

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, March 17, 2006, immediately after the Closed Session
in Room EV 2.260, SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Prof. A. Al-Khalili; Prof. I. Bachmann; Mr. D. Bernans; Prof. W. Bukowski; Prof. J. Camlot; Mr. R. Daoud; Prof. M. Doyle; Prof. A. Dutkewych; Prof. O. Dyens; Dean N. Esmail; Dean D. Graham; Mr. B. Hamideh, Prof. E. Jacobs; Prof. M. Jamal; Prof. C. Jourdan, Prof. R. Kilgour; Dr. C. Lajeunesse; Ms. J. Lewy; Prof. W. Lynch; Ms. C. Marshall; Mr. J. Moschella; Mr. M. Murphy-Perron; Prof. E. Regler; Mr. S. Rosenshein; Prof. C. Ross; Dean E. Sacca; Prof. J. Segovia; Mr. M. Shuriye; Dr. M. Singer; Dean J. Tomberlin; Prof. C. Trueman; Dr. T. Vo-Van; Ms. L. White; Dean C. Wild; Mr. D. Zand; Prof. W. Zerges

Non-voting members: Prof. M. Danis; Mr. M. Di Grappa; Mr. L. English; Me P. Frégeau; Ms. L. Healey; Mr. A. McAusland; Dr. J. W. O'Brien (*Speaker*); Dr. R. J. Oppenheimer; Mr. K. Pruden

ABSENT

Voting members: Prof. R. Rudin; Ms. S. Salamoun

Non-voting members: Mr. W. Curran

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. O'Brien at 2:19 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

R-2006-2-4 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Sacca, Trueman), it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda be approved.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of February 3, 2006

Dean Sacca noted a correction in item 9.3. However, with respect to item 7, further to a request by Prof. Segovia to have a comment added as well as a table with several percentages that he read at the last meeting appended to the Minutes, Dr. Singer objected, indicating that

this would be out of context unless his reply was also added. Dr. O'Brien noted that the Minutes usually do not include such detail and ruled that the adoption of the Minutes should be tabled until the next meeting in order to allow Steering Committee to decide on the amount of detail which should be recorded in the Minutes.

4. Business arising from the Minutes

With respect to the APC report regarding revisions to admission standards (TOEFL) at the graduate level, Dr. Lynch indicated that all calendars changes should be approved by Senate, or at least officially documented and reported to Senate. Dr. O'Brien stated that this matter would be dealt with later in the meeting.

Prof. Segovia commented on the budget and its process, opining that more money was going to the administrative sector than the academic sector and that the administration must support the academic mission of the University, not vice versa. He felt strongly that the budget must be submitted to Senate for approval. Dr. O'Brien answered that in some instances, such as the last meeting, the budget is presented for information purposes only, while in other instances, such as the May 5 meeting, a presentation will be made at Senate, further to which comments on the budget will be forwarded to the Board of Governors for consideration.

5. Committee appointments (Document US-2006-2-D2)

R-2006-2-5 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Singer, Shuriye), it was unanimously resolved that the appointment to committees, as outlined in Document US-2006-2-D2, be approved.*

6. Report from the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2006-2-D3)

6.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science (Document US-2006-2-D4)

R-2006-2-6 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Esmail, Lynch), it was unanimously resolved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Document US-2006-2-D4, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2006-2-D3.*

6.2 Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science (Documents US-2006-2-D5 and D6)

R-2006-2-7 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Sacca, Esmail), it was unanimously resolved that the major graduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Documents US-2006-2-D5 and D6, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2006-2-D3.*

6.3 Proposed undergraduate changes to the cumulative GPA and the graduation GPA (Document US-2006-2-D7)

At the request of Dr. Singer, speaking privileges were granted to Dr. Danielle Morin, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, who chairs the Academic Programs Committee (APC). The latter conveyed that the changes to the cumulative GPA and the graduation GPA for undergraduate programs are proposed to be consistent with the practices at several other universities regarding the calculation of repeated courses in the GPA. She specified that this change does not affect the student's record and transcript, in that the grades for both attempts will appear, but only the last attempt will be calculated in the cumulative GPA and the graduation GPA.

A discussion ensued, during which some skepticism was expressed because the new policy would be unfair to students who have done well the first time. Others opined that this could devalue the Concordia degree. It was suggested that perhaps the average of both attempts could be calculated.

Mr. Hamideh and Dr. Lynch respectively moved and seconded that the proposal be applied to the calculation of the last annual GPA. Some Senators expressed support for this amendment. Mr. Hamideh conveyed the positive impact that this measure could have on students whose graduation is currently compromised because of an annual GPA lower than 2.0. However, Dr. Morin explained that the annual GPA has a different purpose than the two other GPAs and is meant to assess students' progress and standing in their program. Moreover, a change to the calculation of the annual GPA cannot be made on the floor of Senate since this requires further discussion. Dr. O'Brien ruled that the amendment was not in order and referred the issue of the calculation of the last annual GPA back to APC.

Dr. Dyens enquired how this new policy would affect students who repeated a course after having received a failing grade as a result of academic misconduct. Dr. Morin recognized that this was a valid concern which could be appropriately addressed by including a statement in the Code of Conduct (Academic).

R-2006-2-8 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Singer, Trueman), it was resolved by a majority that the changes to the cumulative GPA and the graduation GPA at the undergraduate level, detailed in Document US-2006-2-D7, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2006-2-D3.

6.4 Proposed undergraduate changes to the TOEFL requirements for the new TOEFL iBT (Internet-based TOEFL) (Documents US-2006-2-D8 and D9)

Dr. Morin informed Senate that a committee was struck last year to establish the minimum standard for the new internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT). The committee's report and recommendations were forwarded to the Academic Programs (APC) which reviewed the recommendations and proposes that the minimum score for acceptance at the undergraduate level be set at 75 out of 120, with the allowance for an unpublished discretionary range of five points below the minimum. Dr. Morin added that this score will be reviewed in two to three years to assess if it is at the right level and that this minimum score does not prevent faculties or departments to set their own higher score.

A discussion ensued, during which Dr. Morin responded to queries from Senators. Speaking privileges were also granted to Prof. Joanne Locke, Vice-Dean, Curriculum and Appraisals in the Faculty of Arts and Science, a member of the committee to establish minimum scores for TOEFL iBT, who replied to questions regarding the components of the test and its workings.

R-2006-2-9 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Singer, Hamideh), it was resolved by a majority that the changes to the TOEFL requirements for the new TOEFL iBT (Internet-based TOEFL) at the undergraduate level, detailed in Documents US-2006-2-D8 and D9, be approved as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2006-2-D3.*

6.5 TOEFL requirements for the new TOEFL iBT related to graduate programs

Dr. Morin specified that, in accordance to its mandate approved by the Board of Governors, the Council of the School of Graduate Studies has the authority to establish university-wide admission standards to graduate programs. As a result, Senate approval is not required. She added that although the Academic Programs Committee (APC) is not required to make a recommendation, nonetheless it has indicated its support to the recommended minimum score of 75 out of 120 for acceptance to graduate programs as adopted by the Council of the School of Graduate Studies.

Dr. Singer apprised Senators that Steering Committee had discussed this issue. While it is clear that Senate has the authority, in accordance with its mandate, to delegate to the Councils any of its responsibilities, such as the establishment of admission standards, Steering Committee will be looking into whether or not it would be opportune to review current delegations. While opinions vary, arguments have been made that Senate should be the final academic authority, or at least that Senate should be advised formally of any change to university-wide graduate standards.

7. Approval of the proposal for a Concordia Institute for Cultural and Social Diversity (Documents US-2006-2-D10 and D11)

In response to a query about the reference in the draft motion to a center for the Humanities, Dean Graham conveyed the concern that had been raised at the Council of the Faculty of Arts and Science regarding that dormant proposal. The inclusion of the wording in the motion is intended to ensure that the establishment of the Concordia Institute for Cultural and Social Diversity (CICSD) does not preclude discussion about the unrelated establishment of a center for the Humanities. In this respect, Dean Graham was pleased to report that a proposal for a center for the Humanities has been unanimously endorsed by the Humanities Chairs and is expected to go forward for approval by Senate at the meeting of May 5, subject to the endorsement by the Faculty Councils of Arts and Science and Fine Arts.

While a reservation was expressed about the appropriateness of establishing the CICSD before resolving the JMSB building and library space issues, other Senators commented favorably on this initiative. Speaking privileges were granted to Dr. Jack Lightstone who gave clarification regarding the information contained in Appendix B in connection with the initial funding and future operating budget of the CICSD.

R-2006-2-10 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Singer, Graham), it was resolved by a majority:*

Whereas a proposal for a Concordia Institute for Cultural and Social Diversity (CICSD) has been received by Senate;

Whereas approximately 50 faculty members, many of whom are well-established researchers, from three Faculties (Arts and Science, Fine Arts, and the John Molson School of Business) have indicated their desire to be members of an Institute with the proposed mandate were it to be established by the University, and whereas these faculty members have been consulted in the drafting of the proposal;

Whereas initial external funding has been secured in an amount sufficient to justify commencement of operations, and whereas there seems evident potential to raise additional external funds to support the operations of the proposed Institute;

Whereas at a meeting held on February 17, 2006, the Fine Arts Faculty Council recommended to Senate the establishment of the Institute in accordance with the provisions suggested in the memorandum of January 18, 2006 from J. Lightstone to the Chair of the Council;

Whereas at a meeting also held on February 17, 2006, the Arts and Science Faculty Council endorsed in principle the establishment of the Institute, wishing, in particular, (a) that a centre for the Humanities, an initiative long discussed in the Faculty, be discussed concurrently, and (b) that over the course of the next several months preceding any commencement of operations the CICSD, its focus, under the supervision of the proposed steering committee, on internal organization and development of initial "sub-themes" as called for in the proposal.

Whereas at its Council meeting of March 17, 2006, the John Molson School of Business discussed the proposal, and the Council's recommendations have been orally reported to Senate;

BE IT RESOLVED that Senate recommend to the Board of Governors:

- the establishment of the Concordia Institute for Cultural and Social Diversity;*
- that the Institute commence operations no later than January 1, 2007, permitting in the interim:*
 - the establishment of a representative supervisory steering committee for the CICSD through a process of consultation facilitated by the Deans of Faculties whose faculty members are represented in the membership of the Institute;*
 - discussion of, and the development of a proposal for, a centre for the Humanities (however called);*
 - the elaboration, under the supervision of the steering committee, of the internal organization of the CICSD, its initial "sub-themes" as called for in the CICSD*

proposal, and the modalities of cooperation and complementarity with a proposed centre for the Humanities;

- *that the CICSD be evaluated every five years in accordance with terms of reference approved by Senate, and recommended to Senate by the Provost in consultation with the Deans of the concerned Faculties;*

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Senate encourage the Faculty Council of Arts and Science, on its own or together with any other Faculty Council, to submit a proposal for the establishment of a centre for the Humanities and ensure that the terms of reference for the Concordia Institute for Cultural and Social Diversity include consideration of its relationship with the center for the Humanities should it be established.

8. Tabling of the proposal to establish a School of General Studies at Concordia University (Document US-2006-2-D12)

Dr. Singer, the author of the document, mentioned that the proposal is meant to address concerns regarding the quality of education received by students on the margin, which represent about half of all Concordia students. He said that those students can be classified into five groups, students registered in non-credit courses, off campus students, students taking web-based courses, special students (independent, visiting and mature students) and at-risk students (in conditional or failed standing), underlining the problems and challenges specific to each group.

The School of General Studies would bring together those previously isolated units and services and coordinate their activities more closely with the mainstream credit operations and reassert academic authority over all programs and courses. Under the proposal, the four Faculties will assume responsibility for all credit courses, regardless of their mode of delivery. Dr. Singer specified that this document elaborates a concept and outlines a way of proceeding, but that the details regarding the name of the school and the titles of the administrators will be finalized later. Moreover, he indicated being aware of the overlap of some of the sectors but opined that this can be dealt with during the implementation phase, provided there is agreement on the concept.

The Provost continued by saying that this structural change is in line with the Senate-approved academic plan (*Moving Ahead*) and will permit Concordia to continue to meet the challenge to help students achieve success without lowering standards. This proposal is tabled at today's meeting and has been forwarded to the Faculty Councils and the Council of the School of Graduate Studies for their input for the next meeting of Senate, at which time the proposal should be presented for formal approval. Further to this presentation, a discussion ensued, during which Senators commented on the proposal and Dr. Singer responded to questions.

9. Remarks from the President

9.1 Update on the search for the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies

Dr. Lajeunesse indicated that the search was progressing well. An advertisement for the position will be published in the next issue of *University Affairs*. The draft profile has been finalized by the search committee and it will be circulated next week to the members of the Executive Committee of the Board, Senate, Faculty Councils and the Council of the School of Graduate Studies for input.

10. Items for information

10.1 Update on the search for the Dean of the John Molson School of Business

Dr. Singer said that the search committee met two weeks ago, and that the next step is an open meeting of JMSB faculty, staff and students on April 6, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. The objective of this meeting is to engage the members of the JMSB constituency in a discussion on the qualifications of the future dean, as well as the direction of the School, with a view of helping the search committee draft the profile. Dr. Singer mentioned that this meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the search committee on that day at 8:30 a.m.

10.2 Other

Dr. Singer indicated that, in keeping with the academic plan, the hiring of full-time faculty members was moving along, with approximately 30 of the 50 projected new faculty members having been hired. Moreover, about 100 limited-term appointments will be made, the majority of which are renewals. Seventeen applications for promotion will be considered in April, and faculty performance reviews and tenure reviews are ongoing.

Dean Esmail was proud to announce that Behzad Akbarpour, under the supervision of Sofiene Tahar, had been awarded the NSERC doctoral prize for natural sciences and engineering.

Ms. Healey informed Senate that the Office of the Registrar was accepting nominations for non-academic graduation awards until March 31. As of today, no nomination had been received, and thus she encouraged Senators to make nominations, specifying that forms are available at the Office of the Dean of Students and the Birks Student Centre.

11. Question period

Further to a query from Dr. Ross regarding the status of a JMSB motion which was forwarded to Senate, Dr. Lajeunesse was not clear on which motion Dr. Ross was referring to and therefore asked him to forward the motion to him.

In response to a question from Mr. Rosenshein, Ms. Tessier said that the Loyola Medals is usually awarded every two years. The recommendation of the Loyola Medal Committee for the 2006 recipient will be forwarded to the Graduation Ceremonies Committee, and then to the Board of Governors for final approval sometime in the Spring.

12. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the meeting.

13. Next meeting

Dr. O'Brien specified that Senate Steering Committee will be meeting on March 28 to ascertain if there is sufficient business to hold the next meeting of Senate which is scheduled to be held on Friday, April 7, 2006, at 2 p.m., Room EV 2.260, on the SGW Campus.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate