

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, December 5, 2008, at 2 p.m.
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Prof. L. Blair; Prof. J. Chaikelson; Dr. L. Dandurand; Dean R. Drew; Prof. L. Dyer; Prof. A. English; Prof. B. Gamoy; Mr. C. Goldfinch; Dr. D. Graham; Prof. M. Jamal; Ms. K. Kashfi; Prof. S. Lister; 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; Prof. F. Shaver; Ms. M. Sheppard; 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. L. English; Me B. Freedman; Ms. L. Healey

ABSENT

Voting members: Mr. S. Bellemare; Mr. K. Diaz; Mr. R. Doucet; Prof. J. Garrido; Prof. A. Hamalian; Mr. S. Jack; Dean S. Sharma; Associate Dean T. Stathopoulos

Non-voting members: Mr. M. Di Grappa; Mr. A. McAusland; Ms. E. Morey

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Dean Locke asked that Document US-2008-11-D3 under Item 7.1 be removed from today's Agenda. It will be submitted for consideration at another meeting.

R-2008-11-1 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Jamal, Locke), it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda be approved as revised.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 14, 2008

R-2008-11-2 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Pugh), it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 14, 2008 be approved.*

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

In response to a query from Prof. Shaver regarding the retroactive suspension of the University Writing Test referred to on page 4 of the Minutes, Ms. Healey indicated that it is preferable to have changes implemented at the beginning of the academic year, thus the date of May 1, 2008, noting that all students admitted for May 2008, September 2008 and January 2009 will receive the information that the test is no longer required. Ms. Healey also clarified that the requirement has been suspended for students who have been at the University for several years and have not yet passed the test.

5. Presentation on the Student Food and Emergency Fund by Rev. Ellie Hummel

Dr. Boisvert introduced Rev. Ellie Hummel, Coordinator of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy, and invited her to address Senate. Rev. Hummel referred to an email which was recently sent to all members of the Concordia community appealing for funds to assist students by providing them food vouchers but also emergency bursaries.

Thanks to the generous response from the community, including the Board of Governors, the unions, the departments, etc., the larger Concordia community can reach out to students in need. The money amassed provides great relief for some students who otherwise would abandon their studies due to their precarious situation. Rev. Hummel explained that for some students the need for support goes beyond grocery vouchers and therefore the Student Emergency Food Fund has been expanded to the Student Emergency and Food Fund. The funds raised will continue to go towards grocery vouchers but will also go towards the awarding of occasional emergency bursaries, which will be administered by the Financial Aid and Awards Office. The Fund constitutes a societal safety net which matches the University's tradition and mission. She encouraged Senators to support the fund by making personal donations, participating in fundraising events or spreading the word.

6. Committee appointments (Document US-2008-11-D1)

R-2008-11-3 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Goldfinch), it was unanimously resolved that the committee appointments, outlined in Document US-2008-11-D1, be approved.

7. Report and recommendations from the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2008-11-D2)

7.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science (Documents US-2008-11-D4 to D9)

Dr. Boisvert reiterated that Document US-2008-11-D3 (BA Major in Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality) has been removed from the Agenda.

R-2008-11-4 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Locke, Kashfi), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science, set out in Documents US-2008-11-D4 to D9, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2008-11-D2.

7.2 Major undergraduate curriculum changes - Grade Submission Deadlines (Document US-2008-11-D10)

A motion was moved by Dr. Graham, seconded by Ms. Peek, to approve the recommendations concerning grade submission deadlines as set out in Document US-2008-11-D10. More specifically, it was proposed to clarify the text in the undergraduate calendar to specify that calendar days are used to determine the deadline. A discussion ensued further to which the following concerns, comments and suggestions were voiced:

- The proposed modification changes working conditions which might be more appropriately set out in a collective agreement than in the calendar;
- Some thesis courses cannot be corrected at the same speed;
- This modifies how scheduled final examinations are defined;
- The impact of this measure on notations and take-home examinations should be considered;
- This reduces the time that professors have to give a thoughtful evaluation, which could cause professors to opt for multiple choice examinations;
- Exam schedules should be changed to recapture the two lost days or, alternatively, the exam period should be compressed;
- Compressing the exam period is not a good option because it would create difficulties for students;
- The problem rests with those professors who do not respect the deadline submission and a better way should be found to deal with them;
- Is there a relationship between the number of late grade submissions and the number of F incompletes;
- The regulation was originally written when only paper submissions were in place and the fact that grades are now submitted electronically should be taken into account;
- A stricter rule will allow better enforcement.

The Provost and the Registrar responded to the above-noted concerns and comments. With respect to take-home examinations, Ms. Healey stated that they offer flexibility to professors and have never been an issue in terms of the deadline. Dr. Graham added that take-home exams can be addressed operationally at the departmental level.

The Provost explained that the spirit of the modification is to ensure that all grades be submitted no later than seven calendar days after the last scheduled final examination and cautioned Senate against micro-managing. He specified that no days are lost, in that seven days would become seven calendar days. This is not a new regulation and the addition of the word "calendar" is merely a clarification to enforce the existing wording which allows no leverage to address late grade submissions. The Academic Programs Committee wanted to ensure that the process for grade submission is progressive, that there is clear language which gives latitude to professors throughout the process while having an absolute deadline.

During the ongoing discussion, a few modifications were proposed with respect to the wording of the regulation, which ultimately led Profs. Ross and Chaikelson to respectively move and second that the main motion be withdrawn and that the matter be referred back to the Academic Programs Committee. This motion was adopted by a majority.

7.3 Minor undergraduate curriculum changes - University Writing Test (Document US-2008-11-D11)

Dr. Boisvert indicated that minor curriculum changes are submitted for information purposes.

8. Report of other Senate Standing Committees

8.1 Academic Planning and Priorities (Document US-2008-11-D12)

Senators had no questions regarding this report.

8.2 Finance (Document US-2008-11-D13)

The Speaker noted that the Committee Chair is not a member of Senate and that any question should be directed to Prof. Chaikelson who is a member of the Committee. In response to questions, the latter said:

- that the Committee had asked for a presentation on the course costing process but was unsure of its use. Dr. Graham explained that the exercise is being done to seek a clearer understanding on the cost of each course section offered. It is essential to have the tools to make rational decisions regarding courses and programs; while cost is one factor, it is by no means the only one;
- that the Committee will be looking into the deficit at upcoming meetings;
- that the Committee has concerns about the use of large classrooms and therefore has requested information on how automated classroom bookings are made. Dr. Graham opined that this is an operational issue which should be analyzed by the Operational Efficiency Committee.

8.3 Library

Mr. Beasley informed Senators that the Library Committee had recently met and that a written report would be provided for the January Senate meeting.

8.4 Research

The Research Committee has not met since the last Senate meeting.

9. Update of the Advisory Search Committee for a Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science

Dr. Graham apprised Senate that the Search Committee is scheduled to meet on December 17 to review the long list of candidates.

10. Remarks from the President (Document US-2008-11-D14)

Dr. Woodsworth highlighted some of the successes involving students which she had included in her written report. She had been invited to serve as the lead judge in a competition organized by the Concordia Entrepreneurship and Management Association which allowed her the opportunity to see and appreciate the professionalism of the students. She was also very proud that Concordia student Liliame Chamas had been chosen as a 2009 Rhodes Scholar. Ms. Chamas is one of only two students selected in Quebec.

With respect to her recent Installation, the President was extremely honored and touched by the ceremony. She thanked the Installation Committee, headed by Mrs. Lillian Vineberg, for its hard work and dedication. She was delighted with the special showcase, presented under the banner "Imagining Great Change" which was held on the eve of the Installation. The showcase allowed faculty, staff, students and alumni to demonstrate their areas of creativity and accomplishments. She thanked the Showcase Committee, led by Dr. Ollivier Dyens.

The President closed her remarks by remembering that the following day would mark the 19th anniversary of the École Polytechnique massacre and by expressing her sympathies to the families and friends of the murdered women.

11. Items for information

There were no items for information.

12. Question period

In response to a query from Prof. Lynch, Mr. English indicated that there is no major variance to the projected year-end deficit of \$3.9 million. Further to a question from Prof. Ross, Mr. English confirmed that the \$1.16 million in contract buy-outs had been disbursed in the previous fiscal year.

In response to a question from Prof. Dyer, Dr. Dandurand explained that the slowdown of the process for ethics review for research was due to the advisor's precipitated departure on maternity leave. However, best efforts are being made to replace her and things should get back on track shortly.

11. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the meeting.

12. Next meeting

The Speaker noted that the next meeting of Senate will be held on Friday, January 16, 2009, at 2 p.m., in Room H 765/767 of the Hall Building.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate