

## Senate Meeting Report, 2016-03-23

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place on Wednesday, March 23, 2016.

Principal Fortier welcomed Senator Stuart Cobbett, Chair of the Board of Governors, who will be attending the first part of today's meeting. Senate then adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/senate\\_minutes\\_feb\\_17\\_2016.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/senate_minutes_feb_17_2016.pdf)), the report of the Steering Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/report\\_of\\_the\\_senate\\_steering\\_committee\\_33.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/report_of_the_senate_steering_committee_33.pdf)) and the agenda ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/0\\_agenda\\_-\\_senate\\_march\\_23\\_2016.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/0_agenda_-_senate_march_23_2016.pdf)).

In her comments from the Chair, Principal Fortier congratulated Ms. Edyta Rogowska on her appointment as the University's next Secretary-General and thanked outgoing Secretary-General Stephen Stropole for his service in this position. Ms. Rogowska will begin her five-year term on July 1, 2016. The Principal next addressed the subject of this morning's special meeting of the Board of Governors, which was convened to receive the final report of the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) on Divest McGill's submission to the Board. She summarized the information on this subject which she had already transmitted by email to all McGill staff members and students shortly before today's Senate meeting, and noted that the CAMSR report is now public.

Principal Fortier commented on the federal and Quebec budgets which have just been presented, describing them as good news and adding that an important corner has been turned. The Quebec budget, for the first time in many years, features no cuts to the university sector; rather, it includes targeted investments in post-secondary institutions on the order of 2.5% per year for three years. It also includes investments in infrastructure, and in the areas of science and innovation, from which Quebec universities will benefit.

On the federal side, she noted the new Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund which will invest up to \$2 billion over three years in infrastructure at post-secondary institutions and affiliated research and commercialization organizations. Starting in 2016-17, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) will each see an increase in funding of \$30 million per year. Funding for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) will increase by \$16 million and there will be an additional \$19 million available in support of the indirect costs of research. These increases are in addition to the \$46 million provided to the Tri-Council granting agencies in last year's budget, bringing the total new funds available as of this year to \$141 million, and restoring Tri-Council support to levels not seen for nearly a decade.

The Principal reported that the Task Force on the Academic Vision and Mission of the RVH Site has received some forty expressions of interest (many of them complementary) for the use of the site. Meetings will now be held to discuss and align them. Principal Fortier also noted the success of the University's recent one-day fundraiser, which collected almost \$800,000.

In the period for discussion and questions arising from the Principal's remarks, several student Senators expressed unhappiness at the lack of advance notice for the morning's Board meeting, and about the presence of security personnel at both the Board meeting and the present Senate meeting. Secretary-General Stropole concurred that a notice of the Board meeting should have been posted, and accepted responsibility for this oversight. Senator Cobbett added that the Secretariat had been exceptionally busy over the past week, and explained that the timing of today's Board meeting had been dictated by the Board's earlier commitment to reach a decision on the CAMSR report by the end of March and by the fact that he would be flying abroad later that afternoon.

Under the agenda point for formal questions, Senator Hébert posed a question on the ethical conduct of suppliers, which was answered by V.-P. Di Grappa ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/question\\_and\\_response\\_re\\_ethical\\_conduct\\_of\\_suppliers.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/question_and_response_re_ethical_conduct_of_suppliers.pdf)).

Senate next considered the 471st report of the Academic Policy Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/5\\_d15-41\\_471st\\_report\\_of\\_the\\_apc.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/5_d15-41_471st_report_of_the_apc.pdf)), which was presented in two parts by Provost Manfredi. Senate adopted most of the items included in the APC report for the meeting of February 18, 2016, except for the proposed changes to the Time Limitation Policy; these will be sent back to APC so that APC can look into the issue of retroactivity, with the matter then returning to Senate next month.

The APC report for the meeting of March 17, 2016 included a proposal that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors for approval a Statement of Academic Freedom (Appendix B of the March 17 APC report). Provost Manfredi prefaced the motion by indicating that the Statement was being presented jointly by the Administration and by MAUT, which had originally developed the document; that the Statement, once adopted, would be placed on the University website in a suitable location (perhaps on the page displaying the McGill Mission Statement); and that future changes to governance documents (such as regulations and policies) will be made with reference to the principles which are defined in the Statement.

Senator Richard thanked the Provost for his introductory remarks, saying that they were helpful in addressing the reservations he has about the fact that the document, whose content is otherwise excellent, is being framed as a statement. He noted that "statements" have no status under McGill's governance structure, and expressed his appreciation for the linkage made by the Provost between the Statement and future revisions of instruments which do have governance status. He indicated that he would therefore be voting in favour of the Statement's adoption, on the understanding that the Administration will be honouring this commitment.

Following a question from a Senator about the meaning of the phrase "the scholarly members of the university," Provost Manfredi responded that his understanding was that the phrase is intended to cast the widest possible net; it applies to all members of the McGill community who are engaged in study, teaching and research, and is meant to include students. Senator Chainani noted that the Statement does not include any obligation to ensure sound pedagogical practice, and Senator Brunot similarly expressed a wish to see the Statement state clearly the University community's responsibilities. Associate Provost Campbell responded that these responsibilities are in fact already stated elsewhere, for instance in existing regulations; she noted that these documents are meant to be read in relation to each other. The vote was taken and the Statement was approved by Senate, along with the rest of the March 17 APC report.

Senate approved the report of the Nominating Committee ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d15-42\\_nominating\\_report\\_revised.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d15-42_nominating_report_revised.pdf)). This included the appointment of Jane Aitkens, Carole Urbain and Joseph Hafner to the University Tenure Committees Senate List for terms beginning May 1, 2016 and ending April 30, 2019, and of Cynthia Leive, Louis Houle and Daniel Boyer to the UTC Senate List for terms beginning May 1, 2016 and ending April 30, 2018.

Senate adopted proposed revisions to the University Student Assessment Policy, which were presented by Deputy-Provost Dyens ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/6\\_d15-43\\_student\\_assessment\\_policy.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/6_d15-43_student_assessment_policy.pdf)). In light of concerns raised about the revised phrasing of article 6.1.3, the final sentence was struck and Deputy Provost Dyens indicated that he would return with a clearer phrasing before the end of the academic year.

Senate received for information the annual report on Enrolment and Strategic Enrolment Management ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/7.\\_d15-44\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_enrolment.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/7._d15-44_annual_report_on_enrolment.pdf)), which was presented by Deputy-Provost Dyens and Ms. Kathleen Massey, University Registrar and Executive Director (Enrolment Services); the annual report on Scholarships and Student Aid ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/8.\\_d15-45\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_scholarships\\_and\\_student\\_aid.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/8._d15-45_annual_report_on_scholarships_and_student_aid.pdf)), which was presented by Deputy-Provost Dyens; and the annual Report from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/9.\\_d15-46\\_annual\\_report\\_gps.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/9._d15-46_annual_report_gps.pdf)), which was presented by Dean Nalbantoglu.

Provost Manfredi presented the McGill University Staffing Report for 2014-2015 ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/10.\\_d15-47\\_staffing\\_report.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/10._d15-47_staffing_report.pdf)). Referring to Table 7, which shows a slight, gradual reduction in the number of full-time tenure-track/tenured librarian staff over a five-year period, Senator Richard commented that this is the third time in a row that the annual staffing report has noted this trend, has said that the decline is being examined carefully, and has promised that an analysis will be provided in a future staffing report. He asked whether the analysis would appear in next year's staffing report, and Provost Manfredi responded that it would. Senator Hastings asked how McGill had arrived at a ratio of one-third tenure-track academic staff and two-thirds non-tenure-track academic staff. The Provost responded that the figures include all academic staff in all situations, including clinical staff and individuals who are hired to teach special courses. He added that the proportion of courses taught by tenure-track staff, as opposed to contract academic staff, is actually quite high.

Senate received for information the report from the Board of Governors to Senate ([http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/11.\\_d15-48\\_bog\\_to\\_senate\\_report.pdf](http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/11._d15-48_bog_to_senate_report.pdf)), which was presented by Mr. Ram Panda.

As the final agenda item, Senate moved into confidential session to discuss the report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee.

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2016. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,  
Your librarian Senate reps,

Genevieve Gore  
Marc Richard  
Natalie Waters