

## **Senate report for Thursday, November 23, 2017**

2:30 in the Robert Vogel Council Room (rm 232), Leacock Building

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### **SECTION I**

The Chair began the meeting by thanking everyone who participated in, and planned the joint Board-Senate meeting on November 15, 2017.

#### **1. Memorial Tributes**

There were no tributes

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#### **2. Report of the Steering Committee**

Senate received the Report of the Steering Committee.

**3. Business Arising:** There was no business arising.

#### **1. Principal's Remarks**

##### **i. Steps to ensure respect and inclusion**

On Monday, Oct. 23, 2017, the Students' Society of McGill University, to which undergraduate students on the downtown campus belong, held a General Assembly attended by fewer than 300 students. At that meeting, three members of the SSMU Board of Directors were voted off the Board. Allegations have arisen suggesting that the votes against one or more of those Directors were motivated by anti-Semitism. In response an investigation has been initiated and is being conducted by Dr. Spencer Boudreau, former Ombudsperson for Students to determine whether anti-Semitism played a role in the votes. In addition, a Principal's Task Force on Respect and Inclusion in Campus Life was established and is being chaired by Senator Lennox, to make recommendations on ways to ensure that the University's values and principles are respected. Also, a phone line has been set up where members of the community can seek support following experiences of exclusion or discrimination at McGill.

The Chair also discussed government relations. Beginning at the municipal level, she mentioned that Ms. Valérie Plante was the first women elected Mayor of Montreal in its 375 year history, and mentioned that she has already met with her. She also acknowledged the contributions of Montreal's outgoing Mayor, Mr. Denis Coderre. At the provincial level, she discussed Bill 157, a bill to enact the Cannabis Regulation Act and to amend various highway safety-related provisions. The bill includes some of the recommendations made by Quebec universities, including a recommendation to establish a fund for research on cannabis. The Chair also discussed the introduction of

Bill 151, which aims to and prevent and combat sexual violence at institutions of higher education institutions.

With respect to funding, She noted that the province recently announced \$107 million in additional spending in the area of Higher Education over the next six years, including funding for CEGEPs and universities.

At the federal level, the University's priority continues to be funding for fundamental research, noting that many meetings on this matter took place throughout October and November. Finally, she noted the visit November 16<sup>th</sup> of the Federal Minister of Science Kirsty Duncan to McGill, where she met with Dean Geitmann and toured several labs here at Macdonald. Minister Duncan also met Dr. Bruce Mazer (Interim Executive Director and Chief Scientific Officer of the Research Institute of the MUHC) and visited the Reasoning and Learning Lab.

## **ii. Community relations**

The Chair highlighted several gifts and donations that were recently received. These include a \$10 million gift from the Max Bell Foundation for the launch of the Max Bell School of Public Policy, and two additional gifts in support of the School, including a \$1-million dollar donation from the McConnell Foundation and a \$2 million gift from an anonymous donor. Also, the BMO Financial Group and the McConnell Foundation announced that they are providing \$2.25 million and \$1 million in new support for the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Montreal. Finally, the Chair participated in a gala event for the 10th anniversary of the Cundill History Prize, and the winning book was *The House of the Dead* by British historian Dr. Daniel Beer.

## **iii. Kudos**

The Chair provided information on several kudos. The Minister of Science announced an investment of \$27 million through the CFI Innovation Fund for six McGill-led projects. McGill was voted second greenest campus in Canada according to the 2017 Corporate Knights Green Campus Ranking, just one percentage point behind the University of Calgary. Professor Isabelle Daunais (Department of French Language and Literature) received the 2017 Acfas André Laurendeau prize in the humanities, and McGill students Clare Lyle (Joint Honours Mathematics and Computer Science) and Alexander Lachapelle (Medicine) have been awarded 2017 Rhodes Scholarships.

## **SECTION II PART A: Questions and motions by members**

### **1. Motion Regarding Bill 62**

There was a Motion regarding Bill 62, which is an Act to foster adherence to State religious neutrality, and in particular, to provide a framework for requests for accommodations on religious grounds in certain bodies.

The motion resolved that the McGill Senate, in the context of Bill 62, reaffirm its commitment to the University's values, mission and principles, which include those of equity, inclusiveness and openness; and that Senate strongly endorse the McGill University administration in seeking opportunities to preserve academic and personal

freedoms on campus in response to effects that Bill 62 has or will have on McGill operations and procedures. The Motion was voted upon and carried.

## **SECTION II PART B: Motions and Reports from University Government**

### **1. Open Discussion on Experiential Learning**

A discussion was held on the role of experiential learning at McGill and how existing structures could be further developed to enhance experiential learning. The University has provided funding for a number of experiential learning opportunities, including a special financial aid package of \$1.8 million to increase students' ability to participate in Enriched Educational Opportunities (EEOs), which are voluntary experiential learning opportunities; and a financial package of \$1.5 million to allow Faculties to create more EEOs. The Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) has provided funds to increase the number of internships, experiential learning opportunities and EEOs. Also, funding was given to Career Planning Services (CaPS) to develop a program called the Employ/Ease student Employee Onboarding Program, which provides a pedagogical experience to students working on campus. It was also noted that a requirement for the funding provided to faculties for EEOs is that the EEO is officially recognized on the student's record. Several Senators stated that it is important for the McGill community to find creative ways of incorporating experiential learning into a program. Senator Buddle stated that Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) could provide assistance with course design to include experiential learning. Senator Winer added that TLS also provides support on alternative assessment strategies.

### **2. 483rd Report of the Academic Policy Committee**

Senator Manfredi presented the report for Senate's information. He highlighted that it contained new courses and teaching programs approved by the Academic Policy Committee as well as course retirements.

### **3. Extension of the Strategic Research Plan 2013-2017**

Senator Crago presented this item for Senate's consideration. She explained that a strategic research plan is required to apply for funding to the Canada Foundation for Innovation and to nominate Canada Research Chairs and subsequently requested an extension of the current Strategic Research Plan, until December 31, 2018. A motion to extend the McGill Strategic Research Plan until 31 December 2018, was endorsed by Senate.

### **4. Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2017-2020**

Francois Miller, Director of the Office of Sustainability, presented this item for Senate's information. The Action Plan is the result of extensive consultation with McGill stakeholders through various events on campus. The long-term targets are to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 and attain a platinum sustainability rating by 2030. Three strategies were identified to reduce building energy emissions: (1) reducing the energy use of buildings through the deferred maintenance work; (2) recycling energy by using smart energy grids and heat exchange systems; and (3) transitioning energy systems from gas to electricity. With respect to the implementation of the plan, a number of

strategies have been identified (engagement, communications, unit-level climate and sustainability action plans; sustainability projects fund to help kick-start some of the initiatives). Finally, the validity of the long-term targets will be reassessed every three years and a reporting system including sustainability KPIs was established.

### **5. Report on the McGill Context**

Senator Manfredi presented this report for Senate's information. Senators Buddle and Campbell are conducting a review of best practices on the meaning of the "university context," further to allegations of misconduct involving members of the McGill community that occurred off-campus in private settings. The goal of the review was to help arrive at a clearer, implementable definition that would inform revisions to the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (the "Code").

### **6. Progress Report on the McGill Wellness Strategy**

Senator Dyens presented a verbal update on the Wellness Strategy for Senate's information. He reported that there has been a significant increase in the number of students accessing mental health and counselling services in the past few years. In response, Student Life and Learning developed a mental health and wellness strategy, which was submitted to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic). The strategy focuses on awareness and prevention, skills development and capacity building, access and inclusivity, healthy spaces, healthy policies and practices, and recognition of best practices. A number of initiatives have recently been implemented in support of the strategy, including; the number of staff in counselling services has increased by 43% since 2014 and the number of physicians increased by 50% since 2016. Group counselling was increased, two additional case workers were hired, the substance abuse program was expanded, and a collaborative care model was launched. An online booking system would be available in 2018. Furthermore, three additional advising staff were hired in the Office for Students with Disabilities, the universal access hub was developed and a low cost integrated assessment and diagnostic services for students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD was launched.

A question was asked about the impact of the new initiatives on the average wait time for students to access professional services. While the wait time used to be four to six months, it is now approximately four weeks, with the intention to have same day access to a social worker and a wait time of one to two weeks to see a counsellor.

*Professor Angela Campbell* (Associate Provost (Equity and Academic Policies)

In 2016-2017, the number of harassment cases increased but the number of sexual harassment cases decreased. Most of these cases did not proceed past the enquiry stage, but 13 cases (31%) did proceed to an investigation and formal resolution. As mentioned above, the number of assessors will increase from 9 to 12.

#### **7. Annual Report of the Committee on Student Discipline (2016-17)**

Senator Buddle presented this report for Senate's information. He highlighted that the number of cases has decreased and has not been this low since the 2005-06 academic year. He stated that the reasons are unknown but could include underreporting, informal resolution of cases and more awareness around the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. He also explained that a number of cases are in progress largely due to the non-availability of students and members of the Committee during the summer as well as appeals from decisions of disciplinary interviews that later get withdrawn.

#### **8. Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Physical Development (2016-17)**

Cameron Charlebois, Executive Director, Campus Planning and Development, and Chair of the Senate Committee on Physical Development, presented this report for Senate's information. He highlighted some of the major planning initiatives, off-campus leases and real estate projects and major infrastructure and deferred maintenance projects reviewed by the Committee during the last governance year. A suggestion was made that major infrastructure projects be included in the climate and emissions calculations and be part of the carbon neutrality goal.

#### **9. Annual Report of the Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs (2016-17)**

Senator Dyens presented this report for Senate's information. He highlighted that the Committee considered items related to admission requirements and scholarships. In response to a question regarding awards and financial aid provided to McGill students, Senator Dyens clarified that the Committee does not provide funds but approves the creation of new awards and changes in the conditions of existing awards.

#### **10. Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting: "Building Stronger Communities and Citizenship through Mentorship"**

The Principal presented this report for Senate's information. She highlighted that Professor Brian Rubineau from the Desautels Faculty of Management delivered a presentation related to mentorship that informed the roundtable discussions. She noted that the main ideas that emerged from the discussions were included in the report.

#### **11. Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **12. Confidential Session**

## Adjournment