



# Memorandum

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**TO:** Senate  
**FROM:** Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
**SUBJECT:** Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting: Designing a Campus for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
**DATE:** November 18, 2015  
**DOCUMENT #:** D15-20  
**ACTION REQUIRED:**  INFORMATION  APPROVAL/DECISION

**ISSUE:** Presentation of the report of the joint Board-Senate meeting.

**BACKGROUND & RATIONALE:** Section 6.3.9.1 of the Statutes of McGill University stipulate as follows:  
*The Senate and Board of Governors shall hold an annual joint meeting in the fall term. At this meeting, the Principal, the Provost, the Deputy Provost, and the vice-principals, as appropriate, shall present for discussion matters they consider relevant to the University’s mission for the ensuing year.*

At the joint Executive Committee/Senate Steering Committee meeting of March 26, 2015, the following topic was proposed and agreed upon for the next joint Board-Senate meeting: “Designing a Smart Campus for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. The joint Board-Senate meeting was held on November 3, 2015. The report arising from the joint meeting is attached as Appendix A.

**MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL:** N/A

**PRIOR CONSULTATION:** N/A

**NEXT STEPS:** N/A

**APPENDICES:** Appendix A: Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting of November 3, 2015



### **Report of the Joint Board-Senate Meeting of November 3, 2015**

Prior to the meeting, Senators, members of the Board of Governors and guests had an opportunity to view physical exhibits demonstrating initiatives and activities related to the theme of a “smart campus”, which were organized by several members of the McGill community.

The Chancellor welcomed the 76 Senators, members of the Board of Governors and guests who attended the joint meeting, and introduced the meeting’s topic, “Designing a Smart Campus for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” The Principal also welcomed attendees reminding participants that the annual joint meeting provides an opportunity for Senators and members of the Board of Governors to explore an important matter affecting the University’s mission.

The meeting included three brief presentations touching on the three themes related to the meeting topic.

- Professor Christopher Manfredi, Provost and Vice Principal (Academic), spoke about the smart campus in the context of our physical campus and face-to-face learning.
- Mr. Javeed Singh, a Master's Candidate in the Department of Natural Resource Sciences at the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, spoke about the smart campus in the context of community engagement.
- Professor Gregory Dudek, James McGill Chair and the Director of the McGill School of Computer Science, spoke about the role of technology as it relates to the smart campus.

Following the speaker presentations, Senators and Governors engaged in roundtable discussions on key questions related to the meeting’s theme. The discussions were based on the following set of questions which had been circulated before the meeting:

#### Theme 1: Technology

- How could classroom and out-of-classroom experiences be more closely integrated using technology?
- How could technology be used to increase collaboration and innovation among McGill students?

#### Theme 2: Physical Campus and Face-to-Face Learning

- With learning technologies enabling more “virtual” education, how can we use our space so that the physical campus continues to add value to the student experience?
- What might face-to-face learning (whether professor-to-student or peer-to-peer) look like?
- What changes to physical space might be made to better spark collaboration and innovation?

#### Theme 3: Community Engagement

- How could we use technology or physical space to better exchange knowledge (research, student expertise) with our local, national and global communities?
- How could a smarter campus help students bring ideas with social, economic or cultural impact to the world?
- What role might technology play in helping alumni and community members mentor or guide students?

The questions generated a lively discussion and a number of valuable ideas. The main ideas that emerged from the discussion are included in Appendix 1.

The Principal summarized the main points of the meeting and provided her closing remarks. The Chancellor thanked the all the attendees for participating, the speakers for their important insights and ideas, as well as the Principal, her team and the members of the Secretariat for planning and organizing the event.

### Working Group and Exhibits

Background materials for the meeting were put together by a working group composed of the following members: Professor Suzanne Fortier (Chair), Ms. Susan Aberman, Professors Gregory Dudek, Ollivier Dyens, David Harpp, Daniel Jutras, Christopher Manfredi, William Straw, Stefan Sinclair, Ms. Susan Murley, Mr. Stephen Strople, Professor Laura Winer.

Exhibits for the joint meeting were prepared by students and staff from the following units/faculties:

- Faculty of Engineering
- School of Architecture
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
- Teaching and Learning Services
- McGill Spaces Project
- Campus Space and Planning

Feedback provided from Senators and members of the Board of Governors was generally positive (see Appendix 2) and will be taken into account in planning future joint Board-Senate meetings.

**McGill Joint Board-Senate Meeting - November 3, 2015**  
**Roundtable Discussion – Main Points**

**THEME 1: TECHNOLOGY**

Key ideas regarding the use of technology include the following:

- Creating virtual online groups, communities and labs where students can collaborate with each other, with students from other Universities and around the world (resources from multiple universities may be pooled for such a project);
- Creating an immersive university experience;
- Encouraging productive communication (e.g., text messaging may be used as a means of class participation);
- Building international connections (in order to learn new perspectives, connect with experts in different fields, etc.);
- Designing engaging academic courses (e.g., by using virtual games);
- Supplementing course material using available information (e.g., MOOCs, online videos);
- Professors should be encouraged to learn new practices on how to better engage students and opportunities to gain such skills should be made more accessible;
- A proper balance between face-to-face and technology in courses is required.

**THEME 2: PHYSICAL CAMPUS AND FACE TO FACE LEARNING**

Key ideas regarding face-to-face learning include the following:

- Use of blended and flipped classrooms (this would allow to use class-time to encourage collaboration between students, allow peer-based teaching, switch from passive lectures, and accommodate diverse learning styles);
- Universities should be a place to acquire knowledge rather than information;
- The added-value of face-to-face learning/instruction and the needs of younger/future generations should be studied in order to adapt accordingly;
- Match traditional and newer tools with teaching objectives and accommodate as many learning styles and needs as possible;
- Incorporate flexibility into the classroom. Provide options to accommodate different teaching methods while retaining tools already considered proven teaching tools (ex. blackboard & chalk);
- Importance of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a means to incorporate student autonomy in determining learning preferences (see <https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/policies/universal-design>);
- Desire for active professorial engagement in finding creative solutions around UDL while retaining key academic objectives;
- Role of professor no longer as sole knowledge-holder but a "guide" to make sense of vast amounts of knowledge.

Key ideas regarding our physical space include the following:

- Increase social spaces on campus to promote collaboration, teamwork and interaction;
- Increase dynamic classrooms, i.e. having moveable chairs and tables to allow the room to serve multiple functions (classroom, meetings, group work, etc.);
- Increase the capacity of our physical space by using technology;

- Physical teaching spaces should incorporate principles of Universal Design (UD) and be adaptable to changing & flexible pedagogies (see <https://www.mcgill.ca/osd/policies/universal-design>)

### **THEME 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Key ideas regarding community engagement include the following:

- We need to define “communities” and determine the motivation and objectives for community engagement. We need to determine the needs of the communities;
- Open up McGill to the local and global community:
  - MOOCs, Online Learning, Webinars, Podcasts;
  - Open public lectures, projects, courses or contests;
  - Physical campus.
- Information transfer/overload;
- Supportive Campus Environment;
- Need to make use of our campus space more effectively (e.g. multi-use rooms, mobile/transforming furniture, etc.), build an interdisciplinary space and take advantage of the proximity we already have with our city;
- Faculties can become interactive hubs for social and technical innovations - we see them in the future as vendors of expertise service their purposes to a wider network;
- Integrate more practical learning and internships;
- McGill can become a role model on different levels by creating more partnerships based on trust with our city and government to solve major issues (such as climate change);
- Create virtual exhibits (e.g., digitizing our libraries' resources, virtualizing the Redpath Museum, etc.);
- Have a publically accessible list of initiatives already taken at McGill in this area;
- Bring back to the community: Sharing information, communication and mentoring are all essential elements in this process. We need to engage our members with success stories, learn from their expertise and make these resources available to our community (example of sustainability-related projects). Also part of that is using our social media more effectively.
- Identify ways the communities can reach the McGill community to share information, provide feedback; we can have an “Ask McGill” website that allows members of the local and international community to ask members of the McGill community questions regarding numerous subjects (legal, environmental, financial, etc.);
- Challenges:
  - Resources;
  - Physical and Virtual Infrastructure;
  - Community-building;
  - Cultural mindset shift.

**McGill Joint Board-Senate Meeting - November 3, 2015  
Evaluation**

**Total number of attendees = 76**

**Number of surveys completed = 47**

**1. Please rate the following from 1 to 3 (1 indicating dissatisfaction and 3 indicating satisfaction):**

Location	1=2	2=2	3=43
Time allotted	1= 1	2=11	3=35
Presenters	1= 3	2=11	3=33
Roundtable Discussion Format	1=1	2= 4	3=41 *one blank

**2. I found the meeting topic interesting and stimulating (1 indicating disagreement with the statement and 3 indicating strong agreement):**

1=1    2=9    3=37

**3. I found the discussion informative and engaging (1 indicating disagreement with the statement and 3 indicating strong agreement):**

1= 1    2=11    3=35