



MINUTES

39th meeting of the Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning (STL) of the Academic Policy Committee

Tuesday, 30 October 2012, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Arts Building, room 160 (Arts Council Room)

Present: Jeremie Abitbol, Nicole Allard, James Archibald, George Azmy, Lawrence Chen, Andre Costopoulos, Jaye Ellis, Ian Henderson, Linda Jacobs-Starkey, Maggie Kilgour, Svetlana Komarova, Sara Laimon, Jana Luker, Morton Mendelson (Chair), Sharon Roy, Doreen Starke-Meyerring, Yvonne Steinert, Nancy St-Pierre (Secretary), Cynthia Weston

Regrets: Murray Humphries, Sujata Madan, Laura Nilson, Carole Urbain

Guest: Marcy Slapcoff, Teaching and Learning Services

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved as amended.

2. Approval of the minutes of 19 September 2012

The agenda was approved as circulated.

3. Business arising

3.1 Principal's Prize for Excellence in Teaching (PPET) and Contract Academic Staff (document # STL2012-10-06 was distributed to members at the meeting)

Further to discussions begun at the 19 September meeting, Y. Steinert and C. Weston presented proposed revisions for the PPET guidelines. Discussion ensued with the following being highlighted:

- the eligibility requirements were reworded to be as inclusive as possible;
- an effort was made to acknowledge criteria, which may be Faculty-defined (e.g., what a full-teaching load represents may vary by Faculty);
- acknowledgement of the various delivery modes of teaching by including teaching in the clinical setting, continuing medical education, and continuing professional and faculty development as part of teaching responsibilities;
- acknowledgement that teaching evaluation data may not be available, in which case documented proof of effectiveness of teaching must be provided;
- the definition of a former student was revised;
- the membership of the adjudication committee membership should include a student representative from Mac Campus and a representative from the School of Continuing Studies.

Action: The guidelines will be further revised and may be circulated to STL by email for feedback.

4. Inquiry Network and Writing Symposium (*Guest: Marcy Slapcoff, Teaching and Learning Services – document #STL2012-10-07 was distributed at the meeting*)

M. Slapcoff provided STL with an update on the activities of the Inquiry Network during the past year. In addition, members were invited to attend an upcoming writing symposium (November 8-9) organized by the Inquiry Network. The keynote will be delivered by Dr. Janet Giltrow, from UBC, who will address the role of writing at a research university for both undergraduate and graduate students.

A discussion ensued on the state of writing in Faculties, with J. Archibald mentioning the work of the McGill Writing Center. It was suggested that an inventory of writing competitions and awards be collected.

Action: Members are to forward their Faculties' writing awards/competitions to M. Slapcoff.

5. Teaching Assistantships

Professor Mendelson reviewed the question raised at the 14 March 2012 meeting regarding the changing use and allocation of TAs. Some of the issues raised were the following:

- difficulty of implementing inquiry based learning due to the reduction of TAs and teaching support;
- possible affects on fundamental learning experience of undergraduate students;
- loss of essential training ground/experience for Faculty and TAs;
- increased Faculty workload; how to expand our teaching efforts and deliver programs effectively;
- effective use of TAs other than for grading;
- the need for a review of the basis of allocation of TAships —e.g., on relevancy and on numerical enrolment.

It was suggested that a working group be established to draft best practices in training and effective use of TAs. The document could also be used to build the case for support, linking it to the Inquiry Network's learning outcomes. M. Kilgour and J. Ellis showed interest in being a part of the working group.

Action: M. Mendelson and C. Weston will discuss membership and terms of reference. This will be returned to STL for further discussion.

6. Unit updates:

6.1 DP SLL: The topic of the next Joint Board of Governors-Senate meeting will be universal design for learning. The aim is to engage governors and senators with the idea that courses and pedagogy can be designed to enhance access to the material for a wide range of learners.

Action: Frederic Fovet, Director, Office for Students with Disabilities, should be invited to present to STL members at an upcoming meeting.

6.2 CIO:

- a) S. Roy advised that the implementation of the LMS is complete.
- b) A Coordinating Committee composed of CCS, TLS, Faculty representative, and the School of Continuing Studies will be working to prioritize future projects, such as SRS (clickers), lecture recording, e-portfolios, and analytics. Y. Steinert asked to be included in the discussion surround e-portfolios.

Action: J. Abitbol will communicate with S. Roy regarding SSMU representation.

6.3 TLS:

- a) C. Weston provided a reminder to those Faculties who have not submitted any information regarding their teaching awards. Members were asked to communicate their information to the Secretary.
- b) The Undergraduate Outcomes Working Group held a retreat on October 5th. It is anticipated that a consultation process will be launched shortly.
- c) The Assessment Working Group will conduct a survey to benchmark current assessment practices in large classes at McGill.
- d) A request for research on best practices in assessment in large classes was prepared for submission to the EAB (Education Advisory Board) and will be prioritized by the Provost's Office relative to other requests.

6.4 Student Services:

- a) A workshop series on Aboriginal perspectives is being launched.
- b) An outreach program, which the McGill Community can consult, has been established by Student Mental Health.

7. Other business

- a) In a recent meeting with the Provost and the DP-SLL, SSMU raised concerns regarding lecture recordings. S. Roy was asked to present the current technologies, constraints, and barriers at the December STL meeting.

Action: Lecture recording will be placed on the agenda for the 11 December meeting. J. Redel from SSMU will be invited to attend.

- b) Professor Mendelson asked that the constraints on students taking courses outside their program/Faculty be placed on an upcoming agenda.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:55.