

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
Meeting of Faculty  
Tuesday, 18 October, 2016  
Leacock Council Room - L232**

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

**DOCUMENTS:** S-16-5 to S-16-12

Dean Lennox welcomed members to the second Faculty of Science meeting of the year.

**1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Jasmine Leung **moved**, seconded by Prof. Stephens, that the Agenda be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**2) CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES**

a) Bachelor of Arts and Science

**S-16-5**

b) Bachelor of Science

**S-16-6**

Director Allard said that there 18 candidates for the B.A. & Sc. and 75 for the B.Sc. These numbers were very similar to those of the previous year.

Director Allard **moved**, seconded by Prof. Roulet, that the candidates for the B.A. & Sc. and the B.Sc. be approved for their respective degrees.

**The motion carried.**

c) Diploma in Environment

**S-16-7**

d) Diploma in Meteorology

**S-16-8**

There were no candidates for the Diplomas in Environment and Meteorology.

Director Allard further **moved**, seconded by Peter Barry, that the Dean be given discretionary power to make such changes as would be necessary to prevent injustice.

**The motion carried.**

**3) MINUTES OF 13 SEPTEMBER, 2016**

**S-16-4**

Olivia Ganescu **moved**, seconded by Prof. Gyakum, that the Minutes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**4) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

**5) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

a) Committee on Student Standing

**S-16-9**

Director Allard said there was no report due to a cancellation of the meetings for this committee.

b) Scholarships Committee

**S-16-10**

Associate Dean Nilson said that the Scholarships Committee Report lists the awards given to continuing students based on their grades for the 2015-2016 academic year. The SGPA cut-offs were 3.97 for monetary awards.

Dean Lennox invited Faculty of Science members to the November 3, 2016 reception celebration of student achievement and donor support.

c) Nominating Committee

Dean Lennox said the Nominating Committee was still in the process of filling a vacancy on the Leo Yaffe & Principal's Prizes Committee.

**6) DEAN'S BUSINESS**

a) Announcements

- i. Dean Lennox said the Faculty expected approximately 20 million dollars in government support for the renovation of the Stewart Biology building. Dean Lennox noted this project is moving quite fast given the government's 18-month deadline to spend the funds allocated. He expressed confidence in the departments affected despite the difficulties associated with this timeline.
- ii. Dean Lennox said the Faculty of Science is playing a major role in discussions regarding the Royal Victoria Hospital. He said a design will be presented in December 2017. Dean Lennox said that at this stage the discussions are about how much space particular types of research and teaching need and matching these space needs to the availabilities at the RVH site.
- iii. Dean Lennox noted that on Thursday, October 20, 2016, students will present their research projects at the twelfth annual Faculty of Science Undergraduate Research Conference (URC). A panel of distinguished McGill judges will adjudicate the projects, and certificates and prizes will be awarded. Following the prize ceremony and keynote address, the day will culminate with a reception for the conference presenters and guests. Dean Lennox invited Faculty of Science members take in the students' presentations in the lobby of the Arts Building and to attend the keynote address by McGill alumnus (B.Sc. 1994, Ph.D. 2000) and Senior Vice President of Science and Education at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. Frederic Bertley. His talk is entitled "A Note to Our Future Scientists: Pay Attention to the Importance of Science in a Growing Clueless Society."
- iv. Finally, Dean Lennox encouraged all members to attend the final day of the Lorne Trottier public science symposium series of which the 2016 theme is Science and the Media: The challenge of reporting science responsibly. The two closing keynotes – speaking at the Centre Mont Royal on the evening of October 18<sup>th</sup> – were Joel Achenbach who presentation was entitled "How to Survive the

Age of Bad Information" and Trevor Butterworth speaking on "Facts, fiction, and science: where the lines become blurred."

b) Dean's Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Research List (DMURL)

**S-16-11**

Director Allard said that the DMURL provides recognition for students who have completed at least 9 credits of graded research-based courses in at least two different units, and who have a minimum GPA of 3.00 on these courses. She then shared with the Faculty of Science members the four B.Sc. students who have completed all the requirements for the Dean's Multidisciplinary Undergraduate Research List and said they are expected to graduate at the June 2016 Convocation ceremonies.

c) Enrolment - Associate Dean Tamara Western

**S-16-12**

Associate Dean Western summarized the admissions process. Applicants to McGill are split into different pools: CEGEPs, Ontario high schools, rest-of-Canada high schools, U.S. high schools and overseas high schools. Different pools are assigned different thresholds for admission, to compensate for grading differences, and to generate appropriate percentages for each pool. Thresholds are based on previous years' experiences. Offers to students are made on a continuous basis, earlier offers being made to students with higher grades and to international students, who require more documentation (visas, etc.).

CEGEP students enter U1, other students enter U0.

Freshman students apply to one of two groups:

- Biological, Biomedical and Life Sciences (BBL group)
- Physical, Earth, Math and CS (PEMC group)

U1 Students apply to one of three groups:

- Biological, Biomedical and Life Sciences (BBL group)
- Physical, Earth, Math and CS (PEMC group)
- Neuroscience (NEUR group)

U1 (CEGEP) students are free to change majors within their group or apply for a transfer between groups. Note that it is difficult to transfer into the BBL or NEUR group.

At the end of their freshman year, students can choose a major from within their group or apply to transfer to another group, including the NEUR group.

Associate Dean Western went over the admissions cut-off levels for 2016-2017. Some could be lowered. The B.Sc. and B.A. & Sc. admissions totals were very close to the targets. For the B.Sc., about 29% of students come from CEGEPs, and about 38% from other parts of Canada.

Another statistic tracked is yield — the percentage of offers made that are accepted. For students from CEGEPs, both the total number of applications and the yield have decreased. This has been shared with some other faculties, such as Engineering. There has also been a decrease in yield from US and other Canadian high schools. On the other hand, there has been an increase for students from Ontario and international students. Associate Dean Western said the Faculty is considering how to encourage enrollment from the CEGEPs.

Total registrations for U0, U1, U2, U3 were very close to those of the previous year in the B.Sc. and down slightly in the BA & Sc. Associate Dean Western said the University has decided to stabilize the number of undergraduate students taught and that there is not a drive to increase undergraduate enrollment given that capacity has been reached. Finally, Associate Dean Western said the current U0 load of around one thousand students is at a comfortable level for the Faculty.

Regarding interfaculty transfers, similar numbers of students transferred into the B.Sc. as transferred out. For the B.A. & Sc., there was more movement out than in, largely to the Faculty of Arts and to the B.Sc. in the Faculty of Science.

More students come into the BBL than the PEMC group, although the number in the PEMC group is increasing, currently being at around 36%. Another trend is an increased interest in interdisciplinary programs that span biological and physical science. Associate Dean Western said the Faculty is in the process of creating more of these types of programs and creating an umbrella that aligns these programs with a common interdisciplinary core of courses.

January admissions are only for CEGEP students and the Diploma in Environment.

Several things to consider for the future:

- Try to obtain more CEGEP applicants. Should the cut-off be lowered? Should CEGEP recruitment be increased?
- Promote the PEMC group. Increase recruitment into PEMC? Inform students that medical-school admission from PEMC is possible?
- Work on ensuring a high-quality of international students.

Dean Lennox thanked Associate Dean Western for her informative presentation. He said that it was important to look at trends, and also to make sure to have large numbers of students from Québec. He noted the CEGEP recruitment program in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics. Professor Stephens said professors in this department were working with students from John Abbott College to carry out a research project over one term and said he hoped this program could be expanded to other CEGEPs in the future.

In reply to a member's question, Dean Lennox explained that it is McGill that determines tuition fees for international students in Bachelor of Science degree programs.

In response to a member who asked about the Faculty of Science's application process, Dean Lennox explained that the University's Enrollment Services did not have the resources to facilitate an admission process that reviewed more than an applicant's marks and test scores. However, he said that this is an infrastructure cost which needs to be revisited periodically. Director Allard noted there are currently only about six admissions officers for all undergraduate admissions at McGill. Dean Lennox said funding more of these positions is a worthy philanthropic endeavor that has been considered in the past and ought perhaps to be considered again.

In reply to a member's question regarding scholarships, Dean Lennox said it is donors who most often specify terms of awards they endow and that many include activity-based considerations. Associate Dean Nilson said many awards are administered by the departments, not the Faculty of Science, and that these awards tend to take into account additional criteria beyond a student's grades. Director Allard mentioned there are also scholarships awarded at admission which require additional elements from students such as personal essays and letters of reference.

In response to a member, Associate Dean Western said that the Faculty does not have any information with regards to Concordia University's internal admissions and enrollment data.

In response to an inquiry as to why US applicants are not considered in the same pool as overseas applications, Associate Dean Western said international applicants are considered differently depending on different types of grading and exam scoring from their respective programs such as A-Levels, IB and the French Baccalaureate.

## **7) REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS**

### **a) Associate Dean Laura Nilson - Graduate Education**

Associate Dean Nilson announced a new source of funding for graduate students from the central administration to encourage graduate students to study and conduct research abroad as part of their McGill degree program. She said this was part of funding from the provincial government to support graduate students' mobility. Such travel could be to work in a collaborators' lab or to participate in specialized training or take a specialized course but is not intended for travel to conferences or for travel that represents a direct cost to research because, she said, the goal is to add value to students' graduate degrees. Associate Dean Nilson said the applications go through the departments but are evaluated by a committee of the Faculty of Science and that, for more information, members should talk to their Graduate Program Directors or Graduate Program Coordinators.

Dean Lennox thanked Associate Dean Nilson for her report.

### **b) Associate Dean Doina Precup - Research**

Dean Lennox gave Associate Dean Precup's report in her absence. The updates were as follows: CFI submissions have been successfully submitted, the CIHR deadline has been pushed back by CIHR to October 20 due to technical problems and the NSERC Discovery grants must be submitted to OSR by October 31<sup>st</sup> at 10 am at the latest. Associate Dean Precup promised to send information about the RAC meeting directly to the departmental chairs.

## **8) REPORTS ON ACTIONS OF SENATE**

Senate Meeting of 21 September 2016 – Prof. D. Stephens

The following is a brief summary of the Senate meeting that took place on 21 September 2016.

(The meeting was held in the auditorium of the Redpath Museum due construction taking place in the Leacock Building)

Prior to the main Agenda items, Senator Roulet presented a memorial tribute for Professor Jan Lundgren.

Chair's Remarks: In her remarks, Principal Fortier reported a 2.7% increase in enrollment is being projected for this year (undergraduate and graduate students in all degree-seeking programs). There was a discussion of University rankings (McGill fares adequately, slipping in some, rising in others) – and the scientific validity of rankings was questioned. The Principal then described the Principal's Task Force activities with

respect to the potential use of the Royal Victoria Hospital site: approximately forty expressions of interest were received and fell under the broad categories health sciences, sustainability, and public policy: sustainability and public policy were selected, and the feasibility study for the site development is ongoing. The Principal then reported on government relations; at the federal level, there is a review of fundamental science, and focus on innovation; at the provincial level, there is now being formed a Conseil des universités (and a consultation on University teaching). The Principal then described various ongoing external relations, including McGill's increased involvement in the World Economic Forum meetings. Finally, the successful CFREF application in neuroscience was mentioned as part of the kudos.

Formal questions on course assessment technologies, educational activities and research on climate change followed.

The Annual Report on Research Misconduct was presented.

The Academic Policy Committee Report included the establishment of the McGill Centre for Islam and Science.

A new Assessor under the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law was appointed, and then Associate Provost Campbell presented the annual report on this Policy.

Deputy-Provost Dyens presented the annual report of the Committee on Student Services.

Associate Provost Campbell presented the annual report of the Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity; this led to much discussion on a variety of topics (the language used in relation to indigenous peoples, working group on Family Care, under-representation of visual minorities at McGill, and the hypothetical under-representation of males on campus). This clearly represents an area of concern to the McGill community.

The meeting adjourned at 4.33pm.

9) **MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no members' questions.

10) **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.