

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE**  
**Meeting of Faculty**  
**Tuesday, December 4, 2007**  
**Leacock Council Room - L232**

**ATTENDANCE:** As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book.

**DOCUMENTS:** S-07-17 to S-07-19

Dean Grant called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

**Pre-Agenda Research Presentations:**

Prof. Lea Berrang-Ford, Department of Geography  
Prof. Anthony Mittermaier, Department of Chemistry

Dean Grant thanked Prof. Berrang-Ford and Prof. Mittermaier for their research presentations. He said he found it fascinating to learn about all the different research occurring in the Faculty of Science.

**(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Prof. Whitesides **moved**, seconded by Prof. Crépeau, that the Agenda be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**(2) CLASS SCHEDULING SOFTWARE**

**402.1** Ms. Anna Walsh, Associate Registrar, and Ms. Nermein Gamal, leader of the class scheduling project team for the downtown campus, gave a presentation on the class scheduling project.

**402.2** Ms. Walsh said that the class scheduling project team was in the early phase of communication and discussion with the academic staff of the university. Academic staff would be very involved in the process.

**402.3** Ms. Walsh said there were a number of reasons why the university had decided to purchase the new class scheduling software: Students could not necessarily fit desired courses into their schedules, the classrooms available were not of ideal size and optimal use was not being made of them, and changing schedules to incorporate new courses and programs was very labour intensive.

**402.4** Currently, units did their own course scheduling, and the Admissions, Recruitment and Registrar's Office booked appropriate rooms for the courses based on times provided, room characteristics, and building requests. The new software would allow the university to schedule both times and rooms for courses.

**402.5** A pilot project had been carried out at Macdonald campus. While the project was successful, it was important to note that the Macdonald campus is much smaller than the main campus. However, the positive results obtained were encouraging.

**402.6** The Class Schedule Advisory Work Group had been formed to investigate the best means of class schedule creation. Class schedules should increase student choice and

optimize classroom use, but also take account of academic objectives, professors' schedules, and space availability. The Advisory Work Group had created new daily time patterns for classes to allow for greater flexibility.

- 402.7** Regarding communications with the academic staff, meetings were being held with units. Information would be gathered from each unit, and follow-ups and meetings would be scheduled as needed. E-mail communication was also available.
- 402.8** Simulations would be run during the current academic year, and priorities and constraints would be built into the system. The results of the simulations would be made available to units for feedback, and data would be analyzed to ensure that scheduling matched the needs of units.
- 402.9** The main areas of data collection involved assembling blocks of course combinations that needed to be free of conflicts as a result of program requirements; flagging constraints on courses, such as a laboratory period that needed to be held at a particular time; and compiling times when instructors were not available to teach.
- 402.10** An internal simulation for the Fall 2007/Winter 2008 terms would be run in December 2007.
- 402.11** A second simulation would be run around April 2008 for the Fall 2008/Winter 2009 terms. The results of this simulation would be sent to units for consultation.
- 402.12** Collection of information for the Fall 2008/Winter 2009 terms would be carried out in February-March 2008. It was hoped that the program would go live for the Fall 2009 term.
- 402.13** Ms. Walsh said that feedback and questions were always welcome, and she provided an e-mail address and phone numbers:
- timetableproject.arr@mcgill.ca
  - Anna Walsh 398-4473
  - Nermein Gamal 398-5420
- 402.14** There were several questions from members, which Ms. Walsh and Ms. Gamal answered.
- 402.15** Dean Grant thanked Ms. Walsh and Ms. Gamal for the informative presentation.

**(3) MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 6, 2007 S-07-17**

Prof. Moore **moved**, seconded by Prof. Butler, that the Minutes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

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

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

**(5) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- a) Scholarships Committee S-07-18**  
**New Award: Richard and Mary Shaw Scholarships in Science**  
**Est. Value: \$2500**

405.1 Associate Dean Leighton presented the new scholarship to Faculty.

b) **Academic Committee**

**S-07-19**

The Academic Committee approved the following on Tuesday, November 20, 2007:

**SECTION A: NEW PROGRAMS**

- Minor in Interdisciplinary Life Sciences

**AC-07-37 (Rev. 2)**

405.2 Associate Dean Hendren introduced the Minor and highlighted its categories.

405.3 Associate Dean Hendren said that she had added a number of additional courses to the lists of courses for the Minor, and she said that although the course lists were already extensive, she would like permission to add extra courses to the lists before the program was submitted to SCTP.

405.4 Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Moore, that the program be adopted, and that Associate Dean Hendren be given authority to add additional courses to the Minor before submission to SCTP.

**The motion carried.**

**SECTION B: MAJOR PROGRAM CHANGES**

None

**SECTION C: NEW COURSES**

(1)	<b>PSYCHOLOGY</b> PSYC 409	Positive Psychology 3 credits	<b>AC-07-29</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Baker, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

(2)	<b>BIOLOGY</b> BIOL 585	Game Theory & Evolutionary Dyn 3 credits	<b>AC-07-34</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

(3)	<b>CHEMISTRY</b> CHEM 287	Intro Analytical Chemistry 2 credits	<b>AC-07-38</b>
	CHEM 297	Intro Analytical Chem. Lab. 1 credit	<b>AC-07-39</b>

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the above courses be adopted.

**The motion carried.****Associated Course Retirements:**

CHEM 257D1/D2	Intro Analytical Chemistry 4 credits	<b>AC-07-40</b>
CHEM 277D1/D2	Intro Analytical Chem. Lab. 3 credits	<b>AC-07-41</b>

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the above courses be retired.

**The motion carried.****(4) NEUROSCIENCE**

**405.5** Associate Dean Hendren introduced the following six courses and their associated program changes.

NSCI 200	Intro. to Neuroscience 1 3 credits	<b>AC-07-57</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Chase, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

NSCI 201	Intro to Neuroscience 2 3 credits	<b>AC-07-58</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Baker, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

NSCI 300	Neuroethics 3 credits	<b>AC-07-59</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Crépeau, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

NSCI 400	Neuroscience Seminar 1 credit	<b>AC-07-60</b>
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Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

NSCI 410	Independent Research 1 6 credits	<b>AC-07-61</b>
NSCI 420	Independent Research 2 9 credits	<b>AC-07-62</b>

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Chase, that the above courses be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**Associated Program Changes:**

Major in Neuroscience

**AC-07-63**

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Franklin, that the program changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**405.6** On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Grant thanked everyone, and in particular Prof. Ellis Cooper, for the work involved in putting together the proposals.

**SECTION D: MAJOR COURSE CHANGES**

**(1) COMPUTER SCIENCE**

COMP 527

Logic and Computation

**AC-07-35**

Changes in number (from 426), title, restrictions  
3 credits

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Crépeau, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**(2) CHEMISTRY**

CHEM 522

Stereochemistry

**AC-07-49**

Changes in number (from 623), credit weight,  
description, prerequisites, restrictions

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**SECTION E: MINOR COURSE CHANGES (For Information Only)**

**- Report on Minor Course Changes**

**AC-07-24**

**405.7** With the new online forms, Associate Dean Hendren encouraged members to carry out any necessary housekeeping work on courses.

**SECTION F: MINOR PROGRAM CHANGES (For Information Only)**

**- Report on Minor Program Changes**

**AC-07-P2**

**SECTION G: OTHER (For Approval)**

**(1) Retirement of B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences**

**AC-07-36**

**405.8** Associate Dean Hendren said that the retirement of the B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences had been extensively discussed at the November Academic

Committee meeting, and that she thought it was important to explain the reasons for the proposed retirement.

**405.9** Associate Dean Hendren said that, particularly with the introduction of the B.Sc. Liberal, students had a wide variety of choice in their programs. The B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences was not working well for two reasons: (1) There was not enough room in the freshman year to take all the credits necessary to take the B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences, (2) The Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences did not provide for depth. Now, with more options for flexibility, it was appropriate to retire the Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences.

**405.10** Associate Dean Hendren said that the proposal to retire the B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences (Document AC-07-36) was in the form of a memo from the five units involved in the Major Concentration.

**405.11** Several members pointed out in opposition to the motion that a B.A. & Sc. degree was a degree from both the Faculties of Arts and of Science, whereas a B.Sc. Liberal was a degree from only the Faculty of Science, and that retaining the B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Biomedical Sciences would allow students a greater degree of flexibility in choosing their programs.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ronis, that the program be retired.

**405.12** A vote was held:

In favour	29
Opposed	5
Abstained	2

**The motion carried.**

**(2) Exemption for B.Sc. Liberal Students Taking a Major Concentration in Music, to the Regulation Regarding Credits Outside the Faculties of Arts and of Science AC-07-54**

**405.13** Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Crépeau, that the following motion be approved.

Students in the B.Sc. Liberal Program taking a Major Concentration in Music may exceed the 18-credit limit for courses outside the Faculties of Arts and of Science, provided that all such courses are necessary to complete their program of study, up to a maximum of 36 Music credits.

**The motion carried.**

**(6) DEAN'S BUSINESS**

**- Feedback on Student Life and Learning Initiative**

**406.1** Dean Grant said that the next day Senate was scheduled to discuss the administrative response to the Report of the Principal's Taskforce on Student Life and Learning, and that the Committee of the Whole discussion could provide Science Senators with additional talking points.

**406.2** Faculty moved into the Committee of the Whole, with Associate Dean Burns as Chair.

- 406.3** Associate Dean Burns said that the Report of the Principal's Taskforce on Student Life and Learning had been released in December 2006, and presented to Senate in January 2007. The main emphasis of the document had been on better coordinating the education process for McGill as a student-centered, research-intensive university.
- 406.4** In many of the recommendations, the Faculty of Science had been held up as a model: The reorganization of the Faculty's student advising office was intended to promote interaction between advisors and students at all levels in their education; the Science Undergraduate Research Office promoted undergraduate research; Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs) exposed students to faculty members on a relatively informal basis; Soup and Science provided students with an introduction to a broad range of research interests; and the Faculty was involved with the Provost's office in an initiative to develop laboratory renovation projects.
- 406.5** Associate Dean Burns asked Senators and other faculty members for their input regarding the Report of the Principal's Taskforce. Some suggestions were:
- ◆ That the Faculty host a meal for students and professors.
  - ◆ That there were many opportunities for professors to interact with students at the Brown Building Cafeteria.
  - ◆ That students were interested in hearing why professors had chosen a scientific career.
  - ◆ That FIGs could be extended to later-year students.
  - ◆ That units could hold annual seminars to inform students of requirements for employment.
  - ◆ That retreats could be held for undergraduate students and professors.
  - ◆ That the University of Toronto provided competitive studentships for summer research in order to attract outside students.
  - ◆ That units could put students interested in summer research in contact with professors who have space available in their labs for summer research.
- 406.6** Associate Dean Burns said that further comments or suggestions could be communicated directly to him or any of the Science Senators.

**(7) REPORT ON ACTIONS OF SENATE**

Please note that the entire Minutes of Senate are available on the Web at <http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/minutes/>.

**Senate Meeting of November 7, 2007 - Prof. R. Chase**

In her opening remarks, Principal Heather Monroe-Blum spoke in anticipation of the university rankings coming from various sources. She noted that while the procedures used in certain cases may be objectionable, the University continues to be interested in the results. In the event, this year's results were excellent. She spoke enthusiastically about the launch of Campaign McGill which has a record-breaking target of \$750 million, of which \$325 was already raised in the "silent" phase of the campaign. Tied into this campaign was the introduction of a Parents Weekend in conjunction with the annual Homecoming event. Because more than 600 parents participated in the successful series of activities, it is likely to reoccur next year. She voiced the University's strong opposition to any new provincial legislation designed to prevent financial problems such as those recently experienced by UQAM, saying that sufficient controls are already in place and that the autonomy of all universities should not be constrained because of poor management at any one university. Lastly, she announced that McGill would not be submitting a brief to the Bouchard-Taylor commission on reasonable accommodation.

The remainder of the meeting was occupied with nine reports from various University sources. Principal among these was a lengthy discussion of proposed changes to the McGill Course Evaluation Policy. An earlier draft of this document had been discussed at a previous meeting of Senate. The discussion was led by Professor Cynthia Weston, Director of Teaching and Learning Services. While all sections of the document were closely scrutinized, two were especially contentious. Regarding the section on Purpose, Professor Robaire asked that the reference to merit increases be removed, and Professor Chase asked that evaluations of TAs be included. The section on Dissemination generated numerous comments in respect to the threshold level of participation required for the dissemination of results to the university community. As drafted, a minimum response rate of 40% will be required for classes with enrolments greater than 12 students, whereas for classes with fewer than 12 students, at least 5 responses will be required. Several variations on these criteria were suggested, but Vice Provost Morton Mendelson and Dean Martin Grant both argued that a threshold of 40% strikes a good balance between the need for statistical reliability and the goal of broad dissemination. Also, it represents an incentive for students to complete evaluations. A revised draft of the Course Evaluation Policy will be presented to Senate for its approval, probably in December 2007.

The Fall 2007 Enrolment Report was presented by Deputy Provost, Mendelson. Some of the statistics are of special interest to Science, notably those reflecting 5-year trends. *Undergraduate enrolments* are down 1.2% in the Faculty of Science, but they are up 11.7% in the University as a whole. On the other hand, *Science doctoral enrolments* are up 39.3%, compared to 25.4% in the University. *Masters degree enrolments* are down 14% in Science and 7.8% in the University. *Postdoctoral registration* is up substantially across the University, but only the data from the past year are reliable; these show an increase of 5.4% in Science, compared to an increase of 15.6% in the University. Finally, Science has about the same *gender ratio* as the rest of the university, with 53% females for Science compared to 57% females for the University. A new student enrolment strategy is currently under development.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 (duration 2½ hours).

**(8) MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD**

- 408.1** In response to a member who asked about delays in processing expense reports, Dean Grant said that he was aware the problem was particularly acute for graduate students. He had talked to the Provost about the issue, and the situation should improve in the future.

**(9) OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.