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## MINUTES

Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning  
Tuesday, January 12, 2016 (2:00pm – 3:30pm)  
James Administration Building, room 302

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**Present:** Adam Finkelstein, Andre Costopoulos, Angela Campbell, Bronwen Low, Carole Urbain, Elizabeth Nash, Hoi Kong, Jean-Paul Remillieux, Laura Winer (Chair), Laurent Mydlarski, Nancy St-Pierre (Secretary), Parvesh Chainani, Svetlana Komarova

**Regrets:** Alexander Kpeglo-Hennesey, Ian Henderson, Jacqueline Leclair, Jessica Head, Lucy Lach, Peter Barry, Robin Beech, Sujata Madan, Yvonne Steinert

**Guests:** Teri Phillips, Director, Office for Students with Disabilities

### 1. Administrative

- Adoption of the agenda
- Approval of the minutes, October 18, 2015
- Business arising

The administrative portion of the agenda was adopted as circulated.

### 2. Meeting objectives

By the end of the meeting, the subcommittee should have:

- Reviewed and approved the revised guidelines for the Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching;
- Received updates on the December 11<sup>th</sup> symposium: *Teaching What's Important – Educating Students for Today and Tomorrow*; from the McGillX initiative, and from the Teaching and Learning Spaces and University Teaching Labs Working Groups;
- Conducted a discussion of issues and concerns with the Director, Office for Students with Disabilities.

### 3. Action items

- a. **Review of the new mandate/membership** (Laura Winer, Director, Teaching and Learning Services)

The recent changes to the mandate/membership of STL were reviewed. As discussed during the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, the rationale was to revitalize STL and engage the members in discussing issues of policy, as well as addressing concerns and trends in teaching in learning in higher education. Members were encouraged to submit topics for discussion.

**b. Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching – Proposed revisions to the guidelines for nomination** (Laura Winer, Director, Teaching and Learning Services)

The revised guidelines for nomination were presented. The proposed edits attempt to bring clarity to the following aspects of the guidelines:

- expectations from the Dean's letter of nomination;
- page limit regarding the comments from student course evaluations. Should comments exceed four pages, nominees are asked to include a representative sample vetted by their Chair/Director.

In order to ensure the representativeness of the student evaluation comments included in the nomination dossiers, Parvesh Chainani asked if a person external to the department should be asked to validate the sample. Angela Campbell responded that the Chair or Director is, in fact, best placed to make that determination (that the sample is representative) as their interpretation of the comments is likely more appropriate. The understanding of the culture of the unit might be missed by asking an external party to validate the comments. It was also noted that the comments are only one piece of a larger package the Adjudication Committee takes into consideration.

Jean-Paul Remillieux asked if the School of Continuing Studies could submit nominees, and was informed that yes, SCS can. As that might not be clear, it was suggested that a list of eligible Faculties be added as a footnote to the introductory paragraph.

**Secretary's note:** With the agreement of the Associate Provost, Policies and Procedures, the following sentence has been added to the guidelines: *The term Faculty is used to represent all teaching faculties including the School of Continuing Studies.*

**Action:** STL approved the proposed revisions with the addition of the sentence clarifying the eligibility of SCS instructors; the guidelines will be forwarded to APC for approval at its February 4, 2016 meeting.

**4. Discussion items**

**a. Symposium update** (*Teaching What's Important – Educating Students for Today & Tomorrow*) (Laura Winer, Director, Teaching and Learning Services)

An update on the recent Symposium was provided. Follow-up will continue with outreach to faculty members who attended regarding the aspirations they identified during both the morning panels and the afternoon workshop.

**Action:** The report Laura Winer presented will be distributed to members by email.

**b. Online education and McGillX update** (Laura Winer, Director, Teaching and Learning Services)

An update on the online education initiative was provided. Laura Winer confirmed that McGill is exploring the possibility of launching online professional graduate education programs targeting international students, and that a selection committee for a Partner in Online Graduate Education has been established. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Provost on whether McGill should launch this initiative independently or with a partner, and if the latter, which partner. The call for tender is

being finalized and is expected to open in the next few weeks. The Faculties of Education and Medicine are most eager to move forward and will likely be the first to participate in this initiative, followed by Law and Management. Further information will be provided as it becomes available.

The courses offered through the MOOC platform continue to be re-run. Natural Disasters (ATOC185x) will begin its third run on January 13<sup>th</sup> and the Body 101x, The Body Matters will begin its second run in February. As was mentioned in an earlier meeting, the first MOOC, Food for Thought (Chem181x) has been adapted for McGill students and is now offered as an online course only through the *myCourses* portal. Student engagement continues to be excellent and course evaluations are very high. The GROOC (Social Learning for Social Impact) closed in December and students continue to work together on Facebook.

There was some discussion on the future vision of MOOCs and it was noted that although some institutions are offering credits for edX courses, McGill does not intend to do so.

**c. Update on teaching & learning spaces across campus** (Adam Finkelstein, Teaching and Learning Services)

Adam Finkelstein provided members with an update on the work of the Teaching and Learning Spaces Working Group (TLSWG) and the University Teaching Labs Working Group (UTLWG). Established by the Provost in 2006 and 2009 respectively, the Working Groups were mandated to develop a vision for teaching and learning spaces aligned with University priorities. Working in collaboration with Faculties, service units and Facilities Operations, the Working Groups identify teaching and learning spaces (classroom and labs) in need of upgrade, set priorities and recommend funding for improvements. With a combined budget of \$5.6M, the groups have worked on over 350 classrooms and 20 major labs over the past 10 years.

It was confirmed that University Relations has had initial meetings with TLS representatives to discuss potential partnerships and opportunities. The Chair asked members to encourage their Faculty development officers to keep spaces in mind when fundraising opportunities arise.

**Action:** The presentation will be forwarded to members.

**d. Office for Students with Disabilities** (guest: Teri Phillips, Director, OSD)

Due to lack of time, the discussion with Teri Phillips was very brief; however, the Director did take the opportunity to introduce herself. She did add that one of her priorities was to develop deeper connections with Faculties and to understand the contexts and challenges of each environment in order to protect academic integrity, accommodate student success, and provide appropriate support for Faculty and staff.

Members were encouraged to contact Ms. Phillips directly to continue the conversations.

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