



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

March 27, 2026  
2 p.m.

## MINUTES

**Present:** J. Dickinson (Chair), J. Bail, E. Ballantyne, C. Barker, A. Benzaquén, G. Boulet, S. Brigham, R. Bursey, A. Card, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, N. Deal, T. Findlay, L. Francis, J. Gahagan, S. Hale Wills, T. Harriott, E. Henderson, S. Huntemann, K. Jones, M. McGonnell, M. Minocha, I. Nault, L. Paul, D. Piccitto, S. Reddington, B. Russo, K. Schlieff, G. Sneddon, E. Solas, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, J. Valcke, K. Whitfield, O. Wokoma, S. Zegarra

**Regrets:** M. Matthews, C. McLean, J. Ryuzaki

**Observers:** K. Allan, G. Batten, M. Caswell, J. Lamb, L. MacFarlane, K. White

*The meeting was called to order at 2:02 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

Jeannie Bail presented 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 B. Russo, seconded by S. Brigham, to approve the agenda as circulated. CARRIED.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. February 27, 2026

**Moved** by B. Russo, seconded by S. Hale Wills, to approve the minutes of February 27, 2026, as amended. CARRIED.

#### **4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

- 4.1. Senate's role in provincially mandated academic program review (Schedule H)  
J. Dickinson introduced the topic and limited the discussion to 30 minutes, as previously decided at EX, and invited T. Findlay and L. Francis to continue the introduction. T. Findlay began with an announcement that JBSL is planning a joint Senate-Board meeting for an opportunity to discuss Schedule H. She also outlined that this current Business Arising discussion would be about other ways Senate could discuss their role in this process. L. Francis continued that Senate has been updated throughout the program review process, that meetings ahead will reflect on Provincial and MPHEC-provided data and that L. MacFarlane is collecting data and meeting and collaborating with units across campus. She concluded that the work of Senate committees and Senate processes will continue to be followed regarding implementation of any changes.

J. Dickinson then opened the topic for discussion.

Acknowledgement of the work of all involved on the reporting thus far was noted. The importance of holding a special Senate meeting was discussed, given the extent of the bilateral agreement and the need to clarify the many schedules that involve academic matters. Who should be involved in discussions and the timing for those meetings was discussed. Concerns put forward included the timeline of the reporting; not having the opportunity to discuss other schedules; lack of transparency about the process and need to understand the goals more fully from a Senate perspective; and the risk that decisions would be made without Senate's timely involvement, thereby bypassing Senate's role to provide oversight of academic programming. Senators were invited to share questions about the schedules, and the lack of flexibility in the program review process at this point was reiterated. A suggestion was made for Departments/Faculties to work collectively rather than independently to best represent MSVU. While recognizing that not all faculty are represented at Senate, some Senators noted that a larger scale meeting might not allow for Senate governance concerns to be adequately addressed. (G. Boulet, B. Russo, D. Piccitto, A. Thurlow, T. Findlay, I. Nault, L. Francis)

J. Dickinson responded that, as no decisions are required by the Board or Senate yet, she sees that a first step would be the joint Senate-Board open conversation event on Schedule H. In addition, she noted the upcoming Campus Exchange and that L. Francis has also made herself available to speak to all Departments/Faculties. J. Dickinson asked for a show of hands to determine if a special Senate meeting should be called at this time, with the result against doing so.

#### **5. Administration Updates**

- 5.1. President  
J. Dickinson recognized the achievements of Dr. K. Whitfield, who received a grant for global health/nutrition research; Dr. J. Keefe, who was recently reappointed as the

Lena Isabel Jodrey Chair in Gerontology and, by association, the Director of the Nova Scotia Centre for Aging, for another five-year term; the Dimensions team, comprised of Dr. P. Joy, Dr. T. Franz-Odenaal and Dr. J. Gahagan, who has had their grant application approved with MSVU as the lead and partnering with St. Anne, UPEI, UNB and NSCC; and a second Dimensions grant that has been approved with Dr. T. Franz-Odenaal partnering with UNB.

Congratulations were given to the Mount Mystics basketball teams, who both made it to the ACAA Final held on March 8 at MSVU. J. Dickinson recognized Chase Tynes, awarded 2025-26 CCAA All-Canadian for Men's Basketball, and Victoria Strickland, awarded 2025-26 CCAA All-Canadian for Women's Basketball.

J. Dickinson continued her report with the news that legislation is moving forward for the Provincial Government to appoint the next NSCC President and that a steering committee is being formed to decide programming. She noted that amendments to the provincial budget changes that were announced do not affect MSVU.

J. Dickinson thanked the Students' Union for their request that MSVU consider meeting the obligation to graduate students whose scholarship money was lost through provincial cuts. She noted that some money towards the overall obligation has been identified to put towards those scholarships and that affected students should be notified shortly.

J. Dickinson reported on meetings with CONSUP (Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents) and ANSUT (Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers) regarding Bill 12, program review and other related matters.

J. Dickinson reported that she met with Mi'kmaq chiefs from across NS, who all sit on the Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) Board, which is in the preliminary stages of proposing an MOU with universities for a new engagement framework for use with new programming that involves Indigenous content.

J. Dickinson concluded by sharing that the new chair of MPHEC is Lindsay Wadden.

## 5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis's report included thanking the teams in the Registrar's Office, IT&S and Communications who worked around a technology issue at the vendor to facilitate registration which opened last week and coincided with a campus power outage.

L. Francis reported that a meeting with S. Hale Wills, K. Jones, and three representatives from the Students' Union had been held to discuss students' experiences with recent academic integrity appeals and that this conversation will continue.

L. Francis highlighted Dr. Sarah Elaine Eaton's visit to MSVU through the President's Visiting Lecture Series, noting that in collaboration with SMU, four days of events occurred on the theme of Plagiarism, AI and Academic Integrity.

The final segment of L. Francis's report referenced the Auditor General of Canada report on the IRCC changes to student visa applications and number of visas available. She noted that the process, which impacted small provinces more deeply, included flaws that caused a reduced number of student visas granted but did not meet the goal of finding fraud.

### 5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault reported that Budget Advisory Committee meetings have been postponed due to various challenges and that more time is being taken to communicate and plan in the short- and long term. She concluded her report by announcing that the PsyD program has received funding for all three contracts promised by government: the academic program, the capital project and the operation of the clinic.

## 6. Question Period

J. Bail reported that the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Education Library is closing due to budget cuts and that a lot of uncertainty exists around library specialists at public school libraries, thereby leading to advocacy happening in the library sector at present.

K. Jones inquired regarding the use of tablecloths at meetings and associated costs.

J. Dickinson responded that changes to catering services are being considered and that Senate will have an opportunity to discuss ideas for changes.

B. Russo reported on the upcoming Red Dress Day organized by Kayla Bernard, Indigenous Student Support Advisor, and noted that details are included in the Campus Bulletin.

S. Brigham inquired regarding funding for PhD students admitted for this coming year.

L. Francis responded that MSVU will fund all award recipients for the first two years as long as the scholarship criteria are met.

At 3:10 p.m. a technology issue required that the meeting pause; it resumed at 3:24 p.m.

## 7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

### 7.1. Senate Executive

#### 7.1.1. Adding members on Senate

P. Crouse reviewed that the SU is interested in bringing forward a change to the Senate Bylaws to add a seat in Senate for an Indigenous student

representative and that by doing so, an additional elected faculty seat would be required to accord with the Charter. S. Zegarra added that the voice of an Indigenous student representative is needed in the Senate space and filling seven student seats will not be problematic. Feedback from Senators was invited.

Senate members expressed support for this change. During the discussion it was noted that the ex officio Mi'kmaq seat has been unfilled for some time, that more Indigenous representation would be a good goal and that a future seat for the University's Special Advisor on Indigenous Affairs could be considered. P. Crouse responded to questions regarding the process of changing the Bylaws, noting considerations for the elected Faculty Complement seats. (C. Dawson, E. Ballantyne, P. Crouse, J. Dickinson, S. Huntemann, C. Barker, K. Allan, B. Russo)

## 7.2. Academic Policy and Planning

### 7.2.1. Revisions to Course Outline Policy

As outlined in the covering memo for this item, L. Francis introduced the recent work of CAPP in proposing a comprehensive update to the Course Outline Policy.

Throughout the discussion, Senators expressed appreciation for the amount of work undertaken to prepare this policy update.

The discussion opened by recognizing the significant change in workload for Chairs; the shift to review all course outlines; the quantity of the existing policy with strikethrough; a request for rationale; concerns about the use of the verb "approving"; and clarity that the scope of the review be limited to compliance with the policy and not infringe upon academic freedom. Senators spoke to the additional steps as quality assurance; the goal to provide up front clear guidance for instructors and accountability for the institution, thereby alleviating concerns expressed by students/faculty; inconsistencies noted in course outlines by external reviewers; some of the strikethrough being attributed to compliance with the Policy on Policies; and the use of the word "approving" as an oversight. It was noted that, to mitigate the administrative burden, some Chairs have been using checklists and receive assistance from administrative assistants. E. Ballantyne offered for the TLC to work in collaboration with Chairs to design checklists that would work well for this purpose and noted a suggestion to improve the formatting of the TLC course outline template. (A. Benzaquén, A. Card, E. Ballantyne, L. Francis, C. Dawson, D. Piccitto, S. Trenholm, E. Solas, B. Russo, K. Whitfield, M. McGonnell, C. Barker, S. Zegarra)

The discussion turned to the language used in the new policy regarding accessibility and accommodations, noting that the language can be considered offensive although it does reflect provincial standards and the NS Accessibility Act. It was clarified that the language refers to the beginning step—that a student must register with Accessibility Services to receive accommodation—and that Accessibility Services will then guide a student through the process. The need to clarify details about the communication process and responsibilities was noted by several Senators. (B. Russo, L. Paul, J. Dickinson, K. Jones, K. Whitfield, L. Francis)

The discussion also addressed the timing of outline submissions with particular concern for the January term; flexibility for an instructor to make changes to a course outline; the related policies section; and concerns about the specificity of due dates and values of each assessment disadvantaging students and changing pedagogical approaches in courses with many assignments. Although the policy sets specific deadlines and required course outline components, it was emphasized that flexibility and grace are necessary for realistic implementation of this policy and that the updated framework ensures that students receive their course information in a timely, transparent manner, while allowing for minor adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances like snow days or pedagogical shifts. One suggestion was that more discretion should be left with each Chair to determine how to ensure compliance within the Department’s internal processes. (J. Valcke, S. Huntemann, P. Crouse, T. Harriott, C. Dawson, A. Card, C. Barker, L. Francis, K. Whitfield, A. Benzaquén)

A concern was raised regarding the changed wording regarding attendance. L. Francis clarified that the Course Outline Policy outlines what needs to be in the policy for compliance and that the Academic Calendar provides more detailed wording on the Attendance Policy. It was clarified that CAPP did not intend to imply that attendance is not important. Faculty expressed concern about attendance issues. (D. Piccitto, L. Francis, M. McGonnell, E. Solas)

Three areas of the Procedures section were addressed: a request to clarify that later changes to the policy must still be in compliance, a request to add a link to the Office of Student Experience website and a question about the retention schedule of course outlines. (D. Piccitto, M. Caswell, J. Bail)

During the discussion, the following were accepted as friendly amendments:

- Under Policy, para 2: “approving course outlines ensuring” to “evaluating course outlines in order to ensure”
- Under Procedures, bullet 3: addition of “and in compliance with this policy.”

- Under Related Policies: addition of a section referring readers to the Office of Student Experience website

**Moved** by L. Francis, seconded by C. Dawson, that Senate approve the revisions to the Course Outline Policy, effective Summer Session I 2026. CARRIED

**Moved** by B. Russo, seconded by S. Huntemann, to extend the meeting to 5:30 p.m. CARRIED

- 7.2.2. Revisions to Nancy’s Chair Committee Terms of Reference  
C. Dawson presented the revisions to the Nancy’s Chair and Nancy’s Chair Committee Terms of Reference.

S. Brigham asked if the pronoun “their” could replace “her” under the “Eligibility” section. C. Dawson and A. Benzaquén accepted this as a friendly amendment.

S. Brigham also asked why the Dean of Graduate Studies is being removed from the committee. C. Dawson responded that, in consultation with colleagues in Women and Gender Studies and the Dean, it was noted that the Coordinator of the Graduate Women and Gender Studies program has more interaction with the Nancy’s Chair so this change was proposed.

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by A. Benzaquén, that Senate approve the revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Nancy’s Chair and the Nancy’s Chair Committee, effective immediately. CARRIED

7.3. Undergraduate Curriculum (A. Card)

7.3.1. Biology

7.3.1.1. Deletion of Course

7.3.1.1.1. BIOL 6100: Advanced Directed Study

**Moved** by A Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the deletion of BIOL 6100. CARRIED

7.3.1.2. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.1.2.1. Program requirements for major

**Moved** by A Card, seconded by C. Dawson, that Senate approve changes to the program requirements for a Major in Biology. CARRIED.

7.3.2. Business Administration & Tourism and Hospitality Management

7.3.2.1. Articulation Agreements

7.3.2.1.1. New Articulation Agreement with New Brunswick Community College Hospitality and Tourism Management program and MSVU Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management

7.3.2.1.2. New Articulation Agreement with New Brunswick Community College Hotel and Restaurant Management program and MSVU Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management

S. Huntemann asked about the math requirement. Since no one was sure of the answer to the question, J. Dickinson proposed that the vote would be called and then A. Card would clarify the math requirement and report back at the next Senate meeting.

**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, to approve these articulation agreements between MSVU and NB Community College. CARRIED.

7.3.2.2. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.2.2.1. Calendar description for Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management and for Work Experience Route

Questions were raised about the rationale and the wording of the change. Clarification was provided that the new wording will require a GPA of 2.0 for both programs, previously not required for the “work experience route” and that this change removes a barrier to registration for students. (B. Russo, M. McGonnell, L. Francis, A. Card)

**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that Senate approve changes to the Calendar description for the Diploma in Tourism and Hospitality Management and Work Experience Route. CARRIED.

7.3.3. History (*for Approval*)

7.3.3.1. New Course Proposals

7.3.3.1.1. HIST 2244: History of China Before 1600

7.3.3.1.2. HIST 2245: History of China After 1600

**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by A. Benzaquén, that Senate approve the new courses HIST 2244 and HIST 2245. CARRIED.

7.3.4. Changes

A. Card presented the following change for information.

7.3.4.1. History

7.3.4.1.1. New course title and description for HIST 2250

7.4. Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarships and Awards

7.4.1. In-course scholarships

Stephanie Hale Wills reviewed the in-course scholarship program, including procedures and policy. She then referred to changes considered by UASAC and presented scholarship award data from 2022/23 and 2023/24.

L. Paul inquired about full-time student status for students in Accessibility Services, criteria for scholarships and Indigenous scholarships. S. Hale Wills responded that the Registrar's Office works with Advancement to relay to donors a desire to keep criteria broad and that the Assistant Registrar Financial Aid works with the Indigenous Student Centre to verify information regarding Indigenous ancestry.

J. Dickinson thanked L. Paul for her questions and noted that the part-time/full-time definition regarding Accessibility Services is an issue that is being addressed. Given the lateness of the day, it was agreed to continue this discussion during Business Arising at the April meeting.

7.5. Joint Board/Senate Liaison

The report from JBSL was provided during Business Arising.

**8. Other Reports**

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

C. Barker reported on a February meeting with the Board of Governors including a presentation from Dr. D. Fisher, Department of Psychology, and Dr. T. Franz-Odenaal, Department of Biology, on research by faculty and students as well as the new MSc degree. C. Barker shared his impression that the research presentation was effective for the Board audience, who is less aware of the research side of a university's activities, and felt that this good news story was very effective in the face of the budget situation, also a topic at the meeting, and led to marketing thoughts

about what makes the Mount different. J. Dickinson agreed that the presentation was very well received by the Board of Governors.

(This report was presented earlier during the meeting.)

#### 8.2. Students' Union

In addition to the written report provided to Senate, S. Zegarra extended an invitation to the Technology Assistance Program launch, April 1, and the Three Minute Thesis Competition on April 7 organized by O. Wokoma.

### 9. New Business

No new business was identified.

### 10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes from February 27, 2026 meeting
- Revisions to the Course Outline Policy, CAPP 2014-04
- Revisions to Nancy's Chair Committee Terms of Reference
- Undergraduate curriculum changes

Senate received for information:

- One undergraduate curriculum change

### 11. Adjournment

As the agenda was exhausted, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.