

Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning
of the Academic Policy and Planning Committee

Minutes of the thirteenth meeting held on Tuesday 6th February, 2007
from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Room 310, James Building

Present: M. J. Mendelson (Chair), C-E. Bouchard, A. Costopoulos, D. Frost, d. Harris, L. Jacobs-Starkey, M. Kreiswirth, J. Nemes, D. Starke-Meyerring, Y. Steinert, S. Tran, F. Upham, J. Wapnick, C. Weston, L.R. Winer, A. Ippersiel (Secretary to the Committee)

Regrets: D. Boyer, A. De Motta,, A. Jaeger, T. Kirby, E. Laflamme, A.C. Masi, T. Wheeler

Guest: M. Tovar (Item 4a and 4d)

The members of the committee formally thanked Helen Richard for her minute taking and welcomed her replacement, Andree Ippersiel (Teaching and Learning Services).

1. Adoption of the agenda

The proposed agenda was adopted as circulated.

2. Approval of minutes of the SCTL meeting held on 24th October 2006

The minutes were approved as circulated with correction to remove period from C-E.Bouchard's name.

3. Business arising from minutes of previous meetings

RE item #8 Teaching Awards: Y. Steinert apologized for not writing one page summary of Faculty of Medicine concerns. Dr. Levin will follow up with the Provost.

4. Reports on activities of working groups, other committees, and TLS

a) Working Group on Best Practices in Classroom Teaching
- Barriers to Best Practices (TL.07-02-01)

Mariela Tovar, a member of the Working Group, was invited to present a summary of the barriers to Best Practices. The structural barriers mentioned by six award winning professors were under the headings of: 1) resources for instructors and students, 2) large classes, 3) training and mentoring and 4) teaching rewards.

Data obtained in the pilot study are limited and represent just a starting point in identifying what McGill faculty perceive as structural barriers to best practices. To derive policy implications, it is recommended that additional data be collected with a more representative sample with special emphasis on the views of new faculty.

The members of SCTL felt that the report is a solid beginning and agreed that more data needs to be gathered. It was recommended that TLS conduct a survey.

The possibility of involving Planning Institutional Analysis will be explored.

b) *Teaching and Learning Space Working Group*

- Priorities and Funding Subcommittee

In September 2006, the Provost requested that TLS and IMS co-chair a new working group (TLSWG) to bring together all pots of funding for renovations. This was never done University-wide before. Now there is a single pot, all faculties submit their requests and decisions are made based on University priorities. The process is collaborative, positive and transparent. The criteria used for the funding decisions are:

- Standard package/enhanced requests: Priority will be given to ensuring that all classrooms have basic function through the standard package.
- Undergraduate/graduate: Priority given to spaces used more by undergraduate students. This is in accord with White Paper priorities and also because graduate classes also involve lab space and the mandate of this committee is for regular classrooms.
- Occupancy/use. TLSWG are presently gathering and computing these statistics. Priority will be given to spaces that have high occupancy and use (number of students and hours of the week).

This process will continue next year.

c) *Working group on the Nexus between Research and Teaching*

- Mandate and membership (TL.07-02-02)

Dr. Weston presented the goals and membership of the working group on the Nexus between Research and Teaching. Work has already begun; a graduate student is doing a literature review and the group will later explore linkages.

The goals and mandate of this working group were accepted by the committee. The name of Finn Upham (SSMU representative) should be added to the list.

d) *Working group on Teaching Awards*

- Proposal (TL.07-02-03)
 - Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching
 - existing call for nominations (TL.07-02-04)
 - proposed revisions (TL.07-02-05)

The Principal asked TLS to revise the standards for the Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching. Mariela Tovar, professional associate in TLS, presented a preliminary draft of the revisions to the PPET. The purpose of these revisions is to align McGill teaching awards with the McGill Teaching Portfolio criteria and those required by recognized Canadian teaching awards (eg. 3M Teaching Fellowships).

Concern was expressed by the representative of the Faculty of Medicine that the criteria used by 3M and suggested for the PPET excludes teaching professors in Medicine since clinical teaching does not include students and courses in the traditional sense.

The Chair suggested taking the proposed revisions to APPC for comments and then bringing it back to SCTL if necessary.

- implementation date

Dr. Weston will let the Principal know what progress has been made and that the revisions will not be ready for this year's call for nominations. We could approach this year's nominees for PPET and ask if they'd be interested in putting names forward for 3M awards.

- SCTL representative

Dr. Steinert agreed to be a "virtual" member of the working group.

e) Working group on Student Engagement in Large Classes

- Goal and membership (TL.07-02-06)
- SCTL representative

TLS was asked to begin a working group; goal and current membership were presented. This group meets once a month to discuss thinking/teaching strategies.

The working group goals and membership were accepted by SCTL.

5. Course evaluations

- Course Evaluation Policy, Revised version, Draft 7 (TL.07-02-07)
- Current use of suggested core items (TL.07-02-08)

The document presented to the Committee was a revised version of the draft Course Evaluation Policy statement discussed on 24th October, 2006. This document is returning to SCTL with core questions listed under item 8, before it can be approved by SCTL for submission to APPC.

Document TL.07-02-07 now includes a list of 3 core items, as well as a statement (Item 9) that states "Each academic unit can select up to 17 additional questions to obtain more specific information".

The addition of three core items addresses the fact that Course Evaluations vary across faculties, departments and even different types of courses. It is useful to have a set of core questions across all faculties that are considered comparable.

The following changes were proposed to the Course Evaluation Policy, revised version:

- Item # 3. Faculty should determine the deadline for close of evaluation
- Item # 8. Indicate that 3 core items will be responded to on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree
- Item # 9. Before deciding on the number 17 for additional items, it was suggested that TLS determine the distribution of number of items on course evaluation questionnaires across faculties and bring this to the next meeting.

Then this revised course policy will go to APPC for discussion. If APPC accepts it, this policy will go forward to Senate.

Proposed by C Weston with changes; seconded by D. Starke-Meyerring. Unanimously accepted. The 3 core items were approved.

TLS was also requested to:

- **report on the on line participation by faculty**
- **provide guidelines on how to interpret course evaluations for tenure and promotion committees and MERCURY.**

6. Second Annual Canadian Summit on the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning, Edmonton, May 4-6, 2006

- Report from dik Harris, July 2006 (TL.06-10-04)

The key note speakers from overseas were interesting but much of the distributed material was disappointing. It was hoped that this forum would discuss what this committee is trying to address but as a happening, it didn't address these issues.

There are other conferences on nexus between research and teaching. In future, someone from TLS should attend.

7. Pedagogical preparation for graduate students

Students are concerned about the pedagogical preparation of graduate students who are teaching undergraduate students. APG met yesterday to discuss some of these ideas.

The Deputy Provost SLL, the Associate Provost of Graduate Studies and TLS will meet to think about policies, strategies and will come back to SCTL with something more specific.

8. Draft SCTL report to APPC 2005-06 and plans for 2006-07 (TL.06-10-05)

This will go to APPC.

9. Other business

None

10. Adjournment: 11:40 a.m.