

MAUT • APBM

McGill Association of University Teachers
Association des professeur(e)s et bibliothécaires de McGill

FALL GENERAL MEETING November 15, 2013

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 pm. Ken Hastings, President, welcomed members to the MAUT Fall General Meeting, reminded them to sign the attendance record, identify themselves and indicate their status as full, associate, or retired members prior to questions and comments.

A total of 61 attendees signed in including 48 full members, 10 retired members, and 3 guests. The quorum for General Membership Meetings of 100 full members was not present.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Members reviewed the Agenda. There was one small change. Under Other Business, K. Hastings wished to add Max Roy, FQPPU President, who will report on the Québec University governance scene. With this change, the Agenda was adopted.

M. Richard / E. Zorychta
Adopted

3. Minutes of the April 19, 2013 Spring General Membership Meeting

The Minutes had been posted on the MAUT website for review. There were no additions or changes. The Minutes were adopted.

J. Galaty / A. Paré
Adopted

4. President's Report (Ken Hastings)

New Principal

K. Hastings noted the correlation between the suggestions forwarded by the MAUT members' survey and the qualifications of Principal Suzanne Fortier, who began her term on September 4, 2013. The new Principal is bilingual and has scholarly and administrative credibility. He remarked encouraging signs of openness and transparency as the Principal's employment contract was posted on her web site and a summary of the Board of Governors' meeting was circulated. Principal Fortier has met with many members of the McGill community, including MAUT Council. The Principal has agreed to meet with the general membership in upcoming "Coffee and Conversation" events.

Salary and pension

K. Hastings referred to work of previous and present MAUT members of the Committee on Academic Staff Compensation (CASC) who have developed a global salary policy that aims to benchmark McGill academic salaries at a level among the top U-15 group of

research intensive universities in Canada. Currently, McGill's academic salaries rank near the bottom of this list, but CASC has adopted a three-year plan of successive increases that is expected to improve our ranking:

June 1 2014 5.2%
June 1 2015 5.7%
June 1 2016 6.2%

K. Hastings referred to 2014 as the final of three years of implementation of McGill University Pension Plan [MUPP] Amendment 24. Amendment 24c, concerning the pension-deficit sharing element, is to be implemented January 1, 2014. During 2014 MUPP Part A members' contributions will be increased by 2.2%, while the employer's contribution will be decreased by 2.2%. The employer's part will amount to \$6.4M and these funds, combined with an additional employer's contribution of \$6.6 M, will be used to finance the required deficit reduction payment of \$13M in 2014.

In response to a question from J. Galaty regarding components of the global MUPP deficit that are shared and not shared, K. Hastings replied that the global deficit (\$19M) includes a \$6M component which represents the difference between McGill's current practice of full payment of plan value to members who leave the university, and the legal minimum payment fraction corresponding to the "solvency ratio" (currently ~74%). This component of the deficit is not being shared between employees and employer, but will be paid entirely by the employer.

5. Auditor's Report (Pierre Gagnon and VP Finance Chris Ragan)

P. Gagnon, C.A. presented the Association's Audit for the financial year September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2013. He referred to the financial statements and noted the figures were in accordance with the new Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit associations. He presented the projected budget for 2014 and the actual figures for years 2013 through 2009, with a focus on the fiscal period from September 01/12 to August 31/13. He noted the decrease in the expenses for professional fees as the recent court case concerning a dismissed member has concluded.

O. Jensen asked about the Provost's Allocation. C. Ragan and K. Hastings explained that the association receives a \$40k annual allocation from the Provost for teaching/research relief for Executive Officers, and that MAUT contributes an additional \$10k for this purpose from its own funds. Such allocations are common practice in Canadian universities. Because of timing issues, the teaching/research relief funds for two academic years, 2012-/13, and 2013/14, were received and disbursed during a single MAUT fiscal year, the 2012/13 fiscal year.

P. Gagnon projected a surplus of \$72K for 2014 and noted that the Association is in good financial shape.

C. Ragan provided a snapshot of MAUT's finances as of November 12, 2013. These included MAUT Investments and balances in the MAUT/McGill Accounts/Receivable and the MAUT Royal Bank Account. The Finance Committee will meet shortly to discuss whether to modify the distribution of MAUT's investments. C. Ragan referred to the projected surplus of \$72K and a future discussion on the desirable size of MAUT's nest egg. He noted that membership fees for CAUT and FQPPU represent together a large fraction of our total expenses. K. Hastings remarked on the benefits of MAUT's

membership in CAUT and provincial FQPPU, and noted that the Constitution states that MAUT is a member of these organizations.

6. Report from Staff Benefits Advisory Committee (Past-President Al Shrier)

A. Shrier introduced his fellow MAUT representatives on SBAC: E. Zorychta and N. Acheson. He referred to the SBAC Mandate and membership which included representatives from MUNASA, MUNACA, SEU, the University Administration, a Chairperson and a non-voting Secretary.

He presented the proposed changes for Health and Dental Plans for 2014 and noted an overall 4% decrease in costs for health and dental expenses. He referred to a 5% rate decrease for the Long Term Disability Plan effective August 1, 2013 which is guaranteed until December 31, 2015.

The rates for the Optional Life Insurance Plan will decrease by 25% for all age groups effective August 1, 2013 and is guaranteed until December 31, 2017. A. Shrier referred to a slide from the Manulife Financial Group Benefits [Traveling] website. The coverage for emergency travel assistance has recently changed for retirees and he advised members to read the small print and be aware of the recent restrictions.

Recently there have been huge claims for members' health expenses which have resulted in these restrictions. E. Zorychta will be looking at the plan offered by CAUT and other universities. A. Shrier noted that Michelle Boivert of *Towers Watson* is researching other benefit plans that do not separate retirees from regular members.

A. Ciampi commented there were few incentives to retire seeing that coverage for LTD ends at age 65. He noted that he has lost his insurance for work-related accidents, drug coverage, must pay into the provincial drug plan. He emphasized that retirees must organize and establish their own front line concerning these changes, which he called discriminatory. He asked the SBAC to investigate the possibility of changing to a plan other than Manulife.

A. Shrier noted the McGill drug plan covers expenses that RAMQ won't. B. Tallant asked about the new coverage that eliminates dental implants, and about the relative costs for bridges and dentures.

E. Zorychta commented that the average retirement age for professors is 70+. She noted that MAUT lost its recent court case against the University on age discrimination grounds concerning pension contributions for those over age 65. N. Acheson provided details concerning limitations for dental insurance. K. GowriSankaran provided some historical facts about RAMQ and compared the coverage provided by the government and the McGill plans.

7. Constitutional Amendments: Electoral process (for decision, see details)

K. Hastings noted the lack of a quorum and hence that the amendments would be discussed at today's meeting but their approval would have to be by referendum of the membership, as specified in the Constitution.

K. Hastings presented amendment 1, to add to Article VI.1.c the text: ***whose term ends at the end of the Spring Annual General Meetings after their co-option,***

and amendment 2, to add a new section VIII.11 to Article VIII

11 ***If, when an election is held, there are vacancies on Council for different term lengths, then each candidate for a Council seat will be nominated for only one specific term length. A candidate may only be elected for the term length for which the candidate is nominated. Each member can vote for as many candidates for a specific term length as there are vacancies on Council of that term length.***

R. Palfree asked for a clarification of the proposed additional text for amendment 1 and proposed a modification. However, M. Richard called a point of order and pointed out that proposed Constitutional amendments must be accepted or rejected as is, and may not themselves be amended during a General Meeting. K. Hastings supported that interpretation. J. Galaty asked regarding the process of soliciting candidates for one year terms, and K. Hastings suggested that this could be useful for people considering participating but who are not available for a two-year term, e.g., because of an upcoming sabbatical. Regarding the referendum that would now be required for adoption of the amendments K. Hastings indicated that it would be an electronic referendum.

8. Communications Report (V-P Communications Bruce Reed)

B. Reed discussed “An Open Communications Strategy” including a listserv to which all members could post. He also mentioned issues that could be the topics of future MAUT Forums. These included: the new classroom scheduling parameters, academic freedom, MOOCs, salary policy issues, discussions on working conditions, and collegial governance. He noted that background information on these topics would be posted on the *Current Concerns* section of the website and members can leave comments. He asked members to forward their suggestions to him.

B. Reed spoke about upcoming open meetings planned with the Principal and the general membership. The focus would be on specific issues such as big-picture items mentioned in the Reporter interview with the Principal. He stressed the importance of MAUT’s input into the Principal’s thinking. One topic suggested was the role of the university in the 21st century. B. Reed mentioned the upcoming Newsletter as a communication tool that could also address such topics.

M. Richard asked about the parameters of the proposed listserv and the opt-out feature. He remarked the need for some moderation and respect for guidelines. If members’ email accounts get flooded, they may choose to opt out. B. Reed said there will be some guidelines posted which he expected members to respect.

9. Classroom Scheduling Parameters (V-P Internal, Greg Mikkelson)

G. Mikkelson spoke about the new classroom scheduling parameters introduced by the Deputy Provost for Student Life and Learning during Fall 2013. This process was initiated by former DPSLL Morton Mendelson and its implementation was one of the first tasks faced by new DPSLL Ollivier Dyens who replaced M. Mendelson at the end of August 2013. In August 2013, M. Mendelson invited the three MAUT Presidents to look over a draft of the scheduling parameters. In advance of this meeting K. Hastings stressed that the provision of comments by several MAUT Officers was collegial participation that did not amount to full consultation with MAUT and could not be interpreted to imply MAUT endorsement. He commented on the value of further

consultation and introduced the possibility of postponement to the 2014 fall term to permit this in-depth consultation.

The release of the classroom scheduling parameters during the fall term resulted in a strong negative reaction. G. Mikkelson noted both the Senate Sub-Committee on Women and the MAUT Non-Discrimination Committee had expressed serious concerns with the new parameters which did not take childcare, elderly care, or the needs of single parents into consideration. G. Mikkelson referred to the administration's consultation process, and the MAUT Executives' response to it, as too little, too narrow and too late. The current lack of daycare places at McGill puts a heavy burden on many academics. Both the Senate Sub-Committee on Women and the MAUT Non-Discrimination Committee expressed serious concerns with the new parameters which did not take childcare, elderly care, or the needs of single parents into consideration. These concerns were raised at Council on October 23/2013 and Council took decisive action in the form of the following motion:

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 letter was sent to Deputy Provost O. Dyens outlining MAUT's concerns and requesting a response. Deputy Provost Dyens attended the November 08/2013 Council meeting to discuss the matter and, following a frank exchange of information and views, it was agreed that the dialogue would be continued.

10. Charte des valeurs (V-P External, Alenoush Saroyan)

Charte des valeurs

Alenoush Saroyan referred to the letter that K. Hastings, MAUT President, sent to Premier Marois on October 29, 2013 stating the Association's opposition to the Charter. The letter was also copied to MAUT members on the MAUTFORUM Listserv. Following the Council Meeting on November 13, 2013, copies were sent to the headquarters of the Québec Liberal Party [PLQ] the Coalition Avenir Québec [CAQ] and Québec Solidaire [QS]. This letter, which arose from discussions at Executive and Council meetings, was drafted by B. Reed, A. Saroyan, K. Siddiqi and L. Kloda.

O. Jensen commented that this letter did not represent all members' views and that the Association should not make presumptuous statements without prior consultation of the membership.

B. Reed noted the Constitution states that the Council can authorize an Officer to speak on behalf of the Association and that the issue of the Charte was not seen to be a political matter but one that had a direct bearing on working conditions at the university.

11. Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom Report (Ian Henderson)

I. Henderson briefly reviewed the history and mandate of the Academic Freedom Committee, including the October 2011 release of a statement on academic freedom from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada [AUCC, an umbrella organization of university/college administrations, including that of McGill], followed in November 2011 by a CAUT academic freedom statement.

Two relevant MAUT Council motions are:

Motion from December 14, 2011 Council

Given the controversy that has arisen over the recently approved AUCC Statement on Academic Freedom and its implications for the exercise of academic freedom by McGill academics,

Given the absence of an explicit McGill policy to inform and provide guidance on academic freedom to the public and to the McGill academic community, and

Given the importance of having a clearly enunciated statement on academic freedom at the University,

Be it resolved that MAUT strike a committee charged with examining statements and policies on academic freedom at other Canadian universities (and if appropriate in other countries such as the US and the UK), reviewing recent exchanges over the AUCC statement on academic freedom, formulating a statement on academic freedom that will be presented to the University for consultation and eventual adoption at Senate.

and

Motion from November 7, 2012 Council

Be it resolved that:

- 1. The MAUT endorses the values and the spirit of the CAUT Statement on Academic Freedom;*
- 2. The existing MAUT Committee on Academic Freedom be encouraged to examine the CAUT statement's main elements and give them due consideration during its deliberations. Any statement on academic freedom that the MAUT committee proposes will be brought to the Council and the General assembly for discussion.*

He stated the importance of this statement to the University.

I. Henderson noted the committee had prepared a draft Statement on Academic Freedom that has been brought to the General Meeting today for study, discussion and comment. In preparation for next steps, he encouraged MAUT members to read the draft document and forward their feedback to him at: ian.henderson@mcgill.ca or to ken.hastings@mcgill.ca .

I. Henderson stated the committee studied the AUCC, and CAUT statements, and many other sources on academic freedom issues. He noted the AUCC devoted most of its attention to institutional autonomy and on constraints and limitations on personal academic freedom, whereas the CAUT statement was focussed on personal academic freedom and on rules of engagement whereby the national association might intervene.

He noted that architecturally the statement is briefer than either the AUCC or the CAUT statements. He commented the final version could ultimately be adopted as McGill's Declaration on Academic Freedom. He invited members to carefully review the draft statement and forward their input.

The draft statement is as follows:

Draft Statement of Academic Freedom

by the MAUT Committee on Academic Freedom

members: Jane Aitkens, Daniel Cere, John Galaty, Brendan Gillon (chair) and Ian Henderson.

Academic freedom is central to McGill University's mission of advancing learning through teaching, scholarship and service to society.

The scholarly members of the university have the freedom to conduct research and disseminate its results, through teaching and publication, without being constrained by the imposition of any orthodoxy, political or disciplinary, without being directed to pecuniary ends and without being subject to punitive measures as a result of their academic pursuits. They may exercise this freedom in the service of both the university and the wider society by promoting and informing debate, encouraging independent thinking and critical reflection, preserving and disseminating knowledge and fostering innovation.

The exercise of academic freedom requires both good university governance and vibrant scholarly life. The former depends on the full participation of scholarly members in administration and governance, who in that setting retain the right of free expression, including the freedom to criticize one another, the university, its policies and its administration.

The university and its officers have a duty to protect the academic freedom of its scholarly community, both individually and collectively, from infringement by other members of the community as well as agents or agencies external to it. An essential element of academic freedom is the obligation of the university, its officers and its members to defend the community from the undue influence of governments, accreditation bodies, corporate and individual donors or societal pressures.

Finally, members of the university are, as citizens, entitled to participate in public forums and debates. In doing so, they should represent their views as their own and not as those of the university.

B. Reed thanked the committee for its work on this draft document. He noted that following the release of the AUCC document, the U of T President resigned from AUCC.

He also referred to the MAUT Council motion that the committee endorse the values of the CAUT statement and take its deliberations into account. He requested a report on the committee's deliberations on these and other documents and how the proposed draft differs from available declarations on academic freedom concerning institutional and personal autonomy as it is a fundamental and important document that will ultimately protect members.

I. Henderson commented that Academic freedom has individual and collective perspectives and the intention of this draft document was to make a general statement.

M. Richard stressed that the document must have teeth. Once it is passed by Council, the draft must then be adopted by the University at Senate as part of the Regulations and then by the Board of Governors as part of the University Statutes. J. Galaty reviewed some history of when the issue of academic freedom arose and how MAUT took hold of it. Upon the release of the AUCC and subsequent CAUT statements, MAUT realized that McGill did not have its own Statement on Academic Freedom. The purpose was to develop one particular to McGill. Concerning institutional autonomy, the committee wanted a statement that would bind the University in specific ways to defend members from threats to academic freedom from within and from outside. J. Galaty proposed the creation of a Standing Committee on Academic Freedom in Senate to look into these issues. N. Acheson, Retired member, commented the draft document does not recognize the quest for knowledge of the individual professor.

12. Report from Retirees' Section (K. GowriSankaran, Section Chair)

K. GowriSankaran reported on the changes in emergency travel assistance for Retirees who are members of the McGill Supplemental Health Plan. The coverage is limited to 90 days or less and is used by many retirees. As of December 1, 2012, Manulife, the health plan administrator, imposed new and restrictive conditions for claims resulting from medical emergencies while traveling. These concerned testing or treatment for any new symptoms or conditions, any worsening of conditions, or changes in a pre-Existing medical condition, that occurred 90 days prior to departure which could lead to a claim refusal. In addition, any non-routine appointment, test or treatment of a pre-Existing or another undiagnosed condition, scheduled before leaving on a trip but will take place upon return, could also lead to a claim refusal.

Manulife agreed to remove these conditions for all active McGill employees and return them to coverage using the previous "medically stable" clause in return for an additional, annual payment to Manulife's Pool Insurance, which is responsible for individual claims that exceed \$75K. Manulife did not agree to accept "medically stable" status for emergency assistance for retirees and have maintained the new and more restrictive conditions for them.

In the October 2013 meeting of the Staff Benefits Advisory Committee [SBAC] the recommendation was to have HR inform Manulife should any claim for a medical emergency be refused and McGill will conduct a full investigation of the particular case. Manulife would have to produce clear documentation that the retiree had a serious medical condition and posed a significant risk of needing treatment during the time of the trip and that the treatment was a consequence of this previously documented condition. The retirees must be informed of the distinct conditions for travel insurance claims being applied to active and retired employees. SBAC will look into other insurance options to

the current situation and will receive a report from *Towers Watson* on other benefit plans offered by other insurance companies and report back in early 2014.

13. Report from Librarians' Section (Lorie Kloda, Section Chair)

L. Kloda reported that on November 8, 2013, the Librarians' Section held its fall general meeting during which the result of the call for nominations was announced and T. Mawhinney is the Chair-Elect. The other members of the Executive are S. Rankin, and J. Garland.

The Librarians' section unanimously passed a statement regarding the qualifications for the future Librarian and Archivist of Canada. The full statement will be available on the MAUT-LS website and will be circulated on the MAUT ListServ.

The Professional Issues Committee [PIC] is undertaking a survey of members' perceptions of support provided by the University for Librarians' own research, which will be useful in continued discussions with the Dean of Libraries.

The Section has a total of 51 active members and 15 retired members and that 78% of all Librarians are MAUT members. The goal is to increase membership.

14. Other Business

K. Hastings introduced Max Roy, President FQPPU who began with a review of the briefs and reports that the Federation had issued since the *Summit on Higher Education*. These included: university funding, hiring new faculty and academic staff, the adoption of framework legislation, the implementation of a council of universities and the revision of the university funding policy. He noted that the government has formally committed to all these issues and had promised to refinance \$1.7B in the next five years, to hire 1,000 new professors, 2,000 lecturers and 1,000 support staff. These promises have been repeated several times by the Premier, the Minister of Higher Education and the Minister of Finance.

The government has created working groups on framework legislation, the National Council of Universities and a new funding formula. The chairs of two working groups have submitted reports but have not heard any response as yet. The Bissonnette-Porter Report on framework legislation stressed the core mission of higher education and the need for collegiality and academic freedom but it gave too much authority to the boards of governors who are mainly composed of external members.

The Claude Corbo Report called for the implementation of a Council of Universities which will allow for a comprehensive review of Québec universities, their specific aims, needs, and development. With respect to the new organization, the FQPPU has prioritized the need to assume a monitoring and documentation role using evidence-based research to inform the government and academic community.

The third working group, focused on university funding, is on-going. As the current formula is based on student enrollment, changes to this enrollment affects the operating budgets and can jeopardize programs with the result that universities are now in competition with each other to attract more students. The FQPPU has proposed a new funding formula that places more emphasis on the number of teachers, programs and courses which are long-term commitments. Currently the fluctuation on the number of

students impacts the current funding formula in the short and medium terms. The final report on this proposal is scheduled to be released in June 2014.

October 2013 saw the release of the National Research and Innovation Policy. The FQPPU participated in consultations. The policy proposed by the MELS indicate that the budgets of the three Research Funds will be increased by \$142M and the research budget for universities will be increased by \$340M according to a five-year plan. There is support for student researches through the awarding of 1500 new grants. There is support for basic research and, though it focuses on technological innovation and the financial benefits of public research, it encourages partnerships with industry. There is attention to theoretical research in all fields of science, the social sciences and humanities. The FQPPU joins CAUT in denouncing measures and bills related to a narrow vision of science and muzzling scientists.

The FQPPU has made the condition of professors' professional lives a priority. A committee is currently collecting data on employment and integration of new professors, career development, working conditions, burnout, psychological harassment and other relevant topics. MAUT will participate in a focus group on these issues.

A translation of the report "Women and Power in Québec Universities" is scheduled to be released shortly. M. Richard asked M. Roy to remember to include Librarians in any future studies on professors' working conditions. A. Shrier asked about the FQPPU's position on the *Charte des valeurs*. M. Roy noted this is a controversial subject and has been discussed at two meetings but is not yet on the agenda. The FQPPU does not have a position as yet. K. Hastings thanked M. Roy.

15. Adjournment

K. Hastings called for the meeting to be adjourned. Moved by M. Richard and seconded by L. Kloda. The meeting adjourned at 1:59pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Honore Kerwin-Borrelli
MAUT Administrative Officer