



Guidelines for Questions at Board of Governors Community Sessions

1. Guiding Provisions

Under the provisions of the Statutes of McGill University, the Board of Governors (Board) has authority over the conduct of all academic, business, and financial affairs of the University. It is also the trustee of all University property and is responsible for its maintenance and administration. The Statutes provide that, subject to the over-arching authority of the Board, the University Senate has various general and specific powers and duties. Most significantly, Senate exercises general control and supervision over the academic affairs of the institution.

The Board delegates responsibility for institutional management and operations to the Principal and the administration, while retaining responsibility for the consideration of strategic plans and other major institutional commitments, whether of a policy or financial nature.

The Guidelines for Questions at Board of Governors Community Sessions (Guidelines) adhere to relevant sections of the Board of Governors Rules of Order and Procedure.

2. Questions to the Board of Governors

Based on these guiding provisions, the Board will provide students, staff, faculty, alumni, and members of the community an opportunity to submit questions on matters within the Board's jurisdiction. In considering questions submitted to the Board, preference will be given to subject matters on the Board's agenda for the governance year.

Questions to the Board must be made in writing to the Secretariat at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting of the Board. Individuals wishing to submit a question to the Board need to submit to the Secretariat the Question to the Board by completing the Question Form (attached).

The Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of questions and confirm logistical details for the community session period.

Written communications to the Board continue to be welcomed and may be submitted to the Chair of the Board of Governors c/o Secretariat at any time.

The Board will not entertain questions on the following topics: subjects discussed by the Board in Closed session that are subject to confidentiality requirements, topics concerning the private activities, lifestyles, or beliefs of individuals employed by or associated with the University; grievances of individual students or employees; proposals or bids for contracts; or litigation involving the University.

3. Review of Questions

Questions will be reviewed by a working group composed of the Chair of the Board the Chair of the Nominating, Governance and Ethics Committee, the Principal and the Secretary-General, to determine their suitability for the Board.

Questions generally pertinent to the academic affairs of the University will be returned to the requester, who may submit them to the appropriate University unit, or to Senate, through established processes. The question may also be referred to another governance body or University unit.

The working group retains discretion to decline a question if an individual or group has previously appeared before the Board regarding the same matter or if the matter has been previously addressed by the Board either at a previous Board meeting or following a question submitted to the Board by another individual or group.

4. Responses

Responses to questions will be provided in writing to the requester generally prior to the session. Responses will also be posted on the Board's website. Where a question requires further study or consultation, a response may not be provided prior to or during the session. In such instances, responses will be provided to the requester within a reasonable amount of time following the community session.

5. Chair

The Chair of the Board will preside over community sessions. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair of the Board or the Chair's delegate will preside over the community sessions.

The Chair will recognize each speaker, maintain order, and require adherence to a five-minute maximum time limit allotted to each interaction.

6. Speakers and Decorum

When a response to a question has been provided to the requester, the requester will be allowed up to (2) two minutes to ask one or two supplemental questions directly related to the subject matter. The Chair may provide a brief answer to the follow-up question or refer it to another individual for a response.

A total of five (5) minutes will be allotted for each interaction between the speaker and the Board.

A maximum of four (4) speakers will be recognized for each session and a total of 20 minutes will be awarded. A timekeeper will assist in ensuring that the time allocation is respected. The time allotted for the community session may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

Each speaker will identify him or herself by any relevant title, the group or organization, if any, for which the speaker serves as spokesperson.

If a question has been submitted by a group of individuals, a single individual is to be identified by the group to address the Board on behalf of the group.

Individuals who are unable to attend the session may not send substitutes.

Failure to respect decorum will relieve the Board from any obligation to address the question and may result in the requester's suspension of privileges to address the Board at future sessions.

7. Schedule of Community Sessions

Community sessions will be held twice a year, once in the fall session and once in the spring session. Sessions will be held following the Board meeting.

Documents for the community session will be available online prior to the session.

Individuals whose questions were not heard by the Board due to time constraints may resubmit them for a future session or may communicate them in writing to the Chair of the Board c/o Secretariat.

In the absence of questions, the community session will be cancelled.

Approved:

Board of Governors: December 1, 2016 ~ Minute 14.2.6

Amended:

Board of Governors: February 15, 2018 ~ Minute 5.2