

668TH MEETING OF SENATE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2024, 1:30 P.M.
MCGREER 100 AND BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

MINUTES

Chair: Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier

Present: Sonoma Brawley, Dr. Eva Bures, Leana Ceresoli, Dr. Julie Desjardins, Alpha Diallo, Dr. Anthony Di Mascio, Sophia Driscoll, Dr. Valerio Faraoni, Dr. Mark Gandey, Fiona Gaombalet, Dr. Kerry Hull, Catherine Lavallée-Welch, Dr. Heather Lawford, Alex Mador, Dr. Jean Manore, Dr. Patrick McBrine, Dr. Matthew Peros, Dr. Jessica Riddell, Roser Rise, Dr. John Ruan, Hans Rouleau, Dr. Cranmer Rutihinda, Dr. Michael Teed, Dr. Maxime Trempe, Dr. Yanan Wang, Dr. Andrew Webster, Dr. Dawn Wiseman

*Alpha Diallo and Dr. Julie Desjardins arrived at 1:36 p.m. followed by Dr. Eva Bures at 1:43 p.m., Dr. Yanan Wang at 1:46 p.m. and Dr. Valerio Faraoni at 1:59 p.m.

*Dr. Jessica Riddell left at 4:50 p.m. followed by Sofia Driscoll at 4:56 p.m., Dr. Anthony Di Mascio and Dr. Michael Teed at 5:00 p.m., and Dr. Matthew Peros at 5:09 p.m.

Regrets: Dr. Hafid Agourram, Julien Collin, Dr. Bruno Courtemanche

Secretary: Geneviève Gagné

Principal Lebel-Grenier formally opened the 668th meeting at 1:33 p.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was held on the anniversary of the tragic Polytechnique massacre and emphasized the importance of continued efforts to prevent such events in the future.

668/1 AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Alex Mador

Motion carried.

668/2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 MINUTES OF THE 667TH SENATE MEETING

The Minutes of the 667th meeting of Senate, held on November 1, 2024, were approved with minor corrections and clarification for inclusion in item 5.3 – Graduate Studies Committee.

Moved by: Sonoma Brawley

Seconded by: Maxime Trempe

Abstentions: Roser Rise and Fiona Gaombalet

Motion carried.

668/3 BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising.

Alpha Diallo and Dr. Julie Desjardins arrived at 1: 36 p.m.

668/4 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Principal Lebel-Grenier emphasized the significance of the meeting, focusing on the Senate Planning Committee's (SPC) recommendations regarding tenure, limited-term appointments, and part-time course allocations. He introduced the curriculum and academic structure review process and the French Language and Culture in Quebec project, aimed at reinforcing Bishop's position as an anglophone institution in a francophone province.

The Principal informed Senators of his early departure to attend a meeting with Minister Déry regarding the implementation of Bill 74, which grants the government discretionary power to impose international student quotas on universities. He referenced his testimony before the National Assembly's Parliamentary Committee on November 5, noting extensive discussions with Minister Roberge. The government, however, maintained its predetermined stance. Although minor amendments were discussed, language of instruction was identified as a potential criterion for setting quotas, posing a significant threat to the University. A united front among Quebec universities is being formed to oppose the bill and address its impacts. Minister Déry's public announcement on these measures is anticipated in the near future.

Dr. Eva Bures arrived at 1: 43 p.m., followed by Dr. Yanan Wang at 1: 46 p.m.

The Chair also addressed the Commissioner of the French Language's report introduced in October on the state of the French language in Quebec, with measures targeting higher education institutions. He highlighted proposals to limit English course offerings in English-language institutions and restrict access to English-Language universities, underscoring ongoing efforts to mitigate these impacts. Senators were directed to the website for the report and additional details.

Principal Lebel-Grenier provided an update on the recovery plan, stating that appointment faculty positions approval remains uncertain until its finalization in May. He indicated he was supportive of option two (2) related to Tenure stream appointments which proposed the Board of Governors decide on appointments at its June meeting. He announced the strategic planning process, which includes surveys and consultation meetings, encouraging participation and the use of available tools. He emphasized this as an opportunity to reflect on Bishop's liberal education model and institutional identity. Details on the next steps will be shared shortly.

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster assumed the role of Chair upon the Principal's departure at 2 p.m.

5.1 ACADEMIC STANDING AND ADMISSION POLICY

Registrar Hans Rouleau presented a report addressing two key points. The first section provided an update and a motion regarding the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur* request to wave requirements for medical certificates for absences of less than five (5) days. Registrar Rouleau noted that revisions to the policy wording were proposed to improve clarity and alignment with government and institutional objectives.

MOTION

That Senate approves the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee's recommendation to implement the Policy on Short-Term Absence(s). This policy is to come in effect immediately.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Leana Ceresoli

Motion carried.

The second motion of the first section referred to an amendment to the wording in the School of Education section of the Academic Calendar regarding the criteria for awarding "With Distinction". The change removes "performance and practicum" as a requirement, aligning the calendar with the actual practice in the School of Education. The motion includes both the current and revised language, with amendments set to take effect for the June 2025 convocation. It was also noted that the Academic Standing and Admission Policy Committee is currently reviewing the university-wide criteria for awarding "With Distinction" and will bring forward recommendations for Senate discussion in future meetings.

Current language:

The notation "with Distinction" will appear on the transcript of students who graduate with a cumulative average of 80% or more. To be awarded a degree with distinction, students must not only achieve first class academic standing in their courses, (cumulative average of 80% or more) but must also perform at a highly successful level in all practicum components as evaluated by the Dean of the School of Education in consultation with the Director of Practice Teaching and faculty members whose courses are directly associated with the student's practicum sessions.

MOTION

That Senate approves the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee's recommendation to edit the School of Education's criteria for awarding "with distinction" to read as follows. Effective: Winter 2025 {June 2025 Convocation}

The notation "with Distinction" will appear on the transcript of students who graduate with a cumulative average of 80% or more.

A question was asked regarding whether the division had already approved this, which Dr. Andrew Webster confirmed.

Moved by: Dawn Wiseman

Seconded by: Julie Desjardins

Motion carried.

Dr. Valerio Faraoni arrived at 1: 59 p.m.

The second section of the report focused on a proposal to modify the Withdrawn with Permission (WP) deadline, currently set for the last day of classes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this timeline was adjusted and previously ranged between the 7th and 10th weeks of the semester.

The report included a historical review of WP deadlines and a benchmarking analysis of other institutions, including Maple League and Quebec universities, which typically set WP deadlines between the 6th and 9th weeks of the semester. Registrar Hans Rouleau proposed aligning the WP deadline with approximately 75% of the semester, designating it as the ninth Friday of the teaching schedule, effective from Fall 2025. This proposal will be brought forward for adoption in January.

Concerns were raised regarding the logistics of calculating part-time courses and the spring-summer semester. Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that the calculation aligns with the ninth week of the semester and is intended to address the fall and winter semesters. Registrar Rouleau confirmed this alignment.

An observation was made that the proposed WP deadline would generally coincide with the Thanksgiving break. Registrar Rouleau explained that the timing is based on approximately 25-27 hours of contact time rather than a fixed calendar date, making the deadline flexible and subject to annual adjustments based on the academic schedule. Dr. Andrew Webster also elaborated on the rationale behind the changes.

Registrar Hans Rouleau then presented a second proposal to reschedule the Fall Reading Week break to immediately follow Thanksgiving Monday, running from Tuesday to Friday of that week (inclusive). This adjustment aims to address the significant absenteeism observed under the current schedule, where the break closely follows Truth and Reconciliation Day and Thanksgiving. Integrating the two breaks would potentially reduce absenteeism while maintaining the required amount of contact hours.

Concerns were raised about reducing the Reading Week break to four days instead of the traditional five. Suggestions included keeping the Monday following Thanksgiving or exploring other options to preserve a five-day break. Comments also highlighted that the current structure, with separate breaks, contributes to extended periods of absenteeism and loss of instructional time.

The proposed modifications will undergo further analysis to address these concerns and will be brought to Senate for adoption in January.

Registrar Hans Rouleau concluded by noting that the report includes a draft of the 2025-2026 sessional dates for review, incorporating the proposed WP and Reading Week changes. Any feedback should be directed to the Registrar's Office.

5.2 SENATE PROGRAM ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE (SPARC)

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster presented the report of the SPARC Committee, which includes the Biology and Biochemistry department Final Report and proposed timeline adjustments to the Committee review timeline for the 2025-2026 academic year. Both items presented are for adoption by Senate.

A question was raised about a potential collaboration with the Sustainable Agriculture department. Dr. Kerry Hull noted that discussions are ongoing, with two (2) Individualized Master's proposals expected to be presented in the coming weeks.

MOTION

That Senate approves the departmental report as presented in Appendix 2 for the Department of Biology and Biochemistry.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Fiona Gaombalet

Motion carried.

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster presented proposed timeline changes for the Philosophy, History and Global Studies, Pre-Med, and Arts Administration department. These adjustments align with the ongoing curriculum and academic review process, considering the broader context of evaluations and potential structural changes that may require program review or adaptation.

A correction was noted indicating that the timeline incorrectly states the review of the Department of Physics and Astronomy occurred in Fall 2019, whereas it actually took place in Winter 2020. Dr. Andrew Webster mentioned that the date will be corrected.

MOTION

That Senate approve the revised SPARC review dates for the following departments:

- Philosophy (PHI): From Winter 2025 to Fall 2025
- History and Global Studies (HIS): From Winter 2025 to Winter 2026
- Pre-Med: From winter 2025 to Fall 2025
- Arts Administration: From Winter 2025 to Fall 2025

Moved by: Jean Manore

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried.

5.3 GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull presented updates to the Individualized Master's Program Proposal Form, emphasizing the need for modifications to align with the University's context and enhance clarity in processes. The updates focus on interdisciplinary aspects, student privacy, and collaboration among various groups involved in approving and managing the program. The revisions were developed in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee, divisional representatives, and faculty experienced with the program.

Key changes include:

- Expanded supervisory teams to enhance mentorship.
- Revised language for research projects.
- Clearer definitions for course types within the program.
- A new course proposal template to streamline analysis and facilitate instructor compensation for graduate teaching.

These changes aim to improve transparency, efficiency, and support for both students and faculty. Dr. Kerry Hull mentioned the form is presently being tested and will be brought to Senate for approval in January.

Clarification was requested regarding the guidelines for distinguishing between Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MSc) programs. Dr. Kerry Hull acknowledged the need to refine the proposal and address the MA/MSc distinction to ensure clarity and alignment across divisions and disciplines. Dr. Matthew Peros provided additional insights, noting that this distinction is particularly relevant in divisions offering both programs. He explained that multiple factors are considered when defining MA versus MSc programs and indicated that discussions on this topic will take place at an upcoming divisional meeting, with further deliberations planned into the new year.

5.4 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dr. Heather Lawford presented the Nominating Committee Report mentioning the appointment of Dr. Matthew Peros, Dr. Hafid Agourram and Dr. Bruno Courtemanche to the Academic Review Committee.

A question arose regarding the status of the Teaching and Learning Committee. Dr. Heather Lawford noted that the Committee is working toward increasing its activities.

It was clarified that any inadvertent or incorrect committee assignment should be communicated to the Chair of the Nominating Committee for correction.

MOTION

THAT Senate approve the new membership of Senate Committees for the 2024-2025 academic year as presented on December 6, 2024.

Moved by: Heather Lawford

Seconded by: Dawn Wiseman

Abstention: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried with the mention of a potential change in committee assignment.

5.5 SENATE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster reported that the Senate Planning Committee (SPC) sought to balance its recommendations in light of the financial situation outlined by the Principal in October. This required careful reflection on the approval of tenure-stream positions, limited-term appointments, and part-time course allocations.

At its November 1 meeting, Senate approved the SPC's recommendation to allocate 15 part-time courses for the Spring/Summer 2025 semesters, a reduction from the usual 35 courses, resulting in savings of \$234,040. At the time, a clearer financial outlook was needed before recommending new tenure-stream and limited-term appointments, delaying these recommendations to the December Senate meeting.

TENURE-STREAM APPOINTMENTS

The Senate Planning Committee recognized that the University's financial situation made it certain that the Board of Governors would examine very closely any recommendation to authorize new tenure-stream positions for July 2025. Nonetheless, each request received by the SPC was evaluated on its merits, independent of speculation over possible Board of Governors decisions derived from financial constraints. The Committee prioritized replacement positions over new ones, given financial constraints.

Four (4) submissions were received for new tenure-stream positions in the department of:

- Computer Science
- Drama
- Sociology
- Sport Studies

Dr. Andrew Webster emphasized that the evaluation process considered several factors, including the staffing needs in each department to support their respective programs, the Curriculum and Academic Structures Review, availability of strategic mandate funds, and Resource Allocation Model (RAM) scores. Sociology and Computer Science were prioritized as top candidates for tenure-track appointments. He commended all the departments for submitting well-constructed and detailed proposals that thoroughly outlined their needs.

Dr. Andrew Webster noted the SPC's recommendation that, if the Board of Governors does not approve tenure-stream appointments at its December meeting, Senate should approve now that these departments instead receive year-long limited-term appointments to address pressing needs. In addition, it recommended that in that case all four (4) of the requested tenure-stream positions, including Sport Studies, should be re-evaluated by the Board of Governors in May/June 2025, when the future financial picture for the university was clearer.

The SPC therefore views such limited-term appointments as a temporary bridging mechanism to address immediate gaps, with long-term solutions dependent on resolving financial challenges and ensuring effective program delivery. By making this recommendation, the SPC approach is intended to save time, provide clarity to departments, and minimize potential process disruptions in the new year.

The SPC acknowledged the need for an additional position in Sport Studies but determined that, given the current financial constraints and its decision on prioritization of replacement positions, it was not feasible to recommend this appointment. Similarly, the SPC recognized the importance of the Drama tenure-stream request, particularly as the department is currently down two (2) members. However, low student enrollments and insufficient RAM scores hindered the Committee's ability to approve this request at this time.

LIMITED-TERM APPOINTMENTS

Computer Science

Dr. Andrew Webster mentioned that a three (3)-year limited-term appointment, from July 2025 to June 2028, was recommended to ensure program stability and attract candidates. This would be funded via the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur* (MES) strategic mandate funds available to the department. The creation of a three (3)-year limited term appointment requires the approval of the Academic Joint Committee, in recognition of article 6.01.c of the Collective Agreement.

Education

Dr. Andrew Webster mentioned the School of Education is requesting one ten (10)-month limited term appointment for 2025-2026 to be funded through the MES strategic mandate as per previous years. (It is also separately requesting another limited-term appointment funded through conversion of their allocated part-time courses.) This position would deliver curriculum teaching and learning courses for the undergraduate programs.

Environment, Agriculture and Geography (Sustainable Agriculture and Food Studies)

Dr. Andrew Webster mentioned that a two (2) – year appointment is due to expire in June 2025. Therefore, the Department is requesting a new two (2)-year limited term appointment for the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Studies program, more specifically for agribusiness and food services, funded through MES strategic funding. This position is a vital component to delivering the existing major and the delivering of the BSc in Sustainable Agriculture.

CONVERSION OF LIMITED-TERM APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Andrew Webster reported that the SPC recommended adjusting the standard conversion rate from seven (7) part-time courses for six (6) part-time courses to eight (8) part-time courses for six (6), better reflecting the actual costs, financial constraints, and reductions in part-time course offerings. Due to resource limitations and the significant reductions already made across multiple areas, the SPC was unable to support certain requests for additional part-time courses.

Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that any department able to identify an “8 for 6” conversion would receive support.

SENATE PLANNING COMMITTEE PROCESS IN FORMULATING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Vice-Principal Academic and Research provided an overview of the process followed by the Senate Planning Committee (SPC) in formulating its recommendations. The process is designed to enhance efficiency by minimizing the need for extensive follow-ups with departmental stakeholders.

The key components in formulating recommendations are as follows:

Timeline for presenting tenure-Stream Recommendations

The SPC postponed presenting tenure-stream recommendations from the October to December meeting of Senate to align with decisions on savings and to account for a clearer financial outlook. This delay also allowed time for evaluating part-time course allocations, a process approved by Senate in October.

Engagement with Deans

Over a four (4)-week period, the SPC held meetings with Deans to gain a comprehensive understanding of departmental needs, particularly regarding part-time credits and institutional priorities.

Final Decision-Making

The SPC convened to review and finalize its recommendations, ensuring they were well informed and ready for adoption.

It was then proposed that an open discussion should precede the moving of the formal motion to adopt the SPC's recommendations by convening as a committee in its entirety.

The proposition was moved, seconded, and carried without opposition y Senate.

Dr. Andrew Webster opened the floor for discussion and invited Dr. Maxime Trempe, who in turn asked Dr. Tavis Smith to present on behalf of the Sport Studies department.

Dr. Tavis Smith opened by thanking the Senate Planning Committee (SPC) for their efforts during challenging times, while expressing disappointment that Sport Studies was not prioritized for a tenure-stream position. He emphasized the department's current composition and the program's rapid growth, with nearly 100 new students expected, increasing total enrollment to approximately 250 students. Dr. Tavis Smith underscored the significant capacity challenges this growth creates and referenced the ongoing Senate Program Academic Review Committee (SPARC) review. He sought clarification on the possibility of capping the program to manage capacity and formally inquired about the process, stressing the importance of aligning any cap with available resources. Dr. Tavis Smith mentioned the department's concerns about its ability to deliver the promised quality education and the distinctive "Bishop's experience" under current constraints.

It was noted that tenure-stream appointments for Sociology and Sport Studies were identified as divisional priorities during discussions in August and September. Concerns were highlighted regarding the significant imbalance in the faculty-to-student ratio within the Sport Studies department, potentially adversely affecting the student experience and increasing faculty workload. An imbalance risks compromising the quality of support provided to students. Additionally, the University's institutional growth objective—targeting an enrollment increase to 3,000 students to enhance financial viability—is closely linked to programs like Sport Studies, emphasizing the urgent need for adequate staffing in the department to support growth, maintain a high-quality student experience, and align with the University's broader strategic goals.

A question was raised about the Computer Science program's ability to meet government requirements related to program expansion and enrollment targets, particularly in introducing a cybersecurity program and increasing graduate studies enrollment.

Dr. Kerry Hull outlined the department's challenges and plans to address these goals. She noted that while the department is striving to meet governmental targets, it faces obstacles such as a decline in international student numbers, partly due to government policies, and the absence of an international recruitment agent.

Dr. Kerry Hull explained that the department plans to hire a faculty member with expertise in cybersecurity to support the development of the program. She expressed optimism that the department's efforts would align with government expectations in the coming years.

Dr. Jean Manore expressed concerns about the Senate Planning Committee's decision not to prioritize a tenure-stream appointment for the Drama Department, despite its situation being comparable to Sociology and Computer Science. While supporting the tenure-stream recommendation for Sociology, given the need for a replacement and faculty pressures, she highlighted Drama's critical decline in full-time faculty—from 4.5 to 1 over the past decade—as an urgent issue.

Dr. Jean Manore criticized the reliance on financial metrics like the RAM score, which disproportionately disadvantage the department of Humanities, in tenure-stream decisions. She also highlighted misallocations of revenue, such as alumni donations and musical production earnings, that were not properly attributed to Drama department within the RAM score calculation. These issues underscored the need for a reassessment and a more equitable, long-term financial strategy.

The Drama Department's significant contributions to the University—including community outreach, industry support, and ancillary revenue generation—were emphasized, while rejecting the narrative that smaller programs must “pull their financial weight” to justify tenure-stream appointments. A tenure-stream position for Drama was strongly advocated as essential for sustaining program quality, supporting institutional growth, and preserving its valuable impact on the University and the broader community.

Dr. Andrew Webster outlined the rationale behind the SPC's recommendations on Drama.

Many Senators expressed disappointment at the lack of support for Drama, emphasizing its role in providing experiential learning opportunities, supporting alumni professional growth, and maintaining student engagement in productions and coursework. Concerns were also raised about the potential erosion of the University's identity and unique niche within Canadian academia if the under-resourced situation continues. A call was made to take tangible actions to reinforce the importance of Drama and the Humanities as integral to the University's identity, culture, and academic mission.

Dr. Jean Manore stated that discussions regarding the role of the Humanities within the University's framework will take place during the Winter semester.

Clarifications were sought on the distinction between Motions 1 and 2 regarding the tenure-stream positions and the reconsideration by the Board of Governors in May/June 2025, as the text did not explicitly include the re-evaluation of tenure-stream positions for Drama and Sport Studies at this time as stated in the report. Dr. Andrew Webster identified this as a drafting oversight, as the report itself reflects this intention and gave explanations on the intent and scope of the recommendations.

Senators were reminded to prioritize the long-term sustainability of the academic enterprise, leaving financial matters to the Board of Governors. They were urged to uphold the integrity of the bicameral governance system and avoid overstepping into Board of Governors responsibilities. A call was made for decisions that align with the University's long-term interests.

Dr. Andrew Webster thanked everyone for their active role and the strong support for the work done by the Senate Planning Committee. He continued by giving procedural guidance, noting that amendments to motions can be proposed, discussed and voted emphasizing avoiding unnecessary complexities.

Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that the SPC's recommendations were based on the institution's current circumstances and financial constraints. The decision not to support tenure-stream positions for Drama and Sport Studies was driven by these factors rather than a negative judgment on the merits of the cases presented by the departments. He referred Senators to the Senate Planning Committee report for in-dept information.

A motion was proposed to return to regular session.

The proposition was moved, seconded, and carried without opposition.

After a lengthy discussion, the first motion was amended.

MOTION

That Senate recommends the following tenure-stream positions for the following departments, in order of priority, for approval by the Board of Governors for the 2025-26 budget.

1. Sociology
2. Computer Science
3. Drama & Sport Studies

Moved by: Matthew Peros

Seconded by: Cranmer Rutihinda

Vote results: **13 in favour** **7 opposed** **4 abstentions**

Motion carried.

Dr. Jessica Riddell left at 4:50 p.m.

MOTION

Should the Board of Governors be unable to approve new tenure-stream appointments at this time:

A) that Senate recommends the following limited-term appointments, all of equal priority, for approval by the Board of Governors for the 2025-26 budget.

- Computer Science
- Drama
- Sociology

B) that Senate requests that the following positions be reconsidered by the Board of Governors in May/June 2025 for approval as tenure-stream appointments, should the Board of Governors determine at that time that financial recovery planning is sufficiently advanced and robust.

- Computer Science
- Drama
- Sociology
- Sports Studies

Moved by: Jean Manore

Seconded by: Dawn Wiseman

Motion carried.

MOTION

That Senate recommends the following limited term appointment positions for approval by the Board of Governors for the 2025-26 budget.

1. Computer Science, 3 years (July 2025-June 2028)
2. Sustainable Agriculture, 2 years (July 2025-June 2027)
3. Education, 10 months (2025-26)
4. Education, 10 months (2025-26)
5. Psychology, 10 months (2025-26)

Moved by: Dawn Wiseman

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried.

A question was raised about the application for Education being a ten (10)-month limited-term appointment rather than a two (2)-year term. Dr. Julie Desjardins explained that limited-term appointments are reviewed by the Chair and aligned with past practices. She noted that while changes could be explored in the future, strategic mandates currently support these appointments. However, annual budget approval limits financial commitments, requiring prudence to avoid expenses without confirmed budgetary security.

Dr. Andrew Webster referred to the Collective Agreement, which permits two (2)-year limited-term appointments under specific circumstances. He emphasized that these appointments are intended to remain exceptions, with ten-month limited-term appointments preferred for financial reasons.

PART-TIME COURSE ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FALL 2025 AND WINTER 2026

Vice-Principal Academic and Research, Dr. Andrew Webster, updated Senators on the financial planning process within the recovery plan framework. He explained that the Senate Planning Committee has implemented targeted reductions in part-time course allocations to prioritize fall-winter offerings while minimizing program impact. Dr. Webster emphasized that reliance on time-limited strategic funds and one-time adjustments is unsustainable in the long term. He described the 2025-2026 academic year as a "bridging year," highlighting the need for further adjustments to address ongoing financial challenges while maintaining a balance between financial constraints and program integrity.

MOTION

That Senate approves the allocation of part-time courses for Fall 2025 and Winter 2026 semesters as specified in Appendix 1a and Appendix 1b.

Moved by: Heather Lawford

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Abstention: 1

Motion carried.

A clarification was sought on the difference between Appendix 1a and 1b. Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that Appendix 1a are recommendations presented by departments and 1b presented by divisions.

TIMELINE REVIEW FOR TENURE-STREAM AND LIMITED-TERM APPOINTMENTS - JULY 2026 START

The Vice-Principal Academic and Research informed Senators about the timeline for departmental submissions, noting that meetings with departments planning to submit will take place before the summer break, following last year's process. Formal applications are expected in August, with the aim of presenting them at the October Senate meeting.

MOTION

That Senate approves the revised timeline for tenure-stream and limited-term appointments, for July 2026 start, as outlined in Part III of the report.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Roser Rise

Motion carried.

5.6 SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull presented the proposed changes to the publication grant application process, which include:

- A shift in funding allocation from a first-come, first-served model to four (4) annual competitions, with any unspent funds carried over to subsequent competitions
- A requirement for receipts to support eligible expenses related to the publication of research or textbooks
- Clarification of the language used in the policy to improve understanding

A formal motion will be presented at the January Senate meeting.

5.7 SENATE RESEARCH SPACE COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull presented the yearly inventory of research space on campus as per Committee mandate.

668/6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 ACADEMIC REPORT

ACADEMIC SECTOR FINANCIAL UPDATES

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster reported on progress toward meeting the \$1.5 million financial savings target for 2025-2026. Savings were achieved through measures such as part-time course reductions, budget adjustments, freezes on non-salary expenses, unfilled positions, and other cost-saving strategies. Dr. Webster emphasized that these figures are provisional and subject to further adjustments.

He reminded Senators that an additional \$3–\$3.8 million in savings must be realized over the next four (4) years. Achieving this goal will require more than one-time cutbacks, necessitating a focus on addressing the long-term financial challenges.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON REVIEWING CURRICULUM AND ACADEMIC STRUCTURES

Dr. Andrew Webster presented the Discussion Paper on Reviewing Curriculum and Academic Structures, emphasizing that it was developed with a genuinely open-minded and engaged approach, avoiding any specific predetermined direction. He noted that the process and timeline will be further discussed in the new year, with open meetings beginning on January 13, 2025. Additionally, he mentioned that efforts are underway to distribute a data paper before the December break, with regular updates to be provided to Senate.

Dr. Andrew Webster clarified the process for reviewing and proposing changes to the academic curriculum in response to financial challenges. He noted that ideas from anonymously submitted reports would also be considered. A first draft proposal will be followed by a second draft, both to be presented to Senate for discussion, with the final version targeted for presentation in May.

It was also suggested and agreed that an additional student representative would be necessary to ensure the student perspective is adequately addressed.

Concerns were raised about reviewing the curriculum and academic structure before finalizing the University's strategic priorities. Dr. Andrew Webster acknowledged the concern but emphasized the urgency of addressing financial challenges. He warned that delays could increase uncertainty and lead to more significant reductions. Proceeding now ensures timely decisions and minimizes disruptions. The objective is to align the strategic planning exercise with the curriculum review to ensure the most effective outcome.

Sophia Driscoll left at 4:55 p.m.

A question was raised about how far strategic planning can advance before the curriculum and academic structure review is finalized. Dr. Andrew Webster noted that the Principal would be best positioned to address the question and that the alignment of the two processes remains uncertain.

Dr. Andrew Webster concluded his report by presenting a letter from the Chair of the Senate Teaching Evaluation Committee on the ongoing work of the Committee. While no Senate approval is required, the update was shared for information and to ensure broad support.

Concerns were raised about the review timeline and the evaluation of proposed changes. Dr. Andrew Webster reassured Senators that the timeline is provisional and subject to adjustment.

A comment was raised emphasizing the importance of faculty safety in reviewing evaluations, highlighting previous efforts by the Committee and Union representatives to address harmful comments in teaching evaluations.

Dr. Michael Teed and Dr. Anthony Di Mascio left at 5: 00 p.m.

6.2 RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES REPORT

Dr. Kerry Hull referred the Senators to the report.

6.3 FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN QUEBEC AT BISHOP'S PROJECT

The Vice-Principal Academic and Research provided an overview of the project before inviting Dr. Julie Desjardins, the project's executive lead, supported by Dr. Sarah Théberge, to present.

Dr. Julie Desjardins outlined the project's scope, which includes developing a roadmap to meet the provincial requirement that 80% of new non-Quebec undergraduate students achieve level 5 oral proficiency by graduation, starting with the Fall 2025 cohort. While non-compliance currently carries no financial penalties, the institution aims to demonstrate proactive engagement.

Dr. Matthew Peros left at 5:08 p.m.

The initiative focuses on enhancing the student experience through French language learning, exposure to Quebec culture, and experiential opportunities. Proposed efforts include creating a French immersion residence floor, branding the project to attract prospective students, and integrating French engagement into academic programs to support cultural and academic connections.

A question was raised about whether the government's requirement applies to international students. Dr. Julie Desjardins acknowledges affirmatively. Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that the requirement is measured at the institutional level, not the individual level.

A suggestion was made to have a broader discussion on the language policy at the institutional level noting potential alignment with the concept of plurilingualism.

Dr. Sarah Théberge brought clarification on the initiatives that will be implemented.

MOTION

That Senate disbands the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on the French Language and Culture in Quebec, created at the Senate meeting #661 on February 23, 2024.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Maxime Trempe

Motion carried.

666/7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 William School of Business – No recommendation

7.2 Faculty of Humanities – No recommendation

7.3 Faculty of Social Sciences – No recommendation

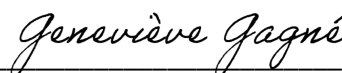
7.4 Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics – No recommendation

7.5 School of Education – No recommendation

The meeting ended at 5:27 p.m.



Sébastien Lebel-Grenier, Chair
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



Geneviève Gagné, Secretary General