

## 08-09:09

PRESENT:

Jordan, Steve  
Kasirer, Nicholas  
Kreishirth, Martin  
Labban, Margaret  
Lasko, Paul  
Madramootoo, Chandra  
Manfredi, Christopher  
Masi, Anthony C.  
McLean, Donald  
Moore, Timothy  
Munroe-Blum, Heather (*Chair*)  
Neilson, Ivan  
Oxhorn, Philip  
Perrault, Hélène  
Potter, Judith  
Quaroni, Enrica  
Richard, Marc  
Robaire, Bernard  
Roy, François R.  
Sieber, Renee  
Snider, Laurie  
Steinhauer, Karsten  
Turner, Kathleen  
Van Eyk, Helen  
Wade, Kevin  
Weinstein, Marc  
Wilkinson, Nadya  
Zannis-Hadjopoulos, Maria  
Zorychta, Edith  
Pelletier, Johanne (*Secretary*)

McGill University  
Senate Minutes  
Wednesday, April 15, 2009

The Principal welcomed all to Senate.

## **SECTION I**

### **1. Resolution on the death of Professor William O. Moser**

The following resolution on the death of Professor William O. Moser was read by Dean Martin Grant, Dean of the Faculty of Science, and adopted unanimously by Senate.

*It is with regret I must inform the Senate that Professor William O. Moser died on January 28, 2009.*

*William O. J. Moser (1927-2009) was born in Winnipeg, and graduated in 1949 from the University of Manitoba, following which he obtained a Master's degree in Mathematics in 1951 at the University of Minnesota. Moser's Ph.D. Thesis, written at the University of Toronto under H. S. M. Coxeter, evolved into the oft-cited standard *Ergebnisse* reference on combinatorial group theory (1957) known to generations as "Coxeter and Moser". Before arriving at McGill he held faculty positions at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Manitoba. Much of his later, seminal, mathematical work was in the area now known as "discrete geometry", where, with Peter Brass and János Pach, he published in 2005 "Research Problems in Discrete Geometry". Moser's interest in problem solving extended far beyond this definitive monograph, and he was active for many years in provincial and national mathematics competitions for pre-university students, and in the publication for the Mathematical Association of America of "Five Hundred Mathematical Challenges" with E. Barbeau and M. Klamkin; along with humour and other irreverence, problem solving was one of the missions he shared with his older brother Leo Moser (1921-1970), who was also a mathematician. Willy, as he was known to his friends, served as President (1973-1975) and in other capacities in the Canadian Mathematical Congress - the predecessor to the Canadian Mathematical Society, and received their Distinguished Service Award in 2003. His experience in editing the Congress's journals served him well subsequently in multiple capacities, including editing his friends' writing - whether or not they requested it.*

*Moser's relations with colleagues were more brotherly than collegial. Typically one might find in his entourage a speed chess match, a peripatetic friend expounding latest discoveries and conjectures, and others enjoying the conversion to mathematics of the potent coffee Willy brewed for his academic family, all bathed in the pungent second-hand smoke of Willy's cigar or pipe. He stubbornly remained active as an Emeritus Professor at McGill after his retirement in 1997, and after a subsequent, debilitating stroke. He will be missed by many.*

*The Senate extends its condolences to William Moser's beloved wife, Beryl Pearlman, his son Lionel and daughter-in-law Karla, his daughters Marla and Paula, his sons-in-law Irwin Nayer and Paul Labute; his grandchildren, Adam and Robert Nayer, Steven and Simon Labute, Mina and Sydney Moser, Amy and Molly Newborn.*

### **2. Report of the Steering Committee**

The report of the Steering Committee (08-09:09) was received.

*Item 1. Approval of Minutes of Senate. On motion duly proposed and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of March 25, 2009 were approved.*

*Item 2. Confidential Minutes.* It was reported that the Steering Committee has scrutinized and approved the confidential minutes of the meeting of March 25, 2009 on behalf of Senate. These minutes are not published or circulated but are available for perusal by senators in the office of the Secretary of Senate.

*Item 3. Speaking Rights.* Senate, on motion duly proposed and seconded, granted speaking rights to Professor William Foster for item IIB5 (Annual Report of the Joint Senate-Board Committee on Equity, D08-58), and to Ms. Sylvia Franke for the response to the question re McGill Computing Facility.

*Item 4. Confidential Session.* On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate agreed to move into Confidential Session for consideration of item IIB1 (Confidential Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee, D08-54).

### **3. Adoption of the Agenda**

On motion duly proposed and seconded, the agenda was approved.

### **4. Chair's Remarks**

The Principal opened her remarks by noting that last Friday, McGill Security became aware of a threatening graffiti message written on a bathroom wall. An announcement was posted over the weekend on the McGill website and on the MyMcGill portal alerting the community to this development. The Montreal police were immediately contacted by McGill Security; they responded rapidly and are continuing to investigate and take the situation seriously. As a precaution, and consistent with security management protocols, there is a heightened security presence on both campuses, with signs indicating that bags and backpacks may be subject to search. This step is part of the increased security measures. Noting that she was not at liberty to describe the contents of the message, the Principal stated that it was not directed at individuals in the McGill community. The Principal expressed gratitude to all members of the McGill community for working together to maintain safety and security.

The Principal reported on the recent press coverage of the hospitals, and noted that Vice-Principal Levin will report in full on the issue at the next Senate meeting. One article gave the impression that McGill was unavailable for comment on the issue. The Principal explained that Dr Arthur Porter, the Director General of the MUHC, is the primary spokesperson for the hospitals, and that where possible McGill would collaborate with his staff to respond to media enquiries. Dr Porter has since replied publicly to the articles, defending the financial projections of the MUHC. The Principal noted that the Quebec government has been very supportive of the development of the hospitals.

Turning to labour relations, the Principal announced that the University had reached a settlement with MUNACA, whose employees had been without a contract since November 2007. The new agreement will be in effect until the end of November 2010, and work is progressing to finalize the agreement for signature and award retroactivity to eligible employees. The Principal thanked MUNACA and Associate Vice-Principal Lynne Gervais and her team for their work in bringing about the agreement.

The Principal reported that progress on the proposed governance legislation was being monitored, and it is expected to be introduced in the National Assembly next week. Common elements of the McGill position on the issue include that the legislation is not necessary to

ensure good governance, will hamper universities in the pursuit of their distinctive missions, and will impinge on the ability of university boards to attract qualified people to carry out their oversight obligations.

The Principal announced that the Canada Foundation for Innovation has made seven awards to McGill researchers in areas as diverse as nanostructures and chronic pain and cancer. She congratulated Drs. Amy Blum (Chemistry), Russell Jones (Physiology), Maia Kokoeva (Medicine), Odile Liboiron-Ladouceur (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Brent Richards (Medicine), Petra Schweinhardt (Dentistry and Neurology & Neurosurgery), and Kai-Florian Storch (Psychiatry) on their successes.

McGill University School of Architecture students have garnered three of the top five awards for creating new home designs in devastated areas of New Orleans, with the School's Director Michael Jemtrud describing it as a unique opportunity for students to design projects that would fulfill the needs of real people. The Principal congratulated the winners: Justin Boulanger and Ann Rodgers; Jessica Dan and Hamza Alhbian; and David Dworkin and Andrew Hruby.

The Principal noted that yesterday, Finance Minister Raymond Bachand announced funding for 17 new international research projects, six of which were awarded to McGill – more than any other institution. The projects are worth over \$1 million and involve collaborations with researchers in Israel, France, Brazil, the US, the UK, and other EU countries.

On April 17 and 18, Media@McGill and Le Centre de Recherche en Éthique de l'Université de Montréal will gather leading academics, journalists and communications specialists for a free public colloquium to explore ethical dilemmas and responsibilities for a free press operating in a free market. The Principal congratulated Professor Marc Raboy, Beaverbrook Chair in Ethics, Media and Communications and Chair of Media@McGill, who is leading McGill's participation in the event.

The Principal concluded her remarks by summarizing, at the request of the Steering Committee, elements of her speech to the Canadian Club, delivered last week, a video version of which is available on the Principal's page of the McGill website.

In reply to a question from Professor Robaire regarding whether there was any pressure to recreate the recently abolished Chief Scientist role in the government, the Principal replied that the role has existed only periodically since the 1950s, and the reality was that the Chief Scientist had not been called upon greatly for advice and did not meet with the Prime Minister. Her view was that a broader mechanism to counsel the government was more important and effective.

Mr DeGuise thanked the Principal for the University's calm, measured response to the security situation. The Principal noted that McGill is an open community of 50,000 people on daily basis, and commended the community for handling the situation so well.

Professor GowriSankaran observed that the hospital project has existed for a decade, and so one would expect the cost to increase, but that it was nonetheless worthwhile to express public reaction to media comment. The Principal replied that it made sense for Dr Porter to be the main spokesperson on the issue, and that the administration would be keeping watch on media responses, and reserved the right to comment if the need arose.

## SECTION II

### PART “A” – QUESTIONS AND MOTIONS BY MEMBERS

#### 1. Question Regarding McGill Computing Facility

On the invitation of the Chair, Senator Hobbins asked the following question:

##### *BACKGROUND:*

*In a question asked at the April 16, 2008 meeting of Senate it was noted that:*

*Use of the McGill Computing Facility (MCF) is governed by the Code of Conduct for Users of McGill Computing Facilities, and its ancillary documents Companion Document to (Code of Conduct) Policy and Management Guidelines. Adopted and unrevised since 1994, they remain the current policies and still appear on the website of the Chief Information Officer.*

*It was further noted that these policies were no longer being followed and the Chief Information Officer was asked what was being done about the matter. In her response she stated:*

*The Office of CIO, in consultation with other campus administrators and academics, will undertake a review of the Code of Conduct, together with the McGill Computing Facilities management guidelines this year. A revised document for discussion will be brought forward in 2008-2009 timeframe, and I am prepared to have it brought to Senate and the Board for input and discussion. Revisions will reflect changes in technology and how IT infrastructure is delivered on our campuses (for example, the web was not in common use in 1993 and is not even mentioned in the current Code) and current best practices in IT governance related to ensuring confidentiality, integrity and availability of data. During the course of that revision, we will also review what type of reporting is appropriate to the CIO on an annual basis related to the Code of Conduct and its application on campus, including those units that do not have an official reporting relationship to the Chief Information Officer.*

*As of April 4, 2009 the Code of Conduct and ancillary documents are still posted on the University websites as the official policy.*

##### *QUESTION:*

*Given that a year has passed and the “2008-2009 timeframe” for Senate is winding down, can the Chief Information Officer give an update on progress and give a firm date when the revised document will be brought to Senate for input and discussion?*

By invitation of the Chair, the Chief Information Officer, Ms Sylvia Franke, responded as follows:

*The University’s Code of Conduct for Users of McGill Computing Facilities has been in place since 1994.*

*It had been hoped to launch consultations related to revision of the Code in 2008-2009. However, I wish to first be in a position to provide, as a starting point, a draft document that is based on best practices at peer institutions across North America. This work is ongoing, and I expect to be able to provide a draft for consultation in the fall.*

*In the meantime the Code of Conduct for Users of McGill Computing Facilities, which has served McGill well, has not been repealed and remains in force. We are committed to ensuring that McGill users are assured of quality computing facilities that protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data and systems.*

In response to Mr Hobbins' request, the Principal replied that the item would be added to a Senate agenda in the fall of 2009.

## **PART "B" – MOTIONS AND REPORTS FROM ORGANS OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENT**

### **1. Confidential Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D08-54)**

Senate moved into confidential session to discuss the Confidential Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D08-54) (this minute is not published or circulated but is attached to the permanent minutes of Senate as Appendix "A").

### **2. Principal's Presentation on Priorities (D08-55)**

The Principal provided a presentation on McGill's priorities, noting the imminent launch of the Task Force on Excellence, Diversity and Community Engagement would be brought forward to the next meeting for discussion.

In response to a question from Mr Richard concerning the University Secretariat's role in stewarding governance and supporting the University's leadership, the Principal replied that this was not intended to mean that the Secretariat provided privileged support to the senior administration, and this would be modified.

In reply to a question from Mr DeGuise concerning plans for increased face-to-face contact between students and faculty, and who the student advisers would be, the Principal replied that next year specific measures would be outlined in this area, and Dean Kreiswirth has been looking at graduate mentorship. The advisers would vary across faculties depending on individual faculty workloads and how the budget advising allocations had been filtered through the budget exercise with the deans. Mr Burgoyne remarked that the issue should be given greater priority in the document, and the Principal said this would be taken under advisement, while welcoming suggestions from the student body on the advising issue.

Professor Sieber asked whether more guidance could be given to new faculty on mentoring and for accomplishments in this area to be recognized, to which the Principal replied that she had already spoken to the Provost about this, it is seen as a high priority and would be added to the document.

Noting the importance of McGill's research-intensive focus, Professor Robaire asked what kinds of micro analysis were being done to analyze the issue and plan for improvements. The Principal replied that some preliminary data had already been presented, and this would be made available to Senate after more work had been done. Professor Robaire noted that there was no mention of postdoctoral fellows in the document, to which the Principal replied that Dean Kreiswirth is looking at the issue of how best to plan for and support postdoctoral fellows, and the issue would return. Professor Robaire also noted that the Secretariat should not be at the service of the administration and recommended the wording that suggests this should be changed. The Principal agreed, adding that it could be taken out.

Noting that the most important factor influencing the undergraduate experience is the quality of undergraduate teaching, Professor Caplan asked what was being done to improve this and that it be added as a priority, to which the Principal replied that this would be considered and suggestions for improvements were welcome.

Mr. Neilson noted that Strategic Enrolment Management was an issue of particular relevance to students and asked whether there would be additional consultations with the student body. The Principal noted that the Deputy Provost was not present to provide his thoughts on that, but it would be taken into consideration.

Professor Quaroni noted that the perception that advising services are poor has not been reflected in the results of the exit surveys from students with advising appointments in the Faculty of Arts, which showed that 95% of responses ranked the experience very positively. The Principal commented that this reflects excellent progress already made in this area in some faculties, and stressed the importance of striving for continuous improvement.

In reply to Ms Wilkinson's question as to whether research opportunities for undergraduates would be promoted, the Principal affirmed that this had been identified as a priority.

Professor Hendren queried the intention (stated in the third priority) to recruit more international students, to which the Principal replied that this was an error in the document; she stated that "international" should have read "graduate", and there was no intention to change the proportion of international students; the number of international students could increase as student numbers increased, but the proportion would remain the same.

### **3. 410th Report of the Academic Policy Committee (D08-56)**

The Provost presented the Report of the Academic Policy Committee (D08-56).

## **II. Presented to Senate for Discussion**

### **1) Final Program Review Summary Sheets**

#### **Faculty Program Review for the Centre for Continuing Education**

Dean Potter presented the Program Review for the Centre for Continuing Education, noting that consistent themes emerged from the review process. These included improving the unit's understanding of its learners and potential learners through improved tracking of the student body; improved relationships with professional bodies and employers to better understand learning needs; and improving the integration of teaching staff and coordination between different course offerings.

In reply to a question from Professor Robaire regarding whether plans were being developed to create so-called micro-programs with deans of the relevant faculties, Dean Potter replied that a planning process was just being launched. Dean Kreiswirth added that some analysis had been done, and the plan would be to develop where there is strength and interest, looking at the fit of the new programs with the larger academic plans at McGill.

## **Faculty Program Review for the Faculty of Law**

Dean Kasirer summarized the Faculty of Law Program Review, noting that developments emerging from the review include a more global and transsystemic orientation of the program; improved transparency of the admissions process; more aggressive recruitment; increasing focus on diversity; the new teaching initiative in Spanish; improved support for doctoral students and enhanced graduate student supervision.

Mr Gulamhussein asked for clarification regarding increasing diversity of the student body, and how this would be achieved, to which Dean Kasirer replied that linguistic diversity was the most obvious form reflected in the law program, but also referred to improving the diverse character of applications to the Faculty. To achieve this, the admissions committee had become a recruitment committee, to reach out to high schools in markets where law is not typically considered as a career choice, into Aboriginal communities, and socioeconomic areas that are underrepresented in the student body.

In response to a question from Mr. Gulamhussein regarding planned improvements to student advising, Dean Kasirer replied that the Faculty was co-financing an office to advise students on career options that included more public interest law work, rather than traditional law practice employment. There was also a new Assistant Deanship for Student Life and Learning whose principal task is to advise students. In response to a question from Mr Gulamhussein concerning whether the curriculum focus on great legal traditions referred to civil and common law or also embraced other legal systems such as Islamic, Talmudic and Aboriginal legal traditions, Dean Kasirer replied that the focus was to be multi-systemic and global, and would include Islamic, Talmudic and Aboriginal systems of law.

### **III. Approved in the Name of Senate**

*Presented for information.*

### **IV. For the Information of Senate**

*Presented for information.*

#### **4. Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Responding to McGill's Academic Objectives (D08-57)**

The Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies presented his report, entitled Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Responding to McGill's Academic Objectives (D08-57), noting that postdoctoral fellows needed a separate analysis. During the presentation, Dean Kreiswirth showed Senate the new admission package USB key, sent to all graduates who are made an offer to study at McGill.

Professor Zorychta asked whether units where graduate supervision is successful could be used as models for other units, to which Dean Kreiswirth replied that this would depend on the research area, as there was a diversity of paradigms, but the most important model to adopt would involve improved training for all supervisors.



In response to a question from Professor Barralet about the effects of abandoning higher tuition fees for international PhD students, Dean Kreiswirth replied that the effects were significant in increasing both the quality and quantity of international students, by improving McGill's competitiveness.

Professor Harpp asked whether there was any variability in the CGPSS doctoral student survey data across departments, to which Dean Kreiswirth replied that the results were divided into broad disciplinary categories with no significant differences between them, suggesting the current model needs to be rethought. Professor Harpp asked how much the new admission USB key cost to produce. Dean Kreiswirth replied that the hardware cost an additional \$8,000, but \$12,000 was saved in mailing costs.

Mr Burgoyne asked where McGill ranked among the G13 in the various CGPSS survey categories. Dean Kreiswirth replied that of the ten categories, McGill ranked bottom in six categories, second from bottom in two categories, and third from bottom in the remaining two.

Regarding completion times, Ms Labban commented that there was sometimes pressure to take longer to complete so that more research could be done with principal investigators. Dean Kreiswirth remarked that a milestone tracking system would be introduced to assess student progress and record whether milestones were being achieved.

Professor Lasko observed that assessing applications from overseas was often difficult, and resources were lacking to interview international applicants. Dean Kreiswirth replied that a quality assessment of transcript recognition was being developed, and GPS is trying to find ways to share information among departments. Noting that many Indian students are being lost to the US market, he added that a high quality three-year Indian degree for entry into the Master's program is being considered.

Professor Sieber commented that the new graduate student website needed user-generated content, and there should be more monitoring of what others think of McGill.

Mr DeGuise welcomed the move towards supervisory committees, noting that committee members would likely possess complementary skill sets that would help students, and that this model would help to prevent grievances that can arise from one-on-one supervision.

In response to Professor Bartlett-Esquillant's comment that it was difficult for supervisors to obtain feedback directly from their students, Dean Kreiswirth agreed that this was a problem and experience demonstrates that such feedback provides false responses and poor response rates. He noted that more innovative methods were needed to obtain good quality feedback on supervision, but also observed that the CGPSS survey data was not, by itself, driving the whole range of initiatives coming forward, and warned against focusing too much on this aspect.

Professor Robaire observed that there is a perception in some departments that students belong in the labs, so that when student space is considered, their actual needs might be overlooked. Dean Kreiswirth explained that he was working with Professor Nicell on the space issue, and was considering different kinds of space for students, such as social and collaborative space, not just lab space.

In reply to Professor Harpp's observation that the CGPSS survey results suggested that McGill was not too far behind the competition, Dean Kreiswirth replied that the seemingly small differences displayed in the graph were in fact statistically significant, noting that they were a

product of the competition starting to look at these issues before McGill, so that McGill needs to work hard now to catch up.

**5. Annual Report of the Joint Senate-Board Committee on Equity (JSBCE) (D08-58)**

Professor William Foster, Associate Provost (Policies and Procedures) and Chair of the JSBCE, presented the Annual Report, for the information of Senate.

In response to a question from Mr Gulamhussein regarding progress made this year on the plans and priorities identified in the report, Professor Foster replied that a new Chair of the Subcommittee on Race and Ethnic Relations has been identified, and the review of the JSBCE and subcommittee mandates is being considered by the Senate Review Working Group. In response to a question from Mr DeGuise concerning why the report was being presented now, Professor Foster replied that the report was completed some time ago but has taken time to be incorporated into the agenda.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.