

MINUTES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STUDENT RECORDS

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Present: C. Arseneault, C. Dean Barnes, J. Barrett, P. Barry, C. Bethelmy, S. Bezeau, K. D' Alesio, H. Emami, M. Kaldeway, D. Lamfookon, J. Martuccio, K. Massey, M-J. McCulloch, M. Mitchell (Secretary), D. O'Connell, S. Pellecchia, M. Pietraroia, H. Ray, K. Reany, C. Spadafora, A. Walsh (Chair-acting), S. C. Wong, C. Zilberman

Regrets: G. Arsenault, D. Bargenda, P. Bassett, M. Brettler, A. Cerrone-Mancini, N. Czemmell, R. Del Degan, J. DeRose, S. DiLollo, N. Gamal, V. Hansen, T. Harrington-Lau, D. Hay, A. He, K. Huynh, D. Jackson, J. Lee, F. Lees, H. Legrand, R. Lesage, F. Lisi, F. Maniaci, L. Morin, M. Moscato, A. Pacheco, P. Pombo, S. Reali, F. Ship, P. Smith, R. Vadivel, J. Younan, A. Zakka

A. Walsh opened the meeting by informing the committee that, as D. Jackson was unable to attend, she was asked to preside as the Chair.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted with the following additions:

? **Application for Deferred Exams – A. Walsh**

2. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes for the meeting of April 1, 2009 were adopted with the following changes/corrections:

Item 3.3 The sentence: [S. Bezeau] added that the regulations haven't changed (as students have always been informed that newly admitted or satisfactory-standing are only eligible for 17 credits).

Was corrected to read: [S. Bezeau] added that the regulations haven't changed much (as students have always been informed that they are eligible for 17 credits per term, unless their CPGA was over 3.0).

Item 3.3 A grammatical error was corrected in the opening sentence.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Takedown of the Minerva for Faculty and Staff website – S. Duciaume

S. Duciaume began by directing the committee to the IT services website, located at: www.mcgill.ca/it. S. Duciaume then outlined that there was a CIO-mandated project to take down the two Minerva-related sites, with the idea of integrating them into either the IT Knowledge Base or other acceptable locations negotiated with departmental stakeholders. For the student site, the solution was that the webpage information for the student page would be integrated into the Enrolment Services webpages.

The target date for the takedown of the Minerva for Faculty and Staff site would be June 15, 2009. Links to the corresponding Knowledge Base articles that have been created are already on the present webpage. People accessing the site will be redirected to the new locations. Minerva for guests will not be affected.

To log in users could use either the "myMcGill" portal, or the McGill homepage. Regarding access to the student page, S. Duciaume mentioned that an icon can be placed on a department's homepage, if so desired. The disadvantage to that would be that it does not promote awareness of the "myMcGill" portal.

S. Duciaume proceeded to demonstrate the functionality of the IT services website, specifically the FAQ option. It was asked if were possible to utilize a keyword search function. To a certain degree it was, but S. Duciaume

suggested the search abilities and disabilities of the knowledge base possibly be the subject of another presentation. It was also pointed out that the IT knowledge base is only available through the IT site.

A demonstration of the “myMcGill” portal website followed—which is available from any McGill webpage. To access, the user is required to enter their **McGill Username** and **McGill Password**.

S. Duciaume returned to the IT services webpages, while briefly noting that both Finance and HR have their own Knowledge Bases as well. It was also noted that links to IT support are all over the knowledge base.

How to communicate the information? S. Duciaume will send an email with the highlights of the presentation to the committee, there would also be an email sent out to Administrative Assistants for the Departments and Faculties later on. Feedback on the presentation as a whole, and on login options specifically, was encouraged. There will be general IT announcements as well. S. Duciaume did emphasize that although “redirects” will be in place, any employee communications that reference the former sites should be updated.

Any revisions to the content should be first addressed to the Registrar’s Office.

3.2 Fee Information – M-J. McCullogh

M-J. McCullogh began by informing the table that anyone who might have previously had access to e-bills that they are now changed on the system—in that e-bills will only be available on the system for 18 months for students. The IT administrators had voiced some concern over the space e-bills would be taking up on the server. Since going “live” in 2006 e-bills have been able to be imaged to be available to Student Accounts administrators. Images can now be accessed for every e-bill that has ever been produced. Going forward, students now only have e-bills available to them for 18 months. Every month, when the latest e-bills are processed, the last one will drop off. Students will be able to see that an e-bill was generated for a particular date but it won’t be underlined; only e-bill dates that are underlined are available for view. When attempting to view older bills, students will receive a message informing them that the e-bills are not available to view/too old and to contact Student Accounts if retrieval of the information is required. Students will be told that if they wish to save their e-bills for longer than 18 months that they should save them in their own directory.

M-J. McCullogh brought up a second issue, that being a memo sent out on April 7, 2009 from the Deputy Provost and the Assistant Vice Principal (Financial Services) regarding student fees associated with specific courses. (Doc will be disseminated to the committee.) M-J. McCullogh stated that, essentially, it is known that there are many courses that have had fees associated with them and in some cases faculties/departments have had the fees billed centrally. The policy will now be that the fees must be handled centrally. Fees collected by departments/faculties will now be attached to courses and billed centrally. So, students can now pay those fees as part of their regular course fee. This means that it now also has to go through Approval, which means that a central body will have to approve of any fees associated to a course, which in turn means that departments will need to prove that there are deliverables, it will have to be evaluated whether or not it is a government approved fee. M-J. McCullogh continued that the help of student societies might be required to approve certain fees. The example of a fee in Agriculture, that is being proposed right now, for a course in first-aid was given. MCSS would have to be involved in the justification of this expense. This is a required course for the program, and once the course is not an optional one, there a lot of steps to go through. It was believed that this would not be the case for non-credit activities. The good news was that the minute the fee has been assessed (as part of the course registration) the money is available that night. Immediately, the whole fee system will generate the credits to the FAOPALs. Detail codes have been set up that the offsetting entry in the revenue account. M-J. McCullogh added that, at this time of year, money that cannot be seen is likely because it is in “deferred revenue,” which is actually revenue for a future year; it is accessible though the GL ledgers.

A. Walsh added that Enrolment Services needs to look at the way that information can be updated each year. M-J. McCullogh then added that it requires a lot of work to set up and offered the example of it being discovered in one Graduate department, that fees that had been approved had not been collected for 7 terms. It was only discovered when they were looking at the government reporting for fees that should have been there. Another positive is that the fees will be placed in the correct account (whereas in the past, some fees have gotten into a “donation account”—which doesn’t roll up to sales to students and then causes problems from the government reporting perspective).

Regarding Field Study courses: as the fee can vary depending on how many students are registered for the

course, it was asked how much flexibility there will be to adjust fees from year-to-year. M-J. McCullogh believed that adjusting fees from year-to-year was flexible, but any changes in fees need to be brought to the attention of the Fee Policy Group. A form has been developed and is on the Student Accounts website. On the left-hand pane of the homepage, there is a section called "McGill Staff Only" that, if accessed, directs the user to a form whereby changes to fees can be requested. M-J. McCullogh did note that it is a work in progress.

M-J. McCullogh added that, for something like fees for a field trip, the fee can be split into two types of charges: one that a tax receipt can be issued to the student for, and another that isn't. So there is a benefit to the student if a portion of the fee that a tax receipt can be issued for can be identified.

This will be effective for the Fall semester.

3.3 Student Information System – H. Ray

H. Ray offered a quick review of things underway, went into production recently (or are in): the institution of new credit card compliance protocol for the web application and confirmation, which will be extended to Quickstart; take home exams to be reviewed with ES; E-Thesis was worked on to now allow the system to upload copyrighted or co-authored documents; implementation of the web curriculum change requirements for the science major groupings; the automatic notification system, MIR3, is in QA and should be in production in June, 2009; the reports team has been mostly working on admissions reports, but two new reports have been done for the student records system and several more are in the works; the new travel policy, with Phase 1 of the project hoped to be in by September, 2009.

For Phase 1, most of the identification will be based on the course. All the courses that have international components will be identified. It will be based, for the most part, on student registration.

It was then asked if it was planned that this would be a requirement of students going on these activities, to ensure that the coordinator of the program has to make sure the students have registered themselves. It was answered that the department would be able to go in and fill a lot of the information in themselves (such as travel plans, evacuation plans, etcetera).

K. Massey informed the table that the guidelines have already been enacted as a result of the H1N1 flu issue in Mexico—even though the systemization of it isn't in place yet. It was then noted that one of the exercises as part of this project is creating a list of all the courses that have an international activity linked to them.

H. Ray added that, normally, for a Level 1 and Level 2 country, there would be no restrictions. Faculties would discourage activities planned in a Level 3 country, with anyone attempting to travel to such a location having to apply for an exemption. The decisions would rest with the Faculties as well as possibly the Student Life and Learning office. There would also be provisos for specific areas of countries that might be riskier than others.

3.4 Registration Issues – A. Walsh, F. Lees

A. Walsh informed the table that she is to be the contact person regarding Registration Issues, as F. Lees will be on leave for 2 months. She added that the testing of the waitlist changes had been done this week (and the emails that go out to students as they move up the list will now start at the 10th person on the list). The Chair thanked ISR for getting the work done months ahead of schedule.

A. Walsh added that, along with Science, Management had some changes as well that affected program registration. There is a new program that affects the curriculum change form. No timeline for the implementation was available just yet.

3.5 GDEU – A. Walsh

A. Walsh relayed to the table that the reports in preparation for the Winter Term Semester should have been started, but, due to a staffing shortage, were not.

The "runs" would be started shortly, with someone from ES contacting faculties should any errors be spotted.

3.6 Deadline for Exchange and Term away students credit evaluation, MELS funding and holds – A. Walsh

A. Walsh informed the table that there have been discussions regarding moving the deadline earlier. Presently looking into changing the way credits are reported up-front. That is, instead of reporting 0 credits, McGill will report 15 credits. This would be done via new programming. Right now, McGill is billing the appropriate amount, but reporting 0 credits. GDEU amendments might then be needed to be done for any students who do not acquire 15 credits.

Arts and Science had been discussing the idea of putting transfer credit information on the student's record, but that depended on whether or not an interim grade was available. H. Emami noted that an interim grade could be entered, as long as the box for it to show on the transcript was not checked. H. Emami added that there is also the issue of using the Course Approval and Transfer Credit Form on Minerva to record the equivalent information.

The Agenda order was altered slightly, with Item 3.7 to now be tabled after Item 4.

4. New Business

4.1 Convocation Update – H. Emami

H. Emami began by reminding the table that today the names were sent to be included in the Convocation Program. Any person, as of 9:00am today, whose name is flagged to be graduating in winter will not have their name included in the program. The situation for grades being submitted for graduating students is being monitored. A memo had been sent out with a reminder to professors to make sure the submitting of grades for graduating students was a priority. Another reminder email would be sent to students next week with information about Convocation.

H. Emami informed the table that the date for which the online submission of grades would shut down would be May 19th, and mentioned that there was still somewhat of a need for volunteers to help out with Convocation duties.

4.2 Summer Friday Schedule – C. Spadafora

C. Spadafora asked the committee to inform her if/when any offices would be closed on either the Friday or the Monday, as a schedule is compiled and circulated.

4.3 Application for Deferred Exams – A. Walsh

A. Walsh informed the table that a request was being submitted from Arts and Science to allow students to apply for Deferred Exams for Take-Home Exams. Other faculties do not handle this centrally, individual instructors do. An error in implementation has left the application open to all students in faculties that have applied for Deferred Exams. If this turned out to be an issue for an Faculties, the program would be pulled out until it could be fixed.

Item added:

4.4 Update on Research Trainee Registration – A. Walsh

Graduate Studies has had an application in place where students can be registered on Banner as Research Trainees on a non-transcript term. In the midst of implementing the same thing at the Undergraduate level. Meetings have been held with faculty reps. A. Walsh noted that this will not be visible on the transcripts.

Item added:

4.5 Refund Policy - M-J. McCulloch

M. J. McCulloch informed the table that the refund policy would be changing as of June 1, 2009. Will be going live on the website June 1. Students will be encouraged to use "Direct Deposit" refund. As long as the student has direct deposit information on file, the refund will automatically be such. Short statement on website to inform students that that will be the default method if they have Direct Deposit information. There will be a charge (\$5.00 for a refund up to \$100, \$10 for a refund over \$100) for any requests for refunds via cheque, unless the charge is waived (as in the case for a U.S. government loan). Refunds under \$2.00 will not be given, which is in line with University policy on personal reimbursements, as well as government policy on tax refunds.

Item added:

4.6 Upcoming CREPUQ Professional Development workshop – K. Massey

K. Massey informed the table that, unlike what happens in every other region of Canada, CREPUQ (Registrar's Group) does not sponsor, launch or organize a regional conference for professional development. Consequently, to address this need, CREPUQ SCSR is in the initial stages of creating a "workshop day." K. Massey added that H. Emami has agreed to be on the Provincial planning committee for the event. K. Massey also added that a virtue of the event is that it is locally held, so the transportation costs won't be exorbitant,

Item added:

4.7 Integrated Services Project – K. Massey

K. Massey began by highlighting some of the recent activities, specifically: M-J. McCulloch and herself had given a presentation at the "Spotlight on Service." There, feedback had been received regarding points of referral and/or integration between offices. K. Massey asked the table to consider what the specific points of integration between faculty offices and the new "Service Point" might be and then share the findings so they could be preserved (and possibly enhanced) while moving forward with the integration of services. K. Massey added that if there is an important service referral, or point of integration, or point of collaboration, that it is believed may be impacted by the Integrated Services Project, to not too hesitate sharing those thoughts with the Project Manager, Romesh Vadivel.

K. Massey added that it was important to ensure that there was a mechanism in place to properly support any students who might show up at the Service Point area who might require more intensive support.

K. Massey then informed the table that jobs are being posted, business process mapping is underway, training schedules are being developed, professional development is underway. K. Massey added that faculties may be contacted regarding details about particular processes that need to be mapped, as well as documents that need to be written to inform the training. K. Massey stressed that it was important to have the information accurately captured in the knowledge base.

The go-live date for the new Service Point de Service is set for January 1, 2010; with construction starting in September, 2009.

The original Agenda was retuned to:

3.7 SIS Priorities List – A. Walsh, K. Massey

A. Walsh began by directing the committee to a document which had been circulated, which was the proposed replacement for the one traditionally used regarding the projects in place at ISR.

K. Massey directed the table to three handouts that had been distributed (*Project Business Case — Instructions; List of IT items requested by SCSR members — completed in 2008-2009; Status Report SIS Co-ordination Meeting*), specifically Project Business Case — Instructions. The document concerned a new iteration of an IT project business case form that had been circulated in January, 2009. Two versions would be provided: the long version and the short version. The short version would comprise of only three sections (needs, benefits, alternatives). Once submitted, the true scope of the project would be determined along with IT. The goal was to reduce the bureaucracy and paperwork historically involved. K. Massey then drew attention to the prioritization cue—where certain criteria (as outlined in handout) are used to conduct the prioritization exercise. With a larger project there is an IT Resource Allocation Council that exists which rates projects based on the content in the filled in fields. K. Massey added that the larger projects are ranked against all larger projects, and not just the ones that were SIS in nature.

The "*List of IT items requested by SCSR members — completed in 2008-2009*" document was spoken about next. K. Massey acknowledged the frustration felt (by IT as well) over the fact that not every project could be worked on expeditiously.

"*Status Report SIS Co-ordination Meeting*" was referred to next. K. Massey pointed out that it demonstrates where all the work is already in progress, where projects have been approved, where some have been put on hold (item #29 in document), where some have been withdrawn. Regarding the topic of "Batch Registration," A. Walsh added that it would be included as part of the Banner 8 upgrade.

A. Walsh brought up the fact that it was possible that smaller projects might not be locatable on the Status Report. She informed the table that there was "Share Point," which was basically an extensive list of all the various items that are being worked on. The amount of items was estimated to be around 1,000. The proposal was to give SCSR members access to the document, so that it might be more usable.

Clarification was requested regarding who it was who determines the SIS priorities, as the SIS Priorities Committee has evolved into the SIS Coordination Meeting (where the priority is no longer determined but where faculties are just informed of their project's placement on the list). It was further asked if a faculty member was required to sit on that group any longer. K. Massey responded that there were a few groups in existence who try to gain input from different areas of the University. The IT Resource Allocation Group was one example. The SIS Coordination Committee also exists, and it looks at everything that has been submitted—with a level of prioritization then taking place. K. Massey added that overarching everything was the realities of increasingly limited resources and executive priorities—which are important strategically.

Regarding projects that are not deemed top-priority, it was asked if there was the possibility of these lower-priority projects never getting accomplished. It was suggested that, if this were so, faculties be informed that certain projects would never get done. It was also suggested one person be specifically assigned the lower-priority items.

Meeting adjourned by the Chair at 12:10 p.m.