



# McGill

Teaching and Learning Services

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## Minutes

33<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL)

of the Academic Policy Committee

Tuesday, 3 May 2011. 10:00am – 12:00pm

Ferrier Building, room 456

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**Present:** Nicole Allard, Jim Clark, André Costopoulos, Adolpho de Motta, Melissa Duffy, Jane Everett, Ian Henderson, Alfred Jaeger, Jana Luker, Bruce Minorgan, Tina Piper, Yvonne Steinert, Nancy St-Pierre (Secretary), Cynthia Weston (Acting Chair)

**Regrets:** Murray Humphries, Maggie Kilgour, Svetlana Komarova, Morton Mendelson (Chair), Meyer Nahon, Ghilaine Roquet, Doreen Starke-Meyerring, Carole Urbain, Claudette Van Zyl

**Guests:** Kathleen Massey, University Registrar & Executive Director, Enrolment Services  
David Syncox, Graduate Education Officer  
Laura Winer, Associate Director, Teaching and Learning Services  
Mariela Tovar, Educational Developer, Teaching and Learning Services  
Adam Finkelstein, Educational Developer, Teaching and Learning Services

### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the following amendments:

Items 3.1 (Senate approval of the University Student Assessment Policy and 4 (Calendar of Academic Dates) were moved to the top of the agenda to accommodate our guest.

### 2. Approval of the minutes of 1 February 2011

The minutes were approved as circulated.

### 3. Business arising

**3.1 Senate approval – University Student Assessment Policy:** Due to the absence of the Chair, Professor Weston invited Kathleen Massey, University Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services to update the members on the above subject.

The Registrar advised STL members that the Policy received Senate approval at its meeting of 16 February 2011 and that the policy will be effective 1 September 2011. The next step will be to ensure that the policy receives as broad a distribution as possible. To that end, the Registrar announced that a work group led by Jocelyne Younan, Assistant Registrar, will begin meeting in May/June to develop university-wide guidelines

for policy implementation. In addition, it was suggested that each faculty develop its own companion guidelines to help inform the process and ensure that all aspects of the policy are faculty-specific.

Discussion ensued with the members identifying a number of websites on which a link to the policy could be included.

**3.2 Webpage for instructors:** The members were updated on the progress of this project. It should be noted that the project is moving forward but due to the transitional status of the McGill home site, publication of a centralized source is not anticipated before Fall 2011.

As a link to item 3.1, the Dean of Students added that her Office sends out a consolidated newsletter at the beginning of each term with essential information for instructors. Perhaps additional links could be added to this newsletter. The Dean noted that she would seek feedback from the Deputy Provost.

**3.3 Senate approval – Revised Course Evaluation Policy:** The members were advised that the Revised Policy received Senate approval at its meeting of 23 March 2011. TLS is coordinating with Mercury liaisons to ensure appropriate implementation of the revisions. An update will be provided during the Fall term.

#### 4. Calendar of Academic Dates

**Guest:** Kathleen Massey, University Registrar and Executive Director, Enrolment Services

The Registrar updated members on recent changes made to the calendar of academic dates. It should be noted that many of these changes were made at the request of students and highlights include:

- Extended holiday break;
- Reduced length of examination period from 12 days to 10 including evening exams;
- Reading week in 2013 will be delayed by one week to allow synchronization with other post-secondary institutions.

The Registrar requested the assistance of STL members in ensuring that this information is communicated as broadly as possible.

#### 5. Graduate Education Initiatives

**Guests:** David Syncox, Graduate Education Officer  
Laura Winer, Associate Director, Teaching and Learning Services

The Acting Chair invited Mr. Syncox to update the members on graduate education initiatives. The presentation was well received with several inquiries from members regarding graduate students and their role in organizing and facilitating the various workshops held throughout the year.

#### 6. Presentation – Active Learning Classroom (ALC) highlights video

**Guests:** Mariela Tovar, Educational Developer, Teaching and Learning Services  
Adam Finkelstein, Educational Developer, Teaching and Learning Services

The Acting Chair invited M. Tovar and A. Finkelstein to update the members on the activities surrounding McGill's active learning classrooms. A short video presentation was made and the members were advised that full video sequences are available on the TLS website (<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/alc/videos/>).

## 7. Report from Working Group on Distance Education

N. Allard, the Chair of the Working Group, provided an update on their activities. The Working Group is requesting some guidance as well as a clarification of the mandate before continuing.

Questions raised by the Working Group and STL members included:

- What is the driving force behind this request to review the existing draft policy?
- What is the definition of distance education?
- Should the mandate focus on distance education or technology-assisted education?
- Should credits for online courses be offered?
- Should credits for online *transfer* courses be offered?
- Should the Work Group put forth recommendations for a policy or draft the policy itself?

It was noted that the previous policy drafted in 2004 did not reach Senate. It would be important to trace back the reason for which the previous draft policy stalled; was it simply an error or were there systemic issues?

The Acting Chair will bring the above to the Chair for discussion and the results will be communicated to N. Allard directly.

## 8. Unit updates

**8.1 Teaching and Learning Services:** no update provided

**8.2 Student Services:** The Executive Director, Student Services provided an update to members on several issues of note:

- Co-curricular transcript project: Student Services anticipates a September launch for the co-curricular transcript project. These transcripts will enable students and prospective employers to validate participation to selected non-academic activities including workshops, seminars, etc.
- Electronic health record: Student Services is now reviewing tenders for software that will centralize student electronic health records. This would eliminate the need for paper copies.

## 9. Other business

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.