

**Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning
of the Academic Policy and Planning Committee
22nd meeting held on Tuesday, 09 December 2008
from 10:00 to 12:00
in Arts 160 (Council Room)**

Present: M. Mendelson (Chair), J. Clark, A. Costopoulos, J. Everett, S. Franke, R. Harris, A. Jaeger, M. Kreiswirth, M. McIntosh, H. Sleiman, D. Starke-Meyerring, Y. Steinert, S. Tran, C. Weston, A. Ippersiel (Secretary to the Committee)

Regrets: B. Baker, A. De Motta, S. Kanfi, T. Kirby, J. Luker, L. Lorenzino, C. Urbain

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated.

2. Approval of minutes of SCTL meeting held on 28 October 2008

The minutes were approved as circulated.

3. Membership list 2008-09

4. Business arising from minutes of previous meetings

- ***Lifetime Teaching Award (C. Weston):***

An initial draft was presented at the last SCTL meeting which was then brought to APG by the Chair and Director of TLS. As a result of the discussion at APG, two changes were made to the document:

- 1) The title of the award was changed to the McGill University Lifetime Award for Teaching Excellence.
- 2) Reference the value of the award to read: "This unique form of recognition brings with it a monetary award".

Action: The corrected document will go to APC.

5.

Action: The CSA memo, with the TLS “Use of Clickers” document as an addendum will go forward to APC.

6. Regular Reports:

a) Dean of Students: (J. Everett)

- **Advising update:** The academic mission statement went to APC where it was slightly modified. It is on the Senate agenda for January 21, 2009.
- **Training modules** for faculty advisers are being developed and will share best practices. There will also be advising websites with FAQs. These are helpful tools for staff.
- **Credit limits:** The question is whether it really is a reduced course load if a student in probationary standing has to take 14 credits. The idea of a reduced course load is to give the student time to do good work on 4 courses. This will be discussed further in CSA.
- **Hidden pre-requisites:** Most faculties don't talk about recommendations re: waivers for pre-requisites. What information is given to students about replacing credits for the program? The recommendation is that all faculties should look at how they handle their waivers for pre-requisites and decide how they want to handle this. This will be raised at CSA to sensitize people.
- **Nomination of second (or associate) examiners** for formal final examinations: There is no University-wide policy. A proposal will be brought to APC. CSA has developed a recommendation for policy to determine who should be nominated as a second examiner. It is proposed that the co-examiner be familiar with the exam before submission in case the examiner cannot be present at the exam. TAs could be available on site but the examiner must be reachable.

Comments/questions:

- Is there any data to suggest that perhaps problems with course selection are result of not showing up at orientation? Are there statistics on orientation? The First Year Office has statistics and there should also be statistics for individual faculties.
- One suggestion was that orientations could be put on COOL and made available to those who couldn't attend.
- The student representative mentioned that Orientation takes place in August when new students are busy moving into their dorms. They haven't quite understood about their email accounts etc.
- It is possible that timing is a problem; perhaps the orientation in August is too early.

b) Teaching and Learning Services: (C. Weston)

- **TLSWG Principles for Designing Supportive Campus Environments** – tabled to next meeting
- **Learning to Teach Workshop (Nov 8)**
C. Weston (Director of TLS) and M. Kreiswirth (Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) gave an update of the Learning to Teach Workshop that was offered to graduate students on Saturday November 8, 2008. There were 264 graduate students in attendance at the workshop (42% were currently Teaching Assistants). The evaluations were positive: 93% of students polled said that the workshop met their expectations and 90% said that it was good for their careers.

The Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies stated that this is a work in progress. The goal is to make this workshop available to all graduate students. This is part of a number of workshops being planned in collaboration with TLS to provide graduate students with

different skills beyond the knowledge of a particular program. Some of these workshops will be offered this year; some will be in future years.

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- There is an emphasis on undergraduate research in the Faculty of Science. At end of summer, presentations are made by students at the Undergraduate Research Conference, and some of the projects are published in the McGill Science Undergraduate Research Journal (mSURJ).
- The Tomlinson Project (T-Pulse) is funded to support teaching innovations and related research. The most important ongoing project is the TA preparation workshop offered every semester. The project also funded part of last year's clicker initiative which was largely in the Biology Department.
- Over last week or so the Physics Department has conducted an online survey of its U2 and U3 students to gather information about students' perceptions of the physics programs. The survey used the SCEQ (Student course Evaluation Questionnaire) from the University of Sydney. It was introduced to the department by A. Saroyan.

Action: Bring SCEQ to this committee. Invite A. Saroyan to present it.

What to report? Action items, general updates?

Where to report? Curriculum committees, departments rather than Faculties, advisory committees to Deans?