



MINUTES

Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning

Wednesday, September 28, 2016 (2:00pm – 3:30pm)

McLennan Library Building, room MS-74

Present: Adam Finkelstein, Bronwen Low, Carole Urbain, Chris Buddle, Jacqueline Leclair, Jean-Paul Remillieux, Laura Winer (Chair), Nancy St-Pierre (Secretary), Peter Barry, Robin Beech, Sujata Madan, Svetlana Komarova

Regrets: Angela Campbell, Annette Majnemer, Jessica Head, Laurent Mydlarski, Lucy Lach, Mitchel Russo, Muhammad Wali

Guests: Sophia Kapchinsky, Teaching and Learning Services
David Syncox, Teaching and Learning Services

1. Administrative

- a. *Welcome:* The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the STL for this 2016-2017 academic year and invited those present to introduce themselves.
- b. *Adoption of the agenda:* The agenda was adopted as circulated.
- c. *Membership for 2016-2017:* The current membership was reviewed and it was noted that we anticipate having a PGSS representative named shortly.
- d. *Approval of the minutes, June 10, 2016:* The minutes were approved as circulated.
- e. *Business arising:* As follow-up to the Ed Tech tools discussion at the June 2016 meeting, the Chair provided two updates:
 - TLS will be launching a new initiative focused on reviewing peer assessment more generally, including the pedagogy surrounding the tools being used;
 - Clickers has moved to a cloud-based platform with tremendous uptake by instructors; over 130 instructors teaching 12,000 (non-unique) students have registered to use the new platform. Physical clickers can be returned to Campus Life & Engagement (Brown Building, room 3100).

The administrative portion of the agenda was adopted as circulated.

2. Action

- a. *STL Annual Report of Activities:* The annual report of activities was approved and it was recommended that it be forwarded to APC for inclusion in its report to Senate.
- b. *Revised guidelines – Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching:* Revised to include Course Lecturers as a category for nomination, the changes were reviewed by the members. Although

it was agreed that this was a great initiative and a wonderful way of valuing the contributions made by Course Lecturers, some concerns were expressed regarding the number of letters of support from former students required. Specifically, members questioned why the requirement had been reduced to one letter (rather than two as per the other categories). The Chair noted that the concern would be brought forward to the Provost and Principal for final recommendation. That being said, consensus was reached on the remaining modifications with members agreeing that they would agree with the final recommendation made by the Provost and Principal. The revised guidelines will be forwarded to APC for its approval at an upcoming meeting.

- c. *Undergraduate Skills initiative:* Sophia Kapchinsky and David Syncox joined the meeting. The Undergraduate Skills initiative was briefly presented and a lively conversation ensued. It should be noted that the program will be presented in greater detail at STL's November meeting. At this time, Sophia Kapchinsky and David Syncox were looking for members to signal their (or their Faculty's) interest in sitting on the Curriculum Committee. Members were encouraged to contact Sophia directly (sophia.kapchinsky@mcgill.ca) to suggest names.

3. Discussion

- a. *Update on Leacock situation:* As most of the community is aware, construction behind Leacock on Dr. Penfield is on-going and anticipated to run until May 2017 with significant jackhammering, which has proved to be very disruptive to courses being held in Leacock. Enrolment Services has relocated most courses except for those taking place in Leacock 26-219-132-232. All mid-terms have been relocated and a construction moratorium during finals has been signed with the City.

A live online solution has been proposed for classes held in those four classrooms. The platform is web-based and includes screen sharing and the possibility of interactive chats and polling tools. TLS has contacted all the instructors teaching in the affected classrooms but to-date, none have chosen to try it. Concerns were expressed about the student experience, however there have been relatively few complaints to-date. This however may change as mid-terms approach.

- b. *Update on Online Education for Graduate Programs:* It was confirmed that a contract to deliver online education for graduate programs has been signed with Everspring. The first McGill programs will be with the Faculties of Medicine, Education and Law. Everspring will not be delivering the content but host the content and will be responsible for marketing and recruiting. Once students are accepted into the programs, they will be McGill students with the same rights and responsibilities as on-campus students
- c. *Round-table discussion: teaching and learning issues in your Faculty*
 - o Music: Health and wellness continue to be a focus for the School. One of their initiatives include reviewing all student grades after the 1st year and reaching out to all students who have a 3.0 average or lower; the idea is to intervene earlier to reduce the risk of concerns becoming overwhelming
 - o Education: focus is three-fold: 1) indigenizing the curriculum; 2) graduate course sizes and establishing cross-university parity (e.g., Education may cancel graduate seminar with less than 20 students as it is not seen as being cost effective, but another Faculty may choose to go ahead with 5 students in a seminar); 3) the challenge of trying to build more competitive entrance packages earlier for students in the context of unionized course lecturers

- SCS: focus is on training instructors for online activities while respecting the course lecturers' collective agreement
- Science: Large classes – from course delivery to assessments and evaluation; exam schedules being too tight (e.g., 5 mid-terms in one week) and space for mid-terms
- Dentistry: lack of physical space for UG dentistry and UG student research involvement

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.