



Senate Meeting

Alice Egan Hagen Board Room (Rosaria 312)/MS Teams

October 25, 2024

2 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: J. Dickinson (Chair), J. Bail, C. Barker, K. Blotnicky, R. Bursey, C. Cameron, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, A. Duquette, G. Durepos, L. Francis, J. Gahagan, R. Gechtman, M. Gonick, S. Grant, S. Hale Wills, S. Huntemann, K. Jones, M. Matthews, M. McGonnell, C. McLean, M. Minocha, I. Nault, D. Piccitto, B. Russo, M. Siddiquee, L. Steele, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, T. Yu

Regrets: A. Card, M. Eskritt, M. J. Harkins, S. Kaur, P. Kaur Johal, J. Sawler, K. Schlieff, G. Sneddon, J. R. Sylliboy

Observers: K. Allan, G. Boulet, E. Ballantyne, G. Batten, T. Findlay, J. Lamb

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 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

Moved by C. Barker, seconded by S. Trenholm, to approve the agenda as presented.
CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. September 27, 2024

Moved by S. Hale Wills, seconded by M. McGonnell, to approve the minutes of September 27, 2024, as circulated. CARRIED.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

No business arising was identified.

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson acknowledged the passing of Dr. David Furrow, former Psychology Professor and Dean of Arts and Science, and noted that a Celebration of Life will be held in The Rook at 2 p.m. on November 9.

J. Dickinson spoke about three recent events: ongoing alumni reunion events, which have seen impressive attendance; the Riva Spatz Women's Wall of Honour event, where T. Franz-Odendaal and E. Davidson, among others, received leaves; and fall convocation. Regarding the latter, J. Dickinson shared that 444 students graduated, with many receiving distinction, first-class honours and Senate medals, and she encouraged feedback about fall convocation to be sent to S. Hale Wills.

J. Dickinson shared that Dimensions has received reapproval from the Federal government, with special thanks to P. Joy and J. Gahagan for their contributions to reinvigorating this project. Additionally, she shared that the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre has successfully secured reinstatement of its funding for the AAAPS [Advanced Academic Access to Post-Secondary] program for this year and is planning for a January intake to the program.

Lastly, J. Dickinson congratulated M. Gauthier, supervised by S. Huntemann, on placing second in the undergraduate math research competition at the 2024 Science Atlantic Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science Conference.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis provided an update on the inaugural meeting of the Academic Strategic Alignment Group, which includes Vice-Presidents Academic and Provost from across the province, as well as representatives from the Provincial Government's Department of Advanced Education. She reported that the province is asking institutions to partner with the province to demonstrate alignment with provincial goals including experiential and work-integrated learning and accelerated programs. She noted that broad support exists for experiential learning, but notable resistance was expressed regarding accelerated programs.

L. Francis reported on AAU [Association of Atlantic Universities] enrollment numbers, noting that while many institutions in the region are experiencing a decline, our enrollment is showing a slight increase.

L. Francis updated on several Federal Government policy changes affecting international students: international students must take at least 50% of their courses in person; off-campus work hours for students on study permits are limited to 20 hours per week, with the possibility of an increase to 24 hours per week; changes to the Post-Graduation Work Permit are forthcoming and may affect certain diploma and certificate programs.

L. Francis shared the dates of upcoming Strategic Enrollment Management Community Engagement Workshops, encouraging attendance.

Lastly, L. Francis provided an update regarding the provision that final exams must be worth 30% at minimum, sharing that CAPP identified that this requirement is not included in the final exam policy, despite its presence in the academic Calendar, and CAPP will address this discrepancy in upcoming discussions.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault reported that October is Cyber Security Awareness Month and thanked those who have completed the cyber security training, encouraging others to participate as well.

I. Nault confirmed that the motion passed at the last Senate meeting regarding the transparency of the Mount's investments was presented for discussion at the Investments Committee meeting and that it is anticipated to be brought forward as a motion at the November 20 meeting.

I. Nault reported that the Q2 budget reports and projections to year end are being finalized, with this information to be used to initiate the 2025-26 budget process cycle. The University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) will be called upon soon to review the information, similar to the process of the last few years. She also updated that the number of students with outstanding fees has decreased over 50% since the last Senate meeting.

6. Question Period

B. Russo inquired about the potential reduction of the final exam minimum requirement.

L. Francis noted that CAPP is reviewing policies and Calendar content which reference final exams and will present its recommendations to Senate.

D. Piccitto inquired about the recent processes being used to establish search committees and noted that issuing general calls for expressions of interest does not match past practice and offered the opinion that constituencies should select their own representatives through their own processes. J. Dickinson confirmed that C. Hattie followed the previous AVP search process for consistency but is reviewing selection committee procedures. I. Nault highlighted that processes vary for senior administration versus senior academic roles and that advisor positions fall within the MPA, which also suggests a different process.

Senators expressed concerns about representation on search committees stressing the importance of ensuring that committee members do not need to share intersectional characteristics to be selected. Other points raised included the need for greater transparency, the absence of Terms of Reference in the recent calls, the availability of the SNC in filling faculty seats even when not required, and the possibility of including representation of part-time instructors on these committees. I. Nault agreed that clarity was needed and committed to meeting with each constituency to ensure she and C. Hattie

are aware of all procedures. J. Dickinson agreed to share all other feedback with C. Hattie. (D. Piccitto, I. Nault, J. Dickinson, P. Crouse, S. Grant, K. Allan)

C. Barker asked the President about the Administration's perspective regarding the relationships among the various constituency groups on campus. Specifically, he inquired about the steps being planned to restore a sense of community following this year's labour dispute. In response, J. Dickinson acknowledged that several ideas have been proposed and that further suggestions are welcome. She emphasized that the effort to rebuild relationships will involve collaboration across the entire campus community, not solely within the Administration.

A. Thurlow raised a query regarding the ongoing Board governance review, expressing concern over the limited involvement of the Senate. She noted the importance of even minimal updates and engagement, particularly given the timing of the review in relation to the opening of the Charter and potential changes to the Board. She asked how the Senate could be effectively engaged in this process, including the timeline and structure of that engagement. In response, J. Dickinson indicated that an upcoming JBSL meeting will serve as an initial platform to discuss how to leverage the expertise of Senate. She emphasized that changes to the BoG will not be implemented hastily, allowing for ample time for further engagement.

On behalf of the part-time faculty union, T. Yu inquired whether Senate would be open to adding at least one seat on the Senate for part-time faculty, with a preference for three seats—one representative from each Faculty. The process for implementing this proposal was discussed. (T. Yu, J. Dickinson, P. Crouse)

T. Yu addressed the issue of insufficient office space in SAC for part-time instructors and full-time academic staff, specifically Librarians, emphasizing the importance of having confidential meeting spaces for student interactions. T. Yu sought comments on potential solutions from both the Vice-President Academic and Provost and the Vice-President Administration. In response, it was noted that extensive discussions have taken place with both the CUPE executive and the FA Joint Committee to develop plans to address this issue, with efforts ongoing to secure space for Librarians, although specific details regarding CUPE office space cannot be disclosed due to ongoing grievance arbitration. The conversation also highlighted the overall limited availability of space on campus and acknowledged that projects related to relocating units require time. Measures currently being implemented and those planned were also discussed. (L. Franics, I. Nault, C. Dawson, B. Russo, J. Bail)

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by L. Steele, to extend the question period by 10 minutes. CARRIED.

C. Barker inquired if a review has been conducted to streamline processes and reduce the administrative workload on faculty as they engage in research. L. Francis confirmed her

desire to evaluate these processes to enhance efficiency and welcomed suggestions about strategically prioritizing and scheduling the necessary changes.

C. Barker asked about NDAs and confidentiality agreements in use at the Mount and if such policies could be reviewed since they can be a barrier to academic freedom and academic processes. J. Dickinson referenced a committee at Dalhousie studying the use and wording of NDAs, the report from which is expected to be shared with the Mount. In regards to our governance process, J. Dickinson clarified that it is the Board's decision to use confidentiality agreements and that she will bring this question to the Board for possible consideration during the current governance review.

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by A. Thurlow, to extend the question period by an additional 10 minutes. CARRIED.

R. Gechtman questioned the distinction between a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and a confidentiality agreement. Senators offered comments on their differences; that our BoG operates as a closed board (which is being reviewed in the aforementioned governance review); the requirement to sign such agreements to participate in specific search committees; and the legal implications of adhering to these agreements in situations involving bullying. (R. Gechtman, J. Dickinson, G. Durepos, D. Piccitto, T. Yu)

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Announcement of Senate Master Graduation List approval

J. Dickinson announced that on October 1, 2024, EX approved the Master Graduation list for Fall 2024, with 440 names cleared to graduate and six names on the enabling list. She shared that four names moved off the enabling list for a total of 444 graduates.

7.1.2. Revision to Policy on Policies, EX-2012-01

P. Crouse presented the revisions to the Policy on Policies, for information, highlighting the background that necessitated these changes and outlining the process undertaken to determine the modifications.

M. McGonnell sought clarity of the meaning of "friendly text" for URLs, which P. Crouse clarified that friendly text refers to the use of the English words in the body of a document, while hovering over the hyperlinked words will reveal the complete URL.

7.2. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.2.1. Applied Human Nutrition

7.2.1.1. Changes to Existing Programs

7.2.1.1.1. Required course list for MAHN and MScAHN

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the change to the required course list for MAHN and MScAHN. CARRIED.

7.2.2. Communication Studies

7.2.2.1. Changes to Existing Courses

7.2.2.1.1. GPRL 6105: Media, Culture and Society

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the new course GPRL 6105. CARRIED.

7.2.2.2. Changes to Existing Programs

7.2.2.2.1. Addition to elective list in MPR

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by A. Thurlow, that Senate approve the addition of GPRL 6105 to the elective list in the MPR program. CARRIED.

7.2.3. Education (Curriculum Studies)

7.2.3.1. New Course Proposal

7.2.3.1.1. GCRD 6310/GLIT 6710: Indigenous Literatures

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the new course GCRD 6310/GLIT 6710. CARRIED.

8. Other Reports

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

T. Yu reported that she was not permitted to give an oral FA report at the October 10, 2024, BoG meeting. She emphasized the efforts she undertook to secure a place on the agenda, only to be denied the opportunity to speak during the meeting. She reported that many Board members had not been informed about labour relations issues and referenced concerns about the confidentiality agreement required by the Board and her obligation to represent faculty.

Senators voiced their concerns over T. Yu's treatment at the meeting, sharing past similar experiences reflecting on EDIA at the Mount, commenting on Board members' lack of awareness regarding labour relations with faculty and advocating for change. (D. Piccitto, R. Gechtman, B. Russo, C. Barker)

J. Dickinson acknowledged T. Yu's report to Senate and Senators' comments, noting that she, too, has signed a confidentiality agreement as a member of the Board.

8.2. Students' Union

A. Duquette reported on her work as VP of Advocacy, noting the development of a library at the Pride Centre, as well as the free delivery of gender-affirming care directly to the Pride Centre. A. Duquette reported on recent and upcoming events, including an art night, a rock painting event, a salsa event and various activities planned in the Rook pub.

C. Cameron provided an update on the status of the food bank's food security grant, noting that they are seeking to contract policy analysts in the areas of administration and client care, as the grant's compliance relies on frequently changing government standards. C. Cameron encouraged Senators to recommend any students they know who might be suitable for a position focused on policy research. Additionally, C. Cameron discussed a collaborative project with P. Joy from the Applied Human Nutrition Department, which aims to host four open-access community-based research lectures on food security and that students who attend all four lectures will have the opportunity for direct admission to a research assistantship.

C. Cameron also highlighted efforts to explore community funding opportunities with the Students' Union, including a streamlined application process; upcoming weekly programming for graduate students; and an event to celebrate Diwali on November 1 at the Rook, with all Senators invited to attend.

D. Piccitto inquired about the recent Queer Prom event. A. Duquette reported that approximately 80 tickets were sold and that they collaborated with the Captain Crow's Cafe to provide food for attendees. Additionally, A. Duquette shared that a student generously purchased five tickets for individuals who could not afford to attend, with Senators expressing their interest in contributing to future Queer Prom events.

9. New Business

No new business was identified.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of September 27, 2024
- Graduate curriculum changes

Senate received for information:

- Revision to Policy on Policies, EX-2012-01

11. Adjournment

Moved by M. McGonnell, seconded by C. Cameron, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.