

**Minutes**

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 19-20:09

Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. via the Webex Conferencing Application.

**PRESENT**

Animesh, Animesh	Harpp, David	Riches, Caroline
Bajeux-Besnainou, Isabelle	Hastings, Kenneth	Robaire, Bernard
Bartlett, Joan	Hébert, Terry	Rogers, Dakota
Beauchamp, Yves	Hurtubise, Jacques	Rohrbach, Petra
Bedjanian, Tatiana	Kamen, Amine	Ronholm, Jennifer
Belzile, Bruno	Kemme, Bettina	Salmasi, Kamal
Bernard, Daniel	Komarova, Svetlana	Saumier, Geneviève
Buraga, Bryan	Labeau, Fabrice	Sekhon, Harmehr
Campbell, Angela	Lach, Lucyna	Shrier, Alvin
Cook, Collen	Larson, Erik	Sladek, Robert
Crago, Martha	Leckey, Robert	Sparks, Tabitha
Cumming, Julie	Lennox, Bruce	Starr, Lisa
Dorval Courchesne,	Liboiron-Ladouceur, Odile	Stephens, David
Noémie-Manuelle	Lyons, Christopher	Tessier, Adrienne
Drouin, Susan	Maioni, Antonia	Theodore, David
Dworek, Nikulas	Manfredi, Christopher	Tremblay, Michel
Eidelman, David	McCullogh, Mary Jo	Vallée, Jean-Sébastien
Elbourne, Elizabeth	McKenzie, Jeffrey	Voudouris, Nellie
Elstein, Eleanor	Mecabô, Henrique	Weil, Carola
Emami, Elham	Nalbantoglu, Josephine	Weinstein, Marc
Engle-Warnick, Jim	Nicell, Jim	Wilson, Madeline
Eperjesi, Debbie	Nilson, Laura	Winer, Laura
Fortier, Suzanne	Nycum, Gillian	Yalovsky, Morty
Frona, Michael	Nystrom, Derek	Yau, Peter
Garneau, Jeremy	Quitoriano, Nathaniel	Zabowski, Glenn
Geitmann, Anja	Rassier, Dilon	Zorychta, Edith
Gonnerman, Laura	Raveendra, Keerth	
Hakim, Joseph	Richard, Marc	

**REGRETS:** Louis Arseneault, Bob Babinski, Jacqueline Bede, Avery Bonair-Cyrus, Sebastien Duckett, Gael Eakin, Peter Grütter, Julia Kafato, Chloe Kemeni, André Lametti, Alison Laywine, Rod Louisa, Michael Meighen, Momar Ndao, Ronald Niezen, Ram Panda, Brenda Ravenscroft, Christa Scholtz, Henri Schoucair, Eran Shor, Ada Sinacore, Laurie Snider, Stefano Stifani, Manon Vennat, Tracy Webb, Eric Wilkinson, Lucille Xiang, Mu Rong Yang.

## **1. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair welcomed Senators to the seventh Senate meeting of the 2019-2020 governance year. In light of the evolving situation regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19), the meeting was held virtually via the Webex conferencing application. The Chair highlighted some guidelines for remote participation in order to enhance meeting effectiveness. She then mentioned that the audio portion of the Senate meeting was being livestreamed and the recording would be accessible until the approval of the meeting minutes.

The Chair noted that the Steering Committee met earlier in April to receive/approve items of a routine nature, as per the plan on the conduct of Steering Committee and Senate meetings (Report of the Steering Committee, 19-20:07), and to prepare the agenda for the meeting.

Regarding the COVID-19 crisis, the Chair stated that the priorities are to keep members of the McGill community safe and ensure students complete the semester. She mentioned that the University was following the recommendations of public health authorities, noting that, except for necessary activities, McGill campuses remained closed. She stated that the Spring 2020 in-person Convocation ceremonies would be postponed and a communication would be issued by the University later that week on the alternative celebrations being planned. The Chair then shared that, to date, over \$1 million was raised for the McGill Student Emergency Support Fund, noting that McGill contributed \$350,000 to the fund.

Regarding government relations, the Chair stated that, at the federal level, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry Navdeep Bains met (virtually) with Universities Canada to discuss the key concerns and economic challenges that students and institutions are facing. The Chair mentioned that the University is waiting for confirmation from the granting councils but is expecting that grants would be extended. The Chair then reported that, in light of the COVID-19 crisis, the Quebec Government would be presenting a new budget in June. She mentioned that the University has been working closely with the *Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire* (BCI) to identify the range of issues and challenges facing universities as a result of the pandemic. Finally, the Chair reported that McGill's Government Relations Office has been working with officials at both the federal and provincial levels to seek clarification on immigration issues, notably travel restrictions.

Regarding community relations, the Chair shared that the University's fifth annual day of giving, McGill24, took place on March 11, 2020 and raised \$2,956,106, setting a new record.

The Chair concluded her remarks with the external recognition of members of the community. She announced that Professor Daniel Jutras (Faculty of Law) was appointed as rector of the *Université de Montréal* for a five-year term beginning June 1, 2020. She congratulated Professor Sujata Madan (Desautels Faculty of Management) on being named one of the 2020 3M National Teaching Fellows and Dr. Guy Rouleau (Director, Montreal Neurological Institute and Hospital) on receiving the Canada Gairdner Wightman Award. Finally, she shared that Dr. Vincent Mooser (Faculty of Medicine) was asked to lead the Quebec COVID-Biobank initiative, which is supported by the *Fonds de recherche du Québec* and *Génomique Québec*.

Senator Nystrom asked about the plans for the Fall 2020 semester in light of the COVID-19 crisis and Senate's role in determining academic policy going forward. The Chair mentioned that different scenarios are being explored but no firm decisions have been made as this is an evolving situation. She indicated that planning mainly concerns logistics rather than policy and informed Senators that the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) was organizing town hall meetings focusing on academic planning.

Senator Bernard asked when research activities would resume. The Chair indicated that there would be a progressive ramp-up of activities, but the government has not made any firm announcements with respect to the timeline. Senator Bernard then asked if further information was available with respect to grant extensions, particularly for grants expiring shortly or those that are two or three years into a five-year period. The Chair noted that the question would be referred to Senator Crago for a response.

Senator Wilson asked why the University established new committees and working groups to deal with the crisis instead of utilizing Senate, the Board of Governors and their committees. Senators Wilson and Dworek expressed their disappointment in the lack of student representatives on these new committees. The Chair stated that the Emergency Operations Centre was a working group that already existed and has the required expertise to respond to emergency situations in a disciplined and rapid manner. She explained that the University had two weeks to develop and implement a plan to ensure students were able to complete the term, noting that the work focused on logistics. She then stressed that under normal circumstances, extensive consultations are carried out.

In response to Senator Quitariano's question on the impact of the crisis on the University's finances, Senator Manfredi confirmed that he would be delivering a presentation on McGill's provisional budget to the Board of Governors later that week and that a presentation would be submitted to Senate..

Senator Mecabô asked if the alternative plans for Spring 2020 Convocation included in-person events. The Chair indicated that the ceremonies would be virtual this year but in-person ceremonies could be organized for Spring 2021 as part of the bicentennial celebrations.

## **2. Motions and Reports from Organs of University Government Referred to Senate for Consideration**

### **2.1 Strategic Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Plan 2020-2025 (D19-47)**

Senator Campbell presented this item for Senate's endorsement. The Strategic EDI Plan would guide McGill's steps toward advancing EDI over the coming 5 years, establishing key metrics for success and identifying the sites of accountability for achieving the stated objectives. Senator Campbell provided an overview of the extensive consultations that took place over the past ten months. She highlighted that all union and association groups were invited to provide feedback by mid-March and an extension was granted in light of the COVID-19 situation. She mentioned that once endorsed, the Plan would evolve through its implementation and welcomed further input from members of the McGill community throughout the process

Senator Cumming asked if the feedback provided by the Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (AGSEM) would be incorporated into the Plan. Senator Campbell confirmed that it would be taken into account throughout the implementation process. Senator Cumming then asked about the budget for the Plan. Senator Campbell stated that funding sources included the operating funds of the equity team in the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and grants from various agencies.

Senator Quitoriano asked for clarification regarding the corrective measures that would be implemented to address underrepresentation in the workforce. Senator Campbell stated that this objective referred to correcting processes and protocols at the University and assured Senators that it would not have any adverse consequences on any particular individuals.

Senator Wilson asked for information on the process for drafting the definitions of the terms “equity”, “diversity”, and “inclusion” listed under the section “Conceptual Framework.” Senator Campbell explained that it was a collaborative effort within the equity team, noting that the team drew upon the available equity literature.

Senator Leckey spoke in favour of the Strategic EDI Plan and commended law student Olivia Ma on the report’s cover art. Senator Rohrbach, President of the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT), indicated that the Plan had the endorsement of MAUT.

Senator Dworek asked if the Plan addressed McGill’s investments as certain companies infringe the rights of Indigenous peoples. Senator Campbell indicated that the Plan addressed Indigenous-led and Indigenous-partnered research. She clarified that this document was not a policy but a strategic plan meant to guide decision-making with respect to different areas of university life over the next five years.

Senator Elbourne asked about measures regarding the francophone community. Senator Campbell indicated that, although Quebec native French speakers are not a designated equity group, work is being done to ensure strong representation and measures for inclusion of all underrepresented groups. She noted that Enrolment Services was making strong efforts to connect with francophone CEGEPs in Quebec.

Senator Buraga expressed concern that certain groups would lose agency on initiatives they have been working on, such as the Black Students’ Bill of Rights. Senator Campbell confirmed that the groups would be able to continue with their initiatives, noting that her team would be able to provide support.

The Chair called the question and Senators were asked to vote using the polling feature on the Webex conferencing application. Senator Wilson expressed her disappointment with the closure of debate, noting that there still may be Senators on the speakers’ list. The Chair stated that the discussion was extensive and a decision by Senate and the Board of Governors was required to allow the University to move forward in this important area, noting that this item was being presented for endorsement rather than approval. She stressed that the Strategic EDI Plan was a living document and conversations would continue on this topic over the next five years.

*On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate endorsed and recommended to the Board of Governors for endorsement, the basic principles and broad outline of the Strategic Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Plan with the understanding that all items emanating from this plan that require academic governance oversight be returned to this body for appropriate deliberation and action.*

There being no other business, on a motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting ended at 3:35 p.m.

**END**

The complete documents, including presentations at Senate, are kept as part of the official Senate record.