



UNIVERSITY SENATE

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2004

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Dr. J. W. O'Brien (Speaker); Dr. F. Lowy; Prof. M. Danis; Mr. M. Di Grappa; Dr. J. Lightstone; Ms. A. Beck; Me Suzanne Birks; Prof. T. Byrnes; Ms. K. Childs; Mr. W. Curran; Prof. M. Doyle; Prof. J. Grant; Mr. B. Hamideh, Prof. A.M. Hanna; Ms. L. Healey; Prof. V. S. Hoa; Ms. V. Hoang; Dean C. Jackson; Mr. K. Khilkevitch; Mr. R. Luppicini; Prof. C. MacKenzie; Mr. A. McAusland; Prof. D. Morin; Dr. R. J. Oppenheimer; Ms. N. Pomerleau; Prof. C. Ross; Mr. M. Schulz; Prof. H. Shulman; Dean M. Singer; Mr. A. Spiro; Prof. P. Thornton; Dean J. Tomberlin; Prof. C. Trueman; Mr. L. Tsang; Prof. C. Vallejo; Prof. D. Vivian; Dr. T. Vo-Van

ABSENT: Dr. C. Bertrand; Prof. W. Bukowski; Prof. A. Dutkewych; Mr. L. English; Dean N. Esmail; Prof. E. Jacobs; Mr. D. O'Driscoll; Prof. D. Peltier-Rivest; Dean E. Sacca; Prof. R. Tremblay

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. O'Brien at 2:22 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

R-2004-1-5 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Hamideh, Lightstone), it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda be approved, as submitted.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting held November 28, 2003

R-2004-1-6 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lightstone, Morin), it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 28, 2003 be approved, as submitted.*

4. Business arising from the Minutes

4.1 Update by the Rector on the Search for Vice-Rector, Advancement and Alumni Affairs (Document US-2004-1-D5)

Pursuant to his presentation in connection with the need and the search procedure for a Vice-Rector, Advancement and Alumni Affairs at the last Senate meeting, Dr. Lowy reiterated the necessity of a high level individual to ensure greater coordination between the Advancement and Alumni units and to spearhead fundraising for the building campaigns and the upcoming capital campaign. Given that the top candidates will come from the private sector, they would probably be reluctant to participate in the open process required under our current search procedures. Moreover, the number of members on the

search committee can be cumbersome, making it difficult to convene meetings and complete the process in a timely manner. The composition of the search committee for this position is smaller but has the same proportion of faculty members as that of the larger search committees. Dr. Lowy acknowledged that this was a break from our tradition while stating that there has never been this type of position at the University.

Prof. Shulman commented that the extensive revision which resulted in the current search procedures had taken many years and said that he was troubled by the fact that the Board of Governors had adopted new procedures without any consultation. Moreover, the composition of the committee provided for a disproportionately high number of Governors and for the possibility of having three of the four Faculties unrepresented. A prior consultation process to explain why this situation is exceptional would have been desirable. Prof. Shulman expressed hope that an item be placed on a future Senate agenda on the role of Senate and its relationship with the Board of Governors as well as the role non-academic senior administrators with respect to academic priorities.

At the request of Prof. Hoa, speaking privileges were granted to Prof. Maria Peluso, President of CUPFA. She stated similar concerns to those expressed by Prof. Shulman and spoke of the search process in terms of inconsistency, lack of vision and insecurity. In her view, the new position does not require to be at a Vice-Rector level. She also pointed out the loss of representation of part-time faculty members as well as the fact that the Electoral College is being told how to run its nomination process for the staff representative. Although the Board has final authority, Prof. Peluso opined that it should not be used in an abusive manner.

Dr. Lowy responded to those comments by agreeing that a discussion could occur at the March Senate meeting. However, he specified that it would be a mistake to misconstrue the intentions of the members of the Board Executive, who are more familiar with a different model of decision-making, and assured Senate that their motivation was purely practical, in light of recent difficulties encountered by several universities with respect to their fundraising efforts.

5. Committee appointments (Document US-2004-1-D6)

Dr. O'Brien pointed out that the name of Prof. Marion Wagschal, from the Faculty of Fine Arts, should be added as a member of the Distinguished Professor Emeritus Committee.

R-2004-1-7     *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lowy, Childs), it was unanimously resolved that the appointment to Senate committees, as outlined in Document US-2004-1-D6, be approved, as revised.*

6. Report from the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2004-1-D7)

6.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts (Document US-2004-1-D8)

R-2004-1-8 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Jackson, Singer), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Fine Arts set out in Document US-2004-1-D8 be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2004-1-D7.*

6.2 Minor undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science (Documents US-2004-1-D9 and D10)

Dr. O'Brien stated that minor curriculum changes are presented for information purposes only.

7. Remarks from the Rector

Dr. Lowy devoted his remarks to the upcoming Commission parlementaire de l'Éducation, a bipartisan standing education committee of the Quebec government, chaired by West Island MNA Geoff Kelley. Hearings will begin on February 17 in Quebec City to examine the relationship between quality, funding and accessibility in higher education. These special hearings are held in addition to those held annually. They will be more comprehensive and significant than any in recent years. This Commission was put in place following cries that Quebec universities are falling behind those in other provinces by an estimated \$375 million per year and the adverse effect this will have on Quebec's future.

The Rector said that CREPUQ is making a case for the sector as a whole, stating the importance of post-secondary education and of its impact on Quebec's economy. However, while all Quebec universities agree that they are falling behind with respect to funding compared to the rest of Canada and North America in general, there is no agreement on how to deal with this shortfall. Larger universities will likely make bolder recommendations, since each member university will also be presenting its own brief. Individuals and other groups can appear before the Commission, and so far more than 100 requests have been received. The Quebec government bears a larger part of the cost of universities compared to other provinces, 72% as compared with an average outside Quebec of 55%. Quebec students pay less of the cost through their tuition, 16% as opposed to 31% on average in the rest of Canada. Dr. Lowy said that it is unrealistic to think that the government can massively increase funding. While it is important to maintain the high level of access to the public system, it is also crucial to maintain the quality of education students will receive.

Provost Jack Lightstone gave some specific information about how the revenue shortfall has affected Concordia. From 1995 to 1999, Concordia, like other universities, not only lost 25% of its operating grant but also lost five years of indexation, for a combined loss of approximately 37.5% of its operating revenue, representing between \$50 and \$55 million.

The government instituted a three-year reinvestment program that provided about \$20 million for Concordia, resulting in a net loss of \$30 to \$35 million. Moreover, Dr. Lightstone stated the university's budget had been recalculated on the basis of the change in the funding formula in the year 2000, by which every activity of the university would be funded at 100% of an observed average cost. However, Concordia often only received 70% of what it expected, representing an estimated \$13 million shortfall. As for Concordia's needs, it requires 318 new full-time faculty members over the next five years,

290 of whom have been hired so far. Only about 80 of 318 will replace retired professor. Therefore, an additional amount between \$21 and \$24 million will be required to cover the new hires.

The Provost opined that full indexation should be restored, representing \$25 million over five years. Moreover, \$6.2 million over five years is needed to hire additional support staff, as well as \$400 million to cover capital expenditures and another \$15 to adequately operate and maintain the physical infrastructure. He mentioned that although a public debate should occur, increased funding is needed immediately and the discussion on the long-term solution should not be invoked as an excuse not to fund the University now.

As for the suggestion from some universities that so-called research-intensive institutions should receive more funding than other universities, Dr. Lightstone said all students deserve to be treated equally and that every faculty member must have the same opportunities to develop research. He concluded by saying that Concordia's preferred choice to make up for the shortfall would be for the government to increase its subsidy. However, if the government cannot inject additional funds, an option already mentioned by CREPUQ is to increase tuition fees. This should be considered an option only if certain conditions are met that do not hinder accessibility. One possible scheme is that the tuition increase could be paid by the government and reimbursed by students once they are earning taxable income.

Pursuant to this presentation, Dr. Lowy and Dr. Lightstone responded to questions from Senators. Notwithstanding the repayment scheme, Student Senators Childs and Beck registered their disappointment with the fact that increase in tuition fees was been considered.

8. Items for information

Dean Jackson was pleased to report on the success of graduate Christopher Hinton, who, for the second time in his career, has been nominated for an Oscar, this time for his animated film "Nibbles". Also, Mr. Félix Dufour-Laperrière, a second-year animation student, has been nominated for a Jutras for his film "L'encre noir sur fond d'azur".

Dean Jackson also saluted the members of Studio Arts Department, chaired by Prof. David Elliott, for their role in the newly-created BFA Major in Intermedia/Cyberarts, which was approved earlier by Senate.

Ms. Childs informed Senators that the Concordia Debating Society hosted the first-ever North American Women's Debating Open. She reported that 22 teams participated in the tournament, which received a pledge of support from the Montreal Municipal Council.

9. Question period

No other questions were asked.

10. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the Open Session.

11. Next meeting

The next meeting of Senate will be held on Friday, March 19, 2004, at 2 p.m.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m., on a motion moved by Dean Singer and seconded by Ms. Childs.

Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of Senate