

**Meeting of Faculty  
Monday, 12 March 2024  
Robert Vogel Council Room (L232), Leacock Building**

**ATTENDANCE:** As recorded in the Faculty Appendix Book

**DOCUMENTS:** S-23-24 to S-23-26

Dean Lennox called the meeting to order at 3 p.m., and welcomed members to the seventh Faculty of Science Council meeting of the 2023-2024 academic year. He announced that he and Vice-Dean David Stephens would have to leave the meeting early to attend another meeting.

**1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Student member **moved**, seconded by Prof. Halverson, that the Agenda be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

**2) MINUTES OF 13 FEBRUARY 2024 [S-23-24](#)**

President Khamis **moved**, seconded by Prof. Roulet, that the Minutes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

During the last Faculty of Science Council meeting, Dean Lennox noted that the Academic Salary Policy for 2024-2025 was expected to be distributed to professors, but it has not been distributed yet.

**4) REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- Academic Committee **S-23-25**

**Part A:** Endorsed Ph.D. Graduate Program and Courses by the Academic Committee on 20 February 2024:

|   |  |                           |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| - | Ph.D. in Biophysics, Executive Summary, Consultation Reports | <a href="#">AC-23-125</a> |
|   | New Courses:   |                           |
|   | BPHY 601 Fundamentals of Biophysics                          | <a href="#">AC-23-126</a> |
|   | 6 credits  |                           |
|   | BPHY 602 Hot Topics in Biophysics                            | <a href="#">AC-23-127</a> |
|   | 2 credits  |                           |
|   | BPHY 603 Effective Science Communication                     | <a href="#">AC-23-128</a> |
|   | 1 credit   |                           |
|   | BPHY 701 Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam                            | <a href="#">AC-23-129</a> |
|   | 0 credits  |                           |

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that the proposal for the Ph.D. in Biophysics was not subject to a vote as it is administered by Interfaculty Studies and not by the Faculty of Science. Instead, this program is brought to Faculty Council to either be endorsed or not endorsed. The Academic Committee discussed this proposal and endorsed it at the Academic Committee meeting held on 20 February 2024. The proposed program focused on creating a new Ph.D. in Biophysics.

The proposal originated from the Centre de recherche en biologie structurale (CRBS) and aims to establish an interdepartmental and interfaculty Ph.D. Program in Biophysics. Its primary objective is to cultivate a new cohort of structural biologists and biophysicists proficient in employing interdisciplinary methods for biomedical investigations, health research, applied biological sciences, and physical sciences. The proposed Ph.D. Program in Biophysics is intended to provide a unified academic framework for training students among the 47 CRBS investigators spanning thirteen departments in five faculties: Engineering, Science, Medicine and Health Sciences, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and Dental Medicine and Oral Health Sciences.

The program targets students with backgrounds in physics or engineering, most of whom were expected to have a Master's degree. While exceptional students with a strong publication record might be considered for direct admission to the Ph.D. program with a bachelor's degree, such cases would be rare exceptions.

The management of this inter-faculty program would fall under the purview of inter-faculty studies. Notably, the program proposed a novel approach wherein incoming students would have the opportunity to explore different labs through a lab rotation scheme before selecting a supervisor.

Concerns were raised about potential overlaps with existing programs and the impact on departmental funding. Questions were raised about mechanisms to ensure the proper allocation of resources and mitigate any strains on departmental facilities.

At the conclusion of the meeting, a straw vote was conducted, resulting in a consensus to endorse the proposal. It was agreed that the endorsement would be communicated to the relevant bodies for further consideration and action.

Furthermore, discussions ensued about the lack of formal scrutiny for inter-Faculty studies programs compared to regular programs. The need for a more structured decision-making process for such programs was emphasized, potentially involving broader discussions and consultations across faculties.

The following proposals were approved at the Academic Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 20 February 2024.

**Part B:        New/Revised Courses and Programs**

1.     Physics

**New Courses:**

|          |  |                           |
|----------|--|---------------------------|
| PHYS 601 | Intro Phys Graduate Studies 1<br>1.5 credits | <a href="#">AC-23-148</a> |
| PHYS 602 | Intro Phys Graduate Studies 2<br>1.5 credits | <a href="#">AC-23-149</a> |

Associate Dean Hundemer introduced two new graduate courses in the Department of Physics. These courses, PHYS 601 and PHYS 602, aim to familiarize new graduate students with life as graduate students in the Department. PHYS 601 focuses on foundational skills, research communication, integrity, ethics, science communication, outreach, inclusion, diversity, and equity. PHYS 602, offered in the Winter semester, focuses on preparation for comprehensive exams, reading and writing scientific papers, and communication skills. Each course is worth 1.5 credits and can be taken in any order, as PHYS 601 is not a prerequisite for PHYS 602. The purpose of this design is to accommodate students who may start in the winter semester.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Blanchette, that the courses be adopted.

**The motion carried.**

Graduate Program Changes:

- M.Sc. in Physics

[AC-23-150](#)

- Ph.D. in Physics

[AC-23-151](#)

Associate Dean Hundemer said that with the approval of the new graduate courses (above), corresponding changes are required in the graduate programs offered by the Department of Physics, both for the Master's and Ph.D. programs. The changes are identical for both programs. For the Master's program, the changes reflect the inclusion of the two newly approved courses. Similarly, adjustments are needed for the Ph.D. program, where the same courses will be incorporated.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Choksi, that the above program changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

|    |          |   |                                  |
|----|----------|---|----------------------------------|
| 2. | Biology  |   |                                  |
|    | BIOL 101 | Organismal Biology Laboratory<br>Changes in supplementary Calendar information<br>1 credit      | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-130</u></a> |
|    | BIOL 102 | Cell and Molecular Biology Methods<br>Changes in supplementary Calendar information<br>1 credit | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-131</u></a> |
|    | BIOL 111 | Principles: Organismal Biology<br>Changes in supplementary Calendar information<br>3 credits    | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-132</u></a> |
|    | BIOL 112 | Cell and Molecular Biology<br>Changes in supplementary Calendar information<br>3 credits        | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-133</u></a> |

Associate Dean Hundemer highlighted that the changes in BIOL 101 to BIOL 112 (above) are all related. Firstly, BIOL 101, the lab component of BIOL 111, will see a reduction in laboratory hours from 3 to 2 per week, initially implemented in response to COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, Biology 102, the lab component of Biology 112, will undergo the same revision, ensuring consistency across all four courses.

A member pointed out that the Department of Biology expressed disapproval of reducing laboratory hours from 3 to 2. This modification was necessitated by the need to teach the class at night in a different building. However, it is anticipated to be temporary until returning to a building where daytime teaching is feasible. The decision for the modification was made to be transparent with students about the courses. In response, the member was reassured that the change can be reverted in the future without any issues.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fussmann, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

|  |          |  |                                  |
|--|----------|--|----------------------------------|
|  | BIOL 568 | Topics on the Human Genome<br>Changes in prerequisites | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-134</u></a> |
|--|----------|--|----------------------------------|

3 credits

Associate Dean Hundemer explained the proposed change in prerequisites for BIOL 568, focusing on topics related to the human genome. This modification is due to BIOL 370, a prerequisite course, currently not being offered. Additionally, one course has been replaced by another, considered more appropriate. These modifications aim to ensure that the prerequisites best serve student enrollment in BIOL 568.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fussmann, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

|    |                    |   |                                  |
|----|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 3. | Computer Science   |   |                                  |
|    | COMP 396           | Undergraduate Research Project<br>Changes in restrictions<br>3 credits                        | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-135</u></a> |
|    | COMP 400           | Project in Computer Science<br>Changes in restrictions<br>4 credits                           | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-136</u></a> |
|    | COMP 401           | Project in Biology and Computer Science<br>Changes in descriptions, restrictions<br>3 credits | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-137</u></a> |
|    | COMP 402, 402D1/D2 | Honours Project in Computer Science and Biology<br>Changes in restrictions<br>6 credits       | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-138</u></a> |
|    | COMP 480           | Independent Studies in Computer Science<br>Changes in restrictions<br>3 credits               | <a href="#"><u>AC-23-139</u></a> |

Associate Dean Hundemer said that courses COMP 396 to COMP 480 undergo similar changes. Students are now required to obtain department approval and submit a project form before enrolling. This modification aims to ensure that students' supervisors are informed of their participation in research projects when registering for these courses. It was noted that although this process was previously informally practiced, it is now being formalized for transparency.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Blanchette, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

B.Sc. Program Changes:

- Honours in Computer Science

[AC-23-140 \(Rev\)](#)

Associate Dean Hundemer mentioned that revisions to the Honours Program in Computer Science included a new program description and rectifying a prior error in credit counts.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Blanchette, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

B.A. Program Changes (For Information Only):

- Major Concentration in Computer Science

- Minor Concentration in Computer Science

|    |                          |   |                           |
|----|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 4. | Mathematics & Statistics |   |                           |
|    | MATH 454                 | Honours Analysis 3<br>Changes in descriptions, prerequisites<br>3 credits                     | <a href="#">AC-23-141</a> |
|    | MATH 455                 | Honours Analysis 4<br>Changes in description<br>3 credits                                     | <a href="#">AC-23-142</a> |
|    | MATH 564                 | Real Analysis and Measure Theory<br>Changes in title, description, prerequisites<br>4 credits | <a href="#">AC-23-143</a> |
|    | MATH 565                 | Functional Analysis<br>Changes in title, description, prerequisites<br>4 credits              | <a href="#">AC-23-144</a> |

Associate Dean Hundemer outlined the above course changes, MATH 454 to MATH 565, focusing on four related courses within the analysis sequence. These changes involve reorganizing course content, integrating measure theory into MATH 454, and emphasizing functional analysis in MATH 455. Similar adjustments are reflected in corresponding 500-level courses, including updates to course titles.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Choksi, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**Course retirements:**

|  |          |   |                           |
|--|----------|---|---------------------------|
|  | MATH 567 | Introduction to Functional Analysis<br>Course retirement<br>4 credits | <a href="#">AC-23-145</a> |
|  | MATH 635 | Functional Analysis 1<br>Course retirement<br>4 credits               | <a href="#">AC-23-146</a> |

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that the topics previously covered in MATH 567 have been integrated into MATH 455 and MATH 565, rendering MATH 567 unnecessary. Also, MATH 635 is proposed for retirement. This decision acknowledges the importance of the material covered but reflects its redundancy due to alternative options. In the future, students interested in these topics may have the opportunity to explore them through periodic topics courses.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Choksi, that the retirements be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**B.Sc. Program Changes:**

- Major in Biology and Mathematics [AC-23-147](#)

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that the revisions in the Major Program in Biology and Mathematics involve a comprehensive review of the program, initially created over 10 years ago. The proposed changes include evaluating existing courses, introducing new ones, and adjusting the program structure. The Mathematics component will be organized into Applied Mathematics and Statistics streams, while minor adjustments will be made to the Biology component's available course streams.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fussmann, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

5. Psychology  
 PSYC 601, 601D1/D2 First Year Research Paper  
 Changes in title, course activities  
 6 credits

[AC-23-152](#)

Associate Dean Hundemer explained that the primary changes to PSYC 601 and 601D1/D2 involve the title, previously labeled "Master's Comprehensive." This adjustment was made after consultation with GPS, as "Comprehensive Exam" is reserved exclusively for Ph.D. programs. Consequently, this alteration necessitates changes in course activities, requiring students to submit a research paper in their first year of the master's program in Psychology. However, despite this modification, the course remains mandatory in both the MSc and MA programs.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Palmer, that the changes be approved.

**The motion carried.**

**Section C: New/Revised Program Descriptions for New Online Calendar Platform, Course Catalogue**

*Approval Required from Faculty of Science Council on behalf of the Academic Committee*

**1. Computer Science**

| Full program title (with credit weight)  | Description   |
|--|---|
| Master of Science (M.Sc.) Computer Science (Thesis): Bioinformatics (45 credits) | <p>Bioinformatics research lies at the intersection of biological/medical sciences and mathematics/computer science/engineering. The intention of the Bioinformatics option is to train students to become researchers in this interdisciplinary field. This includes the development of strategies for experimental design, the construction of tools to analyze datasets, the application of modelling techniques, the creation of tools for manipulating bioinformatics data, the integration of biological databases, and the use of algorithms and statistics.</p> |

**2. Geography**

| Full program title (with credit weight)                          | Description  |
|--|--|
| <b>Master of Science (M.Sc.) Geography (Thesis) (45 credits)</b> | The Master of Science in Geography; Thesis is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program provides the opportunity to conduct research, including field-based studies, focusing on the natural (i.e., biophysical) sciences and includes supervision by a faculty member. Research themes reflect the expertise and interests of current faculty |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | members. A thesis, based on original research, is required.  |
| <b>Master of Science (M.Sc.); Geography (Thesis) — Environment (45 credits)</b>             | The Master of Science in Geography; Thesis — Environment is a research-based program of 45 credits. This program is offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment (BSE). The program focuses on the role of science in informed decision-making in the environmental sector, and its influence on political, socio-economic, and ethical judgments. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the environment and geography.   |
| <b>Master of Science (M.Sc.); Geography (Thesis) — Neotropical Environment (45 credits)</b> | The Master of Science in Geography; Thesis — Neotropical Environment is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program is offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI-Panama). The program is focused on environmental issues relevant to the Neotropics and Latin American countries including thematic areas such as geography, environment, biology, agricultural sciences, sociology, and political science. The program favours interdisciplinary approaches to research and learning through the participation of researchers from McGill University and from STRI. Some research and teaching is conducted in Latin America and Panama. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the neotropical environment and geography. |
| <b>Master of Arts (M.A.); Geography (Thesis) (45 credits)</b>                               | The Master of Arts in Geography; Thesis is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program provides the opportunity to conduct research, including field-based studies, focusing on the social sciences and includes supervision by a faculty member. Research themes reflect the expertise and interests of current faculty members. A thesis, based on original research, is required.   |
| <b>Master of Arts (M.A.); Geography (Thesis) — Development Studies (45 credits)</b>         | The Master of Arts in Geography; Thesis — Development Studies is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program focuses on international development issues in geography. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both development studies and geography, approved by the overseeing coordinating committee.  |
| <b>Master of Arts (M.A.); Geography (Thesis) — Environment (45 credits)</b>                 | The Master of Arts in Geography; Thesis — Environment is a research-based program of 45 credits. This program is offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment (BSE). The program focuses on the role of science in informed decision-making in the environmental sector, and its influence on political, socio-economic, and ethical judgments. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the environment and geography.  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Master of Arts (M.A.); Geography (Thesis) — Neotropical Environment (45 credits)</b></p>    | <p>The Master of Arts in Geography; Thesis —Neotropical Environment is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program is offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI-Panama). The program is focused on environmental issues relevant to the Neotropics and Latin American countries including thematic areas such as geography, environment, biology, agricultural sciences, sociology, and political science. The program favours interdisciplinary approaches to research and learning through the participation of researchers from McGill University and from STRI. Some research and teaching is conducted in Latin America and Panama. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the neotropical environment and geography.</p> |
| <p><b>Master of Arts (M.A.); Geography (Thesis) — Gender and Women's Studies (45 credits)</b></p> | <p>The Master of Arts in Geography; Thesis — Gender and Women's Studies is a research-based program of 45 credits. The program focuses on interdisciplinary gender and women's studies and issues in feminist research and methods. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both gender and women's studies and geography.</p>  |
| <p><b>Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.); Geography</b></p>   | <p>The Doctor of Philosophy in Geography is a research-based program that provides the opportunity to conduct research, including field-based studies, in both the natural (i.e., biophysical) and the social sciences and includes supervision by a faculty member. Research themes reflect the expertise and interests of current faculty members. A thesis, based on original research, is required.</p>   |
| <p><b>Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.); Geography — Environment</b></p>                               | <p>The Doctor of Philosophy in Geography; Environment is a research-based program offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment (BSE). The program focuses on the role of science in informed decision-making in the environmental sector, and its influence on political, socio-economic, and ethical judgments. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the environment and geography.</p>  |
| <p><b>Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.); Geography — Neotropical Environment</b></p>                   | <p>The Doctor of Philosophy in Geography; Neotropical Environment is a research-based program offered in collaboration with the Bieler School of Environment and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI-Panama). The program is focused on environmental issues relevant to the Neotropics and Latin American countries including thematic areas such as geography, environment, biology, agricultural sciences, sociology, and political science. The program favours interdisciplinary approaches to research and learning through the participation of researchers from McGill University and from STRI. Some research and teaching is conducted in Latin America and Panama. The</p>   |



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | thesis must be on a topic that relates to both the neotropical environment and geography.  |
| Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.);<br>Geography — Gender and Women's Studies | The Doctor of Philosophy in Geography; Gender and Women's Studies is a research-based program that focuses on interdisciplinary gender and women's studies and issues in feminist research and methods. The thesis must be on a topic that relates to both gender and women's studies and geography. |

### 3. Psychology

| Full program title (with credit weight)                    | Description   |
|--|---|
| Master of Science (M.Sc.) Psychology (Thesis) (45 credits) | The M.Sc. program is designed for students who have strong research interests. This program supports the development of advanced intellectual understanding and specialized research skills. The M.Sc. program includes course work and a significant research component, culminating in the submission of a thesis. The program's objective is to equip students with skills in critical reading, data collection, and scientific communication to either continue their studies or pursue professional opportunities. This program typically takes 2 years to complete. |
| Master of Arts (M.A.) Psychology (Thesis) (45 credits)     | The M.A. program is designed for students who have strong research interests. This program supports the development of advanced intellectual understanding and specialized research skills. The M.A. program includes course work and a significant research component, culminating in the submission of a thesis. The program's objective is to equip students with skills in critical reading, data collection, and scientific communication to either continue their studies or pursue professional opportunities. This program typically takes 2 years to complete.   |

Associate Dean Hundemer said that the program descriptions for the above graduate programs have been revised in anticipation of the transition to the new calendar platform, Course Catalogue, which will take effect starting the 2024-2025 academic year. With the introduction of the new calendar software, program descriptions are now prominently displayed on the front page. This ongoing initiative aims to enhance program descriptions, especially for those previously lacking comprehensive information. Various departments have proposed changes as part of this effort.

Associate Dean Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Blanchette, that the revised program descriptions for the graduate programs outlined above be approved.

**The motion carried.**

5)

**DEAN'S BUSINESS**

(a) Announcements

(i) Kudos

Dean Lennox announced **Professor Courtney Y. Paquette** from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics as the recipient of the 2024 Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship. Out of 1,000 applications, only 126 were awarded this year across five different disciplines, underscoring the Fellowship's critical role in supporting early career researchers. It is truly a privilege to have such a talented individual contributing to our community, and their recognition is inspiring for their groundbreaking research endeavors.

**(ii) President Saini's Message and Follow-up Message from Dean Lennox on Peaceful Assembly on McGill's Campuses**

Dean Lennox discussed the distribution of messages sent on Friday, 8 March 2024. President Saini sent a message to all community members on Friday morning, followed by Dean Lennox's message later that afternoon. The intention behind these messages was to reflect the university's stance on demonstrations and protests, stemming from a document [Operating Procedures Regarding Demonstrations, Protest and Occupations](#) that emerged from the 'Maple Spring' protests. These operating procedures, approved by the Senate, emphasize respecting the rights of students and members of the university community to express themselves while ensuring that activities do not interfere with others' rights to learn. Dean Lennox emphasized the importance of understanding that while protest is vital in civil society, individuals also have the right to not participate in such activities. He will try to distribute the Task Force Report on Respect and Inclusion, which he co-chaired in 2017, encapsulating the principles guiding discussions on conflicting beliefs and educational vision. Dean Lennox acknowledged receiving a thoughtful letter from the SUS President to discuss concerns at the Faculty Council meeting. He has called a separate meeting as he doubts that the Faculty Council is the optimal forum for these discussions. However, if the SUS feels that their concerns are not adequately addressed by the Faculty of Science, then such concerns will be addressed at a Faculty Council meeting.

**(iii) Possible AGSEM TA Strike**

Dean Lennox discussed the ongoing possibility of a labour action strike vote from the TA Union. He emphasized that while this process is ongoing, no comments will be made during the current meeting. However, he assured all members including graduate students, faculty, postdocs, and undergraduate students that the Faculty of Science is actively working during this period of conciliation to ensure continuity in delivery within legal frameworks. Dean Lennox reiterated that a strike, if it were to occur, would not hinder individuals from continuing their activities within the university environment. Efforts are being made to maintain program delivery until the end of the school year. Dean Lennox invited questions on item (ii) above only.

A student member expressed agreement with the sentiments shared in the mentioned email messages in item (ii) and highlighted the importance of supporting students' rights to protest within university guidelines. The member also raised concerns about recent communications being perceived as threatening and stressed the significance of students feeling supported in expressing their views alongside their academic commitments. In response, Dean Lennox encouraged open dialogue on effective protest strategies within the campus environment, noting the importance of constructive dialogue on relevant issues such as tuition. He proposed further discussions on these matters topics and suggested organizing a meeting.

**6) SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY (SUS) REPORT**

President (SUS) Asma Khamis presented the report from 13 February 2024, which was postponed to the current Faculty of Science Council meeting.

**(i) Report of 13 February 2024**

The SUS Sea Soirée, this year's Gala, took place on 16 February 2024 at the Grand Quai Pavilion, welcoming 800 participants and featuring amenities such as an open bar, catering, photo booth, DJ, and photographers. A bursary was provided to enhance student accessibility.

Internal governance amendments, including updates to the constitution and equity bylaws, were underway. The President and VP Communications collaborated to establish frameworks for departmental edits to governing documents, presenting motions at the General Council. A new funding opportunity, the CTF Tech Fund, was launched in partnership with CTF to facilitate departmental hardware acquisition.

The VP Academic, along with the Academic Events Committee, planned the Open Science Fair for 26 February 2024, collaborating with SRI, TOSI, and UAEM. Additionally, a speaker panel focusing on underrepresented groups in Science was scheduled for March 2024.

The VP Internal spearheaded Grad Ball for 5 April 2024 and Kiki Ball for 22 March 2024, a collaboration with the Science Internal Committee, Queer McGill, Black Students' Network McGill, and community ballroom groups. Other events, including Karaoke Night in late February, were also in planning.

The VP Sustainability, alongside committees, organized initiatives like the successful trivia night by the SUS Environment Committee on 9 February 2024 and the ongoing SUS Mental Health Snowman Competition. Efforts were underway with SECC to develop a Room Accessibility Repository.

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=cZYzedeSaFqvqfz4-J8J6rwudbYsxvhPuHl\\_1cB\\_d6htUMzdSWWBYRFBXMjY0WTJHM0hVOFO3UEdRSS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=cZYzedeSaFqvqfz4-J8J6rwudbYsxvhPuHl_1cB_d6htUMzdSWWBYRFBXMjY0WTJHM0hVOFO3UEdRSS4u)

The VP Communications hired French Translators to expedite the translation of the SUS website. The Public Relations committee organized the SUS Love Lab event, connecting students virtually with over 150 registrants.

The VP External continued preparations for the Burnside Basement reception and engaged local businesses with the sponsorships committee.

The Science Senator is currently exploring the concept of student-led minicourses and seeks both Faculty leadership and input for this endeavor. Building upon previous student proposals and initiatives, the envisioned approach entails an upper-level student undertaking a 3-credit course to design a curriculum and assess its impact, focusing on pedagogical training, leadership development, and course design. Subsequently, other students would have the opportunity to enroll in the 1-credit course during a subsequent semester, led by the upper-level student with the guidance of a supervisor. Those interested in providing feedback or participating in this initiative are encouraged to contact Grace Parish, the Science Senator, at [sciencesenator@ssmu.ca](mailto:sciencesenator@ssmu.ca).

The 2024-2025 SUS Elections commenced with the Preliminary Candidates Meeting hosted by the CRO. Nominations would begin later in the week, with the electoral calendar spanning from mid-February 2024 until the end of March 2024, alongside several fee renewal questions on the ballot, prepared in collaboration with the VP Finance.

#### **(ii) Report of 12 March 2024**

The following report provides updates on activities discussed in the 13 February 2024 report, presented at today's meeting.

The Annual SUS Gala was successfully held on 16 February 2024, accommodating 800 students. The VP Academic organized the Open Science Fair on 26 February 2024, with approximately 600 students attending throughout the evening.

The VP Internal and associated committees are currently preparing for the Grad Ball on 5 April 2024 and the 'Birds of a Feather' Kiki Ball on 13 April 2024, accompanied by workshops aimed at educating students on ballroom history and culture.

In the realm of sustainability, the VP Sustainability and her committee are actively planning events for this month. The Mental Health Committee is organizing an 'Adulting 101' workshop scheduled for 13 March 2024. Charity Week is slated for 18-22 March 2024, with proceeds from events directed to Animal Rescue Network Montreal. This week's events include a ceramics sale, movie night, fitness class raffle, and trivia night.

Preparations for the Burnside reopening celebration, under the VP External portfolio, are ongoing. Collaboration with the EUS is underway to co-host the Blue's Engineering Pub night on 15 March 2024. SUS Elections are in progress, with candidates commencing campaigning this week. Voting is scheduled from 20-27 March 2024, with the ballot featuring questions related to constitutional amendments and fee renewals.

Additionally, efforts are underway to organize the SUS Appreciation Night (SUSANs), a sit-down dinner planned for 28 March 2024 to celebrate the accomplishments of SUS Committees and Departmental Councils.

Dean Lennox thanked President Khamis for presenting the two reports detailing the activities of the SUS.

## 7) **SCIENCE EQUITY AND CLIMATE COMMITTEE**

Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson reported on the meeting of the Science Equity and Climate Committee held on 20 February 2024. Various topics were discussed to address a broad scope of issues.

Updates related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) matters were provided by the EDI Committee. This included discussions on proposed revisions to the Federal Employment Equity Act Review Task Force led by Prof. Adelle Blackett from the Faculty of Law, which align closely with McGill's existing practices.

Additionally, updates were provided on the gender-inclusive washroom project, the Provost's action plan to combat anti-black racism, and the forthcoming launch of McGill's accessibility strategy organized around five pillars. This comprehensive strategy aims to enhance accessibility for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities across various university domains.

Transitioning to climate-related discussions, the Committee addressed concerns regarding the excessive delays in processing of expense reports and efforts to promote the availability of travel advances to alleviate financial burdens while waiting for reimbursements.

Furthermore, inquiries were made regarding tenure and promotion processes and departmental compliance with university policies, underscoring the committee's role as a platform for identifying and helping to address workplace challenges.

The Committee aims to enhance information dissemination between the university and its departments to ensure effective implementation of policies and initiatives.

8) **PROVOST'S ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS ANTI-BLACK RACISM**

Associate Dean Nilson informed members that one of the advancements made over the past year towards the Anti-Black Racism (ABR) plan is the creation and launch of an online learning module addressing systemic racism, particularly anti-Black racism. This module, a commitment under the ABR plan, has been finalized and is expected to be publicly available, although this information is not fully confirmed.

This module is similar to the "It Takes All of Us" module addressing sexual violence, with one key distinction: while the latter is mandatory under the law, the new module will serve as an informational resource rather than a mandatory training.

Another significant advancement involves improvements to the mentorship support network for new Black faculty members. This network consists of senior Black faculty members who serve as mentors to new faculty, providing valuable guidance and support as they begin their journey at McGill University.

Associate Dean Nilson said that recruitment efforts are crucial, but it's equally important to focus on retention and fostering a supportive working climate. These advancements represent positive steps in that direction.

9) **THE NEW VIC PROJECT UPDATE**

Due to Dean Lennox having to leave the meeting early to attend another engagement, there was no report provided on the New Vic Project update.

10) **REPORTS OF ASSOCIATE DEANS AND VICE-DEAN**

- a) Vice-Dean David Stephens
- b) Associate Dean (Academic) Axel Hundemer
- c) Associate Dean (Research) John Stix

There were no reports for the current meeting.

- d) Associate Dean (Student Affairs) Anthony Mittermaier

Associate Dean Mittermaier drew members' attention about the "Keep Me Safe" resource available at McGill University, emphasizing its utility for both students and academic staff. Highlighted was its importance, particularly for students abroad who may lack access to provincial mental health resources. The resource serves as a tool for seeking advice on various student-related issues, offering support for instructors encountering challenges.

- e) Associate Dean (Graduate Education) Laura Nilson

Associate Dean Nilson provided updates on graduate program admissions, noting that the current numbers are either on par or slightly ahead of the previous year, reflecting positive momentum.

Additionally, the launch of a new climate survey called the 'Graduate Student Experience in the Research University Survey' was announced, facilitating comparisons with other North American research universities. This survey covers various topics, including financial support, program climate, and health and well-being. In conclusion, Associate Dean Nilson emphasized the survey's high response rates as crucial for gathering meaningful data to drive improvements across the university.

11) **REPORT ON ACTIONS OF SENATE**

- **Senate Meeting, 14 February 2024: Senator Natalya Gomez**  
**Select remarks from the Chair:**

The University and board announced that a decision had been made on who the next Chancellor will be (which was later announced publicly to be Pierre Boivin), and Chancellor John McCall MacBain was thanked for his ongoing service to the University with his term ending June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**In terms of Government Relations:**

**French language and tuition:**

The Chair shared that he had met with Premier Legault and Minister Pascale Dery for a frank discussion concerning a number of issues, and especially the tuition fee increase and francization program. No significant progress was made in these discussions, but the chair noted a commitment to maintaining open lines of communication and engaging the government on these matters. In response to questions from Senators, he later emphasized the University's position of asking that government decisions be made based on real evidence and bringing new evidence to the table, sharing his commitment to principles and optimism that evidence and data will get us to where we want to go.

Senator Manfredi later reminded us of the University's view that the 80% intermediate French proficiency requirement laid out by the Provincial government is impractical, and noted that there were currently no available details with respect to how this requirement would be monitored and/or assessed.

Senators asked how broader stakeholders such as students, faculty and staff are being involved in decision making on issues of tuition and French language requirements, and the Chair noted the ways that the Chair is engaging stakeholders in budget planning, including the formation of an Ad hoc group called the Faculty Engagement Consultative Group, and an upcoming university-wide townhall.

**International study permits:**

The Federal government has announced that it is imposing a cap on the number of new international undergraduate students it will accept into the country, with each province or territory receiving a portion of the study permits based on population size, which they can then distribute to universities and colleges. Quebec's quota was not yet known at the time of the meeting, but the chair said that we would be kept abreast of news on this front.

**External Relations, internal events and recognition:**

President Saini has recently attended a meeting of the U15 Executive Heads in Ottawa and participated in the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos where he in particular served as a moderator for a panel on Biodiversity.

In this new year, the university has hosted a number of university events, including its second annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration and a commemoration of the seven-year anniversary of the Quebec City Mosque Attack. There have also been a number of events for Black History Month in February. And the 9<sup>th</sup> annual McGill24 day of giving will be held tomorrow, March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Several achievements by McGill members were highlighted, including a team of five Undergraduate students winning first place in an International Artificial Intelligence Competition.

**Question on the New Vic Project:**

There was a question put forward by senators on the **New Vic Project** and Indigenous reconciliation commitments, asking in what ways the University will ensure a spirit of reconciliation as the situation moves forward. The discussion on this focused on the 52 Calls to Action set by the University's Task Force Report on Indigenous Studies and

Indigenous Education. And how they were being implemented and carried out with respect to the New Vic Project.

**Committee and Annual Reports:**

Two committee reports were presented to Senate for information: A report of the **Academic Policy committee** was presented by Senator Manfredi, and a report of the **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee** was presented by Senator Leckey. The latter contained, among other things, a discussion of an education module on anti-Black racism and McGill's accessibility strategy – highlighting that widespread focus on this is long overdue since #s of staff with disability have not been increasing like some other groups.

When the Annual Report on Student Life and Learning was put forward for information, a student Senator requested that a reference manual for students be created to raise awareness of the resources and services available to students and how to access them. Senator Beech said that the Student Life and Learning website is currently under review to serve as a more comprehensive access point for students.

Finally, The Annual Report of the Ombudsperson for Students was provided in Senate Materials, which provides activities over 2022-2023 and relevant statistics. In related discussion, a potential need for more informal conflict resolution resources within the broader University community came up.

12) **MEMBERS' QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no members' questions.

13) **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, Prof. Choksi **moved**, seconded by Mr. Barry, that the meeting be adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

**The motion carried.**