



Minutes

Wednesday, April 23, 2014 13-14:08

Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on April 23, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. in the Robert Vogel Council Room (Room 232, Leacock Building.)

PRESENT

Aitken, Ellen	Ghoshdastidar, Jim	Lu, Catherine
Algieri, Stefano	Goldstein, Rose	Martone, Lydia
Allison, Paul	Grant, Martin	Masi, Anthony
Bader, Darine	Green, Garth	Michaud, Mark
Beheshti, Jamshid	Grütter , Peter	Mooney, Jonathan
Bell, Graham	Harman, Christopher	Moore, Timothy
Bernard, Daniel	Harpp, David	Nystrom, Derek
Bouchard, Adam	Heath, Nancy	Potter, Judith
Butler, Cameron	Hébert, Terence	Richard, Marc
Cecere, Renzo	Hepburn, Allan	Saroyan, Alenoush
Cooke, Rosemary	Hill, Reghan	Shaughnessy, Honora
Covo, David	Hurtubise, Jacques	Sheridan, Kathleen
Cuello, Claudio	Ismail, Ashraf	Snider, Laurie
Di Grappa, Michael	Jonsson, Wilbur	Stromvik, Martina
Dinel, Haley	Jutras, Daniel	Strople, Stephen <i>(Secretary)</i>
Doucette, Elaine	Kalil, Alex	Thordardottir, Elin
Dudek, Gregory	Kreiwirth, Martin	Todd, Peter
Dumont, Marie-Josée	Kuzaitis, Ruth	White, Lydia
Dyens, Ollivier	Labeau, Fabrice	Wolfson, Christina
Eidelman, David	Lach, Lucyna	Yalovsky, Morty
Engle-Warnick, Jim	Lametti, David	Yue, Stephen
Fortier, Suzanne <i>(Chair)</i>	Lane-Mercier, Gillian	Zhang, Ji
Gehring, Kalle	Larson, Katie	Zorychta, Edith
Gholmieh, Yasmeeen	Lazarus, Darius-Lucian	Zuroff, David
	Lennox, Bruce	

REGRETS: Amine Arezki, Guillaume Blais, Daniel Boyer, Leslie Breitner, Serge Carrier, Stuart Cobbett, Colleen Cook, Andre Costopoulos, Brian Cowan, Helge Dedek, John Di Giulian, Antonia Di Paola, Gwenyth Epstein, Sean Ferguson, Frank Ferrie, Daniel Gagnier, Natalie Hiles, Alvin Kuate Defo, Maya Kucij, Chandra Madramootoo, Christopher Manfredi, Olivier Marcil, Michael Ngadi, Jim Nicell, Andrea Pejovic, Gary Pেকেles, Cynthia Price, Dilson Rassier, Nigel Roulet, Melvin Schloss, Joey Shea, Ada Sinacore, Arnold Steinberg, Claire Stewart-Kanigan, Farzan Subhani, Marc Weinstein.

The Chair began by welcoming everyone to the Senate meeting. She mentioned that in accordance with the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Livestreaming of Senate Meetings, this meeting would be livestreamed and a recording would be posted to the Senate website until May 14, 2014 when the meeting minutes will be approved. Given that exam period was ending this month, and that many students would be leaving campus for the summer, the Chair thanked the 20 student Senators for their engagement and dedication over the course of the governance year, despite their busy schedules.

SECTION I

1. Report of the Steering Committee (13:14-08)

Senate received the Report of the Steering Committee (13-14:08).

Item 1. Approval of Minutes of Senate – March 19, 2014.

Item 2. Speaking rights. Upon approval of the report, speaking rights were granted to Dr. Laura Winer (Interim Director, Teaching and Learning Services) for item IIB4 (455th Report of the Academic Policy Committee); and Mr. Martin Kraymer von Krauss (Manager, Office of Sustainability) for item IIB6 (Vision 2020: A Sustainability Strategy for McGill University).

Item 3. Approval of the Agenda

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the Steering Report.

2. Chair's Remarks

The Chair began by calling for a moment of silence to commemorate the five University of Calgary students who were stabbed to death during an end of class celebration.

Regarding government relations, the Chair noted that the results of the April 7 provincial election resulted in a majority Liberal government, which will provide political stability for the next few years. She cautioned, however, that government funding remains uncertain in the wake of the election and the province's finances remain limited. She observed that many Liberal members elected to the National Assembly have a sound understanding of universities, including the Premier, Philippe Couillard, who was a McGill Senior Fellow in health law from 2009 to 2012; the Cabinet was to be announced during the afternoon. She then shared that Yves Bolduc had been appointed as *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport et Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur*. She concluded this portion of her remarks by noting that it is unknown what will become of the four *chantiers* established by the previous government and how the Charter of Values will be dealt with.

The Chair also discussed a meeting of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) which she attended on April 8 and 9. She explained that the conference's theme was "The New West, the New Canada" and a key topic was aboriginal education. Other topics discussed included university-college partnerships, international and interprovincial student mobility and the role of universities in preparing students for Canada's changing economy.

In her kudos, the Chair noted that eight McGill researchers have been awarded Canada Research Chairs (CRC), while another four CRCs were renewed. She subsequently mentioned that on April 10 Principal Emerita Heather Munroe-Blum received the Public Policy Forum Award for her work in fostering greater cooperation between the public and private sectors to improve the quality of government in Canada; two McGill alumni, Sheila Fraser and Erin Freeland Ballantyne, were also honoured. The Chair also acknowledged the seventeen recipients of the Scarlet Key, including Senators Shea and Shaughnessy, who were inducted into the Society for their demonstrated leadership and outstanding extracurricular contributions to the McGill community.

She also congratulated McGill's athletes who are not only talented in their respective sports, but who also maintain high grade point averages; noting that 25% or more of McGill's student athletes maintain a 3.5 GPA or higher each year. The Chair concluded her remarks by calling on the Provost to provide an update on actions taken since the "Breaking Down Silos" open discussion, which Senate held in February 2014.

The Provost explained that further to Senate's suggestions expressed in the open discussion, the proposed 2014-15 University budget includes funds earmarked for creating interdisciplinary spaces. For example, he mentioned that if McGill acquired the site of the Royal Victoria Hospital, the University intends for part of the space to be used for interdisciplinary purposes. Similarly, a feasibility study is being conducted to construct a new building on the Macdonald Campus; the building would house multiple disciplines and include interdisciplinary spaces. Regarding student advising, the Provost noted that Deputy-Provost, Senator Dyens, has been working with relevant units to increase student advising. He also mentioned that the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Senator Kreiswirth, has been tasked with expanding interdisciplinary graduate programs, while the creation of other interdisciplinary programs are being considered. The Provost concluded by explaining that he and the Deans are working to hire professors who work in common research areas. A feasibility study is being undertaken to reorganize library spaces to increase shared discipline spaces.

SECTION II

Part "A" – Questions and Motions by Members

1. Question Regarding Research Ethics and Partnerships Policy Development (Senators Stewart-Kanigan and Butler)

Senators Stewart-Kanigan and Butler submitted the following question:

Whereas, at the Principal's Address on March 28th, 2014, in response to a question regarding research ethics, Principal Fortier stated that "it is important for us to look at [research] partnerships and see and assess for ourselves if indeed they meet our principles and our values ... One of the things that we have already started is to design a process that will allow us to ask questions before doing the final signature on the contract regarding ... the ethical question and make sure that with the collaborations we participate in, we know that we are meeting our own values and principles... I know that the team in Research [Office of the

Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations)] is already working on designing that process;”

Whereas, it is unclear what research ethics policy development process was being referenced, and upon contacting the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations), further information was not made available;

What is the research ethics policy development process referred to in the above statement, and under whom is it being conducted?

What is the timeline for its completion?

What channels are available for students to become involved in contributing to the development of said policy?

Senator Goldstein provided the following response:

Thank you, Senators, for these questions.

At the Principal’s Address on March 28, 2014, Professor Fortier stated, “one of the things we’ve already started is a process that will allow us to ask questions before the final signature on the contract regarding ethical questions, and make sure that the collaborations we participate in...[that] we are meeting our own values and principles. This is something that will happen and I know the team in Research is already designing this process.”

I would like to take this opportunity to outline the actions the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations) is taking to review McGill’s policies regarding the conduct of research, with the aim of ensuring they are of the highest quality and reflect our own values and principles. I would also like to share the timeline for this work and to discuss how students and the University community can contribute to this process.

It bears repeating at the outset that McGill is involved in research with many partners, including governmental, community, non-profit, and industrial partners, and that our researchers conduct their work with integrity and adhere to the highest ethical standards.

As per the University’s *Regulation on the Conduct of Research*, McGill researchers acknowledge that with academic freedom comes the responsibility to ensure that all research and scholarship:

- Is informed by the principles of honesty, integrity, trust, accountability and collegiality;
- Meets high scientific and ethical standards;
- Is conducted with honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, and accountability for the use of professional standards; and
- Seeks to increase knowledge in ways that do not harm but which benefit society.

I believe that a statement regarding McGill's values and principles would be an important addition to the *Regulation on the Conduct of Research*. Moreover, it should be aligned with McGill's *Strategic Research Plan*, which includes five "Core Commitments" to research that supports: Ideas, Innovation, Sustainability, Collaboration and Partnership, and Social Engagement.

The *Regulation on the Conduct of Research* is set to receive its triennial review in 2014 under the leadership of the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations). Among the objectives is to update the *Regulation* according to the highest international standards. Ethical values in partnership-driven research will be specifically addressed in the revised *Regulation*. It will propose language, if necessary, that will both provide clear guidelines for McGill researchers and students who wish to collaborate with external partners while maintaining our commitment to our values and principles and academic freedom.

The first step of the review will be to identify individuals from the McGill community to participate in a working group. This group will include faculty members, students, and staff with interests in this area. As per the current regulations three members of the working group will be appointed by the Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations), the Provost, and the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; three members of the academic staff will be nominated by the Senate Nominating Committee; and two students will be nominated by the PGSS and SSMU.

McGill's leading ethicists will be specifically targeted for membership on the working group. Moreover, the review process includes consultation with the wider McGill community. We anticipate the review process to take approximately one year. I will report back to Senate on the progress and recommendations from the working group at the end of the 2015 academic year.

Senator Butler asked a supplementary question concerning which projects will fall under the scope of a new research ethics policy. Senator Goldstein replied that a process for reviewing projects will be developed and that new research projects, or project renewals, would be subject to review. Senator Butler also asked whether students would be included in the process and how the University intends to maintain confidentiality in the review process. Senator Goldstein reassured Senators that students will be included in the policy development and review processes, and that issues surrounding confidentiality will be examined by the working group established to develop the policy. Senator Mooney suggested that the University establish clear guidelines for entering into private partnerships and that it clarify that graduate students involved in the research process are primarily engaged in research and are not simply providing labour.

Part "B" – Motions and Reports from Organs of University Government

Open Session

1. McGill University Staffing Report

(D13-56)

The Chair called on Senators Masi and Di Grappa to present this item for information. Senator Masi highlighted that sabbatic leaves represent a significant portion of the academic staff count;

he added, however, that in 2013 the number of other leaves had declined. The Provost noted that in 2013 the tenure-track academic staff count increased by 0.6% although there was a slight decrease in the number of tenure-track librarians. He indicated that he and the Trenholme Dean of Libraries are working to determine the reason for this anomaly. The Provost reiterated that academic renewal remains a priority for McGill University.

Regarding the employment of administrative and support staff, Senator Di Grappa indicated that as a result of the implementation of Bill 100-related policies, including Workforce Planning, the administrative and support staff count rose by 0.2% in 2013. He explained that next year's report will show a marked decrease in the number of administrative and support staff as a result of last year's voluntary retirement program. Senator Di Grappa clarified that the ratio of administrative and support staff to professor has decreased slightly to 1.95, whereas in the past, this ratio remained relatively constant at approximately 2.0. It is expected that this number will decrease further given staff departures and because few of those who retired will be replaced. Nonetheless, staff redeployments are occurring as needed.

Senator Saroyan asked why it appears as though professional and deregulated programs have relatively more administrative and support staff and asked if academics seconded to administrative positions were included in the total count. Senator Masi replied that administrative and support staff counts vary by Faculty because Faculties have different support staff requirements; for example, Faculties with laboratories require staff to run and maintain them. The Provost clarified that academics seconded to administrative positions are counted amongst the tenure-track staff only when they return to their academic duties; however, Deans are counted as tenure-track faculty members because they often teach.

Senator Saroyan also asked whether stipends are included in the proposed budget's salary envelope. The Provost responded that they are.

2. McGill University Budget 2014-2015

(D13-57)

The Provost presented the 2014-2015 budget to Senate for information. He began by explaining that the Finance Committee of the Board of Governors had met in the morning to consider the budget, which will be sent to the Board of Governors for approval on April 29. Providing a detailed overview of the budget, Senator Masi reiterated that exact funding levels remain unknown for multiple reasons including uncertainty of provincial funding in the wake of the recent provincial election. He noted that enrolment levels and course selection also determine base government funding. He highlighted that the reinvestment in the university system, promised by the previous government, has not been confirmed. No allocation of budget amounts to reflect the proposed reinvestment for FY2015 has been made to the responsible ministry and the amount in question for McGill is approximately \$24M. The Provost informed Senate that the proposed budget includes some contingencies in the event that certain funding for the coming fiscal year from the Quebec government does not materialize.

Given expected funding levels, the proposed budget projects revenues of \$768.8M and expenditures of \$775.8M, resulting in a planned deficit of \$7M. This could be higher should revenues be lower than expected. Senator Masi reiterated that academic renewal remains a priority for the University. In the past few years, the University's compensation of academic staff

has fallen to the bottom of sister universities in the U15. To retain and attract talented academic staff members, the proposed budget includes academic staff salary increases over the next three years, beginning with a 5.2% increase in FY2015, which will help McGill reach the average academic staff salary in the U15. Senator Masi concluded by reassuring Senators that the budget aims to sustain the University's quality, advance its priorities and enhance its research quality.

Senator Mooney cautioned that universities sometimes pursue research prestige to the detriment of teaching. The Provost replied that McGill rewards teaching, research and service to the community and aims to recruit strong researchers and teachers. Senator Dudek added that McGill pursues excellence rather than prestige and that great researchers often are excellent teachers.

Senator Bernard asked what new sources of revenue the University is pursuing beyond the provincial government and whether the University is considering selling or renting its properties. Senator Masi indicated that reliance on the provincial government is decreasing, particularly for deregulated programs. Regarding the University's properties, Senator Di Grappa indicated that the University is examining the possibility of disposing of properties which are peripheral to campus, and all options are being assessed.

Senator Lu asked whether the proportion of administrative to academic staff was high, if the University is working to streamline administrative processes, and inquired how funds are allocated to special projects. Regarding salaries, Senator Masi replied that sister universities expend similar resources on administrative and academic staff salaries. Concerning streamlining administrative processes, Senator Masi explained that the University is working to do so. He further elaborated that the last year's voluntary retirement program has challenged the University to think about the activities it undertakes and how to best execute them; this has resulted in staff redeployments and streamlined processes. Senator Masi noted that some administrative processes are required for government reporting purposes. Regarding special projects, the Provost mentioned that a committee, including associate Deans, was established to consider such projects. Senator Lu suggested that such funding allocations could be subject to participatory budgeting whereby Senators could provide input on which projects receive funding.

Senator Bouchard asked under which budget expenditure portfolio the acquisition of the Royal Victoria Hospital would fall. The Chair explained that at the moment, the provincial government owns the property and that McGill would only agree to acquire it if were provided at no cost and if the province provides sufficient funding to support the necessary renovations to adapt it to the University's needs.

Senator Grütter asked how the University plans to recruit more graduate students. Senator Masi replied that there is room for growth in graduate students by recruiting more doctoral students and through the establishment of professional master's degree programs.

3. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Enhancement of Senate Meetings (D13-58)

The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Enhancement of Senate Meetings, Senator Wolfson, presented this report for Senate's approval. She reiterated the Committee's recommendations including that changes to the format of Senate meetings, implemented since Fall 2013, continue; that a review of the terms of reference of the Academic Policy and Steering Committees be

undertaken; that Senate orientation sessions cover additional topics; and that the location of Senate meetings be moved to the Moot Court (Chancellor Day Hall) (a pilot is set for the May Senate meeting).

Senator Richard asked whether the Moot Court has a microphone system and sufficient desk space to accommodate laptops. The Secretary-General indicated that it has desk space and that microphones will be set up for the meeting.

Senator White cautioned that were Senate to reassume some responsibilities currently delegated to the Academic Policy Committee, this could slow down decision-making.

The Chair indicated that upon approval the report, the Committee's recommendations would be implemented to the fullest extent possible. In the event that it is not possible to fully implement a given recommendation, Senate would be informed and would discuss the issue.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Enhancement of Senate Meetings and the implementation of the recommendations contained therein.

4. 455th Report of the Academic Policy Committee

(D13-59)

The Provost presented this report for Senate's approval. He noted that the following items required Senate's approval: the creation of a *Certificat D'Études Supérieures* (Graduate Certificate), *Enseignement Immersif*; revisions to the Course Evaluation Policy; and the creation of a Professional Development Certificate.

Some Senators expressed concern over allowing students to fill out course evaluation forms after the results of final exams are distributed. Senator Zorychta asked what studies had been undertaken to support this change and whether units can opt out of this revised deadline. Dr. Laura Winer, the Interim Director of Teaching and Learning Services, explained that pilot projects showed that course evaluation results are not different when students are permitted to complete them after the results of final exams are distributed. She added that departments can choose to opt out of this deadline. Senator Cooke inquired whether departments must opt out each year. Dr. Winer replied that once departments opt out, this continues unless and until they opt back in. Senator Harpp asked which Faculties had been piloted. Dr. Winer replied that the Faculties of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Religious Studies and Education were included in the pilot project.

Senator Sheridan explained that students support the new deadline as it allows more time to complete the evaluation, and students can provide feedback when final exams do not match the material taught. Senator Nystrom indicated, however, that many students choose not to complete course evaluations, and asked Senate to consider how to improve completion rates. He noted that at other universities, students are unable to access their grades unless they complete their course evaluations. Senator Bernard supported Senator Nystrom's suggestion. Senator Sheridan suggested that tenure-track professors explain to their students that completing course evaluations is beneficial to their tenure assessment. Dr. Winer indicated that McGill chose not to compel students to complete course evaluations, opting instead to encourage students to do so.

The Provost concluded the presentation of this item by explaining that the Academic Policy Committee had further examined the potential existence of gender grading bias at McGill and determined that there is no evidence of its existence at McGill in the past five years. He elaborated that between 2009 and 2013, female students had a higher average cumulative GPA, and formed a larger proportion of the students on the Dean's Honour List, than their male counterparts (data provided in Appendix A of the meeting minutes).

Senator Harpp noted that Appendix E of the Report outlines the guidelines for the Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching. He proposed a friendly amendment to revise the wording of the first sentence to make a stronger link between great teaching and enhancing research.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the creation of the Certificat D'Études Supérieures, Enseignement Immersif.

Senate also approved the proposed revisions to the Course Evaluation Policy.

Senate further approved the creation of a Professional Development Certificate to be offered by the School of Continuing Studies, and other Faculties who comply with the certificate's criteria.

Senate also approved a revision to the first sentence of the Guidelines for the Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching to make a stronger link between great teaching and the enhancement of research.

5. Report of the Senate Nominating Committee

(D13-60)

The Chair introduced the first item of this report, which concerned recommendations for appointments to an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Provost. Senators Masi, Eidelman and Lennox left the room for this item.

After preliminary discussion of the recommendation, Senate voted to consider this item in closed session at the end of the meeting.

The Provost presented the remainder of the report which contained recommendations to fill vacancies on an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Dean of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the Academic Policy Committee and various Committees Arising from the University Regulations.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, the Senate approved the recommendations contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D13-60) to appoint representatives of Senate and alternate representatives to an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Dean of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Senate agreed to consider the recommended appointments to an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Provost in closed session at the end of the meeting.

Senate also approved the recommendations contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D13-60) to fill vacancies on the Academic Policy Committee and various Committees Arising from the University Regulations.

6. Vision 2020: A Sustainability Strategy for McGill University (D13-61)

Senator Di Grappa introduced this item for Senate's information and called on Senator Lennox, Chair of the Vision 2020 Steering Committee and Mr. Martin Kraye von Krauss, the Manager of the Office of Sustainability, to provide further details on the initiative.

Mr. von Krauss provided an overview of the history of the sustainability process at McGill and discussed some of Vision 2020's priorities, while outlining the plan's strategy. He elaborated that the initiative contains 23 goals and 14 actions, which have been endorsed by the University's administration; these are divided into actions which describe concrete projects for the next two years. Actions include activities such as defining "sustainability research," identifying and facilitating opportunities for applied student research that advances sustainability, Renovate underused indoor and outdoor spaces on campus to transform them into community gathering spaces, adopting green building standards, developing waste action and energy action plans.

Senators discussed the details of the initiative and asked questions about particular priorities and activities. Senator Mooney asked what the consequences would be if actions are not implemented and who would provide support for achieving goals. Mr. von Krauss replied that no consequences have been established and that members of the community would work with the Office of Sustainability to provide support for achieving goals; he added that many actions build on current initiatives which include multiple stakeholders.

Senator Harpp suggested that the McGill homepage should include a graph or other visual representation outlining the progress made towards achieving zero waste on campus.

Senator Butler asked why the strategy did not include equity-related priorities/actions. Mr. von Krauss explained that it was agreed that the initial plan should focus on actions which are readily associated with sustainability; though, the Office of Sustainability will continue to work with the Social Equity and Diversity Education Office to ensure that any actions do not undermine equity.

Senator Lu inquired whether a supplier code of conduct would be developed to guide the procurement of food on campus. Mr. von Krauss replied that a supplier code of conduct does not exist at the moment, but a discussion of such issues will be undertaken to carryout sustainable procurement of food on campus.

7. Progress Report on the Quartier de l'Innovation (D13-62)

Senator Goldstein presented this item for information. She provided an overview of the project's achievements since its inception last year, discussed current activities and outlined its goals and priorities for the coming year. She highlighted that, currently, 8 Faculties, 34 professors and 30 students are actively involved in the Quartier de l'Innovation (QI). She also indicated that the QI provides internship opportunities for students in areas such as social innovation and urban planning, while numerous collaborations have been fostered with private partners and non-profit

organizations. Moving forward, the University aims to continue expanding on last year's achievements to continue enriching academic experiences of students, faculty and researchers.

Senators discussed how goals and priorities are measured. Senator Dudek also asked what support is available to students who would like to undertake entrepreneurial initiatives in the QI. Senator Goldstein replied that key performance indicators are being developed to measure goals and priorities and that the QI is one venue used to support student entrepreneurship.

8. Report of the Joint Senate Steering and Board Executive Committees Meeting (D13-63)

The Provost presented this report for Senate's information. He highlighted that the topic of the 2014-2015 Joint Board-Senate meeting will be "Strengthening McGill's Engagement with the External Community." He underlined that the Committees believed it was key to select a topic to which both Senators and members of the Board of Governors can contribute.

9. Other Business

No other business was raised.

Closed Session

10. Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (cont'd) (D13-60)

By resolution, Senate moved into closed session to discuss the first item of the Report of the Nominating Committee, which concerned recommendations for appointments to an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Provost. Senators Masi, Eidelman and Lennox left the room for this item.

The Chair presented the nominations stating that in recommending appointments to the Advisory Committee, the Nominating Committee sought to have representation from across disciplines and gender balance on the Committee. There was some discussion on whether the recommended appointments were appropriately representative, particularly on the issue of the high level of administrative experience of the nominees. Senators generally agreed that administrative experience is a desirable quality as current or former administrators have a sound understanding of the University's structure and operations, and would understand the role of Provost.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the recommendations contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D13-60) to appoint representatives of Senate (and alternates) to an Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Provost.

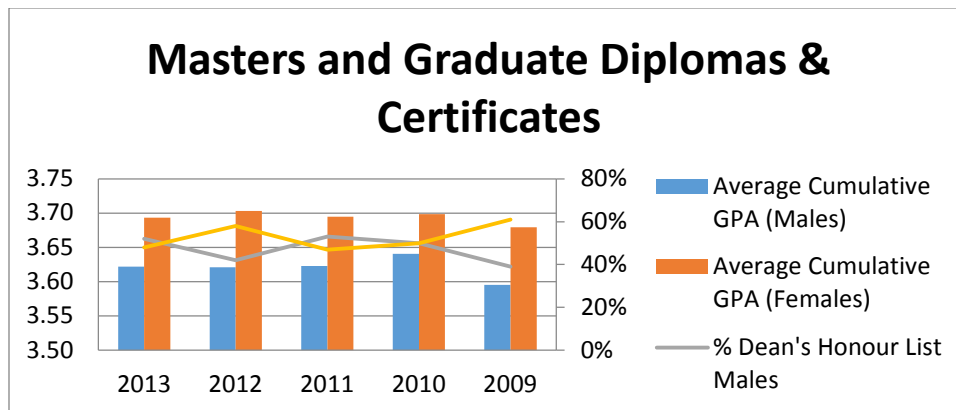
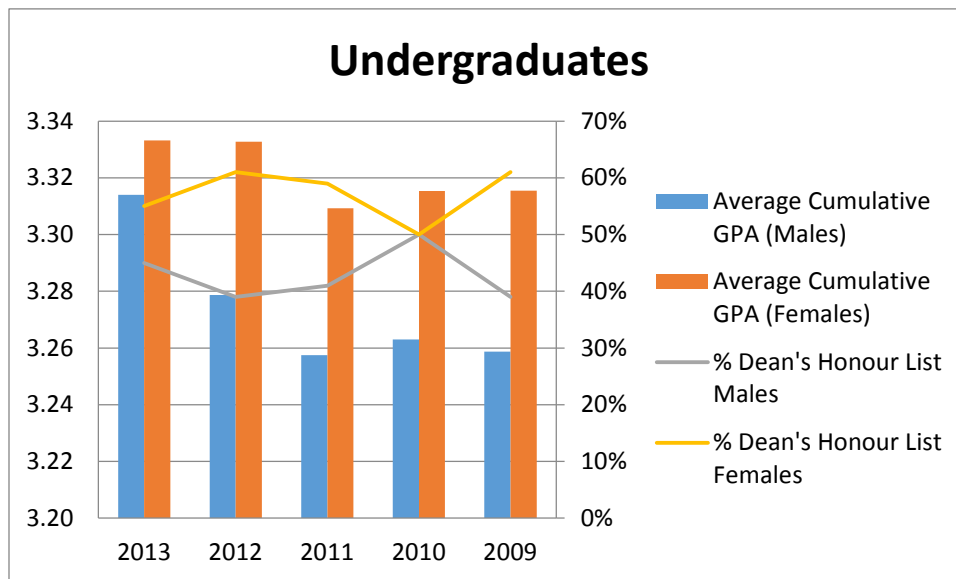
There being no other business to deal with, on a motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

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

Information on grading and gender, and blind grading practices

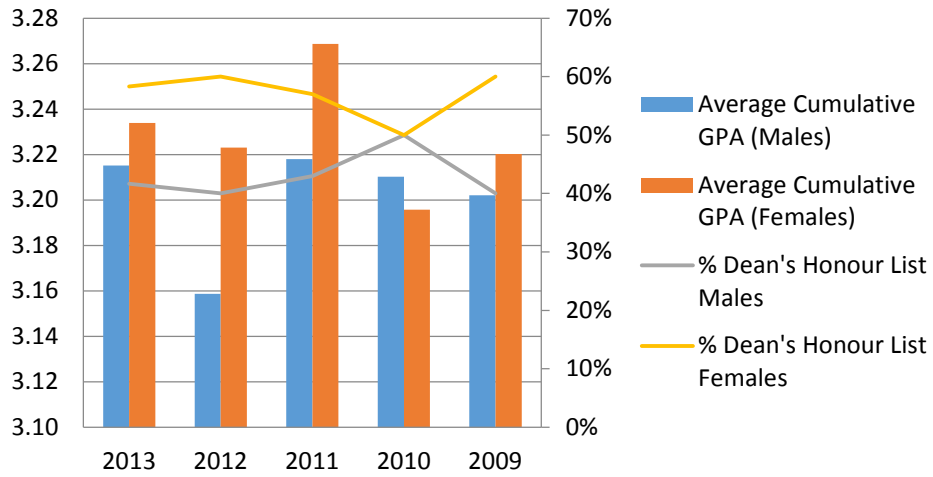
Grading and gender

A review of historical grading at McGill University reveals no apparent gender bias in grading as assessed by examining average cumulative GPA at graduation. At all levels, and for almost all years examined between 2009 and 2013, the average cumulative GPA of females was greater than that of males. Similarly, the proportion of females on the Dean's honour list is generally equal or higher than that of males.¹

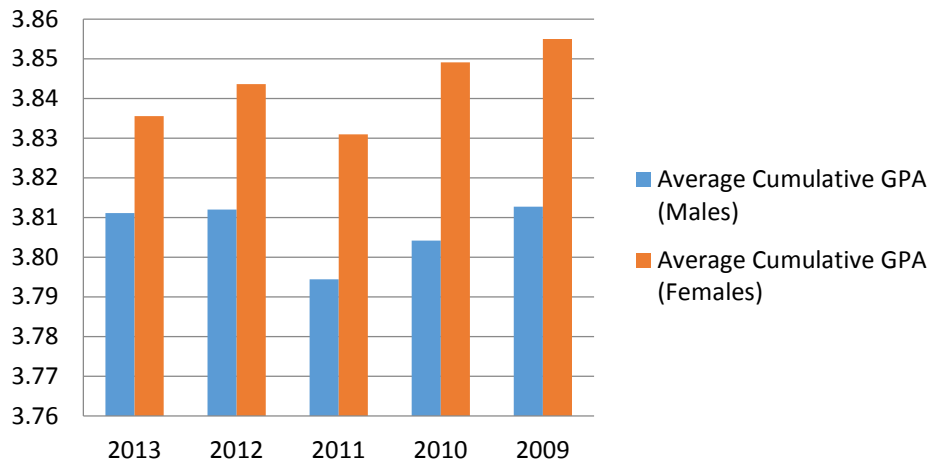


¹ These data exclude Continuing Studies, Collegial and Post-Grad Medicine, and MDCMs and any record with a CGPA of 0 (zero)

Dentistry/Law/Medicine (UP)



Doctorate



Blind grading practices (TLS analysis)

Suggestions have been made recently that anonymous grading should be considered at McGill to reduce presumed bias. Leaving aside the question of whether such bias does, in fact, occur at McGill, we reviewed the literature on anonymous grading to investigate whether this is a practice that should be considered for McGill.

The articles reviewed considered the effectiveness of anonymous marking to reduce perceived grading bias in university level assessments. All experiments used anonymous and identified assessments as their means of identifying and differentiating the presence of grading bias; generally, studies focused on one particular bias such as gender, reputation, race or educational background. No studies were found that used the assessor characteristics as a variable but several did try to control for them.

The foundational article in the literature on bias in grading was written by Bradley in 1984. She was investigating whether the identified gender-bias operative in employment assessments was also a factor in education. She concluded that second markers (i.e., markers who had less knowledge of the students) were influenced by knowledge of student gender. However, first graders, who did have knowledge of the students, were not influenced by gender. This study has often been cited as the justification for implementing anonymous grading, generalizing to all graders from the experience of graders who were not familiar with the students.

The empirical evidence suggests that the implementation of 'blind' or anonymous assessment of student work at the university level **does not** affect average scores in a systematic way. (Baird, 1998; Batten, 2013; Brennan, 2008; Newstead & Dennis, 1990; Owen et al., 2010; Shay & Jones, 2006). One study that indicated a moderate effect of knowledge of students by graders had real limitations in terms of method and interpretation of results (Malouff, 2013).

Vikram (2014), PrawfsBlog (2009) both investigate the origin of anonymous assessment in Law Faculties, an almost ubiquitous practice in this discipline. Anonymous grading policies developed in the mid-1960s in the U.S. to mitigate the influence of affirmative action programs. The concern was not that students would be graded unfairly negatively, but rather that instructors would grade minority students more favourably given an identifiable student denomination. (Note that this concern about an operative bias in favour of students perceived to be disadvantaged was also found in Shay & Jones, 2006 in the context of post-apartheid South Africa.)

Although researchers have been unable to identify strong systematic biases in assessments of student work, it is clear that there are inconsistencies between assessments before and after the use of anonymous marking. Given that, it would be important to develop and implement procedures that are known to help reduce bias in grading due to many different causes; such procedures include informal and formal training in assessment, articulating explicit and clear marking criteria (i.e., rubrics), and controlling for assessor variables such as fatigue. These are potentially much more productive strategies to ensure fairness than implementing anonymous grading.

Complications with anonymous grading

- Depersonalization of teaching (disrupts communication, collaboration, trust, individualized mentorship)
- Risk of decreased student engagement/participation

- Inauthenticity (does not prepare students for individualized professional assessment methods)
- Necessary exceptions (oral presentations, observation of professional practicums, performances, 'supervised' thesis/research)
- Complexity of administration

Potential bias within anonymous grading

- Student Information still identifiable from anonymous scripts (gender, educational background, racial group)
- Examiner biases are still present (fatigue, order of presentation, pedagogical beliefs)

Alternative methods to reduce bias:

- Robust model answers and rubrics (sequential, standardized requirements)
- Increased staff development/training (establish greater pedagogical consistency and continuity)
- Examination construction and grading training
- Group/Collaborative marking

AAU Blind Grading Poll

McGill's registrar polled AAU universities to inquire about their use of blind grading. AAU universities with law schools reported that they use blind grading in that context. No AAU university reported an institutional policy for blind grading. A list of respondent universities is included below:

- Yale University
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- Texas A&M University
- Case Western Reserve University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of North Carolina
- The Johns Hopkins University
- State University of New York at Stony Brook
- Brandeis University
- University of Michigan
- Pennsylvania State University
- University of Rochester
- University of Oregon
- University at Buffalo, the State University of New York
- Harvard University
- Princeton University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Brown University
- The Ohio State University
- Northwestern University
- University of California, Irvine

- University of Wisconsin–Madison
- University of Virginia
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (1989)
- University of Toronto

Input from Russell Group of UK Registrars

- Blind grading is standard in UK universities, not just in the faculties of law.

Input from Australia G08 Universities

- 'In theory it is a standard', but in practice it is not always done