

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE**

Held on Friday, December 6, 2013, at 2 p.m.
in the Norman D. Hébert, LL.D. Meeting Room
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Dr. A. Shepard (*Chair*); Prof. A. Akgunduz; Dr. B.-A. Bacon; Dr. G. Beaudry; Me P. Blais; Prof. S. Carliner; Dr. G. Carr; Prof. J. Chaikelson; Prof. S. Chlopan; Prof. R. Courtemanche; Prof. J. Didur; Prof. I. Dostaler; Prof. D. Douglas; Prof. L. Dyer; Mr. J. Fiset; Prof. M. Frank; Prof. M. Kin Gagnon; Ms. J. Glavina; Prof. J. Grant; Dean S. Harvey; Prof. N. Ingram; Prof. C. Jackson; Ms. W. Kraus-Heitmann; Mr. M. Kumar; Prof. B. Layne; Ms. M. Lemieux; Prof. G. Leonard; Prof. J. Lewis; Dean J. Locke; Prof. D. Morris; Ms. H. Nazar; Dr. B. Nelson (*replacing Dean P. Wood-Adams*); Prof. C. Nikolenyi; Prof. R. Reilly; Mr. L. Sanscartier; Prof. Y. Shayan; Prof. T. Stathopoulos; Mr. C. Tisshaw; Ms. K. Trowell; Dean C. Trueman; Mr. J. T. Vaccaro; Ms. M. Wheeler; Prof. M. L. Wholey; Dean C. Wild; Mr. T. Wilkings

Non-voting members: Ms. J. Beaudoin; Mr. P. Beauregard; Mr. R. Côté; Me B. Freedman; Ms. R. Marion

Permanent observers: Mr. G. Morrow; Dr. L. Ostiguy

ABSENT

Voting members: Prof. M. O. Ahmad; Ms. E. Couto; Prof. J. Garrido; Ms. K. Korola; Dean B. Lewis; Prof. H. Proppe; Prof. J. Segovia; Prof. M. R. Soleymani

Non-voting members: Mr. P. Kelley; Ms. S. Sarik

1. **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Shepard at 2:08 p.m.

1.1 **Approval of Agenda**

R-2013-8-1 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved.*

1.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 1, 2013

R-2013-8-2 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 1, 2013 be approved.*

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

There was no business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda.

3. President's remarks

The President reported on the following:

- His speech given on November 21 at the Montreal Board of Trade, attended by over 600 people, which provided an opportunity to highlight Concordia, its future directions and its successes.
- The University's appearance before the Commission Parlementaire on November 28 went very well. It was a great team effort and he was proud of the University's performance. He also expressed appreciation to the Board Chair who was in attendance.
- Dr. Margie Mendell received the Prix du Québec, the highest award given by the government of Québec.
- The accreditation of the PhD program in Psychology was reaffirmed.
- The granting of two new Canada Research Chairs, to Drs. Malcolm Whiteway and Christian Moreau, are signs of our research progress. The University's research grants rose by 2% this past year while the national average rose by 1%.
- The collective agreement with the administrative and support staff union (CUSSU) has been settled.

4. Standing Committee reports

Standing Committee reports are provided for information.

4.1 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (Document US-2013-8-D1)

In response to queries, Dr. Bacon provided some details regarding the Committee's discussion on internal and external benchmarks and the possibility of Concordia joining the Comprehensive University Consortium.

4.2 Finance Committee (Document US-2013-8-D2)

4.3 Library Committee (Document US-2013-8-D3)

4.4 Research Committee (Document US-2013-8-D4)

There were no questions in connection with the above reports.

5. Update on Academic Plan (Document US-2013-8-D5)

Dr. Bacon summarized the highlights of his written report.

Further to a question, Dr. Carr explained that the funds allocated under the Academic Plan to undergraduate student research awards will allow the University to increase the number of undergraduate summer research internships in 2014 to approximately 125 students, as opposed to 100 in summer 2013.

CONSENT

6. Committee appointments (Document US-2013-8-D6)

R-2013-8-3 *The committee appointments outlined in Document US-2013-8-D6 were approved by consent.*

7. Academic Programs Committee: Report and recommendations (Document US-2013-8-D7)

7.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

7.1.1 Department of English (Document US-2013-8-D11)

7.1.2 Département d'études françaises (Document US-2013-8-D12)

R-2013-8-4 *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts of Science outlined in Documents US-2013-8-D11 and D12 were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2013-8-D7.*

7.2 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

7.2.1 Département d'études françaises (Document US-2013-8-D13)

7.2.2 Department of Geography, Planning and Environment (Document US-2013-8-D14)

7.2.3 Department of Psychology (Document US-2013-8-D15)

R-2013-8-5 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts of Science outlined in Documents US-2013-8-D13 to D15 were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2013-8-D7.*

7.3 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Fine Arts – Department of Studio Arts
(Document US-2013-8-D16)

R-2013-8-6 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Fine Arts outlined in Document US-2013-8-D16 were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2013-8-D7.*

7.4 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science – Department of Education (Document US-2013-8-D17)

R-2013-8-7 *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Arts and Science outlined in Document US-2013-8-D17 were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2013-8-D7.*

REGULAR

8. Academic Programs Committee: Report and recommendations (Document US-2013-8-D7)

8.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

8.1.1 Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (Document US-2013-8-D8)

8.1.2 Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (Document US-2013-8-D9)

8.1.3 Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (Document US-2013-8-D10)

Dean Trueman was pleased to report that the creation of the new bachelor/baccalaureate in Engineering in Aerospace Engineering has received widespread support. Prof. Marius Paraschivoiu presented the highlights of this new undergraduate program, specifying that Quebec has a strong aerospace industry which has hired 800 engineers this past year, which motivates us to specialize in programs to fill that niche.

The Chair of the Finance Committee, Prof. Chaikelson, noted that some changes on pages 23 and 24 of Document US-2013-8-D8 and which were circulated at the meeting, had been brought to the official Senate document with respect to the financial aspect and which reflect more accurately the cost and income if enrolments targets are met.

R-2013-8-8 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science outlined in Documents US-2013-8-D8 to D10 be approved, as recommend by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2013-8-D7.*

9. Rescission of the Senate resolution establishing the Academic Plan Coordinating Committee as a standing committee of Senate (Document US-2013-8-D18)

Dr. Shepard summarized the background outlined in the accompanying document. In light of the regular reports provided at Senate, Steering Committee is of the opinion that the creation of the Academic Plan Coordinating Committee as a standing committee of Senate is no longer necessary and therefore asked that a motion be presented to rescind the proposal to create such a committee.

Dr. Shepard responded to questions, specifying that Senate's role in the Academic Plan is general oversight. He undertook that the regular reporting will continue.

R-2013-8-9 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, on recommendation of Steering Committee, Senate rescind resolution R-2011-9-13 establishing the Academic Plan Coordinating Committee as a standing committee of Senate.*

10. Presentation on library renovation project

Dr. Beaudry began the presentation by underlining the great collaboration between the Library and Facilities Management which will result in the transformation of the Webster Library and change its service offer.

Libraries are at the centre of the academic life. Our library must respond to evolving needs by providing a shift from print to digital culture, promote discourse and critical thinking, support multiple learning strategies, serve as a resource for students experiencing domains of knowledge for the first time and provide students with access to scholarly publications. Dr. Beaudry noted that, apart from the computers, our current library is based on a mid-19th century model. Our next-generation library must be a space for active and collaborative learning, where students take command of their own learning, which responds to revolutionary changes in information technology and provides the foundation for intellectual life within the University.

The student population has tripled since the opening of the Webster Library in 1992. Findings from student surveys as well as comments posted on Facebook and blogs reveal dissatisfaction with respect to the overcrowding and the lack of space for studying and for teamwork, especially during the examination periods. The Grey Nuns' Chapel, which will be converted to a study hall along with 14 adjoining fully-equipped group study rooms, will provide an additional 240 seats next fall.

The objective of the renovation project is to provide a new library concept, in which the overall space would be increased by 27%, with an increase of study seats by 114% (from 1,550 to 3,400). It will include a reconfiguration of the collections and provide for 11 types of study space. Dr. Beaudry showed the architectural plans of the renovation. The entrance of the library will be more visible and located on the first floor. As well, the information desk will be located at the entrance to welcome users. There will be several seminar rooms, social learning spaces, rooms dedicated to graduate students, etc.

Mr. Côté presented the second part which dealt with the phasing of the project and the budget. The planning for this transformation began some time ago with the Board's Real Estate Planning Committee. He reviewed the various stages of the construction which is scheduled to begin in January 2015 with a projected completion date in August 2017.

A major portion of the project will be financed from within the envelope of the Quebec government's Plan Quinquennal d'Investissement (maintien des actifs). The balance of the cost, about \$2.7 million, will be paid for via fundraising initiatives which are currently in preparation. Mr. Côté noted that the University is mindful of minimizing any problems which could arise during the construction and will continue to serve the community while engaging in the project. To that end, a project communications and consultation plan, focused on users, will be put in place in support of preparing for change, noise and disruptions and to consult for collection reconfiguration, comments on furniture and technology program. Additionally, broader communications to the Concordia community will focus on the benefits and provide periodic project updates.

Pursuant to the presentation, a discussion ensued during which Dr. Beaudry and Mr. Côté responded to comments and questions. It was agreed that a copy of the presentation be forwarded to Senators.

11. Draft of the University's response to the Quebec Charter of Values and ratification of process

Dr. Shepard noted the University is close to making its position known but that it had to be careful and thoughtful about it. Of the 200 emails he had received from the University community, only a handful was in favor of the Charter. Dr. Shepard apprised Senators of the three premises on which the statement would be founded, the University's particular history, the potential effect of the Charter on recruitment and retention and the autonomy of the University in teaching and research. It would be daunting to have such a large group edit the statement, and therefore the President proposed that Senate authorize Steering Committee to approve the final version of the statement.

Me Freedman presented a high-level summary of the Charter which calls for the religious neutrality and secular nature of public bodies, including universities and all its employees. He outlined the duties and obligations of the personnel, which restrict the wearing religious symbols and oblige employees to have their face uncovered. He reviewed the rules of application provided in the Charter and the handling of accommodation requests on religious grounds, specifying that the Charter does not permit accommodation that would allow religious symbols and covering of the face. Me Freedman spoke of the implementation, noting that no sanctions or penalties are provided for in the Charter. The full details are included in the presentation which will be sent to Senators after the meeting.

Dr. Shepard asked Senators for their views on the proposed Charter, and more specifically if the University should request an exemption. Senators were not in favor asking for an exemption to the Charter since this would imply that they accept its legitimacy. Overall, it was felt that several components of the proposed Charter are deeply troubling.

R-2013-8-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that Senate delegate to Steering Committee, in conjunction with the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors, the task of approving the final wording of the University's statement on the proposed Charter of Secular Values, in accordance with the general discussion held at its meeting of December 6, 2013.

12. Question period

In response to a question from Prof. Ingram regarding the graduate certificate in university teaching approved by Senate last May, Dr. Carr said that the first cohort of 4 students will begin in January. Approximately 60 students who were deemed eligible were contacted about the program and invited to apply. After consultations with the Provost's office, it is clear that a larger cohort will be eligible going forward.

Dr. Carr acknowledged that there is an operational challenge regarding the assignment of reserve courses and that this will require co-ordination between departments, faculties, the Provost's office and the School of Graduate Studies. Students who are admitted into the program have to go through several steps for approval and cannot be admitted unless a department chair has set aside a reserve course for them. Despite these challenges, the certificate constitutes a wonderful opportunity for our graduate students and it important for all stakeholders to work together toward the success of the program.

13. Other business

There was no other business to bring before Senate.

14. Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday, January 17, 2014, at 2 p.m.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.



Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate