

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, March 17, 2017, at 2 p.m.
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Alan Shepard (*Chair*); Ali Akgunduz; Amir Asif; Guylaine Beaudry; Patrick Blair; Patrice Blais; Stéphane Brutus; Philippe Caignon; Ian Campbell; Graham Carr; Frank Crooks; Daniel Cross; Christine DeWolf; Effrosyni Diamantoudi; Jill Didur; Charles Draimin; Rebecca Duclos; Marcie Frank; Jana Ghalayini; Vince Graziano; Rudy Grow; Brigitte Jaumard; Esmaeel Kariminezhad; Lea Katsanis; Lucinda Marshall-Kiparissis; Marion Miller; Alexander Milton; David Morris; Monica Mulrennan; Lorraine Oades; Virginia Penhune; John Potvin; Justin Powlowski; Harald Proppe; Omar Riaz; André Roy; Sophia Sahrane; Daniel Salée; Francesca Scala; Yousef Shayan; Robert Soroka; Ali Sherra; Ted Stathopoulos; Sofiène Tahar; Steven Tutino; Jean-Philippe Warren; Paula Wood-Adams

Non-voting members: Joanne Beaudoin; Philippe Beaugregard; Denis Cossette; Bram Freedman; Frederica Jacobs; Lisa Ostiguy; Daniel Therrien

ABSENT

Voting members: Mudasser Akbar; Mariana Frank; Shannon Gittens-Yahoba; Eliza Griffiths; Rahul Kumar; Shahbaz Masood

Non-voting members: Roger Côté; Isabel Dunnigan; Emmet Henchey

1. **Call to order**

The President called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

1.1 **Approval of Agenda**

R-2017-2-1 *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 January 20, 2017

R-2017-2-2 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of January 20, 2017 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

Prof. Shepard's remarks are summarized as follows:

- Following the events of March 1, he thanked the Concordia community for coming together as the University worked with the SPVM to ensure the safety and security of our campus. He also thanked H el ene David, Minister responsible for Higher Education, for her support, concern and presence on campus that day.
- Open House, held on February 12, was very well attended, attracting over 4,000 visitors. There are a record number of applications at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
- Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin received the first ever Simone de Beauvoir Prize on March 16. While on campus, she gave a lecture on the importance of the courts in Canadian democracy at a seminar organized by the Workshops on Social Science Research.
- His participation earlier today in a panel discussion entitled: *Universities as City Builders: Making the Right Connections for Foreign Students*, in the context of the 19th National Metropolis Conference.
- The third phase of the Webster Transformation Project has been completed and the space is now open. This phase included the first floor of the Library and has provided 450 additional study seats, including silent reading rooms, group study rooms and collaborative space.
- Concordia's former bookstore space on the ground floor of the McConnell Building has become the 4th Space.

4. Report of Standing Committees

4.1 Academic Planning and Priorities (Document US-2017-2-D1)

4.2 Library (Document US-2017-2-D2)

Senators had no questions in connection with this report which is provided for information.

5. Academic update (Document US-2017-2-D3)

As complementary information to his written report, Dr. Carr apprised Senate that Daniel Cross' film "*I Am the Blues*" won Best Feature Length Documentary and Best Cinematography in a Feature Length Documentary at the Canadian Screen Awards on March 12.

CONSENT

6. Academic Programs Committee: Report and recommendations (Document US-2017-2-D4)

6.1 Undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

6.1.1 Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (Document US-2017-2-D5)

6.1.2 Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (Document US-2017-2-D6)

R-2017-2-3 *That the undergraduate curriculum changes in the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Documents US-2017-2-D5 and D6, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2017-2-D4.*

REGULAR

7. Presentation on University Research Units and Infrastructure Platforms

Dr. Powlowski began his presentation by indicating that while there is a multitude of research centres at the University, not all of them are governed by the *Policy on Research Units and Infrastructure Platforms* ([VPRGS-8](#)). There are currently [23 units](#) recognized and governed by Policy VPRGS-8, populated by faculty, staff and graduate students.

The first policy related to research units was approved in 1997. A new framework was underway in 2007, concurrent with the creation of the position of Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies (VPRGS), resulting in the approval of Policy VPRGS-8 in April 2010. Dr. Powlowski conveyed the objectives of Policy VPRGS-8 and the approval timeline of the 23 units recognized units.

Updates were brought to Policy VPRGS-8, approved by Senate in 2014, to include the creation of categories and configurations, the establishment of a recognition period and the clarification of members/users (status and numbers). Dr. Powlowski noted that several units are now coming to the end of the first cycle and are currently re-applying for recognition.

Policy VPRGS-8 provides that each Faculty has its own set of procedures that defines and recognizes Faculty units. Recognition at the Faculty level does not mean that the criteria have been met for University recognition. Units looking for eventual University recognition are expected to have been recognized at the Faculty level for at least one year and be multidisciplinary in nature.

He also outlined the recognition process, which includes the Office of VPRGS receiving requests, providing initial assessment and assistance in developing proposals and recommending those which meet the criteria for recognition to the Research Committee of Senate which in turns makes a recommendation to Senate. Dr. Powlowski encouraged anyone wanting to submit a proposal to contact the Office of VPRGS prior to making the submission. He gave an example of the recognition criteria, the expectations and accountability of units recognized under Policy VPRGS-8, the process for the renewal of recognition as well as the reasons for discontinuation or closure.

He concluded his presentation by relating his own positive experience as a member of the Centre for Structural and Functional Genomics as follows:

- Although the Centre does not provide funding for graduate students, it fosters a rich interdisciplinary environment where students can learn and interact;
- While there is no research funding provided by the Centre, it creates optimal conditions to be able to apply for research grants that involve teams of researchers; and
- The Centre provides access to equipment which students and faculty would not otherwise have.

Following his presentation, Dr. Powlowski responded to comments and questions from Senators. The full details of his presentation are posted on the [Senate website](#).

8. Update on strategic directions

Prof. Shepard provided a high-level summary of some of the ongoing initiatives under the guidance of the game plan, developed at the conclusion of the strategic planning process, which includes a priority list of “first moves” undertaken in 2016/2017.

Using a power point presentation, he gave an overview of some of those “first moves” which include:

- The establishment of the Horizon Postdoctoral Fellows, which will fund 24 to 30 two-year fellowships in disciplines linked to our strategic research priorities.
- The creation of an Indigenous Directors Leadership Group, led by Elizabeth Fast and Charmaine Lyn, the two Special Advisors to the Provost, to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action.
- The creation of a public scholars program, a partnership between the *Montréal Gazette* and the University Communications Services to bridge the gap between academic research and the community.
- At the invitation of the President, Dean Asif updated Senate on the status of the Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering Department and the development of its curricula.

- Two of the targeted three curriculum developers have been hired to assist in the development of priority curriculum projects.
- Some compelling summer offerings aimed at student recruitment, research profile building and community engagement have been developed. At the invitation of the President, Deans Duclos and Roy apprised Senate about some such offerings in their respective Faculties.
- The Concordia University Press, a non-profit, open access publisher of scholarly peer-reviewed titles, was launched last October. At Prof. Shepard's invitation, Dr. Beaudry informed Senate about the status of production, noting the expectation that a first book should be published in late 2017, early 2018.
- The President spoke of other ongoing initiatives such as staff development and invited Dr. Ostiguy to comment on the CEGEP pathway development, Me Freedman on the University's participation in the social innovation network, and Ms. Marshall-Kiparissis on the CSU's housing initiative.

The President concluded his presentation by noting that the movement of Montreal to the top of the QS Best Student Cities list was quite a coup and that the University should determine how best to leverage this status. A copy of the presentation is posted on the [Senate website](#).

9. Motion to extend academic accommodations following events of March 1, 2017
(Document US-2017-2-D7)

Prof. Shepard and Ms. Marshall-Kiparissis explained the context which led the CSU to request an extension to the academic accommodations announced by the University on March 2.

A discussion ensued, during which the following points were clarified:

- Graded work encompasses any type of activity being graded, including any grade given for class attendance or participation.
- The University will deploy its best efforts to ensure that students and professors are aware of the resolution. The information will be posted on the website, and emails will be sent by Deans to department chairs who in turn will disseminate the information to professors.
- In the event that a professor would be unwilling to abide by the motion, students should contact the department chair.

It was agreed that the draft motion be revised to include an acknowledgment from Senate and to specifically state that the accommodations be available to all students on both campuses.

R-2017-2-4 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved:*

Whereas Senate acknowledges that some students continued to be affected in the days immediately following the events of March 1, 2017;

That faculty members be asked to extend academic accommodations to all students (undergraduate, graduate and continuing education in all programs) who request an accommodation because their academic activities, regardless of location, were affected by the events of March 1, 2017, and that such accommodations be applied to graded work due on March 2 and 3, 2017; and

That students wanting to make arrangements for academic accommodations as a result of the events of March 1, 2017 contact their professor or department chair no later than March 31, 2017 with their request.

10. Question period

10.1 Responses to written questions submitted by Alex Milton to Steering Committee on February 2, 2017 (Document US-2017-2-D8)

A motion to grant speaking privileges to Drs. Max Bergholz and Ted McCormick, professors in the Department of History, was discussed and approved by a majority of Senators.

Drs. Bergholz and McCormick expressed dissatisfaction with some of the written responses provided to Senate. They made the point that the acknowledgment of the mistake was not at issue and sought clarification regarding who decided to make the announcement on October 25 to appoint a non-faculty member as Director of the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Right Studies (MIGS), in violation of Policy VPRGS-8. They acknowledged that this situation had been corrected a week later but specified that they wanted to understand how this mistake was made, irrespective of the apology.

Dean Roy replied that he had met with Dr. Bergholz in late December to apologize for this error and has repeatedly apologized since then, reiterating that this mistake was made in good faith.

Dr. Powlowski confirmed that the Director of MIGS was involved in making the decision and explained the unusual situation of MIGS, which existed for many years prior to being recognized under Policy VPRGS-8. The mistake was made in a good faith attempt to help preserve the successful elements of MIGS, despite its undeveloped research capacity, lack of members and recent funding challenges.

Questions about why the position of Director had not been filled after acknowledgment of the mistake and the extent to which the former Director was involved in the decision to appoint the non-faculty member were ruled out of order by Prof. Shepard, who specified that speaking about individuals on the floor of Senate was not appropriate.

In response to a query about awareness of the financial situation referred to in the written responses, Dr. Powlowski indicated that it was known in 2014 that MIGS would likely be in a deficit position in 2016. As a result, a process was initiated then with the Director to discuss possible solutions, resulting in multiple iterations of a business plan.

11. Other business

Me Blais informed Senate that CUPFA members have elected fellow Senator Robert Soroka as their next President, the latter's mandate beginning on March 24.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.



Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate