

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

ATTENDANCE: As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book

DOCUMENTS: **S-20-23**

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

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Prof. Perepichka **moved**, seconded by Prof. Forest, that the Agenda be adopted.

The motion carried.

2. MINUTES OF 23 FEBRUARY 2021

S-20-23

Prof. Roulet **moved**, seconded by Prof. Perepichka, 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

Dean Lennox said he was pleased to announce the following award recipients in the Faculty of Science.

- **Professor Victoria Kaspi** (Physics) has been named a Fellow of the American Astronomical Society for her innovative work in the field of neutron stars and pulsars.
- **Professor Anthony Mittermaier** has been awarded the 2021 CSC Chemical Biology and Medicinal Chemistry Lectureship Award
- **Professor Audrey Moores** (Chemistry) has been awarded the Canadian Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Award for Green Chemistry.
- **Professor Prakash Panangaden** (Computer Science) has been named Fellow of the Association for Computing Machinery.
- **Professor Jeanne Paquette** (Earth Planetary Sciences) has received the 2021 Women in Mining Canada's Rick Hutson Mentorship Award.

The following researchers from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and the School of Computer Science have been named CIFAR AI Chairs:

- **Professor David Rolnick** (Computer Science)
- **Professor Xujie Si** (Computer Science)

- **Professor Adam Oberman** (Mathematics & Statistics)
- **Professor Dzmitry Bahdanau** (Adjunct Professor in Computer Science)

On behalf of the Faculty of Science, Dean Lennox congratulated all these awardees.

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

(ii) COVID-19-Related Updates

Dean Lennox said that the University continues to respond to the provincial government directives to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. The government will be making an announcement, among other things, about extending the curfew by at least one hour in Montréal. The situation in Ontario and Europe is closely watched. Led by Vice-Dean David Stephens and Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer, the course planning process for Fall 2021 is well developed. The course schedule has been submitted to the central Scheduling Office, and the final course schedule is expected to be finalized by mid-May 2021. As was announced by the University, classes with enrolments over 150 are expected to be held remotely, with in-person tutoring and/or laboratories. Dean Lennox said that it was important to inform returning and new students about the course delivery mode for the upcoming Fall 2021 semester.

5. REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS

a) Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer

There was no report for the current meeting.

b) Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson

Associate Dean Nilson reported that McGill's new web-based tool for thesis submission, myThesis, has now been launched. As of today, all Master's students must use the myThesis platform to submit their initial thesis. myThesis will be available for Doctoral students this summer. Details are available from GPS.

c) Associate Dean (Research) John Stix

Associate Dean Stix announced that the CFI-11 competition was underway, and that the Faculty's projects will be developed during the summer 2021. Researchers should begin planning for future CFI competitions for projects that are not yet developed for the current competition. Any questions related to CFI competitions/projects should be directed to Associate Dean (Research).

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

Associate Dean Mittermaier gave a brief update on the allegations of plagiarism or cheating on written assessments that have occurred since Fall 2020. There are over 300 outstanding allegations, and there is a tremendous amount of detailed work on the part of the instructors and the disciplinary officers. He thanked instructors for their work in the analysis process and the departmental and SOUSA advisers. Associate Dean Mittermaier welcomed any ideas or suggestions from members of the Faculty.

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

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

Ms. Merritt said that currently, students were writing mid-term examinations, and the SUS election process was underway until 19 March 2021, which included candidates for the various positions. After the election, there will be transition events and awards night via the Zoom platform.

The Mental Health Committee will be hosting a pie-making tutorial in honour of Pi Day on 14 March 2021. Additionally, there will be a question-and-answer event with the Science Advancement members and B.Sc. graduates.

The SUS will be running an informal student survey on academic integrity for students' feedback.

On behalf of the Faculty, Dean Lennox thanked Ms. Merritt and her colleagues for the excellent and oftentimes incredible work done during this very challenging academic year.

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

Associate Dean Nilson said that the Committee will be promoting an event around a film called "Picture a Scientist." This event is being spearheaded by Rebecca Maymon.

An official selection at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival, *Picture a Scientist* is a film that was created to raise visibility around the critical issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in science and invite viewers into a deeper conversation about how to make science more inclusive. We are advertising this now to bring people's attention to the film because there will be a live on-line event next week (March 24th at 3pm) that will feature an expert panel discussion with scientists from the film.

Information about the film is available at <https://www.pictureascientist.com/>

The film can be viewed for free via the McGill Library at:
<https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/picture-a-scientist?context=channel:academic-video-online>

8. **PROVOST'S ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM**

Associate Dean Nilson reported that the Provost's Office has provided two hiring updates relevant to the Provost's Action Plan Against Anti-Black Racism.

1. The Program Manager to oversee the ABR plan has been appointed and she will begin work on Mar. 23rd within the Equity Team.
2. The search to fill a Black Community Outreach position in Enrollment Services that will support with recruitment efforts focused on Black communities is nearing completion.

9. **THE NEW VIC PROJECT UPDATE**

Dean Lennox gave a brief update on The New Vic Project. He said the design phase was ongoing, and in terms of the budget from the provincial government, a decision has

been postponed to 25 March 2021, initially expected in mid-December 2020. The delay was likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. REPORTS ON ACTIONS OF SENATE

- Senate Meeting of 24 February 2021 - Senator Bettina Kemme

The meeting started with Dean Lennox presenting memorial tributes for Prof. Ryan from the Department of Physics and Prof. Purdy of the Department of Chemistry.

(1) Among the Kudos expressed by Principal Fortier, worth mentioning were the ones mentioned by Dean Lennox at the beginning of this meeting.

For the Faculty of Science are Prof. Kaspi from the Department of Physics being named a Fellow of the American Astronomical Society, Prof. Moores of the Department of Chemistry winning the Green Chemistry award, and CIFAR AI Chairs going to Prof. Rolnick and Si from the School of Computer Science, Prof. Oberman from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and Dr. Bahdanau, Adjunct Professor of the School of Computer Science.

Also, Prof. Panangaden from the School of Computer Science was elected a Fellow of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM).

Other COVID related updates are probably by now known to most of us, such that convocation will be again remotely, and that planning for in-person activities and teaching for Fall is in full progress.

Efforts in terms of sustainability were mentioned as well as fundraising and Black History month. So, it's good to hear that we manage to also look at things beyond the pandemic.

(2) A large part of the meeting was dedicated to discuss student experience in the academic year 2020/21 and how to move forward.

Interesting in the introduction to the topic was that in regard to mental health concern where the biggest need in services was for students that in the past did just fine but now needed more support to develop coping mechanisms in regard to stress and anxiety.

Some things mentioned that went well were:

- * interactive remote learning experiences such as breakout sessions
- * parts of the university worked better together in this online world
- * how student associations worked really well to keep students engaged

Some examples for concerns:

- * workload was too challenging and left to students to balance
- * issues of academic integrity, and the need to design exams in a different way
- * heterogeneity of impact also beyond this year (e.g., for first year student / last year students)

Some recommendations to move forward:

- * better support for professors so that they have more means to provide delivery in this challenging environment
- * re-reconnecting with students to rebuild community - for students and for staff

(3) Next item, in the context of Academic Policy Committee:

Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct have been updated. Nothing that particularly raised my attention.

Furthermore, signing a letter of understanding at the beginning of doctoral studies will now be mandatory.

(4) Next item was the budget update:

Budget on track to have the projected deficit of \$13.1 million for this academic year. Enrollment is mostly green.

The Provost Office is already making predictions for the next academic years considering several scenarios (depending how much life on campus, government funding)

A challenge to mention is that student application behaviour seems to have changed. International students seem to apply for more universities. Thus, expected yield calculations might become imprecise — everything becomes more of a gamble.

(5) A further item was a report of Student Life and Learning Unit:

Obviously, that unit was super-busy this last year. Most mentionable is probably the renaming of the men's varsity teams, the new challenges for Wellness Hub and for Student Housing and Hospitality.

(6) A final item was the report of the Ombudsperson for Students with numbers and statistics.

The meeting ended after 2 hours and 20 minutes.

11. MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD

There were no members' questions.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, Prof. Perepichka **moved**, seconded by Prof. Lydon, that the meeting be adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

The motion carried.