

UNIVERSITY SENATE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2 FEBRUARY 1990

PRESENT: Dr. P. Kenniff (Chair); Dr. R. Sheinin; Dr. M. Cohen; Dr. C. Giguère; Me B. Gaudet; Mr. B. Smart; Dr. S. McEvenue; Ms. M. Sullivan; Mr. K. Lowther; Ms. K. Devahastin; Prof. W. Knitter; Dean R. Parker; Prof. B. MacKay; Mr. I. St-Maurice; Mr. J. Serruya; Ms. Y. Jen; Dr. J. Lightstone; Prof. A.B. Doyle; Dean L. Bertrand; Prof. R. Seppanen; Prof. M. Stelcner; Prof. F.D. Hamblin; Prof. T. Stathopoulos; Dean M.E. Szabo; Prof. P.D. Ziogas; Dean S.H. Appelbaum; Prof. A. Rahman; Dean B. Counihan; Prof. M. Brian.

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Prof. T. Arbuckle-Maag; Prof. R.O. Wills; Prof. D. Dicks; Prof. K. Waters; Ms. K. Cox; Mr. A. Mate.
Call to Order

90-2-1 The meeting was called to order at 2:14 pm.

Approval of Agenda

90-2-2 The Agenda, as presented, was approved.

90-2-3 Dr. Kenniff introduced and welcomed Ms. Kusumal Devahastin, an M.B.A. student, and Mr. Keith Lowther, a Ph.D. student, who were attending their first Senate meeting as new graduate student representatives.

He advised that the next Agenda item would be dealt with in "Closed Session", and he asked those in attendance who were not members of Senate to leave the meeting.

OPEN SESSION

Approval of Minutes

90-2-5 IT WAS MOVED BY DEAN SZABO, SECONDED BY PROF. STATHOPOULOS, THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SENATE MEETINGS OF 8 DECEMBER 1989 AND 15 JANUARY 1990 BE APPROVED.

It was noted and agreed that the references to an M.Sc. degree in item 89-8-11, page 8 of the Minutes of the Senate meeting of 8 December 1989 be corrected to read - "M.A.Sc."

THE MOTION, AS AMENDED, WAS CARRIED.

Remarks from the Chair

90-2-6 In his remarks, Dr. Kenniff expressed the hope that the next Senate meeting would be held in the new Senate Chamber in the Drummond Science Building, and he advised that regardless of whether the move would occur in March or April 1990, appropriate arrangements would be made to underscore the occasion.

90-2-7 Commenting on the recent Government announcement concerning the end of the freeze on university tuition fees, Dr. Kenniff advised that the Minister of Higher Education and Science had met with the Executive Committee of the Conference of Rectors on 21 December 1989 to indicate his perception of the various elements of the policy decision and how it should be applied within each university; that fundamentally the policy decision was that university tuition fees, which currently averaged \$540.00 per year at Quebec universities, and \$450.00 in most programmes at Concordia, would rise by \$350.00 in the 1990/91 academic year and by another \$350.00 in the 1991/92 academic year, bringing the Quebec average tuition fees to \$890.00 and \$1240.00 respectively and Concordia's fees to \$800.00 and \$1150.00 respectively; that the 1990/91 tuition fee increase would be effective 1 September 1990 and the 1991/92 increase would be effective 1 June 1991; that universities individually would have the option to go beyond the \$350.00 increase by an amount equal to 10% of the total fee once the increase has been applied, eg., with respect to Concordia, this would amount to a total fee of \$880.00 for 1990/91, etc.; and that in the third and subsequent years, the fees would be indexed at a percentage which probably would be at or near the cost of living. With respect to reactions to the policy statement, he advised that Quebec university rectors have always insisted that there were two fundamental conditions to giving support for such an increase - the first being that the financial aid programme for students be adjusted to take into account the increase, and the second being that after the first condition has been met, the balance of the net amount resulting from the tuition fee increase would go directly to the universities and not to the Government's general revenue fund; that in terms of the first condition, the Minister announced that an amount equal to 20% of the gross amount generated by the fee increase in each year would be retained by the Government and would be put directly toward the improvement of the student loans and bursaries, programme; that concerning the second condition, the Minister has given his assurance that the balance of the net amount would go to the universities; and that pressure would continue to be brought to bear on all of the Government ministers to ensure that the commitment from the Minister of Higher Education and Science was honoured. He reiterated that the formal decision to increase tuition fees remained within the purview of each university, and he advised that the matter of tuition fee increases would be brought before the Concordia Board of Governors at its February 1990 meeting.

With respect to other issues concerning this topic, Dr. Kenniff advised that he had just received confirmation from the Minister's Office via the Conference of Rectors, that international student fees would remain at the current level of \$5,800.00 for those international students who were not

exempted, i.e., those who do not have a fee waiver under Quebec government policy, but that tuition fees for those international students who presently were exempted would be subject to the increase; that it was his intention to recommend to the Board of Governors that Concordia use the 10% corridor that was being made available by the Minister of Higher Education and Science, particularly given the financial position of the University, and the fact that our tuition fees presently were well below the Provincial average and would remain below the average even if no other university used the 10% option; that the other Montreal universities, including McGill, were also intending to use the 10% corridor; that the Conference of Rectors would be presenting a brief to the National Assembly Commission on Higher Education which would be holding hearings on the student loans and bursaries scheme beginning 21 February 1990; that the Conference of Rectors was concerned about the impact of the new tuition fee policy upon the hard-won accessibility principles, and that its position, and his own position, was that if the appropriate, full and complete adjustments were made to the student financial aid programme in such a way as to ensure that those who were affected adversely by the increase indeed would be helped, the impact on the current levels of accessibility, if any, should be relatively minimal; and that contrary to the "gloom and doom" studies and apocalyptic pronouncements that have been made concerning the consequences, none of which have been substantiated by any scientific evidence, the experience in all other Canadian provinces where tuition fees averaged from \$1,500.00 to \$1,800.00 per year has been that university enrolments have continued to increase over the past decade; and that Dr. M. Cohen, Vice-Rector, Institutional Relations and Finance, has been involved in consultations with the students on these issues and the attendant practical applications, and the University was prepared to pursue those discussions up to the time of the meeting of the Board of Governors on 14 February 1990.

In addition to the above, Dr. Cohen advised that as directed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the fee structures in the universities would not change in the first year of the increase in tuition fees, i.e., universities could not take advantage of the increase to revise their fee structures and thereby make the situation more difficult for students; that with respect to those institutions which charge per credit, the increase would be applied as an increase on a per credit basis in a uniform fashion; and that in discussions with the Ministry, it was being made very clear that the universities must be able to ensure, and to verify, that every penny generated as a direct consequence of the increase, either went into the loans and bursaries system to assist students or remained with the universities.

He also explained that technically the tuition freeze was a funding rule whereby government grants were equal to the difference between the accepted level of admissible expenses and tuition fee revenues; that the unfreezing of tuition fees was really a change in that rule to the effect that the revenues that were deducted are those that would be received had the students been billed under the old system, such that there should be no change in the level of the government grants; that should the rule not be changed, the universities, as a first step, would probably roll back the fees;

and that he had already indicated to people in the Ministry that Concordia would not collect extra money to pass on to the Government. In addition, he advised that the Financial Aid Office was considering a variety of options, including a significant increase to the existing student emergency fund, increasing the Concordia bursaries by an amount at least equal to the increase in fees, increasing the number of such bursaries, and the possibility of establishing a subsidized work/study programme for students.

- 90-2-8 Dr. Kenniff commended Dean Swamy, and the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science, for yesterday's successful and greatly appreciated Symposium on Women in Engineering which had been organized by the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science in conjunction with the Committee on the Status of Women in Engineering.

Question Period

- 90-2-9 Questions which were raised centred primarily on the ending of the freeze on university tuition fees.

In response to a question concerning the possibility of exempting students who qualified for financial assistance from the additional 10% charge, Dr. Cohen advised that his preference would be to consider the matter in terms of putting more money into bursaries to compensate such students, but that the issue raised was a point well taken and would be looked into.

Responding to a question concerning the effect of the new tuition policy on Concordia's revenues, Dr. Cohen advised that by the end of the second year, the University would expect to have an additional 10 million dollars in its base funding; that while part of the money would be put toward reducing the deficit in the sense of attempting to match revenues and expenditures, most of the additional money would be put toward expenditures, i.e., development; and that the particulars with respect to the increased revenues would be contained in the preliminary budgets for 1990/91 and 1991/92 which the Budget Committee intended to table at the March, 1990 meeting of the Board of Governors.

With respect to the Government's announced intention to direct 20% of the money generated by the tuition fee increase toward the student loans and bursaries system, Dr. Kenniff explained that universities levy and collect tuition fees themselves; and that an amount equal to 20% of the money which would be generated overall within the university system, factored out for each university, would be removed from the Government's grant, i.e., the universities would be getting, as a net overall, 80%-of the tuition fee increase. Additionally, Dr. Cohen reiterated that the universities were insisting that the accounting with respect to that 20% be transparent in order to ensure that none of that money ended up in the consolidated revenue fund of the Province.

In response to a concern expressed with respect to the effect of the tuition increase on the per credit fee for Mature Students, and specifically senior independent students, Dr. Cohen advised that technically, given the

agreement between the University and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, if the new policy was approved by the Board of Governors and applied literally, the fees in question could increase by more than 200%; that while it might be possible to leave such fees at their current rate, he had difficulty with the concept of applying the tuition increase vis-à-vis senior independent students on a proportional basis, as had been suggested, because of the variety of student categories and differences in tuition rates which existed; and that this was one of a number of wrinkles and details with respect to applying the policy which remained to be worked out.

Other concerns were raised and responded to with respect to the possibility of a long-term claw-back of the increased funds through malign neglect on the part of the Government vis-à-vis its overall commitment to increase university funding, ie., to re-address the university funding formula, etc.; consideration of provisions to minimize the effect of the tuition increase on a most important segment of Concordia's student population, ie., part-time students, including accessibility to student scholarships, loans and bursaries; and the effects of the tuition increase on students' work/study habits and the possible impact on demands for classrooms at certain times, particularly with respect to the evening classes.

Additional issues which were raised and responded to included questions concerning computer equipment donated to the University by Apple Canada Inc., and possible user restrictions being imposed by Faculties involved; future plans with respect to the Centennial Building once it has been vacated by the present occupants; and concerns over what were felt to be extremely high prices which departments were required to pay for items purchased through the Purchasing Department, including office computer equipment, laser printers etc. With respect to the latter, Dr. Giguère, Vice-Rector, Services advised that he would look into the particular instance which had been alluded to; that the Office of the Rector had reviewed a first draft of a purchasing policy which would eventually be published and made available to the University community; and that he has asked Purchasing to include in the draft, practices and procedures vis-à-vis their own responsibilities particularly with respect to ensuring adequate scope to pre-purchasing searches, competition and bidding procedures, etc.

Appointments

Committees of Senate

90-2-10

IT WAS MOVED BY PROF. HAMBLIN, SECONDED BY PROF. STATHOPOULOS, THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF PROF. S. SANKAR, FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE, TO THE COMPUTER RESOURCES COMMITTEE, AS CONTAINED IN DOCUMENT US-90-2-D2, BE APPROVED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Revision to the Composition of the Commerce and Administration Faculty Council.

- 90-2-11 IT WAS MOVED BY PROF. RAHMAN, SECONDED BY MR. ST-MAURICE, THAT SENATE APPROVE AND RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS, THE REVISION TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMERCE AND ADMINISTRATION FACULTY COUNCIL AS PROPOSED IN DOCUMENT US-90-2-D3.

In the ensuing discussion, a question was raised and responded to concerning the rationale for designating the Dean of Graduate Studies as a non-voting member on the Faculty Council.

THE MOTION WAS CARRIED.

Next Meeting

- 90-2-12 Dr. Kenniff advised that the next Senate meeting would be on Friday, 9 March 1990, and that unless otherwise notified, it would be held in the new Senate Chamber in the Drummond Science Building, Loyola Campus.

Adjournment

- 90-2-13 On a motion by Dean Bertrand, seconded by Dean Szabo, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 pm.

John Noonan
Secretary of Senate