
Minutes of the meeting of the **Academic Policy Committee** held on Thursday 27th October 2011, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., Room 310-B, James Building

Present: M.J. Mendelson (chairing), A. Bouchard, E.Y. Clare, H. Dinel, I. Henderson, M. Luke, C. Mandato, A. Misra, J. Potter, C. Urbain (for C.C. Cook), H.M.C. Richard (*Secretary to the Committee*)
Regrets: W. Adams, C.C. Cook, K. Dalkir, O. Gautheron, R. Goldstein, W. Hendershot, L. Hendren., M. Kreiswirth, A.C. Masi, S. McDougall, R. Mayor-Mora, P. Perez-Aleman, L. Stone, W. Thomson, M. Wanderley, C. Weston,
Guest: C. Jensen (item 8); P. Smith (item 9)

Documents circulated at the meeting: none

04.01 Proposed agenda

The proposed agenda was adopted.

04.02 Chair's remarks

The Chair clarified the issue of delegates to APC. APC includes representatives from all faculties and various constituencies; their membership is determined by the Nominating Committee of Senate. It is not within the custom of Senate committees to have a system of delegation, unless specified (for certain ex-officio members and on a regular basis). For a particular issue on the agenda, APC members unable to attend the meeting may choose to have someone sit at the meeting in their stead and those persons may attend the meeting as visitors, but not as participants.

04.03 Minutes of previous meeting held on 6th October 2011

The minutes were approved as circulated.

04.04 Business arising

- **The Liberal Arts programs** proposed by the Faculty of Arts are on hold. APC was informed that due to a lack of resources in the Student Affairs Office of the Faculty of Arts, caused by the MUNACA strike, the Dean and Associate Dean Costopoulos have agreed that the revised changes suggested by APC will be considered and dealt with at a later date. Meanwhile, the University is awaiting MELS's response to a letter seeking advice regarding the level of approval required for the proposed programs (i.e. University vs MELS approval).

- **Centre for Applied Mathematics in Bioscience and Medicine (CAMBAM):** letters of support from the four faculties involved (Dentistry, Engineering, Medicine and Science) were obtained and the proposal has been updated as requested by APC. The proposal for the creation of CAMBAM will be submitted to Senate for approval and further recommendation to the Board of Governors, in APC's 432nd Report to Senate (meeting on 16th November 2011).

04.05 Report on approvals by Senate, 19th October 2011

The proposal for the creation of the Indian Ocean World Centre (IOWC) was approved by Senate at its meeting on 19th October for further presentation to the Board of Governors for final approval..

04.06 APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP)

a) SCTP 2011 Annual Report (*11-APC-10-23*)

As a subcommittee that carries out the detailed work for APC with respect to courses and teaching programs, SCTP presents major program revisions, new degree programs and new program components to APC for approval, and it reports minor program revisions, program retirements and new, revised and retired courses to APC for information only, in accordance with the streamlined approval process outlined in the document "Approval Paths for New and Revised Courses and Teaching Programs" which was approved by APC (14th February 2008) and Senate (5th March 2008) and implemented in September 2008. When it approved the document, Senate requested that a review of the new streamlining procedures be conducted in 2011. It was

stated that, if possible under the constraints of the work disruption, **SCTP would prepare a review report during the 2011-12 academic year.**

b) SCTP Report # 4, 20th October 2011 (*11-APC-10-29*)

It was noted that the MUNACA strike is preventing proposals relating to courses and teaching programs from being processed for submission by faculties to SCTP.

04.07 APC Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL)

- 2011 Annual Report (*11-APC-10-24*)

In response to a question about item 1.2 (Undergraduate outcomes), it was noted that the question of “undergraduate outcomes” or “graduate attributes” (i.e., what students can expect to get out of a McGill education) had derived from the examination, in 2004-2005, of the applicability to McGill of the Boyer Report and the incorporation of research into undergraduate teaching, or the nexus between teaching and research/scholarship. Undergraduate outcomes have generally not been clearly defined at McGill, with the exception of professional programs. A STL workgroup is working on this issue. Australian universities, in particular, have developed clear statements listing the attributes that their students can expect to graduate with.

It was agreed that the question of undergraduate outcomes should be brought to APC.

Regarding 1.1 Principal’s Prize for excellence in Teaching and whether a similar prize exists for teaching assistants, it was noted that prizes to reward the quality of teaching by T.A.s are awarded at the local level by certain units.

04.08 International Education

a) Student Exchange Partnerships - Desautels Faculty of Management

- i. New York University, Stern School of Business (*11-APC-10-25*)
- ii. Université Libre de Bruxelles, Solvay Brussels School (*11-APC-10-26*)
- iii. University of Witswatersrand, Wits Business School (*11-APC-10-27*)

APC approved the three student exchange partnerships with selected partners of PIM (Partnership for International Management), proposed by the Desautels Faculty of Management. Those approvals will be reported to Senate in APC’s 432nd Report (16th November 2011).

b) Student Exchange Partnership – University-wide - with Université de Strasbourg (11-APC-09-01 Revised)

APC approved the proposed University-wide student exchange partnership with Université de Strasbourg as revised according to APC’s suggestion at its meeting on 1st September 2011. This approval will be reported to Senate in APC’s 432nd Report (16th November 2011).

c) Report on Student Exchanges 2011 (*11-APC-10-28*)

Deputy Provost Morton Mendelson presented the report, stating that efforts to achieve and maintain a balance between the number of incoming students and the number of outgoing students had been made by means of vigorous advertising, talks with units, development of an international exchange network within McGill, and better management of student exchanges. The University has been successful in getting more students to go on exchanges.

In the discussion, it was noted that exchanges seem to be particularly active in Law and Management and that the overall proportion of McGill undergraduate students going on exchanges appears small. In response, it was noted that a more appropriate denominator may be the number of students graduating, i.e. knowing the percentage of those students who acquired an international experience. Several reasons explain why the percentage may seem low: 1) coming to McGill is already the international experience for many students; 2) students who take a three-year program need to think very early about going abroad (the University will strive to get the information out early so that students have time to think about it); 3) students may not be aware that supplemental financial aid is available; 4) some teaching programs are so rigid that students hesitate to take time away from the University; 5) students are not sure whether courses taken elsewhere will be recognized by

their Faculty. Some issues have to be dealt with at the University level while others should be dealt with at the Faculty level. The data produced by CREPUQ's *Comité des relations internationales* (VRI) may show how McGill compares with other universities.

Other questions dealt with the countries that McGill has signed student exchange partnership agreements with. It was noted that McGill seeks partner institutions that are equivalent with respect to quality standards and whose students can meet the demands of studying at McGill. The decision to target specific countries is taken into account to some extent, with respect to graduate studies essentially.

It was further noted that an exchange application fee was introduced in the past year. The fee has had no impact on the number of applications and on the number of cancellations. Late cancellations unfortunately prevent students who would otherwise have gone on an exchange from taking advantage of the exchange spot.

The question of maintaining an equilibrium between outgoing and incoming students was said to stem from a financial concern, as the University cannot afford to provide an education to students for whom it receives no funding. Although students generate more or less funding according to their discipline area, the University seeks to achieve a balance at the University level, not the Faculty level. McGill, however, has a number of faculty-specific exchanges. McGill (along with Concordia) has had to reduce its participation in CREPUQ exchanges significantly in order to restore a balance: with the high number of students from France electing to come to study at McGill and Concordia, the two universities were subsidizing, for example, Université du Québec students going to France. McGill now enters into "preferred" exchanges, such as the bilateral student exchange partnership with Université de Strasbourg.

04.09 APC Subcommittee on Academic Unit Reviews - Proposed membership

The Chair reported that Professor Ian Henderson had accepted to chair the Subcommittee on Academic Unit Reviews and that APC had already agreed that the Subcommittee should have a rotating membership. Professor Henderson elaborated on the proposal, stating that Dr Phil Smith and he would be the members ensuring continuity and consistency in the Subcommittee's work, while the membership would rotate with each review. Members would be drawn from APC and from the University-at-large. The group will present summaries of the reviews to APC. Members of APC will be approached in succession to function as summarizing members of the Subcommittee. Professor Henderson and Dr Phil Smith were therefore requesting the authority to approach APC members and other members of the University for serving on the Subcommittee.

In the discussion, the following points were made:

- For each unit review, APC would receive the executive summaries (not provided in all review documentation) and the summary prepared by the APC Subcommittee on Academic Unit Reviews;
- It is essential that the whole documentation should be available to APC (it will be posted in the restricted Documents section of the APC website or in the restricted section of the CURO website). The volume of such documentation is limited by templates and instructions as to length.
- A template will also be prepared for the review summaries presented to APC.
- The APC Subcommittee would not be required to meet often. The bulk of its work would be carried out electronically.
- Subcommittee membership would rotate and, as with the Academic Program Review process, students would be paired with a professor.
- The main task of the Subcommittee will be to think about issues, so that the exercise is meaningful and helpful to the academic unit under review. The summary should be integrative and analytical, and cut across all the documentation.

It was agreed that a proposal should be presented to APC at the next meeting, together with a template for the Subcommittee's summaries.

04.10 Other business

None.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.