

Senate Report, 2021-12-01

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place remotely on December 1, 2021.

The meeting began with memorial tributes being presented by Dean Eidelman for Doctor Richard Goldbloom, by Dean Nicell for Professor Emeritus Musa Kamal and by Dean Hunter for Professor Ronald Storrs McCall. Senate adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/final_senate_minutes_november_17_2021.pdf, the report of the Steering Committee https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/02_report_of_the_senate_steering_committee_8.pdf and the agenda https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/00_senate_agenda_december_1_2021_web.pdf.

In her remarks from the Chair, Principal Fortier referred to McGill's COVID-19 dashboard page, whose rolling table for the past two months shows no cases linked to McGill classrooms. Other than four individual cases in September, no COVID-19 transmission on campus has been observed. Planning for the winter semester is going well, and the University is ensuring that gatherings for the holidays will be kept safe. The evolving Omicron variant situation is being monitored closely. On the subject of government relations, no measures specific to the university sector were mentioned in the recent federal Speech from the Throne. On the provincial side, Quebec has announced major investments at the CEGEP and university levels for the next five years, including \$1.7 billion for a new scholarship program.

Under the agenda item for formal questions, Senators Quitoriano, Elbourne, Bede, and Bartlett posed a question about strengthening feedback processes within the University, particularly from stakeholders impacted by new systems https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/04_senate_question_and_response_-_promotion_of_stakeholder_feedback.pdf. The written response was provided by Provost Manfredi. As a follow-up point, Senator Quitoriano commented that a lot of work is being pushed down to lower levels and that the impacts of this are not always considered. Senator Elbourne stressed the need to consider feedback from the bottom up. Provost Manfredi concurred with the importance of ensuring that robust and effective feedback loops are in place. On the specific mechanism of surveys, the Provost noted that when a change is contemplated, surveys can be used beforehand to identify user needs, then after implementation to determine how the change is working and how it's not working.

The 508th report of the Academic Policy Committee was presented for information, since this particular APC report did not contain any items for approval by Senate https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/05_d21-21_508th_apc_report_to_senate_updated.pdf. This was followed by the annual report for 2020-2021 on the financial state of the University https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/06_d21-22_annual_report_financial_state_of_the_university_2020-2021_-_c.pdf.

Senate received for information the annual reports of the Senate Committee on Physical Development https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/07_d21-23_scpd_annual_report_2020-2021.pdf, the Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/08_d21-24_cesa_annual_report_updated.pdf and the Senate Committee on Libraries https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/09_d21-25_senate_committee_on_libraries_annual_report.pdf. Senator Kirk noted the brevity of the report of the Committee on Libraries and asked whether the discussion of big-picture strategic issues is part of the committee's mandate. Associate Provost Buddle confirmed that the committee's work involves robust discussions of major projects and larger issues. Deputy Provost Labeau recognized and expressed appreciation

for the adaptability which the Libraries have shown during the pandemic to continue serving the McGill community.

The third monthly report of Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on COVID Academic Planning and Policies was presented to Senate for information https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/10_d21-26_report_of_the_ad_hoc_advisory_committee_on_covid_academic_planning_and_policies_-_updated.pdf.

As its final items of business, Senate received the report on this year's Joint Board-Senate meeting https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/11_d21-27_joint_board-senate_report.pdf.

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,
Your librarian Senate reps,

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