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# MAUT Council Meeting

## MINUTES

Wednesday, October 23, 2013  
McGill Faculty Club 12:00 noon

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Present:	
Executive:	K. Hastings, A. Shrier, B. Lennox, A. Saroyan, G. Mikkelson, B. Reed
Council:	A. Paré, M. Nahon, K. Siddiqi, K. GowriSankaran, P. Caines, H. Durham, L. Kloda, L. Glass, A. Moores, A. Kirk
Regrets:	C. Ragan, K. Hashimoto, J. Varga
MAUT Staff:	H. Kerwin-Borrelli
Guests:	A. Laywine, D. Titone, B. Forrest, H. Meadwell, M-T Starzmann, A. Epstein

### Open Session

K. Hastings called the meeting to order at 12:22 pm. He welcomed Council members and guests and asked them to introduce themselves.

#### 1. Adoption of the Agenda

Council discussed the distribution of proposed agenda items in Open and Closed sessions. K. Hastings suggested addition of three items: a) a letter to Premier Marois concerning the Charter of Values, b) A. Shrier's report on the recent Staff Benefits Advisory Committee meeting with a request for Council to approve the proposed new rates, and c) questions raised by R. Sieber concerning travel expense reports in the case of missing receipts. With these additions, the proposed agenda was adopted by consensus.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed the Minutes of the April 12, 2013 meeting. No changes were requested. A. Shrier moved to adopt the minutes. Seconded by K. Siddiqi. The minutes were adopted by consensus.

#### 3. Terms of Reference of MAUT Standing Committees

The MAUT Working Group on Internal Committees (K.Hastings, B.Lennox, G.Mikkelson, with support from J.Varga and H. Kerwin-Borrelli) had prepared a draft set of terms of reference for Standing Committees, which had been circulated to Council with the annotated proposed agenda on October 21. In the interest of time these were not discussed in detail and Council members were invited to forward comments to K.Hastings by email.

H. Durham referred to the possible implications of a new law, [as of June 01/14] that will deal with Not-for-Profit Associations. K. Hastings will ask J. Varga for a report as it could concern the terms of reference of the MAUT's committees.

#### 4. Invitation to Principal to meet with membership

Following the September 25 Council meeting with Principal Suzanne Fortier at which she agreed to meet with the general membership of MAUT, and the October 9 Executive Committee meeting where this was further discussed, A. Pare and B. Reed drafted the following letter of invitation to the Principal which was discussed by Council and adopted by consensus.

Madam Principal,

I am very happy that the MAUT Council had an opportunity to meet with you last month. Its members benefited from being able to speak with you. I would like to invite you to come and meet informally with all MAUT members at a morning event which we would bill as "coffee and conversation with the Principal". If this interests you, could you suggest sometimes that suit you, possibly in the last two weeks of November?

The MAUT Council feels that it would be useful to make this a regular event, perhaps on a twice yearly basis. Given this, I suggest that first event not have any specific focus but rather allow for discussion of "big picture issues" (and any other subjects our members bring up). Future "coffee and conversation" events could be structured around specific issues.

Regards,

Ken Hastings  
President MAUT

[Note: The letter was sent by K Hastings on November 7, 2013]

### **5. Class Scheduling Parameters**

In the annotated agenda pre-circulated on Oct 21, K. Hastings had provided Council with background information on this item, including an account of an August 22, 2013 meeting with Deputy Provost M. Mendelson, O. Dyens and L. White which was attended by the three Presidents and VP External A. Saroyan to provide input on the first draft of the proposed Class Scheduling Parameters document. In a letter to then Deputy Provost M. Mendelson before that meeting, K. Hastings stipulated that input provided by several MAUT Executives was not to be considered an endorsement by MAUT, and that for such a purpose the document should come to Council for discussion. To date, no document, revised or otherwise, had come to Council for discussion. A. Saroyan stressed that the MAUT Executives attended the meeting as a group of senior professors who might provide helpful input, and not as an official MAUT delegation.

On October 18/13, Deputy Provost [Student Life & Learning] O. Dyens released a revised version of Class Scheduling Parameters. Associated letters seemed to imply MAUT endorsement of the revised parameters and, in general discussion by Council there was considerable expression of dissatisfaction with the implied endorsement, and with the lack of real consultation with MAUT.

In addition to the unsatisfactory consultation process, there were several particular features of the Class Scheduling Parameters that were problematic. In particular, the statement : *Childcare-related requests will be accommodated, if possible, but will not be approved for an instructor for both the beginning and end of the day.* raised considerable opposition among Council members

and other bodies. K. Hastings circulated a request from the Senate Subcommittee on the Status of Women which asked MAUT Council to endorse SSCSOW's suggestion to O. Dyens that this statement be modified to read: *Childcare requests will be accommodated unless doing so will cause multiple time-tabling conflicts for other faculty. If the latter occurs, it is hoped that reasonable accommodation can be made with the Unit/Department.*

Council discussion addressed the complexities of classroom scheduling, the difficulties introduced by the limitation on childcare-related blockoffs, the chronic shortage of daycare supply at McGill, the complex and intimidating nature of the multi-step appeal process outlined in the Parameters, the natural responsibility of Chairs to deal with exceptional situations within their departments, and the low priority accorded to research activities in the Parameters.

B. Reed proposed a motion, seconded by R. Sieber, that following friendly amendment read:

*MAUT regrets the fact that the current policy on course scheduling was implemented without sufficient or formal consultation. MAUT has serious concerns with a number of provisions, including but not limited to, the rules with respect to blocking off time due to the needs of childcare. MAUT calls on the administration to delay the implementation of a new course scheduling policy for a year, and return to the previous policy which gives chairs discretion and responsibility for responding to unavailability requests, so that the views of its members can be properly canvassed and a better policy be crafted.*

A vote was called and the motion was passed unanimously.

L. Glass noted that it was his understanding that motions proposed at Council meetings should be circulated prior to the meeting.

With this motion passed, and to be communicated to O. Dyens and to the MAUT membership, it became redundant to specifically endorse the SSCSOW statement above. [Note: K. Hastings communicated this motion to O. Dyens by email on October 25 and to MAUT members in a letter on October 29.]

## **6. Planning for Fall General Meeting**

The Fall General Meeting is scheduled to take place on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013. There was a suggestion to move the FGM to November 22/13 since it followed very closely after the next scheduled Council meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>. [Note: This proved impractical and instead an additional Council meeting was scheduled for November 8.]

Council discussed possible content of the FGM and noted that the Auditor's Report must be presented at this meeting. A variety of additional topics were considered including compensation, the Québec Charter of Values, class scheduling parameters, balance/imbalance between growth of administration and growth of academic staff, support staff redeployment following the Voluntary Retirement Program, and the increase in student enrollment. Final discussion of the agenda of the FGM was left to the next Council meeting, i.e. the November 8 meeting, which would leave time to circulate the Agenda to the membership one week before the FGM, as required.

## **7. Motion on the Selection of Deans**

P. Caines referred to the motion on the selection of Deans which was presented and discussed but not voted on at Council on April 12/13. At the October 23 meeting he moved the following final wording of the motion, which included friendly amendments. It was seconded by K. Siddiqi.

*In the interests of increasing the democratic and collegial nature of the process of the appointment of Deans of Faculties, Libraries, Continuing Education, etc\*, (henceforth termed a Faculty) within the University, it is resolved that MAUT promotes the following procedural reforms:*

*1. The membership of the Advisory Committee on the appointment of a Dean of any Faculty shall be constituted so that a majority of its members are ranked academic members of that Faculty chosen by a vote held in the Faculty.*

*2. The selection process shall be made an open procedure in that:*

*(i) the list of applicants on the short list for interview shall be disclosed to the members of the University;*

*(ii) candidates shall be provided the opportunity to meet members of the Faculty, and*

*(iii) members of the Advisory Committee shall be free to consult with members of the Faculty.*

*3. The Principal shall recommend to the Board only from those names submitted to it by this committee.*

*\* in the selection of the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies similar procedures should be applied*

A vote was taken: Nine voted in favor; four voted against, with one abstention. The motion was passed.

## **8. Discussion of communications motion at Oct 9 Executive Committee meeting.**

Because time was limited, this item was set aside for a subsequent meeting.

## **9. MAUT Advisors' Program**

Anthony Paré noted it was an important MAUT practice to train a cadre of advisors. He has agreed to begin a campaign to attract articulate and tenured academics to act as advisors. He has established a Working Group with B. Reed and J. Varga. K. Hastings encouraged him to bring forward a specific set of ideas and invite Council members to participate. A. Paré also mentioned the importance of exchanges among advisors including regular advisors' meetings. In the new year, he intended to publicize the availability of MAUT advisors.

## **Closed Session**

## **16. Adjournment**

M. Nahon moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by B. Reed. There were no objections.

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 pm.

*Email voting following the October 23 Council meeting.*

**1. Letter regarding the Charter of Values**

An email message from B. Reed to Council on Oct 24 included the following:

Motion: That the president sign the accompanying letter, and a French translation, on behalf of MAUT. That it then be sent to Madame Marois, copied to our members via the list serve, posted on our web site, and sent to the CAUT discussion list.

Dear Madame Marois,

On September 10, 2013, The Minister of Democratic Institutions and Active Citizenship released a policy paper regarding religious accommodation, the affirmation of the values of Quebec Society and the religious neutrality of the state entitled *Parce que nous valeurs on y croit*. He invited Quebec citizens to comment on the propositions it contains. The McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT), which represents professors and librarians, is grateful for this invitation.

Respect for diversity is essential to the healthy functioning of the McGill University community and Quebec society as a whole. The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms already ensures religious neutrality by protecting the dignity of our members and their fundamental right to religious expression. The proposed new rules with respect to the wearing of religious symbols such as the kippa, the hijab, the niqab, the burqa, and the turban violate their rights. The proposed new rule which requires that governmental services, including education, must be given and received with the face uncovered is also discriminatory. The proposed addition of an affirmation of a certain view of the religious neutrality of the state into the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms will, in fact, diminish the protection it affords to the rights of those in religious minorities and thereby, the religious neutrality of the state. For these reasons, MAUT strongly opposes the adoption of these proposals.

The votes were tabulated by H Kerwin-Borrelli on Oct 25 and were 12 YES, 1 ABSTAIN, zero NO, and 6 no response. The motion was passed.

[Note, K. Hastings sent the letter, and a French translation prepared by Jacques Hurtubise, to Mme Marois on October 29, 2013, and these were also circulated by B. Reed to the MAUTFORUM listserv on Nov 1, 2013]

**2. Proposed Health and Dental Plan Rates for 2014**

An email message from K.Hastings to Council on Oct 28 included the following tabular summary (see below) of the SBAC proposal for 2014, and asked for comments. B. Reed asked

for further input from Retirees and K. Gowrisankaran, Chair of the Retirees Section, indicated that he was in favor of accepting the proposed rates. L.Kloda, H.Durham, A. Shrier and M. Nahon indicated that the email vote was appropriate and that they supported accepting the proposed new rates. On Oct 31 K. Hastings circulated to Council an email message including the comments that had been received, and calling for a vote on the following question “Do you approve SBAC's recommendations for rates for 2014?”. Votes were to be submitted to Honore Kerwin-Borrelli, and were to be tallied at 5:00 pm November 4. The results were 15 YES votes, 1 ABSTAIN and 3 no response. There were no NO votes. The SBAC proposal was accepted.

**SBAC proposed rate changes for Health and Dental Plans for 2014**

The premiums can be lowered for 2014 as we are non-profit and the claims last year were a bit lower than projected. There is no change in benefits.

**Monthly rates Health and Dental Plans**

	Current (Jan 2013)	Proposed (Jan 2014)
<i>Health</i>		
Single	79.20	75.24 (-5%)
Family	156.03	148.23 (-5%)
<i>Dental</i>		
Single	40.85	40.03 (-2%)
Family	91.35	89.52 (-2%)

The overall reduction in premiums for the Health and Dental plans combined is 4%.