (item 4b), C. Madramootoo (item 4a), J. Potter, P. Smith

Documents circulated at the meeting: none.

The Chair welcomed Dr Judith Potter, Dean of Continuing Education, and new members of the Committee: Professor Julie Côté (Faculty of Education), Professor Mari Kaartinen (Faculty of Dentistry), and Professor Dennis Klinck (Faculty of Law).

02.01 Proposed agenda

It was proposed that item 4.a and 4.b should be considered first. With this change, the agenda was adopted.

02.02 Minutes of the meeting held on 28th August 2008

The minutes were adopted with the deletion of Mrs Janine Schmidt's name from the list of members absent at the meeting. Clarification was sought regarding a statement in section 01.05 of the minutes pertaining to the General Engineering proposal that "The curriculum of this proposed first year is identical to the current U0 year in the Bachelor of Engineering program but for the addition of a one-credit course *FACC 100 Introduction to the Engineering Profession*".

Secretary's note: the statement in the minutes applies to the current situation. Associate Dean James J. Clark explained in an email, however, that it is correct to assume that the **intention** of the Faculty of Engineering is "that every student in an Engineering B.Eng. or BSE program (including CEGEP-entry) must take this one-credit course, not just those in General Engineering. Program change proposals will be produced in the near future to ensure this. The wording of the original proposal was due to the fact that the program changes have not yet been done to the other programs, so that at the time the General Engineering program was approved, it was the only program that contained the new 1-credit *Introduction to the Engineering Profession* course. So it would have been incorrect, at that time, to say that the U0 year of the General Engineering program is the same as for the other programs."

02.03 Business arising

- Student exchange agreements: Equity Clause – follow-up

Memorandum from Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) Morton J. Mendelson, 18th September 2008 (0809-APC-09-06)

Deputy Provost Morton Mendelson explained the process that had led to the adoption of the equity clause that is currently included in McGill's student exchange agreement templates.

02.04. APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP)

a) Report on SCTP meeting held on 18th September 2008 (0809-APC-09-07)

1) B.Sc. (AES)

- New programs (*Appendix A*)
- Major Revisions (*Appendix B*)

Dean Chandra A. Madramootoo presented the proposed new programs in the B.Sc. Agricultural and Environmental Sciences which were approved by SCTP on 18th September. The proposals are the result of the work of a Faculty Planning Committee whose activity over two-and-a-half years involved two Faculty

retreats and the creation of workgroups and focus groups including alumni, a member of John Abbott College, employers in the private sector and members of other faculties at McGill. The goal of the program reorganization was to increase efficiency by reducing the number of Majors, several of which had very low enrolments. The Faculty is therefore proposing the reorganization of the twelve majors currently offered in the B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.) into five 42-credit majors and the creation of 22 specializations. One of the major programs and two of the specializations are still under development. The Faculty aims to introduce the five majors and 22 specializations in September 2009.

In the discussion, the use of the term “specialization” was explained. Alternatives such as “concentration”, “minor”, “stream” had been considered but only “specialization” adequately expressed what the new program entities are and satisfied the students. It was suggested and agreed that **APC should consider program terminology at a future meeting in an attempt to rationalize program designations at McGill.** Other questions dealt with whether the Faculty had considered collaborating with other faculties that offer courses dealing with sustainable development and whether the Faculty had achieved its goal in reducing the number of courses. It was noted that course amalgamations had taken place. The full impact of the operation remains to be seen.

The creation of the following 19 specializations was approved by APC for submission to Senate for approval:

- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Animal Biology (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Animal Health and Disease (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Animal Production (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Applied Ecosystem Sciences (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Ecological Agriculture (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Entomology (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Health and Nutrition (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in International Agriculture (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Molecular Biotechnology (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Microbiology (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Agriculture and Food Systems (Multidisciplinary) (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Environmental Biology (Multidisciplinary) (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Life Sciences (Multidisciplinary) (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Plant Biology (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Plant Production (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Plant Protection (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Professional Agrology (21 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Soil and Water Resources (24 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Wildlife Biology (24 cr.)

They will be included in APC’s 404th Report to Senate (D08-07) for consideration by Senate on 15th October 2008.

Major revisions to the four Majors and one Specialization listed below were approved by APC and will be reported to Senate in APC’s 404th APC Report to Senate:

- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Major in Agro-Environmental Sciences (90 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Major in International Agriculture and Food Systems (90 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Major in Environmental Biology (90 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Major in Life Sciences (Biological and Agricultural) (90 cr.)
- B.Sc.(Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Agricultural Economics (24 cr.)

One Major, “Agri-Business & Environmental Economics”, and two Specializations, “Business” and “Environmental Economics” will be submitted to SCTP and APC at a later date.

2) M.Sc. (Applied) in Couple and Family Therapy (Appendix C)

Professor Sharon Bond presented the proposed program. The proposal responds to the need that was identified by the Quebec government as early as 1995 for a program at the master’s level that would train couple and family therapists. This professional program will be offered by the School of Social Work in partnership with the Department of Psychiatry at the Sir Mortimer B. Davis – Jewish General Hospital

where post-master's training in Couple and Family therapy is already being offered in English and in French. The proposed 60-credit professional program is intended to be taken over four semester terms. Its curriculum has been developed to meet the standard requirements of the *Ordre professionnel des travailleurs sociaux du Québec* and the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). The course curriculum is designed to reflect sensitivity to issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation and diversity of family structures within a pluralistic, multi-cultural society. Most of the courses will be taken at the Jewish General Hospital. The program proposal involves the creation of new courses. The program requires no thesis but includes one research course.

In the discussion, it was clarified that consultation with the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology had taken place but the Department prepares individual therapists rather than family therapists. The proposal summary indicates that "Counselling Psychology graduates with master's level family courses" may receive advanced credit for these courses. Students who do not wish to continue to doctoral studies could choose to take the proposed program. The program has been modeled after the master's program offered by Northwestern University; it aims to meet the standards of accreditation bodies, includes 15 credits of stages, and therefore cannot offer much flexibility. Four pre-requisites have to be completed before admission into the program and the internship is run concurrently with the courses. In response to a question, it was stated that the proposed program reflects holistic view of the family as a system and an appreciation of various social contexts, and weaves a broad theoretical approach into its courses. The proposed program will provide students with a survey of the history of the field and how it evolved over the years, and students will be able to weave various components of different theories and approaches into their program. A member felt that the Committee was not able to address the kind of questions it ought to be grappling with, given the documentation available, and that the usefulness of the Committee's function was therefore in question. In response to those concerns, it was stated that program proposals are developed in academic units where the expertise regarding program content exists. The APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP) and the Council on Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) scrutinizes the structure of the proposed program, while higher-level committees consider the integration of the program at the University level. Furthermore, this is a professional program that has to meet external accreditation requirements. It has to satisfy the *Office des professions* (more particularly the *Ordre professionnel des travailleurs sociaux du Québec, OTPSQ*) and will be scrutinized in great detail by the *Commission d'évaluation des projets de programmes* of CREPUQ and reviewed by experts in the field, before it is submitted to the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport for approval.

APC approved the proposed M.Sc. (Applied) in Couple and Family Therapy for submission to Senate for approval, but for one objection in principle. The proposal will be included in APC's 404th Report to Senate (D08-07) for consideration by Senate on 15th October 2008.

b) SCTP 2008 Report to APC (0809-APC-09-08)

APC received the Report. The new streamlining procedure is being monitored.

02.05 Academic Program Reviews

a) Final Academic Program Review documents

- Schulich School of Music (0809-APC-09-09)

As required by the Procedural Guidelines, APC is to receive the final summaries of recommendations resulting from the Academic Program Review process for every review, and to forward them to Senate for information, before they are made public on the Academic Program Review website. Although faculties were told that those summaries would become public documents, it may be necessary to check that the summaries are indeed in a publishable form. It was suggested that it might be useful to examine what other Quebec universities have been doing in that respect.

The Committee agreed that **some of the summaries pertaining to the academic program reviews in the Schulich School of Music should be referred back to the School for revision.** APC also agreed that **only Appendix X should be required.**

b) **DRAFT of a report from APC to Senate on the Academic Program Review exercise 2004-2008**, dated 18th September 2008, for discussion (0809-APC-09-10)

The Committee considered a draft of the report that APC is required to submit to Senate at the end of the Academic Program Review Process, in compliance with the Academic Program Review Policy which states in “Stage 2, ...6. *At the end of the cycle of academic program reviews, the academic program review process itself will be reviewed, with a report to Senate.*” As the report attempts to outline the strengths and weaknesses of the process, APC should make sure that the report provides a complete account, with conclusions and recommendations on how to proceed in the future.

In the discussion, the following points were made:

- **Input from former members of APC.** The draft of the report should be sent to former members of APC who were involved in the review of Academic Program Review reports. They should be asked to submit written comments or be invited to join in APC’s discussions on the Academic Program Review exercise.
- **Student participation.** Reports that reflected strong student input seemed, on the whole, better received than reports that showed little student input. Student participation was undermined by the extension of the process over summer into fall. The next process should ensure better student involvement.
- **Purpose, benefits and usefulness of the exercise.** The main purpose of the Academic Program Reviews was to improve quality and make sure teaching programs are relevant, in compliance with the policy adopted by Quebec universities through CREPUQ. While it may not have been clear to all faculties what the review would be used for, faculties that chose to review every component, such as the Schulich School of Music, found the exercise to be very useful. The B.Sc. Liberal program was proposed as a result of the Academic Program Review process. The review process helped to bring certain weaknesses to light and find ways to correct them. APC also learned about certain shortcomings. However the review reports were not as informative as they might have been because the questions asked did not elicit the information needed.
- **Mistakes.** The philosophy and mechanisms for deciding to conduct the academic program reviews the way they were done were flawed.
 - 1) Allowing faculties such a degree of latitude was seen to be an error. Faculties presented no rationale for groupings programs as they did. It should have been foreseen that this way of proceeding would lead to a meaningless exercise. The workgroup set up by the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to examine the graduate program reviews was therefore disbanded.
 - 2) Allowing silo politics to override the University at large was seen to be another misstep. This was made possible by the lack of an overriding policy.
 - 3) Allowing program reviews to be carried out before centrally-generated data could be provided. Either the data that were included did not match central data or no data were included.
- **Reasons for those mistakes.** McGill had pioneered the cyclical review process in Quebec. When it switched from cyclical reviews of units to academic program reviews, McGill should have considered existing program review models already being used at the granting agency level, university level, national level, and such, rather than start from a blank slate. It would have been useful to examine what other institutions have done, rather than try to develop a new process. The cyclical review process was a centrally-led process that covered academic and non-academic units; the process was time-consuming process and it had generated a number of complaints. The guidelines were revised by the APC Subcommittee on Planning and Priorities in 1999 so as to lighten the process for the third cyclical review exercise significantly but those guidelines were never implemented. It was instead decided that the University would comply with the CREPUQ policy by adopting a very light process that would focus on teaching programs and by allowing faculties the latitude and flexibility that they thought would make the process useful to them and acceptable.

- **APC's performance in reviewing the Academic Program Review reports.** APC took its task very seriously. Feedback indicates that APC's comments were found to be helpful to academic units.
- **Role of the Deans.** Some review reports bordered on the cynical. Some were hastily put together with little thought being given on the issues. The role of the Dean was unclear and APC many times wondered what the opinion of the Dean was. Given McGill's Dean-centered administration, the absence of input from the Deans was a concern. The Dean's role needs to be clarified.
- **Strategic planning.** Reviews are not an opportunity to request new resources. McGill has to decide whether it wishes to run an academic program review or a strategic planning exercise. Strategic planning questions might have offered more to work with than the questions asked in the Academic Program Review process. Strategic planning exercises inspire cooperation and engage staff in a much more positive and energetic way. McGill would have to adopt a loftier goal than merely meeting the CREPUQ policy; faculties should be allowed to express their goal. The University might consider the following: blending academic program review needs and strategic planning needs, consolidating existing review processes (including decanal reviews) as much as possible, and looking into best practices.
- Whether the University got value for time and money spent was thought to be debatable.

APC will continue its discussion of the Academic Program Review process and the draft report on the exercise.

02.06 Other business

a) Senate approvals

At its meeting on 17th September 2008, Senate approved all new programs that were approved by APC on 22nd May and 28th August 2008.

b) MELS approvals

On 4th August 2008 the Minister of Education, Leisure and Sport approved the following new program proposals submitted by McGill University:

- B.Sc. (Major) in Neuroscience (approved by APPC on 27th October 2005 and by Senate on 16th November 2005;
- Ph.D. in Information Studies (approved by APPC on 14th December 2006 and by Senate on 17th January 2007).

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Helen M.C. Richard - HMCR/APPCdocs/minutes/2008-09-25