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Minutes of the meeting of the **Academic Policy Committee** held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., Room 310, James Administration Building

Present: M.J. Mendelson, (chairing), J. Angeles, G. Brown, W. Caplin, J. Côté, A. DeGuise, R. Dooley, V. Errunza, D. Farrow, W. Hendershot, P. Holland, M. Kaartinen, D. Klinck,, M. Mehta, J. Potter, M. Szyf, C. Urbain (for J. Schmidt), L. Winer (for C. Weston), S. Woolf, H.M.C. Richard (Secretary to the Committee)

Regrets: A. Gauthier, E. Gayagoy, M. Kreiswirth , S. MacDougall, A.C. Masi, R. Rozen, J. Schmidt, W. Thomson, C. Weston

Guests: S. Franke (item 4), P. Smith

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**Documents circulated at the meeting:** none

#### **04.01 Proposed agenda**

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

#### **04.02 Minutes of previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009**

The minutes were approved with deletion of the second-to-last sentence in section 03.04 b. beginning with “Graduate students...”.

#### **04.03 Business arising**

Report on Senate meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009:

##### a) Approvals

It was reported that Senate on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009 approved the proposal to change the name of the Department of Otolaryngology to “Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery” and will so recommend to the Board of Governors for final approval.

##### b) Steering Committee of Senate: on Self-funded programs

#### **Excerpt from the Report of the Senate Steering Committee to Senate, 09-10:04:**

##### ***6. POTENTIAL ACADEMIC IMPACTS OF SELF-FUNDED PROGRAMS***

*Steering recommends that APC receive a report from the Dean of Management, and other relevant information as appropriate, concerning potential academic impacts of the self-funded MBA programs adopted by the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors, for its discussion. APC will report the result of its exchanges to Senate, for discussion, providing at least an interim report by the end of the 2009-2010 academic year, paying particular attention to:*

- 1. The principles that underscore the mission of the University as a publicly funded, research-intensive student-centred university, and how they would guide such initiatives, in particular if and when considered in the future.*
- 2. The potential academic impacts of such initiatives, in particular in terms of academic quality, accessibility and student financial needs.*
- 3. The impacts, if any, of the self-funded MBA model on the joint MBA programs with the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Medicine and how they might be addressed.*

#### **04.04 Responsible Use of McGill IT Resources – draft policy (09-APC-11-25)**

- Memo to APC, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009, from Sylvia Franke, CIO
- Draft Responsible Use of McGill IT Resources

In light of the expansion of APC’s mandate regarding “the role of information systems and technology in the provision, management, and support of academic programs”, as a result of the dissolution of the Senate Committee on Information Systems and Technology (Senate 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008), APC was asked to consider a proposed *Policy on Responsible Use of McGill Information Technology Resources*. The draft was submitted for

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discussion; comments from APC members were to be taken into consideration in further revisions of the proposed Policy.

Chief Information Officer Sylvia Franke presented the draft of the proposed Policy on Responsible Use of McGill Information Technology Resources. The proposed document is intended to replace the *Code of Conduct for Users of McGill Computing Facilities* (appended to the proposal) and the *McGill Computing Facilities Management Guidelines* that were adopted in the 1990s. While those documents, which have remained largely unchanged, have been useful, computer technology has evolved and development of a policy that is more relevant and specific regarding contemporary usage is now required. The proposed Policy is also intended to replace the *Policy on E-Mail Communications with Students*.

Ms Franke presented each section and article in turn, comparing the proposed text with former policies in place.

1. *Definitions*. These are generally more explicit.

2. *Principles*. While principles 2.1 and 2.2 are similar to what appears in the current Code, Principle 2.3 is new regarding confidentiality, integrity, and availability. Principle 2.4 is either similar to or implied in the current Code. Principle 5 is also borrowed from the code but made more explicit.

3. *Credentials*. This section makes it more explicit that certain accounts are intended to be shared.

4. *Security*. This section reflects a new field of practice in IT, viz. Information Security. Article 4.1 was implied in the code but the idea is made explicit in the proposed policy. Article 4.2 requires that users report information security threats promptly. Article 4.3 is new with respect to the current Code but not new in practice on campus; computers can be monitored and viewed by system administrators.

5. *Data*. Article 5.1 stresses the users' responsibility in taking the necessary precautions to protect confidentiality, integrity and availability of data obtained through the use of McGill IT Resources. Article 5.2 signifies that having access to information does not mean that one should use it; data should be accessed for legitimate reasons. Article 5.3 is new to the current Code; it outlines the cases when access to user data will be provided. Article 5.4 deals with storage, processing and transmission of McGill data outside McGill's boundaries. Article 5.5 is vague but the University will be enunciating policies related to the way it holds and protects data.

6. *Email and Broadcast Communications*. This section is new.

7. *Public Web Sites*. Use of McGill Web Sites should comply with McGill policies and procedures. While point 7.3 was implied in the Code, Article 7.4 is new. "Wordmark" was explained as meaning the McGill name and/or logo. It was noted that the document would be submitted to the Secretary-General for a check of the terminology.

8. *Access to the internet*. This section is partly new and aims at protecting the University or University users against an information security threat and seeks to protect McGill's assets.

9. *Systems Administrators*. Their responsibilities are greater than those of average users.

10. *Non-McGill use*. Article 10.2 tempers 10.1 by allowing the use of McGill IT Resources "for occasional personal purposes" on certain conditions which are listed. Article 10.3 however cautions that the University "does not warrant any service or confidentiality levels for personal use of McGill IT Resources."

11. *Compliance*. This section refers to violation of the provisions of the policy, potential breach of the policy and the report presented to Senate annually.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

General comments:

- The document seems to be protecting McGill University from user misuse rather than emphasizing the University's responsibility to users. Protection of privacy, which is entrenched in Quebec legislation, could be highlighted in certain sections, in Article 9.2 in particular.

- It is not clear who "authorizes". It was noted that McGill is too complex an institution to define who administratively grants access to IT Resources. A general definition of "authorize" should be provided.

Specific comments:

- Article 4.3: In response to a question as to whether individuals would be informed that their use of McGill IT resources was being monitored. Ms Franke replied that this would not be realistic.

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- Article 5.4. It was not clear whether the Outlook “dropbox” feature for synchronizing e-mail was a violation of this Article. Use of data storage outside McGill’s boundaries and outside Quebec raises questions as to whether it is acceptable and safe. Guidelines will be required on how to encrypt before storing information, and better information should be provided regarding acceptable ways to obtain storage that do not contravene Article 5.4
  - Article 6.2 should refer to all users of McGill IT Resources, not only students. The statement should read: “~~Students~~ All users shall comply with University policies on e-,mail communications.”
  - Article 7.3. Whether mention of the sponsors of a conference would constitute “external or commercial advertising” (7.3) is an issue that should be addressed and monitored. More specific guidelines may be required.
  - Article 8.3. It was not clear whether sharing a laptop with a non-McGill friend on campus would constitute a violation of this article which prevents extending or sharing with public or other users the University network beyond what has been approved by IT Services.
  - Article 10.1: It was noted that distinguishing between business and personal emails could be difficult in certain cases as personal connections and friends may be used towards professional objectives; there is often no distinction in email accounts between professional and personal use. Alumni’s use of McGill’s IT resources is for personal purposes, and students’ use is for both academic and personal purposes. “Financial gain” should be clarified. “Political purposes” could be “political” to some and not to others; this Article could also be interpreted as restraining academic freedom.
  - Article 10.2: It was suggested that the sentence should read: “Notwithstanding ~~the previous provision~~ Article 10.1...”. “Occasional personal purposes” does not define the degree of occurrence.  
10.2 (v): “harm the University reputation”. It was not clear what kind of use for “occasional personal purposes” could harm the University’s reputation.  
10.2 vi was thought to be redundant.  
It was agreed that Article 10 would be reviewed in light of the comments made.

**Any further comments on the proposed Policy should be addressed to the CIO. The draft policy will be revised in light of comments made by APC. A revised draft, which will be brought to Senate in December for discussion, will be circulated beforehand to APC members for information.**

#### **04.05 Academic Program Reviews: Progress Reports on Action Plans**

##### a) Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (09-APC-11-19)

Associate Dean Hendershot presented the Progress Report from the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The reorganization of programs which was implemented in September 2009 was a major outcome of the Academic Program Reviews. It is too early to judge the impact this program restructuring will have on student enrolment.

##### b) Desautels Faculty of Management (09-APC-11-20)

Professor Erunza presented the Progress Report from the Faculty of Management, noting that progress has been made but much remains to be done.

##### c) Faculty of Religious Studies (09-APC-11-21)

Professor Farrow presented the Progress Report from the Faculty of Religious Studies, noting concern about the procedure: in the absence of Appendix X to accompany the action plan, it is difficult to recollect the precise recommendations that resulted from the Report. Few aspects of the B.Th. were flagged as problematic. Discussion of “the role of the study of religious pluralism and interfaith studies as part of the curricular review of the B.Th. program leading up to the next ATS self-study” (5) has been progressing. Regarding a proposal for a joint appointment with the Institute of Islamic Studies, discussions are also moving

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in this direction. Other actions are being taken to follow up on the action plan. Recent developments with respect to graduate programs have been satisfactory.

#### **04.05 APC Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL)**

- 2009 Report to APC (09-APC-11- 22)

The Chair of the Subcommittee, Deputy Provost Morton J. Mendelson, presented the Report. Discussion focused on the Nexus between Research and Teaching and the “activities that will be undertaken in 2009-2010 as part of the third phase of the project (*Inquiry Network*) to assist faculty members in developing their own discipline-specific, inquiry-based strategies to link teaching and research/scholarship”. The *Inquiry Network* is a group of professors from across the University who have been meeting regularly. The activities that will be undertaken have to do with considering course design and structural aspects that will facilitate the integration of research/scholarship into teaching in an organic way. The goal is to advance the linking of research/scholarship and teaching by carrying out intensive projects with a small group of people and by experiencing the possible rather than remaining at the level of the theoretical. Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) have been engaged in an interactive process with the members of the group. SCTL will consider whether this professional development activity can be used as a model and expanded. The project also involves University services other than TLS.

It was noted that in the text of the report, the link to the Student Owned Laptop Guidelines was missing an underscore between “Student” and “owned”. The second sentence of the second paragraph under “Student Response Systems (and use of clickers in exams)” was clarified: “Questions on improved learning showed slightly less positive results” was intended to mean that there were not data showing that learning per se was improved by the use of clickers.

It was also explained that the question of graduate attributes (the goals of a McGill undergraduate education in terms of skills and values that graduates of a McGill undergraduate program are expected to have acquired) evolved from discussions on the applicability of the Boyer Report at McGill, i.e. the Nexus between Research and Teaching. SCTL will be considering this question with renewed interest and submitting a proposal to APC. It was suggested that McGill graduate students be invited to provide input.

#### **04.06 Research Policy Committee**

- 2009 Report to APC (09-APC-11-23)

The 2009 Report from the Research Policy Committee (RPC) will be presented by Associate Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations) Rima Rozen at the next meeting of APC on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

#### **04.07 APC 2009 Report to Senate on Plans and Priorities for 2009-2010 - Draft (09-APC-11-24)**

The Report was **approved for submission to Senate.**

#### **04.08 Other business**

None.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.