

**669TH MEETING OF SENATE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025, 1:30 P.M.
MCGREER 100 AND BY VIDEOCONFERENCE**

MINUTES

Chair: Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier

Present: Dr. Hafid Agourram, Sonoma Brawley, Dr. Eva Bures, Leana Ceresoli, Julien Collin, Dr. Bruno Courtemanche, 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, Roser Rise, Dr. John Ruan, Hans Rouleau, Dr. Cranmer Rutihinda, Dr. Maxime Trempe, Dr. Yanan Wang, Dr. Andrew Webster, Dr. Dawn Wiseman

*Alpha Diallo and Dr. Jean Manore arrived at 1: 34 p.m. Dr. Eva Bures arrived at 1: 37 p.m., Sonoma Brawley arrived at 2: 10 p.m.

Regrets: Dr. Jessica Riddell, Dr. Michael Teed

Secretary: Geneviève Gagné

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier formally opened the 669th meeting at 1: 30 p.m. and welcomed all attendees.

669/1 AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

Moved by: Heather Lawford

Seconded by: Andrew Webster

Motion carried.

669/2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 MINUTES OF THE 668TH SENATE MEETING

The Minutes of the 668th meeting of Senate, held on December 6, 2024, were approved with minor corrections.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Leana Ceresoli

2 Abstentions

Motion carried.

669/3 BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising.

669/4 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Government Relations

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier updated Senators on *Bill 74*, which grants the government discretionary power to impose international student quotas on universities. He noted that an approved amendment added language of instruction as a criterion for setting quotas. While the government has not indicated plans to use this criterion, significant lobbying has aimed to prevent its potential use as a control mechanism. Although quotas remain unannounced, the government has stated they will be based on each university's 2024 *Certificat d'Acceptation du Québec (CAQ)* applications, posing significant challenges for international recruitment. He acknowledged that influencing decisions will be challenging now that the legislation is in force, despite early and continuing lobbying efforts.

He concluded with a brief update on ongoing government relations concerns, noting no further developments.

Alpha Diallo and Dr. Jean Manore arrived at 1: 34 p.m.

Tenure-Stream Appointment

The Chair reported that the Board of Governors had deferred decisions on new tenure-stream appointments to gain a clearer understanding of the University's financial situation and complete key processes, including budget preparation, strategic planning, and the Curriculum and Academic Structure review. The recommendations for tenure-stream appointments will be reconsidered in June 2025.

Strategic Planning

The Principal outlined the strategic planning process, noting the January 20, 2025, workshop on strategic objectives and the upcoming February 5, 2025, session on Mission, Vision, and Values. He highlighted strong participation and encouraged ongoing engagement. A special Board of Governors meeting on March 11, 2025, will be held to adopt the strategic objectives and the new Mission, Vision, and Values statement.

Curriculum and Academic Review Process

The ongoing curriculum and academic review process was discussed, with the strategic planning workshop consistently highlighting a lack of clarity regarding the liberal education model, despite broad consensus on its importance to the institution's identity. The Principal emphasized that the curriculum review process will be essential in clarifying and integrating this model within the strategic planning framework. These initiatives aim to create a more cohesive approach, ensuring that curriculum development and strategic planning work together to shape the institution's future.

Media Report

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier referred to a recent message sent regarding media reports on student concerns about language used in the classroom. While confidentiality prevents commenting on specific cases, the situation highlights the need for clearer communication on available resources and processes. The issue will be addressed at item 6.6, with further details on efforts to improve student access to support information.

A question was raised about the shift in recruitment efforts toward the national market in response to the government's international student policies and their potential impact on enrolment. Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier reaffirmed the University's commitment to maintaining a diverse student body, emphasizing the continued importance of attracting international students and recognizing their contributions to the University community and academic experience. However, he noted that recruitment strategies will be adjusted to navigate external constraints.

Another question addressed the potential impact of curriculum reform and its implementation on collective agreements. Principal Lebel-Grenier noted that the current agreement expires on June 30, 2025, and will be renegotiated through the standard process. Should ongoing curriculum reform discussions ultimately have collective agreement implications, these will be discussed within the negotiation process. However, no such issue has been identified thus far.

669/5 COMMITTEE ITEMS

5.1 ACADEMIC STANDING AND ADMISSION POLICY

Registrar Hans Rouleau presented a report addressing three key points.

Withdrawn with Permission (WP) Policy

At the December 6, 2024, meeting, a proposal was presented to move the Withdraw with Permission (WP) deadline from the last day of classes to the 9th Friday of the semester, aligning with approximately 27 contact hours (75% of the course). The proposal is now submitted for formal approval. This change is driven by a benchmarking analysis of the Maple League and Quebec universities, which revealed significant differences in WP deadlines, as well as concerns about declining student motivation and increased absenteeism in the classroom. Registrar Hans Rouleau stated that no additional comments were brought to his attention following the December Senate meeting.

MOTION

That Senate approve the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee's recommendation to move the "Withdraw with Permission" (WP) date to the ninth (9th) Friday of semester, which represents the completion of approximately 27 contact hours (75% of the semester) for courses.

This change is to take effect as of Fall semester, 2025.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Heather Lawford

Motion carried.

Fall Reading Week

It was reported that significant absenteeism has been observed under the current schedule, where the break closely follows Truth and Reconciliation Day and Thanksgiving. Scheduling Fall Reading Week during the week of Thanksgiving would help address this issue while maintaining the required contact hours.

A suggestion was made to include the Friday before Thanksgiving in the Fall Reading Week. Vice-Principal Academic and Research, Andrew Webster, stated that the Committee had reviewed this proposal and had concluded that a four-day break from classes was sufficient, given the Thanksgiving holiday. This still translated into a full calendar week without normal classes during the semester. Extending the break to five full days in this manner was more disruptive of class sequencing. While future adjustments remain possible, the current structure was considered clearer and more practical.

MOTION

That Senate approve the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee's recommendation that the Fall Reading Week be scheduled during the week of Thanksgiving Monday, covering the Tuesday to the Friday (inclusive) of that week.

This change is to take effect as of Fall semester, 2025.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Jean Manore

Against: Alex Mador, Leana Ceresoli, Sophia Driscoll

1 abstention

Motion carried.

2025-26 and 2026-27 Sessional Dates

Hans Rouleau gave an overview of the adjustments, including the WP date and the Fall Reading Week, to the sessional dates presented. Only minor corrections were made since the presentation of the draft at the December Senate meeting.

A comment was made on the importance of communicating the Withdraw with Permission deadline to students effectively and promptly due to the nature of the change.

MOTION

That Senate approve the 2025-26 and 2026-27 Sessional Dates as presented in the annexes.

- Annex 1 : 2025-26 Sessional Dates
- Annex 2 : 2026-27 Sessional Dates

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Mark Gandey

Motion carried.

5.2 GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Associate Vice-Principal Research Dr. Kerry Hull stated that, based on feedback from Senators and Divisions, changes were made to the Individualized Master's (IM) form. Key revisions include restricting access to student evaluations to the Chair, Registrar, and divisional representative to ensure confidentiality, clarifying requirement instructions, refining supervisory requirements, and specifying assessment roles in the research project section.

A question was brought forward concerning the designation of the primary supervisor as per the University regulations. Dr. Kerry Hull confirmed that as per regulations, the primary supervisor is to be a faculty member or someone with recognized supervisory credentials.

Another question was raised about the selection of the supervisory team. Dr. Kerry Hull mentioned that the student and supervisor will determine the appropriate support rather than the Graduate Studies Committee making the appointments.

MOTION

That Senate approve the revised and updated Individualized Master's Proposal Form.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Valerio Faraoni

1 abstention

Motion carried.

5.3 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dr. Heather Lawford presented the Nominating Committee Report, announcing the appointment of Dr. Daniela Bascunan to the Senate Prizes Committee and Dr. Trevor Gulliver to the Academic Integrity Committee.

MOTION

That Senate approve the new membership of Senate Committees for the 2024-2025 academic year as presented on January 24, 2025.

Moved by: Heather Lawford

Seconded by: Kerry Hull

Motion carried.

5.4 SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull outlined the revisions to the Publication Grant Guidelines, incorporating feedback from previous discussions. Key updates include a date change, language refinements, and streamlined provisions regarding predatory journals.

Senators were reminded that librarians are available to assist with identifying predatory publishers if needed.

MOTION

That Senate approve the revised Guidelines and Instructions for the Publication Grant Application.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Anthony Di Mascio

Motion carried.

669/6 OTHERS BUSINESS

6.1 ACADEMIC REPORT

Academic Sector Financial Updates

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster announced the arrival of the new Dean of the Willams School of Business in mid-March and recognized Prof Mark Gandey's contributions as interim Dean, acknowledging his leadership over the past seven months as he concludes his mandate. In the interim, department chair Dr. Robert Palmer will act in the role of Dean to oversee operational responsibilities for the School, while Dr. Webster will manage governance and approval matters.

Dr. Andrew Webster then provided an update on the Curriculum and Academic Structure Review, noting increasing calls for more concrete proposals to guide discussions. He reported that two well-attended open meetings had been held thus far to foster dialogue, with additional sessions—both online and in person—scheduled in the coming weeks. Associate Vice-Principal, Recruitment, Marketing and Communication Annick Lambert, and her team will attend the next session to discuss recruitment trends, common inquiries, and employer expectations.

Senate was updated on efforts to quantify financial challenges and their impact on course offerings. A data paper had been released before the holidays, and further analysis is ongoing with key stakeholders. Concrete options will be presented at the March Senate meeting. Dr. Webster, encouraged Senators to provide feedback via the vpademic email address, noting that anonymous submissions were equally acceptable.

Proposed Revised Mandate of Senate Task Force on the use of Generative AI

Dr. Andrew Webster acknowledged delays in the initiative to develop responses to the challenge of generative AI due to institutional priorities, including the tuition crisis and financial recovery plan, noting that progress had stalled. He announced that Dr. Jean Manore has agreed to lead the effort, with previously elected Faculty Council members continuing under a refined mandate and membership structure, reflecting the growing impact of generative Artificial Intelligence in the academic sector.

A question was raised about the potential work collaboration between the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Generative AI Task Force, given the overlapping mandates and faculty interest in workshops and professional development. Dr. Jean Manore noted that discussions are ongoing, and ideas are under review. Catherine Lavallée-Welch noted that a guide on AI in research is available on the library website.

MOTION

That Senate approve the revised mandate of the Senate Task Force on the Use of generative AI.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Kerry Hull

Motion carried.

6.2 RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES REPORT

Dr. Kerry Hull reported meeting with a Université du Québec representative, alongside Hans Rouleau and Jimmy Couturier, to learn more about the steps needed to develop an Individualized Doctorate Program. A document outlining the project's scope will be presented to the Senate at a later date.

She noted that Dr. Valerio Faraoni is co-chairing a Task Force to increase nominations for research awards, with a particular focus on the Canada Excellence Research Chairs Program, which could bring significant funding and visibility to the University. Faculty members are encouraged to identify and refer potential international candidates.

As part of ongoing efforts to enhance graduate studies oversight, a revised guidelines for monitoring graduate student progress will be presented at the Senate meeting on March 14, 2025.

Dr. Kerry Hull concluded her report by noting that the Animal Care Committee has resumed its work and encouraged faculty to submit ethics proposals involving animals for review. She also announced a research security workshop on May 1, 2025, and Research week, scheduled from March 17- 20, 2025, for which Nobel Prize recipient Dr. Arthur McDonald will be attending, inviting all to attend.

6.3 FACULTY COUNCIL

Professional Librarian's Representation on Senate

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier presented the Faculty Council's recommendation to add a librarian representative to Senate and its committees. He noted that librarian Gary McCormick had drafted a memorandum but clarified that the proposal was brought forward only to determine whether Senate wished to discuss it further. He reminded members that Head Librarian Catherine Lavallée-Welch serves as an *ex officio* Senate member and that while Senate may recommend adding a representative, any statutory amendment rests with the Board of Governors.

MOTION

That Senate approves for discussion at the March 14, 2025, meeting, the recommendation that a librarian representative be added to Bishop's University Senate and that a review of Senate committees which could be open to librarians be initiated, and to allow Gary McCormick to participate in the debate.

Moved by: Patrick McBrine

Seconded by: Heather Lawford

Absention: Catherine Lavallée-Welch and Andrew Webster

Motion carried.

6.4 APPROVAL OF DEGREES

Hans Rouleau presented the approval of degrees for 110 students, 27 fewer students than last year, who have had their transcripts reviewed by the Chairs, Deans and the Registrar's Office to ensure compliance with their respective program and degree requirements. Convocation is scheduled for June 7, 2025. The names of all graduates are listed in the appendix, with some pending final transcript approval for courses taken elsewhere.

MOTION

Undergraduate degrees

It is moved by Mark Gandey that the University Senate receive the list of candidates for the following undergraduate degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Education, as presented by the Registrar, and that these candidates be awarded their degree(s).

Moved by: Mark Gandey

Seconded by: Leana Ceresoli

Motion carried.

MOTION

Graduate degrees

It is moved by Roser Rise that the University Senate receive the list of candidates for the following graduate degrees: Master of Education and Master of Science, as presented by the Registrar, and that these candidates be awarded their degree.

Moved by: Roser Rise

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried.

MOTION

Certificates

It is moved by Sophia Driscoll that Senate receive the list of candidates for Certificates as presented by the Registrar, and that this candidate be awarded their certificate.

Moved by: Sophia Driscoll

Seconded by: Alex Mador

Motion carried.

MOTION

General motion to add or delete candidates after the Senate meeting

It is moved by Alpha Diallo, that the Vice-Principal Academic and Research, the Academic Deans, and the Registrar be authorized by the University Senate to add the names of students to the graduating list, subject to satisfactory completion of program requirements, or to delete candidates who do not meet their program requirements by the date of Convocation.

Moved by: Alpha Diallo

Seconded by: Mark Gandey

Motion carried.

6.5 2025-2026 SENATE MEETING DATES PROPOSAL

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier noted that, due to administrative constraints, Senate is proposed to meet three times in the fall. He emphasized that Secretary General Geneviève Gagné consulted with University constituencies to address any concerns raised by Senators.

Secretary General Geneviève Gagné gave precisions on the consultation process and solutions that will be implemented if necessary.

6.6 ADJUSTMENT TO COURSE SYLLABI

Dr. Andrew Webster presented the proposed review and alignment of the Academic Calendar statement and Course Outline Policy, emphasizing the need for more consistent information distribution to students. Given the importance of course outlines, the proposal recommends recognizing the Course Outline Policy as the primary governing document and updating the Academic Calendar accordingly. He noted that the Academic Standing and Admission Policy (ASAP) Committee would be responsible for revising the policy to remove outdated content, incorporate new requirements, and refine the wording. These changes aim to enhance clarity, consistency, and academic governance. Dr. Andrew Webster proposed a standardize statement in all course outlines directing students to a centralized support services webpage, ensuring consistency, accuracy and accessibility while reducing faculty workload.

Concerns were raised about the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee (ASAP) leading the Course Outline Policy review, emphasizing the need for strong faculty involvement. It was suggested that the Teaching and Learning Committee might be a more appropriate body for this task.

Additionally, requiring verbatim university policy statements in syllabi was seen as a potential academic freedom issue. Alternative communication methods, such as the academic calendar or administrative announcements, were recommended

A proposal was also made to create a template for faculty as a flexible guideline. This template could serve as both a reference tool and a promotional resource for open houses and other events.

Concerns were raised about administrative influence over syllabi, emphasizing that they should remain a faculty-student document. Standardization was seen as a potential threat to faculty autonomy and the personalized learning experience valued in smaller institutions. Additionally, issues with centralized resource links, particularly for mental health services, highlighted the need for greater oversight.

Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that the ASAP Committee was assigned the Course Outline Policy review based on existing policy but acknowledged that Senate has the authority to reassign it. He emphasized that Senate, as the governing body for academic matters, retains full authority over these decisions.

While he supported a template as a guideline, he cautioned that mandating a standardized syllabus format could be detrimental. He reiterated the importance of providing clear student support information while ensuring faculty retain flexibility in course design.

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier acknowledged that the discussion presents many aspects but noted that while course material and teaching methods fall under academic freedom, certain mandatory course content is determined by governing bodies within the University.

The item will be brought to Senate for further discussion at the March 14, 2025, meeting.

666/7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Secretary General Geneviève Gagné noted that corrections were made to motions to ensure accurate department names, with a revised document uploaded to the portal.

7.1 William School of Business – No recommendation

7.2 Faculty of Humanities

Concerns were raised about the implementation of the new Certificate in Japanese, its enrolment figures, and its impact on the upcoming curriculum review.

Dr. Andrew Webster clarified that the Senate Planning Committee supported the proposal, as it requires no new courses, offers a language-only option without study abroad, and aligns with future program changes. Approval does not guarantee additional part-time course funding but provides students with a recognized qualification while broader curriculum discussions continue.

Senators expressed concerns about the increasing number of minor program modifications, making it harder to identify significant changes. A one-page departmental summary highlighting major revisions was suggested, along with brief rationales from the Senate Planning Committee for key or controversial decisions to improve clarity and discussion.

Dr. Andrew Webster explained that due to unclear demand and resource concerns, the Senate Planning Committee rejected the creation of the Micro-certificate in English as a Second Language. The idea has been raised to establish a Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee to separate curriculum development from resource reviews, ensuring structured discussions on academic governance and program changes.

MOTION

On behalf of the departments of Arts Administration, Classical Studies, Drama, Études françaises et québécoises, Fine Arts, History and Global Studies, Liberal Arts, Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Music, Philosophy, and Religion, Society and Culture, that Senate approve curriculum changes included in documents 669/7.2 and 7.2i.

Moved by: Jean Manore

Seconded by: Sonoma Brawley

Motion carried.

7.3 Faculty of Social Sciences

MOTION

On behalf of the departments of Economics, Environment, Agriculture and Geography, Psychology, Sociology and Sport Studies, that Senate approve curriculum changes included in documents 669/7.3 and 7.3i.

Moved by: Matthew Peros

Seconded by: Leana Ceresoli

Motion carried.

7.4 Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

MOTION

On behalf of the departments of Biology and Biochemistry, Chemistry and Brewing Science, Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy and the Program of Pre-Medicine, that Senate approve curriculum changes included in documents 669/7.4 and 7.4i.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Mark Gandey

Motion carried.

7.5 School of Education

A concern was raised about the Science and Technology profile, specifically the replacement of CHM 131 with PHY 207, which is already a required course. This change reduces the required chemistry course to two (2), while other sciences, like biology and physics, retain three (3) or more. This could create credit discrepancies and impact the balance of science education for future teachers.

It was mentioned that this issue stems from CHM 131 being no longer available due to resource constraints in the Chemistry and Brewing Science Department.

The Senate agreed to approve the program change pending clarification, with any necessary modifications to be addressed at the March 14, 2025, Senate meeting.

MOTION

On behalf of the School of Education, that Senate approve curriculum changes included in documents 669/7.5 and 7.5i.

The motion was approved with the amendment to exclude the program modifications. The item will be brought back to Senate at the March 14, 2025, meeting.

Moved by: Kerry Hull


Seconded by: Eva Bures

Motion carried.

The meeting ended at 4:02 p.m.



Sébastien Lebel-Grenier, Chair
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



Geneviève Gagné, Secretary General