

**Minutes**

Tuesday, December 15, 2020 20-21:05

Minutes of the special meeting of Senate held on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. via the Zoom Conferencing Application.

**PRESENT**

Arseneault, Louis	Grignon, Chantal	Ramnawaz, Shaainee
Babinski, Bob	Hakim, Joseph	Rassier, Dilon
Bartlett, Joan	Hastings, Kenneth	Ravenscroft, Brenda
Bede, Jacqueline	Hébert, Terence	Richard, Marc
Bedjanian, Tatiana	Kemme, Bettina	Riches, Caroline
Beech, Robin	Kiester, Lucy	Riddle-Merritte, Leela
Breau, Sébastien	Kirk, Andrew	Robillard, Martin
Brulé-Champagne, Emile	Komarova, Svetlana	Rohrbach, Petra
Campbell, Angela	Kouchakji, Kristi	Rose, Jessica
Cook, Colleen	Labeau, Fabrice	Ruge-Murcia, Francisco
Crago, Martha	Lach, Lucyna	Salameh, Samer
Cumming, Julie	Leckey, Robert	Salmasi, Kamal
Daryanani, Darshan	Lennox, Bruce	Saumier, Geneviève
Dorval Courchesne,	Loftus, Mary Lynne	Sekhon, Harmehr
Noémie-Manuelle	Low, Bronwen	Sparks, Tabitha
Drouin, Susan	Maioni, Antonia	Sroka-Fillion, Nathalie
Earle, Jemark	Manchanda, Arnav	Stephens, David
Eidelman, David	Manfredi, Christopher	Tessier, Adrienne
Elbourne, Elizabeth	McKenzie, Jeffrey	Theodore, David
Emami, Elham	Nalbantoglu, Josephine	Tippler, Maria
Engle-Warnick, Jim	Nicell, Jim	Uttamchandani, Krishna
Eperjesi, Debbie	Nilson, Laura	Vallée, Jean-Sébastien
Faraj, Samer	Nycum, Gillian	Vennat, Manon
Fortier, Suzanne	Nystrom, Derek	Voudouris, Nellie
Frizzle, Brooklyn	Osiecki, Sophie	Willie, Bettina
Fronza, Michael	Parsons, Addy	Winer, Laura
Geitmann, Anja	Perepichka, Dima	Yalovsky, Morty
Gonnerman, Laura	Qiu, Haoyi	Yang, Mu Rong

**REGRETS:** Yves Beauchamp, Avery Bonair-Cyrus, Beth Cummings, Jean Deschenes, Dahlia Dias, Gael Eakin, Eleanor Elstein, Maiya Rachel Geddes, Jacques Hurtubise, Jan Jorgensen, Srinivasan Krishnamurthy, Alison Laywine, Michael Meighen, Momar Ndao, Ram Panda, Nathaniel Qutoriano, Joella Reev, Jennifer Ronholm, Shaheen Shariff, Eran Shor, Alvin Shrier, Laurie Snider, Narendra Subramanian, Ipek Tureli, Tracy Webb, Carola Weil, Marc Weinstein, Edith Zorychta.

## **1. Welcoming Remarks**

The Chair welcomed Senators to the special meeting of Senate. In light of the evolving situation regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19), the meeting was held virtually via the Zoom conferencing application. The Chair highlighted the guidelines for remote participation, which had been shared with Senators, noting that they were developed to enhance meeting effectiveness in a virtual format, while respecting the Senate Rules of Procedure. She 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.

## **2. Report of the Steering Committee (20:21-05)**

Senate received the Report of the Steering Committee (20-21:05).

*Item A1. Review of Motion.* Further to the December 2, 2020 meeting of Senate, the Steering Committee held a special meeting to review a revised motion to extend the availability of the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) option for courses in the Fall 2020 term. The Committee agreed to consider a revised motion that would be drafted based on further work and consultation on the matter with faculties, student leadership and administrative offices.

*Item B1. Review of Motion.* The Steering Committee held another special meeting to review a revised motion regarding an additional S/U option. The motion was accepted for submission to Senate and included on the agenda of the December 15, 2020, special meeting of Senate.

*Item B2. Approval of the Agenda.*

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

## **3. Motion Regarding Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 (D20-29)**

Senators Frizzle, Kouchakji, Campbell, Labeau and Nycum submitted this motion for Senate's consideration. The motion proposed an additional S/U option beyond the current S/U protocol for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 academic terms.

Senator Vennat asked if feedback was received from other universities on the motion. The Chair clarified that a review of practices at other institutions was conducted, but no consultations were held with the institutions on the motion. She stated that the additional S/U option being proposed was similar to the flexible grading schemes implemented at other universities. She highlighted that the proposal was circumscribed in scope and allowed students time to reflect and seek academic advising before selecting the option. Senator Labeau added that an additional S/U policy was not a widespread practice within the U15, but more common in Quebec. Senator Kiester was pleased to see that comparisons were made with other Quebec universities rather than just the U15, as the impact of the pandemic differs across the country and has been especially difficult in Quebec.

Senator Sroka-Fillion asked for more information regarding the work required by members of the administrative and support staff to implement the motion. Senator Nycum explained that advisors in Student Affairs offices would review the courses selected as S/U to ensure that there were no conflicts with program or accreditation requirements and, if approved, staff in Enrolment Services would manually implement the change. She mentioned that during the Winter 2020 term, the 12,000 transactions that took place required approximately 2,300 manual hours to implement and indicated that her office was prepared to manage the increased workload should the motion be approved. Senator Labeau assured Senators that employee workloads were taken into account when determining the deadlines indicated in the appendix of the motion.

Senator Lach, Associate Dean (Student Affairs) in the Faculty of Arts, indicated that the number of advisors working in the Faculty of Arts was insufficient to advise all students considering the S/U option. As such, she stated that a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document would be prepared to help students make informed decisions. Senator Lach then mentioned that she was initially concerned over the inequitable situation that would result for students who had withdrawn from a course, as the additional S/U option was not available earlier in the semester. However, she stated that a review of the data regarding the number of withdrawals did not suggest that this would be an issue.

Senator Tessier asked about the impact of the motion on students in the Faculty of Law as they could only select 3 credit hours as S/U during their degree. Senator Leckey responded that the motion would not remove this option, but allow for the possibility of selecting the S/U option in Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 for an additional 6 credits.

Senators recognized the work done by Senators Frizzle, Campbell, Manfredi, Nycum and Labeau to prepare the motion and appreciated the collaboration that took place between the Steering Committee, members of the administration and students. Senator Frizzle also thanked the student Senators who helped ascertain the needs of the student body and mobilize support for the motion, as well as Senators Nystrom, Low, Shor and Cumming for their contributions. In addition, Senator Daryanani thanked Senators for taking the time to attend the special meeting and vote on the motion and Senator Parsons thanked them for their willingness to support students, noting that students were deeply appreciative.

Several Senators spoke in favour of the motion, as it supported students during the pandemic. More particularly, Senator Daryanani mentioned that it would help support equity and accessibility, as certain groups are disproportionately affected, and Senator Nystrom indicated that it would acknowledge the challenges faced by students despite the best efforts of their instructors.

*On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the Additional Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Option, exceptionally and only for the Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 terms, as set out in Appendix 1 of document D20-29.*

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting ended at 4:27 p.m.

**END**

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