

**677<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF SENATE  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2025, 1:30 P.M.  
IN PERSON AND BY VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**MINUTES**

**Chair:** Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier

**Present:** Dr. Eva Bures, Dr. Julie Desjardins, Dr. Anthony Di Mascio, Dr. Valerio Faraoni, Rosalyn French, Dr. Jonas Goliash, Dr. Kerry Hull, Catherine Lavallée-Welch, Dr. Heather Lawford, Dr. Jean Manore, Dr. Adrianna Mendrek, Emily Miller, Dr. Linda Morra, Dr. Matthew Peros, Dr. John Ruan, Hans Rouleau, Dr. Cranmer Rutihinda, Dr. Jade Savage, Dr. Margaret BK Shepherd, Dr. Maxime Trempe, Dr. Calin Valsan, Dr. Dawn Wiseman, Dr. Steven Woodward

**Regrets:** Sonoma Brawley, Julien Collin, Dr. Bruno Courtemanche, Matthieu Garceau-Tremblay, Mirana Iliza, Vivienne Webster

**Secretary:** Geneviève Gagné

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier formally opened the 677<sup>th</sup> meeting at 1:36 p.m. He informed Senators that the Students' Representative Council is in the process of identifying candidates for the Graduate Student Representative position following the resignation of Mathieu Garceau-Tremblay.

**677/1 AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**Moved by:** Adrianna Mendrek

**Seconded by:** Catherine Lavallée-Welch

**Motion carried.**

**677/2 BUSINESS ARISING**

Dr. Jean Manore provided an update on Item 5.4, *Artificial Intelligence*, presented at the 676<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting on October 24, 2025. She noted that workshops for faculty will be offered during the first week of December and will be accessible online.

### **Federal Budget**

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier highlighted that the recently tabled federal budget is generally positive, with significant measures to support research and innovation. These include new funding for a talent recruitment program aimed at attracting leading researchers, professors, and postdoctoral fellows to Canada, enhanced support for the *Canadian Foundation for Innovation*, and a potential augmentation of infrastructure envelopes. The government also indicated that funding might be increased in other key envelopes for research in the field of Defence and technology. He noted, however, that cuts affecting students loans have been announced.

### **International Students**

The federal government announced that graduate students have been excluded from quotas imposed to limit the number of international students in Canada. This adjustment will allow for a greater allocation of study permits to non-graduate international students. At the provincial level, the government indicated that, under the new 2026-2029 immigration plan, quotas for international students will remain at current levels, and no details have been provided regarding the exemption of graduate students nor on *Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (CAQ)* renewals. Advocacy efforts will continue to seek a modification of these measures.

### **Bill n°. 1 – Quebec Constitution Project**

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier provided an update on the proposed provincial Bill No. 1, noting the intention to submit a brief and to testify before the National Assembly. Further information will be shared as the situation evolves.

### **Top Ten After Ten**

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier concluded his remarks by announcing the Top Ten After Ten event, which celebrates alumni achievements. The event will take place on November 21, 2025, featuring a speed mentoring session for students in the morning, a celebration of success from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., followed by a reception at 4:00 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

## 677/4 COMMITTEE ITEMS

### 4.1 ACADEMIC STANDING AND ADMISSIONS POLICY COMMITTEE (ASAP)

Registrar Hans Rouleau presented the report and indicated that it included two items submitted for approval: the Course Withdrawal (“W”) Notation Policy and the “With Distinction” Notation at Convocation. He noted that both motions had been presented at the October 24, 2025, Senate meeting and were subsequently withdrawn to allow for further consultation and review by the ASAP Committee.

### **Course Withdrawal Policy**

Hans Rouleau confirmed that workflow concerns have been addressed and that Student Services support implementing the policy as a pilot project. He explained that the policy would allow a “W” notation for course withdrawals up to the ninth week of the semester, with withdrawals thereafter requiring dean approval. The policy is scheduled to take effect at the start of the next semester and includes a review in Fall 2028 to assess workload and overall impact.

Clarifications were provided regarding the non-retroactive application of the “W” notation and the monitoring of recurrent withdrawals.

Concerns were raised about the removal of the maximum number of “W” courses and the potential impact on access to required courses. It was explained that the early-intervention mechanism is intended to address recurrent withdrawals and that this would be monitored as the policy is implemented.

A question was raised regarding the clause on temporary interruptions of studies. Following clarification and noting that existing procedures under the *Student of Concern Policy* already address such situations, Senators endorsed the removal of the clause.

#### **Motion**

That Senate approve the “Course Withdrawal Policy” as outlined in the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy (ASAP) Report with amendment to remove the sentence stating, “*In exceptional cases, students may be required to temporarily interrupt their studies.*”

**Moved by:** Steven Woodward

**Seconded by:** Liam Stewart

**Motion carried.**

#### **Notation “With Distinction” Awarded at Convocation**

Hans Rouleau presented the proposal to introduce “With High Distinction” (top 5%) and “With Distinction” (top 20%) designations at Convocation by degree and program, noting that Grade Point Average (GPA) cut-off thresholds would be publicly posted to ensure clarity for students and potential employers.

Concerns regarding grade inflation were raised and noted as an ongoing priority. A request was made for a percentage breakdown by division and program to support marking meetings.

#### **Motion**

That Senate approve the “With Distinction Policy” as outlined in the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy (ASAP) report.

**Moved by:** Maxime Trempe

**Seconded by:** Adrianna Mendrek

**Abstentions:** 3

**Against:** 1

**Motion carried.**

#### **4.2 SENATE PLANNING COMMITTEE (SPC)**

Interim Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Kerry Hull reported on the evaluation of Spring–Summer part-time course offerings. While a minimum of fifteen (15) courses was required, fewer proposals were initially received. Departments offering high-demand courses were subsequently approached and agreed to offer additional courses to meet the minimum. Courses with enrolment below twelve (12) students will be cancelled, in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

Clarification was provided regarding funding sources, noting that fifteen (15) courses are funded through the part-time allocation, while additional courses are offered on a pro bono basis or as part of faculty teaching loads. It was also noted that some graduate courses with lower enrolment may be delivered and compensated through Box Tops.

In response to a question on course selection, it was explained that decisions are based on Chair submissions and consider graduation requirements, past enrolment, and potential demand.

### **Motion**

On behalf of the Senate Planning Committee, that Senate approve the 15 part-time courses for the 2026 spring-summer session and the 13.3 courses funded by other sources as presented in Appendix 1 of the report.

**Moved by:** Kerry Hull

**Seconded by:** Matthew Peros

### **Motion carried.**

Interim Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Kerry Hull provided an update on academic planning, building on information previously shared at the October meeting of Senate. Key elements include the long-term staffing plan and the three (3) year teaching plan, which will inform decision-making in the coming weeks. While departments have begun streamlining programs under the three (3) year teaching plan, progress remains below the target required to reduce overall course offerings by 2027–2028. The long-term staffing plan establishes a minimum of 119.5 and a maximum of 128.5 tenure-stream positions, with limited proposed redistributions received to date.

An update was also provided on the Senate Planning Committee's viability and resourcing review process. As this was the Committee's first time conducting such reviews, the original December timeline proved unfeasible. The Committee therefore prioritized departments requesting tenure-stream positions. Nine (9) departments submitted requests, and viability and growth reviews were conducted accordingly. It was noted that the Senate Planning Committee will present its recommendations alongside the long-term staffing plan at the December Senate. It was noted that an Academic Sphere meeting is planned to continue discussions. The Principal underscored the importance of the upcoming December deliberations on tenure-stream recommendations to be forwarded to the Board, noting the challenging financial context.

Clarifications were provided regarding the inclusion of programs associated with the proposed School of Performing Arts, given their interconnected nature, as well as the approach to Limited-Term Appointments and their relationship to future tenure-stream requests. It was noted that multi-year LTAs do not automatically preclude subsequent tenure-stream requests and that external funding opportunities may affect planning assumptions.

Comments emphasized the long-term nature of tenure-stream commitments, the need for clear prioritization and refined criteria, and the importance of aligning academic planning with financial sustainability. Members also highlighted the role of enrolment trends, program interdependence, and curriculum coherence, noting that broader discussions are expected to continue during the winter.

4.3 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dr. Heather Lawford presented a report outlining nominations to the Graduate Studies, Library, and Prizes Committees and provided an update on the membership of the Decolonization Circle.

An amendment to the membership of the Academic Standing and Admissions Policy Committee was also presented to reflect the composition approved at the October Senate meeting.

**MOTION**

That Senate approve the new membership of Senate Committees for the 2025-2026 academic year as presented on November 14, 2025.

**Moved by:** Heather Lawford

**Seconded by:** Cranmer Rutihinda

**Motion carried.**

4.4 SENATE TEACHING EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Interim Associate Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching Dr. Jean Manore presented revisions to the teaching evaluation questions and instructions, including distinct questions for regular courses and laboratory instructors. Questions were raised regarding categorization, applicability to certain course types, and broader considerations related to teaching evaluations. It was clarified that the revisions respond to a directive to improve existing questions rather than to reconsider the evaluation framework. Further discussion on the teaching evaluation process is anticipated.

A second motion was introduced, conditional upon the creation of the Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee, to review the process.

**MOTION**

That Senate approve the proposed changes to the teaching evaluation questions and instructions as presented.

**Moved by:** Jean Manore

**Seconded by:** Valerio Faraoni

**Abstentions:** 3

**Against:** 2

**Motion carried.**

**MOTION**

That Senate approve tasking the Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee (SACC) – once established – the responsibility of reviewing the teaching evaluation process and its associated questions.

**Moved by:** Maxime Trempe

**Seconded by:** Adrianna Mendrek

**Motion carried.**

#### 4.5 SENATE COMMITTEE ON PRIZES

Chair Hans Rouleau reported that the Senate Committee on Prizes has largely operated by email since the COVID-19 pandemic and that recruitment of new members remains challenging. As prize criteria are now well defined and administered through existing structures, a recommendation to disband the Committee is brought forward.

Concerns were raised regarding communication with faculty and oversight of certain prizes. It was noted that the Registrar's Office, in coordination with the Alumni and Philanthropy Office and relevant bodies, will continue to manage and communicate prize awards prior to graduation. Clarification was also provided that the administration of certain prizes, including the Webster and Sherman prizes, is under review, with a recommendation to be brought to a future Senate meeting.

It was proposed that a detailed list of prizes with outstanding issues be brought forward for Senate consideration prior to finalizing the disbandment of the Committee.

**Moved by:** Steven Woodward

**Seconded by:** Rosalyn French

**Item withdrawn.**

#### 677/5 OTHER BUSINESS

##### 5.1 VICE-PRINCIPAL ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH REPORT

Interim Vice-Principal Academic and Research Dr. Kerry Hull reported on ongoing work to consolidate Degree Regulations. The discussion focused on four (4) proposals, with the objective of bringing them forward for approval in December.

#### **Degree Count for Minors**

The initial proposal of 18 credits was revised to a range of 18–24 credits, excluding collegial-equivalent introductory courses. This revision aligns with practices at McGill and other Canadian universities. Recruitment expressed support for the change, noting that it reinforces the University's commitment to degree flexibility. The inclusion of a depth requirement within minors was also discussed, with the aim of demonstrating a defined level of expertise in a specific field.

Concerns were raised regarding the academic sufficiency of an 18-credit minor. Suggestions included requiring upper-level courses to ensure academic rigour while maintaining flexibility. It was also noted that lower credit thresholds and extensive double counting could undermine the rigour and coherence of minor programs.

#### **Double Counting**

Drawing on extensive deliberations at the Academic Sphere, an overview of double counting practices was presented, highlighting concerns related to credential integrity and the coherent evaluation of academic requirements. The administrative implications for Department Chairs, as well as whether double counting should be permitted at the student level, at the program level, or not permitted at all, were also discussed.

It was observed that the extent and impact of double counting may vary significantly by discipline, with some programs experiencing substantial overlap. Examples were cited where overlap makes rigid institutional rules difficult to apply consistently.

## **Double Minors**

It was noted that relatively few students currently pursue the option of graduating with a double minor. This option functions primarily as a fallback. Issues related to double minors, including alternative credentialing models and the possibility of strengthening requirements through defined breadth and depth, were discussed. Concerns were raised regarding the academic value of a double minor and its broader implication. It was noted that Bishop's defines a minor as a secondary degree component within an honours or major program.

## **Depth**

Academic depth requirements were discussed, with reference to internal and external benchmarking indicating that many universities establish both limits on introductory-level credits and minimum requirements for upper-level courses. A preliminary proposal was presented for discussion, including limits on introductory-level credits within a discipline, minimum upper-level credit requirements, and options for Honours pathways.

Course classification and numbering practices, including the concentration of offerings at the 200-level and differences between three- and four-year degree structures and entry pathways, were discussed in relation to their impact on academic progression, perceptions of depth, and institutional comparability.

### **5.2 RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES REPORT**

Interim Associate Vice-Principal Research Dr. Matthew Peros reported on a proposed revision to the policy on the allocation of indirect costs for research contract. The revision would adjust the overhead distribution of indirect costs to increase the general revenue and support units' allocation, reflecting recent changes to research contract workload recognition. It was noted that this item will be brought back to the Senate for approval.

A question was raised regarding consultation with the Parity Committee, and it was noted that the change was brought forward by one of its members. A further question explored whether alternative approaches could be considered to address the research associated costs. Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier noted that the indirect costs arise from the terms of the research contract and require coverage. It was also noted that the Parity Committee reviewed various options and that the matter falls within management prerogative.

The distinction between academic policy considerations and matters related to evaluation and working conditions was also discussed.

### **5.3 PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF THE SENATE ACADEMIC AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE (SACC)**

Interim Associate Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching Dr. Jean Manore presented the proposal for the creation of a Senate Academic Curriculum Committee (SACC), which reflects discussions held at the September and October meetings. It was noted that the document had been revised following previous Senate discussions, with updated appendices outlining the Committee's mandate and composition, a proposed structure for its work, and a workflow intended to clarify its relationship with the Senate Planning Committee (SPC).

## **MOTION**

That the Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee (SACC) be created as outlined in Appendix 1.

**Moved by:** Jean Manore

**Seconded by:** Cranmer Rutihinda

An amendment to the Committee composition was proposed to add a voting representative appointed by the Decolonization Circle. It was explained that the amendment aims to distinguish the respective roles and standing of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Anti-Racism Office from those of the Decolonization Circle, while ensuring meaningful representation. It was clarified that non-voting members serve in an advisory rather than a decision-making role. Under the proposed amendment, the Decolonization Circle would determine the appropriate representative.

**Moved by:** Heather Lawford

**Seconded by:** Adriana Mendrek

**Motion carried.**

A second amendment was brought forward to the effect to grant voting right of the representative of the Equity, Diversity and Equity (EDI), and Anti-Racism Office on the Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential impact of adding voting members on the Committee's efficiency and on the role of non-academic personnel in academic decision-making. It was proposed that the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Anti-Racism Office appoint a faculty member to address the concern related to academic decision-making. It was clarified that this would require discussion with the Vice-Principal, Student Affairs and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to determine feasibility.

**Moved by:** Heather Lawford

**Seconded by:** Adriana Mendrek

**In Favour:** 3

**Against:** 11

**Abstention:** 6

**Motion defeated.**

Concerns were raised regarding the potential implications of disbanding committees and integrating their functions into the SACC. Interim Associate Vice-Principal Learning and Teaching Dr. Jean Manore explained that the proposed disbandment reflects feedback from faculty and addresses disparities in committee workload and time commitments, while seeking to ensure that important issues are addressed efficiently and appropriately.

## MOTION

That the Senate Timetable, Teaching Evaluation, Experiential Learning, E-learning and the Academic Integrity Committees be disbanded as the tasks for which they were created will now be under the responsibility of the Senate Academic and Curriculum Committee (SACC).

**Moved by:** Jean Manore

**Seconded by:** Heather Lawford

**Against:** 1

**Motion carried.**

Principal Sébastien Lebel-Grenier raised an additional topic concerning a proposal to review all Senate Committee compositions to determine whether representation from the Decolonization Circle is included. As this matter was not on the agenda, it was suggested that it be brought forward at a future Senate meeting to allow for appropriate consideration and discussion.

677/6 DIVISIONAL ITEMS

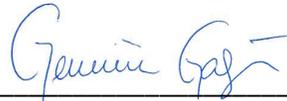
There were no recommendations.

The meeting ended at 6:15 p.m.



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Sébastien Lebel-Grenier, Chair  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor



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Geneviève Gagné, Secretary General