

## MINUTES

Present: M. Bluechardt (Chair), P. Barry Mercer, Adriana Benzaquén, G. Boulet, P. Cantelo, P. Cormier-MacBurnie, D. Cox, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, R. Farmer, T. Findlay, D. Fisher, T. Harriott, T. Harrison, E. Henderson, N. Kayhani, K. Kienapple, G. MacDonald, J. MacLeod, J. McMullin, M. Nadeem, S. Perrott, D. Piccitto, K. Ritchie, T. Sawyer, Cornelia Schneider, S. Seager, D. Shiner, C. Slumkoski, R. Zuk

Regrets: K. Allan, A. Card, D. Plumb

*The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.; no observers were present.*

### 1. Indigenous Land Recognition

M. Bluechardt 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

Agenda item 7.2.2. Communication Studies was removed from the agenda.

**Moved** by K. Kienapple, seconded by D. Shiner, to approve the agenda as amended.  
CARRIED

### 3. Approval of Minutes of January 24, 2020

K. Ritchie referred Senators to the minutes and advised that the mineral she was speaking to with regard to new regulations for water testing was lead and not iron.

**Moved** by N. Kayhani, seconded by P. Barry Mercer, to approve the meeting minutes of January 24, 2020, as amended. CARRIED

### 4. Business Arising from the Minutes

#### 4.1. Restorative Process with Students' Union

J. McMullin provided an update on meetings held with various groups on campus. Restorative process facilitator, J. Llewellyn, and her team hope to bring students together on March 7 to discuss a recommended way forward. The restorative process team will likely recommend to the University a review of various policies and procedures with a hope to moving forward to build relationships that focus more on people rather than policies and procedures.

#### 4.2. Central Listing of Committees

J. McMullin highlighted her initial investigation of the suggestion made for a central location for all University committees and asked for further clarification on the project. Clarification was provided on the need for a central location where all University committees, working groups, and subcommittees are listed, including membership and terms of reference, if applicable. While information is readily available for Senate and Board committees, administrative committees are not listed online. It was also noted that the search function on our website does not work well. (J. McMullin, D. Piccitto, S. Seager, K. Ritchie)

#### 4.3. Student Positions on Senate Committees

T. Sawyer provided an update on students recently added to the Academic Appeals Committee and on the nomination process underway for the upcoming Students' Union elections. He was reminded that some committees require an alternate member to ensure quorum and student participation on the committee. (T. Sawyer, N. Kayhani)

### 5. Administration Updates

#### 5.1. President

M. Bluechardt spoke to the merging and renaming of the Mount's internal and external Aboriginal advisory committees to L'Nu Advisory Circle and highlighted her attendance at the mid-winter feast held in the dining hall and the mid-semester social held at the Aboriginal Student Centre.

She outlined the wrapping up of the strategic planning consultation sessions and highlighted the recent session held with the Sisters of Charity where the Sisters of Charity indicated their interest in engaging more with members of the campus community. She reiterated next steps in the preparation of the strategic plan document and noted themes emerging from the process.

As well, she outlined the various meetings, conferences, dinners and events she attended on behalf of the Mount including a Universities Canada session with Government officials in Ottawa. She spoke to the increasing need for the University to be represented by a Government Relations person who can liaise with the Government on behalf of the University.

Finally, she spoke to the official launch of the PACE program earlier in the day and acknowledged the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) for its \$10K donation to buy equipment for the children. Feedback on the program has been positive.

#### 5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

J. McMullin provided an update on searches for the Associate Vice-President Research and the Dean of Professional Studies and Graduate Studies positions; Search Committee members were thanked for their work. As well, an update on the faculty (tenure stream, library, lab instructor, and limited term) hiring

process was provided. The work of the URC was acknowledged in the review of faculty files for reappointment, promotion, and tenure.

### 5.3. Vice-President Administration

M. Nadeem spoke to the coronavirus and work undertaken in preparation for the virus, including applying an Aegis solution in high touch point areas, refilling hand sanitizers, and increasing the number of hand sanitizer locations. As part of Universities Canada and a public health initiative, the University is communicating regularly to receive updates and stay current on the status of the virus. At this point, risk to business disruptions is deemed low; if this escalates, the University will initiate its Pandemic Plan, which is part of the University's Emergency Response Plan. An explanation of the Emergency Response Plan was provided, and Senators were reassured that the situation is being monitored closely with preventative measures being taken.

## 6. Question Period

### Coronavirus

N. Kayhani questioned, given that the virus is unlike the H1N1 virus, whether the preventative measures taken in preparation for the coronavirus are adequate and what the plan entailed for the residences. The recommendations to use hand sanitizer and regularly wash hands were reiterated, and the protocol in place (including health services on Campus) for those in residences was explained. It was noted that should a student in residence become infected, the situation would then become a public health issue, and the University would work with public health to address the situation. (N. Kayhani, M. Nadeem)

### Reporting Lines

G. Boulet questioned, with regard to 4.1 Restorative Process with Students' Union, whether reporting lines are being reviewed and, in particular, why the Registrar reports to the Associate Vice-President Student Experience. The functions of the University and how the various offices have been impacting, and been impacted by, the situation are being considered; reporting lines are being reviewed. (G. Boulet, J. McMullin)

### Truth and Reconciliation

C. Slumkoski questioned whether the Sisters of Charity formally apologized for any part they played in the treatment of Aboriginal students within the residential schools. A brief discussion was held on the reconciliation panel placed in the Heritage Garden at Caritas Residence in 2018. The President will provide clarification with regard to whether a formal apology was given. (C. Slumkoski, J. McMullin, M. Bluehardt)

### Feedback for Examination and Course Outline Policy Revisions

N. Kayhani questioned whether feedback from Departments could be sought earlier in the process so that it can be incorporated before CAPP brings the policies to Senate. It was noted that the Course Outline and Examination policies will be reviewed in

approximately 4-6 weeks; at that time feedback will be sought from Departments.  
(N. Kayhani, J. McMullin)

#### L’Nu Advisory Circle

C. Schneider questioned whether it would be possible to submit agenda items for consideration by the Advisory Circle. The President will discuss this with the Advisory Circle at its first meeting on March 16 with a view to determining the best process for this input. (C. Schneider, M. Bluechardt)

#### Government Relations

T. Findlay questioned whether, when Government officials are on Campus, there could be a wider range of people invited to participate in the meetings. While not all meetings are conducive to an expanded audience, the President’s Office and Public Affairs will act on this suggestion where possible. (T. Findlay, M. Bluechardt)

#### Resources for Conferences

D. Piccitto questioned support and resources (including money) available for the Girls Conference held on Campus and whether more should be designated to enable the Alexa McDonough Institute (AMI) to facilitate conferences and events without the pressure of having to do so much fundraising for them. Brief discussions were held on the purpose, sustainability, and importance of the Institute; money budgeted specifically for Graduate student support; the strategic planning process that recognizes AMI’s importance, and the need for further consideration of its future. A work plan and budget are being analyzed for the upcoming year; this will better enable AMI to know what funding is available from the University’s operating budget and what fundraising will be required. As well, how the AMI fits into a broader branding strategy and how it can be better supported are being considered. In addition to the current sources of funding, it was suggested that establishing a more permanent relationship with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and connecting with municipal government departments may assist in securing a more stable source of funding. (D. Piccitto, G. MacDonald, J. McMullin, M. Bluechardt, M. Nadeem, T. Findlay, G. MacDonald)

#### Hiring of Administrative Assistants

S. Seager questioned what would be a reasonable length of time for departments to be without administrative support; the current administrative assistant in her department is leaving, and there is no information on when the vacancy will be filled. It was noted that HR was contacted and advertising conducted; an update will be sought through HR. (S. Seager, C. Dawson)

#### Update on Atlantis

R. Zuk highlighted the importance of the *Atlantis* publication and questioned whether there would be future issues of the publication. It was clarified that the *Atlantis* publication is an active publication; initiatives associated with *Atlantis* over the past three years were outlined. The current issue will be out in the spring; an overview of

the next three issues (Spring and Fall 2020 and Spring 2021) was provided. (R. Zuk, G. MacDonald)

#### Harassment and Discrimination (H&D) Policy Review

D. Piccitto reiterated a comment made at the last Senate meeting that, during the upcoming review of the H&D Policy, its relationship to the freedom of expression statement be examined to ensure that holding people to account and advocacy not be confused with bullying and harassment. As well, she asked that during the examination of gaps in the policy related to accessibility services, “accommodation” versus “modification” be examined to ensure that the accommodation being sought is not actually modification and that the integrity of the courses or program is not being impacted. Academic integrity was briefly discussed, and the possible need for an “Academic Integrity Policy” was suggested.

Brief discussions were held on the impact on faculty and staff workload, faculty rights when it comes to accommodation, protecting the integrity of courses/programs, the need for discussion with regard to EDIA/accommodation/modification, and student and human rights versus a duty to accommodate. The recent hiring of G. Johnston (Accessibility Services Manager), a new Accessibility Committee, and an upcoming government mandated Accessibility Plan were noted. Faculty were encouraged to contact G. Johnston for assistance when faced with accommodation requests and were advised that the accessibility plan is expected to address faculty support. G. Johnston is slated to attend the next meeting of the Faculty Association to discuss accommodating students. (D. Piccitto, S. Seager, A. Benzaquén, P. Barry Mercer, P. Cantelo, J. MacLeod)

As well, a brief discussion was held on student(s) who self-diagnose and are accommodated through Accessibility Services, and joint efforts of Accessibility Services and Counselling to help students move away from accommodated exams. Wording within the Accessibility Policy addressing best practices with regard to exam anxiety as well as the ineffectiveness of avoiding an exam as a measure to address exam anxiety were noted. (R. Zuk, P. Barry Mercer, P. Cantelo, K. Ritchie)

During Question Period, the session was extended by 10 minutes through the motion below:

**Moved** by D. Piccitto, seconded by A. Benzaquén, that Question Period be extended by 10 minutes. CARRIED with one opposed

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

##### 7.1. Academic Appeals

N. Kayhani provided an overview of four cases recently reviewed by Academic Appeals; one case was dismissed, two were withdrawn, and the fourth is completed but the student has not yet received the final decision.

## 7.2. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

### 7.2.1. International Education Centre

#### 7.2.1.1. Elimination of Academic Foundation Program

A question arose and clarification was provided on support that is available and criteria that must be met before admission to the University. (G. Boulet, K. Kienapple)

**Moved** by K. Kienapple, seconded by P. Barry Mercer, that Senate approve changes to the Graduate Academic Calendar arising from the elimination of the Academic Foundation Program. CARRIED

## 7.3. Undergraduate Curriculum

### 7.3.1. Biology

#### 7.3.1.1. New Course Proposals

##### 7.3.1.1.1. BIOL 2222: Introduction to Vertebrate Histology

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by T. Sawyer, that Senate approve the addition of BIOL 2222. CARRIED

### 7.3.2. History

#### 7.3.2.1. New Course Proposal

##### 7.3.2.1.1. HIST 2391: History of Education in Canada

#### 7.3.2.2. Changes to Existing Program

##### 7.3.2.2.1. Addition to list of North American History courses, History Areas of Study

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by C. Slumkoski, that Senate approve the addition of HIST 2391 and the associated changes to the existing program. CARRIED

### 7.3.3. Mathematics

#### 7.3.3.1. New Course Proposal

##### 7.3.3.1.1. MATH 0027: Statistics and Mathematics Preparation

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by J. McMullin, that Senate approve the addition of MATH 0027, effective immediately. CARRIED

C. Dawson explained that, while motions don't typically become effective until the next academic year, this course is required to run this summer to fulfill an admission requirement.

7.3.3.2. Deletion of Courses

7.3.3.2.1. MATH 0017: Statistics Preparation

7.3.3.2.2. MATH 0020: College Algebra

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by P. Cantelo, that Senate approve the deletion of MATH 0017 and MATH 0020. CARRIED

7.3.3.3. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.3.3.1. Changes to preamble in Math Calendar Entry

A small error, undetected by UCC, was pointed out and will be corrected: *On page 67, line 9, first paragraph and page 68, line 9, delete "0020" from the Calendar description.*

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by P. Cantelo, that Senate approve the changes to the Calendar description in MATH, with this correction. CARRIED

7.3.4. Political/Canadian Studies

7.3.4.1. New Course Proposal

7.3.4.1.1. CANA 2211/CULS 2211: Canadian Popular Culture

S. Seager questioned the lack of reference to female popular culture figures within the bibliography and description of the course. A brief discussion was held, noting UCC's faith in those offering the course, materials available within the library, content and authors of books on the reading list, and the number of female (10) versus male (9) authors. (S. Seager, C. Dawson, C. Slumkoski, K. Ritchie)

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by T. Findlay, that Senate approve the addition of the cross-listed course CANA 2211/CULS 2211. CARRIED

7.3.5. Changes

7.3.5.1. Mathematics

7.3.5.1.1. New prerequisites for MATH 1102

7.3.5.1.2. New prerequisites for MATH 2208

7.3.5.2. Women's Studies

7.3.5.2.1. New prerequisites for WOMS 3371/SOAN 3371

The above changes were presented to Senate for information purposes only.

#### 7.4. Library (D. Fisher)

D. Fisher invited Senators to SLC's final meeting scheduled for Friday, April 3, 2020, which includes lunch and a special topic presentation. He spoke to the work that T. Harrison and her team are doing to tag all books to address library security. The general collection is at approximately 25% with project completion estimated over the next 18-24 months; T. Harrison's team is exploring options to complete it sooner.

D. Piccitto stressed the importance of library security and whether a process should have been part of the planning for the McCain building. A discussion was held and information shared on the cost of the project, measures (including cameras, locks, and security checks) put in place, inventory and tagging of the library contents, the volume of work involved with purchasing tags and tagging books, a digital library assistant on order, the physical work that will need to be undertaken to install a security system, and work in progress by the library staff behind the scenes to prepare the library for a security system. (D. Piccitto, T. Harrison, R. Zuk, A. Benzaquén, J. McMullin)

#### 7.5. Writing Initiatives

##### 7.5.1. Changes to Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.10.1

D. Piccitto gave notice of the motion coming forward to the March Senate meeting with regard to changes to the Terms of Reference for the Writing Initiatives Committee.

#### 8. Other Reports

##### 8.1. Students' Union

T. Sawyer provided a brief update on student initiatives including the upcoming student elections, Annual General meeting and Student Awards Night.

##### 8.2. Board of Governors

No report was provided.

#### 9. New Business

##### 9.1. Enrollment Report (P. Barry)

P. Barry Mercer, Associate Vice-President Student Experience, presented on and spoke to a full-year comparison (as of Feb. 6/2020) of Education, Graduate, and Undergraduate enrollment. While overall total unit count is up 516 units or 3.7%, it is down slightly in Education, which can possibly be attributed to students having taken more summer classes. As well, student counts (a count of every individual student) over the same period increased in all areas, with a total student increase of 270 or 6%. These numbers were further broken down to show the increases for domestic versus visa students.

Total online registrations by term were reviewed and discussed; total online enrollment has increased 6% over the past year. While there was an increase in



online enrollment in all areas, the increase of over 400 for the fall term was highlighted.

As well, a ten-year comparison of international student enrollment was reviewed; it was noted that we have now surpassed the level of international enrollment the University had at its peak of Saudi students. Approximately 18% of the student population is currently made up of international students.

A five-year retention rate by academic level (all students) was examined; a small decline across all levels in terms of student retention this year was noted. Retention was then broken down by program and a focus on first-year students discussed.

As well, undergraduate retention rates by degree, of first-year students by degree, by admission status, and by numbers of International and those who have self-identified as Aboriginal, African Descent – CA, and African Descent – Visa for 2015-2019 were reviewed and discussed. While overall, retention is quite stable, the Retention Committee is investigating the slight overall decrease. Concern was noted regarding a decrease in the retention of Canadian students of African descent; the Retention Committee is working to develop better strategies to support all equity seeking groups.

A study conducted by MPHEC, and recently released, on retention of students in the Maritimes was referenced and briefly discussed. This study provides the Mount with comparator data and identifies average student first-year retention at 80% and international students at 82%. This study is available to Senators who wish to have the information.

She spoke to the success of the Centre for Academic Advising and Student Success (1200 student appointments in fall – a 61% increase), improvements to the Mount 101 program which will continue next year, and the Right Start Program that has received 227 faculty referrals in the fall (compared to 156 referrals in the Fall of 2018). These initiatives are seen as having a positive impact on retention.

In conclusion, she spoke to complete applications received for Fall 2020 as of February 10; it was noted that as of the current date, it is believed that the numbers may have evened out. An increase of 23% in Graduate enrollment, due to an increased number of cohorts, and a decline in undergraduate enrollment related to international applications (smaller intake of students from India this year and declines from China related to the coronavirus) were identified.

Brief discussions were held on what the retention rate represents, the focus on first-year students when determining retention, the impact of small changes in numbers on percentages, and the Mount's application of status for the Shastra Institute. (S. Seager, G. MacDonald, P. Barry Mercer)

## 10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- The minutes of the January 24, 2020, meeting
- The elimination of the Academic Foundation Program from the Graduate Calendar
- Several undergraduate curriculum changes

Senate received for information:

- Several undergraduate curriculum changes
- Notice of motion re changes to WIC's ToR, Bylaw 14.10.1
- Enrollment report

## 11. Adjournment

**Moved** by D. Fisher, seconded by J. MacLeod, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.