
Senate Committee on Libraries
Minutes



McGill

Minutes of the Senate Committee on Libraries held in person in the Research Commons Room (McLennan-Redpath Library Complex) on **Tuesday, 3 May 2022, from 14:10 to 15:20.**

PRESENT: C. Buddle (Chair), C. Colleen Cook, J. Cumming, C. Della Motta, E. Elbourne, M. Fronda, B. Gillon, J. Hafner, D. Rogers, N. Waters

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

2. Approval of the minutes

The Minutes of the 6 December 2022 and Minutes of 22 March 2022 were presented and approved, although the committee requested minor amendments to the minutes of the 22 March 2022 meeting to reflect more of the discussion around ‘hot-desking’ for Library Staff. The amended minutes will be circulated via email.

3. New business:

i. Governance Structure

As a follow up to discussion earlier in the academic year, the committee had an opportunity to reflect on governance structure of library committees. However, governance of the suite of library committee (e.g., library advisory committee) is beyond the mandate of SCL, although considering whether SCL’s own Term of Reference and Membership need updates is important to consider. It was agreed that a review and update of membership may be necessary. There were two general approaches discussed: first, having representation somewhat aligned by ‘library’ (e.g., chairs library advisory committees); second, having representation by discipline. The current membership is more aligned with the former, yet this means there may be some disciplines across the University that are without voice on SCL.

The prevailing view is that SCL does need to represent the University since it is a Senate committee, and representation by Faculty would be appropriate. It is therefore proposed that in the 2022-2023 Academic Year formal changes to the membership, and perhaps minor changes to the Terms of Reference, be considered and adopted via the appropriate governance procedures.

The committee had other general, pertinent comments about governance, including that communications between library committee at SCL is of critical importance, and information flow must be open, two-way, and ongoing.

ii. Updates

Dean of Libraries Update:

Dean Cook provided the committee with an overall Library update, first indicating that the year finished reasonably well, with the budget being fully spent as is normal each Fiscal Year. Some additional resources were purchased (e.g., e-resources, and ‘publisher plans’). Hiring for replacements positions is ongoing.

Fiat Lux Update:

The committee was informed that some information about Fiat Lux would be provided to Senate in May. This was in reference to previous discussions by the SCL about providing Fiat Lux updates to the broader community, including Senate.

The storage facility construction is commencing, with likely completion by year’s end, and the location is Valleyfield (Quebec). Once complete, materials will start moving (‘ingestion’) into the facility, which is a significant undertaking (estimated at 2.5 million volumes), and one that will take many months. Once all is fully functional, recall to/from the facility is guaranteed within 24 hours.

The general design of Fiat Lux is not yet ready for public consumption, in part because there are sequences to consider (e.g., permits, permissions). However, many of the thematic aspects of the design will be realized (e.g., ‘biophilic’ elements, additional study spaces, graduate student space as a ‘bay’ within one of the larger spaces). Versatility and flexibility remain key elements in the design. Fall 2026 is the current estimate for opening of Fiat Lux.

There was some discussion about offices for librarians, and if individuals needs individual spaces for confidential work, this will occur. It was noted that specific office designs are only indirectly connected to the New Models of Work project, although the latter may help inform design of the former.

The new Trenholme Dean of Libraries will be fully briefed on Fiat Lux as they begin their role in Fall 2022.

Other business:

The committee was informed that the Schulich Library renovations are fully on track and proceeding well, with anticipated re-opening for January/February of 2023.