



UNIVERSITY SENATE

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION MEETING OF MAY 9, 2003

ATTENDANCE

- PRESENT: Dr. J. W. O'Brien (Speaker); Dr. F. Lowy; Prof. M. Danis; Mr. M. Di Grappa, Mr. L. English; Dr. J. Lightstone; Mr. B. Al-Ken; Prof. C. Bayne; Me Suzanne Birks; Prof. T. Byrnes; Mr. Y. Cormier; Dean N. Esmail; Prof. J. Etezadi; Prof. J. Grant; Prof. A.M. Hanna; Ms. L. Healey; Prof. V. S. Hoa; Prof. E. Jacobs; Mr. R. Lee; Prof. C. MacKenzie; Mr. A. McAusland; Mr. W. Merhi; Prof. D. Morin; Dr. R. J. Oppenheimer; Prof. S. Panet-Raymond; Dean E. Sacca; Prof. H. Shulman; Dean M. Singer; Mr. A. Slater; Prof. T. Stathopoulos; Prof. P. Thornton; M Prof. R. Tremblay; Prof. D. Vivian
- ABSENT: Dr. C. Bertrand; Mr. W. Curran; Mr. Y. Engler; Prof. A. English; Ms. S. Friesinger; Ms. C. Ghawi; Ms. Ishii; Dean C. Jackson; Mr. R. Luppicini; Mr. R. Maguire; Prof. P. Ouellet; Dean J. Tomberlin; Ms. S. Virk

Documents associated with the Minutes

- US-2003-3-D5 Committee appointments  
US-2003-3-D6 Memo regarding the appointment of a Tribunal Hearing Chair  
US-2003-3-D7 Report from the Academic Programs Committee  
US-2003-3-D8  
and D9 Major graduate curriculum changes - Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science  
US-2003-3-D10  
and D11 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science  
US-2003-3-D12  
and D13 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts  
US-2003-3-D14 Minor undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science  
US-2003-3-D15 Addendum to the academic planning mandate

1. Call to order

Dr. O'Brien called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m.

Dr. O'Brien welcomed Me Suzanne Birks, the University's new Legal Counsel. He reminded Senators that the holder of this position had become a non-voting member of Senate since the implementation of the revised University By-Laws.

2. Approval of the Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda as submitted was duly moved and seconded. However, Mr. Cormier moved an amendment to add an item regarding issues of racism between items 5 and 6, the first dealing with a case brought before the Student Hearing Panel and the second concerning remarks made by the Rector which were reported in a recent article.

A discussion ensued on the appropriateness of adding this amendment and the role of Steering Committee in setting Senate agendas, further to which the vote was taken on the proposed amendment.

R-2003-3-8 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Cormier, Slater), the amendment to add an item entitled "Issues of racism" to the agenda was defeated by a majority.*

The vote was then called on the main motion:

R-2003-3-9 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Stathopoulos, Sacca), it was resolved with a majority (Al-Ken, Cormier, Lee and Slater asking that their dissent be recorded) that the agenda be approved as submitted.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting held March 14, 2003

R-2003-3-10 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lowy, Jacobs), it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of March 14, 2003 be approved, subject to a correction to the attendance.*

4. Business arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

5. Committee Appointments

R2003-3-11 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lightstone, Stathopoulos), it was unanimously resolved that, Senate approve the appointments to Senate Committees, as set out in Document US-2003-3-D5.*

6. Appointment of a Tribunal Hearing Chair

A motion was moved by Dr. Lightstone, seconded by Dean Singer, that Senate approve the Tribunal Chair appointee, as set out in Document US-2003-3-D6.

Mr. Cormier indicated that this appointment should be postponed, reiterating the same reasons he had invoked at the March 14 Senate meeting. Dr. Lightstone responded that the workings of tribunal hearing panels were not germane to the appointment of the chairs.

Mr. Lee pointed out that there was a conflict of interest, or at least an appearance of conflict of interest, given that this nominee was an instructor in the Department of Continuing Education. It was established by the Provost that the Continuing Education Department is separate and distinct from the Faculties. Nonetheless, several Senators expressed concerns regarding the appearance of fairness. Accordingly, the motion was withdrawn by the mover and the seconder. The possibility of conflict of interest will be looked into, and the matter brought back to the next Senate meeting if it appears appropriate to do so.

7. Report from the Academic Programs Committee

7.1 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

R2003-3-12 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Sacca, Esmail), it was unanimously resolved that the major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer*

*Science, as set out in Documents US-2003-3-D8 and D9, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2003-3-D7.*

7.2 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

R2003-3-13 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Singer, Tremblay), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science, as set out in Documents US-2003-3-D10 and D11, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2003-3-D7.*

7.3 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts

R2003-3-14 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (MacKenzie, Lee), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Fine Arts, as set out in Documents US-2003-3-D12 and D13, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2003-3-D7.*

7.4 Minor undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

The Speaker informed Senate that those curriculum changes were submitted for information purposes only.

8. Remarks from the Rector

Dr. Lowy informed Senate of two recent public statements made by the new Minister of Education, Mr. Pierre Reid, the former Rector of Université de Sherbrooke and former Chair of CRÉPUQ. Mr. Reid stated his support for university autonomy and reiterated the government's position to maintain the tuition freeze.

The Rector updated Senate on the various initiatives undertaken regarding peace and conflict resolution, namely of the series of lectures and panels for which proposals are being submitted, the Diversity Initiative which is being launched with the collaboration of Special Advisor Patricia Gabel and the establishment of the Centre for International and Cross-Cultural Dispute Resolution.

Regarding the issues of racism, Dr. Lowy invited anyone who is interested in what has been reported to talk directly to him. He mentioned that the document that Mr. Cormier had distributed does not give an accurate picture of the situation and that Senate is not the appropriate venue to discuss this issue.

9. Items for information

9.1 Report from SCAPP regarding an addendum to the Academic Planning Mandate

Referring to document US-2003-3-D15, Dr. Lightstone reminded Senate that it had charged SCAPP to oversee the academic planning process. The current planning mandate, adopted by SCAPP in 2001, includes following four broad objectives:

1. faculty renewal and retention,
2. development of research and research funding,
3. effective use of the new information technologies in pedagogy; and
4. student retention and accessibility.

SCAPP has determined that all themes are still relevant but that a fifth theme should be added relating to the increased participation in high quality, research-oriented graduate education. This is a necessary complement to two of the four existing themes, namely numbers 1 and 2 stated above. Dr. Lightstone emphasized that Quebec and Canada are in dire need of more graduates with masters and doctoral education.

## 9.2 Other items for information

Senators were apprised of the other following items for information:

- The lawsuit against the CSU by Hillel has been suspended by the Superior Court Judge until all internal recourses have been exhausted; (Mr. Slater)
- The huge turnout at the recent CSU election. The Evolution Slate will be taking office as of June 1; (Mr. Lee)
- A Concordia MFA graduate student was named Best Director at the Hot Docs Festival, a major film festival held in Toronto; (Prof. MacKenzie)
- A JMSB MBA student won the Pierre Péladeau Bursary of \$50,000 in a competition for student entrepreneurs; (Prof. Morin)
- Fifteen of the 18 students in the South Africa SIP Program will be graduating at this convocation; (Prof. Bayne)
- The Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science will be hosting a conference on housing from June 23 to 27, with participants from over 40 countries; (Prof. Hanna)
- Dr. Nadia Bhuiyan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering won the grand prize of Genesis award for the design of a wheel chair; (Prof. Hoa)
- Concordia's success rate in the applications for graduate fellowships with the various granting agencies; (Dean Sacca)

## 10. Question period

Referring to the document distributed earlier by Mr. Cormier regarding Mr. Chadi Serhal and Mr. Zev Tiefenbach, Mr. Slater commented on the absence of proportionality in the treatment of both students and asked the Rector to address this injustice. Dr. Lowy responded that on September 9, Mr. Serhal had completed his degree program and had applied to graduate in the Fall and therefore was listed as a non-student in the Registrar's records. Dr. Lowy added that Mr. Serhal had registered for a Continuing Education course on November 20 and received the letter banning him on November 25. While Mr. Tiefenbach had also completed his degree program on September 9, he had not applied to graduate. Therefore, because of the Arts and Science regulations on registration which allow a certain amount of time to elapse between registrations, Mr. Tiefenbach was still listed as a student in the Registrar's records. The fact that Mr. Tiefenbach had not been registered for several semesters was only known when Mr. Tiefenbach disclosed this information during his hearing. Nevertheless, because of the uncertainty and the

perception, after having consulted Prof. Marcel Danis, the University has referred this matter to Me Stéphane Fillion, from Heenan Blaikie.

Mr. Cormier noticed that some documents in today's package are dated as far back as January. Thus, he wondered if Dr. Lightstone's statement at a recent Board meeting to the effect that three Senate meetings had been cancelled because there was no business to discuss was merely an excuse to avoid discussing other issues. Dr. Lightstone replied that many documents, such as the curriculum changes, must be vetted through various processes before they are ready to be reviewed by Senate.

Mr. Cormier asked Dr. Lowy to clarify remarks he was reported having said and which were published in *The Canadian Jewish News*, to the effect that a minority of Muslim students identified with Hamas, that the Pro-Palestinians were the principal aggressors in Concordia's tensions regarding the Middle-East conflict and that there was an alliance between Muslim and anarchist students at Concordia. Dr. Lowy prefaced his reply by indicating that he welcomed the opportunity to set matters straight about a speech he made before a branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. He informed Senate that he was asked why Concordia does not clamp down hard on problem groups, at which time he answered that he had no reason to believe that Concordia students are terrorists although there may be some individuals who identify with Hamas, while pointing out that the majority of Concordia students do not hold these views.

In response to the comment attributed to him that Pro-Palestinians were the principal aggressors in Concordia's tensions, the Rector had stated to the audience that the pro-Palestinian students on campus took the initiative, coinciding with the start of the second Intafida. With respect to the alliance between Muslims and anarchists, Dr. Lowy had mentioned that while the problems between the administration and the CSU antedate the resurgence of Israeli/Palestinian conflict, pro-Palestinian students clearly supported the agenda of the past two CSU governments, which were comprised of some members who describe themselves as anarchists.

When asked by Mr. Merhi how he intended to set the record straight in the public arena to correct the above and other misrepresentations, the Rector replied that it is not effective to go back to the media since this usually just perpetuates the inaccuracies.

Mr. Slater asked Dr. Lowy if students had been consulted in drafting revisions to Bill 32, the Student Accreditation Act. Dr. Lowy responded that the University had submitted its brief recently, and that students had also been invited to submit their brief to the Accreditation Committee.

11. Other business

There was no other business to bring before Senate.

12. Next meeting

The next meeting of Senate will be held on Friday, May 23, 2003.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m., on a motion moved by Prof. Stathopoulos and seconded by Dean Esmail.

Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of Senate