

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, January 18, 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*); Mr. H. Abdullahi; Prof. A. Akgunduz; Mr. G. Beasley; Dr. G. Carr; Prof. P. Caignon; Prof. L. Caminati; Prof. S. Carliner; Prof. J. Chaikelson; Prof. S. Chlopan; Ms. A. Dahl; Prof. I. Dostaler; Prof. D. Douglas; Dr. O. Dyens; Prof. L. Dyer; Ms. H. El Jahidi; Prof. M. Frank; Prof. J. Garrido; Ms. I. Giacotta; Prof. J. Grant; Dean S. Harvey; Ms. M. Hotchkiss; Prof. N. Ingram; Prof. F. Khendek; Ms. W. Kraus-Heitmann; Prof. B. Layne; Ms. M. Lemieux; Prof. G. Leonard; Dean B. Lewis; Prof. J. Lewis; Mr. D. McSharry; Mr. G. Morrow; Prof. C. Nikolenyi; Dr. L. Ostiguy; Prof. M. Peluso; Prof. H. Proppe; Prof. G. Rail; Prof. R. Reilly; Ms. D. Saryan; Prof. J. Segovia; Mr. T. Shahwan; Prof. Y. Shayan; Prof. M. R. Soleymani; Mr. R. Sonin; Prof. R. Staseson; Prof. T. Stathopoulos; Mr. S. Swaine-Simon; Prof. J. Turnbull; Mr. J. Vaccaro; Mr. C. Walcott; Prof. M. L. Wholey; Dean C. Wild; Mr. C. Wilson; Dean P. Wood-Adams

Non-voting members: Ms. J. Beaudoin; Mr. P. Beauregard; Mr. R. Côté; Mr. P. Kelley; Ms. R. Marion; Ms. M. C. Morin; Ms. S. Sarik

ABSENT

Voting members: Dean R. Drew

Non-voting members: Me B. Freedman

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Shepard at 2:06 p.m.

1.1 Approval of Agenda

R-2013-1-1 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Lemieux, Stathopoulos), 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 December 7, 2012

R-2013-1-2 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Wild, Douglas), it was resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of December 7, 2012 be approved, subject to verification of the accuracy of the percentage stated in the second paragraph of section 11 on page 5 of the Minutes.*

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

As follow-ups to issues raised at the last meeting, Mr. Côté reported the following:

Computing Provisioning Policy: As mentioned at the last Senate meeting, Mr. Côté had discussions with Dr. Carr to examine the application of the *Computer Provisioning Policy* for purchases made with research funds. This policy was introduced in 2010 with a deferred application until January 2012 for purchases supported by research funds. The deferment period was introduced to gain a greater appreciation of the implications of the desktop standards for the research community.

As a result of this review, the Policy will be amended to reflect the maintenance of the optional nature of its application for purchases supported by research funds. Guidelines for protecting non-standard computers as well as the University information system network from security breaches will be provided to researchers acquiring non-standard equipment. However, IITS will not be able to provide technical support for non-standard equipment. Mr. Côté outlined the benefits offered to researchers who opt to acquire their computer equipment through the University.

Room rental charges: Mr. Côté's office and Hospitality Concordia reviewed the parameters for room rental charges, with the objective to further support the hosting of university related-events on campus by members of the University community. As a result of this review and effective February 1, room rental fees will no longer be charged to faculty, staff and students for University-related events held in space managed by Hospitality Concordia. Mr. Côté specified that charges for equipment, food and special arrangements or special operating requirements will continue to apply.

International recruitment strategy: Mr. Côté apprised Senate that the University has initiated a review of its international recruitment efforts and is implementing a series of actions to assume a more engaged and proactive role to recruit students and improve communication with Chinese students. The University recognizes the importance of the relationship with its applicants and wishes to engage directly, proactively and early in the process.

As a result, the University will be using a blended approach to recruitment in China, consisting of in-house recruitment staff and a third party service provider, which best serves the unique nature of recruitment in China. The agreement with the current provider concludes at the end of February, and the University will be going to tender in February to seek assistance in the recruitment efforts in China. Mr. Côté also informed

Senators about a number of initiatives, including the establishment of a working group on international student housing which has submitted recommendations and are currently under review.

3. President's Remarks

Dr. Shepard apprised Senate of recent meetings with government officials in the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, including a meeting with Premier Marois and Minister Duchesne together with other university presidents. The tone of that meeting was cordial and respectful, and he took the opportunity to express Concordia's concerns and reservations about the consequences of the cuts as well as their timing.

Dr. Shepard apprised Senate of the joint opinion piece signed by Lucie Lequin, Maria Peluso and himself in response to Henry Aubin's editorial in *The Gazette* which suggested a two-tier system for higher education in Quebec.

The President reported the Provost Search Committee has met a few times and is progressing well. He also highlighted some recent accomplishments of Concordia faculty, students, staff and alumni, including an Academy Award nomination for "*Rebelle*", written, produced and directed by Concordia alumni.

Dr. Shepard noted that he is devoting a significant portion of his time lobbying against the budget cuts and/or dealing with the challenges associated with the government announcement in December of a reduction in Concordia's budget of \$13.2 million in the current fiscal year. There is a lot of uncertainty since the government has yet to confirm whether this cut will be recurrent. Scenarios are being considered which cannot yet be shared publicly. The Board will be meeting next week to approve a revised budget for the current fiscal year.

4. Budget challenges

Dr. Ostiguy and Mr. Kelley made a presentation on the impacts of the government reductions in Concordia's funding.

Dr. Ostiguy said that similar presentations had been given at the Faculty and School Councils, the Libraries as well as four focused conversations with the University community held on January 14 to obtain feedback and answer questions.

Mr. Kelley outlined the different sources of the University's funding and explained that this budget is the fourth for the current fiscal year. The original budget projected revenue based on a tuition fee increase of \$325, which was reduced to \$254 and further reduced when the tuition fee was cancelled. The government has now further reduced the University's revenue by \$13.2 million; however, this will be offset by a \$3.4 million reinvestment to compensate for the cancellation of the tuition fee increase. He reviewed some charts showing the University's salary and non-salary expenses as well as the historical trend of University spending.

Stating that the exercise is difficult due to the lack of clarity, Dr. Ostiguy reviewed the approach that will be used to determine how to proceed with the budget reductions, specifying that all sectors of the University will be impacted but that the lowest percentage of reductions will be in the area of teaching and research, and all efforts will be made to protect student aid. She urged Senators to communicate their ideas on how to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources or opportunities to generate additional revenue.

Mr. Kelley concluded the presentation by stating the issues that the University is dealing with, such as implementing the reduction before the end of this fiscal year and the heightened degree of uncertainty surrounding further cuts going into the next fiscal year.

Further to the presentation, in response to a query Dr. Shepard said that, keeping in mind the mandates of Senate and the Board, there will be wide consultation to talk about choices but the decision on where the cuts will be made is reserved to the leadership of the University. A comment was made that the perspective reported in the francophone media is weakening our negotiating position and our reputation. A suggestion was made that shortening the DNE date could be envisaged, which would allow us to take in more students.

5. Update on the Academic Plan

Dr. Ostiguy reported the following ongoing initiatives in support of the Academic Plan:

- Dean Paula Wood-Adams is developing a comprehensive action plan for graduate student recruitment. Senators are encouraged to send her their ideas.
- The Centre for Teaching and Learning Services will kick off its first annual Teaching and Learning Festival on February 1. The objective of the Festival is to encourage ongoing conversations about teaching and learning among all members of the University community through a series of workshops.
- A new undergraduate research bursary program has been launched, supported by the Academic Cabinet, which will provide formal research opportunities to 50 students. This program is modelled on the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council undergraduate research program which will provide an additional 48 grants to Concordia students this year.
- On January 21, Dr. Ostiguy will be meeting with the student Senators to discuss ways of engaging them in the Academic Plan.

6. Standing Committee reports

6.1 Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (Document US-2013-1-D1)

Dr. Ostiguy reported that as a follow-up on the discussion that occurred at the last meeting regarding the e-learning principles, Dr. Saul Carliner, E-Learning Fellow for the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services, has been invited to the upcoming meeting for further discussion.

6.2 Academic Programs Committee6.3 Finance Committee

These committees have not met since the last Senate meeting.

6.4 Library Committee (Document US-2013-1-D2)

Mr. Beasley apprised Senators that the first phase of library renovations, the Vanier Library mobile shelving project, was completed and had resulted in opening up about 350 additional seats in the Webster Library. He added that a survey of library usage sent to all faculty and students every three years will be conducted between January 28 and February 15 and will provide opportunity for feedback.

6.5 Research Committee (Document US-2013-1-D3)

Dr. Carr updated Senate on the *Policy on Contract Research* and the Strategic Research Plan which will both be coming to Senate for approval in the Spring.

7. Presentation on the University monitoring of medical notes

Ms. Melanie Drew, Director of Health Services and Chair of the University Exams Committee, began her presentation by showing the form of the medical certificate which should be used to request a deferred notation. A good medical note has a date that matches the period of illness, indicates the period of incapacity and when normal activities can be resumed and denotes how symptoms interfere with normal activity.

Elements of a questionable note include a back-dated note, an official form not fully filled out, a diagnosis provided without the reason for the required absence, recurring notes with the same minor diagnosis (gastro, flu-like symptoms), and the physician is not in the same city as the patient. However, Ms. Drew said that in assessing the validity of a note, additional data are taken into consideration, such as non-medical extraordinary circumstances (death in the family, fire, etc.) and the statement submitted by the student.

Ms. Drew spoke of the role and functioning of the University Examination Committee which refers cases of questionable practices to legal counsel. Me Melodie Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Student and Administrative Affairs, said that when, over a period of time, the authenticity of medical notes written by a same doctor is questioned, those notes are submitted to the Collège des médecins for review. Accordingly, the notes of about 10 to 20 doctors have been reviewed, which resulted in the syndic of the Collège concluding that there was no intention on the part of the doctors of being dishonest but that they should modify their professional practice.

Ms. Drew concluded the presentation by indicating the caveats, such as the fact that individuals may be ill and have no objective symptoms, the inability of accessing a health facility to obtain a note, the confidentiality of medical information, etc.

Ms. Drew responded to questions, specifying that the student statement has a lot of impact and that the University Examination Committee's objective is to be fair and will give the benefit of doubt to the student. It was agreed that the information provided was very useful and suggested that the medical certificate and information should be centralized and posted on the website.

8. Question period

Prof. Chlopan asked why individuals who leave the employ of the University no longer have access to its medical services. Mr. Côté responded that Health Services is primarily a student service, funded in great part (some 80%) by a Student Services fee along with a contribution from the University to allow for current faculty and staff to access the Service. There is an issue of capacity and also how expenses can be supported and therefore access is limited to current students, faculty and staff.

Mr. Morrow wondered if the wording of article 57 of the By-Laws regarding the eligibility requirements, which prevents independent students from serving on Senate, was an oversight. Dr. Shepard said that this would be answered at the next Senate meeting.

9. Other business

There was no other business to bring before Senate.

10. Next meeting

Dr. Shepard noted that the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday, February 15, 2013, at 2 p.m., in Room EV 2.2.60.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.



Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate