



uOttawa

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

2013-2014 Annual Report

Presented to the Senate and the Board of Governors
of the University of Ottawa

October 2014

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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 and meetings of the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages for 2013-2014. This past year has involved much discussion and reflection following the completion of a number of large-scale projects, including an update on the current state of programs and services in French. We have also continued to closely monitor efforts for designation under the *French Language Services Act* and follow activities aimed at enhancing the linguistic balance among our student population.

In addition, we have begun discussions on a proposed communications strategy that will incorporate the Ontario government's French-Language Policy Framework for postsecondary education and training, designation under the *French Language Services Act* and the subsequent updated regulation on bilingualism. This report also highlights the commitment and efforts of various members of the University community who have helped the University fulfill its objectives and mission related to the francophonie and bilingualism.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all members of the Standing Committee, who shared their expertise and have made it possible to promote francophone affairs and bilingualism at the University of Ottawa. We congratulate them for their exemplary dedication and for the advice they shared with us.

Christian Detellier
Vice-President Academic and Provost

Marc Joyal
Vice-President, Resources

2. Members

The Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages comprises 20 members. Below are the members for 2013-2014:

NAME	AFFILIATION
Joël Beddows	Research Chair in Canadian Francophonie
Marie Biron*	Alumna
Johanne Bourdages	Associate Vice-President, Academic
Ariane Brun del Re	Graduate student
Linda Cardinal	Board of Governors
Christine Charette*	Alumna
Stéphanie Chouinard*	Graduate student
Richard Clément*	Faculty member, humanities section
Christine Dallaire*	Faculty member, humanities section
Julien Dancose	Graduate student
Christian Detellier	Co-chair, Vice-President Academic and Provost
Guy Drouin*	Faculty member, science section
Rosy Fournier*	Undergraduate student
Marc Joyal	Co-chair, Vice-President, Resources
Sophie LeTouzé*	Administrative staff member
Alain Malette*	Administrative staff member
Marcel Mérette*	Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
Rachel Ouellette	Chef de cabinet, Vice-recteur aux études
Tim Stanley	Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Mustapha Yagoub*	Faculty member, science section

*These individuals completed their term in June 2014.

3. Terms of reference

Establishment

The Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages was established on February 4, 2008 by resolution of the Senate 2007-2008.50. The terms of reference were amended by the Senate on April 12, 2010 (2009-2010.42).

Status

The Committee is an advisory standing 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 will also support the University community's development in both official languages.

Functions

1. To ensure that the recommendations proposed in the Senate-approved development plan for programs and services in French are implemented, the results are evaluated annually, and the next five-year plan for Francophone affairs is prepared.
2. To establish, implement and coordinate a mechanism for receiving and processing complaints related to the use of official languages in the various programs and services.
3. To ensure that the Regulation on Bilingualism at the University of Ottawa is promoted, is subject to follow-up, and fully and consistently applied, and to annually evaluate how the Regulation is applied in the various programs and services.
4. To design and implement an ongoing action plan for improving linguistic balance within the student population.
5. To work closely with faculties to design and implement an action plan for ensuring that mandatory courses are offered in French and that the range of elective courses offered in French is expanded.
6. To examine and support the implementation of faculties' plans designed to increase the opportunities of practical, clinical and Co-op placements in Francophone or bilingual settings.
7. To evaluate faculties' annual action plans for developing French teaching materials and recommend the allocation of appropriate resources.
8. To establish a University-community roundtable forum and regularly consult its members.
9. To monitor how faculties and services control the quality and the level of bilingualism of written communication.

Membership

1. The Vice-President, Academic and Provost, co-chair
2. The Vice-President, Resources, co-chair
3. The Associate Vice-President Academic
4. The Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
5. One Board of Governors member , appointed by the Executive Committee of the Board
6. Four faculty members, including two from sciences and two from humanities
7. One dean or department chair, appointed by the Senate
8. Four full-time students, including at least one graduate and one undergraduate, appointed by the Senate
9. Two support staff members, appointed by the Senate
10. Two alumni or retired staff members who are active in the community, appointed by the Senate
11. One holder of the chairs in francophonie, appointed by the Executive Committee of the Senate
12. The Chief of Staff for the Vice-President Academic and Provost

To ensure continuity, mandates will be renewed for a period of one or two years. Mandates are renewable.

Officers

1. Co-chairs: the Vice-President Academic and Provost and the Vice-President Resources
2. Secretary: the Executive Assistant to the Vice-President Academic and Provost

Meetings

The Committee will meet at least four (4) times a year, when convened by the co-chairs.

Meeting Attendance

A member who misses three consecutive meetings will lose the status of member of the Standing Committee and his or her position will be filled on an interim basis by the Committee until the end of the mandate.

Relations

The Committee reports regularly to the Senate.

Quorum

The majority of members constitutes a quorum.

Secretarial services

Secretarial services are provided by the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost.

4. Review of activities

The following pages provide a summary of the activities undertaken between September 2013 and May 2014. The Standing Committee held five meetings during this time, on October 3 and November 29, 2013, as well as January 30, March 27 and May 30, 2014.

4.1 2013-2014 plan

The following action plan for 2013-2014 was developed:

Regulation on Bilingualism (recommendation 1) and system of internal controls

- Develop a plan to communicate the updated Regulation and implement it (postponed)
- Define the parameters for evaluating progress in implementing the Regulation (postponed)
- Develop a mechanism to evaluate services offered in French by services and academic units (ongoing)
- Establish ways to hold managers accountable for the quality and availability of services in French (completed)

Programs and services offered

- Update the State of Affairs for Programs and Services in French. (completed)

Mandate of the Standing Committee

- Review ways to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the Standing Committee (completed)
- Do the groundwork for the next fiscal year for developing the 2013-2018 plan for programs and services in French (completed)

Policy on language planning

- Develop a strategy to promote the policy among faculty members (completed)

4.2 Designation

We continued our efforts related to designation under the *French Language Services Act* throughout 2013-2014. An update on designation efforts was presented to the Committee at its October 2013 meeting. The new designation proposal was approved by the Senate and the Board of Governors at their respective meetings in June 2014 and was subsequently submitted to the Ministry in August 2014.

4.3 Regulation on Bilingualism

The Regulation on Bilingualism was updated in the fall of 2011. In light of efforts under way for designation under the *French Language Services Act* and because such designation may result in changes to the Regulation on Bilingualism, the Administrative Committee recommended postponing submission of the regulation to the University Senate and Board of Governors. However, the Standing Committee began discussions and reflection on a communications strategy for changes to the regulation.

4.4 State of Affairs on Programs and Services in French

A preliminary version of the State of Affairs for Programs and Services in French was presented to the Standing Committee at its May 2014 meeting. Members were invited to share their comments and suggestions over the summer months. An updated version will be presented in the fall of 2014. This report will serve as a starting point to develop recommendations for the coming years.

4.5 Recruitment of francophones and linguistic balance

The Standing Committee continued to closely monitor efforts by Strategic Enrollment Management to recruit francophone and francophile students. At the November 2013 committee meeting, the associate registrar, Recruitment, presented the fall 2013 registration numbers for francophone and immersion students. He also gave an overview of recruitment outreach activities aimed at francophone communities and new initiatives, particularly the regional mentoring program, designed to welcome francophone students on campus, and to help them adapt to university life and integrate into their new setting. At the January 2014 meeting, the associate registrar for graduate studies provided information on current admission numbers, trends in registration, recruitment efforts and improvements made to linguistic balance at the graduate level

As a result of these efforts, the number and proportion of francophone students has continued to increase, reaching a total of 13,022 by the fall of 2013, which represents 30.6% of the total student population.

At the January 2014 meeting, the director of French immersion provided details on the French immersion program, highlighting program objectives, recruitment efforts, scholarships and bursaries available as well as various challenges. French immersion is available in 76 different programs. The Faculty of Science recently decided to offer 16 programs leading to a bilingual studies designation, with approximately 200 students registered in 2013-2014. Since accepting its first immersion students in September 2006, the University has attracted thousands of young

francophiles. The increase in admission applications and registration numbers speaks of its popularity. There were 1,612 students registered in immersion in 2013-2014.

An increase in the number of French-language programs and courses also helps improve linguistic balance. In 2013-2014, some 136 new courses offered in French were created. The University of Ottawa also provided financial assistance for 131 courses with low enrollment at host faculties so the courses could be offered nonetheless.

The Committee kept a close eye on the implementation of the new policy on tuition-fee reductions for international students doing their studies in French. At the May 2014 meeting, the vice-president academic and provost provided an update on this initiative. He highlighted that the number of international francophone student registrations had increased significantly at the undergraduate level; however, it was too soon to draw conclusions at the graduate level.

4.6 Access to postsecondary education for francophones

In the winter of 2014, the University of Ottawa submitted three proposals for increasing courses and programs offered in French in Central and Southwestern Ontario to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Two of these projects received funding. The first is a joint project between the University of Ottawa, Laurentian University and Glendon College aimed at improving the number of undergraduate programs offered in French, in a way that allows us to overcome the challenges of small enrollment numbers in upper-level classes. The three institutions want to explore the possibility of sharing their expertise and resources for this initiative. The second project is aimed at increasing the university-level programs offered in French in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in two disciplines, business and commerce as well as health. The University of Ottawa and York University's Glendon College are looking to jointly offer three programs, one in law, one in nursing and one in biology. These programs would be offered at Glendon College's campus.

4.7 French-Language Policy Framework (PAL)

The associate vice-president, Academic, presented the goals of the priority areas of Ontario's French-Language Policy Framework for postsecondary education and training. She also provided examples of initiatives and projects at the University in each of the priority areas. Members of the Standing Committee discussed the importance of developing a communications strategy for PAL aimed at the faculty members. It was suggested that the message focus on the University's goals related to the francophonie and how PAL aligns with them. Work in this area will continue over the coming year.

4.8 University-community round table

A University-community round table was held in November 2013. The minutes of this meeting are included in appendix 1. After holding round tables for the past three years, we decided it was time to assess the effectiveness of these meetings and asked members to complete a short survey. This survey allowed us to determine the best format for these round tables and which topics would be addressed at upcoming round tables. The next University-community round table is planned for November 2014.

4.9 Summer university on the francophonies of the Americas

The *Centre de la francophonie des Amériques* holds a summer university on the francophonies of the Americas every two years. This one-week intensive training uses a multidisciplinary approach and engages experts from various research and professional settings. This university-level training is open to graduate students, the public, professionals from the private and public sectors, journalists, members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In the fall of 2013, the University of Ottawa applied to host the fourth summer university on the francophonies of the Americas, which will take place in June 2015. It sought support as host from a number of francophone organizations in the community, which were very enthusiastic about the initiative. Thanks to the support the University received, the *Centre de la francophonie des Amériques* recognized the excellence of the University of Ottawa's candidacy. Preparations for the summer university got under way in the spring of 2014, and the scientific committee, which includes a member of the Standing Committee, will hold its first meeting in the fall.

4.10 Corporate and branding websites

Staff at the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost is working with the director of the Communications Directorate to improve the French and francophone content on the corporate website. A preliminary proposal was presented to the Committee in March in order to solicit comments from members and to determine whether there is a need to create a webpage or portal specific to the francophonie. Members formulated some key messages to be communicated on such a site. Work on this project continues.

In the spring of 2014, the Communications Directorate gave a presentation to the Committee on the University's new branding campaign. Members expressed their concern about the lack of emphasis on French and bilingualism in this new campaign. It was suggested that the Communications Directorate adds components of "the francophonie" and "bilingualism" in the campaign as these are the elements that set the University of Ottawa apart from other institutions.

4.11 Transition of francophones from high school to university

The University of Ottawa held their second symposium on postsecondary literacy, whose theme this year was transitions, challenges and new perspectives. The goal of the symposium was to propose benchmarks and conceptual tools to help students, teachers and professors rethink their relationship to language on the one hand and on the other hand, to encourage participants to share and reflect on new avenues of research. The symposium, held in May, drew 69 participants, including managers and individuals from French-language school boards responsible for student success, representatives of PAL partner colleges and universities as well as members of the *Regroupement étudiant franco-ontarien* (RÉFO) and the *Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne* (FESFO).

4.12 French living environment and a 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, such as the television show *Ripostes*

and the event *Campus films*, were held to make living in French a more vibrant experience on campus and to create and maintain links with organizations in the francophone community.

The inauguration of the installation on the main campus to honour francophone communities (*Monument de la francophonie*) was held on September 25, 2013, Franco-Ontarian Day. Numerous dignitaries were present for the unveiling, including the Honourable Mauril Bélanger, MP for Ottawa-Vanier; Mathieu Fleury, city councillor of the Rideau-Vanier Ward; the University's chancellor, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean; and the president, Allan Rock. Brian St-Pierre, together with the *Conseil scolaire de district catholique de l'Est ontarien* school board choir, sang "Mon beau drapeau," just prior to the Franco-Ontarian flag was raised on the Lees Campus. The inauguration was followed by a reception. Many members of the francophone community attended, excited to be taking part in this important event.

The University of Ottawa was the site of a videoconference recorded for broadcast on social media and the TFO 24.7 website in March as part of *Rendez-vous de la francophonie*. Hosted by TFO's Alex Normand, this videoconference brought together nine Canadian universities from right across the country. Performances by each university highlighted the diversity and beauty of the French language and culture in Canada. The group AkoufèN, made up of four uOttawa students, performed an acoustic version of one of their songs. The event wrapped up with closing words from Allan Rock.

4.13 French-language teaching materials

This year, 11 projects were funded to develop French-language teaching materials. Some \$82,800 was allocated for these projects in the faculties of Social Sciences, Science, Health Sciences and Engineering that will make it possible to create French lab manuals, course packs, case studies and videos for various undergraduate courses.

4.14 Coordination of initiatives between institutions

In 2013-2014, the University continued to take part in the *Destination réussite* initiative introduced by the Government of Ontario to both promote and facilitate access to postsecondary studies in French. The University of Ottawa has also been part of this project in Central-Southwestern Ontario since the beginning of 2012. The special projects officer at the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Academic, worked together with the faculties and the French-language school boards to hold a number of "transition" activities such as workshops, campus tours and university courses to encourage future students to explore options for postsecondary education in French. In 2013-2014, 161 French students took part in eight transition activities.

With respect to agreements with other institutions, the University of Ottawa and La Cité continue to explore possibilities for collaborative programs and the development of joint programs. Over the past year, the Faculty of Social Sciences continued reviewing equivalences between courses in the police foundations program at La Cité and the honours BA in criminology at uOttawa. The Faculty of Health Sciences continued its review of equivalencies between courses in the respiratory therapy program at La Cité and the honours BA in health sciences. In 2013, the University also began discussions with Collège Boréal on agreement possibilities between their respective programs in social sciences. The specific fields will be determined during the coming year.

4.15 Tools for actively offering services in French

In the fall of 2013, a member of the *Consortium national de formation en santé* (CNFS) gave a presentation to the Standing Committee on the tools CNFS has created to help increase the number of services being offered in French. This is a new multimedia site that professors can use to help raise awareness among their students of the importance of the French language in the healthcare sector. The site can also help students learn how to actively offer services in French in their future career. The Committee believes this type of approach can be used at the postsecondary level and could be helpful for promoting the University's Regulation on Bilingualism as well as designation.

4.16 Complaints and comments related to language of service

Current mechanism

The mechanism for handling complaints and comments on the language of service was established in October 2008. The process ensures confidentiality is maintained. Comments can be submitted by email, regular mail or telephone. Here are the main steps for the current complaints process:

- 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, advised of the problem and asked to correct it.
- 4) Follow-up with the person responsible at the service continues until the problem has been resolved.
- 5) If necessary, follow-up is done with the person who submitted the complaint or comment to provide information about corrective actions 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 that remain unresolved following 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.

Members of the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages receive regular status reports.

Complaints and comments received in 2013-2014

Between May 1, 2012, and April 30, 2014, a total of 78 complaints and comments were received related to the language of service at the University of Ottawa. Below are the numbers of complaints and comments by category.

Communications	26
Unilingual postings (in English)	18
Web communications	12
Quality of French communications	9

Service provided in English only	6
Other	7

Below is a brief description of the types of comments and complaints in each of the categories :

Communications

Most of the cases involved internal unilingual messages sent between employees or from a faculty or service to employees or professors. In some cases, the University's policy of presenting French first was not followed. In addition, some complaints were submitted about unilingual voicemail messages at service, secretariat or other faculty office.

Unilingual postings (in English)

In this group, almost all complaints related to signs and posters of external organizations or businesses that had rented space on campus. The rest of the complaints were about unilingual English ads on various bulletin boards on campus.

Web communications

Complaints about Web communications were mainly for French websites. Some links took visitors to the English pages or did not work. In addition, the drop-down menus on the University's new site were not in alphabetical order, which resulted in a few complaints. Some complaints indicated that in some cases, English homepages appeared as the default and the University's social media pages did not have an equivalent amount of content in both languages. Finally, some webpages were available in English only.

Quality of French communications

Complaints in this category were typically about grammatical errors, spelling mistakes and anglicisms. These complaints were not specific to a particular sector or faculty, and were most often related to communications between employees.

Service provided in English only

The few complaints received in this category were for external organizations that had rented space on campus. The complaints stated that service in French was not always available.

5. Conclusion

A number of the Standing Committee's long-term projects were completed during the year. This is true, in particular, for the request for designation, which was submitted to the Ontario government in August 2014. In addition, the update to the State of Affairs for Programs and Services in French will be completed in the fall of 2014. It will then be time to turn our energy to identifying the needs and areas for improvement we will need to focus on over the next five to 10 years. The eventual designation will also help in formulating recommendations and may necessitate changes to our regulations and procedures. The Standing Committee will prepare an action plan to ensure the University's programs and services in French continue to evolve and improve and that we meet the requirements of designation.

Appendix 1. Minutes of the University-community round table

University-community round table Minutes of November 22, 2013

Present: Johanne Beauchesne, Johannes Bourdages, Charlotte Cahen, Stéphanie Chouinard, Christine Dallaire, Isabelle Décarie, Christian Detellier (co-chair), Guy Drouin, Anne Gilbert, Marc Joyal (co-chair), Marie-Claude Lanouette, Hilaire Lemoine, Sophie Letouzé, Émil Maheu, Michel Prévost, Nicole Sauvé.

1. Opening remarks

The chair welcomes everyone and asks them to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of agenda

The agenda is approved as read.

3. Approval of minutes of May 17, 2013, meeting

Minutes are approved as read.

4. Business arising from the May 17, 2013, meeting

4.1 Francophonie installation

Christian Detellier informs Committee members that the francophonie monument (*monument de la francophonie*) was inaugurated on September 25, 2013.

4.2 Designation under the *French Language Services Act*

Christian Detellier informs members that the designation project was approved by the Administrative Committee and will be presented shortly to the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee of the Senate and the Senate. The designation proposal will likely be submitted to the Ontario government in the spring.

Christian Detellier also tells members about the provincial Liberal government's announcement to invest \$14.5M over three years to create programs and courses for Central-Southwestern Ontario. A discussion follows on the role the University of Ottawa would play in developing programs and courses in this region. The Ministry has said it wants to take advantage of existing resources to broaden program offerings.

5. Time capsule

Michel Prévost, chief archivist at the University of Ottawa, recounts the significant contributions made over the years by Paul Desmarais, who passed away recently.

6. Mandate - Senior Language Policy Officer

The new senior language policy officer informs the participants about the main focus of the policy officer's mandate.

7. French programming and community life

Isabelle Décarie, French programming officer with Community Life, provides an overview of the French social and cultural activities organized by Community Life. She asks participants to put forward any suggestions they may have for future activities. She is asked to send the Standing Committee an email with a list of future activities planned.

8. *Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française*

Anne Gilbert, director of the *Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française* gives an overview of the Centre's main projects.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place towards the end of May. Date to be confirmed.