Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts Council Room, Arts 160.

PRESENT: Dean Bruce Lennox (Chair), Director Nicole Allard (Acting Vice-Chair), Professors William Coish, Thomas Duchaine, Irene Gregory-Eaves, Axel Hundemer (in place of Vojkan Jaksic), Daniel Kirshbaum, Michael Langer, Anthony Mittermaier, Caroline Palmer, Jeanne Paquette, Kathy Roulet; Natalie Waters; Matthew Rowe, Isabela Vitienes (on behalf of John Lin), Mattheaus Ware, Mackenzie Webber; Sandra Persaud.

GUEST: Professor Yajing Liu, Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences; Mr. Victor Chisholm, Undergraduate Research Officer.

REGRETS: Associate Dean Tamara Western, Professors Barbara Hales, Michel Lapointe, Craig Mandato, Greg Marczynski, Ana Nyzhnyk; Megan Fothergill, Joanna Liu, Alvin Qiu; Josie D'Amico.


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

(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Item # 5, EPSC 520, will be considered after Business Arising from the Minutes Item # 3.

Prof. Paquette moved, seconded by Prof. Coish, that the amended Agenda be adopted.

The motion carried.

(2) MINUTES OF 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

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

The motion carried.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

203.1 Director Allard said that there had been some issues to be resolved at the last Academic Committee meeting, but that the issues were now resolved, and were included in the Minutes as Secretary’s Notes.

(4) COURSES ON DEAN’S MULTIDISCIPLINARY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH LIST (DMURL) AC-15-12

204.1 Mr. Victor Chisholm, Undergraduate Research Officer in the Faculty of Science, said that first of all, he wished to introduce himself, particularly to the students, with whom he would be pleased to coordinate.

204.2 Mr. Chisholm then thanked students involved in the recently completed and very successful Undergraduate Research Conference.
Mr. Chisholm outlined eligibility for inclusion in the DMURL. The DMURL is monitored throughout the year, and reviewed on an annual basis to check whether courses should be added or deleted. Mr. Chisholm asked members whether they had any changes to the DMURL courses listed in Document AC-15-12.

There were no changes from 2014-2015.

(5) EARTH & PLANETARY SCIENCES

New Course
EPSC 520  Earthquake Physics and Geology  AC-15-13
3 credits

Director Allard introduced the above new course. The course will be included in the following programs:

- Major in Physics and Geophysics (to be discussed later)
- Honours in Planetary Sciences
- Major and Honours in Geology

Prof. Yajing Liu, instructor of EPSC 520, described the content of the course. She said the course had been taught twice previously, and being a 500-level course, would target senior undergraduates and graduate students.

In response to Director Allard, who asked how similar EPSC 520 was to the pre-existing EPSC 330, Prof. Paquette said that the two courses were quite different and EPSC 330 (Earthquakes and Earth Structure) had a broader perspective. Students could take both courses.

Director Allard moved, seconded by Prof. Paquette, that the course be adopted.

The motion carried.

(6) PHYSICS/EARTH & PLANETARY SCIENCES

Program Changes:
- Joint Major in Physics & Geophysics  AC-15-14

Prof. Paquette said that while the Department of Physics administers the program, the Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences contributes a block of courses. The program changes involved the replacement of some Required courses by a list of Complementary courses, to provide students with greater choice and to exploit the knowledge of recently hired faculty members in the Department. Additionally, the new course, EPSC 520 is included in the program.

In response to Dean Lennox who pointed out that while other joint majors involve two departments, there is no department of geophysics, Prof. Paquette said that the name is relevant to professional certification, and a special application to Québec's Ministry of Education would be required to change the title of the joint major. The focus of the program is on physics rather than geology.

In further response to Dean Lennox, Prof. Paquette said that there will now be five faculty members with expertise in the area, and these faculty members will
be expanding their research, which she anticipated will lead to an increased demand for the program.

Director Allard moved, seconded by Prof. Paquette, that the program changes be approved.

The motion carried.

(7) PHYSICS

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Change in description</th>
<th>3 credits</th>
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<td>PHYS 434</td>
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207.1 Prof. Coish said the change in description better reflected the course as currently taught, and would provide more options for students.

207.2 In reply to Dean Lennox who asked why the description is presented as a large list of topics, Prof. Coish said that the description reflects topics that instructors choose from.

Prof. Coish moved, seconded by Director Allard, that the course change be approved.

The motion carried.

(8) COMPUTER SCIENCE

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Change in description</th>
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<tr>
<td>COMP 303</td>
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<td>COMP 350</td>
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208.1 Prof. Langer explained that the previous course title for COMP 303, Software Development, indicated a very large field, and that Software Design was a much more appropriate title.

208.2 The content of COMP 350 was similar to that of MATH 317, and the restriction was intended to prevent students obtaining credit for both.

208.3 Dean Lennox suggested that perhaps COMP 350 and MATH 317 could be made into a double-prefix course. It was pointed out that while the overlap justifiably should prevent students from obtaining credit for both courses, COMP 350 had a computer science focus, and MATH 317 had a math focus, so the two courses were not identical. Both courses are very large, which also argues against combining them.

208.4 Dean Lennox said that he would like the restrictions for COMP 350 and for MATH 317 to be brought to Faculty at the same time, and he suggested that the motion for COMP 350 reflect approval of a corresponding restriction for MATH 317.
208.5  Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Prof. Palmer, that the above course changes be approved, and that approval also be given to the institution of a restriction preventing MATH 317 students from taking COMP 350.

The motion carried.

Secretary’s Note: A course revision form for MATH 317 has been submitted.

New Course
COMP 551  Applied Machine Learning  AC-15-18
4 credits

208.6  Prof. Langer explained that a graduate course, COMP 652, Machine Learning, had been taught for a number of years, but the material was too much for a single course. With the creation of COMP 551, Applied Machine Learning, COMP 652 would concentrate on the theoretical aspect.

208.7  It was pointed out that the inclusion of COMP 551 in so many programs would result in a high enrolment. Furthermore, it should be specified, under Supplementary Information, that students should have some background in programming. See Secretary’s Note below.

Prof. Langer moved, seconded by Ms. Roulet, that the course be adopted.

The motion carried.

Secretary's Note: Prof. Langer contacted the instructor of the course regarding the above points. The instructor said that although it was not desirable to have a high enrolment in a 500-level course, the alternatives (i.e., teaching another section, turning down students who are really motivated) seemed worse. Some students might be discouraged from taking a four-credit course, which would reduce enrolment. Regarding the programming background, the instructor did not think it was necessary to specify the background required because students were informed in the first lecture. The instructor added that there were so many tools available that even students with limited background were doing fine.

Dean Lennox would like to further discuss the academic background expected of students at the next Academic Committee meeting.

(9)  McGill School of Environment

B.Sc. Program Changes:
- Major in Environment, Ecological Determinants of Health (Cellular)  AC-15-20
- Major in Environment, Ecological Determinants of Health (Population)  AC-15-21

209.1  Ms. Roulet said that the changes were essentially housekeeping, and outlined their major elements.

Ms. Roulet moved, seconded by Prof. Duchaine, that the above program changes be approved.

The motion carried.

Program Changes (for information only - documents avail. upon request)
- B.A. Faculty Program in Environment, Ecological Determinants of Health in Society
- B.Sc. (AgEnvSc) Major in Environment, Ecological Determinants of Health (Cellular)
- B.Sc. (AgEnvSc) Major in Environment, Ecological Determinants of Health (Population)
Ms. Roulet briefly described the changes in the above programs.

(10) MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS (for information only - document avail. upon request)
- B.A. Minor Concentration in Statistics (Deletion of Complementary Course)

Director Allard said that COMP 202 had been removed from the B.A. Minor Concentration in Statistics.

(11) CHEMISTRY MINOR COURSE CHANGES

Prof. Mittermaier outlined the minor course changes in Chemistry. It was pointed out that it would be convenient to have the documents themselves available so members could check any possible impact on their programs.

Secretary’s Note: The Chemistry Minor Course Change Proposal forms have been sent to the members of the Academic Committee.

(12) SUS ACTIVITIES

Isabelle Vitienes, on behalf of Mr. John Lin, Vice-President, reported on the following activities of the Science Undergraduate Society:

1. The Laptop Lending Program is working with the Computer Task Force.

2. The Graduate and Professional Schools Fair is scheduled to be held on November 2, 2015, featuring 59 programs and with a projected attendance of 500 students.

3. An Excel Workshop was held on October 14, 2015. About 50 students (BIOL 206, CHEM 110, PSYC 204, MATH 203, CHEM 287) attended.


5. External Audits are being carried out for the 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 academic years, with results expected to be up to date in late November 2015.

(13) OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.