



Senate Meeting

Alice Egan Hagen Boardroom (Rosaria 312); MS Teams

March 22, 2024

2 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: J. Dickinson (Chair), K. Allan, K. Blotnicky, S. Brigham, R. Bursey, A. Card, P. Crouse, G. Durepos, M. Eskritt, D. Fisher, L. Francis, J. Fraser Arsenault, J. Gahagan, R. Gechtman, M. Gonick, M. J. Harkins, K. Jones, N. Kayhani, J. MacLeod, C. McLean, I. Nault, C. Schneider, M. Siddiquee, C. Slumkoski, L. Steele, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, J. Valcke, R. Zuk

Regrets: C. Cameron, M. Coolen, T. Franz-Odendaal, S. Goswami, S. Hale, G. MacInnis, D. Rodrigues, K. Schlieff, G. Sneddon, J. R. Sylliboy

Observers: E. Ballantyne, G. Fraser, K. Gallant, E. Johnson, J. Lamb

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m. Observers were identified and welcomed.

Procedures to be used during the meeting and while voting on motions were outlined.

1. Indigenous Land Recognition

J. Dickinson provided an acknowledgement that the Mount is built on traditional, unceded Mi'kmaq territory and paid respect to the Indigenous peoples of the land on which Senate meets.

2. Approval of Agenda

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- Removal of 7.2.1.1.12 and subsequent renumbering in this section
- Correction in 7.3.2.4.1 from INTE 2201 to INTE 2011
- Addition of 8.2 - FA President's Report on Board of Governors' Meeting

Moved by L. Steele, seconded by D. Fisher, to approve the agenda as amended. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. January 26, 2024

Moved by C. Schneider, seconded by S. Trenholm, to approve the minutes of January 26, 2024, as presented. CARRIED.

3.2. March 8, 2024

Moved by C. McLean, seconded by D. Fisher, to approve the minutes of March 8, 2024, as amended. CARRIED.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Cap on international student visa applications

J. Dickinson reported on the federal government's announcement to implement caps on international student visas, as well as new study permit requirements, the most significant being an attestation letter. J. Dickinson reported that Nova Scotia will receive an allotment of 12,900 attestation letters across all institutions, excluding students entering graduate degrees. J. Dickinson further reported on how these changes could impact the Mount, including our conversion rate [of accepted applicants to students], diversification of the student body and the reallocation of unused attestation letters.

L. Francis and K. Jones spoke about the Mount's conversion rates and how we can make them more predictable, sharing insight on what other institutions have been doing to attempt this, as well as the need to adapt our internal processes to incorporate the new requirements.

C. Schneider queried if the Mount would put more focus on graduate student recruitment, as these students are excluded from the cap. J. Dickinson responded that our international student recruitment will remain the same for this year, noting both short-term and long-term planning efforts to ensure the diversification of our student body.

The topic of online students was discussed, with Senators noting that online students only require a study permit if they intend to come to Canada to study. Discussion continued regarding options for students to begin programs online or complete programs entirely online, with their advantages and disadvantages being noted. (K. Allan, K. Jones, J. Dickinson)

G. Durepos inquired about the impact on articulation agreements [i.e. our Jinshan 2+2 program] and if those students would get priority for an attestation letter. J. Dickinson responded that we have an obligation to have those students come to Canada to finish their degrees, with L. Francis adding that attestation letters will be held back for those students, but the likelihood of visa approval remains the same.

4.2. MOU/Requirement for alignment and acceleration with government priorities

J. Dickinson reported on the memorandum of understanding, sharing that the province has offered a 1-year agreement only and is working with each institution individually, rather than collectively as was past practice. She further shared that all small/medium-sized universities will receive a 2% operating grant increase, but that grant increase is dependent on a satisfactory strategic alignment proposal.

J. Dickinson reported on other aspects of the MOU, including a 2% cap on tuition increase for domestic undergraduate students, a mandated 9% tuition increase for

new, first-year international students, as well as a requirement for all 10 provincial institutions to collectively reduce administrative fees by 5%.

Lastly, J. Dickinson spoke on the government's requirement to fill health program seats by at least 97% and the implications of not doing so. She further shared that two of our programs fall into that category: Applied Human Nutrition and School Psychology.

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson congratulated Master of Education alumni, Cong Chen, who won a "Most Inspiring Immigrants in Atlantic Canada 2024" award. She also congratulated our full-time early childhood education students, who will receive up to 25 additional \$3000 bursaries.

J. Dickinson shared that the Women's Studies Department has received an endowment which enabled them to create the Julie-Anne Carol Memorial Graduate Studies scholarship, which will support students in our Master of Arts in Women and Gender Studies program.

J. Dickinson reported that we received funds to support the Student Sexual Health and Safety Educator position from August 2024 until April 2025 and also updated Senators on the planning progress for the Atlantic Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education conference to be held at the Mount.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis announced that a new University Librarian and a new Nancy's Chair have been hired, with public announcements to be made soon. She updated on the status of the Acting Director for Teaching & Learning and AMI Events Coordinator positions and the temporary positions in the Registrar's Office and Graduate Studies to process admissions.

L. Francis reported that the new Master in Child and Youth Study [non-thesis program] was approved by MPHEC, as well as the fact that our quality assurance process is undergoing a quality assurance review in 2025.

Lastly, L. Francis thanked Amy Braye and the International Student Centre for organizing and hosting the inaugural intercultural festival, lauding its success.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault reported on the tuition refund students will receive due to classes missed from the labour stoppage and shared how it was calculated. She also reported that she hopes to share budget information with Senators at a special meeting in April.

6. Question Period

M. Gonick commented on the Julie-Anne Carol Memorial Graduate Studies scholarship, sharing that even with this new scholarship, we are still far behind in comparison to the funds that SMU [who jointly runs this program with the Mount] offers their students.

J. Dickinson will ask Advancement about the particulars of the scholarship, including how many students per year it will fund.

R. Zuk spoke about the alleged censorship by Administration of students' posts on social media before the MSVUFA strike and asked two questions on principle: if the President agrees that freedom of expression is integral to the University and her position on censoring students' views. J. Dickinson made a general statement in agreement with freedom of speech but noted she could not speak further on the topic due to lack of information on this situation.

C. Schneider sought an update on the admissions portal, with J. Dickinson sharing that a "common" admissions portal across NS institutions is no longer viable, so we will be moving forward on our own admissions portal.

C. Schneider noted that the Institutional Analyst position will be vacant as of next week and inquired about the hiring plan. It was shared that the job description is currently under evaluation and that the point of contact for the time being is Leigh-Ann MacFarlane. (J. Dickinson and L. Francis)

C. Schneider asked about priority access to the gymnasium for academic programs, noting that the Education Faculty was once again unable to offer their physical education course this summer as no gym space is available. L. Francis offered to investigate this situation with both the Registrar's Office and Athletics.

Finally, C. Schneider inquired about the four tenure-track positions coming forward in Education, sharing that they are waiting for confirmation that the Black Scholar position can be posted. L. Francis responded that the delay is due to an ongoing discussion about new language to be used for a targeted hire.

G. Fraser asked if the President will be offering the Mount community an apology and/or explanation over her invisibility and absence of leadership during the recent MSVUFA strike. J. Dickinson responded that a President is typically not at the bargaining table and she did not feel it was appropriate to insert herself given the large number of open articles being negotiated. She also offered to talk with anyone who had questions about the President's role in bargaining.

A. Thurlow asked for clarification on the MPHEC quality assurance review and if an outcome could include more efficient processes for departmental self-study reviews. L. Francis acknowledged that the departmental self-study process needs improvement and that we can implement improvements before the external review.

7. Committee Reports

7.1. Academic Policy and Planning

7.1.1. Report on Artificial Intelligence subcommittee

A. Card reported on work of CAPP's subcommittee on artificial intelligence. He identified the subcommittee's membership and welcomed E. Ballantyne to Senate for this report. The committee is addressing three priorities:

- Resources for instructors, available on the MSVU Library's website
- Workshops and events on various AI topics
- Policy review to better reflect implications of GenAI misuse: Academic Dishonesty Calendar regulation and the Course Outline Policy

Senators inquired whether input from Department Chairs will be sought on the suggested policy changes prior to their going to CAPP and whether a revised course outline statement should be motioned at Senate. CAPP was the suggested route for both inquiries. (J. MacLeod, A. Card, R. Zuk, J. Dickinson)

J. Gahagan shared that the Research Office is specifically looking at generative AI and research ethics, noting that materials will be shared on their website when they are available.

7.1.2. Report on external review of Sociology and Anthropology

L. Francis presented the report on the external review of the Sociology and Anthropology program for information.

R. Gechtman inquired on the process of implementing proposals in the review, noting that most require extra budget to implement. L. Francis indicated that, while CAPP will focus on academic elements, other information is important and links to other processes and discussions, possibly informing future budget decisions.

7.1.3. Revised Calendar entry for Regulation 2.2.14: Class Attendance

L. Francis prefaced the motion by commenting on the vagueness of the current wording, the inconsistent application of the regulation and potential negative impacts a withdrawal may have on a student's student loan or study permit status.

Senators also discussed various scenarios where it does and does not make sense to remove a student from a course due to lack of attendance and the process of removal vs. the alternative options such as academic advising and speaking about the implications on student loans or study permits. (K. Allan, G. Durepos, L. Francis, N. Kayhani)

Moved by L. Francis, seconded by D. Fisher, that Senate approve the revised calendar entry for Regulation 2.2.14: Class Attendance. CARRIED.

Senators discussed past practice of restricting a student's access to their MSVU email and Moodle when they have a financial hold on their account and inquired if this is current practice and if instructors are notified. It was shared that a student receives multiple communications via various methods regarding financial holds, with access being restricted only if they do not respond to any of these communications. (R. Gechtman, L. Francis, K. Allan, I. Nault, R. Zuk, P. Crouse)

7.2. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.2.1. Graduate Education

7.2.1.1. Changes to Existing Courses

S. Trenholm presented the following course description changes as an omnibus motion.

7.2.1.1.1. New course description for GFDD 6519/GCYS 6021:
Sociology of Childhood and Adolescence

7.2.1.1.2. New course description for GCRD 6305/GFDD 6513:
Schooling and Social Justice

7.2.1.1.3. New course description for GCRD 6319/GFDD 6512:
History of Educational Ideas

7.2.1.1.4. New course description for GCRD 6324/GLIT 6731:
Cultural Politics and the Teaching of English

7.2.1.1.5. New course description for GCRD 6325/GLIT 6732
Reading and Teaching Popular Culture

7.2.1.1.6. New course description for GCRD 6326/GEMS 6426:
Learning Difficulties in School Mathematics

7.2.1.1.7. New course description for GCRD 6327/GEMS 6427:
Interdisciplinary Study of School Mathematics

7.2.1.1.8. New course description for GCRD 6328/DEMS 6428:
Pedagogical Approaches in School Mathematics

7.2.1.1.9. New course description for GCRD 6336/GEMS 6401:
Numeracy in the Curriculum I

7.2.1.1.10. New course description for GCRD 6337/GEMS 6402:
Numeracy in the Curriculum II

7.2.1.1.11. New course description for GCRD 6338/GEMS 6403:
Problem Solving and Problem Posing in School
Mathematics

7.2.1.1.12. New course description for GFDD 6501/GWGS 6501:
Gender, Sexuality, and Education

7.2.1.1.13. New course description for GCRD 6344/GFDD 6544:
Race, Culture, and Education
Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by K. Allan, that
Senate approve the changes to existing course
descriptions in Graduate Education. CARRIED.

7.3. Undergraduate Curriculum

7.3.1. English

7.3.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.1.1.1. Prerequisites for University Study of English

Moved by A. Card, seconded by R. Zuk, that Senate
approve the prerequisites for University Study of
English. CARRIED.

7.3.2. Modern Languages

7.3.2.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.2.1.1. Requirements for concentration in French

Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that
Senate approve the changes in requirements for a
concentration in French. CARRIED.

7.3.3. Women's Studies

7.3.3.1. Changes to Existing Program

A. Card introduced the following two items as an omnibus motion.

7.3.3.1.1. Addition of combined major with honours to Women's Studies degree

7.3.3.1.2. Addition of combined major honours certificate

Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that
Senate approve the addition of a combined major with
honours and a combined major honours certificate to
the Women's Studies degree. CARRIED.

7.3.4. Changes

A. Card presented the following changes for information.

7.3.4.1. Business Administration

7.3.4.1.1. New prerequisite for BUSI 3361: Finance II

7.3.4.2. Information Technology

7.3.4.2.1. New prerequisite for INTE 2011: Introduction to Project Management

8. Other Reports

8.1. Students' Union

K. Allan reported on the upcoming MSVUSU elections, noting two referendum
questions on the ballots: one concerning student food accessibility fees and another
on orientation activities fees. K. Allan also provided updates on various other
incentives, including the Captain Crow Café, naloxone distribution and training and
the restructuring and hiring of the SU's full-time staff complement.

K. Allan and J. Dickinson also thanked the Muslim Student Association and Chartwells for ensuring a superior experience for students during Ramadan.

8.2. FA President's Report on Board of Governors' Meeting

S. Brigham acknowledged the recent job action and welcomed Senators back on behalf of the Faculty Association. S. Brigham then reported on the Special Board of Governors' meeting that was held on March 14, noting that its focus was to ratify the new MSVUFA collective agreement. S. Brigham also brought attention to the newly vacant role of Governance Secretary and General Counsel.

9. New Business

No new business was discussed.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of January 26, 2024 & March 8, 2024
- Calendar revision to Regulation 2.2.14, Class Attendance
- Graduate and undergraduate curriculum changes

Senate received for information:

- Report on CAPP's AI subcommittee
- Report on external review of Sociology and Anthropology
- Undergraduate curriculum changes

11. Adjournment

Moved by J. MacLeod, seconded by N. Kayhani, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.