



**460<sup>th</sup> REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE TO SENATE**  
**On APC meeting held on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2014**

**I. TO BE APPROVED BY SENATE**

**(A) NEW TEACHING PROGRAMS REQUIRING SENATE APPROVAL** (approvals of new minors and options added to existing programs and major revisions to programs are reported in Section IV.A.1.a. for information) - *none*

**(B) ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ISSUES / POLICIES / GOVERNANCE/AWARDS**

**Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews – Appendix A**

At a meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, APC reviewed the changes made to the Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews, after the Cyclical Unit Review Office conducted a review of its operation, mandated by APC. This led to procedural and operational changes and to the modification of the Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews. These revisions reflect the feedback obtained from past review committees and aim at streamlining and improving the review process.

APC therefore recommends that Senate approve the following resolution:

*Be it resolved that Senate approve the proposed Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews*

**Policy on late withdrawals – Appendix B**

At a meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, APC reviewed the proposal for a Policy on late withdrawals. The current practice in most faculties at McGill is to record a “W” as the final grade if a student is allowed to withdraw late for mental health (and other approved) reasons. The recording of a “W” on an official transcript reportedly causes anxiety and prejudice to students, especially when applying for graduate school or professional programs. The goal of this Policy is to set accurate, fair and compassionate guidelines to address difficult situations students may encounter, such as mental and physical illness and personal tragedies. It stipulates that, in the event of a full term withdrawal warranted by such difficulties (and approved by the Associate Dean or the Director of the program), courses and grades may be removed from the official transcript. They will however stay on the advising transcript in Minerva.

APC therefore recommends that Senate approve the following resolution:

*Be it resolved that Senate approve the proposed Policy on Late Withdrawals*

**(C) CREATION OF NEW UNITS / NAME CHANGES / REPORTING CHANGES**

**Proposed name change for the McGill Centre for the Study of Host Resistance – Appendix C**

At a meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, APC reviewed and approved a proposal to refocus and change the name of the McGill Centre for the Study of Host Resistance to McGill International TB Centre (MITBC), which will bring together researchers with a common interest but different backgrounds and expertise. The MITBC will help foster trans-disciplinary groups and actively promote interdisciplinary research to establish a focal point of global excellence in translational

Tuberculosis (TB) research. This centre will gradually become a major partner in national and international TB control programs, and have better access to international funding that is hard to secure as individual researchers or smaller groups.

APC therefore recommends the following resolution:

*Be it resolved that Senate approve the proposed name change for the McGill Centre for the Study of Host Resistance to McGill International TB Centre (MITBC) and so recommend to the Board of Governors.*

**(D) CHANGES IN DEGREE DESIGNATION - none**

**(E) INTER-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS – none**

**(F) OTHER – none**

**II. TO BE ENDORSED BY SENATE / PRESENTED TO SENATE FOR DISCUSSION – none**

**III. APPROVED BY APC IN THE NAME OF SENATE**

**(A) DEFINITIONS – none**

**(B) STUDENT EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS / CONTRACTS / INTERUNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS**

**a) Faculty-wide partnerships**

**b) Faculty-specific partnerships**

**(C) OTHER - none**

**IV. FOR THE INFORMATION OF SENATE**

**A) ACADEMIC UNIT REVIEWS**

**B) APPROVAL OF COURSES AND TEACHING PROGRAMS**

**1. Programs**

**a) APC approvals (new options/concentrations and major revisions to existing programs)**

**i. Major revisions of existing programs - none**

**b) APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP) approvals (Summary reports: <http://www.mcgill.ca/sctp/documents/>)**

**i. Moderate and minor program revisions**

**Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences**

Approved by SCTP on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014, reported to APC on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014

B.Sc. (Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Applied Ecology (24 cr.)

B.Sc. (Ag.Env.Sc.); Specialization in Soil and Water Resources (24 cr.)

## University Policy on Late Withdrawals November 4, 2014

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### **Mandate:**

The Subcommittee on Student Affairs Policies tasked a working group to reflect on the official transcript implications of late course withdrawal for students who have been granted late withdrawal due to documented, serious mental health issues. The working group was asked to consider making a change to the practice of recording the 'W' on the transcript in these circumstances.

### **Membership:**

Nicole Allard, Director of Advising (SOUSA), Faculty of Science  
 Andre Costopoulos, Dean of Students, Student Life and Learning (and originally Associate Dean of Arts)  
 Heidi Emami, Assistant Registrar, Enrolment Services  
 Kathleen Massey, Registrar and Executive Director, Enrolment Services (Chair)  
 Judy Pharo, Director of Advising, Faculty of Engineering  
 Anna Walsh, Associate Registrar, Enrolment Services

### **Approach:**

The working group met on three occasions to discuss existing practices and the issues that arise with regard to recording a 'W' as the course grade when students withdraw from courses after the last date to add or drop without financial penalty (which typically falls in the third week of the term).

Two surveys were conducted:

1. a Canadian survey of institutional members of the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC), and
2. a survey of the Association of American Universities (AAU) Registrars.

### **Findings:**

The current practice in most faculties at McGill is to record a 'W' as the final grade if students are permitted to withdraw late for mental health (and other compelling and approved) reasons. Some faculties rarely use this approach or use a 'WF' – Withdrawal Failure with no effect on CGPA (e.g. Management and Engineering). The practice of using a 'W' was found to be consistent with the majority of AAU institutions and with many Canadian universities, although the last date to withdraw from a course without academic penalty varied somewhat among universities (many have a later date). Most institutions use just the grade of 'W', but some use variations of 'W' to signal a 'qualification' of the decision to allow a student to withdraw from a course (e.g. 'W Failure', 'W due to hardship', 'W due to illness').

### **Some implications of 'W' on the McGill official transcript:**

The recording of a 'W' on the official transcript reportedly leads to problems for McGill students. Students report that the presence of a 'W' on their transcripts creates a permanent artifact of a very difficult time in their lives and the reminder can also act as a trigger for feelings from that period. Others, including associate deans, report that the 'W' is sometimes treated negatively when students apply for admission to professional and graduate programs or for fellowships. There is no grade point associated with the 'W' on the McGill transcript and its meaning is defined on the key on the reverse of the transcript as 'Withdrew', so it is a unfortunate that some organizations and institutions regard it negatively in this context. It may lead to situations where the students are penalized repeatedly for an earlier, difficult, and yet resolved time in their lives.

# University Policy on Late Withdrawals

## November 4, 2014

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### **Broader mandate proposed:**

Although the mandate of the working group as defined by ESAAC was to consider alternative official transcription practices specifically in reference to students dealing with mental health issues, the members believe that this is rather narrow. There are other compelling circumstances that create the same transcript outcomes ('W') that, in the opinion of members, should be addressed. This document has included those in its deliberations.

### **Principles:**

The members sought to identify new practices that are accurate, fair and take exceptional circumstances into consideration. Further, the working group sees a distinction between the advising transcript on Minerva and the official transcript the University sends to external parties in terms of the recording of late withdrawal decisions. In principle, the policy is to be used to address situations students encounter, including those of a personal physical and mental health nature, family health, and personal tragedy.

With regard to the advising transcript, the working group members recommend that the advising transcript be accurate and thorough, without compromising privacy. The 'W' must be recorded on the advising transcript, with no change to current practices proposed in this regard. It is not advisable to include the reason for the withdrawal on the advising transcript as this is often sensitive and is certainly regarded as private. Given the relatively wide distribution of access to the advising transcript, the reasons and supporting documentation should be kept in a secure repository like a sealed envelope or separate file, accessible only to those who require it for their role.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1) The official transcript should reflect accurate information designed for public consumption. Exceptionally, this record need not be as exhaustive as the advising transcript, as some information is necessary for academic advising purposes, but not for other external third parties such as universities, granting agencies, etc.
- 2) In exceptional cases (those of a physical and mental health nature, family or personal tragedy) where a full term withdrawal is warranted, the courses and grades may be removed from the official transcript, but will appear in detail on the advising transcript (a note will appear on the official transcript, indicating university withdrawal with the date that the student withdrew). It will be the Associate Dean or Director for the program who will make this withdrawal decision. This will only be considered for a withdrawal of all classes in a term (not for select classes or just a few classes). This need not happen for every full term withdrawal – only in the exceptional cases mentioned above. All withdrawals stay on the advising transcript on Minerva while the courses would be removed from the official transcript.

### **Rationale:**

The above, more flexible approach will give advisors and associate deans/directors the tools necessary to provide more options to students and to adjust the student's official transcript to alleviate the anxiety that may arise from the reminder of a difficult time in a student's life. It also ensures that the student record and advising transcript are thorough so that advisors have complete information about the student, necessary when developing effective academic support plans.

## Official and Advising Transcripts - Definitions

The official transcript and the unofficial/advising transcript are documents of a student's entire academic record at the university. They include all attempted work, withdrawn courses (noted with grades of W, WF) and final grades obtained in any and all programs.

The **advising/unofficial transcript** is an internal document available to students and advising staff electronically through the Student Information System. Along with student's entire academic record, it also includes any incomplete grades (e.g. K, L), fine flags and internal notations (e.g. Associate Dean flag). Below is a sample:



# McGill

## Student Advising Transcript - Unofficial

❖ A diamond appears beside a course number to indicate a multi-term course.

\* An asterisk appears next to the credit value of courses not counted in the total credits earned.

Remarks column:

I - Course is included in credits and included in the GPA.

E - Course is excluded from credits and excluded from the GPA.

A - Course is excluded from credits and included in the GPA.

Please click [help](#) for more transcript information.

Student Name: [ ]  
McGill ID:  
Permanent Code: |  
Email Address:  
Advisor(s): Bosch Larose, Marieke

### Student Holds

Hold Type	From Date	To Date	Amount	Reason	Originator	Holds
<a href="#">Associate Dean</a>	Apr 20, 2012	Dec 31, 2099		Extra elective cr. not allowed	Arts and Science	

Subject	Number	Title	Cr. / C.E.U.	Grade	Remarks	Earned	Class Avg.
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### PREVIOUS EDUCATION

US High School

Credits Required for B Science - Liberal - 120 credits

Fall 2008

Bachelor of Science  
Full-time Year 0  
Major Freshman Program

### Credits/Exemptions

From: Advanced Placement Exams - 21 credits

BIOL	111
BIOL	112
ENVR	200
HIST	211
HIST	221
MATH	140
PSYC	100

The advising transcript sample – continued:

CHEM 110	001	General Chemistry 1	4	C+	4	B+
FRSL 211D1	⇨ 002	Oral and Written French 1	3	B	3	
MATH 141	001	Calculus 2	4	C	4	B-
PHYS 101	001	Intro Physics - Mechanics	4	C+	4	B+

TERM	2.36	Advanced Standing & Transfer Credits:	21.00	TERM	Att Cr	Earned Cr	GPA Cr	Points
GPA:				TOTALS:	15.00	15.00	15.00	35.40
CUM	2.36	TOTAL CREDITS:	36.00	CUM TOTALS:	15.00	15.00	15.00	35.40
GPA:								

Standing: Interim Satisfactory

Winter 2009

Bachelor of Science  
Full-time Year 0  
Major Freshman Program


CHEM 120	001	General Chemistry 2	4	B-	4	B
CHEM 212	001	Intro Organic Chemistry 1	4	C+	4	B+
FRSL 211D2	⇨ 002	Oral and Written French 1	3	B	3	B+
HSEL 309	001	Women's Reproductive Health	3	B-	3	B+
PHYS 102	001	Intro Physics-Electromagnetism	4	B-	4	B

TERM	2.66	Advanced Standing & Transfer Credits:	21.00	TERM	Att Cr	Earned Cr	GPA Cr	Points
GPA:				TOTALS:	18.00	18.00	18.00	47.90
CUM	2.52	TOTAL CREDITS:	54.00	CUM TOTALS:	33.00	33.00	33.00	83.30
GPA:								

Standing: Satisfactory

The **official transcript** is issued by Enrolment Services on secure transcript paper or as a secure PDF along with the signature of the University Registrar, and the [transcript key](#). It contains the student's entire academic record with final grades (includes grades of W, WF) and does not display incomplete grades (e.g. K, L), fine flags or internal notations, such as an Associate Dean flag. The official transcript is sent to a third party as authorized by the student, or issued to the student in a sealed envelope.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY TRANSCRIPT OF STUDENT RECORD



**McGill**  
UNIVERSITY

INCLURE / Y COMPUS  
**MACDONALD CAMPUS**  
MONTREAL, CANADA

DATE OF BIRTH /  
DATE DE NAISSANCE: **Aug 13**

STUDENT No /  
No MATRICULE: **260310754**

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STUDENT NAME / NOM DE L'ÉTUDIANT  
**McGill, Rosalie**

REFERENCE /  
RÉFÉRENCE:

DATE ISSUED /  
DATE D'ÉMISSION: **2014/02/14**

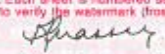
COURSE NUMBER NUMÉRO DE COURS	TITLE TITRE	CR / C.E.U. CR / U.E.C	GRADE NOTE	REMARKS REMARQUES	PAPER OBTENUS	CLASS AVG MOY. DU GROUPE
<b>PREVIOUS EDUCATION</b>						
US High School						
Credits Required for B Science - Liberal - 120 credits						
<b>Fall 2008</b>						
Bachelor of Science						
Full-time						
Major Freshman Program						
<b>Credits/Exemptions</b>						
From: Advanced Placement Exams - 15 credits						
ENVR	200					
HIST	211					
HIST	221					
MATH	140					
PSYC	100					
CHEM	110	General Chemistry 1	4	A-	4	B+
FRSL	211D1 ◊	Oral and Written French 1	3	B+	3	
MATH	141	Calculus 2	4	A-	4	B-
PHYS	101	Intro Physics - Mechanics	4	B+	4	B+
TERM GPA: 3.51		Advanced Standing			Att Cr	Earned Cr
CUM GPA: 3.51		Transfer Credits: 15.00			15.00	15.00
		TOTAL CREDITS: 30.00			GPA Cr	Points
					15.00	52.70
					CUM TOTALS:	CUM TOTALS:
					15.00	15.00
					15.00	52.70
<b>Winter 2009</b>						
Bachelor of Science						
Full-time						
Major Freshman Program						
CHEM	120	General Chemistry 2	4	B-	4	B
CHEM	212	Intro Organic Chemistry 1	4	C+	4	B+
FRSL	211D2 ◊	Oral and Written French 1	3	B+	3	B+
HSEL	309	Women's Reproductive Health	3	A	3	B+
PHYS	102	Intro Physics-Electromagnetism	4	A	4	B
TERM GPA: 3.21		Advanced Standing			Att Cr	Earned Cr
CUM GPA: 3.35		Transfer Credits: 15.00			18.00	18.00
		TOTAL CREDITS: 48.00			GPA Cr	Points
					18.00	57.90
					CUM TOTALS:	CUM TOTALS:
					33.00	33.00
					33.00	110.60
Standing: Satisfactory						
<b>Fall 2009</b>						
Bachelor of Science						
Full-time						
Liberal Program - Core Science Component Physiology						
Minor Concentration Lang et Litt fr-Lang franc						
BIOL	200	Molecular Biology	3	B	3	B-
CHEM	222	Intro Organic Chemistry 2	4	B-	4	C+
FRSL	321D1 ◊	Oral and Written French 2	3	A	3	
PHGY	209	Mammalian Physiology 1	3	B+	3	B
PHGY	212	Introductory Physiology Lab 1	1	B-	1	B+

ENROLMENT SERVICES - TRANSCRIPT OFFICE

**3205712**

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This official transcript is printed on tamper-proof, secure paper. The word 'McGill' appears in white type across the face of the document. Each sheet is numbered sequentially. Hold to the light to verify the watermark (front fence).



Kathleen Massey, University Registrar

THIS TRANSCRIPT IS OFFICIAL ONLY IF IT BEARS THE REGISTRAR'S SIGNATURE