

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
Meeting of Faculty  
13 April 2021 at 3:00 p.m.  
Held via Zoom Conference Application**

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

**DOCUMENTS:** **S-20-24, S-20-25**

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

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

**The motion carried.**

**2. MINUTES OF 16 MARCH 2021**

**S-20-24**

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

**The motion carried.**

**3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

**4. DEAN'S BUSINESS**

**- Announcements**

**(i) Kudos**

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox congratulated the following professors for their achievements for their work.

**Professor Hanadi Sleiman (Chemistry)** has received the 2021 STAR Award from the Research Corporation for Science Advancement.

**Professor Jennifer Sunday (Biology)** has been named an Early Career Fellow of the Ecological Society of America.

**Professor Bruce Arndtsen (Chemistry)** has been awarded the Canadian Society for Chemistry's Alfred Bader Award

**Professor Xue Liu (Computer Science)** has been named Distinguished Member of the Association for Computing Machinery

For complete award details, please see <https://www.mcgill.ca/science/kudos>

Dean Lennox reminded members to contact Fergus Grieve (Communication Officer for the Faculty of Science), for announcements.

**(ii) COVID-19-Related Update**

As was announced by the provincial government, Dean Lennox said that the government had suspended, effective 8 February 2021, all in-person Tier 2 activities until further notice, but Tier 1 activities remain as scheduled. The University continues to be vigilant by maintaining local measures and controls to keep the McGill community safe and healthy as much as is possible.

**5. REPORT OF COMMITTEE**

**- Academic Committee Meeting**

**S-20-25**

Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer introduced and described the following course and program proposals that were approved at the Academic Committee meeting held on 23 March 2021.

**1) Biology**

Graduate Option Retirements:

- M.Sc. in Biology (Thesis), Bioinformatics Option
- Ph.D. in Biology (Thesis), Bioinformatics Option

**AC-20-66**

**AC-20-67**

Associate Dean Hundemer said that the Bioinformatics Option for the M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Biology (Thesis) was being retired because some courses have not been offered for a number of years.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Ms. Mircescu, that the Bioinformatics Option be retired.

**The motion carried.**

Associate Dean Hundemer reminded members to consider retiring the Bioinformatics Option if it is no longer offered.

**2) Microbiology & Immunology**

New Course:

MIMM 390                      SEA-PHAGES: Phage Discovery  
3 credits

**AC-20-68**

**New Course:**

MIMM 391                      SEA-PHAGES: Genome Annotation  
3 credits

**AC-20-69**

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that MIMM 390 is a wet-laboratory oriented course, and MIMM 391 is a bioinformatics course where students would be using different software. These courses had been taught last year as a MIMM 396 course and the response from students was quite enthusiastic.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Ms. Merritt, that the above courses be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**3) Earth & Planetary Sciences**

**New Course:**

EPSC 525                      Microbiology of Earth System  
3 credits

**AC-20-70**

Associate Dean Hundemer said that EPSC 525, a new Complementary course, serves both as an introductory graduate level course and is also available to students in the following programs: Major in Geology, Honours in Planetary Sciences, Major, and Honours in Earth System Science. The course looks at microbes as organisms within the environment and their interactions with biology chemical cycles across a range of timescales and contexts.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. McKenzie, that the above course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**New Course:**

EPSC 540                      Crustal Rheology  
  3 credits

**AC-20-71**

Associate Dean Hundemer said that EPSC 540 is a new course in crustal rheology for graduate students and senior undergraduate students. The course has previously been taught as a topics course, and was now being presented for adoption as a regular course.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. McKenzie, that the above course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**Course Retirement:**

EPSC 580                      Aqueous Geochemistry  
  3 credits

**AC-20-72**

The above course was being retired due to the retirement of the course instructor, and the Department has no foreseeable plans of filling a position in this area of research.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. McKenzie, that the above course be retired.

**The motion carried.**

**4) Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences/Earth & Planetary Sciences/Geography**

**Program Revisions:**

- Major in Earth System Science
- Honours in Earth System Science

**AC-20-73**

**AC-20-74**

The proposed revisions were mainly housekeeping in nature. Some Complementary courses have been added; some courses have been retired or have not been offered for several years, and several have been added, offering more flexibility.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. McKenzie, that the above changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**5) Computer Science**

**New Course:**

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that COMP 611 will be a course on mathematical thinking in the context of computer science. This course will fill in some of the gaps for students coming from varied backgrounds into the graduate programs, and it had been taught as a 700-level topics course proving to be very popular among students. COMP 611 will not be available to students who have majored in Mathematics or an equivalent subject.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Ms. Mircescu, that the above course be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

## 6. REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS

### a) Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer

Associate Dean Hundemer reminded instructors about some standard precautions concerning the upcoming final examinations session. To alleviate stress for both instructors and students, Associate Dean Hundemer strongly recommended the following:

- Wherever appropriate, have the associate examiner review the exam.
- Prior to the exam, inform students which tools they can and cannot use during the exam. Instructors could use a checklist/cover page (preferably the Faculty of Science exam cover page for Winter 2021) and post it in myCourses.

### b) Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson

Although still early in the graduate admissions period, Associate Dean Nilson reported on the number of applications, offers, and confirmations for the graduate degree programs in the Faculty of Science. These numbers were provided by GPS.

#### **Total doctoral in 2021 versus 2020:**

Applications (1196/1002=194)  
Offers (165/120 = 45)  
Confirmations (95/68=27)

#### **Total MSc in 2021 versus 2020:**

Applications (3190/2405=785)  
Offers (253/170=83)  
Confirmations (125/90=35)

Dean Lennox thanked all the departments, the graduate program directors, who led the recruitment of graduate students, and the graduate program coordinators.

### c) Associate Dean (Research) John Stix

Associate Dean Stix emphasized the importance of reviewing and improving safety measures and procedures in labs and with other McGill community members. Regarding the CFI-11 competition, ideas and proposals are currently in progress. Researchers should begin planning for future CFI competitions for projects that are not yet developed for the current competition.

Other major research funding opportunities that will be launched later this year will be the Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) and the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) competitions. It is essential to start early to plan for these projects because it involves significant work and collaboration.

d) Associate Dean (Student Affairs) Anthony Mittermaier

As a follow-up to Associate Dean Hundemer's exam recommendations above, Associate Dean Mittermaier said that it was reasonably simple to retool questions (in myCourses) that require students to apply the knowledge rather than to give the sort of repeat the facts as presented in the course. Also, he informed members about an online website, Chegg, which allows students to submit questions to cheat on exams. To find information on the students who posted the questions, instructors could search for their exam questions on Chegg. If questions appear, instructors should copy the list of URLs and submit them to Associate Dean Mittermaier.

7. **SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY (SUS) REPORT**

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

Ms. Merritt said as the semester was beginning to wind down, so was the work of the Science Undergraduate Society. Nonetheless, here are some updates since the last Faculty of Science meeting on 16 March 2021.

Regarding the Academic Integrity Campaign, the survey of Science students had over 20 responses, with an overwhelming majority "strongly agreeing" that "academic integrity [was] a greater issue with online courses". The social media campaign, with testimonies and some statistics, will launch later this week to coincide with the start of finals!

Furthermore, to support students during finals, the Mental Health committee will be releasing two cameo videos from celebrities wishing students good luck on their finals. These will be released on Friday, 16 April 2021, on all the social media accounts!

Finally, the newly elected president, **Rohan Bhutkar**, was present at the current meeting he will officially be taking over on 1 May 2021. All other officers of the SUS Executive are as follows:

**Alexandra Mircescu** - VP Academic  
**Sarita Campbell** - VP Internal  
**Lorna Fernandez Ciruela** - VP External  
**Joy Zhang** - VP Communications  
**Nikola Kukolj** - VP Finance  
**Shivali Sood** - VP Sustainability  
**Sophie Luo** - Executive Administrator

Congratulations to them all, and I am confident that the SUS is in great hands next year.

Ms. Merritt thanked everyone for a fantastic virtual year!

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox thanked Ms. Merritt and her colleagues, the SUS Executive. Their contributions have as a group been exceptional and this is known throughout the University.

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

Associate Dean Nilson reported that a new website [www.mcgill.ca/secc](http://www.mcgill.ca/secc) had been created. She thanked Rebecca Maymon, Academic Associate, for pulling together the content, and Fergus Grieve for getting the site up and running. Membership, links to some resources including departmental EDI/Climate committees, and a statement of our goals. This will also be archiving the bi-weekly newsletters. These are created by Rebecca Maymon and are called Just Science. “The Just Science Newsletter is an initiative of McGill’s Science community designed to educate ourselves as we strive to take actions to support Science that is equitable, diverse, inclusive, and just – Just Science”. Each issue contains a great collection of articles on various issues of interest either about different aspects of EDI-related issues, or other topics relevant to climate in Science and in academia in general. This latter point is very relevant to the overall goals of the SECC, which is to support EDI but also more broadly to support a productive climate in which we all work.

## **9. PROVOST’S ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM**

Associate Dean Nilson reported that three departments in the Faculty of Science are in the process of launching a pilot program of full-time summer undergraduate research internships for students from underrepresented groups. In total, the goal is to fund five students.

The Faculty of Science has a small amount of funding from the Provost each year to fund initiatives that support the Provost’s Action Plan against anti-Black racism. The Faculty is using part of the 2020/2021 allocation to provide matching funds for students who self-identify as Black.

Finally, Associate Dean Nilson mentioned that it is important to recognize the need to be cautious when administering awards that are intended to have a defined preference. In this regard, on the administration side, the Faculty is consulting with the Equity Team in the Provost’s Office, to make sure that they are advertised appropriately. The departments have been consulting with Antoine-Samuel Moffett-Alavo, McGill’s Black Student Affairs Liaison.

## **10. THE NEW VIC PROJECT UPDATE**

Dean Lennox gave an update on The New Vic Project. The final meeting of the Design Advisory Team (DAT) was held on 12 April 2021, and the design process was 30% completed. He thanked members of the Faculty of Science who have been working as members of the DAT over the last five months. It is a very complex project and the details are now being worked out. The next stage is bringing it to professional cost estimators, looking at everything in terms of the content. As part of a democratic consultation process, a project of this size must go to public consultations in the communities. However, due to the upcoming provincial election in November 2021, public consultations will be delayed until after the election. Dean Lennox said that the New Vic will be fascinating for students, staff, and faculty members, and he hopes to give a presentation at the Faculty meeting scheduled on 27 May 2021.

## **11. REPORTS ON ACTIONS OF SENATE**

### **- Senate Meeting of 24 March 2021 - Senator Jacques Hurtubise**

The meeting began with the Chair’s welcoming remarks and moving memorials to Professors Mario Onyschuck and Francisco Galiana, by Senators Lennox and Nicell. After the report of Senate Steering, the Minutes, and the Business Arising, the Chair made her remarks.

Beginning with condolences to McGill pandemic victims, she then reviewed very briefly the planning for the Fall, following on the preceding week's Town Hall, which had 2000 people attending. She went on to cover the items pushed by McGill for the Federal budget, including wellbeing of the young, a green economic relaunch, and most particularly a rebuilding of our biomanufacturing capacity. On the provincial side, she noted the establishment of the government academic freedom committee under Alexandre Cloutier. She closed by recalling the events surrounding McGill's official 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Notable amongst the kudos were the congratulations to the McGill community as a whole on the success of the McGill 24 fundraiser, which brought in 3.8M.

There were no questions or motions by members.

Following a short report by the nomination committee, Senate moved on to Annual reports.

The first, by Senator Campbell, was on the University policy against Sexual Violence. She reported on attendance at educational activities, in particular the It Takes All online program, and also on disclosures and reports. The number of reports was roughly constant at about 18 with respect to last year, while the number of disclosures diminished, though not as much as one might expect (from 103 to 83). The reports automatically lead to investigations, and half of these resulted in disciplinary measures.

Senator Labeau then gave a report on Enrolment for the current academic year. The general message of this was steady as she goes, with either stasis or steady progress towards the University's general objectives in enrolment, in spite of the pandemic.

Senator Nalbatonglu then gave the Annual Report from Graduate and Post-doctoral studies. Again, basically good news, given the pandemic. Highlights included new records last year for our thesis programs, but a strong reduction in non-thesis; new heights in applications for the coming year, and a new program that traces "where they are" for our graduate trainees, after they leave. The report received wide praise for its comprehensiveness and is a recommended read.

Senator Rohrbach reported on the actions of the Board to Senate, noting in particular 7 promotions to full professor, including for the Faculty those of Brigitte Vachon, Keshav Dasgupta and Andreas Warburton of the Department of Physics.

The Senate then moved into confidential session to consider awards of the McGill Medal and of Honorary Doctorates.

## 12. **MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no members' questions.

## 13. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business, Prof. McKenzie **moved**, seconded by Prof. Lydon, that the meeting be adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

**The motion carried.**