

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION  
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, September 26, 2008,  
immediately following the Closed Session  
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room  
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Mr. S. Bellemare; Prof. L. Blair; Prof. J. Chaikelson; Dr. L. Dandurand; Mr. R. Doucet; Dean R. Drew; Prof. L. Dyer; Prof. B. Gamoy; Prof. J. Garrido; Mr. C. Goldfinch; Dr. D. Graham; Prof. A. Hamalian; Mr. S. Jack; Ms. K. Kashfi; Dean J. Locke; Prof. W. Lynch; Prof. S. McSheffrey; Prof. N. Nixon; Mr. P.R. Osei; Ms. A. Peek; Prof. M. Peluso; Prof. M. Pugh; Prof. C. Ross; Dean S. Sharma; Prof. F. Shaver; Ms. M. Sheppard; Associate Dean T. Stathopoulos; Prof. P. Stoett; Prof. C. Trueman; Mr. M.F. Uddin; Ms. R. Wilcox; Dean C. Wild; Dr. J. Woodsworth

Non-voting members: Mr. G. Beasley; Dr. D. Boisvert (*Speaker*); Mr. M. Di Grappa; Mr. L. English; Me B. Freedman; Ms. L. Healey; Mr. A. McAusland; Ms. E. Morey

ABSENT

Voting members: Mr. K. Diaz; Prof. A. English; Prof. M. Jamal; Prof. S. Lister

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:28 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

R-2008-8-6 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Dandurand), it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda be approved.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of May 23, 2008

Ms. Peek asked that the discussion be recorded in the Minutes. Ms. Tessier replied that she does not draft verbatim Minutes nor does she systematically reproduce each question asked and answered but specified that the discussion on substantive matters requiring actions or decisions is usually fully summarized in the Minutes. Dr. Boisvert indicated that Steering Committee will look into this matter.

In response to comments from Mr. Jack, the second phrase in the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph on page 4 under item 8 “Budget presentation” will be amended to read: *Of that amount, \$61 million will be reinvested in the weighting grid, of which Concordia’s share is 10.3%, representing \$6.288 million.* Moreover, for the sake of clarity and consistency, it was agreed that decimal points should be used when expressing figures, and the third and fourth paragraph will be corrected accordingly.

R-2008-8-7     *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Stathopoulos, Stoett), it was resolved with one abstention that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of May 23, 2008 be approved as amended.*

4.     Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda

In reply to a query regarding item 8.1, Report of the Finance Committee, Dr. Dyens, its past Chair, indicated that some discussions are on the table between the committee and the strategic planning group.

5.     Introduction to Senate – Open Session

The Speaker apprised the meeting that the importance of confidentiality of matters discussed in Closed Session meetings was addressed during the Closed Session which preceded this meeting.

As stated in the University By-Laws, Senate is subservient to the Board of Governors from which it derives its authority. The By-Laws delineate the powers of the Board of Governors, the highest governing body having overall superintending power, and those of Senate, the highest academic body. For example, the powers of the Board include, but are not limited to, appointing the President, Vice-Presidents and the Academic Deans, establishing procedures for their appointment, establishing Senate, Faculties, etc., fixing tuition fees, adopting the budget, conferring honorary degrees and awards of distinction. Senate is the final authority in all matters pertaining to the academic programs of the University, such as the approval of the Spring and Fall graduation lists, approval of curriculum, establishment of academic standards and regulations, etc.

Therefore, while Senate can make recommendations to the Board on any matter, Senators must keep in mind that Senate is bound to consider only matters that are directly of an academic nature. For example, while Senate reviews the budget from an academic priorities perspective, it does not adopt or approve the budget. Also, fees and charges, which are established by the Board, are not in its purview and should not be debated on the floor of Senate. Other matters of an administrative nature that are dealt with by the appropriate administrator, such as collective bargaining negotiations, repairs to building, etc., are also inappropriate topics to raise on the floor of Senate unless they have a clear and direct connection to academic operations.

Senators are encouraged to speak their mind at meetings, share their knowledge and articulate the views of the constituency that nominated them. However, they are expected to maintain an overriding loyalty to the University in its entirety rather than any part of it or constituency within it. In other words, Senators faced with the possibility of a conflict

between the interests of the constituency that nominated them and the interests of the University are bound to be mindful of the University's best interests as a whole.

Dr. Boisvert invited Senators to read the Handbook which was distributed with the documentation for this meeting. It will also be posted on the website of the Board and Senate. It regroups information relevant to members of Senate and will be updated as required to reflect changes to the composition of Senate, the mandates of its standing committees, etc., once approved. Suggestions from Senators for ways in which the Handbook could be improved are always welcome and should be submitted to the Secretary of Senate.

Meetings of Senate are chaired by the elected Speaker of Senate, who is a non-voting member. The procedures which guide Senate meetings are outlined in the Senator's Handbook, under section C. Agendas of Senate are set by Senate Steering Committee which meets during the week preceding the Senate meeting. Members who wish to submit items for consideration may do so by forwarding them to the Secretary of Senate prior to the meeting of Steering Committee. The dates of those meetings are included in the Handbook.

When asked why Robert's Rules of Order have not been officially adopted by Senate, Dr. Graham explained that, as indicated in the Handbook, Senate adheres to the principles of Robert's Rules but also relies on tradition and practice. While Senate meetings do require rules, Senators are not parliamentarians or specialists in procedures. The current system, which relies on an effective Speaker, has worked well and ensures that Senate spends time on substantive issues rather than debating rules of order. In response to queries about discussions on topics not in Senate's domain, Dr. Boisvert clarified that the academic perspective must be kept in mind when addressing matters not directly in its purview.

6. Election of the faculty members of the Steering Committee (Document US-2008-8-D4)

Dr. Boisvert conveyed that the terms of reference of Senate Steering Committee provide for one faculty member from each of the John Molson School of Business (JMSB), the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science (ENCS) and the Faculty of Fine Arts (FA) and two from the Faculty of Arts and Science (A&S). He gave the instructions in relation to the voting and to the eligibility requirements to sit on Steering Committee.

The following faculty members were elected by acclamation since they were the only eligible members from their Faculty not teaching at the usual time of Steering Committee meetings: Martin Pugh (ENCS), Lorrie Blair (FA) and Christopher Ross (JMSB). Arpi Hamalian was elected as one of the representatives of A&S after the first round of voting, while Peter Stoett was elected as the second representative of A&S after the second round of voting.

7. Report and recommendations from the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2008-8-D5)

7.1 Major graduate curriculum changes - Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science (Documents US-2008-8-D6 to D8)

R-2008-8-8 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Drew, Lynch), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer*

*Science, set out in Documents US-2008-8-D6 to D8, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2008-8-D5.*

7.2 Major graduate curriculum changes – John Molson School of Business (Documents US-2008-8-D9 to D13)

R-2008-8-9 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Stathopoulos, Sharma), it was unanimously resolved that the major graduate curriculum changes in the John Molson School of Business, set out in Documents US-2008-8-D9 to D13, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2008-8-D5.*

7.3 Curriculum process for undergraduate programs (Document US-2008-8-D14)

7.4 Curriculum process for graduate programs (Document US-2008-8-D15)

Dr. Boisvert indicated that these documents are submitted for information purposes.

8. Report of Senate Standing Committees

8.1 Academic Planning and Priorities (Documents US-2008-8-D16 and D17)

Dr. Boisvert proposed that Senate go into a committee of the whole to allow Senators to comment on the report without the need of having a formal motion before the meeting. Dr. Graham, Chair of SCAPP, summarized the context which led to the SCAPP report which is divided into three parts, dealing with Senate standing committees, its operating procedures and its composition. He indicated that SCAPP could draft implementation language, if Senate so wished. A discussion ensued, during which the main points made by Senators are summarized hereinafter together with Dr. Graham's responses:

- An inconsistency was pointed out between items 4 and 5 on page 4 of the report regarding the standing committees, the former item calling for monthly written reports while the latter item calls for committees to meet regularly, at least once in the Fall and in the Spring. Dr. Graham noted that those committees which meet regularly can bring substantive reports, while committees that have not met should so indicate by submitting a report of "no report". SCAPP's intention is to leave latitude to each committee to establish its own rhythm of meetings in accordance to its specific mandate. Dr. Dandurand noted in this connection that the Research Committee meets regularly but at a different rhythm of Senate, given that several of its documents are policy-based and time for consultation is required. It normally meets between four and five times yearly. Dr. Graham emphasized that the intention of SCAPP is to draft more detailed language regarding the mandate and procedures for standing committees.
- Further to a question with respect to the method of appointment on standing committees of students who are not members of Senate, it was noted that all appointments are made by the student union. Moreover, it was pointed out that students who sit on Senate often have other obligations and time constraints and, therefore, the practice of allowing non-Senators to sit on standing committees should continue.

- Electing a committee chair from among the committee members is problematic, especially when there is turnover. This is addressed for the Library Committee by proposing that the University Librarian chair that committee, but not for the Finance Committee. Dr. Graham remarked that this is consistent with the recommendation that all committee chairs be voting Senators, since SCAPP has also recommended that the University Librarian become a voting Senator. However, SCAPP concluded that the Finance Committee should not be chaired by the Vice-President, Finance, since it is not recommending that the administrative Vice-Presidents become voting members of Senate.
- The lack of part-time faculty representation on SCAPP, which brought forward recommendations on faculty member representation on Senate, was noted.
- The reasoning behind the proposal to adopt a consent agenda is understood but nonetheless one Senator expressed the view that adopting such a procedure could weaken Senate's diligence in examining each item individually. Dr. Graham responded that the consent agenda is mainly a time-saving measure for items that have usually do not cause any discussion, such as today's curriculum changes, and indicated that there is an easy mechanism for moving an item from the consent agenda onto the regular agenda.
- Disagreement was expressed regarding the obligation to submit questions destined for question period in advance of the meeting. It was felt that this would hinder the free flow of discussion. Referring to this practice in place at another Montreal university, Dr. Graham stated that SCAPP saw merit in giving priority to written questions which would allow the relevant persons to prepare an answer rather than to have to defer the answer to a subsequent meeting of Senate. He also emphasized that written questions would have priority, not exclusivity.
- Further to questions on how the number of full-time and part-time faculty members for each Faculty was determined, Dr. Graham conveyed the method and data used by SCAPP to arrive at its proposal. He underlined that the representation for part-time faculty members in three of the four Faculties is not proportional but absolute, the issue being that each of those Faculty have at least one guaranteed seat for part-time faculty members on Senate.
- The importance of establishing a strong Senate was emphasized. It was suggested that Senate move rapidly in making its recommendation to the Board with respect to its composition, as the Board may be willing to look at the restructuring of Senate more favorably given the current context.

Pursuant to the discussion, the Speaker of Senate proposed that the SCAPP report be approved in principle, which would allow parts of the report to be reworded and brought back to Senate for formal approval.

*R-2008-8-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Hamalian, Stoett), it was resolved with four abstentions that Senate approve in principle the SCAPP Report on the "Recommendations of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Role of Senate in University Governance", set out in Document US-2008-9-D16, and urge SCAPP to finalize the implementation documentation for final approval by Senate no later than its meeting of November 14, 2008 meeting.*

8.2 Library

8.3 Finance

Those committees have not met since the last Senate meeting.

8.4 Research (Document US-2008-8-D18)

Dr. Dandurand apprised Senators that the Strategic Research Plan, further to consultation with all Faculty Councils and the Council of the School of Graduate Studies, is in the midst of being finalized and will be presented to Senate at its October meeting.

9. Committee appointments (Document US-2008-8-D19)

*R-2008-8-11 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Stathopoulos), it was resolved with one opposed that the committee appointments, set out in Document US-2008-8-D19, be approved.*

10. Remarks from the President (Document US-2008-8-D20)

Dr. Woodsworth noted that she was pleased to be back at Concordia after an 11-year absence. A copy of her written report to the Board was included in the documentation. It covers some of her external activities and gives a flavor of her first weeks at Concordia. She apprised Senators of the success of the most recent events, such as Homecoming week, the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Shuffle and Family Fair Day.

With respect to the strategic planning exercise, she apprised Senate that a 1½-day retreat of the senior administration was recently held to begin the process of mapping out the plan. The ground work done over the last two years, including the feedback from the town hall meetings, was reviewed and discussed. Further to the retreat, three broad strategic areas emerged:

*High academic quality:* This should be highlighted. Concordia's key areas should be identified as well as the increase in its overall level of academic achievement.

*Outstanding student experience:* We should concentrate our efforts on creating the best experience for students throughout their studies

*Community engagement:* Emphasis needs to be placed on how we can do an even better job in engaging and participating in the external community.

As a foundation to achieve the above, superb management is required, which includes the financial viability of the University, good governance and transparency, proper human resources management. The effective communication of our successes both within and outside the Concordia community is the other key supporting strategy. A skeleton strategic plan to set out ideas is being drafted. It will be disseminated widely and a broad consultation process will take place to be completed before the Christmas break using open forums, the President's website and all other means to consult with the University community.

Dr. Woodsworth specified that all comments are welcome and can be sent to her via letter or email at [president@concordia.ca](mailto:president@concordia.ca).

The President congratulated Profs. Shimon Amir and Sherry Simon who have been elected Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada, Canada's oldest and most prestigious scholarly society. With respect to the Centraide Campaign, she encouraged everyone to contribute, this year's Concordia internal goal being set at \$100,000.

Dr. Woodsworth updated Senate on the governance issue and the Minister of Education's intention to pass governance legislation before the National Assembly rises. The proposed legislation would appear to be quite specific and restrictive, particularly with respect to Board size and composition. Dr. Woodsworth mentioned that the Board and its Executive Committee have been briefed about this issue.

Moreover, CREPUQ reviewed this matter at a meeting held on September 24. While there was no agreement amongst members regarding some aspects of the proposed legislation, there was a general consensus that the proposed model was not appropriate non-profit boards. CREPUQ is developing a communication plan and a plan of action. Dr. Woodsworth offered to keep Senate apprised of developments on this matter.

11. Items for information

11.1 Annual report from the Academic Hearing Panel (Document US-2008-8-D21)

Dr. Boisvert stated that, as required by the Academic Code of Conduct, the annual report from the Academic Hearing Panel is submitted for information purposes.

12. Question period

No questions were asked.

13. Other business

There was no other business to bring before Senate.

14. Next meeting

The next meeting of Senate will be held on Friday, October 17, 2008, at 2 p.m.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of Senate