



**McGill**

FACULTY OF ARTS – Faculty Council

## Minutes

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

A21-03

Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Council held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. via the Zoom Conferencing Application.

### 1. Welcoming Remarks

The Acting Dean and Chair, Professor Jim Engle-Warnick, welcomed and congratulated everyone for their attendance at the last Faculty Council Meeting of the semester. Instructions on how the meeting would be conducted virtually were given. As a quorum was unfortunately not achieved, the Chair felt that rather than carry over the reports to the Fall, both the Nominating Committee Report and the Minutes of the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will be circulated as an e-vote and that today's meeting would be an Information Meeting instead. The meeting was called to order at 3:03 pm.

A question was raised as to whether the Nominating Committee can hold office without being approved. Associate Dean Michael Fronda responded that technically all committee memberships are approved by the Faculty Council and that their approval should be given. In practice, people agree to be on the Committee. The Nominating Committee is continuing to meet however, the committee memberships for the 2021-2022 Academic Year need to be approved. It is therefore important to have an e-vote as soon as possible. The Chair confirmed that E-votes have been done in the past and an e-vote will be sent to the whole Council.

NOTE: An E-vote via Omnivox was conducted between June 10<sup>th</sup> and June 14<sup>th</sup> 2021. The results were as follows:

Approve: 46  
Do not Approve: 1  
Abstentions: 0

Based on the results received, the Nominating Report was approved.

### 2. Report of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library Advisory Committee Associate Dean Michael Fronda, Administration and Oversight

Associate Dean Fronda discussed the report that was circulated. The main business items were reported in-council, primarily the FIAT-LUXE Project and the moving of the large portions of physical holdings to a remote location but also the ongoing discussion about what the future of the Committee is and should be.

The Committee's role has changed as digital communications have largely replaced the old role of the Committee. That is, university announcements would flow through the Committee out to the staff but now these announcements arrive in email in-boxes. There is a place for the Advisory Committee and as the Chair is on the Senate of the Advisory Library Committee, the Committee should remain. This has been discussed over the past year and will continue to be discussed. Note that Arts oversees this committee with membership from other Faculties.

Associate Dean Fronda shared a comment received in the Chat room by Brian Trehearne. Brian

thanked Associate Dean Fronda for ensuring that modifications were made with regard to the storage of the books. The storage books were successfully carried out as per the comments and concerns given and the appropriate modifications made.

### **3. Teaching Assistantships and Dissertation Prizes** **Associate Dean Tabitha Sparks, Research and Graduate Studies**

As per what was announced at the last Faculty Council meeting, Associate Dean Sparks announced the following Teaching Assistantships and Dissertation Prizes and thanked the Teaching Assistantship winners for attending today and wished it were in person. To the Dissertation winners, well done.

The Chair congratulated the winners and their achievement. Apologies were extended at the impossibility of having any presentation photos taken to document this special occasion.

#### **2021 DISSERTATION AWARD WINNER SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**David Emre Amasyali Department of Sociology, Supervised by Professor Matthew Lange**

*The fight for Eden: a mixed-methods analysis of historical educational competition and its legacies*

Dr. Amasyali's dissertation breaks new ground in research into the human capital and developmental implications of the activities of Christian missionaries – an emerging and growing body of scholarship in the political economy of development and democratization studies. He identifies several important gaps in the systematic knowledge base related to the causal mechanisms linking missionary presence to long-term socio-economic and political outcomes.

His dissertation investigates three important dimensions of missionary legacies: missionaries and Armenian nationalism; competition that missionaries spurred and helped popularize female schooling across ethnic and religious communities; and an exploration of the indirect effects of missionaries via the channel of gender parity engendering broader economic development.

Dr. Amasyali leverages a rich array of primary sources, notably papers from several archives and multiple sources that complement the 1893 Turkish census. He further makes an important methodological contribution to his field of study by creating an original historical Geographic Information System (GIS) data set comprising contemporary socio-economic data, geographic data, and geocoded data from historical records. His work is theoretically significant, empirically rich and methodologically innovative and is bound to stimulate further debate into the channels of transmission of legacies associated with missionary activities globally.

#### **2021 DISSERTATION AWARD WINNER HUMANITIES**

**Yusuf Karabiçak History and Classical Studies**

*Local patriots and ecumenical Ottomans: The Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople in the Ottoman configuration of power, 1768-1828*

The excellence of Dr. Karabiçak's work is three-fold: it is based on archival sources that offer him a sound evidentiary basis to confirm and challenge received knowledge about the topic at hand; he uses that evidence with great and impressive care in order to consider large and small

aspects of the topic and era; and he puts forward a coherent, carefully argued proposition that is new and persuasive.

While Dr. Karabıçak makes his case through careful empirical analysis, just as important is his theoretical and methodological strength: his rigorous pursuit of the very terms used to speak of events and phenomena. Central to his analysis is the terminology of liberty and nation. Many issues that have been uncertain have been clarified beyond a doubt, most particularly the role of the clergy and the notables in Ottoman governance.

Dr. Karabıçak's command of numerous languages gave him access to untapped archival material. This enabled him to produce a thesis that is simultaneously imaginative and historiographically strong, presenting the archival material in the form of a historical narrative that situates the Ottoman empire, through an examination of the agency of the Orthodox church during three eras of crisis, in the perspective of the age of revolutions.

## **2021 TA AWARD WINNERS**

### **Lidia Ponce de la Vega – Languages, Literatures and Cultures (Hispanic Studies/Digital Humanities)**

Teaching language courses well takes a particular talent. When taught well, language courses can open up a world of possibilities for students. To teach them well requires the instructor to exquisitely balance motivation, methodology, academic knowledge, cultural sensibility, and psychology. Lidia Ponce de la Vega does just that and has led the department to offer her the very rare opportunity of teaching higher level undergraduate seminars closely related to her research interests in Literature and Digital Humanities. She has since taught LLCU 212: Understanding Digital and Social Media and LLCU 311: Digital Studies/Citizenry, and was given the chance to develop course syllabi for those two courses that pushed the limits of this nascent field of Digital Humanities while promoting safe environments and an ethical attitude towards technology and media. Lidia has also collaborated in numerous extracurricular activities and has worked closely with the LLC Teaching Committee and other university offices such as TLS and OSD and is a founding member, Chair, and Graduate Representative of the LLC Diversity and Equity Committee.

### **Kaylin Land – Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (Russian Studies/Digital Humanities)**

Kaylin truly stands out in all capacities – as a Course Lecturer, a Teaching Assistant, a grader, and a promising young researcher and academic. Throughout her time at McGill, Kaylin has served as a Teaching Assistant and as a Research Assistant in both Russian Studies and in Digital Humanities. In the classroom, Kaylin promotes various types of learning activities, tirelessly and joyfully preparing a wide range of exercises – from communicative activities in groups to interactive digital assignments across all learning modalities. As one student wrote: “It makes me wish I had started on learning Russian earlier in my University career. I'll be taking the next class in the suggested order, and were I not graduating soon, I'd continue doing these classes until I was fluent.” Kaylin has been an indefatigable contributor to all extra-curricular activities in Russian Studies and was recently elected as unit representative to our Department's Graduate Studies committee. That Kaylin has managed to balance this demanding workload with teaching responsibilities is further evidence of her dedication and superlative work across the board.

## **Hiba Zerrougui – Political Science**

I am going to do something a bit different with the citation. Rather than quoting from supervising faculty or former students, I would like to read part of the letter submitted by a fellow TA. I think it says it all.

Colleen Flanagan writes:

Last year I had the privilege of receiving one of the two Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Teaching Awards. Now I have a chance to acknowledge how much of my approach was influenced by Hiba Zerrougui. For example, Hiba taught me to run seminars that promote diversity and inclusion using small group discussions, small-scale simulations and trivia games. She also taught me how to consider and evaluate the quality and diversity of students' participation instead of just the quantity of participation. I am in awe of the time and energy Hiba is able to invest in teaching activities since I am acutely aware of the competing demands of graduate school. Since I met her in 2018, I have witnessed Hiba consistently showing up for her students, investing quality time and upholding the highest level of teaching standards. Simply put, she always brings her A game. Her notes, spreadsheets and rubrics are next level. She is highly organized and prepared. Above all, Hiba's prioritization of mechanisms to cultivate a rich, positive, diverse and stimulating learning environment makes a difference for her students and ultimately upholds and builds on the standards of excellence McGill is known for.

Thank you all for attending today.

The Chair extended his congratulations to the winners and thanked Associate Dean Sparks and the Committee for all their hard work.

### **4. Report of the Arts Graduate Society (PGSS)**

Kristi Kouchakji reported on behalf of the PGSS and mentioned that things are transitioning between the two Executives. The last Executive did not involve any items to report for the Council but there with interesting information to come in September.

The Chair thanked Kristi for her hard work on the Council as a PGSS Representative throughout the year and the PGSS Executive.

The floor was opened for comments and questions. There were none.

### **5. Report of the Activities of the Arts Undergraduate Society**

Chip reported that the transition from the old Executive to the new Executive is nearly complete. The new Executive has taken office. The following three ART's reps will still be in office for the next five days:

Chip Smith  
Alex Karasick  
Darshan Daryanani

Chip introduced the new AUS Executive and handed the transition virtually to Ghania Jayed who gave the AUS report and introduced Yara Coussa and Asa Ford to the Faculty Council members as well.

Ghania Jayed thanked the previous AUS Executive and Arts Senators and Representatives for all

their hard work and informed the members that the new Team has been in the hiring stage which has now been completed. They are currently doing some training, getting together and getting that virtual Team bonding experience.

VP Social is organizing the Frosh and it looks as if it will be an in person Frosh as the government is more flexible on COVID-19 regulations.

VP Communications teams is working on revamping the AUS website to make it more organized for students to utilize.

For next year the Executive wants to work towards recording lectures remaining as an option with the possibility of the S/U to remain as well. The Executive has some concerns regarding the drop in grades and the transitions which can be overwhelming for students.

The AUS looks forward to working with everyone.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions. There were none.

The Chair welcomed the new Executive and thanked Chip Smith for all his work on the AUS Executive throughout this past year.

## **6. Other Business**

The Chair asked if there was any other business to discuss.

A question was raised regarding the Faculty of Arts EDI plan and whether there is any brief information that can be given regarding its progress. Specifically, can graduate students touch base about this matter going forward.

The Chair asked Associate Dean Lucy Lach if there was any information that can be given. Associate Dean Lach pointed out that this is a working document. A report was required to be submitted to the AVP, Professor Angela Campbell on a number of items, such as, work force, physical space, research, student engagement – five domains to articulate some goals going forward. The report was presented to the EDI Community of Practice. The new regime will be taking over going forward to articulate goals for the five domains and continues to be a working document. Items to work on: How EDI works in relation to governance, having in each department a designated go-to person, receive training in EDI; extremely positive goals going forward.

The Chair informed everyone that a new regime will be taking over and that come the Fall things will go back to person to person. The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meetings this past year. There has been better attendance this year than in the past six years, and come September hopefully have 10% of the faculty attend. Thanks to the Quebec roll-out it will be a bit clearer for how the University roll-out will go in September. The next few weeks will bring further information about the implementations.

The Chair expressed his privilege at having been the Acting Dean. He expressed his gratitude to all those both within the Faculty of Arts and outside the Faculty for the tremendous support he received in fulfilling this role and special gratitude to the Associate Deans in the Faculty of Arts. The Chair wished Professor Mary Hunter all the very best with the transition and Interim Deanship. The Chair touched on the historical aspect of what we are experiencing and with the ongoing vaccinations and restrictions, wished everyone a safe summer.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

**END**

The complete documents, including presentations at the Faculty Council, are kept as part of the official minutes.

