



Senate Meeting

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

January 31, 2025

2 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: J. Dickinson (Chair), J. Bail, A. Benzaquén, R. Bursey, C. Cameron, A. Card, E. Copeland Solas, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, G. Durepos, M. Eskritt, L. Francis, J. Gahagan, M. Gonick, S. Grant, S. Hale Wills, D. Hazelton, E. Henderson, K. Jones, S. Kaur, M. Matthews, M. McGonnell, C. McLean, M. Minocha, I. Nault, D. Piccitto, B. Russo, J. Sawler, K. Schlieff, G. Sneddon, L. Steele, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, T. Yu

Regrets: C. Barker, S. Huntemann, M. Siddiquee, J. R. Sylliboy

Observers: K. Allan, E. Ballantyne, M. Caswell, B. Gagne, S. Kunto, J. Lamb, J. Valcke, H. Yao

The meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m.

New Senators were introduced and welcomed. Observers were also 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 items were added under Committee Reports, and agenda items were renumbered accordingly.

- 7.1, CAPP – Academic Calendar dates 2025-2026 and 2026-2027
- 7.3, SNC – Nominations for Senate committee vacancies
- 7.5, JBSL report

Moved by M. McGonnell, seconded by A. Thurlow, to approve the agenda as amended.
CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. November 29, 2024

Moved by L. Steele, seconded by B. Russo, to approve the minutes of November 29, 2024, as circulated. CARRIED.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Revisions to UREB Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.13

B. Gagne presented the revisions to UREB Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.13, noting minor corrections: (a) In the last bullet under Functions, changing the word “compliance” to “compliant” and (b) “Under Confidentiality, changing “ORE” to “Research Ethics Office (REO).” These changes were accepted as friendly amendments.

Moved by M. McGonnell, seconded by C. McLean, that Senate approve the revisions to UREB Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.13, effective immediately. CARRIED.

4.2. Student applications from US

L. Francis reported on the number of applications from the US we received from 2021-2024, as well as how many applicants accepted an offer and registered as a student. She spoke about possible recruitment strategies, including an upcoming recruitment trip to Boston with other Atlantic universities.

B. Russo inquired why the recruitment team is focusing on Boston, suggesting the market for higher education in Boston is already saturated. In response, it was clarified that the recruitment team is going to Boston as part of a delegation from the Atlantic Association of Universities. (B. Russo, J. Dickinson, L. Francis)

4.3. International student distribution by program

S. Hale Wills presented the international student distribution by academic level (Undergraduate, Graduate, Bachelor of Education), noting that a document containing further information will be distributed to Senators.

D. Piccitto questioned what the Mount is doing as an institution to ensure that we can handle the increase in international students, particularly in regard to resources in the IEC (International Education Centre). In response, it was shared that, in consultation with the IEC, our ratio of international students needs to remain under 25% of our total student population to allow for the services the IEC offers to remain equitable. Furthermore, it was shared that following the closure of the EAL (English as an Additional Language) program, a position was reallocated to create a new International Student Success Advisor position. (D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson, K. Jones)

B. Russo inquired about the previously discussed recruitment presentation to Senate, to which J. Dickinson suggested that the IEC also give a presentation to Senate regarding the supports they offer to our international students.

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson congratulated L. Steele, recipient of the 2024 President's Award for Volunteer Service to the Extended Community, as well as the Centre for Academic Advising team, recipients of the 2024 Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Award.

J. Dickinson welcomed three new staff appointments: S. Kunto as Governance Secretary & General Counsel, E. Ballantyne as Acting Director of Teaching and Learning and D. Younes as Harassment & Discrimination Advisor. She also shared that a candidate has been hired for the role of Special Advisor to MSVU on Indigenous Affairs, with an announcement coming out soon.

J. Dickinson shared that we are receiving two new scholarships from the Harris-McCain Foundation, in which recipients will receive \$4000 per year over their four years of study.

J. Dickinson reported on several other key matters, including:

- The recent appointments of the Minister of Advanced Education and the Deputy Minister.
- Our new performance-based Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the province.
- Research Nova Scotia's decision to cease their support for Type 1 Basic Research as well as to cease matching federal funding for research.
- A document provided by the BoG Chair, which will be shared with Senators, that provides an overview of the BoG's governance review.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis reported on the recent changes to Post-Graduate Work Permits (PGWP) and Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs) for graduate students, sharing that 12% of study permits in Canada are allocated for graduate applicants. She highlighted that not all universities in Canada offer graduate programs, so institutions like MSVU, which do offer such programs, will need to allocate more than 12% of their allotted PALs to graduate students to address this discrepancy. Additionally, she discussed this year's PAL allocation, comparing it to the previous year's allotment and outlining the number of PALs required to be allotted to graduate students.

L. Francis provided an update on several key provincial government matters, including the feedback received on our Strategic Alignment Plan, confirming that we have met the necessary requirements to secure the full release of our holdback funding; the province's emphasis on accelerated programs with fewer requirements; and a recent meeting with the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) Board, during which similar themes of preference for accelerated programs were observed across universities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

L. Francis reported on several other points, including:

- Progress on the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan, aided by the valuable information gleaned through SEM sessions in the Fall.
- The creation of two policy subgroups by CAPP to address policy work that was delayed during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A reminder that nominations for teaching awards are due by February 18, with an invitation extended to Senators to nominate their colleagues.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault confirmed that we have received the full holdback funding from the province for our 2024-2025 operating grant. She also announced that our investment report will be made available on our website on March 31, 2025. Regarding the investment report, J. Dickinson highlighted that the BoG unanimously approved the motion for the annual disclosure of our investments.

D. Piccitto sought clarification regarding the BoG's unanimous decision to ensure transparency in our investments, specifically in relation to the public posting of the investments and compliance report.

J. Dickinson confirmed that a compliance statement will be issued and posted annually, alongside the investment report on March 31.

6. Question Period

B. Russo followed up on a previous enquiry regarding the policy that final exams must be worth a minimum of 30%. L. Francis confirmed that this is on the CAPP agenda, with the goal to bring an update for a future Senate meeting.

J. Sawler inquired about the conditions that will be attached to our new MOU. In response, L. Francis explained that some of the conditions align with our ongoing initiatives, while other items present more challenges or uncertainties. Senators spoke about specific examples as well as the current lack of specific details on how these elements will relate to our bilateral agreement and operating grant. (J. Sawler, L. Francis, J. Dickinson, I. Nault, A. Card)

D. Piccitto raised concerns about the ongoing removal of EDIA (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) language at institutions in other provinces and inquired how MSVU plans to protect the progress we have made in this area. In response, L. Francis noted that, at the provincial level, we received positive feedback on the EDIA component of our strategic alignment report. However, she acknowledged that some requests, such as accelerated programming, may have implications for EDIA that are not being fully considered by the provincial government, and that at the federal level, the situation is less certain. J. Dickinson publicly affirmed her commitment to maintaining these efforts and will take a firm stance to not back down on the progress we have made in this area. (D. Piccitto, L. Francis, J. Dickinson)

A. Benzaquén inquired about any further discussions regarding the potential acceptance of students with two years of university coursework into a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program. J. Dickinson responded that this is not currently being considered at MSVU, although it remains a topic of interest for the provincial government. L. Francis emphasized that if the province were to alter the B.Ed. requirements, we would actively oppose such interference, although, should the change occur, discussions would be necessary to determine our next steps. A. Card added that the Atlantic university Provosts firmly opposed any changes to admission requirements this year, as well as strongly opposed the 8-month B.Ed. program at Cape Breton University. However, it was acknowledged that, at some point, adjustments may be required to align with government directives. (A. Benzaquen, L. Francis, J. Dickinson, A. Card)

L. Francis emphasized the importance of continuing these discussions as an institution. The idea of holding town hall meetings was proposed, and it was suggested that such conversations could take place during Campus Exchange sessions. L. Francis further recommended that discussions be conducted within departments and units, allowing for engagement with various groups and addressing their specific needs and questions. (L. Francis, D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson)

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Academic Policy and Planning

7.1.1. Academic Calendar dates 2025-2026 and 2026-2027

S. Hale Wills presented the Academic Calendar dates for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 academic years for information.

R. Bursey raised concerns about the equity of the 2026 Summer Session II schedule, noting that there are more Thursday classes than Monday/Wednesday classes. While S. Hale Wills noted that Thursday/Friday of the last week of classes may be designated as in-class exam days only, she will verify and bring back to Senate any potential changes.

K. Schlieff inquired about the timing of the fall reading break, pointing out the imbalance between 9.5 weeks of instruction before the break and only 3 weeks afterward. S. Hale Wills agreed to take this back to CAPP to explore possible alternatives. L. Francis added that NS universities initially consulted about the timing of the fall break but noted that this may be open to change. B. Russo expressed agreement and support for K. Schlieff's concerns.

7.2. Undergraduate Curriculum

7.2.1. History

7.2.1.1. New Course Proposal

7.2.1.1.1. HIST 3224: History of Disability in Canada

Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that Senate approve the new course HIST 3224. CARRIED.

7.2.2. Mathematics and Statistics

7.2.2.1. New Course Proposal

7.2.2.1.1. MATH 3414: Special Topics in Mathematics

Moved by A. Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the new course MATH 3414. CARRIED.

7.2.2.2. Changes to Existing Program

A. Card presented 7.2.2.2.1 to 7.2.2.2.3 in an omnibus Motion.

7.2.2.2.1. Requirements for Bachelor of Arts—Mathematics and Bachelor of Science—Mathematics

7.2.2.2.2. Requirements for Bachelor of Arts (Honours)—Mathematics and Bachelor of Science (Honours)—Mathematics

7.2.2.2.3. Deletion of Minor in Statistics and Minor in Applied Statistics and Addition of Minor in Statistics & Data Analytics

Regarding 7.2.2.2.3, M. McGonnell inquired if the changes are substantial enough to require MPHEC approval, to which L. Francis confirmed that minors are not included under MPHEC.

7.2.2.2.4. **Moved** by A. Card, seconded by C. Dawson, that Senate approve the revisions to the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts—Mathematics and Bachelor of Science—Mathematics; Bachelor of Arts (Honours)—Mathematics and Bachelor of Science (Honours)—Mathematics; Deletion of Minor in Statistics and Minor in Applied Statistics; and Addition of Minor in Statistics & Data Analytics. CARRIED.

7.2.3. Politics, Economics and Canadian Studies

A. Card presented 7.2.3.1.1 to 7.2.3.3.1 in an omnibus motion.

7.2.3.1. Changes to Existing Program (Canadian Studies)

7.2.3.1.1. Changes to Canadian Emphasis Courses list

7.2.3.2. Changes to Existing Program (Political Studies)

7.2.3.2.1. Requirements for Major, Combined Major and Concentration

7.2.3.2.2. Changes to Canadian and Regional Politics course list

- 7.2.3.3. Changes to Existing Program (Public Policy Studies)
 - 7.2.3.3.1. Requirements for Major
 - Moved** by A. Card, seconded by J. Sawler, that Senate approve the changes to the Canadian Emphasis Courses list; changes to Canadian and Regional Politics course list; change in Requirements for a Major, Combined Major and Concentration in Political Studies; and change in Requirements for a Major in Public Policy Studies. CARRIED.
- 7.2.4. Psychology
 - 7.2.4.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.4.1.1. PSYC 3335: Historical and Critical Perspectives on Psychology
 - Moved** by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that Senate approve the addition of the new course PSYC 3335. CARRIED.
 - 7.2.4.2. Deletion of Courses
 - A. Card presented 7.2.4.2.1 and 7.2.4.2.2 as an omnibus motion.
 - 7.2.4.2.1. PSYC 3307: Roots of Modern Psychology
 - 7.2.4.2.2. PSYC 3360: Science and Knowing
 - Moved** by A. Card, seconded by C. Dawson, that Senate approve the deletion of PSYC 3307 and PSYC 3360. CARRIED.
 - 7.2.4.3. Changes to Existing Program
 - 7.2.4.3.1. Requirements for Bachelor of Arts—Psychology and Bachelor of Science—Psychology, Combined Major, Combined Major with Honours, Bachelor of Arts (Honours)—Psychology and Bachelor of Science Honours)—Psychology
 - Moved** by A. Card, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that Senate approve the changes to Requirements for Bachelor of Arts—Psychology and Bachelor of Science—Psychology, Combined Major, Combined Major with Honours, Bachelor of Arts (Honours)—Psychology and Bachelor of Science Honours)—Psychology. CARRIED.
- 7.2.5. Tourism and Hospitality Management
 - A. Card presented 7.2.5.1.1 to 7.2.5.3.1 in an omnibus motion.
 - 7.2.5.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.5.1.1. THMT 3403: Hospitality and Tourism Facilities Management
 - 7.2.5.2. Deletion of Course
 - 7.2.5.2.1. THMT 3305: International Travel and Tourism

7.2.5.3. Changes to Existing Program

7.2.5.3.1. Requirements for Certificate, Diploma, Degree and addition to electives list

Moved by A. Card, seconded by R. Bursey, that Senate approve the new course THMT 3403; deletion of THMT 3305; and the changes to Requirements for Certificate, Diploma, Degree and addition to electives list in Tourism & Hospitality Management. CARRIED.

7.2.6. Changes

A. Card presented the following changes for information.

7.2.6.1. Child and Youth Study

7.2.6.1.1. New course name, description, and short title for CHYS 3323

7.2.6.1.2. New description for CHYS 3333

7.2.6.2. Psychology

7.2.6.2.1. New prerequisite for PSYC 3302

7.2.6.2.2. New prerequisite for PSYC 3305

7.2.6.2.3. New prerequisite for PSYC 3310

7.2.6.2.4. New prerequisite for PSYC 3313

7.2.6.2.5. New prerequisite for PSYC 3315

7.2.6.2.6. New prerequisite for PSYC 3319

7.2.6.2.7. New prerequisite and description for PSYC 3330 and PSYC 3331

7.2.6.2.8. New prerequisite for PSYC 4405 and PSYC 4406

7.2.6.2.9. New prerequisite for PSYC 4407

7.2.6.2.10. New prerequisite for PSYC 4410

7.2.7. 14-Month B.Ed. program

A. Card provided an overview of the 14-month B.Ed. program for informational purposes and discussion, emphasizing that while the program requirements are aligned with our existing 20-month program, the key difference lies in the inclusion of summer courses, allowing for expedited completion. A. Card noted that the first cohort of the program will not be publicly advertised but will instead be offered exclusively to individuals who have already applied to the 20-month B.Ed. program.

J. Sawler inquired about the potential implications for faculty and staff during the summer. A. Card responded that two full-time faculty members will be involved in the program during the summer, with additional support from part-time instructors, and that the overall staffing and resources remain consistent.

C. McLean asked whether the 14-month program would be promoted in the future. A. Card explained that the program is currently provisional, with an

evaluation component in place, after which decisions regarding the program's direction will be made.

A. Benzaquén referenced a similar program at Acadia and wondered if the shorter 14-month option could aid in our recruitment strategy. A. Card indicated that the majority of the students contacted have expressed interest in the 14-month program, as opposed to the 20-month version.

B. Russo raised a question regarding the potential long-term effects on teaching quality and teacher retention associated with shorter programs. A. Card replied that past studies have shown that longer programs tend to be more beneficial in the long term, ensuring higher teacher retention rates. He also noted the cyclical nature of teacher supply and demand. L. Francis added that she is raising these points with Advanced Education, emphasizing that they should be focusing on teacher retention in the profession rather than accelerated programming. She also highlighted that MSVU boasts one of the highest teacher retention rates in the province.

On the topic of the teacher shortage, A. Benzaquén asked for insights into the expected duration of the shortage. J. Dickinson replied that the province has yet to invest in research on the issue; that current efforts have been focused solely on increasing the number of B.Ed. applicants, which does not directly address the need for more teachers; and that the province has not committed to investing in additional faculty to train more educators. A. Card added that demand for teachers is expected to remain high for at least the next five years and that construction of eight new schools in the Halifax area supports the demand.

7.3. Nominations

7.3.1. Nominations for Senate committee vacancies

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

Committee	Nominee	Term Begins	Term Ends
Research and Publications	Dr. Karen Macfarlane	When elected	30 June 2027
	Dr. Jessie-Lee MacIsaac	When elected	30 June 2027
Graduate Studies Program and Policy	Dr. Fernando Nunes	When elected	30 June 2027
Teaching and Learning	Dr. Danielle Cox	When elected	30 June 2027
	Dr. Johan Woodworth	When elected	30 June 2027

7.4. Research and Publications

7.4.1. New Policy: Expiration and Return of Grant Funds

J. Gahagan presented the new policy named Expiration and Return of Grant Funds, noting that the rationale for this policy is to ensure internal grants are being used in an effective and timely manner.

In Section 5, D. Piccitto sought clarification about replacing the title “Associate Vice-President Research” with the email address “research@msvu.ca.”

J. Gahagan responded that only they (as AVPR) and the Research Grants Officer have access to the email address and that the change in email address is intended to aid with any future transition of the AVPR.

A friendly amendment was agreed upon to add the title “Associate Vice-President Research” before the email address.

M. McGonnell proposed that the word “School” be struck from the form, as this is not a term that is used at MSVU. P. Crouse clarified that the form has come to Senate for information but that this revision will be made.

Moved by J. Gahagan, seconded by I. Nault, that Senate approve the new policy: Expiration and Return of Grant Funds, effective immediately.
CARRIED.

7.5. Joint Board/Senate Liaison Committee

G. Durepos reported on the recent JBSL meeting, highlighting two key themes discussed:

- Reflection on job action: A roundtable discussion on strategies to rebuild the relationship between the BoG, Senate and the broader MSVU community.
- BoG Governance Review: Draft report from the external consultant firm, confidential interviews, areas of focus for the review, the role of the Sisters of Charity and scheduling of the next JBSL meeting.

J. Dickinson clarified that, while the Sisters of Charity do not wish to fully withdraw, they have expressed the desire to no longer hold the position of Chancellor.

J. Sawler inquired about the consulting firm selected to conduct the governance review, as well as the process by which individuals were chosen for confidential interviews within the MSVU community. G. Durepos responded that JBSL members were selected for interviews, and J. Dickinson noted that she had recommended to the BoG that both outgoing and incoming faculty and student Board members, as well as BoG support staff, be interviewed. Other Senators shared their experiences with the interview process. S. Kunto identified the consulting firm as Kate Fagan

Taylor Consulting Ltd. (J. Sawler, G. Durepos, J. Dickinson, A. Thurlow, T. Yu, and S. Kunto)

Specific language in the Charter regarding selection of BoG representatives was also discussed, with Senators noting that each constituency group is responsible for selecting its own representatives to the BoG. J. Dickinson noted that reducing faculty membership or altering the language in the Charter regarding the selection of representatives has not been proposed. (D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson, S. Kunto, T. Yu)

8. Other Reports

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

T. Yu reported on the December 6, 2024, BoG meeting, noting that the meeting was conducted efficiently and productively. She provided a written report, which was shared in advance, and an oral report. She reported to Senate that her written report encouraged BoG members to visit the FA's website to read about the signing of the Collective Agreement and the overall labour dispute and that the report informed the BoG of the motion passed by the FA, affirming the right of faculty representatives to deliver uncensored reports to the BoG.

T. Yu reported on her oral report, in which she informed BoG members of communication from CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) to the President and from ANSUT (Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers) to the Board; highlighted the FA's current priorities; and noted contention between the BoG and FA regarding issues of representation, employer roles, and transparency. She encouraged the JBSL committee to address and resolve any misunderstandings or issues related to these topics and collegial governance.

A. Benzaquén inquired about the BoG's understanding of who they consider to be the employer. T. Yu responded that the BoG's position is that MSVU is the employer, whereas the FA maintains that the BoG is the employer, and that MSVU represents the broader community as a whole.

8.2. Students' Union

C. Cameron reported on the donation received from the MSVU Alumni Association, which supported the SU's "Visiting Home for the Holidays" project. They also expressed gratitude for the donations made on Giving Tuesday and indicated plans to launch a community project fund. Additionally, C. Cameron discussed the ongoing food security seminar series, as well as the food security assistantship and grants. Lastly, C. Cameron announced that the financial statements for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 fiscal years are currently under review by the auditors and that an update will soon be made to the SU's website to include detailed meeting agendas and minutes.

S. Kaur reported on the upcoming food security roundtable scheduled for February 13. She also noted that the MSVU Food Bank is hosting a culturally diverse dinner this evening. S. Kaur spoke of the success of winter orientation, highlighting the graduate student social and knowledge fair. She also mentioned several upcoming events, including the SU elections, a career fair for students, and a potential graduate investment and financial literacy workshop.

M. Minocha reported on a meeting with L. Francis regarding initiatives for directed study and experiential learning opportunities. She reported that the SU also participated in the recently held AI panel, where students advocated for new and innovative teaching strategies. Lastly, M. Minocha mentioned that the SU is organizing a "Safe Rave" event on March 7, with proceeds from the event to benefit the organization "Wellness Within".

D. Hazelton announced the upcoming launch party for the SU newsletter and shared that submissions for newsletter topics are now being accepted on the SU website.

K. Schlieff provided an update on campus societies, highlighting efforts to foster collaborations between societies on campus. He encouraged Senators to direct students interested in forming societies to the SU for support.

Senators offered their support and suggestions for the proposed graduate student financial literacy session. (J. Dickinson, J. Sawler, R. Bursey, S. Trenholm, B. Russo)

J. Dickinson raised the fact that MSVU is the only food bank within our postal code and inquired whether this could help increase support through Feed NS. C. Cameron acknowledged the fact but noted that while Feed NS is aware of this, the stock is not always sustainable and that the SU's focus is currently on maintaining this essential service.

9. New Business

No New Business was identified.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of November 29, 2024
- Revisions to Terms of Reference for UREB, Bylaw 14.13
- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- Nominations for Senate-elected committee vacancies
- New policy for CRP: Expiration and Return of Grant Funds

Senate received for information:

- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- Academic Calendar dates for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027

11. Adjournment

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.