



Minutes

34th meeting of the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL)

of the Academic Policy Committee

Tuesday, 20 September 2011, 2:00pm – 3:30pm

McLennan Library building, room MS-74

Present: Tom Acker, Nicole Allard, Julie Cumming, Jaye Ellis, Jane Everett, Ian Henderson, Alfred Jaeger, Maggie Kilgour, Jana Luker, Morton Mendelson, Meyer Nahon, Sharon Roy (CIO rep), Doreen Starke-Meyerring, Carole Urbain, Cynthia Weston, Laura Winer (Acting Secretary),

Regrets: Svetlana Komarova, Yvonne Steinert

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

2. Approval of the minutes of 3 May 2011

The minutes were approved as circulated.

3. Business arising

3.1 Working group on distance education

The report by the Working Group on Distance Education to STL dated May 3, 2011, provided a direction for the next phase, so it was decided to strike a new working group. Given the new role and responsibilities of the School of Continuing Studies regarding online education, they are being asked to take the lead. Prof. Jean-Paul Remillieux has agreed to serve as Chair and Dr. Laura Winer, Teaching and Learning Services (TLS), is working with him to draft the terms of reference, which will be proposed to STL for approval, and to recruit members.

3.2 Webpage for instructors

The Dean of Students is working on a comprehensive reminder from the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) that will go out four times a year.

4. STL Annual Report 2010-2011

There was a short discussion about the Annual Report (2010-2011). It was agreed that the URL for the course evaluation policy be added to Item 2.1 and that the title for item 3.4 be changed to *Guidelines on Distance Education*. STL approved the revised document for forwarding to APC.

5. Course evaluations:

5.1 Mercury Annual Report (Dr. Laura Winer)

The Course Evaluation Advisory Group, which continued to meet last year, comprised the following:

Members – Robert Bracewell, Education; James Brawer, Medicine; Alfred Jaeger, Continuing Studies; Kevin Wade, FAES; Bruce Lennox, Science; Andre Costopoulos, Arts; Peter Li, Student Senator, Science; Nancy Czemmell, Law; Amber Saunders, Engineering.

Resource persons – Evelina Balut, ISR Portfolio Manager; Tommy Chan, Programmer, ISR; Pierre-Andre Vungoc, Learning Technology Consultant, TLS.

The primary task was revising the course evaluation policy and shepherding it through the approval process, which was completed when the revised policy was approved by Senate on March 23, 2011 (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations/policy>). The main substantive changes were:

- an extended dates option to allow evaluations to be completed until the last day of exams;
- required evaluation for TAs.

The 2010-11 year saw a 2% increase in the student response rate to 50%. More than 30,000 students were involved in evaluating more than 5,000 courses. At the same time, there was an increase in the number of instructors who give permission to post results; currently, 1350 have given permission, 553 have declined, and the rest have not accessed the form.

Secretary's Note: As of winter 2011, 2,106 instructors have accessed the form, of whom 1,209 are tenure-track (defined as Assistant, Associate and Full Professors, Assistant, Associate and Full Librarians and Deans); of the 1,209, 803 have given permission.

Goals for 2011-12: Implement the changes from the revised policy; continue to increase student participation; and publish useful guidelines for interpretation of course evaluation results for instructors and chairs.

6. Communication with instructors: (Dr. Laura Winer)

6.1 Teaching policies on the web

<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/policies>

Last year, work was undertaken to launch a new Teaching and Learning web page, including TLS, from the McGill homepage. The new web page includes a comprehensive list of policies and guidelines related to teaching. The links will be updated regularly. The Dean of Students will send reminders to instructors that will link to this page (<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/policies>).

Action: Committee members are asked to review and suggest any additional links as appropriate.

6.2 Focus on Teaching

TLS and Content and Collaboration Solutions (CCS) have created a single channel of communication to all academic and contract academic staff regarding all items related to teaching. It will be distributed biweekly and highlight information, such as upcoming workshops, new resources (e.g., films on demand) and Classroom AV instructions for instructors. Anyone who wishes to communicate to the academic community on a teaching-related topic may submit items for inclusion to tls@mcgill.ca.

7.0 Unit updates

7.1 Deputy Provost

There will be a Joint Senate/Board meeting on November 1, 2011, dedicated to the role of research in the undergraduate educational experience at McGill. TLS is working with the Secretary-General to prepare the agenda and activities. The meeting will provide an opportunity for members of Senate and the Board to examine the overlapping relationship between research and teaching.

7.2 CIO

7.2.1 *LMS Learning Management System (LMS) update*: The selection process for a new LMS began in 2009, and the Call for Tenders was launched in March 2011. Two responses were received; the selection was made in June, and are now finalizing the contract with the selected supplier is being finalized. All existing courses will be centrally migrated, and, once the transfer is complete, this the new LMS will be the only system centrally supported.

7.2.2 *Classroom IT upgrades*: Standardization and remote support of classrooms is a priority, therefore so Crestron controllers were installed in 99 classrooms and audio systems were standardized in 34 rooms. As well, 37 rooms received a standard AV package, and 20 rooms received upgrades. In addition, 60 collar microphones were deployed.

7.3 Dean of Students

Nothing to report.

7.4 Services for Students

A new program with enhanced services for commuter students is being launched with more daytime programs, opportunities for involvement, and access to meeting spaces. The off-campus fellows program with Housing is continuing.

The soft-launch for the co-curricular record program has been delayed due to the MUNACA strike. Three phases are planned, corresponding to the information that will be included in students records: 1) Faculty-organized activities; 2) Activities organized by student associations; 3) volunteer activities, but challenges for establishing outcomes and verification will have to be addressed.

Any units offering that wish to have their non-credit workshops or programs recorded should contact the Director.

The Office for Students with Disabilities is working to involve individual faculty more in accommodation; this is particularly important because of the strike. OSD will soon be moving to the street level of Redpath.

7.5 Library News

The Library has been preoccupied by the work disruption, focusing on the maintenance of services. The Humanities and Social Sciences Library and the Schulich Library of Science and Engineering are open 24/7 for study, with reference services 7 days a week (10-6). The Law Library has extended hours (10-10, M-Th), because of the special collections that are only available in print. Print reserves are up-to-date; Reference and Liaison services and workshops are being maintained by 32 managers. Now that basic course support services are established, Library staff are exploring if Inter-Library Loan services can be re-introduced.

7.6 Teaching and Learning Services

7.6.1 Classroom renovations

Renovations were made to 47 classrooms, primarily involving new furniture (moveable tables and chairs). A new Active Learning Classroom was built at 688 Sherbrooke (Room 1265), which was designed to enhance the student experience and provide support for active and collaborative learning.

8.0 Other business

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3 pm.