Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October, 2017, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts Council Room, Arts 160.

PRESENT: Dean Bruce Lennox (Chair), Axel Hundemer (Vice-Chair), Director Nicole Allard, Professors Huy Bui, Barbara Hales, Michael Hendricks, Michael Langer, Timothy Merlis, Anthony Mittermaier, Johanna Neslehova, Ana Nyzhnyk, Gillian O’Driscoll, Jeanne Paquette, Kenneth Ragan, Kathy Roulet; Natalie Waters; Simona Bene Watts, Riley Bowker, Nathaniel Leitao, Candace Yang; Lina Alvarez, Josie D’Amico

REGRETS: Professors Gail Chmura, Greg Marczyński; Lia Huo, Ellie Joung, Michael Wolman

GUESTS: Mr. Ryan Bouma, Prof. Jérôme Waldispühl

DOCUMENTS: AC-17-10 (Rev.) AC-17-11 to AC-17-25

Dean Lennox called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

(1) Item #4, Ph.D. in Psychology; Behavioural Neuroscience Option, PSYC 781, PSYC 782, was tabled to the next Academic Committee meeting due to missing consultation reports on the program.  
(2) Item #10, GEOG 420, was withdrawn from the Agenda by the Department of Geography.

Ms. Roulet moved, seconded by Prof. Ragan, that the amended Agenda be adopted.

The motion carried.

(2) MINUTES OF 26 SEPTEMBER, 2017

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Prof. Hendricks, that the Minutes be approved.

The motion carried.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 110.11, Supplemental Examinations

203.1 Associate Dean Hundemer said that at the last Academic Committee meeting of 26 September, 2017, he asked representatives to talk to their departments for comments on supplemental examinations. He said he had heard back from two departments, the Department of Mathematics & Statistics, and the Department of Psychology. He encouraged representatives who have not had the chance to discuss this with their department to do so.

203.2 Comments by representatives from the following departments/school were:  
(1) Biology: Some members were in favour of offering supplemental examinations but this should be made contingent on mid-term examination results.
(2) Computer Science: Five people from the undergraduate curriculum committee, were all in favour of eliminating supplemental examinations.

(3) Physics: More than 50% of the Department agreed that supplemental examinations should be eliminated, or that the statistics should at least be made available to students. Another comment was that in many universities, supplemental examinations were not offered. Also, overwhelmingly, students who write supplemental examinations, do not perform well during the entire course, and by offering supplemental examinations does not benefit students.

203.3 Dean Lennox explained that supplemental examinations arose in the days of pre-credit courses. He said that when a student failed a course, the student would be required to repeat an entire year.

203.4 Associate Dean Hundemer said that he will bring a proposal to a future Academic Committee meeting, after he receives comments from all departments.

Since consultation reports were not available, the following items were tabled to a future Academic Committee meeting.

(4) PSYCHOLOGY

Ph.D. in Psychology; Behavioural Neuroscience Option  AC-17-10(Rev.)

New Courses:

PSYC 781  AC-17-11
PSYC 782  AC-17-12

(5) COGNITIVE SCIENCE

- Interfaculty in Cognitive Science  AC-17-13
- Honours in Cognitive Science  AC-17-14

205.1 Mr. Ryan Bouma, Interdisciplinary Program Advisor, Science Office for Undergraduate Advising (SOUSA), described the changes in the Interfaculty and Honours Programs in Cognitive Science. He said the revisions were mostly housekeeping in nature to align the two programs.

Director Allard moved, seconded by Prof. O'Driscoll, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

(6) CONCURRENT B.SC./B.ED. PROGRAMS  AC-17-15

206.1 Director Allard said that the concurrent B.Sc./B.Ed. Programs were being retired since (i) the concurrent degree has been replaced by the Master of Science in Teaching (MATL); (ii) there have been no new students admitted to the programs since 2011; and (iii) the last student graduated with the B.Sc. and B.Ed. in May, 2017.

206.2 The programs are:

- Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)
  Major Concentration Biology  Cell/Molecular with Minor Chemistry for Teachers (135 credits)
- Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)
  Major Concentration Biology  Organismal with Minor Chemistry for Teachers (135 credits)
- Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)
  Major Concentration Biology  Cell/Molecular with Minor Physics for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Concentration Biology Organismal with Minor Physics for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Concentration Chemistry with Minor Biology for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Concentration Chemistry with Minor Physics for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Concentration Physics with Minor Biology for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Mathematics for Teachers (135 credits)
• Concurrent Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Major Concentration Physics with Minor Chemistry for Teachers (135 credits)

Director Allard moved, seconded by Prof. Langer, that the above concurrent B.Sc./B.Ed. Degree programs be retired.

The motion carried.

(7) PROPOSED CHANGES TO PROTOCOL FOR LISTING FIELD STUDY SEMESTERS ON TRANSCRIPT (FOR INFORMATION) AC-17-16

207.1 Director Allard introduced the above document on the proposed changes for labelling Field Study Semesters (FSS's) on transcripts. Currently, the FSS's are not noted on the students' transcripts, and unless someone is familiar with the course numbers and titles involved, it is not possible to see on the transcript that a student is taking part in an FSS. As a result, there were issues both in terms of government reporting and funding for students' travel. Director Allard said that Enrolment Services has agreed that labelling the FSS on the transcripts can be done. Another advantage for the notation is that it will provide additional information for graduate school and for future employers.

207.2 In response to a member, Director Allard said that she will look into whether a notation could be included on the transcripts for students who are taking part in a McGill Study Away or Exchange Program. She added that in her experience, such changes on Minerva/Banner could take a very long time to implement.

(8) PHYSICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE
New Honours Joint Program:
- Honours Program in Physics & Computer Science AC-17-17

208.1 Prof. Ragan introduced the above Joint Honours Program in Physics & Computer Science. The Academic Committee had previously approved a number of ad hoc programs in Fall 2016, and there has been a demand for proposing the program. He said that at the Academic Committee of 21 March, 2017, there had been a lengthy discussion concerning the credit count for the program and about MATH 222. These issues were now addressed in the revised proposal by reducing the number of credits for the Complementary courses.

208.2 Associate Dean Hundemer said that he was in favour of the revised proposal but that the Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP) may not approve a program with a credit weight range, i.e., “78 or 81 credits”.

208.3 In reply to a member, Prof. Langer said that if students have not previously taken both MATH 222 and COMP 202 (or its equivalent), students should not be in the program because they would not succeed. Associate Dean Hundemer said that
freshman students can take COMP 202 in their freshman year because it is part of the freshman program, whereas, MATH 222 is not a freshman course and therefore it has to be counted in the proposed program.

208.4 After some discussion about the program credit weight and MATH 222 versus COMP 202, Dean Lennox recommended that Associate Dean Hundemer discuss the program and its credit weight with the Chair of the SCTP.

208.5 Prof. Ragan moved, seconded by Prof. Langer, that two versions of the program be adopted, i.e., one version with a total credit weight of 78 credits, and the other version with a total program credit weight of 81 credits, pending the outcome of Associate Dean Hundemer's discussion with the Chair of the SCTP.

The motion carried.

(9) Mathematics & Statistics
New Course:
MATH 698 Reading Course in Probability AC-17-18
4 credits

209.1 After introducing the above new graduate reading course, MATH 698, Prof. Neslehova moved, seconded by Associate Dean Hundemer, that the course be adopted.

The motion carried.

The following item was withdrawn by the Department of Geography
(10) GEOGRAPHY
GEOG 420 (Changes: description, prerequisites, restrictions) AC-17-19

(11) COMPUTER SCIENCE
COMP 252 Honours Algorithms & Data Struct AC-17-20
Changes: prerequisites, restrictions
3 credits

211.1 Prof. Langer said that for many years, some Honours Math students have been taking MATH 235 instead of MATH 240 as a prerequisite course for COMP 252, and history has shown that these students have sufficient background for COMP 252. Therefore, the Department of Mathematics & Statistics has asked that MATH 235 be included as a formal prerequisite course for Honours Math students. Furthermore, under Supplementary Information, an advising note has been added informing students that if they are unfamiliar with basic combinatorial counting methods covered in MATH 240 and not in MATH 235, students should consult with the instructor of COMP 252.

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Prof. Neslehova, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

COMP 330 Theory of Computation AC-17-21
Change in prerequisites
3 credits

211.2 Prof. Langer explained that currently COMP 251 and MATH 240 are prerequisite courses for COMP 330. However, students who have taken COMP 251 would also have taken MATH 235 or MATH 240 as a corequisite course for COMP 251.
Therefore, it becomes unnecessary to list MATH 240 as a prerequisite for COMP 330, because students would have the necessary math background with either math courses.

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Prof. Neslehova, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

COMP 559  Fund. Computer Animation  AC-17-22
Change in prerequisites
4 credits

Prof. Langer said that currently the prerequisite course for COMP 559 was COMP 557 (Fundamentals of Computer Graphics). However, many students were not taking COMP 557 prior to taking COMP 559, which meant that not all students had the same amount of knowledge. Having determined that the material in COMP 557 was not necessary for COMP 559, the instructor has decided to remove COMP 557 as a prerequisite course, and replace the prerequisite with basic Math and Computer Science prerequisites. These basic prerequisites are needed to succeed in COMP 559 and already serve as prerequisites for COMP 557.

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Prof. Hendricks, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

COMP 564  Adv Comp Bio Meth & Res  AC-17-23
Changes: title, description, corequisites
3 credits

Prof. Jérôme Waldispühl, School of Computer Science, said that the previous instructor of COMP 564 left McGill about 10 years ago, and that, for the last two years, he has been offering the course as a Topics course (COMP 598). By revising the course description and title to reflect the current course content, he would like to formalize COMP 564.

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Associate Dean Hundemer, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

(12) McGILL SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT
ENVR 301  Environmental Research Design  AC-17-24
Change in corequisites
3 credits

Ms. Roulet said the change in corequisites was to strongly encourage Environment students to complete the 200-level courses prior to taking ENVR 301. Currently, many students are unable to complete the 200-level courses in sequence because often students participate in a Field Study Semester, or Study Away or Exchange Programs. Also, there were scheduling conflicts because courses are offered by a wide variety of units in some of the Environment programs. The aim of the proposed revisions was to allow Environment students to prioritize their curriculum, but at the same time allow flexibility. She added that
the requirement was not meant to discourage non-Environment students to take ENVR 301. ENVR 301 is offered both in the Fall and Winter terms.

212.2 After a long discussion about the purpose of the proposed changes, the implication that non-Environment students are capable of succeeding in the course without having the prerequisites, and the fact that students with the appropriate prerequisites were much more likely to contribute and engage in the 400-level courses than those without the prerequisites, the following statement should be included under Prerequisites in place of the proposed Corequisites:

“Completion of U1 Required courses in Environment or permission of instructor.”

Ms. Roulet moved, seconded by Prof. Paquette, that the changes be approved with the above modification.

The motion carried.

212.3 Dean Lennox asked that the McGill School of Environment report back to the Academic Committee about the situation.

212.4 Ms. Roulet described the proposed changes in ENVR 401 which is the capstone course in the Environment programs. She said that a statistical course (MATH 203 or equivalent) was added as a prerequisite since it has always been required in all the different degree programs in Environment, and by explicitly stating that MATH 203 was a prerequisite for ENVR 401, it will be more likely that students fulfill the prerequisite requirement prior to the final year of their studies. Other changes include revisions in the course description to reflect current practice, and a correction in the name of a program under Restrictions.

Ms. Roulet moved, seconded by Prof. Paquette, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

(13) RETIREMENT OF NON-OFFERED GRADUATE PROGRAMS (For Information)
- M.Sc. in Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences (Non-Thesis)
- M.Sc.(A) Chemistry Qualifying
- Graduate Diploma in Earth & Planetary Sciences
- M.Sc.(A) in Earth & Planetary Sciences (Non-Thesis)
- M.Sc.(A) in Psychology (Non-Thesis)

213.1 Associate Dean Hundemer explained that the Faculty reviewed the above five graduate programs that are currently not being offered and consulted with the relevant departments, who agreed that these programs can be retired. Of note here is that only a program that has been retired for no more than five years may be reinstated.

213.2 Dean Lennox asked the representative from the Department of Chemistry, Prof. Mittermaier, to consult with the Department of Chemistry on whether the M.Sc. (Applied) in Chemistry qualifying year was worthwhile keeping on the books, instead of retiring it.

213.3 With the exception of the M.Sc. (Applied) in Chemistry qualifying year, the remainder of the above four programs will be retired.
214.1 Associate Dean Hundemer reminded members that a new writing course, CCOM 314, Communicating Science, was available for undergraduate students and that the syllabus had been previously circulated to the Academic Committee. He said the course had been discussed at a previous Academic Committee during 2016-2017. The course teaches Science students how to communicate science to a non-science audience. The course will be offered by the McGill Writing Centre. He asked members to inform their departmental advisors about CCOM 314 because it was a very valuable course.

214.2 A student member said that she was currently taking the course and found it well worthwhile.

214.3 Dean Lennox said he was pleased to have a well-structured writing course available to Science students.

(15) SUS ACTIVITIES

215.1 Following the discussion on supplemental examination at the last Academic Committee, some of the student representatives reported feedback from their departmental student society/council:

(i) Having had the opportunity to write a supplemental examination saved a student from retaking the course. Totally eliminating supplemental examinations may not be a good plan, but perhaps revising the requirements for supplemental examinations should be examined.
(ii) Although students were surprised at how poorly students performed in supplemental examinations, they would not want the supplemental examinations to be eliminated.
(iii) Making statistics available to students would be beneficial.
(iv) To space the examinations further apart and suggest that a review of the examination policy should also take place.

215.2 Some members suggested holding supplemental examinations soon after the final examinations, i.e., perhaps during a weekend at the beginning of the Winter semester. Associate Dean Hundemer said that scheduling all examinations in two days maybe problematic.

215.3 Another member pointed out that holding the supplemental examinations too close to the final examination period could be a burden on professors. Associate Dean Hundemer said that, under current policy, supplemental and deferred examinations are supposed to be submitted at the same time as the final examinations. Director Allard said that for the upcoming final examinations in December, 2017, instructors will be urged to submit both their supplemental and deferred examinations together with their final examination, in preparation for the Winter 2018 Study Break.

215.4 Dean Lennox said that, on a trial basis, supplemental examinations will be held during the Winter 2018 study break, and the results of these examinations will be examined. A proposal on improving students' success rate on supplemental examinations will be presented by Associate Dean Hundemer at a future Academic Committee meeting. If the proposal is adopted, the issue will be reviewed in three years.
(16) OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The motion carried.