



Minutes

Wednesday, May 16, 2012 11-12:09

Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on May 16, 2012, at 2:30 p.m. in the Robert Vogel Council Room (Room 232, Leacock Building.)

PRESENT

Barney, Darin
 Bernard, Daniel
 Bouchard, Adam
 Boyer, Daniel
 Brophy, James
 Carrier, Serge
 Clare, Emily Yee
 Covo, David
 Di Grappa, Michael
 Dinell, Haley
 Doucette, Elaine
 El-Khatib, Ziad
 Etemad, Hamid
 Everett, Jane
 Ferguson, Sean
 Galaty, John
 Gale, Charles
 Gale, Charles
 Gehring, Kalle
 Gold, Richard
 Goldstein, Rose
 Gonnerman, Laura

Grant, Martin
 Grütter, Peter
 Gyakum, John
 Han, Lily
 Harpp, David
 Hashimoto, Kyoko
 Hebert, Terence
 Hepburn, Allan
 Hobbins, Joan
 Hynes, Andrew
 Ismail, Ashraf
 Janda, Richard
 Johnson, Juliet
 Jutras, Daniel
 Kalil, Alex
 Kirk, Andrew
 Knight, Maggie
 Kreiswirth, Martin
 Kurien, John
 Laverdiere, Eric
 Lefsrud, Mark
 Lowther, David
 Madramootoo, Chandra

Marcil, Olivier
 Masi, Anthony
 McCulloch, Mary Jo
 Michaud, Mark
 Munroe-Blum, Heather
(Chair)
 Nassim, Roland
 Pekeles, Gary
 Perrault, Hélène
 Peterson, Kathryn
 Potter, Judith
 Pritz, Alex
 Richard, Marc
 Riches, Caroline
 Shaughnessy, Honora
 Sinacore, Ada
 Todd, Peter
 Wapnick, Joel
 Weinstein, Marc
 White, Lydia
 Zorychta, Edith
 Strople, Stephen
(Secretary)

REGRETS: Tom Acker, Ellen Aitken, Paul Allison, Mahmoud Almasri, Jamshid Beheshti, Usman Bin Shahid, Gregg Blachford, Leslie Breitner, Emil Briones, Renzo Cecere, Roshi Chadha, Ian Clarke, Stuart Cobbett, Colleen Cook, Brian Cowan, Claudio Cuello, Brian Driscoll, Gregory Dudek, David Eidelman, Brendan Gillon, Ashraf Ismail, Jacques Hurtubise, Wilbur Jonsson, Torrance Kirby, Ruth Kuzaitis, Richard Leask, Jason Leung, Max Luke, Annie Ma, Christopher Manfredi, Kevin McDonough, Morton Mendelson, Arun Misra, Michael Ngadi, Kady Paterson, Amir Raz, Nigel Roulet, Melvin Schloss, Arnold Steinberg, Isabel Vivas, Christina Wolfson, Ji Zhang.

The Chair welcomed Senators and thanked them for their service, recognizing those whose terms were ending. She also reminded them that the proceedings were being broadcast to the Cybertheque classroom for the benefit of spectators.

SECTION I

1. Report of the Steering Committee (11-12:09)

The Report of the Steering Committee (11-12:09) was received.

Item 1. Approval of Minutes of Senate. On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the minutes of the April 18, 2012, meeting.

Item 2. Approval of Confidential Minutes of Senate. The Chair informed Senate that the Steering Committee had reviewed the confidential minutes of the meeting of April 18, 2012, and had approved them on behalf of Senate.

Item 3. Confidential Session for the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee. On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate agreed to enter into Confidential Session for discussion of item IIB1, the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee.

Item 4. Business Arising from the Minutes. The Chair reported that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Recording and Transmission of Senate Meetings had begun its deliberations. She also informed Senate that Vice-Principal Di Grappa would be speaking to Senate about workforce planning projects in the fall.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

On motion duly proposed and seconded, the agenda was adopted.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair began her remarks by delivering an update on the ongoing student boycotts and demonstrations in Quebec. The Chair conveyed McGill's satisfaction with the government's consultation process and approach going forward. She expressed the administration's view that university work must continue in a safe environment and that students have the right to attend classes without fear of violence or intimidation. The Chair explained that McGill aimed to start its classes on time in September and that the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) was working with the Deans on special accommodations for admitted students whose CEGEP was affected by the boycotts.

The Chair expressed McGill's view that the recent tentative agreement between the provincial government and student associations was unacceptable. Beyond its impact on McGill's operating budget, the agreement would undermine the University's autonomy and governance, would compromise academic freedom and would even further reduce the funding to Quebec's universities. The Chair told Senate that McGill maintained high standards of governance and accountability and remained dedicated to upholding its autonomy.

The Chair then discussed workforce planning projects. She told Senate that the Workforce Planning Initiative (WPI) had recently been launched, arising out of the Strategic Reframing Initiative. The WPI aimed to ensure that McGill could comply with the requirements of Bill 100 – replacing one administrative position for every two vacancies due to attrition – while continuing to invest in its highest academic priorities and providing support to units and staff members. She added that positions associated with front-line student services would be maintained, with savings coming from across the rest of the University. The Chair told Senate that workforce planning would include staff-development to best equip employees and managers to plan for and adapt to change. She added that, in the coming months, staff would be invited to participate in orientation sessions and training in key areas related to Workforce Planning.

The Chair then spoke about her recent trip to Brazil, which was led by the Governor General and included numerous federal politicians, business and science leaders, and Canadian university heads. The Chair told Senate that McGill presently had 50 research collaborations in Brazil as well as numerous alumni there. On her trip, McGill signed 4 new Memoranda of Understanding with Brazilian institutions and received updates on the Science without Borders program, which will provide scholarships for Brazilian undergraduate and graduate students to study abroad, including 12,000 spots in Canada. The Chair told Senate that McGill was seeking to obtain a great share of this pool of scholarships while also establishing fellowships for McGill students with the many research collaborations in Brazil. The Chair also reported on the unique agreement between McGill and the Research Foundation of Sao Paulo, which would work to create matches between top scientists in that state and those at McGill.

Lastly, the Chair spoke about the upcoming Spring Convocation and encouraged all Senators to participate in its events. She underlined the visits of the Scottish Principals from McGill's foundational institutions – the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh – as well as the ceremony installing the Governor General as McGill's official Visitor.

Senator Galaty asked whether workforce planning and job cuts would impact central administration as well as faculties. The Chair responded that, as she had said, student services were the only protected area.

Senator Janda asked whether the University had considered alternative funding arrangements or opportunities as a result of the recent backtracking of government support. The Chair answered that all options were being considered and that the University would continue to resist any infringement on its autonomy or academic freedom. She also encouraged professors to be active in this cause via their own channels. Senator Knight voiced concerns regarding the government's proposal to reduce ancillary fees and the possible impact this would have on student services. She added that SSMU had raised these concerns with the Quebec Student Roundtable.

Senator Clare reported that SSMU remained committed to helping integrate any incoming students with specific needs arising out of the current situation.

SECTION II

Part "A" – Questions and Motions by Members

1. Question Regarding the McGill Writing Centre

In Senator Crawford-Appignanesi's absence, Senator Clare asked the following question:

McGill's 2012-16 Strategic Enrolment Management Plan states its goals will include higher numbers of undergraduates in research, teaching and learning excellence, and increasing international student retention. The report also claims that complacency and underfunding could threaten McGill's good record in undergraduate retention.

The final report of the Principal's Task Force on Diversity, Excellence and Community Engagement establishes the retention of students as a major community concern, and claims that an increasingly diverse pool of students will require adequate support services in order to adjust to McGill's unique environment.

McGill's Writing Centre is integral to achieving the goals of the SEM plan and avoid ingcomplacency in retention and excellence. This holds doubly true if McGill wishes to increase undergraduate participation in research and broaden the diversity of the student body.

The Centre's main challenge in helping the University attain its goals lies in its limited capacity. A total of 1,106 students have enroled in the Centre's for-credit courses. Approximately 850 students have used the Centre's tutorial service since last October. Both these services are inundated with requests and applications, and the Centre severely lacks the resources to fill them. Many of these problems stem from a lack of tenure track professors who can offer the professional support students need from the University.

As the University is committed to both improving the diversity of the undergraduate student population and keeping retention high, what is the commitment to ensuring that students have adequate access to ESL services, writing skills for-credit classes and non-credit workshops through the McGill Writing Centre?

Senator Potter, Dean of Continuing Studies, answered as follows:

I am pleased to provide for Senate an update on the activities of the McGill Writing Centre (MWC). The Centre, although only launched in fall, 2011, is showing remarkable success in addressing the writing development needs of native and non-native English language speakers within the McGill student body.

The Centre offers a variety of credit courses for graduate, undergraduate, and continuing studies students. In 2011-12, these included:

- 4 undergraduate courses for non-native speakers
- 1 undergraduate course for native speakers (5 sections per semester)
- 1 undergraduate course designed for Engineering students (6-7 sections per semester)
- 4 graduate courses for non-native speakers
- 2 SCS written communication courses

Enrolment in these courses were 1106 undergraduates, 81 graduate students, and 224 continuing studies students, for a grand total of 1411.

In addition, the Centre started a Tutorial Service, through which students can receive help individually or in small groups. 955 appointments were made with the Tutorial service, 83% by undergraduate students. Likewise, small-group workshops on specific writing-related topics were added to the MWC offerings.

The MWC is staffed by a full-time Director, two full-time Faculty Lecturers, 15 part-time Course Lecturers, and a full-time administrative support person. It is guided by 2 pan-university committees – the Advisory Committee and the Programming Committee – each featuring representation from faculty members and students.

The University made the establishing of the MWC a priority during Fiscal Year 2012 because of a strong commitment to helping our students succeed. And, the MWC has done much with constrained resources. As Senate has consistently heard from the Provost, however, the University is challenged by chronic underfunding. Given recent events, this situation does not appear to be changing—and so we cannot anticipate that funding to the MWC will be substantially increased for the 2013 Fiscal Year. The MWC will, however, continue to serve McGill's diverse student body with a range of programs and services.

Senator Clare thanked Senator Potter for her answer and emphasized that every student who had utilized the services of the MWC raved about the quality of its offerings.

2. Question Regarding the McGill Staff-Student Mentoring Program

In Senator Ma's absence, Senator Diné asked the following question:

The McGill Staff-Student Mentoring Program was conceived with the goal of building relationships between students and staffs outside of the classroom settings. Since its launch in winter 2011, the program has received great praise from the students and staff involved in the program. Not only has this program helped students gain a better understanding of the structure and administration of our university, it has also allowed the staff to see the university from a student's point of view and to gain personal satisfaction from helping students. Currently, many students are interested in participating in the program, but it is difficult to get staff members involved in becoming mentors. Therefore, we have not seen significant growth of the program.

1. Given that the Mentorship Program could be a key in building a tighter community in McGill, what steps can we take in order to dedicate more resources to this effort?
2. What steps can the university take to encourage more staff and professors to become mentors?
3. What office (workgroup) should take the responsibility of organizing, overseeing, and monitoring the program?

Senator Everett, Dean of Students, answered as follows:

Thank you for the opportunity to promote this Program. I'll start with a bit of a preamble to provide context, then will answer your questions.

The Staff-Student Mentoring Program was launched in February, 2011. Potential mentors sign up by providing an online profile. When students sign up to be mentees, they can ask to have a mentor randomly assigned, or they can request that particular considerations be taken into account. If the student opts for random matching, the program automatically generates a choice of two potential mentors. If the student mentions particular considerations, a manual match is made. Since the beginning of the program, more than 111 students have been paired with mentors. Mentors come from all areas of the University; and most of the Faculties are represented in the mentee group. Mentors and mentees are asked to commit to meeting for a minimum of two hours per term. They are provided with a first meeting checklist and a form to sign that outlines their common understanding of their expectations with respect to each other.

I come now to your three questions.

1. The first step, on which we are already working, is to get a clear idea of what the scope of the program should and could be. This will allow us to identify the human and material resources that would need to be dedicated to the Program for it to flourish. SSMU's recent report on mentoring, including a survey of current mentors and mentees and of mentoring programs at other institutions, will be a valuable source of information and best practices in that regard. We are also working to secure philanthropic funding for the Program. Such funding would allow us to provide training for mentors, hold events to promote the Program and provide networking opportunities to current mentors and mentees, hire experts to enhance the functionalities of the current only partly automated online system and fund a prize or award for Program participants.
2. The SSMU report also contains a number of recommendations that, if followed, would help make the Program, its objectives and its benefits better known. Some units may wish to recognise and reward mentoring through the promotion or merit process; this might attract more staff. It might also be interesting to explore the possibility of renaming the Program, since there is resistance, in some quarters, to the idea of a mentoring relationship that is not serendipitous and/or discipline-specific. What is important is the relationship and the mutual benefits that flow from it, not what it is called.

3. The Staff-Student Mentoring Program is currently administered by the Office of the Dean of Students because it is a pan-University initiative. This Office may be one of the obvious administrative homes for the Program, but it would be useful as well, I think, to create a permanent work group or steering group (with staff and student membership) associated with it to ensure continuity, accountability and oversight. This work group or steering group could report to the Enrolment and Student Affairs Advisory Committee.

Senators Dinel and El-Khatib asked whether alumni and post-doctoral students could be incorporated as mentors. Senator Everett expressed her appreciation for these suggestions and said that she would like to follow-up, but presently lacked resources for such a project. Senator Harpp pointed out that the ratio of administrative and support staff to faculty members acting as mentors was three to one; he called on more instructors to get involved. He also told Senate that the mentoring program had been a great selling point for many incoming students to whom he had spoken.

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

Confidential Session

1. Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D11-62)

Senate moved into confidential session to discuss the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (this minute is approved by the Senate Steering Committee and is not published or circulated, but is attached to the permanent minutes of Senate as Appendix "A").

Open Session

2. Achieving Strategic Academic Priorities 2012: Progress Report (D11-63)

The Provost presented this progress report. He told Senate that ASAP 2012 would be a strategic academic plan that extended progress of the 2006 White Paper and would serve as a roadmap for the next five years. Over the 2011-2012 year, the Provost had consulted with stakeholders in a multitude of manners and had formed six work groups, each looking at a specific academic priority. The Provost reported that the consultation had resulted in 5 broad goals, covering the three themes of Internationalization, Sustainability and Innovation. He outlined the 10 strategic objectives of ASAP 2012 and the core values of the concurrent Strategic Research Plan.

The Provost indicated that, going forward, ASAP 2012 would be measured on how well it served as the driver for the University's financial plan and budget allocations, and how well it was endorsed by the McGill community. He told Senate that the ASAP 2012 draft should be circulated for consultation by July 15 and completed by September for formal presentation to Senate and the Board of Governors at their first meetings of the 2012-2013 year.

Senators Clare and Knight asked that the Provost distribute slides for these types of presentations ahead of Senate meetings. Senator Knight also raised a question about the theme of “Sustainability,” in particular, worrying that it could be used as a catch-all for stability, reducing its focus on economic, environmental and social sustainability.

3. Revisions to Regulations Relating to the Employment of Academic Staff (D11-64)

Senator White, Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures and Equity), presented this item for Senate’s approval. She explained that the proposed revisions were identical to those discussed at the March Senate meeting, other than the revisions to tenure criteria, which were withdrawn and may return to Senate in the future. Senator White explained that the revised regulations would come into effect on September 1, 2012, to avoid impacting candidates currently in the tenure pipeline.

Senator White explained that certain numbering matters and typos remained to be fixed. She asked that Senate approve the proposed revisions while empowering her to make such editorial changes. In addition, as the current sections 8 to 15 applied to librarians and contract academic staff as well, Senator White proposed that these sections remain in effect until an additional set of amendments could be prepared. Senator Jutras suggested that Senator White draft a separate regulation that would spell out transitional issues of procedure and substance.

Senator Richard proposed an amendment to section 7.11.1(ii), replacing “third” with “remaining” to avoid confusion on the three categories of tenure evaluation. The amendment was accepted as friendly by Senator White and its motion was passed by Senate.

Senator Lefsrud asked about the requirement of a “superior” teaching record for promotion to Full Professor. Senator White accepted changing it to “high-quality,” as to distinguish this criterion from that for the initial granting of tenure. Senator Harpp spoke in favour of formalized teaching criteria for Full Professorship, explaining that the Faculty of Science had included such criteria for several years. Senator Lefsrud later added that online teacher evaluations often had a low response rate. Senator White agreed and pointed Senators to the Teaching and Learning Services document “Interpreting End-of-Course Evaluation Results.”

Senator Galaty asked about the formal timelines for appeals to the Provost. He asked that mitigating factors be worked in, suggesting the addition of the word “normally” to qualify the timelines. The Provost and Chair each spoke in favour of the word “normally” as a way to accommodate mitigating factors while maintaining a level of precision that has served the professorate well. Senator White accepted the suggestion.

Senator Kirk asked about direct appeals to the Principal to formulate a Statutory Selection Committee. Senator White replied that this process envisioned cases where a departmental committee may not be appropriate. She added that the *Regulations* stipulated that the Principal would nonetheless consult with the department.

The Chair told Senate that McGill seemed disadvantaged among peer institutions because of its low rate of promotion to Full Professor. She suggested this might be an issue for Senate to discuss in the future.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved and recommended to the Board of Governors the revisions to the Regulations Relating to the Employment of Academic Staff, allowing for all necessary editorial changes, adjustments to numbering and transitional regulations to be made by the Associate Provost (Policies, Procedure and Equity).

4. 438th Report of the Academic Policy Committee (D11-65)

The Provost delivered this report for Senate's approval. The first approval item was the creation of a B.A.; Liberal Arts. Senators questioned the name "liberal arts," insofar as the program only featured humanistic studies. Senator Johnson replied that the current program was just a beginning and that the Faculty of Arts was planning to incorporate social sciences as well. Senator Knight asked about the absence of Indigenous cultures and Senator Han questioned the breadth of a single distribution requirement covering "six credits emphasizing Africa and/or Asia, including the Middle East." Senator Johnson answered that the proposed arrangement was a compromise between providing students with choice and focus, adding that advisors would advise students how to focus their studies.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the creation of the B.A.; Liberal Arts.

The second approval item was the creation of the Department of Bioengineering/département de *bioingénierie*. Senator Kirk told Senate that similar departments around North America were very popular and that McGill would attract students who were going elsewhere for such a program. He added that the Faculty of Engineering had already begun interviewing people for the unit, with the academic program slated to begin in January or September, 2014. Senator Kirk told Senate that he viewed Bioengineering as complementary to the existing departments of Bioresource Engineering and Biomedical Engineering.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the creation of the Department of Bioengineering / département de bioingénierie in the Faculty of Engineering and so recommended to the Board of Governors.

5. Report of the Nominating Committee (D11-66)

The Provost presented the Report of the Nominating Committee for approval.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the recommendations contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee.

6. Items Relating to the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law

6.1 Proposal to Review the Policy (D11-67)

Senator White, Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures & Equity) presented this item for approval and asked Senate to allow the policy to be reviewed slightly ahead of schedule in order to allow a more comprehensive review.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved having the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law reviewed starting in the Fall term of 2012.

6.2 Appointment of Assessors (D11-67)

Senator White presented the proposed assessors to Senate for approval. Senator Knight told her that SSMU would like to be given more than just the assessors' names to ameliorate the consultation process. Senator Madramootoo pointed out that there were no faculty members from Macdonald Campus, which could be problematic for people there. Senator White agreed, but added that there had been difficulty finding such a person.

On motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the reappointment of Professor Prakash Panangader for a two-year term ending August 31, 2014, and the appointment of Professor Ronald Gehr for a three-year term ending August 31, 2015, as Assessors under the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law.

7. Report of the Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs on Awards and Financial Aid Provided to McGill Students (D11-69)

Senator Everett presented this item for information. She explained that this report was normally part of the Report of the Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs and she highlighted the growth in the amount of aid handed out each year.

Senators asked about the change in GPA requirements for the renewal of aid scholarships from 3.5 to 3.7 and its impact on students' ability to maintain leadership positions. Senator Knight added that such requirements would likely have different impacts in different disciplines. The Provost responded that the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) would analyse the impact of this change, including discipline-specific data, and report back to the Committee.

Senator Michaud asked about possible financial aid implications of lower than expected tuition increases. The Provost answered that McGill was in excess of the government's requirement that 30% of tuition increases go towards aid, but that impacts were being examined.

8. Report of the Board of Governors to Senate (D11-70)

Senator Pেকেles presented this report for Senate’s information. Senator Dinel asked when minutes of meetings of the Board of Governors would be made available. The Chair answered that it was being worked on by the Secretariat.

9. Senate Dates for 2012-2013 (D11-71)

The Secretary-General presented the dates of Senate and committee meetings for the 2012-2013 governance year.

Other Business

There being no other business to deal with, on motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

END

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