FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
Meeting of Faculty  
12 January 2021 at 3:00 p.m.  
Held via Zoom Conference Application

ATTENDANCE:  As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book

DOCUMENTS:  S-20-14

Dean Lennox called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., and welcomed members to the fifth Faculty of Science meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Merritt moved, seconded by Prof. Ragan, that the Agenda be adopted.

The motion carried.

2. RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR DAVID G. RYAN, DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

Prof. Sangyong Jeon read the following resolution on the death of Prof. Ryan, which Faculty subsequently unanimously approved:

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Professor David Ryan, a Post-Retirement Professor in the Department of Physics. He passed away on September 28th, 2020. Professor David Ryan, a very talented and respected physicist at McGill University, will be remembered by his colleagues and students here and in other centres of research in Particle Physics in Canada and abroad.

David was an exceptional student in his secondary school in Quebec City before entering Queen's University where he received a Bachelor and Master’s degree in Engineering Physics. During his years at Queen’s he was greatly influenced by Professor B. W. Sargent, a student of Rutherford and later Director of Physics Research at The Chalk River Laboratory. For his PhD, David moved to The University of Birmingham where a high energy proton synchrotron was in operation.

After completion of his PhD studies in 1965 David accepted a Research Associate position at Cornell University. During this period of his career, he joined Professor D. H. White in experiments at Brookhaven National Laboratory. It was in this new challenge that David developed his skills in the techniques of Particle Physics and in the application of computers to the analysis of experimental data. Many students and colleagues at McGill were to benefit from his knowledge and experience acquired at Cornell and later at The Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. David started at McGill in 1967 as an Assistant Professor and stayed at McGill for more than three decades until his retirement in 2001.

David was highly organized and systematic. In his research and teaching he strove to achieve the highest standard of precision and thoroughness. In this effort he was usually successful and always much appreciated by his students and colleagues.
In a different but important aspect of David's life, he was a dedicated curler and skier, sports he had learned in his early life in Quebec.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his brother Peter, his sisters Louise and Marie as well as to his extended family members, his many friends, colleagues and all those whose lives he touched. He will be missed.

3. RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR WILLIAM C. PURDY, DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

Prof. Dima Perepichka read the following resolution on the death of Prof. Purdy, which Faculty subsequently unanimously approved:

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Dr. William Crossley Purdy, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Chemistry, McGill University, on October 30, 2019, after a prolonged illness.

Bill Purdy was born in 1930 in Brooklyn, New York and obtained his Ph.D. degree in Analytical Chemistry from M.I.T. in 1955 under the supervision of Professor David Hume. He immediately took up a position as an Instructor in Analytical Chemistry at the University of Connecticut and in 1958 moved, as an Assistant Professor, to University of Maryland where he eventually became a Full Professor and Head of the Analytical Chemistry Division. He served the country as a Consultant to the Surgeon General -U.S. Army (1959-70) and as a Science Advisor to the Food and Drug Administration (1967-69).

In 1976, Bill moved to Canada to become Professor of Analytical Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry at McGill. He retired in 2002 and, during his 26 years at McGill, he was appointed Sir William Macdonald Professor of Chemistry, and Associate Vice-Principal (Academic) (1986-91). His research mainly focused on clinical analytical chemistry involving electrochemistry, electrophoresis, high-pressure liquid chromatography, and atomic absorption spectroscopy. He directed the research of 23 M.Sc. and 49 Ph.D. students, and published over 200 peer-reviewed papers, with over a 100 of them reporting his work at McGill. He is also known as an author of an important monograph “Electroanalytical Methods in Biochemistry”.

Bill was the recipient of several prestigious awards from the American Association of Clinical Chemistry and Canadian Society of Clinical Chemistry. He was named as a Fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada, the Royal Society of Chemistry (U.K.), and was the founding member of the National Academy of Clinical Biochemistry.

We extend heartfelt condolences at this difficult time to his wife of 66 years, Myrna (affectionally known as Chris); his three remaining children Scott, Lisa and Lori; and his five grandchildren. Bill will be sorely missed by his many friends and scientific colleagues throughout the world.

4. RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR MARIO ONYSZCHUK, DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

Prof. Dima Perepichka read the following resolution on the death of Prof. Onyszchuk, which Faculty subsequently unanimously approved:
With heavy hearts we announce the passing of Professor Mario Onyszchuk on January 1, 2021. Mario was born in 1930 near Lviv in Poland, now a part of Ukraine. He grew up in Montreal, earned a BSc in Chemistry from McGill University in 1951, an MSc from U Western Ontario (1952; C. Sivertz) and a PhD from McGill under Carl Winkler (1954). He then moved to England where he received a second PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1956 (H.J. Emeléus). By this time, Mario had decided on a teaching-research career, and returned to McGill as a lecturer, ultimately earning tenure, and full professorship. He was appointed Professor Emeritus by McGill upon his retirement in 1993.

During his years as professor at McGill, Dr. Onyszchuk taught thousands of students in general and inorganic chemistry courses. In his research laboratory, he trained 5 M.Sc. and 12 Ph.D. students and a number of post-doctoral researchers. He built up an international reputation in the coordination chemistry of group 4 elements publishing over 70 peer-reviewed papers. He was named a Fellow of the Chemical Institute of Canada and the Royal Society of Chemistry (UK).

In addition to his achievements in research, Mario was an extraordinary contributor to the life of this University. He served for six years as Chair of his Department (1979-84), and four years as Associate Dean. Even after retiring, he continued serving the department, promoting the younger faculty for various award nominations. All those who knew Mario will concur that he gave of himself far beyond the normal call of duty. A kind and true gentleman, he set many examples of hard work, kindness, and generosity, providing advice, help and support to his colleagues.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 61 years Anastasia (Nancy) Onyszchuk, and by his son Ivan. He is survived by sons Tim and Greg, and grandsons Ethan and Zachary. We will miss him dearly and will always talk of him with great affection.

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox expressed condolences to the families of Prof. Ryan, Prof. Purdy, and Prof. Onyszchuk. A letter of condolences will be sent to the families.

5. **MINUTES OF 1 DECEMBER 2020**

   **Prof. Perepichka moved**, seconded by Ms. Mircescu, that the Minutes be approved.

   The motion carried.

6. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

   (i) **Awareness of Foreign Influence**

   As mentioned at the Faculty of Science meeting on 1 December 2020, Dean Lennox reported on the meeting on foreign influence which took place in December 2020 with the Science Chairs, Directors, Associate Deans, Vice-Principal Martha Crago, Director Brian Bauer, and representatives from CSIS. There was a presentation about the nature of the threats by CSIS representatives followed by a discussion. The recommendations that emanated from the meeting was the importance of awareness of foreign interference and less on the instruction of vigilance. Foreign influence was always present, and the U15 is continually being updated.
(ii) Bellairs Research Institute in Barbados

In reply to a member's question at the Faculty of Science meeting on 5 October 2020 about resuming activities at the Bellairs Research Institute in Barbados (BRIB), Dean Lennox said that given the current travel restrictions and the health infrastructure at the BRIB, it was highly unlikely that any course would be offered by Fall 2021.

7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

There were no reports for the current meeting.

8. DEAN'S BUSINESS

a) Announcements

(i) Kudos

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox congratulated Professor Wayne Pollard from the Department of Geography for being named the recipient of the 2020 Northern Science Award and the Centenary Medal. This award is presented annually to an individual or a group who has made a significant contribution to meritorious knowledge and understanding of the Canadian North.

(ii) Provincial Government's Restrictions

Dean Lennox said that in response to the recent provincial government's announcement, remote teaching will continue as scheduled, and a small number of Tier 1 courses (laboratory and clinical) will continue to be offered in-person as they are essential for students to graduate on time. Instructors, researchers, administrative and support staff who could work from home will continue to do so. Tier 2 courses, which were previously planned for in-person teachings for January 2021, will be on hold pending further notice. FRezCa activities and the Math help desk will be on pause until 8 February 2021.

At a meeting with Chairs, Directors, and Associate Deans, Dean Lennox said that there was a lot of concerns with the province-wide curfew for students (effective 9 January 2021 to 8 February 2021). Vice-Dean Stephens will be reaching out to the President of the SUS, Ms. Sydney Merritt and her colleagues, to provide student support and resources. Dean Lennox welcomed further suggestions and comments from the members.

9. REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS

a) Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer

(i) Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Option

Associate Dean Hundemer reminded members that the University approved an additional S/U option for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 semesters. The current S/U option was valid for elective courses only. The additional S/U option will allow students to take up to six credits over the two semesters, and these credits may be applied to electives, complementary, and required courses. The link below provides more information, as well as the deadlines to have courses grades as S/U:

https://www.mcgill.ca/student-records/adjusted-academic-measures

(ii) December Final Examinations
Associate Dean Hundemer said that the online Fall 2020 final exams ran very well. He thanked professors for putting in extra effort and dedication during these challenging times.

b) Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson

Associate Dean Nilson informed members that the special S/U Option for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 also applies to graduate students.

c) Associate Dean (Research) John Stix

There was no report.

d) Associate Dean (Student Affairs) Anthony Mittermaier

Associate Dean Mittermaier informed members that there has been a tremendous increase in allegations of plagiarism or cheating on written assessments. In previous years, there were about 10-15 allegations per semester, whereas in Winter 2020 there were 50, in Summer 2020 there were 10, and in Fall 2020 there were 450, which was probably due to remote assessments. In order to review the evidence and to expedite the process, instructors will be contacted for more information. Associate Dean Mittermaier thanked instructors in advance for their help in the review process.

10. SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY (SUS) REPORT

Ms. Sydney Merritt, President of the Science Undergraduate Society, gave the following report:

Since the last meeting Faculty meeting on 1 December 2020, most of the committees and executives have been taking some much-needed time off. SUS has started planning events and virtual initiatives for the upcoming semester.

Current plans include a renewed study-buddy program for the Science first year students in collaboration with Dr. Anita Parmar and the team behind FRezCa, as well as Academia Week in late January 2021. The Mental Health Committee is still posting regularly with self-care campaigns, and the peer support groups will be starting again soon.

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox thanked Ms. Merritt for the SUS Report.

11. SCIENCE EQUITY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE – ASSOCIATE DEAN (GRADUATE EDUCATION) LAURA NILSON

There was no report for the current meeting.

12. PROVOST’S ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Associate Dean Laura Nilson gave an update about the hiring initiative that the Provost is supporting as part of his Action Plan for Addressing Anti-Black Racism, announced in September 2020.

The Provost has made available up to ten tenure-track licenses, issued over a two-year period, to support hiring in areas of scholarship that are relevant to the commitments made in the plan.
These licenses are being awarded by competition, and in December 2020 the Faculty of Science submitted three proposals. Associate Dean Nilson said she was happy to report that all of them have been approved to go forward with the goal of hiring within the next two years.

a) Geography: Broadly-trained scholars specializing in racial inequalities, particularly in urban contexts.

b) School of Computer Science: The field of fairness in AI – with a focus on how systems in AI, which one might assume would be unbiased, can actually reproduce or even amplify the systemic biases.

c) Psychology: Looking for a scholar studying racial biases, either from a clinical or social perspective.

These areas of scholarship directly support the Provost’s plan, and importantly they all align with and build on existing research strengths in these departments and therefore promise to be a great fit.

Associate Dean Nilson thanked colleagues for pulling these winning proposals together on short notice.

13. THE NEW VIC PROJECT UPDATE

Dean Lennox said the The New Vic Project was proceeding with the design advisory process, and the aim was to refine the uses of spaces by late Spring 2021. Due to other important issues, a decision on the funding, which was anticipated by December 2020, has been postponed. However, with the funding from the government in May 2019, and with the hiring of professionals, advisors, and consultants, the project will continue to further develop. Once approved, the next phase is the business case, which will take approximately 18 months, and then the decontamination process will begin in 2022-2023. The full construction was anticipated to begin in 2024 to 2027.

14. REPORTS ON ACTIONS OF SENATE

- Senate Meeting of 2 December 2020: Senator Laura Nilson

SECTION I

1. Meeting opened with Welcoming Remarks from the Chair, and a Memorial Tribute to Professor John Crawford, Emeritus Professor in the Dept of Physics, read by the Dean of Science.

2. The next item on the agenda was the approval of the Report of the Senate Steering Committee, which, among other Committee business, reported that a motion to extend the availability of the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) option for courses in the Fall 2020 term had been submitted to the Committee but had not been approved for submission to Senate. This item generated considerable discussion, with a number of Senators voicing both their own support, and that expressed in select testimonials submitted to them by their constituents. A Senator mentioned that they had submitted a revised motion to the Secretary General immediately prior to the Senate meeting and asked that it be moved from the floor and considered by Senate on the spot. The Secretary General noted that this would bypass the standard requirement that all motions be reviewed by the Steering Committee, but given the degree of interest and discussion about this item, it was agreed to continue the discussion in the “Other Business” section at the end of the meeting. The Senate Steering Committee report was then approved.
3. This item was then followed with the Chair’s remarks, including the details about university operations in the context of the pandemic, government and community relations, and highlights of kudos.

SECTION II
Proposed Revisions to Calendar of Academic Dates for 2020-2021
This was presented by Senator Gillian Nycum, who explained that the proposed plan had been developed in response to concerns from the McGill community about pandemic-related stress, and that changes being proposed would delay the start of classes in Winter 2021 by three days for all Faculties except for Medicine and Health Sciences and Dentistry. She explained the constraints that had been taken into account when designing the plan, and the adjustments that would be made in order to allow the three extra days to be added while still allowing a full 13-week term. She also explained that the extension of the break only referred to the start of classes and would not apply to staff members. After some further discussion, Senate approved the proposed changes.

Annual Report on the Financial State of the University
This report summarized the fiscal year ending April 20, 2020, and was presented by Senator Yves Beauchamp and Ms Christine Tinmouth, for the information of Senate.

McGill University FY2021 Final Budget
This item was presented by Senator Manfredi for information. This was a revision of the provisional budget that had been approved by the Board of Governors in April, due to pandemic-related uncertainties. Some highlights were that Fall 2020 revenues and expenses had been lower than predicted, that the final budget projected a $13M deficit, that enrolment had generally increased except for decreases in graduate non-thesis programs. In response to questions, he noted that universities in Quebec have thus far experienced a less dramatic financial impact than those in other provinces and in the US. The discussion then moved into a lengthy consideration of concerns about problems with the implementation of Workday, and concluded with a reminder that the University is working hard to resolve any lingering problems.

Budget Planning FY2022 Report I
This report was presented for information, pointing out that the university’s planning is taking into account the considerable uncertainty due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other Business
After the presentation of the Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Physical Development and the Report of the 2020 Joint Board-Senate Meeting, the Senate moved to the Other Business section and resumed the discussion of the proposed S/U motion, focusing not on the merits of the motion itself, but on whether to allow this revised motion to be considered by the Senate at this meeting. A motion to suspend the Senate Rules of Procedure and debate the S/U motion failed, and the motion was referred to the Senate Steering Committee for review, according to standard procedures.

The meeting ended at 5:12 p.m.

- Senate Meeting of 15 December 2020: Senator Laura Nilson

This meeting had two main agenda items:
1. The report of the Senate Steering Committee, who had held a special meeting to review the revised motion about the S/U option. The committee did not accept this motion but offered to consider an even-further revised motion that would take into account further consultation. The Steering Committee then held another special meeting, in which they accepted the revised motion for submission to Senate.
2. The second agenda item was the consideration by Senate of the Motion Regarding Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021. The motion passed.

The meeting ended at 4:27 p.m.

15. **MEMBERS’ QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no members’ questions.

16. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business, Prof. McKenzie moved, seconded by Prof. Lydon, that the meeting be adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

The motion carried.