Academic Governance: SENATE’S ROLE

Ms. Edyta Rogowska
Secretary-General
Overview:

- Legislative and Governance Framework
- Academic Governance: Senate’s Mandate
- Senate-Board Continuum
- Senate Meetings
- Committees
- Reference Documents
Legislative Framework

McGill University:

Royal Charter  University Act
(Approved by Provincial Legislature)

History

Royal Charter (1821/1852)

Board of Governors (1821/1852)

Statutes (1843/1854/1863)

Senate (1935)
Shared Governance

- Fundamental principle of inclusion in key areas of institutional authority and decision-making.

- Governing Boards hold the ultimate authority and responsibility over the conduct of the affairs of the University.

- In a shared model of collegial governance, responsibility for decision making is shared among the Board, the Senate and the administration.
Mandate of Senate

- General control and supervision over the academic activities of the University
  - Programs of study and curriculum
  - Degrees, diplomas and certificates (in course and honorary)
  - Academic policy and regulations
  - Disciplinary authority over the student body
  - The academic calendar
- May recommend establishment and discontinuance of academic units (faculties, departments and schools)
- Make recommendations on academic policy and regulations.
Senate-Board Continuum

- Senate alone
  - Courses
  - Degrees Approval

- Senate must recommend before Board can consider
  - Regulations and Policies (e.g. Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct; Regulations for Contract Academic Staff)

- Senate advises (may recommend but not binding on the Board)
  - Establishment of Academic Buildings
  - Budget (resource allocation)
  - Representations through the Principal

- Board sole authority
  - Allocation of Resources (finances, investments)
  - Capital Expenditures and Infrastructure

- Disagreement - Conference Committee (Board: final decision)
Senate-Board Continuum

- **Senate**
  - Regularly reports to the Board on its activities
  - Has representatives on the Board

- **Board**
  - Regularly reports to Senate on its activities
  - Has representatives on Senate

- **Annual Joint Board-Senate Meeting**
  - Joint Executive-Senate Steering Committee
    - *Discussion of matters relevant to the University’s mission for the ensuing year*

- **Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity**

- **University committees with representatives from the Board and Senate**
  (i.e. statutory advisory committees)
Senate Composition
(Statutes, s. 6.1.1)
(Last reviewed in 2014)

111 members

- 53 Elected Faculty and Library Representatives
- 3 Elected from the Faculty-at-Large
- 25 Ex Officio Members (Chancellor, Chair of the Board of Governors, Principal, Provost, Deputy Provost, VPs, Deans, University Registrar, Director of Teaching & Learning)
- 21 Students (SSMU; PGSS; MCSS; MACES; Postdoc)
- 6 Elected Administrative and Support Staff
- 3 Representatives of the Board of Governors
Senate Meetings

- Based on the Senate Standing Rules of Procedure
  - [https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/standingrules](https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/standingrules)

- Calendar of Business
  - List of items to be presented to Senate
  - Reviewed monthly by the Steering Committee

- Questions and Motions
  - Suitability determined by the Senate Steering Committee
Senate Meetings

▶ Voting
  - Quorum - 40% of its members
  - Usually a simple majority, some exceptions (e.g. honorary degrees, amendments to Statutes)

▶ Spectators and Livestreaming
  - Room for 60 spectators
  - https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/webcast

▶ Open/Confidential Session
  - Why confidential session?
AGENDA

SECTION I

2:30-2:35 p.m. 1. Welcoming Remarks
2:35-2:45 p.m. 2. Memorial Tributes for Chancellor Emerita Gretta Chambers and Professors Zafer Ali-Khan and Eleanor Stubley
2:45-2:48 p.m. 3. Report of the Steering Committee [Consent item] (17-18:01)
2:48-2:55 p.m. 4. Business Arising from the May 15, 2017 Minutes
2:55-3:10 p.m. 5. Chair’s Remarks

SECTION II

Part "A" – Questions and Motions by Members

None

Part "B" – Motions and Reports from Organs of University Government

Open Session

3:10-3:20 p.m. 1. Report of the Senate Nominating Committee
Professor Christopher Manfredi, Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) (D17-01) Approval

3:20-3:25 p.m. 2. Appointment of Assessors under the Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law
Professor Angela Campbell, Associate Provost (Equity and Academic Policies) (D17-02) Approval

3:25-3:40 p.m. 3. Report of the Provost’s Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education
Professor Christopher Manfredi, Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) (D17-03) Information
Senators at Meetings

Role
- Prepare, attend regularly and participate
- Bear in mind the University’s best interests
- Report to your constituency after meetings

Speaking at Senate
- Raise your card to be seen by the Chair
- Use your microphone (and remember to turn it off)
Senate Committees

http://www.mcgill.ca/senate/committeesofsenate

- Senate Standing Committees
- Committees Arising from University Regulations
- Ad Hoc Committees
Senate Standing Committees

https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/committeesofsenate/senate-standing-committees

- Academic Policy Committee
- Committee on Enrolment and Student Affairs
- Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee
- Committee on Libraries
- Committee on the Rights of Senate
- Senate Committee on Physical Development
- Senate Nominating Committee
- Senate Steering Committee
- Committee on Student Services
- Joint Board-Senate Committee on Equity
Senate Steering Committee

- Charged with proposing the Senate agenda and carrying out functions such as:
  - Reviewing the Senate calendar of business;
  - Recommending the approval of the minutes of the last meeting and approving confidential minutes;
  - Assigning speaking rights;
  - Assigning items for confidential session;
  - Appointing acting Chairs;
  - Selecting open discussion topic(s) for the governance year;
  - Reviewing written questions and motions;
  - Approving degrees and diplomas on Senate’s behalf;
  - Dealing with some of the contingencies that arise between Senate meetings.

- A written report is submitted to Senate at every meeting.
Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee

- Advises on convocation matters and recommends to Senate outstanding individuals for the conferral of:
  - McGill honorary degrees (DD, LLD, DLitt, DMus and DSc honoris causa)
  - McGill University Medal for Exceptional Academic Achievement
  - Lifetime Achievement Award for Leadership in Learning

- The Committee’s deliberations and recommendations to Senate are strictly confidential. All Senators share responsibility for maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of the process.
Committees Arising from University Regulations

https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/committeesofsenate/committees-arising-university-regulations

- University Tenure Committees
- University Tenure Committee for Recruitment
- Statutory Selection Committees
- Committee on Student Discipline
- Committee on Student Grievances
- Appeal Committee for Student Discipline and Grievances
- Advisory Council on the Charter of Students’ Rights
- Committee on Staff Grievances and Disciplinary Procedures
- University Appeals Committee
- Panel for the Investigation of Research Misconduct
Ad Hoc Committees

https://www.mcgill.ca/senate/committeesofsenate/ad-hoc-committees

- Senate may establish ad hoc committees from time to time on a particular subject matter.
- These committees are dissolved after the completion of their mandate.

- Example of an ad hoc committee:
  - Ad Hoc Senate Committee on Teaching Staff-Student Intimate Relationships
Reference Documents

- Statutes of McGill University
- McGill University Mission Statement
- Statement of Academic Freedom
- Senate Standing Rules of Procedure
- Meeting Dates (Senate and Committees)
- Senate Calendar of Business

https://www.mcgill.ca/senate
http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat
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