

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, October 12, 2007, immediately after
the Closed Session meeting, in the Hall Building, Room H 767
on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Ms. V. Allard; Mr. W. Chan; Dr. L. Dandurand; Prof. O. Dyens; Mr. A.D. Fernandes; Prof. B. Gamoy; Dean D. Graham; Prof. A. Hamalian; Mr. B. Hamideh; Mr. S. Jack; Prof. M. Jamal; Ms. K. Kashfi; Prof. Prof. W. Lynch; Prof. B. Nelson; Prof. N. Nixon; Ms. A. Novoa; Ms. A. Peek; Prof. M. Peluso; Prof. M. Pugh; Mr. J. Redler; Ms. C. Reimer; Prof. C. Ross; Prof. F. Shaver; Prof. P. Stoett; Prof. C. Trueman

Non-voting members: Mr. R. Côté; Mr. W. Curran; Me M. Danis; Mr. M. Di Grappa; Mr. L. English; Me P. Fréreau; Ms. L. Healey; Dr. J. W. O'Brien (*Speaker*)

Also attending: Dr. G. Kanaan (Acting Dean, John Molson School of Business)

ABSENT

Voting members: Prof. R. Cross; Dean N. Esmail; Dr. C. Lajeunesse; Prof. E. Mongerson; Prof. J. Segovia; Dean S. Sharma; Ms. M. Sheppard; Dean C. Wild; Prof. W. Zerges

Non-voting member: Mr. A. McAusland

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:12p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Prof. Hamalian moved to amend the Agenda in order to remove item 6 regarding graduate studies representation on Senate. The motion to amend was seconded by Prof. Peluso. After having heard Prof. Hamalian's rationale and Dr. Dandurand's rebuttal thereto, a vote was taken further to which the motion to amend was defeated by a majority. The vote was then taken on the main motion.

R-2007-9-4 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Novoa), it was resolved that the Agenda be approved as submitted.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of September 21, 2007

R-2007-9-5 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lynch, Shaver), it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of September 21, 2007 be approved.*

4. Business arising from the Minutes

4.1 “Committee of the Whole” discussion on the relationship between the Board of Governors and Senate

Dr. O’Brien conveyed that, at its last meeting, Steering Committee felt that it would be useful for Senate to hold a general informal discussion on issues that the University is facing in light of the President’s departure. It is therefore proposed that Senate have a “Committee of the Whole”-type discussion to allow Senators to express their views without having to culminate them into a formal resolution. Senators were amenable to this approach. During the discussion, several Senators stated their views and the following points emerged:

- The University belongs to the faculty, students and staff, not the Board of Governors or the Minister of Education;
- The Board of Governors, while being the highest governing body responsible for general oversight, should not get involved in the day-to-day operations;
- Senate, the highest academic body, should have a say in all important decisions affecting the University;
- The line of communication between Senate and the Board should be clear and unfettered;
- To promote understanding between both bodies, members of Senate should be invited to Board meetings, and vice-versa, and to hold a yearly joint meeting of Senate and the Board;
- Senate should have formal representation on the Board and vice-versa;
- A periodic review of the governance structure should be undertaken to address the concerns about the inter-connection of Senate and the Board;
- A joint task force of Senate and the Board of Governors should be established to review overall University governance;
- External Board members are not actively involved in the University and therefore do not have a true understanding of the academic milieu and its issues;
- The Board should be alerted to the concerns expressed by Senate and the internal community and act upon them;
- Senate and the internal community are owed an explanation as to why the President is leaving.

In light of the above concerns and the overwhelming support of Senators for the establishment of a joint task force, a preliminary motion was drafted by Dean Graham as follows:

THAT Senate recommend to the Board of Governors the establishment of a joint task force of Senate and the Board, with membership and exact mandate to be determined, but in general to examine and make recommendations on policies and procedures connected with university governance, including but not limited to such matters as the By-laws of Concordia University, respective roles of and channels of communication between the two bodies, periodic review of university governance and the desirability of more frequent contact including such possibilities as a joint annual meeting.

It was agreed that this motion be referred to Steering Committee in order that a more precise mandate and composition be defined prior to formally adopting this resolution and forwarding it to the Board of Governors. In the meantime, Dr. Dandurand undertook to convey the essence of Senate's discussion at the upcoming Board meeting.

4.2 Recommendation to the Board of Governors regarding the continuation of the Provost search

Pursuant to the last Senate meeting, at the suggestion of Ms. Novoa, Steering Committee had been asked to consider placing an item on the next Senate Agenda to canvass Senate's view about whether or not the search for a Provost should be continued, with the objective that it make a recommendation to the Board of Governors on this matter.

A discussion ensued, during which most Senators, while acknowledging the legitimacy of the concerns of those who felt the search should not continue, opined that on balance it was preferable to continue the search.

R-2007-9-6 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Novoa, Hamideh), it was unanimously resolved that Senate recommend to the Board of Governors that the search for a Provost continue.*

5. Committee appointments (Document US-2007-9-D2)

R-2007-9-7 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Dandurand, Graham), it was unanimously resolved that the committee appointments, as outlined in Document US-2007-9-D2, be approved.*

6. Graduate Studies representation on Senate (Document US-2007-9-D3)

Dr. Dandurand indicated that, in light of her additional duties as Interim Provost, it is imperative that there be a separate voice at Senate representing graduate studies. Therefore, it is proposed that the seat attributed to the Dean of School of Graduate Studies be filled by Dr. Ted Stathopoulos until such time that the Advisory Committee to Review the School of Graduate Studies will have formulated its recommendations with respect to the School's structure and governance.

A discussion ensued, during which some Senators stated their concerns about the haphazard way the composition of Senate is being modified. It was underlined that the voice of other academics on Senate was lacking and that it could be argued that this seat should be filled by one of those, such as the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, among others. It was suggested that in lieu of attributing a seat to Dr. Stathopoulos, speaking privileges could be granted to him when necessary. It was also stated that this position was abolished without Senate's consent and that the composition of Senate as a whole should be revisited. Other Senators, however, spoke in support of the motion, emphasizing the importance of the voice of graduate studies on Senate.

In response to the above comments, Dr. Dandurand noted that she had not been privy to the decision to abolish the Dean's position. The Advisory Committee had already met twice, and she is hoping to present the governance structure of the School to Senate in due course. In the meantime, graduate studies must have a voice on Senate. She stated that her intent is not to privilege this sector but simply to ensure that its weight remain the same.

R-2007-9-8 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Dandurand, Chan), it was resolved with two opposed and one abstention (Hamalian requesting that her abstention be recorded into the Minute):*

Whereas the University abolished the position of Dean of Graduate Studies effective May 31, 2007;

Whereas the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies has convened an University-wide advisory committee to review the School of Graduate Studies which, as reported at the May 25 meeting of Senate, will submit a report to Senate by December 2007;

Whereas the current functions of the School of Graduate Studies remain unaltered during the review period in order to continue the normal operation of the University in the area of Graduate Studies;

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the seat on Senate for the position of the Dean of Graduate Studies be occupied by Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies Ted Stathopoulos for the 2007-2008 academic year.

7. Remarks from the President

7.1 Update on the search for a Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs

Reporting on behalf of Dr. Lajeunesse, Dr. O'Brien noted that since the last Senate meeting there had been no new developments. The Committee has a meeting tentatively scheduled for October 24 to review two applications and one nomination, pending the Board's decision at its meeting of October 18 that the search be continued.

8. Update on the search for a Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

Dr. Dandurand reported that the Committee met on October 4 and reviewed an impressive list of over 20 candidates. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on November 1.

9. Update on the search for a University Librarian

Reporting on behalf of Dean Esmail, Dr. Dandurand apprised Senate that the Committee had not met since the last Senate meeting but that the next meeting is scheduled for October 29 with the objective to determine a short list of candidates.

10. Items for information: Reports from University Councils and Boards, Senate Committees, and reports concerning outside bodies

10.1 Report on the faculty hiring pool

Dr. Dandurand indicated that the report was deferred to the next meeting, given the importance of the input of the Deans in this matter and that three of them were absent from today's meeting, attending to other University business.

10.2 Reports from Senate Standing Committees

Academic Planning and Priorities: Dr. Dandurand indicated that at its meeting of September 28, the Committee discussed its mandate and focus for 2007/2008 as well as integrated planning. The next meeting will be held on November 6.

Academic Programs: Dr. Morin reported that the committee had met on October 11 for over six hours to review a long list of programs which are in the pipeline for the November Senate meeting.

Finance: Mr. English indicated that the Committee will be meeting in the near future.

Library: There was no report.

Research: While the Committee has not met yet, Dr. Dandurand mentioned that the review of a series of research support initiatives and a draft policy framework for research chairs will be among the topics discussed at an upcoming meeting.

10.3 Report on general academic matters

Dr. Dandurand encouraged Senators to attend the workshops which are hosted by the School of Graduate Studies. The information can be found on the School's website, and the first workshop will be held on October 26 on avoiding and resolving conflict.

11. Question period

Ms. Tessier replied to queries regarding the availability of Senate Minutes to members of the Board of Governors, and vice-versa. She conveyed that the Minutes of all Open Session meetings of the Board of Governors and Senate, once approved, are posted on the website (<http://secretariat.concordia.ca/governors/>) and <http://secretariat.concordia.ca/senate/>), respectively.

12. Other business

Dr. Dandurand was very pleased to announce that Dr. François-Marc Gagnon was honored at the recent ACFAS (Association francophone pour le savoir) Gala, at which time he received the 2007 Prix André-Laurendeau, Sciences Humaines in recognition of his exceptional contributions made to research.

13. Next meeting

Dr. O'Brien noted that the next meeting of Senate will be held on Friday, November 9, 2007, at 2 p.m., in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room (Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate