

**Meeting of Faculty
12 September 2023
Leacock Council Room - L232**

ATTENDANCE: As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book

DOCUMENTS: **S-22-38, S-22-39, S-23-1, S-23-2**

Dean Lennox called the meeting to order at 3 p.m., and welcomed members to the first Faculty of Science meeting of the 2023-2024 academic year.

1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A Memorial Tribute for Professor Emeritus Douglas Grant Stairs will be added to the Agenda as Item #2.

Prof. Perepichka **moved**, seconded by Prof. Halverson, that the amended Agenda be approved.

The motion carried.

2) MEMORIAL TRIBUTE FOR PROFESSOR EMERITUS DOUGLAS GRANT STAIRS

Prof. Sangyong Jeon, Chair of the Department of Physics, read the following:

Douglas Grant Stairs (1933 – 2023)

Professor Douglas Grant Stairs, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Physics, passed away on February 19, 2023, at the age of 89. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Birgit, daughter Ingrid, son John (Lina), and grandchildren Viggo, Kaya, Alexander, Elizabeth, and Axel.

Doug was born in St. Catherines, Ontario and studied at Queen's University, earning a BSc in 1955 and an MSc in 1957, and conducted his PhD work at Harvard University under the supervision of Richard Wilson. Staying on at Harvard as a research associate after his PhD, Doug worked in Frank Pipkin's group at the newly commissioned Cambridge Electron Accelerator (CEA).

Doug returned to Canada in 1964 as an assistant professor at McGill and began building one of the first experimental particle physics groups in Canada which would grow to include 3 more faculty members. Together, they made the group one of the strongest particle physics groups not just in Canada but also in the world. Throughout his illustrious career, Doug participated in a number of major particle physics experiments of his days such as those carried out in the Brookhaven Lab, Fermi Lab, and DESY. Doug was made a full professor at McGill in 1970 and was appointed Macdonald Professor in 1988. After formally retiring in 2001 he continued his association with McGill as an Emeritus Macdonald Professor. Today, the particle physics group at McGill that Doug founded is as strong as ever and continues to carry on the tradition of excellence.

As a scholar and a true gentleman, Doug was valued by his peers for his experience, insights, and judgment. He was soft-spoken yet everyone listened when he spoke. His calm and assuring presence and wisdom made everyone in the Department feel welcomed and it made a great impact on the collegial atmosphere of the Department as well as the direction of the Department. From

1981 to 1991 Doug served as Chair of the Institute of Particle Physics (IPP). With his quiet patrician manner, coupled with an enviable set of diplomatic skills, he enabled the Canadian particle physics community to work together, and served as a 'father confessor' to the first generation of IPP scientists. He also served on advisory committees in Canada (NRC, NSERC, TRIUMF) and abroad (DESY, SSC, SLAC, Cornell) befitting his stature and reputation in the international community.

Doug Stairs was a scholar and a gentleman, and a faithful friend to many of us. He will be missed greatly.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox expressed condolences to the family of Prof. Stairs. He mentioned that he would be presenting a memorial tribute at an upcoming Senate meeting.

3) SEATING OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES S-23-2

Dean Lennox welcomed student representatives to the first Faculty meeting and thanked them for serving on the Faculty of Science meetings. He noted that the Faculty of Science had a long-standing tradition of including student representation at its meetings and mentioned that it was one of the first Faculties in the University to adopt this practice. He said that it is understandable that some students had course conflicts with Faculty of Science Council meetings, however, it was very important to have the students' perspectives. Dean Lennox asked members to introduce themselves, and said the Faculty was looking forward to working together with student representatives.

4) MINUTES OF 23 MAY 2023 S-22-38

Prof. Choksi **moved**, seconded by Prof. Paquette, that the Minutes be approved.

The motion carried.

5) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

6) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

a) Nominating Committee S-23-1

1. Science Nominating Committee (for information):

The Nominating Committee is composed of the Science Senate Representatives, with Professor Anthony Mittermaier serving as the Convenor. Its role involves approving and recommending memberships in Faculty of Science committees, in accordance with the Science Constitution.

2. Science Chairs' Council (for information):

The Science Chairs' Council functions as an advisory committee to the Dean and comprises the following members:

- The Dean
- The Vice-Dean
- The Associate Dean (Academic)
- The Associate Dean (Graduate Education)
- The Associate Dean (Research)

- The Associate Dean (Student Affairs)
- The heads of all units within the Faculty of Science, including the MSE and the Redpath Museum.

Dean Lennox introduced and welcomed three new Chairs:

- Prof. Galen Halverson, Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences
- Prof. Rustum Choksi, Department of Mathematics & Statistics
- Prof. Andreas Zuend, Department of Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences

3. Tenure Committee (for information):

The Tenure Committee consists of Faculty of Science representatives and Senate representatives from various faculties.

4. Committee on Student Standing (for approval):

The Committee on Student Standing (CSS) is responsible for reviewing student appeals.

Student representatives to be announced at a future Faculty meeting.

5. Academic Committee (for approval):

The Academic Committee reviews and approves all academic content taught in the Faculty of Science.

Student representatives to be announced at a future Faculty meeting.

6. Scholarships, Fellowships and Awards Committee (for approval):

The Vice-Dean or Associate Dean (Academic) or Associate Dean (Education) or delegate serves as the Chair of the Committee. The Committee is also made up of department representatives.

7. Leo Yaffe & Principal's Prizes Committee (for approval):

The Leo Yaffe and Principal's Prizes Committee recommends candidates for these awards for excellence in teaching.

Student representatives to be announced at a future Faculty meeting.

8. Science Equity and Climate Committee

The Associate Dean (Graduate Education) or delegate serves on the Committee as Chair. The remaining membership of the Committee includes: one tenure-track faculty member from each unit in the Faculty of Science, representing a related unit-level committee where applicable, two graduate students, and two undergraduate students. Membership shall also include representatives of the Office of Science Education, the Office of Science Outreach, the Science Office for Undergraduate Student Advising, and occasional *ad hoc* members as appropriate.

9. Council of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (for approval):

Representatives of all faculties sit on the Council of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

10. B.A. & Sc. Program Administration Committee (for approval):

The B.A. & Sc. PAC reviews changes to the B.A. & Sc. degree programs. Only the Science membership is subject to approval by the Faculty of Science.

Prof. Roulet **moved**, seconded by Prof. Perepichka, that the above memberships of the Faculty of Science standing committees, be approved.

The motion carried.**b) Scholarships Committee****S-22-39**

Associate Dean (Academic) Hundemer, Chair, Science Scholarships Committee, provided a report on undergraduate scholarships awarded to continuing students based on their 2022-2023 academic year grades.

The Scholarships Report consists of named awards provided by donors and the Dean's contribution to supplement these awards to ensure that all students received comparable recognition. Associate Dean Hundemer thanked the Dean and donors for their significant contributions.

For monetary awards, the SGPA cut-offs were 4.00 for both B.A.&Sc. and B.Sc. students. Notably, this year, the cutoff for the B.Sc. Dean's Honour List (top 10%) was also 4.00 SGPA, while it was 3.94 SGPA for the B.A.&Sc.

Associate Dean Hundemer congratulated all the award-winning and scholarship-winning students, recognizing it as a considerable achievement.

Associate Dean Hundemer thanked Melanie Xu and Josie D'Amico for their diligent work on the Scholarships Report, emphasizing that it was a collaborative effort. He acknowledged that many of the awards were departmental and thanked the departments for their role in selecting deserving recipients. Associate Dean Hundemer also highlighted the consistent outstanding students every year, which posed a challenge in award distribution. Associate Dean Hundemer answered members' questions.

7) DEAN'S BUSINESS**a) Announcements****(i) Kudos**

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox congratulated the following winners for their outstanding accomplishments and achievements.

- Professor Simon Caron-Huot, from the Department of Physics, was elected as a Member of the College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists.
- Professor Matt Dobbs, from the Department of Physics, Professor Galen Halverson, from the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, and Professor Joelle Pineau, from the School of Computer Science, were elected as Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada.
- Professor Claude Crépeau, from the School of Computer Science, received the 2023 Edsger W. Dijkstra Prize in Distributed Computing.
- Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson, from the Department of Biology, received the Equity and Community Building Award.

For more in-depth information about the above awards, please visit [Kudos](#)

(ii) New Appointments and Promotions

Dean Lennox congratulated the following newly appointed Professors and Faculty Lecturers. The Faculty of Science is privileged to attract these outstanding professors.

He then congratulated both the recently tenured Professors for their exceptional contributions and accomplishments.

2023 New Professors			
Golnoosh Farnadi	School of Computer Science	Assistant Professor	01-JUN-2023
Sara Knox	Geography	Assistant Professor	01-JUL-2023
Mohamed Mehdi Dagdoug	Mathematics & Statistics	Assistant Professor	01-AUG-2023
Rees Kassen	Biology and Max Bell School of Public Policy	Full Professor (tenured)	01-AUG-2023
Lucas Caire Da Silva	Chemistry	Assistant Professor	01-AUG-2023
Robert Fajber	Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences	Assistant Professor	01-AUG-2023
Mallik Mahmud	Geography	Assistant Professor	01-AUG-2023
2024 New Professors			
Borke Obada-Obieh	School of Computer Science	Assistant Professor	01-AUG-2024
Paul Masset	Psychology	Assistant Professor	01-JAN-2024

2022-2023 New Faculty Lecturers		
Mona Elsaadawy	School of Computer Science	25-NOV-2022
Isabeau Prémont-Schwarz	School of Computer Science	14-AUG-2023
Kiwon Lee	Mathematics & Statistics	28-AUG-2023

June 1, 2023 Faculty Members Granted Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor	
Jessica Lin	Mathematics & Statistics
Elliot Paquette	Mathematics & Statistics
Anush Tserunyan	Mathematics & Statistics
Patrick Allen	Mathematics & Statistics
Christopher Thibodeaux	Chemistry
Hsin Cynthia Chiang	Physics
Oliver Hardt	Psychology
Carl Falk	Psychology
Grant McKenzie	Geography
Blake Richards	Joint - Neurology & Neurosurgery (MED) and School of Computer Science
Yann le Polain de Waroux	Joint - Institute for the Study of International Development (Arts), and Geography

(iii) Faculty Council Meetings - Future Plans

Dean Lennox highlighted that this September marked a departure from previous years, as there were no foreboding signs in terms of public health measures. He noted the improved state of health in general and the favorable outlook ahead. He emphasized that the Faculty now has the opportunity to redirect its efforts. This includes delivering programs to students, engaging in research with both undergraduate and graduate students, and nurturing the generation of new knowledge.

Dean Lennox also proposed using Faculty Council meetings as a platform for more engagement, particularly among students. The idea of discussing important issues in

Faculty Council meetings was suggested for future consideration, with a focus on encouraging greater attendance and productive discussions.

8) **SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY (SUS) REPORT**

Asma Khamis, President of the Science Undergraduate Society, reported on the activities of the SUS.

Asma Khamis said that both the SUS and departmental activities were already in full swing.

The SUS had its first Executive Council meeting of the semester on 6 September 2023, and the first General Council Meeting was scheduled for 20 September 2023. The SUS Departmental Orientation will take place on 18 September 2023, followed by Equity Training on 2 October 2023. These events were designed to prepare all executives for the upcoming year, providing them with valuable information and resources to excel in their roles.

Over the summer, the President had individual meetings with all the departmental Presidents to discuss their plans and ideas for the year ahead. They also explored ways in which the Faculty and the SUS could provide optimal support to these departments. Many of them had recently organized back-to-school BBQs to enjoy the pleasant weather.

The equity and accountability teams had been busy preparing materials and pipelines to ensure that operations at the SUS remained inclusive and accessible. The SUS had also been maintaining its relationship with the Office of Science Education and other faculty councils, brainstorming collaborative projects for the year ahead.

The Vice-President Internal and their team of Coordinators had successfully organized the Science Orientation Week, also known as Frosh, from 24-28 August 2023. This event had a significant turnout, with around 800 students, 150 leaders, and staff participating in various activities such as the Boat Cruise, Montreal crawl, McGill campus tour, movie night, variety show, and concerts. Currently, the VP Internal was in the process of hiring for the Science Games committee for an event in January 2024, as well as for the Science Internal Committee.

The Vice-President Academic was working in collaboration with the AUS (Arts Undergraduate Society) to plan the annual Graduate School Fair, which was scheduled to be held in person on 6 November 2023. The team was inviting graduate and professional programs from Canada, the US, and internationally, representing various degree pathways. The Academic Portfolio was also setting up a formal Academic Complaints channel and hiring for its different committees. They were actively working with other members of the SUS team to maintain the SUS Syllabus Repository.

The Vice-President External was in the process of gathering the sponsorships committee and planning the student bar, After Hours. The Vice-President Sustainability was in the process of hiring for her committees, while the Vice-President Communications had been managing the organization's social media pages and sending out the first batch of Listservs. The Vice-President Finance was collaborating with the departments to establish their operating budgets and provide guidance on appropriate financial processes for the year. Finally, the SSMU Representatives and Senator were starting to attend meetings with the SSMU (Students' Society of McGill University) and join committees to work on projects for the upcoming year.

Dean Lennox thanked President Khamis for the report and looked forward to continued partnership with the SUS. He was impressed with the effective governance demonstrated by the SUS.

Dean Lennox strongly encouraged every member, especially the department Chairs and Directors, to establish contact with their departmental student club representatives. There should be a representative for each of the 15 departments. These representatives are instrumental in connecting various organizations, clubs, or groups with the SUS, and they have proven to be highly effective.

9) **SCIENCE EQUITY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE**

Dean Lennox reported on behalf of Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson, who was unable to attend the current meeting due to a meeting conflict.

The first Science Equity and Climate Committee meeting will be held on 26 September 2023.

She also reminded members that parental leave funding for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows is available from the Tri-Agency (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC). This funding program provides up to 12 months of parental leave support for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, including those holding their own fellowships, or supported by Tri-Agency research grants from their supervisors.

Dean Lennox said this initiative was originally introduced during the tenure of McGill's former Principal Emerita Suzanne Fortier when she served as the President of NSERC, but regular reminders are provided because it is not clear that students and supervisors are aware of this support.

It is worth noting that such support for parental leave is still relatively uncommon in the Western world of research funding. For further information and details on accessing this support, please feel free to contact Associate Dean Laura Nilson.

10) **PROVOST'S ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM**

There was no report for the current meeting.

11) **THE NEW VIC PROJECT UPDATE**

Dean Lennox provided an update on the New Vic Project, noting its rapid progress despite various challenges reported in the press. Since the injunction was lifted in April 2023, allowing site exploration, regular reports from the Provost have been received.

A detailed agreement exists, involving the Mohawk Mothers, the plaintiffs, and the University, granting a 100-year lease for 15 of the 40 acres on the Royal Victoria Hospital site. Professional archaeologists and community representatives oversee the entire site.

The current phase focuses on building preparation and the demolition of 1950s-era buildings, along with ongoing deconstruction of Heritage Buildings on University Street. This 27-month phase emphasizes recycling materials, with around 70% of removed materials repurposed on-site. There will be no wrecking ball involved; instead, many materials will be reused on-site.

The next task is to reintroduce the project to the broader community, challenging due to court injunctions. A six-year communication plan is in development, ensuring ongoing engagement with students, graduate students, faculty, and staff, as the project

significantly impacts the university community. Dean Lennox, in his role as Academic Design Lead, will continue to provide updates to Faculty Council, a well-informed group over the past four years.

12) **REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS**

a) Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer

Associate Dean Hundemer said that the Academic Committee has not yet convened; it is scheduled to meet on 19 September 2023. He thanked the departments for their assistance and work on placement exams for incoming students. He further mentioned that all grades had been submitted, and all students had been informed about their success or failure in opting out of the courses.

b) Associate Dean (Student Affairs) Anthony Mittermaier

Associate Dean Mittermaier recapped an email that he sent to all professors on 21 August 2023 on academic accommodations, the use of AI in assessments, and support of our TAs and tutors.

Academic Accommodations

Associate Dean Mittermaier emphasized that if a student required accommodations due to barriers interfering with their class participation or assessment access, it was McGill's obligation to provide accommodation where possible. He noted the importance of this obligation under the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and encouraged anyone in such a situation to contact Associate Dean (Student Affairs) for guidance. He also highlighted the collaboration with the McGill office of Student Accessibility and Achievement (SAA <https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/>) for valuable resources and legal obligations awareness.

ChatGPT

Associate Dean Mittermaier addressed the issue related to ChatGPT and other AI resources producing text, specifically regarding academic integrity. He explained that AI-generated work does not qualify as a student's own work, violating the Student Code of Conduct. However, he acknowledged the practical difficulty in detecting AI usage and mentioned OpenAI's recent acknowledgment that AI detectors were unreliable. He emphasized that instructors had a responsibility, especially for un-proctored assessments such as assignments, essays, and online exams, to assess whether ChatGPT could complete a specific assignment. Additionally, he suggested considering proctoring, specifically in-person exams, for critical assessments.

TA Harassment

Associate Dean Mittermaier mentioned that there have been a small number of incidents of lab TAs facing bullying by undergraduate students. He urged members to report such incidents promptly, emphasizing that early intervention could prevent serious disciplinary cases.

In response to a member's question about academic accommodation and the possibility of a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and accommodations workshop for signs and structures, considering the extensive guide available from the SAA office, Associate Dean Mittermaier mentioned that he was not aware of such a workshop but expressed a willingness to investigate the matter further.

c) Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson

Dean Lennox presented a report on behalf of Associate Dean Laura Nilson, who, unfortunately, could not attend the current meeting due to a meeting conflict.

One significant update pertains to GPS (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies), which has introduced functional features to the myThesis platform. These enhancements primarily benefit students working on their thesis submissions. It is advisable for both students and their supervisors to explore these features, particularly in the context of thesis submissions and the completion of the oral defense form for doctoral students. Starting in Summer 2024, students will be able to directly complete the oral defense form within the myThesis platform, streamlining the process considerably.

However, it is crucial to note that this is a relatively new development, and not all the introduced features in these platforms may function flawlessly. She urged everyone not to wait until the last minute to test their functionality. In case any Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) or department Chairs are present at the current meeting, she encouraged them to have individuals check these features to ensure they function smoothly.

d) Associate Dean (Research) John Stix

Associate Dean John Stix, who was unable to attend the current meeting, reported via email to the Secretary of the Faculty that the upcoming Expression of Interest for the next CFI round is due on 1 November 2023.

13) **MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no members' questions.

14) **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, Prof. Roulet **moved**, seconded by Prof. Perepichka, that the meeting be adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

The motion carried.