From: Marc Richard

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2009 10:34 AM

Cc: Marc Richard

Subject: Senate Meeting Report, 2009-02-11

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place on Wednesday, February 11, 2009.

The meeting began with Dean Christophe Pierre presenting a resolution on the death of Professor Martin Weber and Dean Donald McLean presenting a resolution on the death of Professor Emerita Dorothy Morton.

Senate adopted the report of the Steering Committee (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/ReportofSenateSteeringFeb3_2009.pdf>)

and the agenda (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/SenateAgendaFebruary11_2009.pdf>).

In her comments from the chair, Principal Munroe-Blum noted the opening of McGill's new Sustainability Office.  She next discussed the subject of compensation for the University's senior officers, a topic which has attracted much attention from the press over the past week.  She indicated that McGill works to attract the best talent in the world to its academic and senior officer positions, and that it has always done the best it can to hire and retain this talent by offering competitive compensation benchmarked by the international market.  Regarding the departures of Ann Dowsett Johnston and Michael Goldbloom, the Principal indicated that McGill must respect its contractual obligations in such circumstances and noted that both departures were followed by a major restructuring of the positions which had been vacated.

The Principal then thanked everyone who had provided her with input in response to her recent open letter on McGill's financial situation.  The overarching question she has has distilled from this input concerns what the worldwide financial downturn means for the University.  She indicated that she and Provost Masi have a clear commitment to stay the course on the progress which McGill is making in such areas as planning, priorities and the University's Master Plan.  The establishment of the Provost’s Administrative Task Force on Dealing with Economic Uncertainty was announced to all staff by email on February 10th, and the Principal will soon be announcing the details of the task force she will be chairing on issues related to accessibility and diversity.  A preliminary meeting on next year's budget will be held with the Board's Finance Committee in March; this will be followed by a second open letter from the Principal to the McGill community in April, then by the presentation of the budget to the Board by the Provost in May.

Regarding the recent federal budget, the Principal is pleased by the new support it offers in the area of graduate fellowships and university infrastructure, but is surprised and disappointed by the lack of new investment in the federal granting councils.  On the subject of the provincial government's legislative project on university governance, the Board has recently mandated the Principal and the Chair of the Board to write to the Quebec government to express the Board's grave concerns about this law.

In the period for formal questions, Senator Gulamhussein asked a question regarding equitable licensing practices for intellectual property (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/QuestionreIntellectualPropertyReview.pdf> <<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/QuestionreIntellectualPropertyReview.pdf)>> ). V.-P. Thérien answered that the University's policy on intellectual property is under review, that this process is still at at early stage and does not have a finalized timeline, that a working group of Senate's Committee on Technology Transfer will be involved, and that students and other constituencies have representatives at all three levels of the review process.

Senate then moved into confidential session to consider the report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee.

Senate next approved the 407th report of the Academic Policy Committee (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-38407thAPCReport2009-02-11.pdf> and <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-38AppendicesAtoE.pdf>.)  This included a proposal to reconstitute the McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women (MCRTW) into a McGill Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies, and a proposal to create a McGill Biodiversity Research Centre (MBRC) that reconstitutes the existing Limnology Research Centre.   Senator Hobbins asked for clarifications on the difference between a centre and an institute.  Provost Masi answered that APC is looking into this issue, and that much variation in practice exists, but that generally speaking an institute has graduate-level teaching programs, has an interdisciplinary research focus, and can have individuals appointed to it; individuals can be affiliated with research centres but are not appointed to them.  On the subject of the report on academic program reviews for 2004-2008, which appears as Appendix E of the APC report, the Provost indicated that this document was being submitted to Senate for discussion at a later meeting.

The Provost next presented the proposed revision of the regulations governing the Emeritus Professor / Emeritus Librarian designations (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-39MemoreRetiredRankedAcademicandLibrarianStaff.pdf>, <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-39APPENDIXAandB.pdf> and <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-39APPENDIXCBENEFITS.pdf>).  These revisions correct McGill's somewhat anomalous practices in this regard and bring them more into line with the practices at many research-intensive universities.  Also proposed in the same package is the establishment of a McGill Medal to recognize exceptional academic achievement (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-39APPENDIXDTheMcGillMedal.pdf>).

Senator Butler pointed out that NSERC requires emeritus professors to hold a lifetime emeritus appointment or at least a three-year post-retirement appointment in order to apply for a grant.  The Provost answered that, in situations where individuals wish to pursue research after retirement and have the support of their dean, the Administration would make sure that they have a post-retirement appointment.  Regarding section 7.8.1 of the new regulations, Senator Hobbins asked if the Provost would make inquiries with the appropriate dean if the recommendation to allocate the honorific designation "emeritus" to a retired staff member was not forthcoming or was negative.  The Provost indicated that such inquiries would indeed be made in writing.  Senator Gowrisankaran asked if the "academic leadership" referred to in the proposal for the establishment of a McGill Medal included exceptional service; the Provost answered that he believes it does.  The proposed changes to the regulations were approved.

V.-P. Thérien next presented the amendments to the Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-40MemoreResearchMisconductRegs.pdf> and <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-40AppendixAResearchMisconductRegs-Amended.pdf>) which are being proposed to bring them into line with Tri-Council expectations for such policies.  They do not affect the substance of the regulations.  Senator Zorychta asked what was meant by "substantive evidence" in the newly-numbered section 5.3 dealing with anonymous allegations.  Associate Provost Foster answered that this means evidence establishing the facts.  Such evidence could initiate the investigatory process, but conclusions could not be drawn from it until and unless it has been substantiated by the investigation.  Senator Zannis-Hadjopoulos asked if the evidence had to accompany the letter making the allegation; Associate Provost Foster answered that he thinks this is implicit.  The amendments were adopted.

Senator Smith next gave a PowerPoint presentation on the results of the study which has been conducted under the auspices of the Committee on Academic Salary Policy on possible academic salary differentials between men and women at McGill (document not posted).  The presence or absence of differentials varies depending on what model is used to analyze the data.  Provost Masi will be preparing an administrative response to the study.

As the final item of business, Deputy Provost Mendelson gave a PowerPoint presentation (document not posted) to supplement the report card on student life and learning (<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-41MemoreReportCard.pdf>, <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-41AppendixAProgressReportExecutiveSummary.pdf>, <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-41AppendixBTheStudent-CentredResearch-IntensiveUni.pdf>, <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-41AppendixCNSSEExecSnapshot2008.pdf> and <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/senate/D08-41AppendixDNSSEPocketGuide.pdf>). The slides included an architect's concept of the integrated service point which will be established in a to-be-renovated facility on the street level of the McLennan Library Building, with an entrance on McTavish Street, and which will bring together administrative services for students currently offered at six different service counters in four buildings (Enrolment Services, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Student Accounts, Student Affairs (of the Faculties of Arts and Science), and the Scholarships and Student Aid Office).

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.  The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2009.

Regards,

Your librarian Senate reps,

Jodie Hebert

John Hobbins

Marc Richard