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## MINUTES

### 38<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL) of the Academic Policy Committee

Wednesday, 19 September 2012, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

James Administration Building, room 301

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**Present:** Nicole Allard, James Archibald, George Azmy, Lawrence Chen, Andre Costopoulos, Jaye Ellis, Maggie Kilgour, Svetlana Komarova, Sara Laimon, Jana Luker, Sujata Madan, Morton Mendelson (Chair), Laura Nilson, Sharon Roy, Yvonne Steinert, Nancy St-Pierre (Secretary), Carole Urbain, Cynthia Weston

**Regrets:** Ian Henderson, Murray Humphries, Linda Jacobs Starkey, Doreen Starke-Meyerring

**Guests:** Jean-Paul Remillieux, Laura Winer

#### 1. *Welcome and introduction of members*

The Chair welcomed the members to this first meeting of the academic year and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

#### 2. *Adoption of the agenda*

The agenda was adopted with the following amendments: items 5 and 8 were moved up to the beginning of the agenda to accommodate our guests.

#### 3. *Approval of the minutes of 13 March 2012*

The minutes were approved as circulated.

#### 4. *Distance Education Working Group (Guest: Jean-Paul Remillieux, Director, Instructor Services and Educational Technologies, School of Continuing Studies)*

Jean-Paul Remillieux, Chair of the Distance Education Working Group provided an interim report on the group's activities. Highlights included:

- a review of the mandate and guidelines established by STL on 17 January 2012
- confirmation that the terms of reference, with minor edits, received APC approval on 15 March 2012
- a description of the process by which the group is accomplishing its work, which has included breaking up the working group into five subgroups to handle various issues:
  - academic standards
  - design and development issues
  - Faculty involvement
  - intellectual property

- student support
- The Working Group anticipates meeting several times during the Fall term to draft a recommendation for a policy by December 2012. It should be noted that the Working Group agreed to focus primarily on credit courses, with a view of considering the policy for non-credit courses at a later date.

The Chair thanked Prof. Remillieux for his presentation.

**5. Course evaluations** (Guest: Laura Winer, Associate Director, Teaching and Learning Services)

- a. **Faculty means for Mercury:** L. Winer advised members that the Faculty means are now available online. The reports contain overall results by Faculty for the four core questions, as well as by course size and level. Data are available from 2009-10, and will be updated annually. It should be noted that the reports on Faculty means are restricted to the McGill community; Faculty and students can access the data by sign-in.
- b. **Application of policy as it regards TAs:** As per the regulations of the revised Course Evaluation Policy, TAs are now required to be evaluated. However there has been some concern from Faculties that including their TAs would exceed the 25 question limit in their course evaluations.

L. Winer responded that, as a general rule, TAs are excluded from the question limit. She did point out that students can choose their TA from a drop down list as long as the Banner list is up-to-date. In addition, the questions can be adjusted per course if need be.

The Chair thanked Dr. Winer for the update.

**6. STL Annual Report 2011-2012**

The annual report was reviewed and approved as distributed.

**Action:** The secretary will forward the annual report to APC for approval at an upcoming meeting.

**7. Updates from Content and Collaborations Solutions**

- a. **Enhancing Student Engagement – use of clickers in 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses (Turning Point):** S. Roy provided an update on workshops to be held last May encouraging the use of clickers in second-year courses. Unfortunately, the phase of incompatibility between Turning Point and the new LMS extended beyond the anticipated deadline, so no workshops were held. The CIO's office hopes to have Turning Point operational within D2L for January.

The CIO's office will develop a pilot to test polling using mobile devices rather than clickers. STL will receive updates in due course.

- b. **D2L:** The new LMS has been successfully launched with 1081 courses and 590 instructors having logged onto the system. A satisfaction survey was conducted for Summer courses; 95/440 instructors responded, and 80% of stated that their use of the new *MyCourses* was successful.

For the Fall term, 3119 courses with 1965 instructors have logged on. Analytics are being developed to enable tracking of what functions are being accessed.

In addition, the CIO's office is working on the decommissioning of WebCT and anticipates having a plan developed by the end of the year.

The Chair thanked S. Roy for the seamless transition to the new LMS.

**8. Recognizing and rewarding excellence in teaching:**

- a. **Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching and Contract Academic Staff:** The Faculty of Medicine has asked STL to review the language used in the award's guidelines as it seems to exclude contract academic staff from eligibility. Y. Steinert added that this issue has become divisive within the faculty, because the bulk of their faculty are contract academic staff and are therefore not eligible. C. Weston reminded members that previous discussion had taken place on this issue in 2007-2008.

Subsequent discussion centered on the definition of a full teaching load, because that expectation varies by Faculty, and methods to ensure that the adjudication committee is comparing instructors who carry similar teaching loads.

**Action:** C. Weston and Y. Steinert will work together to develop more inclusive language for STL's review at an upcoming meeting.

**9. Unit updates**

- a. **DP SLL:** The Deputy Provost announced that McGill is now a member of the Education Advisory Board (<http://www.eab.com/>). The Board provides best practice research on a number of fronts, and McGill has subscribed to the following forums :
- i. business affairs and finance
  - ii. academic affairs and research
  - iii. student affairs and campus life
  - iv. continuing professional and online education

He added that staff and students are eligible to sign in and encouraged members to do so.

- b. **TLS:** C. Weston advised that TLS and the Office of the Vice-Principal Research worked together to submit two strong nominations for this year's 3M Teaching Fellowships. In addition, she advised that TLS will be updating its awards page and asked members to forward their departmental/Faculty awards lists to the Secretary.
- c. **Libraries:** C. Urbain advised that the Library is working on developing a new plan to deliver their services and ensure that liaison librarians are more deeply embedded within departments and continue to support teaching. The Humanities and Social Sciences Library (HSSL) will unveil a new service desk shortly to help provide better services.
- d. **Student Services:** J. Luker updated members on changes made to Orientation Week this year. She noted that approximately 4500 student were anticipated for the week and that, on average, students registered for six activities. It was suggested that follow-up sessions be held for students a few weeks into the term, because the amount of information available at Orientation can be overwhelming.

She also advised that Student Services have begun to develop a pilot in which counseling services could be offered to students using Skype and that the faculty-in-residence program is being improved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45am.