

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on January 17, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts Council Room, Arts 160.

**PRESENT:** Dean Martin Grant (Chair), Associate Dean Laurie Hendren (Vice-Chair), Nicole Allard, Professors Fiona Bedford, Paul Clarke, James Cline (in place of Kenneth Ragan), Frédéric Guichard, Galen Halverson, Axel Hundemer, Bettina Kemme, Greg Marczynski, Kathy Roulet, Ann Wechsler; Louis Houle; Alan Blayney, Timothy Tsang, Neil Verma, Debbie Wang, Billi Wun; Malek Yalaoui, Josie D'Amico.

**REGRETS:** Professors, Gillian O'Driscoll, Linda Reven, Julie St-Pierre, Bruno Tremblay, Jon Unruh; Jan-Marc Lieskovsky, Hardik Vala.

**DOCUMENTS: AC-11-24 to AC-11-33**

Dean Grant called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Prof. Wechsler **moved**, seconded by Prof. Guichard, that the Agenda be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(2) MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2011**

Prof. Halverson **moved**, seconded by Prof. Marczynski, that the Minutes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

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

**- Minute 404.6, Microbiology & Immunology**

**503.1** Prof. Marczynski said that at the Academic Committee meeting of December 13, 2011, there seemed to have been some ambiguity as to the status of MIMM 314 and whether units could keep it in their programs. He said that after further consultation, MIMM 314 will remain in the list of Other Complementary Courses in the Major Program in Neuroscience. Prof. Marczynski said he had not heard from anyone else.

**(4) BIOLOGY**

***New Course:***

BIOL 597

Advanced Biostatistics  
2 credits

**AC-11-26**

**504.1** Prof. Guichard introduced the above course, and said it had been created as a follow-up to the recently approved course, BIOL 596, Advanced Experimental Design. He said the

new course is intended for students conducting data analysis, and will assist students in implementing appropriate statistical approaches for their data.

**504.2** Dean Grant pointed out that students could take BIOL 597 without having done BIOL 596.

Prof. Guichard **moved**, seconded by Prof. Hundemer, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(5) ARCTIC FIELD COURSES**

**- Overview**

**AC-11-27**

**505.1** Dean Grant introduced Prof. Wayne Pollard (Geography), Prof. Hans Larrsson (Earth & Planetary Sciences, and Redpath Museum), Ms. Martine Dolmière (Faculty of Science Internship & Field Studies Officer), and Prof. Nicholas de Takacsy (Interim Director, T-Pulse [Tomlinson Project in University-Level Science Education]).

***New Courses:***

ATOC 373	Arctic Climate & Climate Chge 3 credits	<b>AC-11-28</b>
EPSC 373	Arctic Geology 3 credits	<b>AC-11-29</b>
GEOG 373	Arctic Geomorphology 3 credits	<b>AC-11-30</b>

**505.2** Prof. Pollard introduced the above three Arctic field courses and said that these were a first step towards the creation of an Arctic Field Study Semester. He said the courses would introduce students to the principles of Arctic climate and climate change, the principles of geology, and the principles of periglacial and permafrost science. McGill students and Nunavut Arctic College students would be based at the Meadowbank mine of Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd.

**505.3** Prof. Pollard said that part of the justification for the future Arctic Field Study Semester was to train students to understand and address the rapidly changing polar environment in a scientifically and culturally responsible manner.

**505.4** Dean Grant thanked the people involved for taking this initiative, and complimented their leadership in the project.

**505.5** In reply to a member who asked whether there would be a social component to the field semester in the future to make it appealing to Arts students, Prof. Pollard said that the field semester would initially be designed for Science students, but broadening the scope to include social issues would be a longer term goal. Ideally, work in the Arctic would eventually involve all faculties. He added that the Arctic was a very "hot" topic in the Canadian context, and it was a good time for McGill to establish a presence.

**505.6** In response to a member, Prof. Pollard said that there would be significant costs to take the courses, including costs for various training.

**505.7** In reply to Associate Dean Hendren, Prof. Pollard said that the courses would be integrated into the three departments' programs in the near future. Other units, such as the MSE, would also be able to incorporate the courses in their programs.

Mr. Houle **moved**, seconded by Ms. Roulet, that the above three new courses be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(6) COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**- B.A. & Sc.: Major Concentration in Software Engineering AC-11-25**

Prof. Kemme introduced the above program revisions, and said that the changes were minor.

Prof. Kemme **moved**, seconded by Prof. Guichard, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

***For Information Only:***

- B.A.: - Major Concentration in Software Engineering

**(7) AD HOC JOINT HONOURS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND BIOLOGY AC-11-31**

**507.1** Director Allard introduced the above ad hoc Joint Honours Program in Computer Science and Biology. She said that the ad hoc was modeled after the Joint Major Program in Computer Science and Biology. Director Allard described the proposal in detail.

**507.2** Director Allard suggested that in the table headed Additional Courses, it be specified that at least two courses be chosen from each of the MATH-COMP course list and the BIOL list.

**507.3** Director Allard said there was currently no GPA requirement for the ad hoc, due to different requirements in the Department of Biology and the School of Computer Science. However, a GPA requirement would be introduced. She emphasized that the student had a very high GPA, and would have no problem completing the program.

**507.4** It was pointed out that for an Honours program it would have been more appropriate to require COMP 252 (Honours Algorithms and Data Structures) than COMP 251 (Algorithms and Data Structures). However, since the student had already taken COMP 251, it was allowed in this case.

Director Allard **moved**, seconded by Prof. Guichard, that the ad hoc program be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**(8) McGILL SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT**

***For Information Only:***

- B.A. Faculty Program Changes
- Ecological Determinants of Health in Society
- Economics and the Earth's Environment
- Environment and Development

Ms. Roulet said that the changes in the three MSE B.A. domains were simply housekeeping.

**(9) PROGRAMS WITH LOW ENROLMENT**

**AC-11-32**

- 509.1** Associate Dean Hendren introduced the document on Enrolment, and described how the data were set up. She said it was interesting to note the movement of students from the Faculty Program not only to the Core Science Component, but also to the Major and Honours programs. The initiative to examine low-enrolment programs came from the Office of Deputy Provost (Student Life & Learning) Morton Mendelson. She said it would be worthwhile to try to pick out any trends, and to review programs with low enrolment with the aim of considering retiring these.
- 509.2** Associate Dean Hendren said that any programs not listed most likely had not had students registered in them in the last five years. These should probably be retired. She mentioned that the programs listed were based on students' first Major.
- 509.3** Associate Dean Hendren said that Academic Committee representatives could look at all programs, but in particular should review their own unit's programs, and decide whether any should be retired. If so, members should let her know in the next couple of weeks.
- 509.4** Associate Dean Hendren mentioned she had heard that the Joint Major Program in Physics and Geophysics might be closed, and she emphasized that program retirements must be done officially through the Academic Committee.

**(10) INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS**

**AC-11-33**

- 510.1** Associate Dean Hendren said that she had put together the above document on Interdisciplinary Programs after the discussion at the Academic Committee meeting held on December 13, 2011. She said she would like feedback from members before submitting the document as information, to APC.
- 510.2** Associate Dean Hendren went through the document and briefly described each item. The following are the main issues relevant to B.Sc. and B.A. & Sc. Interdisciplinary Programs in the Faculty of Science in the document:
- What is an Interdisciplinary Program?
    - Inter-unit Programs
    - Joint Programs
    - Minors and Options
  - Growth in Interdisciplinary Programs
  - Designing a Good Interdisciplinary Program
  - Integration
  - Advising
  - Administration
  - Program Review
  - Summary
- 510.3** Associate Dean Hendren went over the table of enrolment in interdisciplinary programs for the B.A. & Sc. and the B.Sc., in document AC-11-33. Enrolment in interdisciplinary programs had more than doubled for both degrees over the last five years.

**510.4** Associate Dean Hendren asked members what they thought of document AC-11-33. Members were in agreement with the description of Interdisciplinary Programs in the document.

**(11) OTHER BUSINESS**

**511.1** Mr. Verma announced that the SUS will be holding its annual Academia Week from January 23 to 27, 2012, and invited members to attend. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Marc Tessier-Lavigne from the Rockefeller University.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.