

**671ST MEETING OF SENATE
FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 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, 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, Dr. John Ruan, Hans Rouleau, Dr. Cranmer Rutihinda, Dr. Margaret BK Shepherd, Chelsea Sheridan, Dr. Michael Teed, Dr. Maxime Trempe, Dr. Yanan Wang, Dr. Andrew Webster, Dr. Dawn Wiseman

*Alpha Diallo and Dr. Jean Manore arrived at 1:36 p.m. Dr. Eva Bures arrived at 1:38 p.m., Dr. Bruno Courtemanche at 1:40 p.m. and Sonoma Brawley arrived at 2:10 p.m.

Regrets: Sophia Driscoll

Secretary: Geneviève Gagné

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier formally opened the 671st meeting at 1:33 p.m. and welcomed Dr. Margaret BK Shepherd to her first Senate meeting as the incoming Dean of the Williams School of Business.

671/1 AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

Moved by: Margaret BK Shepherd

Seconded by: Dawn Wiseman

Motion carried.

671/2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 MINUTES OF THE 670TH SENATE MEETING

The Minutes of the 670th meeting of Senate, held on March 14, 2025, were approved with minor corrections.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried.

671/3 BUSINESS ARISING

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster provided an update on ongoing discussions related to Item 6.3 – Moodle Issue, presented at the March 14, 2025, Senate meeting. While the matter remains under the purview of management and no formal action or proposal was brought forward, various options are being explored. Senators will be informed of the measures to be implemented prior to the start of the next semester.

671/4 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Government Relations

Principal Lebel-Grenier reported on the international student quotas implemented pursuant to *Bill 74*. He noted that the government remains firm in its position, and quotas will remain in effect for the 2025-2026 academic year. Following a significant drop in applications, Bishop's remains within its assigned quota and continues to support affected students while closely monitoring the situation. He also indicated that a province-wide enrolment decline of approximately 45% is projected for the Fall 2025. The government's multi-year immigration planning (*Planification pluriannuelle*) has been postponed, reducing immediate opportunities for institutional input and advocacy.

Provincial Budget

Principal Lebel-Grenier reported that the provincial budget tabled on March 25, 2025, includes a 0.3 % increase in universities operating grants – well below the anticipated 1.5 % indexation rate and insufficient to offset rising costs. This reduced level of funding is expected to persist for several years.

The full impact of this funding decrease on Bishop's remains unclear and depends on the forthcoming release of annual budgetary rules ("*règles budgétaires*") from the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur* (MES). Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier noted that, given the ongoing uncertainty, a provisional budget will be presented at the April 25, 2025, Board of Governors meeting and that the final budget will be presented at the June meeting. Notwithstanding the current context, a recommendation will be brought forward to maintain the current recovery plan financial targets. Lobbying efforts are underway to minimize the punitive consequences associated with deficit-running universities.

A Townhall on budget updates will be announced at a later date.

Tenure-Track Positions

Principal Lebel-Grenier noted that the under-indexation of grants in the latest provincial budget is likely to impact the Board of Governor's ability to approve delayed tenure-track positions. He reminded members that the Board will make that determination at its June meeting. He did however indicate that Senate Planning Committee will continue its important resource planning work in the coming year to ensure continued alignment with the University's long-term priorities. He emphasized that the final decisions on tenure-track positions remain under Board purview.

Capital Infrastructure Funding

Principal Lebel-Grenier indicated that the provincial government has increased its capital investment envelope ("*Plan québécois des infrastructures*" [PQI]), which includes funding for university infrastructure. He explained that Bishop's regular PQI allocation had been drastically reduced in recent years—from approximately \$4 million annually to \$400,000—thereby limiting the University's ability to carry out essential renovations and maintenance. While improvements to this situation are anticipated, details remain pending, and formal confirmation regarding the release of funding for the Paterson extension project is expected in the coming weeks.

Strategic Planning

Principal Lebel-Grenier thanked all those who attended the April 2, 2025, workshop on community experience. He noted that working groups will be established to develop and implement plans aligned with the goals and strategies adopted by the Board of Governors. A communication identifying lead coordinators for each aspect of the action plan will be shared in the coming weeks.

Workshops will be held in May to present the proposed action plan. He invited everyone to participate.

671/5 COMMITTEE ITEMS

5.1 ACADEMIC STANDING AND ADMISSIONS POLICY(ASAP)

Registrar Hans Rouleau began his report by presenting a proposal to amend the "Selection of Courses" section of the University Regulations, found on page 31 of the Academic Calendar. The proposed amendment would allow students to substitute alternative courses when required courses are not offered in a timely manner. This measure aims to help students progress in their programs and improve their grade point average (GPA) when otherwise not possible - which may prevent removal from a program or students from proceeding to their practicum placement.

Current regulation (2024–2025 Academic Calendar, page 31):

A course for which credit is earned in any semester may be repeated once to improve the grade. No additional credit will be awarded. The initial course registration and grade will remain on the student's academic transcript, with the notation "RNC — repeat no credit" appearing beside it. The grade received in the second registration for the course will be used in the calculation of the student's average (including cumulative average) and credits awarded, regardless of whether it is the higher or lower grade. Repeated courses will not retroactively affect academic standing.

Proposed revision:

A course for which credit is earned in any semester may be repeated once to improve the grade. No additional credit will be awarded. The initial course registration and grade will remain on the student's academic transcript, with the notation "RNC — repeat no credit" appearing beside it. The grade received in the second registration for the course will be used in the calculation of the student's average (including cumulative average) and credits awarded, regardless of whether it is the higher or lower grade. Repeated courses will not retroactively affect academic standing.

In situations where a required course is not re-offered, significantly impeding a student's path to graduation, students may request a course substitution. A course substitution request evaluates whether a course not regularly offered for an Honours/Major/Concentration can fulfill a specific program requirement. Course substitutions are exceptions and must be approved by the appropriate Dean or Chair prior to course registration. The initial course registration and grade will remain on the student's academic transcript, with the notation "EXT — Extra to Degree" appearing beside it.

Registrar Rouleau provided clarification regarding a question on the proposed substitution mechanism. He emphasized that substituted courses must be at the same academic level (e.g., a 400-level course must be replaced by another 400-level course) and that approval would be required from both the Dean and the Chair to ensure the process remain exceptional and controlled. He noted that the proposed language aligns with the Academic Calendar to maintain consistency across faculties, while acknowledging that each faculty or school may have its own internal processes. The substitution process would apply only to required courses (not electives) where course rotation prevents timely completion and is expected to be used in very limited circumstances.

A question was asked about the rationale behind substitutions being limited to required courses and the potential GPA inequity. Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster noted that this approach is intended to support student progression and minimize the risk of affecting academic record in ways that could impact eligibility for placement, delay graduation, or jeopardizing program standing. It was stated that the Committee views this amendment as addressing a specific progression problem for a limited number of cases.

It was noted that extending this process to non-required courses could lead students to view it as a way to enhance their grade point average, thereby creating a misleading academic profile.

Motion withdrawn. The item will be brought back to the Senate at the May meeting.

Amendment to the Winter 2026 sessional dates

Registrar Rouleau presented an amendment to the Winter 2026 sessional dates to include the last day of condensed classes for EDU 328/329 and EDU 428/429, which had been omitted from the version presented in January.

MOTION

That Senate approve the addition of April 24, 2026, as the final day of condensed classes for students enrolled in EDU 328/329 and EDU 428/429.

Effective Date: Immediately

Moved by: Julie Desjardins

Seconded by: Dawn Wiseman

Motion carried.

Registrar Rouleau concluded with an update on the various projects currently underway within the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee. Related proposals will be brought to Senate at an upcoming meeting.

5.2 SENATE PROGRAM ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE (SPARC)

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster presented the SPARC Committee report, which included the Final Reports for the Department of Chemistry and Brewing Science and for the Department of Sports Studies for Senate approval. Dr. Webster called out for specific recognition the committee's satisfaction with the Sports Studies departmental report, which was described as a model submission and the product of an exceptionally well-run process. He also provided, for information, a timeline and status update on current and upcoming departmental evaluations.

A Senator noted that the report for the Department of Chemistry and Brewing Science contained little to no reference to the Brewing program or potential programming in fermentation science, despite its significance. Dr. Kerry Hull confirmed that internal discussions on the matter are underway and that an update would be presented to the Senate at its May meeting. Dr. Webster noted that the report was found to meet SPARC's procedural standards, despite the absence of commentary on the brewing science programming.

A broader discussion followed regarding the role of the Senate Program Academic Review Committee. Dr. Webster clarified that, despite its name, the committee does not conduct or pass comment upon the actual assessment of academic departments; rather, it merely monitors and oversees the correct running of the review processes. It was noted that the committee's mandate has been the subject of ongoing debate, and that Senate may need to clarify the intended scope of SPARC's responsibilities.

MOTION

That Senate approve the final reports as presented in **Appendices 2 and 3** for the Department of Chemistry and Brewing Science and Sports Studies.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Fiona Gaombalet

Motion carried.

5.3 GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull reported that, following last Senate's discussion, the Graduate Studies Committee approved modifications to the Academic Regulation for Monitoring Graduate Student Progress. Changes include naming the three standalone graduate programs exempt from general regulations and clarifying the roles of the Graduate Studies Coordinator and Vice-Principal Academic and Research or delegate.

MOTION

That Senate approves the revised Academic Regulation as presented in document 671-5.3.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Jean Manore

Motion carried.

5.4 SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr. Kerry Hull updated Senators on the proposal of Research Centres. She noted that following discussions with the Principal, the Vice-Principal Academic and Research and the Director of Research and Graduate Studies, precision on the funding allocation and institutional support were included in the proposal. Dr. Hull mentioned that recognition of leadership within Research Centres as a form of University services was discussed. While the decision rests with Senate, the Committee would support including such a role as part of academic service.

MOTION

That Senate approve the revised Research Centres Proposal Document.

Moved by: Kerry Hull

Seconded by: Alpha Diallo

Motion carried.

671/6 OTHERS BUSINESS

6.1 ACADEMIC REPORT

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Andrew Webster presented the Draft 2 of the *Academic Report and Proposals on Curriculum and Academic Structures*, emphasizing that the initiative is Senate-led and builds on prior discussions. The first part of the Report pertained to the structured process for assessing program viability and guiding long-term academic planning, with key recommendations due by December 5, 2025. It directs the Senate Planning Committee to review teaching delivery plans and begin developing a 5–10 years' faculty staffing strategy aligned with institutional priorities. It also requires Departments, Program Chairs, and Academic Deans to review their academic structures and submit their conclusions to the Senate Planning Committee by October 20, 2025, to support institutional alignment and effective resource planning. Supporting materials include guiding principles, a delivery plan template, and a planning timeline.

Dr. Webster proposed that the discussion on the motions for approval take place before proceeding with the rest of the agenda. The proposal was accepted.

Several concerns were raised in relation to the ability for the Senate Planning Committee (SPC) to conduct in-depth reviews of program sustainability, and the broader planning process. The workload of the sole student representative on the SPC was highlighted, along with a call to include an additional student representative to ensure more equitable representation across student divisions. The importance of equity and representation in the planning process more broadly was emphasized, with a focus on avoiding overburdening any one group—whether students or faculty.

Additional concerns included the need to maintain transparency and ensure broad academic community engagement, especially in light of anticipated financial constraints. It was also noted that part-time instructors may be perceived primarily as flexible budget solutions, which could unintentionally devalue their contributions to the academic mission.

In response, Dr. Webster acknowledged the limitations of the SPC’s formal mandate but indicated that informal (non-voting) student participation could be arranged moving forward. Support for this proposal was expressed, underscoring the importance of broader student representation.

He also clarified that broad financial criteria will be a key element in identifying programs for review and viability discussion – which will be guided by clear expectations.

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier and Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster both endorsed the importance of equity and sustainability, stressing the need to balance new priorities with existing responsibilities. Principal Lebel-Grenier emphasized that the current review process aims at long-term structural changes to ensure the University financial viability and sustained ability to fulfill its mission.

Questions were raised regarding the tone of Motion 1 and the alignment between faculty planning and enrollment growth. Dr. Webster acknowledged that the term “suspension” may appear severe, but explained that it was retained to reflect the potential seriousness of outcomes. With respect to faculty planning, he noted that it will move forward based on provisional enrollment growth assumptions. Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier noted the need to shift from isolated year-by-year discussion towards a more transparent, assumption-driven approach recognizing that not all areas will expand equally.

MOTION 1

That the Senate direct the Senate Planning Committee to conduct a review of all programs and departments, to investigate their ability to sustainably deliver their existing curriculum within the boundaries of the University's financial constraints as laid out in the Financial Modeling Paper. This should include:

- Consideration of the required resources specified for each department in its teaching delivery plans for 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29
- Identification of any programs that appear to require greater resources, in order to support and sustain potential growth
- Identification of any programs that do not appear to have long-term viability, with a view to their potential suspension
- Consideration of the potential for significant curriculum revision or academic structural change for areas identified as being of marginal viability
- Development of allocation principles for part-time courses over the period 2025-26 to 2028-29, accounting for the likely extent of the reduction of the part-time teaching budget over this period and for how some areas may require cross-subsidization.

This review should be completed in time for its conclusions and recommendations to be submitted to the Senate meeting on December 5, 2025, for consideration and decision.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Michael Teed

Motion carried.

MOTION 2

That the Senate direct each program and department, in collaboration with their respective Dean, to develop for the Senate Planning Committee's consideration a teaching delivery plan that shows how they intend to offer their curriculum within the parameters of the limited resources identified in the *Financial Modeling Paper*, and where needed a plan for curriculum revision in that program or department that will bring it into a viable position for ongoing delivery by 2028-29 at latest.

These teaching delivery plans are to be completed and submitted to the Senate Planning Committee by August 28, 2025.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Michael Teed

Motion carried.

MOTION 3

That the Senate direct the Senate Planning Committee to develop a set of recommendations for full-time faculty staffing at the level of both academic programs and academic divisions to cover the 5-10 year future horizon. These recommendations should be presented to the Senate for consideration and approval at its meeting on December 5, 2025.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Michael Teed

Objection: 1-Hafid Agourram

Motion carried.

MOTION 4

That the Senate direct all Department and Program Chairs and Academic Deans to review their existing academic organizational structures, in collaboration with their respective faculty members, to determine whether they wish to pursue a change to those structures, and to report their conclusions to the Senate Planning Committee by October 20, 2025.

In cases where structural changes are proposed, such as the realignment or merger of departments, the Senate Planning Committee shall seek to account in its planning for additional support and resources that might facilitate their creation and implementation.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Michael Teed

Motion carried.

MOTION 5

That the Senate direct the Senate Planning Committee to identify any cases where significant potential benefits to curriculum delivery and/or to planning for long-term resourcing might arise from changes to existing academic organizational structures, and to make recommendations to the Senate on potential academic structural changes.

Moved by: Andrew Webster

Seconded by: Michael Teed

Motion carried.

Dr. Webster concluded with the presentation of a draft of institutional degree regulations for discussion and consideration at the May Senate, aimed at formalizing and standardizing the structure and requirements of degrees to support clearer academic governance.

Dr. Maxime Trempe left at 5:27 p.m.

6.2 RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES REPORT

Dr. Kerry Hull reported that discussions on the Individualized Doctorate proposal are ongoing at the divisional and departmental levels, with further updates anticipated at the May Senate meeting. She noted continued strong engagement with the Individualized Master's Program, highlighting several new applications and five expected graduates this year.

Dr. Hull also reported that Research Week was a success, with Joannie St-Germain receiving a Student Representative Council Impact Award for her contributions. She concluded by noting that several faculty members received research grants, and support is being provided to those whose applications were not successful.

6.3 FACULTY COUNCIL

Professional Librarian's Representation on Senate

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier provided context regarding the motions on Professional Librarians' representation at Senate. He clarified that while the document listed the motions as originating from the Faculty Council, that body had only passed a single motion – supporting the addition of a librarian representative on Senate – while the Senate document presents three (3) options. It was emphasized that the Faculty Council's intention was to convey a clear, unified recommendation to add a librarian representative and that the proposed motions did not reflect the original motion.

A procedural ambiguity was raised regarding the moving of the motion, and clarification was provided. Senate acknowledged that the motion was submitted in a Senatorial capacity, informed by responsibilities held within Faculty Council. While the distinction is nuanced, it does not alter the substance of the motion. Senate agreed on the need to develop clearer procedures for similar cases in the future.

Senate was also reminded that only the Board of Governors holds the authority to amend Senate composition.

Support for the addition of a Librarian representative on Senate was expressed, highlighting the academic role of Librarians, their strong academic and governance contribution.

Vice-Principal Academic and Research Andrew Webster advocated for the second proposed motion, which would integrate Librarians through Faculty Council without altering Senate's overall composition, noting it as the more appropriate approach. He emphasized the importance of preserving Senate's structural balance and recommended enhancing Librarians' involvement through committee participation rather than adding a Senate seat. Concerns were raised about the second motion proposed as it could create a division by reallocating Faculty seats.

A discussion arose concerning the composition of the five (5) Senate seats appointed by Faculty Council, which, according to the University Statutes, comprise three (3) full-time and two (2) contract faculty members. Clarification was provided that the second proposed motion seeks to modify the language to make Librarians eligible for any of these seats. As an alternative, the option of appointing a Professional Librarian as a non-voting Senate member was suggested, allowing for their expertise to be included without altering Senate composition. The distinction between Faculty Council-appointed seats and division-nominated seats was also clarified.

It was stated that most Canadian universities include Librarians on Senate. The importance of equal voting rights for all academic members was stressed.

Senators reflected on the broader purpose of Senate membership, emphasizing that Senators serve the institution as a whole rather than representing individual units. Concerns were raised about the absence of a clear governance pathway for Librarians to serve on Senate, despite their academic roles. It was clarified that the Statutes assign five (5) faculty-elected Senate seats but do not explicitly include Librarians.

MOTION

That Senate recommend to the Board of Governors the creation of an additional seat on Senate for a librarian.

Moved by: Patrick McBrine

Seconded by: Valerio Faraoni

Vote:

In favor: 9

Against: 8

Abstentions: 4 – Catherine Lavallée-Welch

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

Dr. Julie Desjardins presented the recommendation pertaining to modifications to Education courses, primarily adding prerequisites to fourth-year courses to ensure students complete earlier program requirements.

MOTION

On behalf of the School of Education, that Senate approve curriculum changes included in documents 671/7.5.i.

Moved by: Julie Desjardins

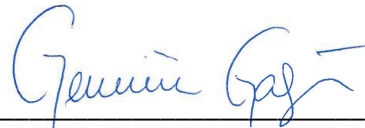
Seconded by: Dawn Wiseman

Motion carried.

The meeting ended at 5:44 p.m.



Sébastien Lebel-Grenier, Chair
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



Geneviève Gagné, Secretary General