

**From:** [Marc Richard](#)  
**Cc:** [Marc Richard](#)  
**Subject:** Senate Meeting Report, 2013-11-20  
**Date:** Thursday, November 21, 2013 3:52:45 PM

---

## Senate Meeting Report, 2013-11-20

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place on Wednesday, November 20, 2013.

The meeting began with Senator Lach presenting a memorial tribute for Professor Peter Leonard. Senate adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/final\\_oct\\_16\\_2013\\_senate\\_minutes\\_3.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/final_oct_16_2013_senate_minutes_3.pdf)), the report of the Steering Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/report\\_of\\_the\\_senate\\_steering\\_committee\\_-\\_nov\\_12\\_2013\\_0.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/report_of_the_senate_steering_committee_-_nov_12_2013_0.pdf)) and the agenda ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/agenda\\_-\\_november\\_20\\_2013\\_0.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/agenda_-_november_20_2013_0.pdf)). Due to the anticipated length of today's meeting the report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee will be dealt with after the agenda item on key performance indicators.

In her remarks from the Chair, Principal Fortier reported on the first meetings of the Association of American Universities, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the U15 group which she had attended as Principal of McGill. She also referred to Quebec's *Politique nationale de la recherche et de l'innovation* (PNRI), saying that McGill is in good alignment with its research priorities. On December 3, from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, Principal Fortier and senior members of her team will make a presentation to the Quebec National Assembly's *Commission de la culture et de l'éducation*, before which Quebec universities appear every three years; a link to the webcast will be sent out by her office. The Principal then called on Deputy Provost Dyens to address a recent off-campus incident involving allegations of a sexual assault by three McGill students. Deputy Provost Dyens indicated that the Administration is reflecting on this incident, on its response to it and on the University's disciplinary policies and procedures, notably on what is meant by the McGill context in relation to disciplinary matters. Wide consultations on this subject are presently under way, and their outcome will be made known to the University community in the near future.

Under the agenda point for formal questions, a combined answer was provided by Deputy Provost Dyens to the separate but related questions on class scheduling parameters asked by Senator Moore ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/1.\\_question\\_-\\_moore.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/1._question_-_moore.pdf)) and by Senators Lu and Hebert ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/2.\\_question\\_-\\_lu\\_hebert\\_with\\_appendices.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/2._question_-_lu_hebert_with_appendices.pdf)). Deputy Provost Dyens indicated that instructors have been blocking off too many hours as unavailable (some 10,000 hours per week), and that some chairs have complained that this severely restricts course scheduling, especially when instructors block off both morning and evening hours. He argued that this is no longer sustainable, and drew attention to the fact that McGill must make it possible for students to meet the course combination rules of their programs. The Deputy Provost recognized, however, that there are legitimate situations involving child care issues, and also recognized the need for individuals to have a full day devoted to research; he therefore presented the text of two revisions to the class scheduling parameters which provide greater flexibility in addressing these two issues. Deputy Provost Dyens also described the consultation process which had been undertaken on this subject by the previous Deputy Provost; he acknowledged that it is always possible to consult more, and added that he would be advised of this in the future. Senate was not consulted on the matter because the scheduling parameters are administrative in nature.

Provost Masi provided some background on the adoption of the coordinated class scheduling system which occurred three years ago, noting that McGill had not been using its classroom space efficiently and that the Quebec government requires that 70% of classroom seats be filled 70% of the time before a university can ask for more funding. The Provost also drew attention to the low number of large classrooms available at McGill, saying that this problem forces faculties to share these spaces. Principal Fortier remarked that it

might be advisable for Senate to have an open discussion on the subject of scheduling at a future meeting.

The next question, from Senator Stewart-Kanigan, concerned employment equity ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/3.\\_question\\_regarding\\_employment\\_equity\\_stewart-kanigan.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/3._question_regarding_employment_equity_stewart-kanigan.pdf)). Associate Provost White opened her response by underlining McGill's strong commitment to equity and by listing the various equity-related policies which cover all McGill staff. She indicated that the Federal Contractors Program is changing its reporting requirements, and that these revisions have not yet been communicated to McGill. Improvements to McGill's online self-identification questionnaire, which is used for internal tracking, are expected by April 2104; it is hoped that these improvements will clarify the picture. Since the tracking is voluntary, there is a lot of under-reporting. Professor White concluded by noting that McGill does not impose quotas or practice reverse discrimination in its hiring.

Associate Provost White next addressed the question on equity-related resources asked by Senator Butler ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/4.\\_question\\_regarding\\_equity-related\\_resources\\_butler.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/4._question_regarding_equity-related_resources_butler.pdf)). She drew attention to various policies related to this subject, noting in particular that the Charter of Students' Rights is explicit about the right to equal treatment. She also mentioned the Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity and its five subcommittees, adding that she will soon be bringing to Senate a proposal to create a sixth subcommittee which would focus on family care. Professor White referred to two offices having relevant mandates (the Office for Students with Disabilities, and the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office) and noted that Macdonald Campus has been working with SEDE to provide resources and training.

Senate next held an open discussion on the proposed Charter of Quebec Values ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-18\\_open\\_discussion\\_november\\_2013\\_appendix\\_incl.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-18_open_discussion_november_2013_appendix_incl.pdf)). The discussion began with a presentation by McGill's General Counsel, Mtre Line Thibault, in which she focused on the provisions of the bill which potentially clash with the University's values; these are mainly contained in Article 5. This was followed by the reading of prepared statements by Senator Diné and Dean Aitken. Senator Diné argued that McGill must resist and speak against the proposed bill in order to defend the rights of the members of the University community. Dean Aitken characterized the bill as a chilling and deeply disturbing encroachment on personal freedoms; she noted that the bill would require the University to act in a police-like role, saying that this would challenge its autonomy.

Principal Fortier presented a draft motion for Senate's consideration, saying that a common position is needed very soon on this matter because the Administration will be making a presentation on the subject to the *Commission des institutions*. The draft motion read: "Be it resolved that while the McGill Senate supports the secular spirit of Bill 60, it strongly objects to the restrictions on the right to wear religious symbols, as described in Article 5 of the draft legislation, which run contrary to the University's mission and values." Several Senators agreed with the draft motion in general terms but advocated making its language stronger. Senator Stewart-Kanigan asked what provisions of the bill deal with face coverings; Mtre Thibault responded that these provisions are in Articles 6 and 7. Senator Stewart-Kanigan recommended modifying the draft motion to include references to these two articles; Principal Fortier responded that this was a different issue. Senator Kerr formally proposed amending the motion to read "as described in Articles 5, 6 and 7 of the draft legislation". After interventions by various Senators, Dean Jutras suggested deleting all the article numbers so that the motion would read "as described in the draft legislation" and also suggested that Senate formulate and adopt a parallel French version of the revised motion. Senate accepted these two suggestions; Mtre Thibault drafted and read a French translation, and Senate unanimously adopted the motion in the revised form which reads "as described in the draft legislation".

The next item of business was a presentation on key performance indicators given by Dr. Pierre Moreau ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-19\\_-\\_senate\\_kpis\\_memo\\_with\\_appendices.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-19_-_senate_kpis_memo_with_appendices.pdf)). He noted that some of the figures had been requested by the Quebec government in connection with the *contrat de performance* it had negotiated with McGill. Senator Cooke asked about the meaning of the check marks in table KPI 13; Provost Masi answered that they indicate that a salary agreement is in place for a particular staff category in a particular year.

Senate next moved into closed session to consider the report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee. Upon returning to open session, Senate adopted the Senate approved the 450th report of the Academic Policy Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-20\\_450th\\_apc\\_report\\_2013-11-20\\_appendix\\_included.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-20_450th_apc_report_2013-11-20_appendix_included.pdf)), which includes a Policy on Research Centres. Senate then turned to the report of the Nominating Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-21\\_report\\_of\\_the\\_nominating\\_committee.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-21_report_of_the_nominating_committee.pdf)), approving several committee appointments as well as a proposal to revise the terms of reference of the Senate Nominating Committee. Proposed revisions to the terms of reference of the Senate Steering Committee were also considered; Senator Richard moved an amendment to delete the proposed addition to the Steering Committee of an ex-officio seat for a Dean; the amendment was defeated by a vote of 21 for / 29 against, and the proposal to revise the terms of reference was adopted in its original form. Senate then adopted the terms of reference creating an Ad Hoc Committee on the Enhancement of Senate Meetings, with two modifications: 1) the correction of "March 2013" to "March 2014"; and 2) at Senator Lu's suggestion, the addition by friendly amendment of a statement explaining the purpose of the enhancements which are being considered. Finally, Senate approved the terms of reference creating an Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Charter of Students' Rights and an Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Livestreaming of Senate Meetings.

Senate concluded its session by receiving the following reports for information:

- The annual report from the Senate Committee on Physical Development ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-22\\_scpd\\_memo\\_\\_report.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-22_scpd_memo__report.pdf)), presented by Mr. Robert Couvrette.

- The annual report from the Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-23\\_cesa.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-23_cesa.pdf)), presented by Deputy Provost Dyens.

- The annual report of the Committee on Student Discipline ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-24\\_csd\\_memo\\_and\\_report.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-24_csd_memo_and_report.pdf)), presented by Dean Costopoulos.

- The report of the Board of Governors to Senate ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-25\\_report\\_from\\_bog\\_to\\_senate\\_nov\\_2013.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-25_report_from_bog_to_senate_nov_2013.pdf)), presented by Secretary-General Strople.

- The report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-26\\_joint\\_board-senate\\_report.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/sites/mcgill.ca.senate/files/d13-26_joint_board-senate_report.pdf)), presented by Secretary-General Strople.

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 2013. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,  
Your librarian Senate reps,  
Daniel Boyer  
Maya Kucij  
Marc Richard