

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, September 26, 2006, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts Council Room, Arts 160.

**PRESENT:** Dean Grant (Chair), Associate Dean Hendren (Vice-Chair), Associate Dean Leighton; Professors Baker, Baines, Bennett, Drury, Kemme, Gonzalez (in place of Prof. Levine), Kemme, Martin, Ronis, Silvius, Yau; M. Retrouvey; M. Osborn, C. Haakonsen, N. Budd, A. Coutinho, S. Ng, L. Crawford; J. D'Amico.

**REGRETS:** Professors Chmura, Moore, Ricciardi, Wechsler; Associate Dean Hendershot; L. Houle.

**DOCUMENTS:** AC-05-142 AC-06-1 to AC-06-17

Dean Grant called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

Dean Grant welcomed members and asked them to introduce themselves.

**(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Prof. Bennett **moved**, seconded by Prof. Gonzalez, that the Agenda be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(2) MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2006**

**AC-05-142**

Mr. Ng **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the Minutes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

**(4) REPORT ON MINOR COURSE CHANGES  
(for information)**

**AC-06-1**

Associate Dean Hendren went over the Report on Minor Course Changes.

**(5) AD HOC PROGRAMS:**

**i. Ad hoc Honours Program in Cognitive Science**

**AC-06-2**

Associate Dean Leighton introduced the above ad hoc program.

Associate Dean Leighton **moved**, seconded by Prof. Baker, that the ad hoc Honours Program in Cognitive Science be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**ii. Ad hoc Honours Program in Computer Science for B.A. Student AC-06-3**

**105.1** Associate Dean Leighton introduced the above ad hoc program. He explained that there was no Honours Program in Computer Science for Arts students. The student in question would like to follow the B.Sc. Honours Program in Computer Science, and the Faculty of Science was being asked whether they approved the use of the B.Sc. Honours program for use as a B.A ad hoc Honours Program. If the Faculty of Science agreed, it would be up to the Faculty of Arts to decide whether to approve the program for the B.A. degree.

**105.2** After a long discussion concerning the replacement of MATH 223 with MATH 251, Associate Dean Leighton **moved**, seconded by Prof. Martin, that the ad hoc Honours Program in Computer Science for the B.A. student be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**iii. Ad hoc Major Program in Neuroscience AC-06-4**

**105.3** Associate Dean Hendren said that a Major Program in Neuroscience had been approved at all levels of McGill, and was now awaiting approval from the Québec government. The ad hoc program was identical to the program already approved, and until the program was approved by the Québec government, students could follow the Major in Neuroscience as an ad hoc program.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Silvius, that the ad hoc Major Program in Neuroscience be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**(6) PHARMACOLOGY & THERAPEUTICS**

**New Course:**

PHAR 558	Pharmacology Research Topics	<b>AC-06-5</b>
	3 credits	

Associate Dean Hendren introduced the new course.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Silvius, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**New Programs: (Presented for Discussion Only)**

	- Major in Pharmacology	<b>AC-06-</b>
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**6**

	- Honours in Pharmacology	<b>AC-06-7</b>
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**106.1** Associate Dean Hendren introduced the proposed Major and Honours Programs in Pharmacology. She said that the proposals were being presented for discussion only, and that she wanted to obtain comments from the Academic Committee.

**106.2** Associate Dean Hendren said that the U1 courses in the proposed programs were similar to those for the current biomedical programs, and then she read out some comments from a member who was unable to attend the meeting:

- the Major and the Honours Programs are too similar

- there are no Pharmacology Courses in the first year of the proposed Major & Honours Programs
- it is not clear who would be advising students in the programs
- the number of students in the Physiology lab courses (PHGY 212, 213), might not be a problem since students doing the Pharmacology Programs would likely come from departments such as Physiology & Biochemistry.

- 106.3** Associate Dean Hendren said the current biomedical Honours programs required about 64-67 credits, including CHEM 212. The proposed Pharmacology programs required 67 credits for the Major and 73 credits for the Honours, as well as an additional four credits for CHEM 212 if this had not previously been taken.
- 106.4** In reply to a member who suggested that a number of Chemistry courses be included in the Complementary Course List, Associate Dean Hendren recommended that the Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics consult with the Department of Chemistry.
- 106.5** It was recommended that the Complementary Course Lists be modified to provide more flexibility, and also to reduce the total number of credits.
- 106.6** A member pointed out that BIOL 301 was listed as a required U2 course, but that the Department of Biology was unable to accommodate more students in the course.
- 106.7** It was pointed out that PHAR 300 was an introductory pharmacology course, but still had a number of prerequisites and required a large amount of background, so it would not be appropriate to introduce a 200-level Pharmacology course.
- 106.8** Students taking the program would have more flexibility if there was the option of taking an alternative statistics course to BIOL 373.
- 106.9** It was suggested that a possible means of distinguishing between the Major and the Honours programs would be to have Honours versions of the Pharmacology courses.
- 106.10** A member pointed out the limited resources available to units, and Dean Grant said that the Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics would have to approach the Faculty of Medicine to obtain more resources.

**(7) MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS**

- 107.1** Prof. Drury explained that the proposed changes were due to the revamping of the Mathematics & Statistics programs for students in the Faculty of Management.

**Program Revisions:**

**- Minor in Mathematics**

**AC-06-8**

Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Ms. Osborn, that the program changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**- Minor in Statistics**

**AC-06-9**

Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Associate Dean Leighton, that the program changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**New Programs:****- Major in Mathematics to Management Students****AC-06-10**

- 107.2** Prof. Drury said that the program name should be Major in Mathematics **for** Management Students, and Associate Dean Leighton suggested that the name be further modified to **Major Concentration in Mathematics for Management Students**.

Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Prof. Gonzalez, that the program be adopted with the above changes.

**The motion carried.**

**- Major in Statistics to Management Students****AC-06-11**

- 107.3** Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Associate Dean Leighton, that the program be adopted, with the same changes as above, i.e., the name of the program would be **Major Concentration in Statistics for Management Students**.

**The motion carried.**

**Program Retirement:****- Major in Mathematics for Management Students****AC-06-12**

Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the above program be retired.

**The motion carried.**

**(8) BIOLOGY/NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES**

BIOL 350 (Revision)/ENTO 350(New)    Insect Biology and Control    **AC-06-13A/AC-06-13B**  
3 credits

- 108.1** Prof. Gonzalez explained that BIOL 350 had been updated. Although a Biology course, BIOL 350 had always been taught by a professor from the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The course was being made into a double-prefix course with the creation of ENTO 350, to take allowance of the professor's home faculty.

- 108.2** Associate Dean Leighton pointed out that ENTO 350 should be considered as a Science course.

Prof. Gonzalez **moved**, seconded by Prof. Bennett, that the above changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**New Course:**

BIOL 590 (New)    Linking commun/ecosyst ecology  
3 credits

**AC-06-14**

Prof. Gonzalez **moved**, seconded by Prof. Drury, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(9) REDPATH MUSEUM****New Course: (Tabled to a Future Meeting)**

REDM 399

Science Writing

**AC-06-15**

1 credit

- 109.1** Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Mr. Haakonsen, that the course be approved pending removal of the description of the course as pass/fail in the course outline; the course would be given as a graded course.
- 109.2** There was a long discussion about whether students' current research projects should form the basis for the writing exercises in the course. Some members felt that using students' research projects would be "double-grading" the projects. Other members felt that assigning separate projects such as library research would vastly increase the workload of the course.
- 109.3** It was proposed and accepted that REDM 399 be tabled until there was a clear definition of "70% final research project" in the course outline.

**(10) RESEARCH COURSES FOR VISITING GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND SPECIAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS****AC-06-16**

- 110.1** Document AC-06-16 proposes that faculties set up research courses specifically for visiting graduate and undergraduate students, and special undergraduate students.
- 110.2** Dean Grant said that the previous year the Faculty of Science had introduced the 396 research courses for Science undergraduate students, so there was no need to create new research courses for visiting and special undergraduate students.
- 110.3** He said that the 396 courses had been accompanied by a large amount of documentation with respect to how students would be evaluated, how mentoring would take place, how supervisors would be found, and how departmental chairs would play a role in the courses. All of this was completely absent from the current proposal for research courses for visiting graduate and undergraduate students, and special undergraduate students.
- 110.4** Dean Grant proposed that the Faculty of Science Academic Committee voice its concern about the inconsistency of compiling complicated documentation and governing structures for the 396 courses, while passing the current proposal, which had no governing structure.
- 110.5** Associate Dean Hendren added that the proposed courses were supposed to be at the Faculty level, which raised questions as to who would set the standards for the courses, submit the grades, put the courses on Minerva, and in general be responsible for the courses.
- 110.6** A member pointed out that based on past experience, the Academic Committee in his unit would refuse outright to consider additional research courses because the unit was already stretched and any additional courses would jeopardize existing programs.

- 110.7 Dean Grant said that the Committee would need more information concerning the proposed courses.

(11) **K GRADE EXTENSIONS FOR RESEARCH COURSES**

- 111.1 Associate Dean Leighton explained that professors in at least one unit were treating research courses as open-ended, in that students would be given a grade of K or KE for a one-semester research course, and then continue the research in the following semester under a different research course number, resulting in a grade for two semesters worth of work which would then be applied to each of the individual semester courses. He felt that having students do what was essentially open-ended research within the framework of a time-limited course was not fair to students. He said that by bringing the issue to the Academic Committee, he was hoping to obtain a consensus that the practice of linking two three-credit courses was not appropriate, and that members would bring this message back to their units.
- 111.2 After some discussion, Dean Grant said that it was clear that the linking practice was definitely not appropriate and that it should stop.

(12) **FACULTY STANDARD CALCULATORS**

- 112.1 Prof. S. Drury, Department of Mathematics & Statistics, said that the Faculty of Engineering had a list of calculators that were acceptable for examinations. He said that the concern was that some calculators may have inappropriate capacities, and also that some calculators may be out of the financial reach of some students, creating unfairness. He would like the Faculty of Science to consider creating an analogous list.
- 112.2 Prof. Drury mentioned that he would like students in his exams to have the option of using calculators for arithmetical calculations since his courses were not examining these. However, in bringing the issue to the Academic Committee, he was not intending precluding professors from banning calculators for their examinations, or from specifying particular types of calculators.
- 112.3 Dean Grant said that he had reservations about telling students to buy a calculator that was useful only for taking examinations. He said it would be preferable for students to be given simple calculators at the beginning of an exam. He thought that it would be appropriate for the university to pay for these.
- 112.4 A member pointed out that it was possible students might have trouble working with an unfamiliar calculator.
- Prof. Drury **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the Faculty of Science create a short list of standard calculators.
- The motion carried.**
- 112.5 Dean Grant said that the motion was a general statement of principle. Whether students or the university or the Dean provided the calculators was a separate issue, which the Dean would look into.

(13) **THE DELIVERY AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS OF UNDERGRADUATE SCIENCE COURSES**

AC-06-17

- 113.1 Associate Dean Hendren said Document AC-06-17 contained various points for discussion, that the Academic Committee could use to create a set of guidelines for the

delivery and evaluation of undergraduate courses. She said that each Academic Committee meeting could be used to discuss one of the topics listed in Document AC-06-17. She would announce the topic ahead of time so that members could think about it before the meeting, and then the topic could be discussed for about ten minutes during the meeting. She added that members could e-mail her if they wished to add additional topics.

- 113.2** Associate Dean Hendren said that after announcing the topics, she would set up a Wiki page. Members could make postings to the page, and the page would be printed out and used for discussion at the Academic Committee meeting. The discussions would then form the basis for the guidelines.

**(14) OTHER BUSINESS**

- 114.1** A member asked about the dramatic increase in enrolment in the Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology over the last two years. This increase was extremely difficult to cope with. Some students were not able to gain admission to required courses.

- 114.2** Dean Grant said he was aware of the problem, and that other units were also experiencing difficulties. Dean Grant has been talking to the provost about courses offered in the Faculty of Science. Resources for courses offered in the Faculty of Medicine should be handled by the Dean of Medicine.

- 114.3** Dean Grant said he would discuss the situation with the Dean of Medicine at the upcoming Deans' Retreat.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.