



McGill

Question

TO: Senate

FROM: Catherine Lu

SUBJECT: Question Regarding McGill's participation in a consortium (edX) delivering massive open online courses (MOOCs)

MEETING DATE: March 20, 2013

PREAMBLE: Whereas Senate had an open discussion on innovative learning environments, with a particular focus on massive open online courses (MOOCs) at its January 23, 2013 meeting;

Whereas, at this meeting, there was no indication that a decision was going to be made in the near future about whether or not to make MOOCs part of the academic mission of McGill University;

Whereas at the February 19th, 2013 Senate meeting, neither the Principal nor the Provost informed Senate of any impending decision to join a MOOC consortium;

Whereas an email was sent to the university community on February 20th announcing that McGill had joined the edX (MOOC) consortium, and thanking "Deans, Senators, students and professors...who have made valuable contributions to this important development, and particularly the members of the Academic Working Group on Innovative Pedagogy"; and

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Notwithstanding the constraints which may have been involved during the negotiations with the edX consortium, why was Senate not informed of the context surrounding its 'open discussion' on MOOCs and not subsequently made aware of such negotiations? Why didn't the Academic Working Group on Innovative Pedagogy report its insights and recommendations to Senate before any decision was made to involve McGill in the development and delivery of MOOCs?
