

Senate Report, 2022-01-19

Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the Senate meeting which took place remotely on January 19, 2022.

The meeting began with Dean Eidelman presenting a memorial tribute for Professor Olli Miettinen. Senate adopted the minutes of the last Senate meeting [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/final\\_senate\\_minutes\\_december\\_1\\_2021.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/final_senate_minutes_december_1_2021.pdf), the report of the Steering Committee [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/02\\_report\\_of\\_the\\_senate\\_steering\\_committee\\_10.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/02_report_of_the_senate_steering_committee_10.pdf) and the agenda [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/00\\_senate\\_agenda\\_january\\_19\\_2022\\_-\\_web.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/00_senate_agenda_january_19_2022_-_web.pdf).

In her remarks from the Chair, Principal Fortier discussed the January 24 progressive resumption of in-person teaching. She noted that most lectures with more than 200 students will remain online, and that instructors can teach up to 20% of their courses remotely. An open discussion on academic accommodations is being planned for the February meeting of Senate. The Quebec government has indicated that education is its top priority after health care, and that it considers education to be an essential service. Deputy Provost Labeau provided Senate with additional details on the topic and indicated that this information will be the subject of a series of emails to the McGill community throughout the week.

A lengthy discussion followed the Principal's remarks. A number of Senators stated concerns about the forthcoming return to class and expressed the view that it would have been more prudent to wait. In response to a question about how much autonomy Quebec universities have regarding the option of staying online, the Principal responded that universities do have some flexibility and that this is why McGill is providing the option of teaching up to 20% online. The guidelines which McGill receives from Public Health are based on the data they track, both on the domestic situation and the international one.

Dean Eidelman commented that he understands why people are concerned, but he urged caution in concluding that things are dangerous. He indicated that the comments made by Senators regarding immunocompromised individuals are well taken, but that for the vast majority of people the balance of risks is acceptable and a return to campus soon is a reasonable idea. A question was asked on whether the procedural masks currently being supplied by McGill will be supplemented with, or replaced by, N95/KN95 masks. Dean Eidelman and Senator Beth Ann Cummings provided responses regarding the efficacy of these masks and the current manner of their deployment in hospitals. In terms of filtration, N95/KN95 masks are indeed better than procedural masks. They are, however, exceptionally uncomfortable for prolonged wear, and they must be fitted properly at all times to be fully effective; for these reasons, procedural masks are better for general activities by the population at large. N95/KN95 masks are recommended in a health care setting, especially in high-risk contexts, and because they are not available in unlimited numbers their use in hospitals is being rationed.

There being no formal written questions, Senate moved to the next agenda item and adopted the 509th report of the Academic Policy Committee [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-28\\_509th\\_apc\\_report\\_to\\_senate.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-28_509th_apc_report_to_senate.pdf). This included the adoption of a proposal by the School of Information Studies to create a new Graduate Certificate in Cybersecurity.

Provost Manfredi presented a budget planning report [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-29\\_budget\\_planning\\_i.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-29_budget_planning_i.pdf) as part of the customary series of yearly communications to the University

community outlining major budget considerations. The report was also presented to the Finance Committee on December 13, 2021 and to the Board of Governors on December 16, 2021.

Senate received the following reports for information:

- The latest report of the Ad Hoc Committee on COVID Academic Planning and Policies [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-30\\_covid\\_ad\\_hoc.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-30_covid_ad_hoc.pdf)

- The annual report of Student Life and Learning [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-31\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_student\\_life\\_learning.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-31_annual_report_on_student_life_learning.pdf)

- The annual report on the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-32\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_policy\\_on\\_harassment\\_discrimination.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-32_annual_report_on_the_policy_on_harassment_discrimination.pdf)

- The annual report on the Policy Against Sexual Violence [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-33\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_policy\\_against\\_sexual\\_violence.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-33_annual_report_on_the_policy_against_sexual_violence.pdf)

- The annual report of the Advisory Council on the Charter of Students' Rights [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-34\\_annual\\_report\\_of\\_the\\_advisory\\_council\\_on\\_the\\_charter\\_of\\_students\\_rights.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-34_annual_report_of_the_advisory_council_on_the_charter_of_students_rights.pdf)

As the last agenda item, Senate received the latest report from the Board of Governors to Senate [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-35\\_board\\_report\\_to\\_senate\\_january\\_2021.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/files/senate/d21-35_board_report_to_senate_january_2021.pdf)

The next Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us.

Regards,  
Your librarian Senate reps,

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