

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE
Meeting of Faculty
Tuesday, February 12, 2008
Leacock Council Room - L232**

ATTENDANCE: As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book.

DOCUMENTS: S-07-20 to S-07-26

Dean Grant called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Pre-Agenda Research Presentations:

Prof. Joelle Pineau – School of Computer Science
Prof. Andrew Hendry - Redpath Museum and Department of Biology

Prof. Garry Peterson, Department of Geography and McGill School of Environment, was unable to give his research presentation due to a scheduling conflict.

(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

The motion carried.

(2) CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

- a) Bachelor of Arts and Science **S-07-23**

Associate Dean Leighton **moved**, seconded by Prof. Gyakum, that the above degree list be recommended to the Senate Steering Committee for the Bachelor of Arts and Science degree.

The motion carried.

- b) Bachelor of Science **S-07-24**

Associate Dean Leighton **moved**, seconded by Prof. Moore, that the above degree list be recommended to the Senate Steering Committee for the Bachelor of Science degree.

The motion carried.

- c) Diploma in Environment **S-07-25**

There were no candidates for the Diploma in Environment.

- d) Diploma in Meteorology **S-07-26**

There were no candidates for the Diploma in Meteorology.

Associate Dean Leighton further **moved**, seconded by Prof. Whitesides, that the Dean be given discretionary power to make such changes in the degree list as would be necessary to prevent injustice.

The motion carried.

- 602.1** Associate Dean Leighton thanked unit advisors and advisors and staff in the Student Affairs Office for their diligent work in preparing the degree lists.

(3) MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4, 2007 S-07-20

- 603.1** It was pointed out that in the Senate Report for the meeting of November 7, 2007, in the first paragraph, "\$325" should read "\$325 million."

Prof. Gyakum **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the amended Minutes be approved.

The motion carried.

(4) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

(5) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- i) Academic Committee S-07-21**

The Academic Committee approved the following on December 11, 2007 and January 29, 2008:

SECTION A: NEW PROGRAMS

- (1) Ad Hoc Joint Honours Program in Physics & Computer Science AC-07-69**

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Buchinger, that the program be adopted.

The motion carried.

- (2) Ad Hoc Major Program in Pharmacology AC-07-75**

- 605.1** Associate Dean Hendren said that the Major and Honours Programs in Pharmacology was in the process of being approved by the MELS.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the program be adopted.

The motion carried.

- (3) School of Computer Science & Department of Biology
- Joint Major in Computer Science and Biology AC-07-80**

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Levine, that the program be adopted.

The motion carried.

- (4) School of Computer Science
- B.A. & Sc. Major Concentration in Software Engineering AC-07-81**

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Panangaden, that the program be adopted.

The motion carried.

- B.Sc. Liberal: Core Science Component in Software Engineering AC-07-82

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Panangaden, that the program be adopted.

The motion carried.

SECTION B: MAJOR PROGRAM CHANGES

None

SECTION C: NEW COURSES

- (1) **Geography**
GEOG 310 Development and Livelihoods **AC-07-66**
3 credits

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

The motion carried.

- GEOG 403 Global Health & Envir. Change **AC-07-67**
3 credits

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

The motion carried.

- GEOG 409 Geographies of Developing Asia **AC-07-83**
3 credits

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

The motion carried.

- (2) **Field Practicum**
FSCI 400 Field Practicum **AC-07-70**
0 credits

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

The motion carried.

- (3) **School of Computer Science & Department of Biology**
BIOL 495 Integrative Computing in Biol. **AC-07-77**
3 credits

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

605.5 Associate Dean Hendren said that students in the B.Sc. and B.A. & Sc. programs were restricted from taking more than two of the four World of Chemistry courses. However, the grade distribution in the World of Chemistry courses was quite reasonable and no other Science general interest courses had such a restriction, so she was proposing that the restriction on the World of Chemistry courses be lifted.

Associate Dean Hendren **moved**, seconded by Prof. Barrett, that the policy in Document AC-07-93 be adopted.

The motion carried.

(3) Academic Program Review (Appendix X) **AC-07-85 (Rev)**

605.6 Associate Dean Hendren said that Appendix X of the Academic Program Review summarized recommendations from the Review Document itself, from the external reviewer, and from the APC review of the document. Appendix X also described the Faculty's action plans for putting in place the recommendations. A number of these had already been put in place or were currently being put in place.

605.7 Associate Dean Hendren drew members' attention to recommendation #6, regarding the gender gap in Honours programs. She showed a chart illustrating that, with the exception of only several programs, males outnumbered females in Science's Honours programs. The gender gap in Honours programs would be the focus of the day's Committee of the Whole discussion.

605.8 Dean Grant said that since Faculty of Science meetings functioned as an advisory committee to the Dean, he would like to obtain the Faculty's feelings regarding the recommendations in Appendix X. He called for a straw vote on the matter.

605.9 In the straw vote, the Faculty unanimously endorsed the recommendations of the Academic Program Review.

SECTION H: OTHER (For Information Only)

(1) Administering Mid-Term Examinations **AC-07-74A/B/C**

605.10 Associate Dean Hendren said that Prof. David Harpp, Department of Chemistry, had attended a recent Academic Committee meeting, and had described ways of giving multiple versions of exams, of scrambling seating, and of administering mid-term exams in order to ensure fairness. He had emphasized that multiple versions of multiple-choice exams should be given. She said that the Faculty would be making available ideas and information concerning administering mid-term exams; these would be posted on the Science Website. Prof. Harpp would be providing much of the information, but if other members of Faculty wished to contribute, they were certainly welcome to get in touch with Associate Dean Hendren.

(2) School of Computer Science (B.A.)
- New Major Concentration in Software Engineering

(3) Psychology (B.A. Program Changes)
- Major Concentration in Psychology
- Honours in Psychology
- Joint Honours in Psychology
- Minor Concentration in Behavioural Science

(4) Report of the Faculty of Science Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Inflation **AC-07-84**

605.11 Associate Dean Leighton said that as Chair of the Science Scholarships Committee, he had noticed that the GPA cutoff for the Dean's Honour List and for scholarships, had been increasing. A small subcommittee of the Academic Committee had been struck to examine the issue. The members were: Associate Dean Leighton (Chair), Prof. Robert Levine (Biology), Prof. Guy Moore (Physics), Dr. Jose Correa (Statistician), and students Mr. Kyle Howe and Ms. Kathleen Maloney.

605.12 The Committee recommended that all units look at their own data in detail and where appropriate monitor future trends. The Committee also recommended that a similar study be repeated in two years.

605.13 Dean Grant thanked the Committee for its hard work, and mentioned that the Committee had not recommended that an A⁺ grade be considered at the current time.

**ii) New Award:
Robert H. Lennox and Elizabeth Graham Lennox Scholarships S-07-22
in Science and in Nursing**

605.14 Associate Dean Leighton introduced the award.

605.15 Dean Grant added that Robert Lennox and Elizabeth Graham Lennox were the parents of Prof. Bruce Lennox, Chair, Department of Chemistry.

(6) **DEAN'S BUSINESS**

- Gender Imbalance and the Major and Honours Programs. How do we fix it?

606.1 Associate Dean (Research & Graduate Education) Burns said that a number of questions could be posed regarding gender imbalance in Science's programs:

- Can we identify the intended role of the Major and Honours Programs?
- Who is our Honours Program for?
- Right now there is not enough female representation in the Honours program, so how do we fix it?
- How do we get more women in the Honours program?
- How do we get more women interested in research?

606.2 Associate Dean Burns briefly described Associate Dean Hendren's chart showing the gender ratios in the various Science programs, and asked for members' opinions and suggestions.

606.3 Among the points raised were:

- That some units did not have a gender imbalance in their Honours program.
- That there was actually a gender imbalance in favour of women in Science programs overall.
- That the relative lack of female professors in at least one unit was not due to an imbalance in graduation rates or in quality of female graduates.
- That there was a long lag time between changes in the ratio of females to males in the student population, and changes in the ratio in the professorial population.
- That in units with a low proportion of women in the Honours program or in the professorial staff, an attempt could be made to target women during the advising process, using a personal approach.

- That the above approach could be used for any group with minority status in programs or in professorial staff.

606.4 Dean Grant thanked members for their feedback and said that this was an issue that the university would have to deal with and understand better.

(6) MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD

There were no members' questions.

(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 December 5, 2007 - Prof. K. GowriSankaran

Prof. GowriSankaran will present his Report at the next Faculty meeting.

Senate Meeting of January 23, 2008 - Prof. T. Moore

After a eulogy on librarian Elaine Yarosky by the Director of Libraries, and a comment from Senator Jonsson on the late Bobby Fischer playing chess at McGill in the 1950's, and in the absence of the Principal, Senate turned to Questions.

The first question came from the Professor Butler of the Chemistry Department, concerning the extension of employee and University contributions from 69 to 71 years of age. The former would require a change in the McGill Pension Plan and the University Administration suggested that they would not participate in this extension. Other questions concerned the appropriate release of course grades (deemed a matter of Faculty jurisdiction), student athletics and the bilingual nature of the University (18% of students with French as mother tongue, 30% when based on students from CEGEPs) and that English was the working language of Senate, but there could be interventions in French. One assumes that this applies to the Faculty of Science.

Most of the time of Senate was taken up by discussion of the 16th draft of the Course Evaluation Policy, brought back to Senate after criticisms in Senate in the fall and further consultations with the community. There was much debate about the critical threshold for dissemination of results (rising from 25% where > 200 students to 40% for 12-30 students etc.), some duplication in the nature of the core questions asked and the response rate of instructors to agree to or deny permission to disseminate the evaluations. An amendment by Science Senators to raise the threshold to 40% or more in all courses was defeated. Of those instructors that had responded to the request for permission in fall, 2007, the ratio of 'yes' to 'no' was 3:1, but the overall response rate was about 50%, about the same as the average student response rate. An amendment to review the policy in three years was approved and the revised policy was passed with a substantial majority.

The revised policy on Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct was presented and generated some discussion. It was felt, however, that the University Administration, especially Associate Provost Bill Foster, had been able to incorporate many of the misgivings of an earlier draft and the policy passed with a substantial majority.

Finally, the Provost made a Powerpoint presentation on the University budget and the need to reduce the annual deficit next year from about \$15 million to about \$10 million. He outlined the principles behind the increase in revenue and decrease in expenditures and where these changes might occur. A general belt-tightening can be expected, along with reduced salary

increases, encouragement of retirements, no 'mortgages' on professorships, an increase in graduate student enrolment (one quarter of tenure-track staff supervise no thesis-degree graduate students) and encouragement to increase research funding. Although the presentation was billed as 'good news' and 'bad news', the latter dominated.

After 3 hours of deliberation Senate adjourned.

(8) OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.