Senate Meeting Report, 2013-05-15

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place on Wednesday, May 15, 2013.

Principal Munroe-Blum opened the meeting of Senate, the last one to be chaired by her during her term of office, by thanking all outgoing and continuing Senators for their service. The Principal and Provost Masi also recognized the work of Professor Morton Mendelson, who is completing his term as Deputy Provost, Student Life and Learning. Principal Munroe-Blum then presented a resolution on the death of Charlotte Légaré, McGill's long-serving Director of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Senate adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/senate_minutes_minutes_april_17_2013_final_.pdf), the report of the Steering Committee (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/report_of_the_senate_steering_committee_9.pdf) and the agenda (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/agenda_-_may.pdf).

In her remarks from the Chair, Principal Munroe-Blum reported that the Administration is working actively on its proposals for the first two *chantiers* on higher education which the Quebec government is organizing (one on university governance and one on a proposal for a national council on universities). The next focus will be the *chantier* on university funding. Regarding CREPUQ, the Principal indicated that half of its member institutions have withdrawn from the organization and that it can therefore no longer speak for Quebec universities as a whole. CREPUQ will undertake a day of reflection (in which McGill will participate) which will focus on whether it still has a role and, if so, what it should be (for example, a possible continuation of its data analysis services).

The Principal concluded her remarks with some words of appreciation for her time at McGill and for the important work conducted by Senate during the course of her mandate. Dean Grant, Senator Dinel and Provost Masi then spoke to recognize Principal Munroe-Blum's contributions to McGill over the years.

Under the agenda point for formal questions, Senator Dinel posed a question regarding the integration of sustainability principles into the research activities of the University (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/question_regarding_sustainable_research_0.pdf). Vice-Principal Goldstein responded by describing the role played by Research and International Relations (RIR) in working with other units to develop overarching policies on sustainability. RIR also applies sustainability values in its own work, for example by its exclusive use of electronic forms rather than paper-based ones, and also takes care to benchmark its progress. She also noted that sustainability is an underlying theme of McGill's Strategic Research Plan.

The next question, by Senator Mooney, concerned limits on freedom of expression (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/question_regarding_freedom_of_expression.pdf). Provost Masi responded by paraphrasing a letter he wrote in 2011 regarding controversial speakers on campus, which is available on the Provost's web page (http://www.mcgill.ca/provost/sites/mcgill.ca.provost/files/doc_provosts_letter_about_controversial_speakers_on_campus_201111.pdf). As was noted in the Steering report, freedom of expression will be the topic of an open discussion session which will be held in Senate during the 2013-2014 academic year.

The last question, posed by Senator Dinel, was on the subject of McGill's Harassment Policy (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/question_regarding_harassment_policy.pdf). Associate Provost White responded that the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Discrimination Prohibited by Law had been adopted in 2005 and amended in 2009, and that a working group had been struck in the fall of 2012 to review it. The group aims to bring some proposals to Senate in the fall regarding the Policy. The Policy has the twin goals of preventing harassment and of providing a complaint mechanism for situations in which it nonetheless occurs. Total prevention cannot be guaranteed, but education and the promotion of awareness are the key to reducing it. Professor White drew attention to various units (such as the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office), events (such as orientation sessions for new faculty members) and other initiatives (such as diversity surveys) which are involved in raising awareness in this area.

Senate approved an amendment to the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Tenure Track and Tenured Academic Staff (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-65_amendment_to_regulations_relating_to_the_employment_of_tenure_track_and_tenured_academic_staff.pdf) which corrects an omission made when the latest version of the document was adopted by Senate in May 2012. Senate also approved revisions to the Code of Student Grievance Procedures (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-66_revision_to_the_code_of_student_grievance_procedures.pdf).

The next agenda item was a PowerPoint presentation by V.-P. Goldstein on the Quartier de l'Innovation (QI) project (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-63_qi_update_memo_and_presentation__0.pdf). In the period for discussion which followed, Senator Dinel asked about the accountability parameters which apply to McGill's partners in this project. V.-P. Goldstein responded that McGill policies are applicable in each partnership case. McGill has a 25-year engagement with the École de technologie supérieure (ETS); its other partnerships and collaboration initiatives are with individual companies or other bodies.

Senator Galaty asked about the possible negative effects of the QI project at the level of urban development, for example rising

property values. V.-P. Goldstein drew attention to the urban facet of the project, which involves discussions with local inhabitants, artists and urban developers among others. It is recognized that the project will not happen if it simply involves building condos. Senator Bouchard asked if the QI will be self-sustaining without infusions of government funding. V.-P. Goldstein answered that there is as yet no long-term business plan dealing with the sustainability of the QI. She noted that the cultural and artistic elements of the project are not as profitable as what would be expected from the business elements.

Senate approved the 447th report of the Academic Policy Committee (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-67_447th_apc_report_.pdf). This included the creation of a Microbiome and Disease Tolerance Centre, and a change of a School of Information Studies degree title from (M.L.I.S.) to Master of Information Studies (M.I.St.). Provost Masi also gave notice of a motion that will be brought to Senate in September to revise the wording of article 13.1 of the Statutes. The article in its current form lists all the degrees conferred by the University; changes to degree designations therefore require amending the Statutes, which is a lengthy process. In its new form, article 13.1 would no longer include such a list, but would refer instead to an official list of degrees maintained by the Secretary-General on the basis of decisions recorded in the official minutes of Senate meetings.

Following from an item contained in the APC report, V.-P. Goldstein presented for approval a proposal to create a Principal's Prize for Outstanding Emerging Researchers (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-68_principals_prize_emerging_researchers.pdf). V.-P. Goldstein verbally integrated into the motion an amendment suggestion she had received from Senator Richard: changing the phrase "presented yearly to early-career faculty members" to "presented yearly to early-career faculty members or librarians", and changing the phrase "Each Faculty is invited to make one nomination per year" to "Each Faculty, as well as the University Library, is invited to make one nomination per year". She noted that this amendment clarified the eligibility aspects of the prize in a way which reflected the proposal's intended meaning, and that she had accepted the amendment as a friendly one. The amended motion was adopted.

Senate approved the report of the Senate Nominating Committee (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-69_nominating_report.pdf). This included the nomination of several student representatives to the Senate Committee on Libraries; the nomination of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Composition of Senate; and the nomination of April Colosimo as an alternate Senate representative on an Advisory Committees for the Selection of a Dean of a Large Faculty. In connection with this last item, Principal Munroe-Blum informed Senate that Dean of Education Hélène Perrault is leaving McGill. Provost Masi thanked Dean Perrault for her service, adding that she had been offered reappointment but had chosen a different path. Also adopted was the Nominating Committee's recommendation for an omnibus replacement of the words "non-academic" by "administrative and support" as applicable in the terms of reference for all Senate Standing Committees.

Associate Provost White presented for adoption a new set of Regulations on the Retirement of Academic Staff (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-70_revisions_to_regs_concerning_retirement_academic_and_librarian.pdf). These Regulations would replace: a) the Regulations Concerning the Retirement of Academic Staff and Librarian Staff; b) Sections 7.8 - 7.10 of the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Academic Staff; and c) Section 6 of the Regulations Relating to Employment of Librarian Staff. Professor White made two verbal amendments to the proposal: deleting article 4.6.2, and changing "2 years" to "3 years" in article 4.6.13. The motion was adopted.

Professor White next presented a Report on Employment Equity (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-71_report_on_employment_equity_0.pdf) and gave a PowerPoint presentation on academic salary differentials by gender (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-72_report_on_academic_salary_differentials_by_gender.pdf). Senator Zorychta suggested that a committee look into what strategies have been used successfully elsewhere to increase staff diversity .

The last four items of business, presented for information, were the Calendar of Academic Dates for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-73_calendar_of_dates_2015-2016_and_2016-2017.pdf), the Report from the Board of Governors to Senate (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-74_report_from_bog_to_senate_may__2013.pdf), the annual report on the Policy on Safe Disclosure (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-75_safe_disclosure_policy.pdf) and the calendar of Senate Dates for 2013-2014 (http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d12-76_2013-2014_senate_meeting_dates_0.pdf).

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 18, 2013. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,
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