

Minutes of a meeting of Senate held on Wednesday, May 9, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. in the Robert Vogel Council Room (Room 232), Leacock Building.

PRESENT:

Angus, Adrian	Itzkowitz, Jake	Pierre, Christophe
Arnaert, Antonia	Jacobs-Starkey, Linda	Quaroni, Enrica
Bennett, Hamilton	Jobin, Pierre-Gabriel	Rhéaume, Alexandra
Bhatt, Vikram	Jonsson, Wilbur	Richard, Marc
Bouchard, Carl-Eric	Kasirer, Nicholas	Robaire, Bernard
Bracewell, Robert	King, Daniel	Ryan, Dominic H.
Burns, David	Kirk, Andrew	Saroyan, Alenoush
Cartwright, Glenn	Kreiswirth, Martin	Schmidt, Janine
Chadha, Roshi	Kurien, John	Sedgwick, Donald
Chase, Ronald	Levy, Barry	Serero, Didier
Chiang, Albert	Lewis, Brian	Shaughnessy, Honora
Cox, Amy	Lund, James	Smith, Michael
Dear, Judy	Manfredi, Christopher	Tallant, Beverlea
Dowsett-Johnston, Ann	Maric, Milan	Thérien, Denis
Dowsley, Martha	Masi, Anthony	Todd, Peter
Ezzy-Jorgensen, Frances	McDougall, Sally	Upham, Finn
Fujinaga, Ichiro	McGruthers, Lauren	Wade, Kevin
Glaser, Alison	McLean, Donald	Waugh, Sean
Glenn, Jane	McSweeney, Kerry	Whitesides, Sue
GowriSankaran, Kohur	Mendelson, Morton	Wolfson Christina
Grant, Martin	Munroe-Blum, Heather (<i>Chair</i>)	Zannis-Hadjopoulos, Maria
Harpp, David	Newlove, Chris	Pelletier, Johanne (<i>Secretary</i>)
Henderson, Ian	Paré, Anthony	
Hoechsmann, Michael	Peterson, Kathryn	

REGRETS: Stefano Algieri, Franco Carli, Annick Chapedelaine, Jim Henderson, John Hobbins, Frederick Kingdom, Richard I. Levin, Charles Lin, Philip Oxhorn, Gary Pেকেles, Richard Pound, Robert Rabinovitch, Marilyn Scott, Dora Maria Skaf, Roger Slee, Sarah Stroud.

The Principal opened her remarks by welcoming Mr. Daniel King, a new Senator from SSMU. She also announced that, as a new tradition initiated by Secretary-General, there will be a wine and cheese reception after the last Senate meeting on May 23.

1. REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The report of the Steering Committee (06-07:10) was received.

Item 1. Approval of Minutes of Senate, Ms. Upham requested that the minutes be amended as follows:

Page 7, first sentence to read "Ms. Upham stated that students support the projects coming through CCSS. However, students would appreciate being consulted more widely about the levelling of these fees."

Professor Quaroni's name was added to the list of those present.

With these changes to the minutes, on motion by Professor Robaire, seconded by Professor Paré, the minutes of the meeting of April 18, 2007, were approved.

Item 2. Confidential Session, On motion by Professor Tallant, seconded by Professor Zannis-Hadjopoulos, Senate agreed to move into Confidential Session for discussion of the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D06-62).

Item 3. Committee of the Whole, on motion by Professor Robaire, seconded by Professor Tallant, Senate agreed to enter into Committee of the Whole, with Dean Todd in the chair, to discuss the Report on Research (D06-67).

Item 4. Speaking Rights, On motion by Ms. Dowsely, seconded by Professor Wolfson, Professor William Foster was granted speaking rights to answer questions regarding the Revision of the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Librarian Staff (D06-66).

On motion by Ms. Rhéaume, seconded by Mr. Angus, Professor Norman Miller was granted speaking rights to answer questions regarding the Report of the Ombudsperson (D06-60).

2. AGENDA

On motion by Professor Paré, seconded by Professor Robaire, the agenda was approved.

3. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Principal opened her remarks by addressing the security breach leading to the web availability of select student records, explaining that the breach was due to a combination of new software code for McGill's search engine and files being inadvertently left on accessible servers. This problem was resolved within the day it occurred. She informed Senate that the Provost has mandated the Chief Information Officer and the Registrar to review the processes and procedures related to changes to our file servers and information systems, and she assured Senate that the administration takes the privacy of student records and the security of its information very seriously. She noted that all affected individuals would receive a personal notification and conveyed apologies on behalf of the administration for this incident.

She then addressed the issues surrounding the financial problems experienced by the Université du Québec à Montréal on recent construction projects. She noted that while we concur with Education Minister Courchesne on the university's obligation and responsibility for financial controls, we would not favour the imposition of regulatory measures on all universities. Through CREPUQ and through independent representation, McGill is asserting our good management and governance processes and is working hard to protect the autonomy of the University and to ensure that the principle of autonomy for the university system is upheld.

The Principal reported that the G13 Universities are meeting with government leaders in Ottawa, and she had met with the Finance Minister and the President of the Treasury to reinforce the need for reinvestment in research.

Commenting on the fall 2007 launch of McGill's campaign, the Principal noted that Vice-Principal Dowsett Johnston will speak briefly about the campaign and the launch at the next meeting of Senate.

Finally she congratulated members of the community on recognition received. She noted that Dr. Michael Petrides, James McGill Professor, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She also congratulated Professor Jake Barralat, who holds Canada Research Chair in Osteoinductive Biomaterials, at the Faculty of Dentistry for a breakthrough with colleagues at two other universities: they have adapted a printer to produce synthetic, three-dimensional structures to make bone grafts. She announced that last month, McGill hosted meetings of Universitas 21. As part of this event, Professor Jan Jorgensen, Desautels Faculty of Management, organized a half-day Symposium on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Dean Nicholas Kasirer, Faculty of Law, and the Director of McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, Antonia Maioni, chaired panels on that day.

She further congratulated a McGill team of engineering students who clinched the Formula Hybrid International Competition held at New Hampshire International Speedway the preceding week. McGill's entry, described as "reliably simple", also won the autocross event and ranked second in design, and the team won a first place in the presentation category.

For the second year running, McGill will be sending an impressive eight law clerks to the Supreme Court, the most selective legal employer in Canada. They are:

- ♦ David Sandomierski
- ♦ Ewa Krajewska
- ♦ Julien Morissette
- ♦ Christine Mainville
- ♦ Sean Kelly
- ♦ Pierre-Olivier Savoie
- ♦ Jacob Wilson and
- ♦ Kirk Shannon

She congratulated the students and Dean Kasirer and Professor Frédéric Bachand, who supported them.

McGill biochemist Philippe Gros, recently discovered a gene that causes spina bifida. Dr. Gros' discovery was published in the April 5 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

4. QUESTION RE ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Ms. Rhéaume asked the following question:

In the last Senate meeting of the 2005-2006 academic year, Senate has adopted a new policy moving all course evaluations online. As a result, professors no longer have to devote class time to the completion of questionnaires in class. They are, however, supposed to ask their students to complete the evaluation, as those are important in their personal evaluation.

Since then, very diverse practices have been observed as far as advertising the evaluations go in different Faculties.

Moreover, despite promises of making the results available to students online, they are not yet available.

Given the new method of feedback collection, it is important to evaluate the results of the new measure, and hence the following questions arise:

- 1- *What percentage of students participated in the online course evaluations? Did the participation rate increase/decrease from previous years?*
- 2- *When will the dissemination of main results be available on-line for all students to consult?*
- 3- *What recommendations have been given to professors to increase student participation?*
- 4- *What measures will be taken to inform students of the importance of their participation in the evaluation process?*

Professor Mendelson thanked Ms. Rhéaume for raising this important issue and also Professor Cynthia Weston (Director, Teaching and Learning Services) and her colleague, Ms. Effi Kaoukis for their input. He provided the following answer:

The response rate for the Winter 2007 term is not yet available. However, I can report on previous terms: Fall 2005 — 53.6% with 1041 courses evaluated online; Winter 2006 — 51.0% with 1261 courses evaluated online; Fall 2006 — 48.5% with 2200 courses evaluated online.

McGill instructors report that response rates for online course evaluations seem much lower than for paper-based evaluations, which would be consistent with the literature on the subject. When universities move to online evaluation systems, response rates generally drop from about 70% on paper to about 50% online. However, response rates tend to increase over time when appropriate strategies are implemented to encourage students to complete the evaluations. Moreover, even with lower response rates online, the quantity and quality of comments increases over paper-based evaluations.

It is important to note a consistent finding that responses from online systems are not systematically biased, even when response rates are relatively low. Students who are dissatisfied with a course are not more likely to respond than are other students.

There are a number of strategies that can be used to increase response rates:

Instructors should communicate the value of course evaluations:

- *Students tell us that they don't know the purpose or value of course evaluations, so it is helpful for instructors to describe changes that have been made to teaching based on course evaluation results.*
- *On course outlines, it would be helpful to include the dates for the course evaluation period. Also it would be helpful to include a statement about why course evaluations are important and how the instructor might use results to plan courses or change teaching.*

Instructors should encourage students to fill out course evaluations in other ways:

- *In some courses, the instructor lets the students out of class early to do their evaluations.*

Instructors should give permission to disseminate results:

- *Numerical data from this term's course evaluations will be available online by August 2007, at least for courses in which instructors have granted permission for us to do so.*
- *Instructors should communicate to their classes that they are giving permission for student access to the numerical portion of course evaluations, which is a concrete way of convincing students that there is a purpose to completing the evaluations.*

The University also takes steps:

- *Reminders are set up during the evaluation period:*
 - *Four automatic e-mail reminders are sent (two for summer courses)*
 - *pop-up window appears on MINERVA and WebCT Vista,*
 - *links to Mercury are widely accessible*
- *This semester, all students who completed all their course evaluations were entered into a draw for four iPods.*
- *Next year we will work with student societies to communicate to students the importance of completing course evaluations.*

For more information, see <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/courseevaluations/>.

Ms. Rhéaume asked about the measures available for professors to stimulate student responses.

Professor Mendelson replied that there is a list of suggestions available, and we are trying to disseminate the information as much as possible.

Professor Wolfson asked if there is feedback on fatigue factor as students are faced with completing course evaluations for several courses on their own time. She suggested having focus groups held with students, especially in Departments where the response rate is low, to get information on why students are not filling out course evaluations.

Professor Mendelson agreed that these are important issues. He indicated that students who have more course evaluations to fill out complete fewer of them. The data obtained from course evaluation online is the same as the data obtained from the paper course evaluations. He noted that course evaluations are only one aspect of evaluating competency of teaching, but they are important in terms of providing information to students.

Professor Jonsson spoke about the letter regarding the lottery of iPods. He noted that it was sent in the name of instructors. He asked whether such a letter would in future instead be in the name of the administration.

Professor Mendelson apologized for the letter, which was sent out without his knowledge. He noted that necessary changes were made as soon as he was aware of it and affirmed that the mistake would not be replicated in future messages encouraging students to complete evaluations.

Professor Saroyan asked what provisions are available to support new faculty members who need these course evaluations for reappointment or tenure purposes.

Professor Mendelson explained that there is no data to indicate that recent course evaluations do not fulfill the same function as the course evaluations collected previously. He said that we are doing the best to encourage students to fill out these course evaluations. He further explained that moving to online system has proved effective in reducing significantly the administrative workload, as well as costs and paper consumption.

Professor Saroyan noted her appreciation for lower administrative costs but reiterated her concerns about junior faculty members who have to produce evidence of their teaching.

In reply to a question from Ms. McGruthers about whether professors would be required to provide reasons for not posting their course evaluations, Professor Mendelson explained that according to Quebec law, the University cannot post personal information about either instructors or students without their consent. Therefore, professors do not have to provide the reasons why they do not want to post their evaluations. However, we are trying to encourage them to post their evaluations.

In reply to a question from Ms. Upham, Professor Mendelson indicated that we do not know the number of professors who allow their results to be disseminated. He explained that this is the first year moving into the online system permission form for instructors. Efforts are being made to make it easier for instructors to provide their permission.

Professor GowriSankaran suggested a default situation where professors opting out from publishing their results have to send a request. Prof. Jonsson pointed out that silence does not indicate consent and therefore moving in the suggested direction would not fulfill the requirement of obtaining consent.

The Principal suggested that Senate revisit the issue of course evaluation in the next academic year.

Professor Mendelson noted that the policy on course evaluation is being updated and will come to Senate in the fall.

5. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE HONORARY DEGREES AND CONVOCATIONS COMMITTEE

Senate moved into confidential session to discuss the Confidential Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D06-62) (this minute is not published or circulated but is attached to the permanent minutes of Senate as Appendix "A").

6. 390TH REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Professor Masi presented the 390th Report of the Academic Policy and Planning Committee (D06-65).

Item 1.A.1. New Teaching Programs, Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Law, the European Studies options in the programs leading to the M.A. in History, the M.A. in Political Science and the LL.M. in Law as listed here below, were approved:

M.A. in History; Non-Thesis – European Studies (45 cr.);
M.A. in History; European Studies (45 cr.);
M.A. in Political Science; European Studies (45 cr.);
M.A. in Political Science; Non-Thesis - European Studies (45 cr.); and
LL.M. in Law; European Studies (46 cr.).

Item 1.A.2. Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Science, the Graduate Option in Gender and Women's Studies in the programs leading to the M.A. in Anthropology, the M.A. and Ph.D. in Art History, the M.A. and

Ph.D. in French, the M.A. in Geography, the Ph.D. in Islamic Studies, the M.A. in Political Science, the M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology as listed here below, were approved:

M.A. in Anthropology; Gender and Women's Studies (48 cr.);
M.A. in Art History; Non-Thesis – Gender and Women's Studies (45 cr.);
Ph.D. in Art History; Gender and Women's Studies (0 cr.);
M.A. in French; Gender and Women's Studies (48 cr.);
Ph.D. in French; Gender and Women's Studies (0 cr.);
M.A. in Geography; Gender and Women's Studies (48 cr.);
Ph.D. in Islamic Studies; Gender and Women's Studies (0 cr.);
M.A. in Political Science; Non-Thesis – Gender and Women's Studies (45 cr.);
M.A. in Sociology; Non-Thesis – Gender and Women's Studies (45 cr.);
M.A. in Sociology; Gender and Women's Studies (48 cr.); and
Ph.D. in Sociology; Gender and Women's Studies (0 cr.).

Item I.A.3. Centre for Continuing Education, the Graduate Certificate in Human Resources Management, the Graduate Certificate in Public Relations Management, the Graduate Certificate Entrepreneurship, and the Graduate Certificate in Accounting Practice were approved.

Item I.A.4. Desautels Faculty of Management, the M.B.A.; Global Leadership Concentration and the M.B.A.; Technological Innovation, Operations and Information Management Concentration were approved.

Item I.B.1. Major Program Revisions, Faculty of Education, the major revisions to the M.Ed. in Educational Psychology; Non-Thesis were approved.

Item I.B.2. Desautels Faculty of Management, the major revisions to the M.B.A. were approved.

Item II. Approved in the Name of Senate and item III. For the Information of Senate were noted.

7. REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Professor Tallant presented the Report of the Nominating Committee (D06-63).

Part A: Regular Business

Item 1. Statutory Selection Committees, was approved.

Item 2. University Tenure Committee for Recruitment, Mr. Marc Richard was appointed as a member on the University Tenure Committee for Recruitment for University Libraries for a two-year term commencing September 1, 2007.

Mr. Louis Houle (Schulich Library of Science and Engineering) was appointed as an alternate member on the University Tenure Committee for Recruitment for University Libraries for a three-year term commencing September 1, 2007.

Item 3. Advisory Committees

3.1 For the Selection of a Dean of Dentistry, Professor Christina Wolfson (Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health) was appointed as a Senate representative to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Selection of a Dean of Dentistry.

3.2. For the Selection of a Dean of Law, the following were appointed as Senate representatives of Senate on the Advisory Committee for the Selection of a Dean of Law:

Professor Nancy Ross (Geography)
Professor Graham Bell (Biology)
Professor Kathy Cullen (Physiology) [alternate]
Professor Robert Kok (Bioresource Engineering) [alternate]

PART B: For the Information of Senate

1. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATE CHAIRS FOR THE UNIVERSITY TENURE COMMITTEE – UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

It was noted that Mr. Adam Gacek, Head of Islamic Studies Library, would be the alternate chair on the University Tenure Committee for Libraries in the event that the director is unable to chair the University Tenure Committee, or is disqualified for cause or conflict of interest.

8. REVISION OF THE REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF LIBRARIAN STAFF

Professor Masi presented the Revision of the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Librarian Staff (D06-66).

Professor Glenn noted substantive change in academic duties between the old and the new regulations and asked for more information about the extent of the change. She referred to item 1.2.2 and asked whether the responsibility of formal and informal instruction mentioned in the old regulations still forms part of the librarian's academic duties and if so, where that is reflected in the proposed revisions.

Professor Foster explained that if teaching was performed by librarian staff as part of their duties, it would be embraced within the general categories of duty mentioned. He called upon the Director of Libraries to provide more clarification on this issue.

Ms. Schmidt explained that some librarians teach as part of their "position responsibilities", usually in conducting the information skills programs linked to teaching offerings within faculties. A few librarians teach more widely, which would be captured under the category of "other contributions to the University". She added that new criteria would be developed, in a consultative fashion, in each of the areas of academic duty, once these regulations are approved.

Professor Glenn then asked whether research is optional for librarians and whether they must obtain permission to conduct research.

Ms. Schmidt read a draft statement outlining some of the representative activities under the second category of academic duties represented by the phrase "professional and scholarly activities, which may include research".

Professor Glenn then summarized her understanding, noting that under the new regulations, research is a possible component of activity at the option of the librarian in question. She deduced that the ground rules have not changed significantly.

Professor Foster added that the regulations establish librarians as members of academic staff who enjoy academic freedom and who have duties and responsibilities to fulfill. Professor Masi stated that serious consultations have been carried since 2004 in trying to arrive at a definition of librarians as an academic category that has a different and distinctive contribution to make as compared to faculty. He disagreed with the statement that the ground rules have not significantly changed.

Professor Glenn then referred to section 4.2 Promotion to Full Librarians, and raised concerns regarding the change in definition of academic duties that librarians tenured under the old regulations would be subjected to when considered for promotion to full librarian.

Professor Masi explained that rules cannot be changed midstream for those already in a track. He pointed out that of the tenured librarians at McGill, a minority underwent the tenure process because when tenure was implemented for librarians, professional librarians already in place were given tenure. We are now giving the option for those hired on a non-tenure track as library professionals (sessional librarians) to move into a new set of regulations.

Professor Glenn stated that it is her understanding that the basic underpinnings of fairness have not been affected by the change of the regulations, because the job description remains essentially the same.

Professor Masi agreed with both assumptions and emphasized that it is the librarianship that remains the principal criterion for promotion and that it will be easier for librarians to apply for tenure and promotion as we develop specific criteria for librarians.

In reply to a question from Professor Paré regarding the statement read by Ms. Schmidt and its effect on the document and the vote, Professor Foster explained that, under the new regulations, certain criteria would have to be developed, after the regulations are adopted, to address each of the academic duties. They are not part of the regulations to be voted on.

The Principal ascertained whether Senate was ready to vote on the regulations. The vote was called, and the regulations were approved as per the resolutions circulated to Senate in document (D06-66).

The Principal and the Provost thanked all the members who worked diligently to bring these regulations to Senate.

9. REPORT ON RESEARCH

Senate then moved into Committee of the Whole for 45 minutes with Dean Todd in the chair. Vice-Principal Thérien presented the Report on Research and a discussion followed. The notes from this Committee of the Whole are attached to these minutes as Appendix “B”.

10. THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OMBUDSPERSON FOR STUDENTS

The Nineteenth Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Students (D06-60) was received.

Mr. Angus indicated that many other universities have a professional ombudsperson and asked about the advantages and disadvantages of having a faculty member as an ombudsperson.

Professor Miller thanked Mr. Angus for such an interesting question and said it is being discussed at other universities where an ombudsperson position is being created. As to the advantages, he said that a faculty member is well aware of how the University works and is considered as a colleague by other faculty members. The main disadvantage is that a faculty member could be considered in a conflict of interest.

In reply to a question from Professor Zannis-Hadjopoulos regarding the increase in rate of harassment cases, Professor Miller stated that it is hard to comment without doing intensive research. However, he noted that the culture of the University is changing so that students are more comfortable now in talking about issues such as harassment. The fact that incidence of other issues is dropping is a positive sign that various Faculties, associate deans and people responsible for student affairs -- and even the Office of the Ombudsperson -- are having an effect.

In reply to a question from Mr. King, Professor Miller explained that the role of the Ombudsperson is neutral. In any dispute there are two sides to the issue and the role of the Ombudsperson is to weigh both sides and come up with a recommendation that is meant to satisfy both parties.

Ms. Upham asked what impact the Task Force for Student Life and Learning will have on the role of the Ombudsperson at the University.

Professor Miller said he welcomes steps towards integration of student services within the University. He said he could not predict the impact of the Task Force on the role of the Ombudsperson but welcomed the opportunity to be part of the dialogue.

Ms. Dowsely noted that 42% of request to the Ombudsperson involved graduate students and asked about trends and recommendations for these cases.

Professor Miller noted that situation of graduate students is unique. The relationship between a supervisor and a student is central to the well being of the student. The supervisor has the power to guide and evaluate the student and to write letters of recommendation, which create an imbalance in the relationship – and the potential for problems in the event of personality conflicts.

11. UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARSHIPS AND STUDENT AID ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

The Annual Report of the University Committee on Scholarships and Student Aid (D06-61) was received.

Meeting ended at 5:10 pm

REPORT ON RESEARCH
Appendix “B”

Following a presentation by Vice-Principal Thérien, there was a discussion period.

Professor Jonsson noted that the Sloan research fellow Jacques Verstraëte is leaving McGill after one year due, partly due to difficulty in settling in, which started with lack of day care facilities at McGill. He then asked about the criteria used to select the research achievements presented and whether there was anything outside the health sciences sector worthy of selection.

Vice-Principal Thérien replied that the selection was partly based on international media coverage. He noted that the researchers mentioned included one from the natural sciences and engineering and one from the social sciences and humanities.

Professor Roulet said that the revision of the strategic research plan should not be listed as a sub-bullet of research performance but should stand on its own as one of the main pillars of the research portfolio.

In reply to a question from Mr. Richard regarding the definition of the G4 group (Universities of British Columbia, Toronto, Montréal and McGill), Vice-Principal Thérien replied that these universities are considered in general to be the top universities in Canada and our closest comparators.

Mr. Bouchard thanked Vice-Principal Thérien for his thorough presentation. He asked how students could get involved in helping to secure more research funding and if student involvement is taken into consideration in these competitions.

Vice-Principal Thérien replied that there has been a focus on undergraduate research as a meaningful concept not only at McGill but across North America in recent. He reiterated the importance of developing undergraduate research at McGill and cited the example of the Dean of the Faculty of Science who is a leader in promoting research programs for undergraduates. Furthermore, students are contributing in an indirect way to securing these grants by feeding research at a significant level.

Professor Wade referred to the NSERC figures and asked if NSERC is devoting more money to new researchers versus the renewals.

Vice-Principal Thérien replied that the results correspond to the explicit will of NSERC to allocate a significant portion of their funding to researchers at the early stages of their careers. He said he is concerned that top research is not being funded at the level it should be.

Professor Robaire thanked the Vice-Principal for an enlightening presentation. He then asked him to comment on how well McGill is doing in securing funding from the Quebec granting councils.

Vice-Principal Thérien stated that McGill's performance is strong but could be better with respect to FQRSC funding.

Professor Robaire referred to the amount of \$15 million in contracts with the private sector, and noted that the amount has not kept up with the inflation rate over the last decade. Despite this, we have seen an increase in the number of people working in the Office of Technology Transfer, with some cutbacks in the last few weeks. He asked about the approaches being taken to improve our relationship with the private sector.

Vice-Principal Thérien noted that this is a complex question. He explained that OTT has been operating with a deficit in the past few years, which is why budget cuts were taken recently. He confirmed that the indicators are flat over the last few years. He said that the first step in improving the results is to understand the data.

Regarding our poor recent results in competitions for funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, Professor Robaire said they must reflect some other issues than the explanation given by the CFI president – that McGill is a collection of individual stars rather than a coherent galaxy. He noted that this

description of McGill would have applied equally at the time of earlier rounds, when our results were much better. He pointed out that there has not been any discussion at the level of Faculties to assess our failures and find ways to improve our performance.

Vice-Principal Thérien explained that a process has started and everyone will be informed of the steps that have to be taken at the Faculty level. In a discussion at a recent Research Policy Committee meeting, decisions were taken to better organize our processes to develop projects in continuous time for CFI and other major competitions.

Dean Kasirer asked about the immensity of the Vice-Principal's portfolio and in particular about the relationship between research and international relations, which are both represented in the Vice-Principal's title. He asked whether Vice-Principal Thérien could comment on how these mandates fit together and noted that the pairing is not the model in most universities.

Vice-Principal Thérien replied that while it is not the norm, he believes it is right to pair research and international relations. At CREPUQ meetings on international relations, much of the discussion revolves around student mobility and student agreements, which mainly fall under the Provost's portfolio. He explained that the focus of international relations in his portfolio is, on the other hand, on its relationship with research. He said he views student mobility as a consequence of research partnerships that we are constructing and he believes this is the right perspective.

In reply to a question from Ms. Upham about how we can facilitate interdisciplinary research, Vice-Principal Thérien explained that this has been discussed for many years but its implementation is not complete yet. He cited an example of an institute in California built on the theme of interdisciplinarity and said he is constructing a pilot project that would borrow on ideas from such a model.

Professor Wolfson thanked Vice-Principal Thérien in advance for his support for the preparation of large grants and CFI applications. She said that in CFI grant competitions, there is a large component about training of which we are perhaps not taking advantage, given our leadership in many national and international training programs, particularly those supported by CIHR. She wondered if the Vice-Principal's office could coordinate among the training programs which are based at McGill, so that they might work together.

Vice-Principal Thérien agreed.

In reply to a question from Professor Paré regarding the image of individual stars versus galaxies, Vice-Principal Thérien gave the example of the proposal for the nanotechnology infrastructure, which did not have a main theme. He explained that his understanding of successful CFI proposals is that they are built around a central concept bringing together top researchers from different fields. He added that the recently submitted Letter of Intent for the Research Hospital Fund was developed in this way, and he therefore expects it to succeed.

The Principal thanked Vice-Principal Thérien for his presentation.

Senate rose from the Committee of the Whole.