



Minutes

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 A22-26

Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Council held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 3:00pm via the Zoom conferencing application.

SECTION I – INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

1. Welcoming Remarks

The Dean and Chair, Professor Lisa Shapiro, waited until quorum was achieved to start the Faculty Council meeting. Quorum was achieved and the meeting was called to order at 3:05pm.

Dean Shapiro then welcomed everyone and confirmed that the next Faculty Council meeting will also be remote. She reminded everyone to use the “raised hand” feature on Zoom if they wish to speak. The land acknowledgement was then given.

2. Announcements

The Chair asked the Council members if they had any announcement to make. There were none.

3. Guests and Speaking Rights

The Chair informed the members that Dana-Kaye Matthews, who is working with SSMU as a Special Researcher on Mental Health and Wellness in Academic Contexts, had requested attendance to the meeting in order to present her research. The Chair moved that she be granted speaking rights for this purpose. The motion was seconded by Marianne Stenbaek and accepted unanimously.

4. Approval of the Agenda (Document A22-19)

The Chair moved for the Agenda of February 14th to be approved. The approval was seconded by Ian Gold. The Agenda was approved as submitted.

5. Approval of the January 17th Minutes (Document A22-20)

The Chair moved for the Minutes of January 17th to be approved. The approval was seconded by Jennifer Welsh. The motion was accepted unanimously.

6. Business Arising from the January 17th Minutes

There was no business arising from the January 17th Minutes.

7. Presentation on Academic Wellness (Document No. A22-21)

The Chair gave the floor to Dana-Kaye Matthews. The SSMU Special Researcher presented her research as submitted and shared her email address and a survey link in the chat. She hopes to get survey responses by the end of February. The Dean encouraged Faculty members to reach out to Dana-Kaye Matthews directly and thanked her for her time.

8. Question regarding Robert's Rules of Order (Document No. A22-22)

Prof. Ian Henderson submitted a question to the Dean of Arts for consideration at Faculty Council: "Is it the intention of Council to modify the Terms of Reference to require seconds for motions to implement standing committee recommendations?"

Prof. Henderson shared his question with Faculty Council. (Document No. A22-22)

The Chair agreed that according to the most recent version of Robert's Rules of Order, a seconder is not required for a motion from a standing committee. Nonetheless, it is permissible for a motion from a standing committee to be seconded, and there is no harm in doing so. The Chair also agreed that the Dean's Office will secure a reference copy of the most recent version of Robert's Rules.

SECTION II – REPORTS

9. Report of the Dean – Professor Lisa Shapiro

Dean Shapiro updated the Faculty members on the following:

- a) February is Black History Month, which was opened at McGill by a talk by Rinaldo Walcott, organized by Faculty of Education. Relatedly, the 2022-2023 Annual Report on the Action Plan to address Anti-Black Racism is available on the Addressing Anti-Black Racism website: <https://www.mcgill.ca/antiblackracism/about>
- b) An Integrated Planning Exercise with the Provost's Office, and Faculty of Arts Brief for the new Principal were submitted at the end of January. Both were very helpful exercises for Dean Shapiro and helped her crystallize the understanding of the workings of the Faculty she has developed since arriving on October 1.
- c) To further her understanding of the Faculty, Dean Shapiro is hoping to visit more departments and meet faculty by the end of the semester.
- d) Budget Meetings with units and University Tenure Committee meetings have been taking up most of the calendar, but they are moving along quite smoothly and almost over.

- e) Site visits for the new MAs in ISID and IGSF have happened, and the visits went well. The Chair congratulated Erik Kuhonta and Manuel Balán from ISID and Natalie Stoljar from IGSF for their work.
- f) The University is in the process of consolidating what was learned during the pandemic to develop a Pandemic Plan. Dean Shapiro thanked everyone who kept the Faculty functioning during an extended and stressful period, both on the Academic and Administrative sides.
- g) The merit process has started: Faculty members should have received the unified report forms from their Chairs and Directors. Dean Shapiro indicated that the timelines are quite tight and asked everyone to please respect them and return their completed forms to their Chair/Director in a timely manner. The Dean's Office will be working with the Chairs and Directors to determine the eligibility list for Merit review.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. There were none.

Report of the Associate Dean of Administration and Oversight, Professor Michael Fronda

Associate Dean Michael Fronda updated the Faculty members on the following:

- a) Senate Committee on Libraries: The bulk of the discussion was about library governance, i.e. the relationship between the various Faculty-level advisory committees, the Library advisory committees, and how they relate to the Senate Committee on libraries. The goal is to have better communication between the libraries and the Senate Committee on Libraries, and the discussion will continue for the rest of the term.
- b) Long-term delay for Wilson Hall renovations: This has an impact on the Faculty of Arts because of the loss of space, and it is compounded by the moving forward of the Fiat Lux renovation of the library, which is going to force the relocation of the McGill Writing Centre and the French Language Centre. Associate Dean Fronda stated that he is working with Campus Planning Development Office on solutions and trying to mitigate what is now going to be a longer-term loss of Wilson Hall.
- c) IT Asset Inventory form sent by Kristin Mueller-Heaslip: Associate Dean Fronda reminded everyone to complete the form for the purposes of compliance.
- d) Supplemental Teaching Budget for next year will be allocated in early March

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. Catherine Desbarats asked Associate Dean Fronda if he had any updates about the Stewart Biology building. Although Stewart Biology isn't a Faculty of Arts building, some Faculty members teach in this building and Associate Dean Fronda said that he would follow up to get more information. The Chair pointed out that Yvonne Hung had posted a link to the latest news item in the chat for people's reference. The Chair encouraged Faculty members whose classes are impacted to reach out to Associate Deans Fronda and Balán so that the Dean's Office can escalate the issue.

There were no further questions.

Report of the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, Professor Tabitha Sparks

Associate Dean Tabitha Sparks updated the Faculty members on the following:

- a) Submission of packets for the Arts TA Awards and dissertation awards are due on March 13th. Last year there was a surprisingly low number of nominations for the dissertation awards in the Social Science category and Associate Dean Sparks encouraged Faculty members and GPDs to nominate a student in all these categories.
- b) Late in the last academic year, GPS made a change to the thesis requirements by specifying 2 new categories on the submission page: Literature survey, and Comprehensive summary. It should be very clear that these are not aimed at Arts students, but for students in other faculties.
- c) Mid-admission season: offers are starting to go out and things seem to be moving along well. There is a lot of pressure to recruit at the PhD level and Associate Dean Sparks will keep everyone posted.
- d) Associate Dean Sparks thanked Andy Catalano for setting up a listserv for GPDs and GPCs to post questions and best practices. It went up last week and it's already proven to be very efficient.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. There were none.

Report of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Professor Manuel Balán

Associate Dean Manuel Balán updated the Faculty members on the following:

- a) OASIS:
 - OASIS recently welcomed the new Associate Director of Faculty Affairs, Romesh Vadivel, as well as a new Faculty Advisor, Sarah Lessard. They are also finalizing a second Faculty Advisor who will join them in the coming weeks.
 - Reorganisation within OASIS: Different departments will be assigned to different advisors, and the roles will be recasted slightly. These changes will be communicated to the different units as soon as they are finalized. One big project that is in the works right now is to revise how study away requests and exchanges are processed.
- b) Student accommodations: There are different types of letters sent by Student Accessibility and Achievement (SAA):
 - Legal mandate to accommodate: These accommodations are not up to instructors. They are a mandate that the University must accommodate for certain barriers that students are facing, and these are mostly managed directly by SAA.
 - Suggestions about what instructors can do to support academically the work of students: These are not mandated. It is up to instructors to decide whether they make sense within the context of their class. Courses look very differently from one course to the other, and it may be much easier to accommodate for occasional absences in a lecture course that is recorded than in a seminar where participation and attendance is essential.
- c) Implementation of the new assessment policy for the Faculty of Arts: Associate Deans Fronda and Balán will bring this to both Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Student Affairs in their coming meetings, and the idea is to form a working group out of those two committees to start looking at what that implementation would look like within the faculty.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. Fernanda Macchi mentioned that there are delays and costs to obtain letters from SAA, which could explain why students are reaching out to their instructors directly for accommodations. Associate Dean Balán indicated that there are no real delays at the moment, as letters are often produced within a day and SAA has many availabilities for appointments. Jason Carmichael mentioned that he receives many athletic requests and feels like he is not given a choice to accommodate them. Associate Dean Balán reiterated that unless there is a legal mandate from SAA, it is up to instructors to make the decision. He added that there are two principles that the instructors should take into consideration: the academic integrity of the class (if accommodating a student means that the student will not get the content needed in order to pass the course and achieve the learning objectives of the class), and fairness (accommodations should be fair to the student receiving them, but they should also be fair to the other students in the class. If the accommodations result in a student getting a higher grade because the instructor removed the most demanding components of assessment within a course, that's not fair to the other students in the class).

There were no further questions for Associate Dean Balán.

Report of the Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, Professor David Wright

Associate Dean David Wright did not have a report. He explained that his portfolio addresses confidential issues of hiring, retention, merit, as well as personal and medical leaves, and that he is thus unable to comment on these matters before Council. He did, however, confirm that things are quite busy in the Dean's office, especially with 12 to 15 searches ongoing and an unusual number of retirements. He is addressing faculty affairs situations as they come up with the respective Chairs and Directors.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. There were none.

10. Report of the Curriculum Committee

Associate Dean Michael Fronda updated Faculty members on what the Curriculum Committee has been up to recently. They have had discussions about a number of outdated policies and practices and how they can be revised. They've also looked at the constitution of the Curriculum committee, namely its membership and Terms of Reference, and how that can be updated.

Associate Dean Fronda then presented the Report of Curriculum Committee (Document A22-23). He moved that the motion to accept the Report of the Curriculum Committee be approved *in toto*.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. There were none.

Curriculum Committee Report (Document No. A22-23) was put to a vote. 54 people approved and 2 abstained. The report was approved.

11. Reports of Student Societies

- **AUS President, Ghania Javed**, presented the AUS Report (Document A22-24) as submitted.

AUS President Javed added that they will be looking for professors to join the Arts Undergraduate Improvement Fund Committee (AUIF) and that Associate Deans Balán or Fronda will be reaching out to Faculty members. Associate Dean Fronda clarified that the Committee requires Department Chairs or Unit Heads to serve on it and mentioned that it is a very enjoyable committee.

The floor was opened for any questions or comments. There were none.

- **PGSS Representative, Rine Vieth**, was ill and unable to attend the meeting. The Chair informed the Council members that PGSS will work to submit a retroactive report.

12. Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the Chair moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Tabitha Sparks seconded the motion. All were in favour.

The meeting adjourned at 3:59pm.