

MINUTES / PROCÈS-VERBAL
Annual Meeting of the Academy of Social Sciences / *Réunion annuelle de l'Académie des sciences sociales*
November 16, 2021 / Le 16 novembre 2021
McGill University & on Zoom

Academy Council / Conseil de l'Académie	
Janine Brodie	President
Alain G. Gagnon	Past President
Colleen Sheppard	Secretary / Secrétaire
Jennifer Clapp	Division Director, Social Sciences / Directeur de la division
Lucie Lamarche	Division Director, Sciences sociales / Directrice de la division

The meeting was called to order at 19h30.

Attendees: Janine Brodie, Alain Gagnon, Colleen Sheppard, Barbara Neis, Linda Cardinal, John Berry, Wendy Craig, Catherine Beaudry, Juliet Johnson, Kenneth Coates, Wenona Giles, Judith Teichman, William Michelson, Celia Benoit, Michael Eskoin, Geraldo Otero, Christopher Dragon.

1.

Introduction

President Janine Brodie welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged that she was speaking from the traditional territories of the Indigenous Peoples of Treaty 7 and of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. She also welcomed and congratulated the new Fellows.

The President introduced the Executive of the Academy of Social Sciences. She also provided a brief overview of the Governance Structure and Composition of the Royal Society of Canada, including the three academies (Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) as well as the College.

2.

Approval of agenda: Motion to approve the agenda by Linda Cardinal; seconded by Alain Gagnon. Motion adopted.

3.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Academy of Social Sciences, by Alain Gagnon ; seconded by Barbara Neis. Motion adopted.

Overview of 2021 Fellow Selection Process

The President noted that the RSC welcomes 89 new RSC fellows this year, including 21 from the Social Sciences.

There were 75 nominations to our Academy in 2021 – 65 files were directed to Division 1, chaired by Dr. Jennifer Clapp (Waterloo) and 10 files were directed to Division 2 chaired by Dr. Lucie Lamarche (UQAM). This was an 18% decrease in nomination files from the previous year, perhaps linked to the impact of the pandemic on administrative work on nominations within universities.

In 2021, the RSC allocated 16 slots for Division 1 and 5 for Division 2 of the Academy of Social Sciences (Academy II). The President reported that:

- 28% of the nominations to Academy II were successful.
- 43% of the successful nominations were for women – a decline from 60% in 2020.
- The elected fellows this year come from a broad range of disciplines and both larger and smaller universities across Canada
- Data tracking other vectors of diversity are still not available – something that the RSC intends to begin to address next year.

Professors Jennifer Clapp & Lucie Lamarche – Directors of Division 1 & 2, respectively, had scheduling conflicts and were not able to attend the Annual Meeting. The President, therefore, shared a few comments from their reports.

In her report, Jennifer Clapp noted that although her committee worked smoothly, she strongly recommends that the RSC strengthen its language with regard to conflict of interest (COI) for nominators and letters of support. The current language indicates that COIs cannot be current and should be declared but several files reviewed in 2021 as in 2020 did not respect this requirement and consequently undermined the value of the recommendation.

The report from Lucie Lamarche raised a continued concern about the low number of nominations of francophone candidates from both large and small francophone universities, and inside and outside of Quebec. It may be necessary for the RSC to directly contact francophone universities and establish a dialogue to increase the candidate pool.

Both Divisions also emphasized that universities should be more attentive to diversity when making nominations to the RSC.

On behalf of the Academy, the President thanked Jennifer Clapp and Lucie Lamarche for their agile leadership and sheer hard work in guiding the fellow selection committees for Division 1 and Division 2 over the past few years.

She also expressed the Academy's appreciation to the outgoing members of both division's selection committees. The work of the Academy would not be possible without their valuable time, good judgement, and collegiality. It is a fine example of academics, having been elected to the RSC, paying this honour forward!



President's Report

A) New RSC Executive:

The RSC executive will see some turnover next year.

RSC President (2022-2025) Alain Gagnon (UQAM)
 RSC Secretary (2021-2024) Gary Libben (Brock)
 Pres. Academy of Arts and Humanities (2022-2025) Sheila Embleton (York)
 Pres. Academy of Social Sciences (2022-2025) Barbara Neis (MUN)
 Pres, Academy of Science (2022-2025) Michel Tremblay (McGill)
 Institutional Representative – Cecilia Benoit (UVic)

B) Other RSC News:

Overall, the Deloitte 2020 Audit indicates that the RSC is on solid financial footing in the wake of the worst of the pandemic.

The RSC has established a new prize in honour of Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella. The result of a confidential donation, a \$1000 prize will be given to a graduating law student in each of Canada's law schools beginning in the spring of 2022.

This year also saw the publication of *Royally Wronged: The Royal Society of Canada and Indigenous Peoples* (McGill-Queen's University Press). Edited by Constance Backhouse, Cynthia Milton, Margaret Kovach and Adele Perry, this new collection examines the contributions of the RSC and the Canadian academy to the production and reproduction of white settler privilege and the suppression of Indigenous knowledges, governance and cultures.

The RSC is currently exploring the creation of an Alumni Association for members of the College of New Scholars, the first wave having completed their 7-year term as members of the College.

Also of note, the RSC is in planning with the Royal Society of New Zealand to have a joint academy day on Indigenous Knowledge in 2022.

C) COVID-19 Task Force:

One silver-lining of pandemic was the RSC's increased virtual capacities for community outreach and engagement. Beginning April 2020, the RSC mobilized its expertise to address the COVID-19 pandemic – providing a wonderful example of how the RSC can contribute to public debate. The exceptional mobilization of expertise around the pandemic is beginning to wind down, as we all hope that this pandemic moves to highly preventable and treatable endemic. Of note, however, is the following:

- To date the task force has mobilized 700 experts, many from this Academy and social scientists in the College of New Scholars and have issued 170 publications since April 2020, ranging from mental health to economic recovery to impacts on Indigenous and racialized communities.
- Some of the substantial reports such as long-term care had over 20,000 downloads.
- Beginning in January 2021, the RSC and Globe and Mail organized a series of virtual town halls focused on vaccines. Over 10,000 Canadians participated.



- Through the pandemic task force, the RSC has established a partnership with the Globe & Mail.
- Between January and October of this year, approximately 145,000 people have visited the RSC website – double the rate in 2020.

Building on the success of public engagement, the RSC is beginning to shift focus to *climate change and the environment*; op-eds have begun to appear in the Globe and Mail. As well, the RSC participated in the G7 research summit on climate change earlier this month.

D) Committee on Membership:

The President provided a review of the important work of the Committee on Membership, noting that there has been increasing pressure for the RSC to respond to greater calls for diversity, greater representation of Indigenous scholars, and gender equity. There is concern that the RSC become a more inclusive organization than it has been in the past.

After 2 years of work, the Committee on Membership, led by Marie D'lorio (University of Ottawa), submitted its Report in August 2021.

Although this Committee reports every five years, this Report is one of the most extensive and potentially transformative that the RSC has received in decades. It has 11 substantive chapters which examine barriers to historically underrepresented groups, inter-disciplinarity, comparisons with other International Academies, Indigenous knowledge systems, francophone representation, the College of New Scholars, the Academies, and small institutions. The Report examines over a decade of data, including internal and Stats Canada data.

It has made dozens of recommendations that the RSC Council has only begun to discuss. Its three major recommendations are:

1. To increase the number of new fellows elected annually by 25%;
2. To achieve a better balance between the Academies in terms of the success rate of nominations;
3. To develop strategies to ensure that the RSC is more inclusive of underrepresented groups as well as Indigenous scholars, and knowledges.

With respect to Academy II, it notes that

- The number of slots allocated has grown from 15 or 19% of the RSC total in 2012 to 21 or 24% of the RSC total in 2021. Stats Canada data, however, suggest that social scientists constitute approximately 33% of full professors in Canada.
- The success rate of social science applications is about 27% slightly higher than Academy III (Science) and significantly lower than Academy I (Arts & Humanities)(49%).
- In 2011, the RSC Diversity Task Force recommended that measures be taken to increase women's representation to a minimum of 30% of the elected fellows. While gender representation has increased steadily in the past decade, it remains at only 20% in 2019 for the RSC as a whole. Academy II has consistently improved its gender equity targets in these years – from 31% in 2016 to 42% in 2019.

The RSC has not collected data on the other three federally designated groups – Indigenous people, racialized people or persons with disabilities. It will attempt to do so beginning in 2022.



To date, there have been three special meetings of the RSC Council to discuss the recommendations of the Committee on Membership.

A number of the recommendations in the Report have been approved by the RSC Council, but they must be approved at the RSC Annual Meeting. These include:

- The creation an *Indigenous Excellence Council* to increase the representation of Indigenous peoples in the RSC and to develop ways of including and evaluating Indigenous knowledge excellence;
- Reinvigoration of the *Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization* (EDID) to collect data and develop pathways for underrepresented groups into the RSC;
- Critically for this Academy, the Council endorsed the recommendation that the numbers of fellows elected be increased by 25%;
- The Council also endorsed the recommendation that a further eight slots be dedicated to advance EDID and interdisciplinary nominations. These slots are potentially available to all three Academies and will be adjudicated by the RSC President and Secretary, and the President and Secretaries of the three Academies;
- The requirement for two RSC co-nominators will be dropped from fellow nomination and award files.

As already noted, these changes have to be endorsed at the annual meeting.

E) New Strategic Plan:

The RSC is in the final year of the existing strategic plan, which had three key components – mobilizing the membership, catalyzing new contributions, sustaining momentum. New themes will be identified with a focus on strategic engagement, especially with respect to climate change. Consultations will begin in the spring and you are welcome to send your thoughts about new strategic directions. The new plan will be approved at the 2022 annual meeting.

6.

Introduction of New Members of the Academy of Social Sciences Executive

The Academy will see a significant change in leadership in 2022.

The new President-Elect for the Academy will be Barbara Neis, a distinguished professor at Memorial University, well known for her scholarship in health, work and the environment.

The new Academy Secretary will be Linda Cardinal. A professor at the University of Ottawa and Vice-rectrice (adjointe) aux partenariats, collectivités et relations internationales at the Université de l'Ontario Français.

There will also be two new division directors who will chair the Selection Committees: Kenneth Coates (University of Saskatchewan) for Division 1 and Sébastien Grammond (Federal Court of Canada) for Division 2.

The President offered her heartfelt thanks to Colleen Sheppard who will be leaving the post of Academy Secretary, noting that we are all richer for her many contributions to the Academy and her wise counsel over the past four years.

She also thanked Christopher Dragan of Walter House, who has provided invaluable assistance to our Academy over the past year. Thanks as well to the entire RSC Walter House team.



7.

Fellow Participation in the Academy

The President highlighted the importance of the participation of fellows in the work of the RSC. She noted that the RSC runs on voluntary participation and expertise. While it is often the case that after election as fellows, ties to the RSC weaken. Many committees regularly need to recruit new members and our Academy welcomes your interest and engagement.

There are also Standing Committees of the RSC as a whole, including, for example, Finance and Audit, International Affairs, and Public Engagement. The President noted as well that a Committee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID) will be reconstituted and undertaking important work on these issues. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please send the President an email (Jbrodie@ualberta.ca). Although it is impossible to guarantee participation in specific committees, expressions of interest are welcome. It would also be helpful to identify those with expertise in climate change and environmental issues. Fellow John Smol is coordinating op-eds on climate change.

8.

Other Business

The President reminded the meeting that next year the Celebration of Excellence will be held in Calgary. We hope to be able to celebrate and to meet in person! Until then, she extended her best wishes to all to stay safe and healthy.

Meeting adjourned at 20h35.

**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Colleen Sheppard, Secretary, Academy of Social Sciences, 29 November 2021.

