MINUTES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STUDENT RECORDS

Tuesday, June 14, 2016, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Arts Council Room 160, Arts Building

Present: E. Abbandonato, P. Barry, M. Brettler, H. Emami, M. Gabriel, K. Hooton, P. L'Ecuyer, V. Katikaneni, D. Lamfookan, A. Lameiras, F. Lees, I. Lemme, K. Massey, A. Melios, M.J. McCullogh, L. Morin, V. Morelli, S. Pellecchia, C. Spadafora, R. Vadivel, K. Voudouris, A. Walsh (Chair)

Regrets: E. Balut, P. Bassett, T. Beck, E. Branco, G. Campofredano, S. Di Lollo, L. Houghton, J. Lee, J. Martuccio, D. O'Connell, K. Reany, G. Rota, A. Zakka

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1. Adoption of Agenda
The agenda was adopted with the addition of one item:
> Term pick-list on Minerva – S. Pellecchia

2. Approval of the Minutes
The minutes of the May 4, 2016 were adopted without changes.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Fee Information – M.J. McCullogh
M.J. McCullogh reminded everyone that fees are in Banner for 201609 and on the Banner form SFAREGF, they may select "Options – Fee Assessment with Min/Max Applied" to see what a student's fee assessment will be. If there are any detected errors, they should be reported to M.J. McCullogh. Student Accounts is in the midst of testing and just recently revised assessment rules to reflect a reduction in fees made for PGSS as a result of their recent referendum. The societies have been rather late in submitting their information this year. There were also changes made to MBA tuition because the MBA administration decided to stay with last years' tuition fees for their part-time MBA program and the regular 2 year MBA program.

The budget for 2017 by the federal government had indicated that they will no longer be using full-time/part-time months and the education deduction was disappearing. These fields will continue to be recorded on the T22A because they are used to calculate the taxability of awards and scholarships. This decision had an impact on the Destiny1 implementation as they must load information in Banner for activities that are tax receipt-able to ensure that McGill students have a consolidated tax receipt.

M.J. McCullogh explained that the rules on Banner are used to calculate what is considered to be fulltime months based on the number of weeks the student is enrolled in courses and these rules have to continue to be maintained. The government always used these rules to calculate tax eligibility for awards and scholarships. For full-time students, an award scholarship is not taxable, but for part-time students the first $500 is exempt and the remainder is taxable depending on the remainder of part-time months. It is also used by the Quebec government to populate the box A amount which a parent can deduct for full-time term that a student is in school. This is the reason why these fields must continue to be populated.

A. Walsh brought up the issue about students who are doing distance programs or programs that are a mix of on-campus and distance. She explained that they have been struggling with how to record them on the system, how to assess them, and how to report them to the government. If a student is doing a program from outside Quebec, they are not eligible for funding and therefore they would be considered as being in a self-funded program (McGill will not be eligible to collect funding from the government).

Different Scenarios have been presented:

1. African studies programs – our students are mostly in Quebec and doing one term in Africa. The University has decided that for these students, their fee assessment has remained unchanged since `most` of their program has been done in Quebec. We are not funded by the government for students who are visiting or special from outside the province and who do not step foot in Quebec – normally we would charge them a self-funded rate of tuition. However, the University feels that we need those students to complete our registration to make the program viable, therefore we will continue to charge them as if they were within Quebec. She and M.J. McCullogh are following up on those issues.

2. Students registered in a degree program at McGill but taking various terms away out of the province. This causes some grief for SP when there is a renewal of a CAQ or Study Permit required but students feel it is not required because they are studying outside the province for the term in which their permits expired. The terms they are in Quebec need to be identified very clearly however that also raised the question if they should be charged different fees if they are here in person vs when they are studying elsewhere. When they are on campus they can take advantage of the different services offered to them but not when they are away.

There have been discussions about these issues but a clearer policy and procedures need to be implemented in order to determine how to handle these cases.

M.J. McCullogh added that the Middle East Peace program has been resurrected this past year and the Fee Advisory committee decided that those students should continue to be charged the on-campus fees because their degree is from McGill and they have to support the services of their University. She feels it is even more so the case with the African Studies program since students in that program are only away one term out of the entire program. They still have access to a number of services and representation from these services (PGSS).

K. Massey added that although she understands the stand that the University has taken she would like to be involved in these discussions since they involve the possibility of potentially much higher tuition fees for students.

A. Walsh said that the decision about fees is being taken on an ad-hoc basis but it is becoming quite difficult to manage. Privatized programs will not necessarily mean that they will be charging very high tuition fees. For government reporting we will regard them as self-funding so we know that we do not need to collect legal documents from them.

3.2 Student Information System – A. Melios, V. Katikaneni
A. Melios reported that they are working on the following enhancements and supports for the Student module. IT made some enhancements on the Mercury course evaluations as well as VSB upgrade, myFuture upgrade which is expected to be ready in August. They are working on OPUS for Service Point, getting ready for non-credit courses (Destiny One) Phase 1. They are also working on Secure Electronic Documents with H. Emami. IT has started the planning phase for the Milestones Project and they will be using a program called Degree Works by Ellucian for graduate programs. They are in the planning phase of phase 2 of the Banner upgrade. It is primarily an upgrade of Oracle to 12c which will have an impact on the McGill add-ons but there will be a lot of testing. There will also be an upgrade to the integration between myCourses and Banner to a more recent version which should fix the issues with importing grades from myCourses.

A. Walsh added that she is currently testing for the upgrade of Visual Schedule Builder which will provide a nicer interface for students as well as improved functionality. The most important piece of is that there will be better integration with Banner. When students log in, instead of having to look up their courses and put them into VSB, their registered courses would automatically display in VSB. This functionality would allow them to build their schedule around their current courses. The new look will be updated within the next week or so but the integration with Banner will only be updated later this year.

K. Massey stated that she is on a Banner Steering Committee and one of the questions they have been discussing is whether we will move to Banner 9. At this point it is not a guarantee that we will. HR and FIS feel that Banner does not meet there needs and therefore they have gone to tender to purchase a new software which will better suit their needs for R2R (Recruitment to Retirement).

There is an interest in adopting a best in breed approach and using Banner as the core is being considered for the Student module. More discussions are underway. She noted that Banner 9 is upgradeable in a modular basis which means it could be done in pieces as opposed to all at once. As soon as she has more information she will bring it back to SCSR.

P. Barry brought up the issue about the slow response time issues while on Banner and Minerva. A. Walsh reported that she brought up the issue with Karl Jarosiewicz from CCS but he was unaware there were any problems with the web. She put in a ticket with IT on behalf of the faculties and will raise the issues with him again.   H. Emami suggested that whoever has a problem should submit an individual ticket for each problem.

R. Vadivel said that they have been working on the OPUS project where students can order their reduced fare cards on-line which should be in place by August 10.   Students will pay on-line through a payment gateway owned and operated by the ATM. Additionally, students will not have to go have their picture taken at Berri-UQAM metro station. The photo used for their McGill ID card is the one that will be also used for their OPUS card. Photos will not be retaken by Service Point.

3.3 Registration Issues – A. Walsh, F. Lees
A. Walsh said that registration for CEGEP scholarship winners opened on Friday and the rest of the CEGEP students registered as of yesterday. F. Lees stated there was a bit of an issue with a small group of students missing from the specs of the scholarship recipients but otherwise everything went smoothly. The focus will now be on getting the advance standing and U0 students their access for this coming Friday. IT confirmed that there were no load issues with this opening registration but they are considerably smaller groups. R. Vadivel stated that they were not flooded with calls. Faculties agreed that they only got calls from students until about 10 a.m.

K. Massey explained that they will be tracking these registrations closely for the next three weeks. The new student confirmation rate this year is 2-3% higher (overall) than it has been in previous years. There have been many earlier offers of admissions this year. Yield rate (registrations over offers) is the next benchmark that will be used to see whether or not that increase in confirmation translates to an increase in yield and higher enrollment.

3.4 GDEU – I. Lemme
I. Lemme gave an update on statistics about Amendments that were sent to the government in March as follows:

Term	Activity Changes	Program changes	Student changes	Student rejections	EX_TA
201405	1	1	254	13	376
201409	1	3	1166	24	300
201501	0	4	476	30	526
Annual 2014-2015	0	N/A	1	0	N/A

A. Walsh clarified that Activity changes means course changes.

I. Lemme explained that most of the rejections were mobility award related (Barbados, Africa registrations) and there were some incorrect destination codes for exchange and study away. There were a few rejections related to perm code and legal status changes. They experienced technical problems for the amendments regarding the program output file which resulted in Assaad having to sit with IT to resolve the bug in the outputs.

I. Lemme reported on the BI project.   They are presently working on the BI KB and they are testing the BI amendment panel which it is going well so far. The program calendar is pending approval from the Ministry and it cannot be tested until we get the Ministry's approval. BI platform will be going live this Friday, but it will only be in the background which means it will run parallel with our present GDEU submissions process. A. Walsh added that she is very encouraged with all the work that has been done on the BI project. This project will give much more flexibility and functionality for reporting and analysis and more streamlining of other GDEU related processes.

I. Lemme had emailed a template that they would like everyone to use for the post-GDEU requests in order to standardize the process. Any questions or comments about the form should be sent to Ida or Elena Abbandonato.

She reminded everyone that the Audit is around the corner and that they are awaiting the list from the Ministry and requested everyone's continued support during that period. During the audit, the post-GDEU requests will be suspended. She will send out an email reminder to inform everyone as of when that will commence.

3.5 Inter-University Transfers - H. Emami, C. Spadafora
C. Spadafora reported that work on IUTs is complete for winter 2016. If anyone is missing any grades, they should contact her directly. Since the summer term has 3 or 4 different start dates, there is on-going work with approvals and confirmations of registrations. For all the courses that have started, the fee assessments have already been processed and confirmation that they are registered have already begun. She explained that grades for summer have not yet been received. They will submit bi-weekly reports so the faculties can start working on transfer credits. The deadline for summer courses is September 30 regardless which month the summer course begins. The reports will be run weekly in September. They have been approving and moving grades to the host institution for the fall term. Confirmation of registration will only take place after the add/drop deadline as will fee assessment.

3.6 Exchange and Term Away Transfer Credits - H. Emami, C. Spadafora
H. Emami reminded everyone to send their requirements/policies pertaining to online courses. She requested this information in order to prepare a document for ESAAC for a discussion on online course practices. She added that this topic comes up often in terms of the course equivalency system. K. Massey stated that McGill has to examine its practices re online courses as they are becoming outdated with more courses being offered online. H. Emami will send out an email reminder. K. Massey added that faculties should include not only what their official policy is but also what their current practices are if they differ from the policy (i.e. when exceptions are made).

3.7 Student Records – H. Emami, C. Spadafora
H. Emami reported that convocation went very well and she extended her thanks to everyone who was involved and to all who volunteered their time at the ceremonies. She mentioned that extra convocation programs are available and to let her know if any office needs copies, and to send her any feedback about convocation.

H. Emami reminded everyone that the process to run academic standings (for winter term) ran on May 26 so faculties should be reviewing students who are in unsatisfactory standing. S. Pellecchia asked when registration would be dropped for students who are in unsatisfactory standing. H. Emami will look into it and get back to her. Fees are being assessed on July 7 but they are only due at the end of August. This way it gives students more time to plan. A. Walsh suggested that a review of this process be done to establish the best time to de-register students in unsatisfactory standings.

3.8 Internship/Co-Op/Stages/Practicum Changes – A. Walsh
A. Walsh, P. L'Ecuyer and Melissa Paulmier met to discuss this topic. A. Walsh said she has a document with the different types of co-ops which she will circulate to this group and request updates. One of the issues they discussed is the work permit. The rule for work permits is that if the co-op part of the program is a required part of the program, it is mandatory that the student has a work permit (regardless of whether the co-op is full-time or part-time). In the programs where the co-op is optional part of the program, the international student can work in the summer but if it is a mandatory work term they still need a work permit and must be enrolled full time.

P. L'Ecuyer said the reason why her office wants to have a better idea which programs offer these mandatory co-op requirements is because they want to be able to provide better advice to international students. In order for the students to be more pro-active to apply for the necessary government documents prior to their arrival here. She explained that in some cases there could be up to a three-month delay in getting a work permit. A. Walsh added that it is not evident that they require a work permit based on their letter of admission that the co-op is a required part of the program. If we had a list of programs that have mandatory work terms; the student still requires a letter from the University.

R. Vadivel questioned if these work permits would also have to be recorded in Banner and will discuss this off-line with A. Walsh. A. Walsh said that because it is required in cases where students are doing a mandatory co-op term we should consider recording it. For now, we record only the study permit and she asked I. Lemme if the work permit is required for the government audit. I. Lemme explained that so far the government has not requested it, but the auditors may in the future.

4. New Business

4.1 Term pick-list on Minerva – S. Pellecchia
S. Pellecchia requested if it would be possible to shorten the number of (previous) terms from the Minerva pick-list is very long. Can it default to the most recent terms or can it be shortened? The meeting ended before this question could be addressed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.