

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SENATE
VOL. CXXXVII**

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

PRESENT: Susan Tighe (Chair), Rasheed Ahmad, Sonia Anand, Catherine Anderson, Blaise Bourdin, Steven Bray, Ruth Chen, Mark Crowther, Katherine Cuff, Kim Dej, Arlene Dosen, Saher Fazilat, Catherine Frost, Gillian Goward, Khaled Hassanein, Faiza Hirji, Steve Hranilovic, Manish Kacker, Ridha Khedri, Lucas Klein, Marc-Andre Letendre, Graeme Luke, Maureen MacDonald, Sue McCracken, Michael McGillion, Logan McLean, Alex Mouriopoulos, Paul O'Byrne, Gianni Parise, Tracy Prowse, Mehak Ismail Rajani, Erin Reid, Stacey Ritz, Kalai Saravanamuttu, Nicholas Serruys, Heather Sheardown, Jaeyoon Song, Dennis Souder, Pamela Swett, Abdalla Talaat, Sarah Wojkowski, Salwa Zaher, Margaret Zanel, Edward Zhang, Eugenia Zuroski, Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary & Chief Governance and Privacy Officer*), Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Alysha Sless (*Assistant University Secretary*)

REGRETS: Paul Andrews, Kusum Bhatta, Saara Greene, Bruce Newbold

OBSERVERS: Carolyn Brendon, Dina Brooks, Sandra Carroll, Rosa da Silva, Darran Fernandez, Matheus Grasselli, Bhagwati Gupta, Martin Horn, Bonny Ibhawoh, Elisabeth Marquis, Karen McGarry, Clare Mitchell, Ellen Pocobelli, Melissa Pool, Sean Van Koughnett

OPEN SESSION

S. Tighe welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged that we meet today on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations and within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement.

Senators were advised that the Secretariat is looking for two scrutineers for the University By-Elections that will help to fill Senate vacancies. Scrutineers will be needed on October 24 for no more than 30 minutes. Interested individuals were asked to email elections@mcmaster.ca.

S. Tighe shared that the feedback received through the June survey of the 2024-2025 group of Senators was helpful, but not many of the Senators filled out the survey. The survey will be circulated in February in the hope of improving the response rate.

A suggestion received from the survey that we provide introductions to our guest speakers that help everyone understand how the topic is related to Senate has been adopted. Later in today's meeting we will begin a series of presentations by campus

experts on matters of particular interest to the Senate. Today, Deputy Provost Matheus Grasselli and Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning Kim Dej will discuss the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in an academic context. Their presentation is intended to give Senators an overview of AI at McMaster since ChatGPT burst onto the scene in late 2022. The presenters will provide global, North American, Canadian and provincial context, as they explain McMaster's position, using examples focused on the academic mission.

Our campus community observed the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30 with numerous events and activities leading up to the day, and on the day itself, to foster knowledge and reflection about Canada's shameful residential school system and to encourage action toward genuine reconciliation with Indigenous people, who continue to experience the residential school system's toxic legacy.

S. Tighe advised that Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs launched the McMaster News site on October 1, the 95th anniversary of McMaster's move to Hamilton from Toronto. The new site is clean, well-organized and easy to navigate, and combines content from the former McMaster Daily News and Brighter World into a one-stop destination for all campus news. The launch is the result of great teamwork, and S. Tighe congratulated CMPA and urged everyone to bookmark the new site.

The latter half of September was very busy with campus events, including the successful activities related to the Presidential Installation, including the Installation ceremony, reception and dinner, special receptions to meet McMaster alumni in Hamilton and Toronto, and an academic research panel discussion featuring Canadian and international colleagues from S. Tighe's field of research: the engineering and science of pavement. S. Tighe noted that it was gratifying to see so many representatives of McMaster's sister institutions, our governmental partners and our campus community at the Installation ceremony.

S. Tighe was pleased to perform the ceremonial coin toss before the Homecoming football game, a victory over the Guelph Gryphons in front of a sellout crowd of 5,497. The game was part of a suite of successful campus events, which also included the daytime Homecoming Festival, with more than 4,000 participating, primarily students, and the evening Homecoming Concert, for which more than 5,300 tickets were sold. Though unsanctioned gatherings occurred off campus, there were no major incidents.

On September 12, which would have been former McMaster President Peter George's 84th birthday, Peter's family members and friends returned to campus to join us in celebrating five years since the opening of the Peter George Centre for Living and Learning, including the unveiling of a new commemorative plaque. The original opening ceremonies had been deferred due to the pandemic, and this was a welcome opportunity to celebrate the legacy of an especially influential McMaster president.

S. Tighe advised that the report from the recent external review of the University Secretariat is now complete and posted on the President's website. The reviewers

praised the work of University Secretary Andrea Thyret-Kidd and the Secretariat team, noting their deep expertise and commitment to service, while suggesting ways to help the team maximize its efficiency in the context of its increasingly complex responsibilities. S. Tighe thanked the reviewers and our own organizers for their work to make the review a success. Similar reviews are now under way for the Faculty of Health Sciences and Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs.

The Public Affairs team has arranged major advocacy days at Queen's Park on October 20 and in Ottawa December 1-2 when we will have a chance to meet with government representatives and make the case for McMaster.

S. Tighe shared the news of a special honour for McMaster's Sandra Lapointe. The Canadian Science Policy Centre has awarded her its 2025 Trailblazer Award for Innovation Policy, recognizing her groundbreaking contributions to shaping Canada's science and innovation landscape. A Professor of Philosophy, Lapointe is nationally respected for advancing social innovation and science policy. She is the founder of The Canadian Collaborative for Society, Innovation and Policy, a cross-sectoral think tank dedicated to strengthening science strategy and innovation policy for complex human systems and societal prosperity, and of The La Collaborative, a pan-Canadian network developing new models for knowledge and talent mobilization in social innovation.

S. Tighe explained that the process of setting a new five-year strategic plan is in its early stages as we prepare to consult broadly with our community and our external partners to gather input that will inform the new strategic plan, *Setting The Course*. We are working on an accelerated schedule with the goal of having a new strategic plan ready by June. S. Tighe asked everyone in the community to start thinking about big-picture questions such as, "What should McMaster look like in five years?" and "What are the greatest challenges and opportunities facing the university?" S. Tighe encouraged everyone to take advantage of upcoming opportunities to participate in framing the future of our university. Updates and information will be shared on the McMaster News.

1. Approval of Agenda – Open Session

S. Tighe confirmed that no requests had been received to move any items from Consent to the Regular agenda of the Open Session.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of October 8, 2025 and that items 2 through 4 be approved or received by Consent.

The motion was **Carried**.

CONSENT

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – September 10, 2025 (Open Session)

Motion:

that the minutes of the Open Session of the meeting held on September 10, 2025 be approved as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

3. Report from the University Planning Committee**a. Report from the Libraries**

Received by Consent.

4. Report from the Committee on Appointments**a. Terms of Reference**

1. Revised Terms of Reference – Stelco Chair in Sustainable Steel Production

Motion:

that Senate approve, for recommendation to the Board of Governors, the revised terms of reference for the Stelco Chair in Sustainable Steel Production, as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

REGULAR**5. Business Arising**

There was no business arising.

6. Enquiries

There were no enquiries.

7. Communications

S. Tighe explained that throughout the year, Senate will receive annual reports from offices or boards that do work connected with the mandate of Senate. Two reports will be presented today. The first is from the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB), which is responsible for ensuring that research involving humans at McMaster is done in compliance with the Tri-Council standards.

a. McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB) Annual Report 2024-2025

Tara La Rose, *Chair, McMaster Research Ethics Board*, provided a verbal report on MREB.

T. La Rose shared an overview of staffing changes and noted that the challenging work on the guidelines for payment of honoraria to research participants has continued this year. The CRA has a new level of diligence for collecting information and the interim policy continues to be monitored and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. T. La Rose thanked all members of MREB and staff.

A member highlighted the number of applications processed noting it is a testament to the research occurring. There were 597 submissions, 383 new ethics applications and 214 amendments.

This item was for information.

b. Ombuds Office Annual Report 2024-2025

S. Tighe advised that the Ombuds Office is jointly funded by the University, the MSU and the GSA and provides a confidential, impartial and independent service for student-related issues and policies.

Carolyn Brendon, *Ombuds*, presented the report.

C. Brendon provided an overview of the office noting that the mandate is to identify areas for systemic improvement. The Ombuds analyzes complaints objectively through the lens of administrative fairness standards which includes procedural, relational and substantive fairness. The Ombuds assists in the fair resolution of individual complaints and concerns and has the power to investigate and make recommendations, but not to decide on a matter. This year's report includes statistics about visitors to office and the types of issues reported.

In response to a question around a similar number of complaints from last year to this year, C. Brendon advised that there was a small increase in undergraduate cases and that most issues were related to grading. C. Brendon added that outreach efforts have resulted in students becoming more aware of the office.

Questions were raised around systemic issues and email campaigns. C. Brendon explained that the Ombuds Office makes recommendations but does not have the power to implement the recommendations. The University and Student Unions are responsible for ensuring changes are being made. Concerning email campaigns, if it is not within the jurisdiction or mandate of

the Ombuds Office, it would be more appropriate for another office to respond.

This item is for information.

8. Report from Graduate Council

a. New Awards

This item was for information.

9. Report from Undergraduate Council

Kim Dej, *Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning*, presented the report.

a. Curriculum Revisions for the 2026-2027 Undergraduate Calendar

1. Faculty of Social Sciences

K. Dej explained that at the meeting held on September 23, 2025, the Undergraduate Council reviewed and approved a new University of Birmingham LLB Option to the Honours Political Science B.A. program. This is a major modification, not a new program. The program allows students to enter into a first year Social Sciences program, choose the Political Science stream, and then pursue a joint degree option. The students will spend two years at McMaster, three years at Birmingham and then the final year back at McMaster. Birmingham is already an existing partner with McMaster.

In response to a question regarding mechanisms in place to assist students when they return to Canada, it was explained that the purpose of the fourth year is to prepare students. There are courses and programs in place as well as partnerships for articling. Students in this program take courses that are already part of our curriculum. Birmingham has students from Canada and offers a number of courses on Canadian law and other specializations. There is also a Canadian law conference with guest speakers. The exchanges are well set up. When students return, they will take fourth year courses that prepare them for writing bar exam.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the establishment of a new University of Birmingham LLB Option as a major modification to the existing Honours Political Science B.A. program, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

b. Terms of Award

This item was for information.

10. Report from the University Planning Committee

Maureen MacDonald, *Provost and Vice-President (Academic)*, presented the report.

a. Reporting Change for the Centre for Scholarship in the Public Interest (CSPI)

M. MacDonald explained that at its meeting on September 17, 2025, the University Planning Committee approved the proposed reporting change to the Centre for Scholarship in the Public Interest (CSPI). A review was conducted, and the recommendation was that the Centre would be better situated within the Faculty of Humanities rather than the Vice-President Research Office.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve, for recommendation to the Board of Governors, the transition of the Centre for Scholarship in the Public Interest (CSPI) as a Senate approved Research Centre reporting to the Office of the Vice-President, Research (OVPR) to a Centre reporting to the Faculty of Humanities.

In response to a question regarding the closure of the Centre in 2030 and whether that decision was part of the review, M. MacDonald confirmed the closure was also a recommendation and explained that the closure is centered around a number of items and that the activities of the Centre are associated with a singular faculty member. The closure is tied to the directorship of the individual.

The motion was **Carried**.

11. Report from the Committee on Appointments

Graeme Luke, *Chair of the Senate Committee on Appointments*, presented the report.

G. Luke explained that at its meeting on September 22, 2025, the Committee on Appointments approved the following recommendations and now recommends them to the Senate for approval:

a. Policy Revisions

1. University Scholar Policy Revision

The proposed revision is to align the University Scholar Policy with the Distinguished University Professor Policy. The revision will ensure that both policies use the same number of full-time faculty members in their corresponding calculations.

A member noted that number 13. in the policy notes .002 instead of .02. Matheus Grasselli advised that it was a typo in the original policy that was carried over. The member added that special 'appointment' should read 'appointments'. Members agreed to a friendly amendment.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the proposed revision to the University Scholar Policy, effective October 8, 2025, as amended.

The motion was **Carried**.

- b. Terms of Reference

1. Revised Terms of Reference – Deputy Vice-President (Research)

The revised Terms of Reference add the Biosafety Officer, the Director, Research Security Risk and the University Veterinarian as direct reports.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve, for recommendation to the Board of Governors, the revised terms of reference for the Deputy Vice-President (Research), as circulated.

In response to a question regarding the reporting structure, Gianni Parise advised that they have been reviewing the reporting structures in the Vice President Research (VPR) Office. Many individuals were reporting directly to the VPR. It was clarified that previously the Biosafety Officer reported directly to the VPR.

The motion was **Carried**.

12. **Report from the Committee on University Ceremonials and Insignia**

Stacey Ritz, *Chair of the Committee on University Ceremonials and Insignia*, presented the report.

S. Ritz explained that at its meeting on September 30, 2025, the Committee on University Ceremonials and Insignia approved the following recommendations and now recommends them to the Senate for approval:

a. Proposed Parchment

1. Academic Certificates and Academic Microcredentials Parchment

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the proposed parchment for Academic Certificates and Academic Microcredentials at both the Undergraduate and Graduate levels, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

b. Degree Designation, Abbreviation and Hood

1. Master of Management

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve that the Master of Management degree assumes the degree abbreviation M. Mgmt. and that it adopts the hood description currently used by the Master of Business Administration and Master of Finance: black silk, lined with white silk and bound over the anterior side with copper silk and over the posterior side with copper silk.

The motion was **Carried**.

13. Report from the Committee on By-Laws

Sarah Wojkowski, *Member of the Committee on By-Laws*, presented the report.

a. Amendments to the Faculty of Business By-Laws

S. Wojkowski explained that Senate accepted Notice of Motion for the amendments to the Faculty of Business By-Laws at its meeting on September 10, 2025.

At its meeting on September 25, 2025, the Committee on By-Laws reviewed and recommended that Senate approve the amendments to the Faculty of Business By-Laws.

The Committee made some additional revisions around the functions of the Tenure and Promotion Committee (vii) to align with the Tenure and Promotion Policy and revised the required number of supporters for election nominations

from five to three to align with the Senate By-Laws.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate, on the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws, approve the proposed amendments to the Faculty of Business By-Laws, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

14. Other Business

a. Artificial Intelligence and the Academic

Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost*, spoke to the item.

M. Grasselli shared a presentation on the global perspective of AI and then narrowed to McMaster University's perspective. Report highlights from UNESCO, ITHAKA S+R, and the U15 Guide were shared. M. Grasselli advised that in Ontario, we are participating in two ongoing provincial initiatives; the HEQCO Consortium on Gen AI and the COU Task Force on AI.

An overview of McMaster's response to AI was shared including the institutional response in January 2023, the Task Force on Teaching and Learning in May 2023 and the formation of the AI Advisory Committee in March 2024. The Academic Integrity Policy was also revised to recognize AI.

There was no other business.