

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION  
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, January 21, 2011  
immediately following the Closed Session meeting  
in the Norman D. Hébert, LL.D. Meeting Room  
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Mr. H. Abdullahi; Mr. N. Alatawneh; Mr. G. Alexandar; Ms. O. Alsaieq; Mr. G. Beasley; Mr. N. Burke; Prof. J. Camlot; Dean G. Carr; Prof. J. Chaikelson; Mr. E. Chevrier; Mr. M. Coleby; Dr. L. Dandurand; Prof. M. Debbabi; Prof. D. Douglas; Dean R. Drew; Prof. A. Dutkewych; Prof. L. Dyer; Me B. Freedman (*Acting President*); Mr. M. Freedman; Mr. D. Gal; Prof. J. Garrido; Dr. D. Graham; Prof. J. Grant; Prof. F. Khendek; Prof. G. Leonard; Dean B. Lewis; Ms. H. Lucas; Prof. W. Lynch; Ms. R. Mehreen; Prof. S. Mudur; Prof. B. Nelson; Prof. M. Paraschivoiu; Prof. M. Peluso; Prof. G. Rail; Prof. R. Reilly; Prof. C. Ross; Mr. A. Severyns; Dean S. Sharma; Prof. F. Shaver; Prof. W. Sims; Mr. R. Sonin; Prof. R. Staseson; Prof. P. Stoett; Mr. J. Suss; Prof. J. Turnbull; Prof. H. Wasson; Dean C. Wild

Non-voting members: Mr. P. Beauregard; Dr. D. Boisvert (*Speaker*); Mr. R. Côté; Ms. L. Healey; Mr. P. Kelley; Me D. McCaughey

ABSENT

Voting members: Prof. J. Garfin; Prof. M. Magnan; Mr. C. McKinnon; Ms. T. Seminara; Prof. P. Thornton

1. Call to order

The meeting was called at 2:07 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Dr. Boisvert apprised Senators that there is a typo in Document US-2011-1-D8 under item 6.2 which is submitted for information purposes only. The change will take effect for the 2011-2012 calendar rather than the 2012-2013 calendar. This document, together with the APC report and recommendation, Document US-2011-1-D5, will be revised accordingly.

R-2011-1-4 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Graham, Lynch), it was unanimously resolved that Senate approve the Agenda of the Open Session meeting, that items that items 3 to 7 be approved, ratified or received by consent.*

CONSENT

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 5, 2010

R-2011-1-5 *The Minutes of the Open session meeting of November 5, 2010 were approved by consent.*

4. Committee appointments (Document US-2011-1-D2)

R-2011-1-6 *The committee appointments, outlined in Document US-2011-1-D2, were approved by consent.*

5. Report of Senate Standing Committees

5.1 Academic Planning and Priorities (Document US-2011-1-D3)

5.2 Finance

5.3 Library (Document US-2011-1-D4)

5.4 Research

These reports are provided for information purposes. The Finance Committee did not file a report, and the Research Committee had not met since the last meeting.

6. Report and recommendations of the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2011-1-D5 - revised)

6.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts - Sections 16.3.3 and 81.20.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar (Document US-2011-1-D7)

R-2011-1-7 *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Fine Arts regarding Sections 16.3.3 and 81.20.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar, detailed in Document US-2011-1-D7, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2011-1-D5 – revised.*

6.2 Minor undergraduate curriculum changes – Section 15 of the Undergraduate Calendar (Document US-2011-1-D8 - revised)

Minor curriculum changes are submitted for information purposes only.

6.3 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

6.3.1 Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture (Document US-2011-1-D9)

6.3.2 Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry (Documents US-2011-1-D10 and D11)

6.3.3 Department of Communication Studies (Documents US-2011-1-D12 and D13)

6.3.4 Department of Education (Document US-2011-1-D14)

6.3.5 Department of Political Science (Document US-2011-1-D15)

6.3.6 Department of Religion (Document US-2011-1-D16)

R-2011-1-8 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science, detailed in Documents US-2011-1-D9 to D16, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2011-1-D5 – revised.*

6.4 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts – Department of Creative Arts Therapies (Document US-2011-1-D17)

R-2011-1-9 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Fine Arts, detailed in Document US-2011-1-D17, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2011-1-D5 – revised.*

6.5 Major graduate curriculum changes – School of Graduate Studies – Special Individualized Programs (Document US-2011-1-D18)

R-2011-1-10 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the School of Graduate Studies regarding the Special Individualized Programs, detailed in Document US-2011-1-D18, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2011-1-D5 – revised.*

6.6 Minor graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts - Department of Creative Arts Therapies (Document US-2011-1-D19)

Minor curriculum changes are submitted for information purposes only.

7. Annual report from the Office of Rights and Responsibilities (Document US-2011-1-D20)

In accordance with Article 16 of the Code of Rights and Responsibilities, the report of the Advisor detailing the Office's activities was submitted to the Senate for information purposes.

REGULAR

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

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

9. Departure of the President

Dr. Boisvert apprised Senate that this item was placed on the Agenda further to a discussion at Steering Committee, which had recommended that a committee-of-the-whole discussion be held to allow Senators to express themselves. At Steering Committee's request, an invitation was forwarded to the Chair of the Board, Mr. Peter Kruyt, inviting Board members to attend the Senate meeting so that they could hear Senators' concerns.

While Mr. Kruyt was not in attendance, a statement was distributed in which he acknowledged that the President's departure had raised concerns among the internal community about issues of governance and other matters at the University, outlined his concerted efforts to reach out the Concordia community, including a meeting with Steering Committee of Senate, and conveyed his intention to propose a joint meeting of the Board of Governors and Senate before the end of April 2011 to foster open and constructive dialogue on the issues.

The Speaker introduced President-elect Dr. Frederick Lowy who had asked to attend today's meeting and to address Senate. Dr. Lowy apprised Senators that he had not expected an invitation to return to the University. However, during his 10-year tenure he had enjoyed his time and had developed strong positive feelings for the University. This contributed to his decision to accept the Board's invitation to lead the University for the next 12 to 18 months.

Dr. Lowy emphasized the importance of the relationship between the Board of Governors and Senate and recognized that several challenges and issues need to be addressed forthrightly and soon. Acknowledging that there is considerable unrest among those who work and study at the University, he undertook to investigate and deal with the adversarial component so that it does not worsen. He outlined the proper distinction between the role of the Board, Senate and senior administration. He told Senators that he espouses transparency and openness and that his main purpose in coming back is to help the University through this troubled time. He concluded his statement by indicating that he could not say more before gaining a full understanding of what had transpired.

Following Dr. Lowy's address, Dr. Graham read a statement signed by the senior academic administrators, a copy of which was distributed, conveying that while they can neither participate in the discussion nor vote on any motion arising therefrom, they welcome the opportunity for an informed and respectful debate by faculty and student Senators. The statement reaffirmed their belief that the well-being of the University's academic mission must always be their paramount consideration as well as their confidence in Concordia's vitality and their commitment to open, accountable and collegial academic governance.

The comments formulated by Senators during the committee-of-the-whole discussion are summarized as follows:

- It is unfortunate that the Chair of the Board is not present to explain a decision made behind closed doors. Clarifications are necessary with the respect to the reasons and terms of the President's departure.
- We are in this situation because while the Board may mean well, it does not do well.
- This is the second departure of a President in three years. The decapitation of the senior administration demonstrates instability, and going forward we need to make sure that this situation does not repeat itself. The press release was misleading and deceptive, as it gave the impression that the departure of the President had been of her own volition, which now does not seem to be the case. Anger is stemming from this deception and there are many departmental motions calling for the resignation of Board members.
- Aside from the departure of two Presidents, there has also been high attrition among other senior administrators. There is a lot of confusion. The University's mission statement has lost its meaning. We must think beyond the corporate box by focusing on effectiveness, not efficiency. There should be active listening from the Board and the University should get back to basics by incorporating its stakeholders.
- A lot of the unrest has to do with unanswered questions. It is not reasonable to pay out a large severance and to be told that the details cannot be disclosed. The use of public money calls for more transparency.
- We need to increase transparency and instill a new ethic of cooperation between the Board of Governors and Senate. Hope was expressed that Senators could find a way to work cooperatively.

- There is a sense of bewilderment and demoralization. The anger is real and tangible.
- There is a widespread unrest, a lack of confidence in the Board and a uniform discourse of concerns among the internal constituencies which needs to be responded to so that we can move towards healing measures.
- Students have many questions. We should be inclusive rather than exclusive, learn from our mistakes and focus on the process so that this not happen again.
- The University is trying to move forward according to the strategic framework. Announcements such as the one made on December 22 create a visceral reaction when you invest as much time and energy as a department chair does. Immediate and substantive actions need to be taken.
- The fact that not a single Board member is in attendance is symptomatic of the way that the Board functions and its pattern of ignoring Senate.
- Governors do not behave like volunteers but as owners. There is a lack of information regarding the President's departure and also that of several other senior administrators. Senate is a deliberative body which cannot guide the University academically in the face of unknowns and contracts that trump common sense.
- A comparison was made to a structure or value system that creates jobs akin to "widow-makers".
- The University has a serious problem with sustainability and proper governance. There is a disconnect between the academic mission and the senior administration. The staff is under-valued. There is also a disconnect between what is said and what is being done. The corporate structure is costing us dearly in terms of the bottom line.

Dr. Lowy thanked Senators for their comments so far which were thoughtful, heartfelt and constructive, confirming that he had heard them loud and clear. He said that at this point he could not be sure what actions need to be taken but undertook to look into the matter. He acknowledged that morale is low and needs to be addressed.

The meeting then moved out of the committee-of-the whole, further to which the following motions were adopted:

*Whereas as proud members of Concordia's dynamic, strong and committed research and teaching community, we are concerned that the recent departure of the University President and other senior administrators has had a significant negative impact on the University's reputation with the communities we serve; and*

*Whereas we present these motions in the spirit of moving forward in a positive manner and with full confidence in our community of students, faculty, and staff;*

R-2011-1-11 *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Camlot, Rail), it was unanimously resolved that in view of the loss of confidence expressed uniformly across the University, for the good of the University and to allow necessary healing to begin to take place, Senate strongly urge that the Chair of the Board of Governors step aside immediately.*

R-2011-1-12 *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Nelson, Peluso), it was unanimously resolved that Senate strike a Special Governance Commission to review past events and current governance structures and to make recommendations for the future.*

R-2011-1-13 *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Chaikelson, Sonin), it was unanimously resolved that, until the recommendations of the Special Governance Commission are made and implemented, the nominations to the community-at-large seats on the Board of Governors be approved by a 2/3 majority in a Joint Senate/Board of Governors committee consisting of 50% of Senators appointed by Senate and 50% of members appointed by the Board of Governors.*

Senators requested that these motions be sent directly to all members of the Board of Governors.

10. Report and recommendations from the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2011-1-D5)

10.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science – School of Canadian Irish Studies (Document US-2011-1-D6)

While not opposed to the upgrade of a successful Minor into a Major, Prof. Chaikelson commented that it is misleading to consider funding resulting from students already registered in the Minor as new. The Provost concurred with Prof. Chaikelson's observation but indicated that a Major has a significant potential to attract new students from across the country which could result in increased revenues.

R-2011-1-14 *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Lewis, Stoett), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science with respect to the School of Canadian Irish Studies, detailed in Document US-2011-1-D6, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2011-1-D5 – revised.*

11. Remarks from the President

Acting President Freedman waived his remarks.

12. Question period

Prof. Debbabi stated that the new *Policy on Computer Provisioning* is limiting and does not allow the appropriate flexibility for the acquisition of computer used for research purposes. Dr. Dandurand replied that she was aware of the problem and that discussions had been held with Mr. Kelley and Me Freedman to resolve this issue. Mr. Kelley informed Senators that the issue had indeed been addressed.

Further to a comment by Prof. Peluso regarding the beginning of the January term and the appropriate calculation of statutory holidays, Ms. Healey answered that the first day of class is determined by verifying with the Department of Human Resources as to when the University is legally allowed to open.

In response to a query from Ms. Mehreen regarding the timing of the appointment of the new Chancellor, Me Freedman indicated that the appointment of Chancellor Ménard was done in the regular course of business following the end of the term of the outgoing Chancellor O'Brien.

12.1 Response to written questions submitted by Mr. Chevrier (Document US-2011-1-D21)

Mr. Chevrier thanked Mr. Côté for the written response but was troubled by the lack of transparency regarding the awarding of contracts. He felt that students are being used as commodities and for marketing purposes. The discussion needs to be continued and the process needs to be changed.

Mr. Côté replied that he had taken note of Mr. Chevrier's comments. He indicated that he would be open to more input on the phase of defining the requirements of the Request for Proposal (RFP). In terms of disclosing details of commercial negotiations, Mr. Côté stated he would stand by the information in the written response. While the tendering process itself is public, the commercial negotiations are not.

#### 12.2 Response to written questions submitted by Prof. Lynch (Document US-2011-1-D22)

Prof. Lynch moved a motion, seconded by Prof. Dyer, that Senate approve the four recommendations enumerated in Document US-2011-1-D22. Dr. Graham summarized APPC's extensive debate, which had resulted in its overall position that recommendations 2 and 3 were not appropriate, for reasons conveyed in the committee's response. Consequently, he felt that each recommendation should be voted on separately. However, a motion to split the motion, moved by Dr. Graham and seconded by Dr. Dandurand, was defeated.

During the discussion that ensued, some Senators spoke in favor of the motion, arguing that more transparency would be appropriate. In their view, access to all the committee documentation and attendance at committee meetings as observers would allow for a better understanding of the minority position and lead to a more informed discussion at Senate. Others spoke against the motion, opining that it would be unwise to adopt this approach and that the appropriate way to capture the relevant information would be to provide more extensive committee reports.

Prof. Chaikelson and Dr. Graham respectively moved and seconded that the motion be amended by removing from recommendation 2 the obligation to provide documentation other than the agenda and the right of non-committee members to attend the committee meetings, and by deleting recommendation 3 in its entirety. The motion to amend the motion was carried. The vote was then taken on the main motion as amended:

*R-2011-1-15 Upon motion duly made and seconded (Lynch, Dyer), it was unanimously resolved:*

- *that Senators be given notice of the dates of meetings of all Standing Committees (with the exception of the Distinguished Professor Emeritus Committee and the Special Graduation Awards Committee);*
- *that Senators be given electronic access to the Agendas of the above committee meetings; and*
- *that Senators be given electronic access to the full Senate documents in advance of Senate meetings.*

#### 13. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday, February 18, 2011, at 2 p.m.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Tessier".

Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of Senate