

FACULTY OF ARTS
Minutes of Special Additional Meeting
February 25, 2020
Robert Vogel Council Room

Attendance: As per Faculty Appendix Book.

Documents: A-19-1 and A-19-12 to A-19-13

Guest: Prof. Alana Thain (IGSF)

Order

Dean Maioni welcomed members to the Special Meeting of the Arts Council per the definition of Roberts Rules of Order, called because of business arising that needed to be dealt with before the next scheduled Council meeting in March. The single item of business was to vote on the report of the Curriculum Committee. This would be followed by an open discussion on the topic of graduate options and interdisciplinary MA programs in Arts. The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

Report of the Curriculum Committee (A-19-12)

- 401.1 Dean Maioni requested to move to a closed session for the vote on the report of the Curriculum committee.
- 401.2 After discussion regarding the proper procedure to move to closed session, Dean Maioni requested a member of Council move to go to closed session. Prof. Trocmé moved, Prof. Hickman seconded. **The motion passed.** Non-members left the Council room.
- 401.3 Associate Dean Fronda presented the report of the Curriculum Committee. He thanked the Faculty of Science and Associate Dean Sparks for their hard work in drafting the proposed interfaculty program Masters of Arts and Science (MASc). He noted that the Faculty of Science had already approved the program. He also thanked the Curriculum Committee for its deliberations, which concluded the day before. He reported that the Curriculum Committee approved the proposal. He noted that some consultations were still missing from the proposal dossier.
- 401.4 A long discussion followed. Associate Dean Fronda was asked to elaborate on the deliberations in Curriculum Committee. He reported that the deliberations were difficult, and that Curriculum Committee had recommended the striking of a working group to revise some of the proposed program and to facilitate consultation with Arts units, as a condition of approval. He stated that he was uncertain if, technically, such conditions could be attached to an approval.
- 401.5 Several Council members raised concerns and objections about the program and the approval process. The heavy course load in the proposed program was noted. Members expressed uneasiness about approving a program if the course list was yet to be finalized. Associate Dean Sparks responded that a new program such as this will necessarily go

through several iterations before taking its final form. Several members suggested the need for wider consultation. Dean Maioni noted that Chairs and Directors had been consulted throughout the year, and that further consultation was ongoing.

- 401.6 Associate Dean Fronda moved to accept the report of the Curriculum Committee recommending approval of the program. Prof. Ruge-Murcia seconded. **The motion was not carried.**

Graduate Options and Interdisciplinary MAs (A-19-13)

- 402.1 Dean Maioni welcomed non-voting attendees back to the Council room. She introduced the next item, a discussion of graduate options and the future of interdisciplinary MA opportunities in Arts.
- 402.2 Associate Dean Fronda reiterated an announcement made via email, that a prior decision to suspend the graduate options in Gender and Women's Studies and in International Development Studies had been rescinded. He noted that new APC guidelines had been issued regarding graduate options, however existing options were exempted from these new guidelines. He referred the council to these new guidelines and to statistics on Arts graduate options, provided in the dossier of documents (A-19-13) distributed prior to the meeting on the web.
- 402.3 Prof. Hickman thanked the Dean for this opportunity to consult and open a wider discussion on graduate options and MA programs, and for the possibility of developing a developing an MA program in Gender Studies. Prof. Kuhonta spoke about the importance and success of the International Development Studies option.
- 402.4 Associate Dean Sparks spoke briefly about proposals for new interdisciplinary MA programs in Arts. She noted that Arts and other faculties have been asked to develop interdisciplinary MA programs, as have been developed in peer institutions. She indicated that there is growing demand one-year, non-thesis MA programs, and that the development of such programs aligns with the initiative of the McCall-MacBain foundation.
- 402.5 Dean Maioni invited Alana Thain to present a draft MA in Gender and Women's Studies as a possible model for future interdisciplinary MA programs. Prof. Thain then gave an overview of the work done at IGSF and laid out the prospective program.
- 402.6 A lengthy period of questions and discussion followed. The status of graduate options was clarified: while options are not technically programs and so new options are approved only internally to McGill, they are reported to the ministry as separate programs. Questions were raised about the institutional home of interdisciplinary MA programs, the resources available to develop them, and the possibility that new programs and existing options on similar subjects might remain side by side. Associate Dean Sparks answered that the University is providing support for such programs. She suggested that one argument provided to the Ministry to justify approval of a new program is that a similar one does not already exist at the institution, which may be more difficult to assert if options are counted by the ministry as programs. Associate Dean Sparks was asked to comment further on the pedagogical thinking behind one-year MA programs. She responded that these are different

from two-year, thesis MA programs with different target students. Some members commented on the possible link between the development of non-thesis MA programs and deregulation of international tuition for such programs. Some members suggested possible models within and outside McGill that might be benchmarked and referred to in developing interdisciplinary MA programs.

Other Business

403.1 After a long discussion, Dean Maioni reminded the Council that the next meeting was scheduled for March 31 and the Provost was scheduled to discuss the budget.

Adjournment

404.1 The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.