

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place remotely on Wednesday, October 21, 2020.

The meeting began with Dean Maioni presenting memorial tributes for Professors Jarett Rudy and Stefan Sinclair, and Dean Lennox presenting a memorial tribute for Professor Robert Lynn Carroll. Senate adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting

(https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/final_senate_minutes_sept.22_2020.pdf), the report of the Steering Committee

(https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/02_report_of_the_steering_committee_2.pdf) and the agenda

(https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/00_senate_agenda_oct.21_2020_web.pdf).

In her remarks from the Chair, Principal Fortier indicated that the Quebec government's designation of Montreal as a red zone under its colour-coded regional alert system for COVID-19 will continue at least until October 28. The situation continues to evolve rapidly and the Administration will keep the McGill community informed of developments. Fall Convocation will be virtual this year, and Winter 2020 courses will be delivered primarily through remote platforms. On the subject of community relations, the Principal welcomed the \$15M gift commitment by Marc and Marie Bieler to McGill's School of Environment, which will be renamed the Bieler School of Environment. The Principal also noted the recent appointment of Professor Robin Beech as Dean of Students for a five-year term, beginning November 1, 2020 and ending October 31, 2025.

There were no items under the agenda point reserved for formal questions. The next item of business was the open discussion on McGill's Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism

(https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/04_d20-06_open_discussion.pdf). The discussion took place in ten virtual breakout rooms, and a summary from each group was presented to Senate when it reconvened as a whole. Some of the main points to emerge from the group sessions were:

- Students have been pulling a great deal of weight on this issue over the years; they need more support, and the burden needs to be shared by all the members of the McGill community. Allies need to be trained.
- The position of Black Student Affairs Liaison which will be created should not simply have the role of being a messenger. The position should have some sort of authority and should have genuine influence on decision-making.
- Outreach by McGill, to the local community and beyond, is critical to attract more Black students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) and more Black academic staff members (including librarians). The pool of student candidates needs to be widened, as does the recruitment pool for faculty members; it was noted that "you can't hire someone who doesn't apply." Tactics need to be developed to let McGill and its programs be better known; existing networks need to be expanded and new ones need to be created.
- Hiring committees need to be provided with strong guidance. We need to expand measures of excellence and other criteria used for the evaluation of applicants and for the reappointment and tenure processes.

As the next items of business, Senate approved the 500th report of the Academic Policy Committee (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/05_d20-07_500th_apc_report_to_senate_oct_2020.pdf) and the report of the Senate Nominating Committee (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/06_d20-08_nominating_report.pdf).

A set of proposed amendments to the Senate Standing Rules of Procedure (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/07_d20-09_senate_rules.pdf) was presented to Senate both as a notice of motion and for initial feedback. These amendments are the first comprehensive revision of the Rules to have been carried out since the approval of their current version by Senate in 1973. The package of amendments will return to Senate in November for adoption.

Senate received for information the 2019-2020 annual reports from the Committee on Student Services (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/08_d20-10_css_annual_report.pdf) and University Advancement (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/09_d20-11_ua_annual_report_0.pdf), as well as the most recent report to Senate from the Board of Governors (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/10_d20-12_board_report_to_senate_october_2020.pdf). Secretary-General Rogowska then presented for information the notice of the upcoming Joint Board-Senate meeting, which will take place on November 12 (https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/11_d20-13_notice_of_joint_board-senate_meeting.pdf).

As its final item of business, Senate went into confidential session to consider the report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee.

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2020. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,

Your librarian Senate reps,

Tatiana Bedjanian
Lucy Kiester
Marc Richard