

Minutes

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 22-23:08

Minutes of the meeting of Senate held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 2:30 p.m. in the Robert Vogel Council Room (Room 232) of the Leacock Building (future site of the Rimer Building).

PRESENT

Arseneault, Louis	Geddes, Maiya Rachel	Nycum, Gillian
Baron, Sam	Geitmann, Anja	Nystrom, Derek
Bartlett, Joan	Girard-Lauriault, Pierre-Luc	Poirier, Étienne
Beauchamp, Yves	Grignon, Chantal	Poorhemati,, Hossein
Beaudry, Guylaine	Hansen, Patrick	Quitoriano, Nathaniel
Bede, Jacqueline	Hastings , Kenneth	Rassier, Dilson
Beech, Robin	Hébert , Terry	Richard, Marc
Behzadi, Houman	Hickman, Miranda	Robillard, Martin
Blanchette, Mathieu	Hunter, Claire	Rohrbach, Petra
Borenstein, Bonnie	Johnson, Juliet	Shapiro, Lisa
Campbell, Angela	Khoury, Lara	Soehl, Thomas
Chan, Yolande	Kirk, Andrew	Subramanian, Narendra
Cumming, Julie	Kochkina, Svetlana	Syed, Mahidul
Cummings, Beth	Krishnamurthy, Srinivasan	Theodore, David
Czemmel, Nancy	Labeau, Fabrice	Tureli, Ipek
Dirks, Melanie	Leckey, Robert	Weil, Carola
Drouin, Susan	Lennox, Bruce	Weinstein, Marc
Eakin, Gael	Levey, Margaret	Weinstock, Daniel
Eidelman, David	Levine, Alissa	Werber, Joshua
Elbourne, Elizabeth	Manfredi, Christopher	Winer, Laura
Ellis, Jaye	Moore, Catriona	Wright, Risann
Elstein, Eleanor	Nalbantoglu, Josephine	Yang, Kerry
Emami, Elham	Ndao, Momar	Zorychta , Edith
Ferguson, Sean	Nicell, Jim	
Frona, Michael	Nilson, Laura	

REGRETS: Maryse Bertrand, Sébastien Breau, Francesca Carrieri, Martha Crago, Jean Deschenes, Luciano D'Iorio, Mustafa Fakh, Darlene Hnatchuk, Roubina Karaminassian, Kristi Kouchakji, Jacob Levy, Sonya Liu, Jose Londono, Bronwen Low, Saku Mantere, John McCall MacBain, Jeffrey McKenzie, Anthony Mittermaier, Ahmed Anwar Mohamed, Dima Perepichka, Dakota Rogers, Jennifer Ronholm, Alireza Roosta, Francisco Ruge-Murcia, Harmehr Sekhon, Eran Shor, Laurie Snider, Nathalie Sroka-Fillion, Karsten Steinhauer, Patricia Tonin, Ghali Benjoullon Touimi, Brigitte Vachon, David Vaillancourt, Manon Vennat, Coco Jie Wang, Isabella Xia.

1. Welcoming Remarks

The Chair welcomed Senators to the sixth regular Senate meeting of the 2022-2023 governance year, held in-person in the Robert Vogel Council Room (Room 232) of the Leacock Building (future site of the Rimer Building). Senators and guests were reminded that the use of electronic devices was permitted for viewing meeting documents, but that the Standing Rules of Procedure prohibit the recording of sound or images, and as well the communication or posting of Senate deliberations. It was mentioned that the meeting was being livestreamed, and that the audio recording would be accessible until the meeting minutes are approved at Senate's next meeting.

2. Memorial Tributes

The Chair informed Senators that no memorial tributes had been submitted for the February 15, 2023, meeting of Senate.

3. Report of the Steering Committee (22:23-06)

Senate received the Report of the Steering Committee (22-23:06).

Item 1. Approval of Minutes of Senate. Meeting of January 18, 2023.

Item 2. Speaking Rights. Upon approval of the report, speaking rights were granted to Ms. Marie Cousineau, Legal Counsel, Labour and Employment, for item IIB4 (New Policy on the Use and Quality of the French Language); and Professor Patricia Hewlin, Ombudsperson for Students, for item IIB5.2 (Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Students).

Item 3. Approval of the Agenda.

Item 4. Review of Questions and Motions. One question was submitted for the February 15, 2023, meeting of Senate.

4. Business Arising from the February 15, 2023, Minutes

There was none.

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair began his remarks by reminding Senators of the University community's profound loss following the passing of Mr. Marcel Desautels, LL.D. '07 (C.M., O.Ont., O.M.). The Chair extended his heartfelt condolences to Mr. Desautels' family, and shared that the University flag would be lowered in his honour on Thursday, March 9, 2023.

On the topic of Government and External Relations, the Chair informed Senators that he had met with Simon Kennedy, Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), while in Ottawa for a meeting of the U15 executive heads. He shared that ISED is working to develop advanced research security guidelines in the near-term, as announced to the House of

Commons Science Committee on February 2, 2023, and that the U15 is actively involved in the development of new guidelines.

Regarding Community Relations, the Chair shared that the University community had held several meaningful campus events over the last weeks. The University's inaugural International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration took place on January 26, 2023, and featured a testimony by Holocaust Survivor and twice-alumna Judith Nemes Black, and statements by the Consul General of Israel Paul Hirschson, municipal councillor Peter McQueen and Eta Yudin (Vice President, Quebec, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs), a prayer by Rabbi Shmuly Weiss, and candle lighting led by students from Hillel McGill. The Chair noted that this observance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day marked an important step in transforming the recommendations of the University's [Initiative against Islamophobia and Anti-semitism](#) into meaningful action. He went on to report that a campus commemoration in memory of the six-year anniversary of the Quebec City Mosque Attack, which included remarks by MNA and McGill alumna Jennifer Maccarone, as well as City Councillors Serge Sasseville and Émilie Thuillier, had been held on January 30, 2023. The Chair reminded Senators that, for the seventh year running, the University is hosting a series of events for Black History Month, and highlighted that the keynote address during the series opening was delivered by Professor Rinaldo Walcott, Chair of the Department of Africana and American Studies at the University at Buffalo.

Providing a preview of McGill 24, the Chair announced that the University's annual day of giving will be held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023. He reported that, over the past eight years, nearly 19,000 donors have contributed \$17M during McGill24 events in support of students, researchers, student-athletes, and other diverse initiatives across campus.

Sharing selected Kudos, the Chair highlighted the achievements of leading statistician Professor Christian Genest, for receiving the 2023 CRM-Fields-PIMS Prize; Professor Adelle Blackett for receiving an honorary doctorate from the *Université catholique de Louvain*; Professor René Provost for being awarded the American Society of International Law's 2023 Certificate of Merit for a Preeminent Contribution to Creative Scholarship for his book *Rebel Courts: The Administration of Justice by Armed Insurgents*; and, finally, the Martlets and Redbirds swim teams who attained three first-place finishes at the 2023 RSEQ Provincial Championships (Women's, Men's and combined team scores). In doing so, McGill became the first school in RSEQ conference history to win all three categories three years in a row.

SECTION II

Part "A" – Questions and Motions by Members

1. Question regarding the New Vic Project and Kanien'keháka Kahnistensera

Senators Werber, Tureli, Levey, and Vaillancourt submitted the following question:

Given that reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is at the core of the University's academic mission, including its plans to establish new research centers, how has the

University’s consultation methods changed with Indigenous communities on this project after the court order, particularly with the Kanien’kehá:ka Kahnistensera?

Seeing as it is in the interest of advancing the University’s academic mission that the New Vic Project not be interrupted by archeological discoveries after construction has already begun, can the University commit to following the Canadian Archaeological Association’s guidelines for best practices, which is widely seen as the proper way to proceed at sites where allegations of unmarked graves have been made?

Does the University believe that permitting the Kanien’kehá:ka Kahnistensera to conduct their own archeological investigations of the New Vic site may be the proper approach in light of the ruling from the Quebec Superior Court?

Senator Campbell and Senator Labeau provided the following written response prior to the Senate meeting:

Thank you for your questions, Senators Werber, Tureli, Levey, and Vaillancourt. We will answer each in turn. Prior to doing so we would like to clarify one point. The second paragraph of the preamble begins, “Discussions regarding the New Vic Project have historically been within the purview of the University’s Senate”. We note informational updates on the New Vic Project have been provided to Senate from time to time but that decisions regarding the financing, design, and construction of the New Vic Project fall within the purview of the Board of Governors. Turning to the actual questions, the University has been actively engaged in discussions with the Kanien’kehá:ka Kahnistensera. There were 7 meetings held between the end of October 2022 and now, with the last one taking place on February 7, 2023. There was also email communication between the Kanien’kehá:ka Kahnistensera, the University and the *Société québécoise des infrastructures* between meetings. The Canadian Archaeological Association guidelines are nuanced, and apply in a variety of circumstances. Any archaeological work conducted on the site will be informed by these guidelines. The University has relied, and will rely, on the advice of professional archaeologists to conduct the archaeological work on the New Vic site. Given that the New Vic site is not the site of a former Indian Residential School, nor is it known as a site of unmarked graves, and in view of the geology of the site (notably the proximity of the bedrock to the site’s surface), the University believes that the likelihood of finding unmarked graves on the site is very low. We are prepared to do archeological work appropriate to the site to verify this matter and we are working in consultation with Indigenous communities in this regard. The University believes that archaeological work must be conducted by expert archaeologists in consultation with the parties and their experts, including the Kanien’kehá:ka Kahnistensera, the governing bodies of the relevant Indigenous communities, the University, and the SQI. The work would have to be done in accordance with authorizations that must be obtained from the Ministry of Culture of Quebec.

Senator Werber highlighted that while a similar question had been received at the October 19, 2022, meeting of Senate, it was not the aim of the submitters to delay the project unnecessarily. Referencing Senator Labeau’s answer, which indicated that since the site in question was at no

point an Indian Residential School, and that as such, it would be unlikely to discover unmarked graves there, Senator Werber noted that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had also deemed medical institutions as locations of interest with respect to potential unmarked burial sites. Senator Campbell reminded members that the proximity of bedrock immediately below the ground's surface at the site in question, as well as other geological factors, rendered the possibility of a burial site being found even more unlikely, noting, however, that the University remained willing and open to implementing archaeological ventures as officially recommended. Senator Baron shared that his concern with respect to the topic was the lack of current information being made available, and asked why the University was not communicating developments. Senator Campbell informed him that confidential discussions were ongoing, and that it would constitute a breach of agreement to report on them.

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

Open Session

1. Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D22-37)

Senator Lennox presented this report to Senate for consideration. He explained that the report included recommendations concerning appointments to Senate Standing Committees (being the Academic Policy Committee, the Committee on Libraries, and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee), and Committees arising from University Regulations (being the Committee on Student Discipline, Statutory Selection Committees [SSC's] [Senate Pool], and University Tenure Committees [UTC's]).

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the recommendations for appointments to Senate Standing Committees contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D22-37).

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approved the recommendations for appointments to Committees arising from University Regulations contained in the Report of the Senate Nominating Committee (D22-37).

2. Proposed Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Council of the School of Continuing Studies (D22-38)

Senator Weil presented this item to Senate for consideration. She provided an overview of the proposed revisions and explained that they were presented as a result of the recent restructuring of the School of Continuing Studies, which had taken place in 2020. Senator Hastings asked why course lecturers were not included on the Council, and Senator Weil informed him that, based on discussions and consultations within the School, it was decided that membership would be reserved for Faculty staff and program managers. Senator Hasting inquired about the types of channels in place to foster discussion amongst the whole School of Continuing Studies community. Senator Weil noted that Faculty Lecturers were a key component of the School and provided examples of other ways in which they participate in the activities of the School, notably through community gatherings, which were held annually, as well as 'town hall' meetings.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate approve the proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Council of the School of Continuing Studies, effective January 24, 2023.

3. McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) By-Laws Repeal (D22-39)

Senator Weil presented this item to Senate for consideration. She explained that during the recent restructuring of the School of Continuing Studies, the Institute had been replaced by the McGill Community for Lifelong Learning (MCLL), which was under the sole purview of the School, and as such, the existence of the ILR By-Laws was no longer necessary.

On a motion duly proposed and seconded, Senate repealed, and recommended to the Board of Governors the repeal of the current McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) By-Laws.

4. New Policy on the Use and Quality of the French Language (D22-40)

The Secretary-General presented this Policy to Senate for information. She explained that the drafting of the new draft Policy was carried out by a working group comprised of herself, Legal Services, and the Vice-Principal (Communications and External Relations) with input from a range of administrative units across the University. It was explained that the new draft Policy, which remains largely consistent with the 2004 Policy, addresses the requirements of the Charter of the French Language, which was recently revised effective September 1, 2022. She described for Senate the revisions to the Policy, highlighting that the new Policy will be presented to Senate for consideration at its meeting of March 22, 2023, and to the Board of Governors for consideration thereafter. She noted that following governance approval, the new Policy will be submitted for review and approval to the Ministry of Higher Education, after which it will come into effect on June 1, 2023. Senator Kirk inquired if Section 5.1.2, which relates to the University’s communications with Government bodies, was meant to apply to the University Administration, or any members of the University community. He went on to ask if Section 8 should be titled in a manner that encompasses efforts to help students learn French. Ms. Cousineau replied that Section 8 relates most to providing tools and resources to foster the linguistic success of students who will be domiciled in Quebec at the end of their studies, but noted that some professional orders require certain French proficiency levels. Senator Elbourne shared that some Departments face challenges when it comes to assisting new members in learning French, and suggested that a formal mechanism be established to address this issue, perhaps in the form of a course release. The Chair responded that the Academic Personnel Office has opportunities on offer. Senator Campbell noted that course loads differ, and as such a blanket approach may not be most appropriate or effective, though more information on the topic would follow in upcoming University communications. Senator Baron inquired if the University intended to put any measures in force that would aid students in navigating the Province’s new immigration space, and if ‘students domiciled in Quebec’ meant to describe individuals who were working towards gaining permanent residency post-graduation. Ms. Cousineau shared that no definition of ‘domiciled in Quebec’ was provided in the revised Charter, and that immigration assistance was not a required areas for consideration under the scope of the new Policy. Senator Baron commented on the difficulty newcomers to

Quebec may face and asked if the University would take action to assist students in their integration into Quebec culture. The Chair responded that the new Policy is meant to ensure that the University's operations are consistent with its obligations under law, and highlighted that the revised Charter specifically recognizes the University as English-language-speaking. He encouraged interested individuals to take full advantage of the numerous opportunities offered by the University to aid in French-language development. Senator Hickman shared her perceived ambiguity regarding 'domiciled in Quebec', and noted that the manner in which this was written may cause confusion. Senator Moore inquired if the new Policy related to the recent Human Resources communication which provided that messages from Faculty Deans should be bilingual, with French first. The Secretary-General reminded Senators that the new Policy is designed to address the requirements laid out in the revised Charter, which describes the elements that should be reflected in the new Policy, and that it is within that context that the new Policy was being presented. She noted that the University does have other requirements, particularly in the area of employment, that are currently being addressed at the operational level. Senator Richard highlighted a perceived paradox presented in Section 8, remarking that the initiatives to assist in developing a given student's command of the French language must be undertaken while said student is currently enrolled at the University, while it would only be well after they have completed their studies that a final judgment could be made on their question of residence in Quebec. He suggested that the section be revised for clarity. Senator Kirk inquired if Section 8.2, which touches on bilingual glossaries and other resources, would serve to increase workloads for instructors, and if any resources would be made available to ensure the quality of such items. The Secretary-General noted that a number of resources are already in place to ensure high-quality expression of the French language with the University. Senator Hunter inquired if the new Policy would restrict the opportunities of non-French-speaking students to gain employment on campus. The Chair responded by clarifying that the services described in the new Policy would be available in French on request, which would not restrict employment opportunities.

5.1 Annual Report on Student Life and Learning (2021-2022) (D22-41)

Senator Beech presented this annual report to Senate for information, on behalf of Senator Labeau. He provided some highlights from the report, noting in particular that Student Life and Learning had attained success in ensuring the availability of the gender marker 'X' within the University and promoting mental health initiatives that focus on prevention and training. Senator Baron expressed his gratitude for the important services offered by Student Life and Learning, but noted that some students had felt disappointed in their dealings with the office. He inquired if any thought had been given to potentially breaking up the units encompassed by Student Life and Learning in order to expedite and streamline operations. Senator Beech replied in stating that a reorganization of the office had been undertaken in recent years. The Chair indicated that Senator Labeau could provide a follow-up on Senator Baron's question at the next meeting of Senate.

5.2 Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Students (2021-2022) (D22-42)

Professor Hewlin presented this annual report to Senate for information. She provided an overview of the matters considered and activities undertaken by the Office of the Ombudsperson in 2021-2022, as well as the Office's mandate. She noted that the number of requests for assistance received by the Office over the period had returned to pre-pandemic expected levels, and highlighted that

the majority of requests were submitted by Graduate students and related to their research/thesis supervisors. Senator Hasting inquired if conflicts between Graduate students and their research/thesis supervisors were inevitable, and if the requests received by the Office shed any light on ‘problem’ students or supervisors. Professor Hewlin replied in noting that indeed, some personality conflicts are inevitable, and that requests received were really all-encompassing. Senator Baron asked if the Ombudsperson has any disciplinary power, to which Professor Hewlin informed him that while she does not have disciplinary power, she always conducts follow-up action on requests by reaching out to the individual, or their department chair, for example. She encouraged student Senators to promote awareness of the services offered by the Office following comments made by Senator Baron regarding the Office’s perceived lack of visibility among students. Senator Quitoriano inquired if trends in received requests were consistent over time, to which Professor Hewlin replied that she addresses requests on a case-by-case basis, but does her best to categorize them appropriately to glean data points. Senator Quitoriano then asked if Professor Hewlin was aware of the outcomes resulting from her work and/or interventions, to which she replied that she is not, specifying that there was no need to report to her on outcomes. Senator Richard stated that issues arising from structural origins (i.e., policies) may be addressed in structural ways. He encouraged Professor Hewlin to flag any particular facets of policies that are deemed problematic to the Secretary-General or the Executive Sponsor of the policy in question. Senator Poorhemati shared that, going forward, he will encourage Graduate students who are experience difficulties with their research/thesis supervisors to reach out to the Office of the Ombudsperson, in addition to the Office of the Dean of Students, if needed. He suggested that training be made available to supervisors to aid in avoiding or addressing problematic situations or behaviours.

6. Other Business

There being no other business to deal with, Senate moved into Confidential Session to receive the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee.

Confidential Session

7. Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee

Once in confidential session, Senate received a verbal update which constituted the Report of the Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee. The Report provided an update on matters relating to Honorary Degrees.

The minutes relating to this report are approved by the Senate Steering Committee, and are not published or circulated. They will be attached to the permanent minutes of Senate as Appendix A.

Following the presentation of the Report, with there being no other business to deal with, on a motion duly proposed and seconded, the meeting ended at 3:44 p.m.

END

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