

**ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
Friday, January 23, 2009, 1:00 p.m., room F-216**

Present: M. Besner, V. Broege, I. Der Aprahamian, D. Gallagher, C. Hall, R. Herrera, S. Hervouet-Zeiber, C. Koufoudakis, P. Labrinos, J. McMahon, S. Pettifer, G. Quinn, C. Rossignoli, A. Tharani, J. Tromp, N. Wargny
Regrets: M. Abiri, P. McCoy, S. Newbigging
Non-members: M. Belanger, C. Hanrahan, T. Ingerman, J. Macdonald

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus with the following additions: 3. c) Procedures re Strategic Plan (S. Pettifer), 6. a) IPESA (A. Tharani) and b) Update on the Mid-term Assessments (T. Ingerman).

2. Approval of Minutes of November 28, 2008

The minutes of November 28, 2008 were approved by consensus with a correction to M. Besner's name.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Bridging Programs Evaluation

The committee continued the review of the Global Recommendations in the Bridging Programs Evaluation report.

Recommendation #3

M. Belanger briefly presented the new recommendation distributed to the members in replacement of the one in the report. He asked that Council consider this recommendation.

It was moved by N. Wargny and seconded by V. Broege that Academic Council consider Recommendation #3 as rewritten.

Approved unanimously.

It was agreed to discuss each point of the recommendation separately.

- a) *Under the current structure, the various Explorations profiles fall under three Faculty Deans and are coordinated by one Coordinator. From an administrative perspective, it would be more logical for the entire Explorations program, including the session d'accueil and session de transition profiles, to be overseen by a single Faculty Dean. The Explorations Coordinator would continue to coordinate the program in consultation with the various Faculties involved in the program.*

Council discussed this recommendation in light of the document distributed by M. Belanger showing the current situation in the Explorations programs and the report read by N. Wargny on the A'08 program transfers clearly showing FSSCAL as the predisposed Faculty. In the discussion, it was noted that the *status quo* was working well and that this was not a major concern for the Deans as the most important was the collaboration and links between the three Faculties. R. Herrera also noted that it was important to respect that the decision of what department will teach what course was a departmental decision and suggested adding a sentence to that effect. It was then suggested that this issue be further considered by the Faculty Deans, the Academic Dean and the Program Coordinator.

It was moved by C. Rossignoli and seconded by P. Labrinos that Academic Council refer Recommendation #3 a) to the Explorations Coordinator, the Faculty Deans and the Academic Dean to decide.

Approved unanimously.

- b) *Given the multi-disciplinary nature of this program, a Curriculum Committee composed of faculty members from each of the Faculties should be established.*

It was moved by D. Gallagher and seconded by I. Der Aprahamian that Academic Council approve Recommendation #3 b).

Approved unanimously.

- c) *A College Preparation course should be designed for each Explorations profile that is a session d'accueil (ie. Explorations 2, Explorations 5, Explorations 6). This course should be designed in a modular fashion, with some common elements, but specific content appropriate to each particular Explorations profile.*

This is already underway. Academic Council approved last May allocation of resources and release time to develop such a course. M. Belanger confirmed that the document was almost finalized and will be submitted shortly to Council.

It was moved by M. Besner and seconded by V. Broege that Academic Council approve Recommendation #3 c).

Approved unanimously.

- d) *For greater pedagogical effect, and to facilitate synchronization between teachers, students in Explorations 5 should be grouped for their College Preparation, Math, and/or Science courses. "The College Preparation course for Exploration 5 shall be taught by FSSCAL faculty."* (*Amendment added by FSSCAL, November 5, 2008). "The College Preparation course for Explorations 5 shall be taught by any faculty member who has the appropriate training and academic background."** (Amendment added by SCC, November 19, 2008)*

This recommendation was discussed in two parts, first the idea of grouping (1st sentence) and then the issue of who would teach the course.

It was moved by N. Wargny and seconded by A. Tharani that Academic Council approve the first part of Recommendation #3 d).

Approved unanimously.

It was moved by C. Rossignoli and seconded by M. Besner that Academic Council recommend that the College Preparation course for Explorations 5 be taught by FSSCAL faculty.

There was a long discussion on the two amendments as, although it was noted that the FSSCAL had a long expertise in that area, some members felt that teachers from other Faculties might also have the skills to teach such a course and that it should best remain open. R. Herrera spoke against the FSSCAL amendment, reiterating that this was a departmental decision and that it was not up to Academic Council to decide who would teach what course. J. McMahon stated that although he would see the course taught in FSSCAL as most of it was study skills and methodology, he could understand the other point of view and therefore might abstain from voting.

The motion was then voted upon.

In favour - 3

Opposed - 5

Abstentions - 8

It was moved by C. Rossignoli and seconded by D. Gallagher that Academic Council recommend that the College Preparation course for Explorations 5 shall be taught by any faculty member who has the appropriate training and academic background.

In favour - 15

Opposed - 0

Abstention - 1

- e) *For students in Explorations 6, the College Preparation course should be twinned with a Math or Science course.* “The College Preparation course for Explorations 6 shall be taught by Math/Science faculty.”* Amendment added by FSSCAL, November 5, 2008.

This issue was also dealt with in two parts, the twinning and the amendment.

It was moved by M. Besner and seconded by V. Broege that Academic Council recommend that for students in Explorations 6, the College Preparation course be twinned with a Math or Science course.

Some discussion followed on the advantages of twinning to give content to the skills studied and to apply those skills in a course and the danger that the College Preparation course becomes a content course.

In favour - 15
Opposed - 0
Abstention - 1

Based on this vote, the second part of the recommendation was passed automatically.

Recommendation #4

It was moved by J. McMahon and seconded by C. Rossignoli to table Recommendation #4 until the College has had time to consider the changes to the RREC.

Approved unanimously.

Recommendation #5

Already dealt with (ref. to Recommendation #2 c).

Recommendation #6

J. McMahon's friendly amendment to replace the word "followed" with "considered" was agreed to.

It was moved by D. Gallagher and seconded by C. Hall that Academic Council approve Recommendation #6 as amended.

Approved unanimously.

Recommendation #7

It was moved by J. Tromp and seconded by V. Broege that Academic Council approve Recommendation #7.

Approved unanimously.

Recommendation #8

It was moved by P. Labrinos and seconded by M. Besner that Academic Council approve Recommendation #8.

In favour - 13
Opposed - 0
Abstentions - 3

Recommendation #9

After some discussion, it was agreed that this recommendation should be divided into two distinct recommendations, #9 on the CI issue and #10 on equity in all sections of a same course.

Two friendly amendments to the new Recommendation #9 were agreed upon: to replace "addressed" with "explored" and to replace "are needier and less skilled" with "require more support".

It was moved by C. Rossignoli and seconded by P. Labrinos that Academic Council approve Recommendation #9 as amended.

In favour - 14
Opposed - 0
Abstentions - 2

Recommendation #10 (second part of #9 in report)

It is recommended that equity in all sections of the same course remain a high priority for the programs, with each party (department/program) preparing a regular report on its progress with this matter and sharing it with the involved program committees for overall review.

This recommendation was considered to be awkwardly worded and to lead to confusion as to the use of the term “equity”. It was reworded and then voted upon.

It was moved by N. Wargny and seconded by S. Hervouet-Zeiber that Academic Council recommend that equity (in terms of course content, requirements and student success indicators) in all sections of the same course remain a high priority for the Explorations programs with the Explorations Curriculum Committee preparing a regular report on its progress in this matter and sharing it with the involved departments/programs.

In favour - 15
Opposed - 0
Abstention - 1

Recommendation # 11 (#10 in report)

It is recommended that ongoing evaluation of all of the transition programs be approached in a systematic fashion using annual reports and strategic plans to detail objectives and assess progress. A list of essential key performance indicators should be developed for each program, perhaps via collaboration between the Program Committee (PC) and the new Office of Institutional Development and Effectiveness (OIDE). The intent would be for the OIDE to supply the results of such measures to the PC on an annual basis to better enable the PC to determine the needs and direction for future program development.

It was moved by S. Hervouet-Zeiber and seconded by V. Broege that Academic Council approve Recommendation #11.

Approved unanimously.

Recommendation #12 (#11 in report)

The Committee recommends that the College and Explorations 2 Program Committee consider the value of offering the College Preparation course (recommended for Explorations 2) to other students who may be at risk. PSEP data on incoming grades over the past decade a) suggest a significant degree of grades inflation in high school marks since 1997; 24.5% of all Vanier incoming students had an MGS under 71% in 1997 versus 11% in 2006, a trend common in all English colleges (14% vs 6.8%) and b) confirms Vanier’s disproportionate intake of weak students.

This recommendation was amended to particularly address the concern that it seemed to have been written for a credit course. The term “non-credit” was added in front of “College Preparation course in the first sentence and “the Explorations 2 Program Committee” and the parenthesis deleted. C. Koufoudakis expressed some concern about the actual number of students who would take a non-credit course. It was noted that success would be an incentive among several students to take such a course. The ways in which the course was offered could also be a determining factor in the number of students interested. It was noted that such a course should be of particular interest to Cont. Ed. students. It could also serve as a model to other courses in developing study skills.

A friendly amendment to drop the second sentence of the recommendation was also agreed upon.

It was moved by C. Hall and seconded by I. Der Aprahamian that Academic Council approve Recommendation #12 as amended.

In favour - 14

Opposed - 0

Abstentions - 2

J. McMahon thanked M. Belanger for his work. There was a hand of applause.

J. McMahon reminded Council that an overall recommendation for approval by the Board of Directors was needed, also to ensure that the College could move ahead on some of the recommendations to be implemented in A'09.

It was moved by J. McMahon and seconded by N. Wargny that Academic Council recommend the Global Recommendations of The Explorations Program Evaluation report as modified to the Board of Directors for approval to allow for the required operational changes for Fall 2009.

Approved unanimously.

b) Project Proposals with Université de Montréal

J. McMahon presented the two projects submitted to the MELS by Université de Montréal, Vanier, Bois-de-Boulogne and Lionel-Groulx under the *Programme de collaboration universités-collèges - Concours 2008-2009*. Although the two projects are different, they are complementary and the overall objective of both is to increase the number of students who pursue science studies at the university level. J. McMahon further explained that although the two documents had to be signed to be submitted to the MELS, they are pending approval from Academic Council and the Board of Directors. A decision from the MELS is expected in February.

It was moved by C. Rossignoli and seconded by A. Tharani that Academic Council approve the two project proposals with Université de Montréal as submitted and recommend them for approval by the Board of Directors.

J. McMahon answered a few questions from the members. D. Hetherington, as the Faculty Dean for Science, confirmed that, although there were some concerns with the projects, they were worth pursuing as the colleges will have the opportunity to further discuss them with the university. Some suggestions were also made to improve the presentation of the documents.

The motion was then approved unanimously.

c) Procedures re Strategic Plan

S. Pettifer reported that changes were made to the Strategic Plan as approved by Academic Council before it was sent to the Board members. According to By-law No. 3, if the College does not accept recommendations from Academic Council, the latter is informed in writing of the reasons for the College's decision. J. McMahon confirmed that the College was well aware of this condition and that Council would receive an explanation in writing by the next meeting.

A question arose as to the type of changes made. S. Pettifer confirmed that a couple of them were significant and reported as an example that the hiring of a position in charge of the Alumni in the Communications Department had been re-added to the document although Council had recommended that it be deleted. J. McMahon noted that hiring was the responsibility of the College and that Council's role was to give recommendations re the academic sector. An explanation of why the position was put back will be included in the document to be sent to Council.

Further discussion followed on the procedures as the Vice-chair was informed of the changes just prior to the Board meeting and some members of the administration did not know of the changes made. J. McMahon confirmed that the lines of communication had to be improved. The link between the Board and Council was also questioned: it was noted that the Academic Dean reported regularly on the Board meetings and that, as an *ex officio* member of the Board, he would make sure that an item which needed reconsideration be returned to Council. The changes made to the Strategic Plan were highlighted at J. McMahon's request with a commitment that Council would receive an explanation in writing.

4. Reports, Announcements and Correspondence

a) Board of Directors

J. McMahon reported the following on the December 16th Board meeting:

- The Director General, the Academic Dean and the Vice-chair of Council gave reports.
- The main item was the Strategic Plan (see item 3. c). A number of issues were raised by the student representative on the Board. There was agreement by consensus to meet with the student representatives to look at them. The Director General, the Academic Dean, the Vice-chair of Council and the student

representative already met and identified items to be addressed. Changes to the Plan may be made in the future.

J. McMahon reminded the student representatives that Academic Council was the appropriate forum to bring up items of concern to the students.

- The Board approved the change of name of the Faculty of Applied Technologies which becomes the Faculty of Careers and Technical Programs. The project with Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board and a list of graduates to be granted their DEC were also approved.

b) Joint Coordinators

In S. Newbigging's absence, J. Tromp reported the following on the January 21st Joint Coordinators' meeting:

- There was an update on the members' concerns raised at the previous meeting.
- The Joint Coordinators received a list of the academic success grant projects which were approved. The call for projects for A'09 will be launched shortly. The deadline for submission of projects will be the beginning of March.
- A process on how to go about the revision of academic policies was agreed upon. A survey will be sent to all the Joint Coordinators asking them to identify which policies should be revised first.
- The following members' concerns were discussed: Honours Science scheduling, start of classes on a Monday, quality of chinks, noise in Boardroom, X. Trevino's telephone.
- Reports were given on the Board of Directors, Academic Council, FSSCAL, FSGS, FCTP and registration.

The report on the December 3rd Joint Coordinators' meeting was tabled again. S. Pettifer thanked J. Tromp for stepping in for S. Newbigging and stressed the importance that Council receive regular reports on the Joint Coordinators' meetings.

5. Main Business

J. Macdonald, on behalf of G. Dracopoulos, spoke to the two items under Main Business.

- a) Cooperation Agreement between *Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis (France)* and Vanier College
- b) Agreement on Student Exchanges between *Institut Universitaire de Technologie Nice-Côte d'Azur de l'Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis (France)* and Vanier College

J. Macdonald gave a brief report on the expansion of the program of cooperation in Business Administration with IUTs (*Instituts Universitaires de Technologie*) in France. The program which started with three students on stage three years ago involves eight students this year. It is possible that these students will be eligible for funding from the MELS to carry out their stage.

J. Macdonald then briefly went over the two agreements, one general and the other more specific, submitted at this meeting for approval by Council. Both are similar to the ones previously signed by Vanier and do not require any investment from the College. J. Macdonald further explained that the agreements had been sent directly to the Director General's Office by mistake, hence they were already signed by G. Héroux. However, they had not been returned to France as they first had to be approved by Council and the Board of Directors. The date of signature will be changed on both documents. The procedure will be corrected for the future.

It was moved by S. Hervouet-Zeiber and seconded by R. Herrera that Academic Council accept the Cooperation Agreement between *Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis (France)* and Vanier College and recommend it for approval by the Board of Directors.
Approved unanimously.

It was moved by C. Hall and seconded by C. Koufoudakis that Academic Council accept the Agreement on Student Exchanges between *Institut Universitaire de Technologie Nice-Côte d'Azur de l'Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis (France)* and Vanier College and recommend it for approval by the Board of Directors.
Approved unanimously.

The Vice-chair thanked J. Macdonald who in turn thanked Council for their support.

6. **Varia**

a) IPESA

C. Koufoudakis asked that, before the item be submitted to the Board for approval, the wording in Chapter 12 referring to students be changed because students are not aware of the policy.

The Vice-chair ruled this request as out-of-order as the document had already been discussed and approved by Council, and the issue addressed by P. McCoy who had confirmed that the policy was in the student agenda. C. Hanrahan noted that the committee to be struck on the revision of the policy will include student representation. This will be an opportunity for students to raise their concerns.

b) Update on the Mid-term Assessments

T. Ingerman reported that 79.9% of teachers participated in the A'08 mid-term assessment process. There is a mechanism to identify the ones who did not participate. A list of the latter will be sent to the Faculty Deans.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wanda Kalina

