



uOttawa

**Standing Committee on
Francophone Affairs and Official Languages**

2011-2012 Annual Report

Presented to the University of Ottawa Senate and Board of Governors

September 2012

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1. Message from the Co-Chairs

To the Senate and the Board of Governors,

We are pleased to present a summary of the activities undertaken by the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages during 2011-2012. Our activities included a review of our terms of reference so that they better reflect recent changes in Francophone affairs and bilingualism. We continued our consultations to update the *Regulation on Bilingualism* and have prepared a document that will be submitted to you this fall. We have also been closely monitoring the situation related to designation under the *French Language Services Act* and efforts to enhance the linguistic balance within our student population. We examined how Ontario's new *Politique d'aménagement linguistique* would be applied within our institution. We have also been monitoring very closely the complaints and comments received on the language of service at the University. In short, we've had a busy year, as you will see in this report.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all members of the Standing Committee for their dedication and valuable advice. We are fortunate to have their support and greatly appreciate it. A special thanks to the staff of the various academic units and services who worked with us on a variety of issues. They have made it possible for us to make real headway in fulfilling our mission. We would also like to thank our external partners, who have made it possible for us to remain connected to the needs and expectations of the region's Francophone community.



Christian Detellier
Co-Chair, Standing Committee on Francophone
Affairs and Official Languages
Interim Vice-President Academic and Provost



Denis Cossette
Co-Chair, Standing Committee on Francophone
Affairs and Official Languages
Interim Vice-President, Resources

2. Members

The Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages has 20 members. Below is the list of members for 2011-2012:

NAME	CATEGORY
Marie Biron	Alumna
Michel Bock	Research Chair in Canadian Francophonie
Johanne Bourdages	Associate Vice-President, Academic
Christine Charette	Alumna
Stéphanie Chouinard	Graduate student
Richard Clément	Faculty member, Humanities
Denis Cossette	Co-Chair, Interim Vice-President, Resources
Christine Dallaire	Faculty member, Humanities
Julien Dancause	Undergraduate student
Pierre de Blois	Board of Governors member
Christian Detellier	Co-Chair, Interim Vice-President, Academic and Provost
Guy Drouin	Faculty member, Sciences
Bruno Gélinas-Faucher	Undergraduate student
Irene Makaryk	Vice-Dean, FGPS
Isabelle Mayrand	Support staff member
Marcel Mérette	Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Rachel Ouellette	Standing Committee's Secretary
Véronic Tardif	Support staff member
Dominic Villeneuve	Graduate student
Mustapha Yagoub	Faculty member, Sciences

The following members have completed their term this year: Isabelle Mayrand, Véronic Tardif and Bruno Gélinas-Faucher. We thank them for their contributions. There are now three vacant positions to be filled for 2012-2013. We would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution of François Houle, Vice-President, Academic, and Co-Chair of the Standing Committee until January 2012.

3. Mandate

The Committee's mandate was updated in 2011-2012 to reflect the changes in the area of Francophone affairs and bilingualism.

Status

The Committee is a standing advisory committee of the Senate. Its role is to oversee the planning and implementation of initiatives that will help the University fully assume its mission and commitment to promote and develop French culture in Ontario. The Committee's mandate also includes supporting the University community's development in both official languages.

Functions

1. To develop an annual action plan that incorporates emerging issues on campus in the areas of Francophone affairs and official languages;
2. To ensure that the recommendations in the Senate-approved development plan for programs and services in French are implemented, that results are evaluated annually and that the next five-year plan for Francophone affairs is prepared;
3. To ensure that the University's *Regulation on Bilingualism* is promoted, is applied consistently and in its entirety, and its implementation is proactively evaluated;
4. To monitor and evaluate the mechanism for receiving and processing complaints on the use of official languages in the University's programs and services;
5. To monitor the ongoing action plan for improving linguistic balance within the student population;
6. To work closely with faculties to implement the action plan ensuring that mandatory courses are offered in French and that a wider range of elective courses are offered in French;
7. To work with faculties to increase opportunities for practical, clinical and CO-OP placements in French-language or bilingual settings;
8. To review the annual report on initiatives funded to develop French-language teaching materials;
9. To lead a University–Community roundtable forum, to consult its members regularly and to review the community's recommendations;
10. To support the development and implementation of mechanisms and procedures to ensure that written communications from faculties and services are of high quality and bilingual.

4. Review of Activities

The following pages provide a summary of the activities undertaken between June 2011 and May 2012. The Standing Committee held five meetings during this time. Members continued to make progress on implementing several of the recommendations made by the Task Force on Programs and Services in French in the fall of 2007 and to monitor important initiatives implemented in previous years.

4.1 2011-2012 Work Plan

The members of the Committee developed the following work plan for 2011-2012:

Regulation on Bilingualism (Recommendation 1)

- Complete the update of the Regulation and submit it to the Senate and the Board of Governors (ongoing)
- Develop a plan to communicate the updated Regulation and implement it (to do)
- Define the parameters for evaluating the implementation of the Regulation (to do)

Linguistic balance and programs and services offered (Recommendations 6 and 9)

- Continue to monitor changes in registration, targeted recruitment efforts and progress on programs offered in French (completed)
- Update the State of Affairs for Programs and Services in French (ongoing)

Bilingualism of professors (Recommendation 11)

- Obtain annual data on the bilingualism of tenured professors (completed)

Designation under the *French Language Services Act* (Recommendation 4)

- Monitor the University's request for designation (completed)
- Provide advice for the brief the University will present to the Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs in order for the necessary amendments to be made to the Act (to do)

Internal control mechanisms

- Develop a mechanism to evaluate services offered in French by services and academic units (to do)
- Suggest ways to make managers accountable for the quality and availability of services in French (to do)
- Review the current mechanism for handling complaints related to the language of service and make any necessary adjustments (ongoing)

Politique d'aménagement linguistique

- Ensure the University complies with Ontario's new *Politique d'aménagement linguistique* (PAL) de l'Ontario pour l'éducation postsecondaire et la formation en langue française (ongoing)
- Gather the necessary data to facilitate decision-making and the implementation of PAL (ongoing)

Terms of reference of the Standing Committee

- Update the terms of reference of the Standing Committee (completed)
- Review ways to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the Standing Committee (ongoing)
- Do the groundwork for preparing the 2013-2018 Development Plan for Programs and Services in French (to do)

4.2 Recruitment of Francophones and Linguistic Balance

The Standing Committee continued to closely monitor the recruitment efforts of Strategic Enrollment Management. The Associate Registrar, Recruitment, reported to the Standing Committee on Francophone and immersion student registrations for the fall 2011 session. He also presented a summary of recruitment outreach activities within Francophone communities and new initiatives designed to welcome Francophone students on campus, help them make the transition to university, and integrate into their new setting, including a regional mentoring program. Through these efforts, the number and percentage of Francophone students has continued to increase in recent years to 12,730 in the fall of 2011 (31.3% of the total student population on campus). Moreover, 1,261 French immersion students were registered in 74 programs.

Increasing the number of programs and courses in French is another key element of improving the linguistic balance. In 2011-2012, some 80 new courses and four new programs in French were created. The University of Ottawa also provided financial support for 157 small group-courses in host faculties so the courses were offered despite low enrolment.

4.3 Regulation on Bilingualism

The update of the *Regulation on Bilingualism* was completed in the fall of 2011. In light of efforts underway to obtain designation under the *French Language Services Act* and because the designation may require some additions or changes to the University's *Regulation on Bilingualism*, members of the Administrative Committee recommended waiting before submitting the Regulation to the University Senate and Board of Governors. Indeed, in the spring of 2012, the definition of *designated programs* was added to the Regulation. The Regulation should be ready to present to the Senate and Board of Governors in the fall of 2012.

4.4 Designation

A working group comprising members of the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages was established in the fall of 2011 to identify the main issues and questions surrounding a possible request for designation under the *French Language Services Act*. University representatives met with Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner to discuss these issues and questions. The dean of the Faculty of Law, Civil Law Section, and the president of the University of Ottawa met with members of the Standing Committee during meetings in March and April 2012, to update them on progress and to consult them on, among other things, developing a communication plan related to the designation process. Following approval by the Board of Governors, a formal request for designation was sent to the Minister in June 2012.

4.5 Bilingualism of Professors

The Standing Committee obtained data on the linguistic proficiency of professors tenured in 2011. The data showed that 90% of the professors had the required level of bilingualism (63% were bilingual at the time of hire and 27% had achieved bilingualism at the time of tenure). In 10% of the cases, documentation made no specific mention of achieving active or passive language skill levels. Members of the Standing Committee requested that this information be included in all tenure files. Currently, deans are responsible for overseeing the application of article 14 of the *Regulation on Bilingualism*, relating to the bilingualism of faculty members. However, after reviewing the Regulation, the Standing Committee, proposed that standardized tests be used to ensure linguistic requirements are met.

4.6 Politique d'aménagement linguistique

In the summer of 2011, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities released its *Politique d'aménagement linguistique de l'Ontario pour l'éducation postsecondaire et la formation en langue française* (PAL). Professor Sylvie Lamoureux, who is very familiar with this policy as a result of having been directly involved in it, presented information on the policy at the September 2011 meeting of the Standing Committee so members could become familiar with it and evaluate its impact on the University of Ottawa. The Standing Committee members immediately added the policy to their work plan for the year. In May 2012, Johanne Bourdages, the Associate Vice-President, Academic, provided an update on developments. A plan to implement PAL at the University of Ottawa must be developed based on the six key strategic areas set out in the provincial policy. The plan must be submitted to the Ministry in the fall of 2013. A working group will be established in the fall of 2012 to develop the plan and will include a member of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will be informed of progress made.

4.7 Life in French and Francophone Space

The French Programming Officer at the Community Life Service continued her excellent work over the past year. A number of social and cultural events were held to enhance the experience of living in French on campus and to create and maintain links with organizations in the Francophone community.

Further related to the concept of Francophone space and Francophone visibility on campus, plans to launch a fundraising campaign to build an installation on campus honouring the Francophone community (Monument de la francophonie) were unveiled in the spring of 2012. The installation should be completed by the fall of 2013.

4.8 University–Community Roundtable Forum

The University–Community Roundtable Forum held two meetings in 2011-2012, one on November 22, 2011, and the other on June 1, 2012. The minutes of the two meetings are provided in Appendix 1.

4.9 French-Language Teaching Materials

This year, 14 projects were funded to develop French-language teaching materials. Some \$112,000 was allocated for these projects, which will make it possible to develop French laboratory manuals, compendiums of articles, case studies and videos for various undergraduate courses.

4.10 Coordination of Interinstitutional Initiatives

In 2011-2012, the University continued to take part in the *Destination réussite* initiative introduced by the Government of Ontario to promote and facilitate access to postsecondary studies in French. In close cooperation with faculties, we offered a number of activities for potential students, including mini-courses, seminars and workshops, campus visits as well as various other initiatives aimed at encouraging students to explore the options for postsecondary education in French.

A course was offered under the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program in secondary schools. The course was a university credit course in theatre, offered on campus to secondary students. It will be recognized in the students' program of study when they enroll at the University. The University of Ottawa has also signed a new articulation agreement with *La Cité collégiale* which stipulates that graduates of *La*

Cité's Techniques des services en loisirs program will be granted equivalencies of eight university courses (24 credits) towards a minor in leisure studies at the University of Ottawa.

4.11 Complaints and Comments Related to the Language of Service

Mechanism

The mechanism for handling complaints and comments on the language of service was established in October 2008. The complaints process is confidential and relatively simple. Comments can be sent by email, regular mail or by telephone. Here are the main steps for handling complaints and comments:

- 1) Complaint or comment is received.
- 2) Acknowledgement of receipt is sent within two working days.
- 3) The person responsible at the service in question is contacted and advised of the problem and asked to correct it.
- 4) Follow-up is done with the person responsible at the service until the problem has been corrected or resolved.
- 5) If applicable, follow-up is done with the person who submitted the complaint or comment, providing information about any steps taken.

The process also provides for the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages to intervene directly in more complex cases not resolved through the above process. Such interventions, however, are very rare. The process also provides for the Standing Committee to become involved in more complex cases. To date, this has not been necessary.

Status reports are regularly submitted to the members of the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages.

In the past year, members of the Standing Committee agreed that the complaint process should be reviewed and any necessary changes made to improve it. Given that the number of complaints has increased considerably since the process was established, we must ensure that it is adequate and meets the University's and the community's needs. The complaints process will be reviewed in the coming months.

Complaints and comments received in 2011-2012

Between May 1, 2011, and April 30, 2012, a total of 185 complaints and comments were received on the language of service at the University of Ottawa. Email continues to be the tool most used to formulate these complaints.

Signs and posters were the subject of most of the complaints (51). Complaints involved a number of locations on campus. As a result, we contacted either Physical Resource Service, or the academic unit or service concerned in order to have the problem corrected.

Some 20 complaints were received about **Food Services**. Unilingual English signs and a lack of services in French by subcontractors were the two issues most often raised. A number of improvements have been made in this sector, but challenges nevertheless remain, especially in terms of the availability of bilingual staff to cover all shifts.

We received 18 complaints about the poor quality or unilingual nature of **internal communications** (between employees or from a service to a group of employees). Although most of these complaints were resolved, it is difficult to eliminate this type of problem altogether since the solution relies on the individual responsibility of several thousand employees here on campus.

Sports Services received 17 complaints involving unilingual signs and advertisements in sports facilities, the lack of French at Gee-Gees games and the lack of services and classes in French. The necessary changes are being instituted.

Eleven complaints were related to **Protection Services**. Unilingual signs on security devices was the main problem reported. Efforts are underway to correct the problem.

Complaints were also received about unilingual English IT tools (9), as well as services offered by **Financial Services** (8), by the French-language **Common Law program** (8) and by **Strategic Enrollment Management** (5). We have worked closely with these groups to correct the problems.

Other sectors received four or fewer complaints each, and follow-up was ensured in each case. We also received a few comments that were not considered complaints per se, some suggestions and requests for information, as well as one message of congratulations.

5. Conclusion

We have addressed many issues over the past year and have provided advice and expertise allowing progress to be made. Certain ones required greater involvement than we had anticipated, and, therefore, we advanced a number of activities on our 2011-2012 work plan to next year. We are very pleased with the progress we have made on some major issues over the past year.

Several projects will require follow-up over the next year, namely the designation and the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique*. We would like to review the mechanism for complaints related to the language of service and make improvements so the process is more proactive. We will also set the stage for the next five-year plan to ensure programs and service levels in French continue to improve. These are just a few examples of the work ahead of us in the coming months.

Appendix 1. Minutes of the Meetings of the University–Community Roundtable Forum

University–Community Roundtable Forum Minutes of the November 22, 2011 Meeting

Present:

Community

Luc Bigras, *Association des enseignantes et enseignants franco-ontariens* (AEFO)

Emile Maheu, CECCE – community liaison

Myriam Hebabi, *Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne*

Camélia Djama, *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*

Jean-Louis Schryburt, *Fédération des aînés francophones de l'Ontario*

Danielle Manton, AJEFO

Brigitte Cyr, *Centre canadien de leadership en évaluation*

Jocelyne Constant, *Communauté ethno-culturelle francophone*

Mona Fortier, La Cité collégiale

Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages

Marie Biron

Johanne Bourdages

Guy Drouin

Hilaire Lemoine

François Houle, Chair

Véronic Tardif, Secretary

Guests

Marie-Soleil Pinsonnault, Community Life

Michel Prévost, University Archives

Linda Cardinal, Faculty of Social Sciences

1. Opening remarks

François Houle welcomed participants and asked them to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with one change: Item 7 will be dealt with immediately after item 4.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the May 13, 2011 meeting

The minutes of the May 13, 2011 meeting were approved as presented.

4. Business arising from the May 13, 2011 meeting

François Houle presented the University's position on designation under Bill 8 and the reasons why it has not yet requested designation. He also presented the situation involving the Faculty of Law, which expressed its interest in designation and mentioned that this issue is still being reviewed. François Houle replied to questions and took suggestions from participants.

One participant suggested pursuing transfer agreements with other French-language institutions and that the University should better advertise the programs offered in French. It was also suggested that the forum offered by *Le Droit* be used to explain the reasons why the University is not requesting designation. One participant also pointed out the need to update the *French Language Services Act*, which is now 25 years old and to discuss it in light of the recommendation to work with Minister Meilleur.

5. Research Chair in Canadian Francophonie — Public policies for empowering language minorities

Linda Cardinal provided an overview of the work of the Research Chair in Canadian Francophonie and Public Policies she holds and answered a number of questions from participants. Her research focuses on empowering minorities and developing the concept of a linguistic regime. A major effort was extended to create a strategic plan with an emphasis on actively offering services in French.

She also presented the new *Études des Francophonies* program (minor or certificate), which is now offered by the Faculty of Arts.

François Houle thanked Linda Cardinal for her presentation.

6. Projects related to enhancing the student experience

Due to a lack of time, this item was moved forward to the next meeting.

7. Historic capsule – Historic overview of the *Société des débats français*, the oldest Francophone association at the University of Ottawa

Michel Prévost, the University of Ottawa's chief archivist, provided an historic overview of the *Société des débats en français*. Founded in 1887, the society will celebrate its 125th anniversary next year. The society earns many awards and brings international recognition to the University.

One participant suggested that Michel publish a historical column on a regular basis in some of the newspapers and that he create a series on the history of the University of Ottawa's role in supporting the Francophone community and fostering bilingualism.

François Houle thanked Michel Prévost.

8. French programming and a Francophone space

Marie-Soleil Pinsonnault, French Programming Officer at the Community Life Service, presented a summary of events held in recent months and upcoming activities, including *Coups francs*, the Good Ideas Café and Francophonie month activities in March.

The *Carrefour francophone* receives many requests for French learning resources. The Carrefour's space can be rented for student activities and for hosting exhibitions such as the one on *La Rotonde*, which is celebrating its 85th anniversary. The Carrefour continues to gain notoriety in the community as a meeting place for Francophone groups.

François Houle thanked Marie-Soleil Pinsonnault for her presentation.

9. Installation honouring the Francophone community

The University will build an installation honouring the Francophone community on the land between Perez Hall and Simard Hall.

The University is in the process of launching a competition among the student body to create a concept and the visual design for the installation. The competition is planned for the winter with the installation details being unveiled in fall 2012.

It was suggested that a means be found to include alumni in the project.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held in May 2012.

University–Community Roundtable Forum Minutes of the June 1, 2012, Meeting

Present:

Bertin Beaulieu, ACFO Ottawa
Johanne Bourdages, University of Ottawa
Claudette Boyer, ACFO Ottawa
Lucien Bradet, CJFO
Charlotte Calen, AJEFO
Jocelyne Constant, *Communauté ethnoculturelle francophone*
Denis Cossette, University of Ottawa (Co-Chair)
Christine Dallaire, University of Ottawa
Christian Detellier, University of Ottawa
Guy Drouin, University of Ottawa
Julie Gareau, University of Ottawa
Luce Lapierre, La Cité collégiale
Julie Marais, *Alliance culturelle de l'Ontario*
Marie-Soleil Pinsonnault, University of Ottawa
Rachel Ouellette, University of Ottawa
André Potvin, CECCE
Michel Prévost, University of Ottawa
Simone Saint-Pierre, FCCF
Denis Vaillancourt, AFO

1. Opening remarks

Christian Detellier welcomed participants and asked them to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as adopted as presented.

3. Adoption of the minutes of the November 22, 2011, meeting

The minutes of the November 22, 2011, meeting were adopted as presented.

4. Business arising from the November 22, 2011, meeting

Items requiring follow-up were included on today's agenda.

5. Designation under the *French Language Services Act*

Denis Cossette reported that this effort is moving forward well. He provided a summary of the various steps taken in recent months towards designation of French-language programs and services at the University of Ottawa. Most recently, the president and the dean of the Faculty of Law, Civil Law Section, met with Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Minister Meilleur and legal counsel from the Office of Francophone Affairs to discuss the University's partial designation under the *French Language Services Act*. Clarification on reviewing the list of programs every four years is the only issue remaining. The University is waiting for a response from the Office of Francophone Affairs on this matter and hopes the issue can be brought before the Senate and Board of Governors in June.

Questions from community representatives were answered. They raised a number of points:

- The issue of the partial and full designation of the University of Ottawa creates some confusion around what will and will not be designated.
- We need to improve our communication strategy so it is clearer because, at present, the University's position has not been clearly communicated.
- We also need to clarify our intentions for the future, i.e., do we want to develop more French-language programs and services or merely protect what is currently offered in French?
- The issue of the additional costs of designation was raised. Communications and managing complaints are seen as the two main areas involving additional costs.
- Information on the progress of designation needs to be provided regularly, perhaps a role that can be taken on by the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages.

The community representatives were thanked for their comments and suggestions.

6. Projects related to enhancing the student experience

Johanne Bourdages reported on the status of efforts to improve the student experience and activities launched over the past year, particularly those affecting Francophone students.

Some community representatives indicated there was a need to increase student participation in community organizations, for example in roles such as board members for different organizations. They acknowledged the Centre for Global and Community Engagement, which provides volunteer opportunities for students, and the CO-OP program, which provides work placements for students, but there is a desire for the University to be even more proactive and to encourage its students to become more involved in Francophone community organizations.

7. Historic capsule – 80th anniversary of *La Rotonde* newspaper

Michel Prévost, the University of Ottawa's chief archivist, provided highlights of the history of *La Rotonde* and distributed the April edition of the newspaper, which covered the paper's history over the past 80 years.

Michel Prévost also distributed the program for Open Doors Ottawa, which takes place on June 2 and 3, 2012.

8. French programming and a Francophone space

Marie-Soleil Pinsonnault summarized the activities offered by the Francophone component of the Community Life Service and announced a few activities coming in the fall. Michel Prévost mentioned that Marie-Soleil was leaving to resume her studies in the fall. Participants thanked Marie-Soleil sincerely for her excellent work.

Installation honouring the Francophone community

Véronic Tardif provided an update on the file, which has progressed significantly over the past few months. She described the site and the installation, with development to begin this summer. Plans are for an unveiling in mid-September 2012. Forum participants will be invited to the event.

9. Other

No other items were discussed.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held in November 2012, with the date to be confirmed.