



Senate Meeting

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

September 27, 2024

2 p.m.

MINUTES

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

Regrets: C. Dawson, P. Kaur Johal, J. R. Sylliboy

Observers: E. Ballantyne, M. Forrest, F. French, K. Gallant, J. Lamb, L.A. MacFarlane, M. Reardon

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 p.m. New and returning Senators were welcomed and round-table introductions took place.

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

A late nomination from SNC was added to the agenda as 8.3.2.

Moved by R. Bursey, seconded by C. Barker, to approve the agenda as amended. CARRIED.

3. Conduct Statement

In accordance with Senate Rule of Order 16.2, J. Dickinson read the Senate Code of Conduct statement. No questions or discussion arose.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. May 22, 2024

Moved by C. McLean, seconded by R. Bursey, to approve the minutes of May 22, 2024, as amended. CARRIED.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

5.1. MOU and IRCC Update

I. Nault reported on the frequent, required reporting to the government regarding the bilateral agreement, with a strategic alignment plan submitted at the end of June to which no feedback has been received, and various other reports due this quarter including a report that details our residence occupancy and seat utilization ratio of our health-related programs and a plan to reduce operational costs by 5% amongst universities provincially. I. Nault also shared that committees have been struck with all Atlantic Vice Presidents of Administration, University Presidents, AVPs Research and Provosts, with the prior three having been actively meeting but the latter not set to meet until October.

Following a request from G. Durepos for examples of what would be included in the 5% reduction of operational costs, I. Nault shared that the government is yet to provide a concrete definition. She clarified that it does not include academic budgets and that the 5% target is amongst all universities provincially, not per university.

L. Francis highlighted that the government is asking us as an institution to align with provincial priorities, which is, in some cases, targeting our academic programs and how we offer them. Examples were given on how this could be/is impacting us at the Mount.

L. Francis reported on the recent IRCC updates regarding PALs [Provincial Attestation Letters] and how they could potentially impact us at the Mount. In particular, the new requirements for graduate students to obtain a PAL were discussed as well as changes in eligibility for post-graduate work permits. Clarification was sought on the reusability of unused PALs and the impact of unused PALs on next year's allotment. L. Francis shared that a process is in place to reallocate unused PALs and that unused PALs from this year will not affect the number of PALs we receive next year. The specific number of PALs issued last year at the Mount in relation to our total allocation was also discussed. (L. Francis, G. Durepos, J. Dickinson, R. Bursey)

L. Steele sought clarification on the government's request for B.Ed. prerequisites to be dropped to 90 or 60 credits. L. Francis shared that currently students who have a 90-credit undergraduate degree are qualified to apply for a B.Ed.; however, the government is asking us to consider applicants with any 90 credits overall, without a particular credential, and that this requirement could be dropped even further. J. Dickinson commented that the government is currently negotiating with the Teachers Union on these requirements and noted that the number of applicants is not the issue as we consistently have more applicants than spots for our B.Ed. programs.

6. Administration Updates

6.1. President

J. Dickinson congratulated all those involved in orientation for a successful and energetic week of events, noting that the engagement of off-campus students was great to see. She also congratulated the recipients of recent Scotia Scholar Awards: Robyn Ashley (supervised by Dr. Jessie-Lee McIssac), Katelyn Ford (supervised by Dr. Krista Ritchie), Dan Shanahan (supervised by Dr. Melissa McGonnell) and Yara Yazbek (supervised by Dr. Sara King).

J. Dickinson further highlighted the successful launch of the Kinu tourism program; Dr. Maria Matthews for receiving the Best All Conference Paper award at the ASB conference, as well as for her successful PhD defence; the 32 CCAA National Scholars at the Mount; and Ruby Blois, who is set to receive an honorary doctorate at fall convocation.

J. Dickinson shared that the first Campus Exchange event will be held on October 3, where Bradley Paul will be discussing the Kinu project and the importance of treaties. She explained that these campus exchange events are meant to highlight the work and projects happening on campus, with the aim to promote synergy and awareness on campus.

J. Dickinson updated that the provincial government is still interested in the Mount's proposed Doctor of Psychology program and the possible accompanying youth care clinic and thanked those who have worked on the project thus far.

6.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis reported on our fall enrollment numbers, noting the difference between the number of students enrolled versus the number of courses students are enrolled in and shared that, given the uncertain climate, we are in a reasonable place budget-wise.

L. Francis also shared that she has been nominated to sit on the Board of MPHEC [Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission], which is advantageous timing as we will be undergoing our external quality assurance review by MPHEC this year.

L. Francis reported on two administrative updates: the recruitment team will now report through the Office of Student Experience and the Institutional Analyst will be moving into the Registrar's Office.

Lastly, L. Francis updated that a MSVU specific admissions portal for both undergraduate and graduate applications is going to be implemented, with a search to recruit companies interested in building this portal to begin soon.

6.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault reported that the budget is proceeding as anticipated, with more insights to be gleaned after Q2 reporting.

I. Nault updated on the process of student tuition collection, notably, that if students owe money, their Moodle access will no longer be cut off. She reported on the number of students owing tuition and that faculty may be contacted to determine if certain students are actually studying here.

7. Question Period

B. Russo spoke on the requirement for final exams to be worth at least 30%, questioning its validity and if the minimum ought to be reduced to reflect the diverse learning styles of our students. L. Francis agreed on the importance of meeting our students' needs and noted that both CAPP and SEM [Strategic Enrollment Management] are reviewing policies that could potentially flag accessibility concerns. To expediate this particular request, L. Francis asked that B. Russo email her regarding this policy, and she would bring it forward to the next CAPP meeting for discussion.

M. J. Harkins sought an update on the Indigenous Cluster hire. J. Dickinson reported that while we had four positions available, only one candidate was hired. She further shared that plans are underway for institutional training to ensure that we are ready and able to attract candidates for the remaining positions.

Referencing a motion passed at a recent Faculty Association meeting regarding the condemning of recent attacks on academic freedom, C. Barker asked the Academic Vice President and Provost for confirmation of Administration's commitment to upholding academic freedom and protecting those who may be involved in controversial scholarship and advocacy and for plans and processes in place for support. L. Francis agreed that protecting academic freedom and ensuring safety and security of our community is of concern and welcomes the opportunity for open discussion on how we may enact and signal these commitments. J. Dickinson added that an upcoming Campus Exchange will be held on this topic and that the topic is being discussed by Universities Canada federally.

With reference to the Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy, C. Barker sought confirmation from the Academic Vice President and Provost that Administration supports the rights of individuals to pursue formal grievance processes and that no pressure should be exerted on individuals to withdraw grievances. L. Francis indicated that she would not respond to questions about specific cases or matters before the Labour Board and confirmed that, if there has been a violation of collective agreements or policies, grievances are encouraged.

J. Sawler requested the outcomes of the meeting between J. Dickinson and the MSVU Students for the Liberation of Palestine group. J. Dickinson shared that six attended the meeting, three of whom were students from MSVU, and that great discussion occurred

including the correct processes to take the group's requests forward. She noted that communication with the group continued via email, with the offer given to assist the group with the preparation of a motion to go to the Investment Committee of the Board; that no communication with the group had occurred since June; but that she provided a notice of motion at the last Investments Committee meeting, requesting disclosure of the University's investments. The notion of divestment was discussed, and it was stated that should any investments be found to not be in compliance with the Board's Investment Policy, mechanisms are in place for divestment, with it being emphasized that we are currently in compliance. (J. Sawler, J. Dickinson, R. Gechtman)

An update was sought on when the next Microcredentials report would be given to Senate. It was suggested that a report can be provided at the end of each semester. (R. Gechtman, J. Dickinson, I. Nault)

R. Gechtman also requested an update on the Governance Secretary and General Counsel position. J. Dickinson updated that the original full-time incumbent hired for the position is no longer with the University, and after evaluation, it was decided to reduce the position to a part-time, 50% position. Examples were given of instances where in-house General Counsel was beneficial. The interview process for the position will begin in October.

8. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

8.1. Senate Executive

8.1.1. Report on Senate Self-Evaluation

G. Durepos presented the results of the 2023-2024 Senate self-evaluation, highlighting the evaluation's purpose, methods and results.

The demographic makeup of the respondents was questioned; however, as the survey is anonymous, that information is not available. (J. Sawler, G. Durepos, P. Crouse)

B. Russo commented on the results presented for question 6 of the self-evaluation, noting that a 20% decrease is not slight as indicated in the presentation. G. Durepos clarified that the portion of those who responded 4, 5, and 6 remained similar to the pattern of responses from previous years.

The meeting time of Senate was discussed, with it being noted that meeting time is specified in the Senate Bylaws, that it was moved to its current time following Senator requests including the self-evaluation responses but that does not mean that the time cannot be changed. (M. Siddiquee, G. Durepos, P. Crouse)

8.1.2. Ratification of EX Motion for SNC nomination

Moved by L. Steele, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate ratify the EX motion for the SNC's nomination to the UREB. CARRIED.

Committee	Nominee	Term Begins	Term Ends
University Research Ethics Board	Dr. Andrea Fraser	July 1, 2024	30 June 2027

8.1.3. Academic Calendar Review

P. Crouse referenced the memo in the supporting materials, providing information to new Senators on the purpose and scope of the guidelines.

8.2. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

8.2.1. Education: Foundations

S. Trenholm presented the following in an omnibus motion.

8.2.1.1. New Course Proposals

8.2.1.1.1. GFDD 6525 – Ethics and Teaching

8.2.1.1.2. GFDD 6527 – Bias, Media and Education

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the new courses GFDD 6525 and GFDD 6527. CARRIED.

S. Trenholm presented the following in an omnibus motion.

8.2.1.2. Course Deletions

8.2.1.2.1. GFDD 6515 – 19th and 20th Century Critical Thinkers

8.2.1.2.2. GFDD 6523 – Issues in Teaching and Learning

R. Gechtman asked for the rationale behind the removal of GFDD 6515 to which S. Trenholm shared that the course has not been regularly taught over the past 10 years and that the content is being incorporated into the new GFDD courses 6525 and 6527.

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the deletion of GFDD 6515 and GFDD 6523. CARRIED.

8.2.1.3. Changes to Existing Programs

8.2.1.3.1. Calendar revision to General Information for Educational Foundations

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the Calendar revision to General Information for Education Foundations. CARRIED.

8.3. Nominations

8.3.1. Nomination for Senate Committee

Moved by M. McGonnell, seconded by R. Gechtman, that Senate elect the following faculty members to the indicated committees for the indicated terms. CARRIED.

Committee	Nominee	Term Begins	Term Ends
Nancy's Chair	Dr. El Jones	When elected	30 June 2027
Committee on Research and Publications	Dr. Jennifer Khoury	When elected	30 June 2027

8.4. University Research Ethics Board

8.4.1. Accessibility Updates to Standard Operating Procedures

J. Gahagan presented the revisions to Standard Operating Procedures for information, inviting comments or questions from Senators.

- 8.4.1.1. Authority and Purpose
- 8.4.1.2. Research Requiring REB Review
- 8.4.1.3. Training and Education of REB Members and REB Office Personnel
- 8.4.1.4. Management of REB Office Personnel
- 8.4.1.5. Conflicts of Interest - REB Members and REB Office Personnel
- 8.4.1.6. Conflicts of Interest - Researcher
- 8.4.1.7. Conflicts of Interest - Organization
- 8.4.1.8. Signatory Authority
- 8.4.1.9. Uses and Disclosures of Personal Information (PI)
- 8.4.1.10. SOP Maintenance
- 8.4.1.11. Addendum for US-Regulated Research
- 8.4.1.12. Departmental Research Ethics Boards
- 8.4.1.13. Composition of the Board
- 8.4.1.14. Management of the Board
- 8.4.1.15. Duties of REB Members
- 8.4.1.16. REB Office Personnel Serving as REB Members
- 8.4.1.17. REB Submission Requirements and Document Review
- 8.4.1.18. REB Meeting Administration
- 8.4.1.19. Documentation and Document Management
- 8.4.1.20. Delegated Review
- 8.4.1.21. Initial Review – Criteria for REB Approval
- 8.4.1.22. REB Review Decisions
- 8.4.1.23. Ongoing REB Review Activities
- 8.4.1.24. Continuing Review
- 8.4.1.25. Completion of Research
- 8.4.1.26. Suspension or Termination of REB Clearance
- 8.4.1.27. Full Board Review Process
- 8.4.1.28. Multi-Jurisdictional Research

- 8.4.1.29. Reconsideration of REB Decisions and Appeal Process
- 8.4.1.30. REB Review During Publicly Declared Emergencies
- 8.4.1.31. Resumption of F2F Research
- 8.4.1.32. Scholarly Review
- 8.4.1.33. Communication - Researcher
- 8.4.1.34. Communication - Research Participants
- 8.4.1.35. Free and Informed Consent
- 8.4.1.36. Consent Updates and Ongoing Consent
- 8.4.1.37. Researcher Qualifications and Responsibilities
- 8.4.1.38. Quality Assurance Inspections
- 8.4.1.39. External Inspections or Audits
- 8.4.1.40. Non-Compliance

9. Other Reports

9.1. Students' Union

C. Cameron reported on the MSVUSU's awarding of a \$12,475 one-time bursary to provide safe housing to a student affected by modern conflict, which was made possible through the Mount's Access and Impact Fund. C. Cameron also reported on an emerging project which includes four open-access lectures, leading to one paid assistantship relating to community-based research. They indicated the MSVUSU's intention to write a proposal for funding for this project from the Canadian Federation of Students. C. Cameron encouraged faculty members whose research aligns with social issues such as food security or housing and who would accept a research assistant to connect with them.

S. Kaur reported on the food bank's ongoing work to achieve standards in excellence based on framework provided federally to improve operations. She shared that the food bank was approved for a \$14,187 grant to assist with achieving these standards and they are currently working on hiring an external policy writer to assist in this goal.

S. Kaur also reported on orientation, noting the successful on- and off-campus events, with the aim to improve student retention and maximize student engagement. J. Dickinson commended the great work of the Captain Crow Café and on-campus food bank.

10. New Business

10.1. Annual Reports of Senate Committees

- 10.1.1. Academic Appeals
- 10.1.2. Academic Policy and Planning
- 10.1.3. Appointment, Promotion and Tenure or Permanence for Academic Administrators
- 10.1.4. Executive
- 10.1.5. Graduate Studies Scholarships, Assistantships and Awards

- 10.1.6. Graduate Studies Program and Policy
- 10.1.7. Information Technology and Services
- 10.1.8. Library and Archives
- 10.1.9. Nominations
- 10.1.10. Research and Publications
- 10.1.11. Student Experience
- 10.1.12. Student Judicial
- 10.1.13. Student Discipline Appeals
- 10.1.14. Teaching and Learning
- 10.1.15. Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarships and Awards
- 10.1.16. Undergraduate Curriculum
- 10.1.17. University Research Ethics Board
- 10.1.18. Writing Initiatives

J. Dickinson made a call for questions or discussion on the annual reports.

K. Blotnicky offered a correction to 10.1.1, sharing that 98 academic offenses in total were reported, with 19 appeals received and 1 withdrawn, totalling 18 appeals reviewed by the committee.

J. Gahagan also offered a correction, noting a few editorial edits needed for 10.1.10, and that an updated report will be submitted to Senate.

The bicameral governance review as mentioned in 10.1.4 was discussed, with Senators questioning the difference between this review and a previously initiated bicameral review that was put on an infinite hiatus. It was shared that this review was initiated by the BoG with the aim to review its own practices and procedures and that it included both faculty and student participation. The procedures of the recently conducted interviews to gather information for this review were discussed, with Senators sharing insight on the process and next steps in the review process. (D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson, A. Thurlow, S. Grant, G. Durepos, K. Blotnicky)

In reference to 10.1.7, D. Piccitto asked if an Interim Director of TLC was appointed and sought information on the restructuring of TLC as mentioned in the report. L. Francis shared that the restructuring is in regard to the reporting structure of TLC and Online Learning as well as the possibilities to expand the types of services provided by TLC. In terms of the Interim Director position, L. Francis shared that this did not come to fruition as planned in January, with follow-up to the two candidates needed.

In reference to 10.1.10, changes to Faculty awards given out at Convocation were discussed, notably the two research awards being moved to the fall ceremonies and the lack of citations in the spring. It was shared that these decisions were based on feedback received from graduating students in the Spring 2023 convocation

ceremonies and prior, that the ceremonies were too long and not student-centered. Much discussion ensued regarding the validity of the feedback and decisions, with some Senators articulating that Spring convocation was the most appropriate place for these awards since it is the biggest celebration on campus. Other Senators voiced concern over elevating one convocation ceremony over the other as “the best and biggest” as students finish their programs at all different times of the year. Alternative solutions were discussed, including ideas for shortening other aspects of the ceremonies, alternative venues for the faculty awards and community consultation. (D. Piccitto, J. Gahagan, S. Hale Wills, J. Dickinson, R. Gechtman, L. Francis, C. Barker, B. Russo, S. Grant)

10.2. Annual Report of Joint Board Senate Liaison Committee

10.3. Annual Report of Nancy’s Chair Committee

10.4. Annual Report of Gail and Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Learning Disabilities

10.5. Annual Report AMI

10.6. Annual Report *Atlantis*

J. Dickinson opened the floor to items 10.2 – 10.6; no discussion or questions were raised.

10.7. University Investments

Referencing the supporting materials provided, D. Piccitto prefaced these motions by outlining the connections between these motions and the Mount’s stated values and mission, as well as highlighting that other Halifax universities and beyond are already publicly disclosing their investments.

A brief discussion occurred on the role of the BoG’s Investments Committee, concluding with the notion that it would be up to the BoG to distribute this request to the appropriate committee. (J. Dickinson, D. Piccitto, R. Gechtman)

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by R. Gechtman, that Senate recommends to the Board of Governors that it provide public disclosures of the University’s investments in a timely, accessible manner. CARRIED.

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by L. Steele, that Senate recommends to the Board of Governors that it review and disclose University compliance with Section 9.3 of the Board of Governors Investment Policy and Procedures, especially its statement that “Considering the University’s mission and the nature of its constituency, the following general industry categories will be avoided: tobacco, munitions and

defence,” and the Senate recommends doing so in a timely, accessible manner, including providing any documentation showing evidence of such compliance.

Topics of discussion included the implication of divestment should we not be in compliance with Section 9.3 of the BoG Investment Policy and Procedures and the ambiguous nature of the stated timeframe in the motion. (R. Gechtman, J. Dickinson, B. Russo, I. Nault, C. Barker)

A friendly amendment was identified, to which D. Piccitto and L. Steele agreed to change the wording of “timely” to “on an annual basis”.

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by L. Steele, that Senate recommends to the Board of Governors that it review and disclose University compliance with Section 9.3 of the Board of Governors Investment Policy and Procedures, especially its statement that “Considering the University’s mission and the nature of its constituency, the following general industry categories will be avoided: tobacco, munitions and defence,” and the Senate recommends doing so on an annual basis and in an accessible manner, including providing any documentation showing evidence of such compliance. CARRIED.

J. Dickinson will bring back an update to Senate after the November Investment Committee meeting.

11. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of May 22, 2024
- Ratification of EX motion for a SNC nomination
- Graduate curriculum changes in Education
- Nominations for Senate committee vacancies
- Two motions to communicate with the BoG regarding University investments

Senate received for information:

- Report on Senate Self-Evaluation 2024
- Information about the Calendar review process
- Updates to SoPs of the UREB
- Annual reports of Senate-related committees

12. Adjournment

Moved by R. Bursey, seconded by B. Russo, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.