MAUT
Council Meeting

MINUTES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014
McGill Faculty Club 12:00 noon

Present:	
Executive:	K. Hastings, A. Shrier, B. Lennox, A. Saroyan, C. Ragan, B. Reed. G. Mikkelson
Council:	M. Nahon, K. GowriSankaran, A. Moores, H. Durham, R. Sieber, A. Paré, S. Rankin, L. Glass, P. Caines
Regrets:	K. Siddiqi, L. Kloda, K. Hashimoto, A. Kirk
MAUT Staff:	H. Kerwin-Borrelli, J. Varga
Guests:	H. Mitri, F. Hassani, L. Cortelezzi, F. Fovet, T. Beck, R. Thomson, G. Bachar, K. Zendehbad

K. Hastings called the meeting to order at 12:11 pm.

Open Session

1. Adoption of the Agenda
Council considered the previously-circulated (January 21, 2014) proposed agenda. K. Hastings noted that the item "GPS recommendations on grad/postdoc supervision" was postponed. S. Rankin, replacing L. Kloda, asked to introduce "retirement and merit issues" under "Other topics (time permitting)". C. Ragan moved to accept the Agenda with these changes. Seconded by A. Paré and approved by consensus. In preparation for discussion of Growing Salary Inequality under "Other topics (time permitting)" in the adopted agenda G. Mikkelson circulated results of a Gini index analysis he had done (attached to these minutes as Appendix 1).

2. Approval of Minutes
Council reviewed the Minutes of the September 25, 2013 Meeting, previously circulated on January 24, 2014. H. Durham moved approval, seconded by R. Sieber and approved by consensus.

3. Open Forums
B. Reed proposed topics for MAUT Forums that could be held during Spring and Fall 2014 terms. Beyond the annual Tenure and Mentoring workshop [scheduled for April 25, 2014] these included: Academic Freedom, MOOCs, Coffee and Conversation with the Principal, Classroom Scheduling and Working Conditions, Merit Pay and Incentives, Workforce and Redeployment issues, and Retirement. In discussion Council identified Coffee and Conversation with the Principal and a forum on MOOCs as the top priorities and possible dates of February 13 and February 26, respectively, were discussed. R. Sieber proposed that MAUT provide relevant information and set up on-line discussions prior to all forums. B. Reed noted that he and A. Saroyan would work on the structure of the MOOCs Forum and asked Council for feedback on format and content.

4. French language proficiency requirements
At K. Hastings' request, B. Lennox has taken the lead on this issue. He has contacted G. McClure [Associate Provost-Academic Staff and Priority Issues], and will continue the dialogue with the Administration to carve out a MAUT niche and find a solution. B. Lennox, B. Reed and K. Hastings will form a working group on this dossier.

As of August 1, 2013, the requirements for a higher level of proficiency in French required for obtaining the Certificat de Sélection du Quebec have affected academics applying for permanent residency. Increasing the difficulties, the Canadian government has indicated that the long-standing practice of issuing of serial work permits over a period of many years will soon be curtailed, and this may drive many long-time McGill academics into the Permanent Residency stream, with its challenging French language requirement. Thus the French language requirement issue affects not only 81 Assistant Professors (currently on conventional initial 3-year work permits) but also a significant number of senior academics. There is considerable work required to achieve proficiency (up to 600 hours of lessons).

Guest L. Cortelezzi, [Mechanical Engineering] spoke of his difficulties with the French language proficiency requirements. He was hired in 1998 and since then has obtained a series of 3-year work permits, the current one expiring in 2016. Issues of concern to him were 1) the impact of taking the French language course work is substantial – up to 10 hrs of work per week. He noted that the impact of this on the academic work of newly-hired assistant professors must be devastating. 2) would a professor be fired if he was not granted Permanent Residency? 3) the relationships among McGill Immigration and Relocation Services, Immigration Quebec, and Immigration Canada were confusing, 4) are there difficulties with holding both a student visa (required for taking the French courses) and a work permit at the same time?

This was recognized by Council as a serious issue that could have a strong negative impact on McGill. B. Lennox, K. Hastings and B. Reed will follow up.

5. Course evaluations

B. Lennox noted that L. Weiner [Interim Director, Teaching & Learning Services (TLS)] is heading a process to update the current policy on evaluations found at:
http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations/about/policy

B. Lennox, who is a member of the TLS committee reviewing this update, discussed several of the proposed changes and outlined several issues. It should be indicated that course evaluations are used as one indicator of teaching effectiveness, and students must be informed of how evaluations are used. Concerning the suggestion to move the evaluation date from the last day of courses to the last day of exams, he noted that that in a trial involving 29 units across faculties this change had little or no impact on results. Other changes meant to maximize the availability of the information were that instructors' permission for publication of course evaluation results be changed from "opt-in" to "opt-out" and that the information on course evaluations be available for five, instead of the current three years.

Council comments included:
Are professors inclined to increase ratings by incentives such as providing a "free" question or "donuts"? Would the Australian system of not releasing grades if evaluations are not submitted be considered? Students will need a proper preamble to ensure effective evaluations.

6. Childcare subcommittee

A. Moores reported the proposal for a Subcommittee on Family Care [a subcommittee of the Joint Board and Senate Committee on Equity] was presented to and passed at Senate in December 2013. She emailed L. White [Associate Provost, PP&E] to offer MAUT's participation in this venture. A. Moores also discussed the application from the Senate Sub-Committee on the Status of Women to the Sustainability Projects Fund to provide funding to support family care issues, particularly childcare needs. This application, for the creation of a two-year position for a Family Resources Coordinator, was also supported by MAUT in the form of a letter of support from K. Hastings on January 20, 2014 (appended to these minutes). A. Moores also reported that she had presented academic staff daycare concerns to Principal Fortier at her meeting with the Citizen's Council January 20, 2014. A. Moores noted that PGSS recently successfully launched its own daycare initiative (non-subsidized) and McGill provided the space. She will contact other members of the MAUT Ad Hoc Committee on Daycare to prepare for a follow up meeting with the Principal concerning non-subsidized daycare spaces similar to those offered to the SSMU and PGSS. Three years ago, the Daycare committee in conjunction with McGill's Centre de la Petite Enfance and the administration unsuccessfully applied to the Québec government for more subsidized daycare spaces.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Daycare will prepare a survey for MAUT members concerning their experiences with finding daycare. K. Hastings noted this major item will be on the Council agenda in February. He asked A. Moores to prepare and circulate a draft of the survey questions prior to the February Council meeting.

7. Universal Design

Guest F. Fovet of the OSD [Office of Students with Disabilities] introduced T. Beck, Access Advisor and Liaison, and R. Thomson, *Chantier 3* project coordinator. Universal Design [UD] is defined as a sustainable, environment-focused framework to manage disabilities issues. The presentation objectives encompassed both challenges to faculty and the resources offered by the OSD.

A graph [2004-2013] outlined the increase in the number of students who are registered with the OSD and a subsequent chart indicated the disability categories of the current student population. F. Fovet noted the shift from a medical to a social model leading to inclusion in the classroom. The OSD has examined the "lack of fit" between individual characteristics and environmental expectations. The focus is on looking at the barriers to learning instead of impairments. F. Fovet mentioned the user-friendly accommodations already made at the School of Architecture. He remarked that UD will not be implemented overnight and that the OSD staff is available to work with academics.

He noted the differences between accommodations made and the UD approach, where access is proactive, inclusive and sustainable. F. Fovet presented a slide on UDL [Universal Design for Learning] which outlined multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement. One example used involved submitting a class assignment to fellow students by video, in the case where the development of public speaking skills was not a specific course goal.

B. Lennox noted that accommodations can lead to academic success. R. Sieber took exception to some aspects of F. Fovet's presentation. She questioned the validity of large-scale, high-impact initiatives like UD and noted that the OSD is not a research but a service arm of the University. She asked if the OSD would cease to exist if all academics were to adopt UD practices. She also asked about a possible merge with TLS [Teaching &Learning Services]. H. Durham commented on making the environment *fit* the students and the difficulty in changing the environment of, e.g., an organic chemistry lab. She noted that students must realize that a certain "fit" is required for them to take a course in the first place. F. Fovet referred back to the outcomes that would be evaluated and noted that the prior establishment of specific course goals provides a basis for assessing "fit". He referred to access issues as external barriers and that non-inherent barriers could be removed.

Before their departure, K. Hastings thanked F. Fovet and colleagues.

8. **McGill Travel Management Program [TMP]**
Guest G. Bachar from the Travel Management Program, Financial & Procurement Services, introduced colleague, K. Zendehbad, and presented information on Travel Management Companies at McGill and the Online Booking Tool [OBT]. She referred to the initiative as originally outlined in the SRI [Fall 2011] and listed those consulted for this venture. She described the proposed two-tier Travel Card Program, a virtual travel credit card for airline tickets, and individual credit cards to travelers for out-of-pocket expenses. The TMP would simplify the current booking and expense management system, and develop guidelines on best practices. One example was that images of receipts could be uploaded to the system and stored. The integrated *Travel and Expense Reimbursement Program* could take a traveler from booking, to expenses charged to virtual credit cards, to completion of an expense report, and sending it for audit approval.

G. Bachar presented information on contacts for airlines, rail travel, Québec's hotel program, a Travel Risk Assessment Program and the Online Booking Tool [OBT]. She also presented a quick reference guide which listed McGill Travel Contracts.

A. Moores asked about how to integrate students on university business, whether the credit card system would require multiple cards designated for personal and/or business use, and if there could be an automatic insurance form with different levels of coverage and insurance assistance, depending on the country. G. Bachar noted that personal travel is not included in the TMP, and would not be charged to Individual Travel Credit Cards. She also indicated that any suggestions regarding the functionality of the TMP would be welcomed and would be carefully assessed. R. Sieber remarked on on-going issues concerning outstanding advances and filing expense reports. She noted problems with receipts which, depending on the country, may not be provided. She noted the time that can be spent waiting for a public

agency to recognize an expense. G. Bachar stated that reasonable claims for public transportation would be reimbursed, unless the granting agency specified otherwise. K. Zendehbad noted that advances could cover situations in countries where the credit card is not accepted.

K. Hastings thanked G. Bachar and all guests left.

Noting that the information presentations had run longer than scheduled and that the time was advanced K. Hastings proposed postponing some agenda items to the next meeting. There was general agreement and also discussion of the possibility of scheduling an additional Council meeting in the near future. Several of the remaining agenda items were very briefly considered.

9. **Business Arising**
   - update on Advisor Program (A. Paré). This item was postponed.
   - Council meeting with the Provost February 27
        The following topics were proposed for this discussion meeting: administrative staff numbers over recent time and their distribution in the units versus centrally, the impact of workforce reduction/redeployment, how the administration is helping faculty face the heightened French language requirements for Permanent Residency.
   - Professional licensing fees. This item was postponed
   - functions of the Nominating Committee
        Al Shrier, Chair of the Nominating Committee, stated that the role of the Nominating Committee was to ensure a full slate. The question had arisen whether the Nominating Committee must wait until the end of the nomination period before seeking candidates for unfilled positions but it was felt that the committee should keep tabs on progress of nominations and take steps during the nomination period to ensure that there are sufficient candidates at the close of nominations.

10. **Other topics (time permitting)** –
        growing salary inequality, AUNBT strike, student access to information, Senate reform, retirement and merit issues.

        These items were postponed.

11. **Adjournment.**
Adjournment was moved by R. Sieber, seconded by L. Glass and approved by consensus. The meeting adjourned at 2:32PM.