



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

November 28, 2025
2 p.m.

MINUTES

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

Regrets: J. Bail, C. Barker, J. Ryuzaki

Observers: G. Batten, M. Caswell, F. French, J. Lamb, L. MacFarlane, K. White

The meeting was called to order at 2:11 p.m.

Observers were identified and welcomed. New Senator N. Deal was welcomed. Senators whose terms are ending, G. Durepos and J. Sawler, were thanked.

Procedures to be used during the meeting and while voting on motions were outlined.

1. Indigenous Land Recognition

J. Dickinson provided an acknowledgement that the Mount is built on traditional, unceded Mi'kmaq territory and paid respect to the Indigenous peoples of the land on which Senate meets.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by S. Huntemann, to approve the agenda as circulated.
CARRIED.

T. Findlay inquired about the absence of advance supporting documents for Items 8.2 (Strategic Plan) and 9.1 (Enrollment Report), emphasizing that items discussing numbers (such as the enrollment report) are helpful to have ahead of the meeting.

In response, J. Dickinson explained that for Item 9.1, a PowerPoint presentation would be shared following the meeting, noting that enrollment figures change almost daily and that this approach allows for the most current information to be provided. Regarding Item 8.2, J. Dickinson indicated that the document is still in development and will be circulated by email in December once finalized.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. October 24, 2025

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by E. Henderson, to approve the minutes of October 24, 2025, as amended. CARRIED.

3.2. November 17, 2025

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by S. Huntemann, to approve the minutes of November 17, 2025, as circulated. CARRIED.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. IT&S Support

Following a recent SCOITS meeting, G. Sneddon reported on two issues: clarification of support for Mac users and recent changes to printer connectivity, particularly for laptop use. He confirmed that while Mac devices are supported, not all supports available for Windows systems can be provided for Macs and that IT&S agreed that communication regarding the improvements and limitations should be expanded.

G. Sneddon also reported that with the rollout of PaperCut alongside the new printers, printing from laptops should be better supported but that it is unclear whether PaperCut can be self-installed or if each laptop must be configured individually.

D. Piccitto expressed appreciation for the information and raised two additional points. First, she asked that communications regarding laptop printing clearly outline what is possible, the steps users need to take and the support available. Second, she noted that the rollout of the new printers and PaperCut has not been smooth, at least on her floor, and questioned why the implementation occurred mid-term.

J. Dickinson responded that the existing contract expired mid-term, necessitating the rollout, with I. Nault confirming that the previous contract could not be renewed or extended. I. Nault also indicated that the additional concerns would be brought back to IT&S without waiting for the next SCOITS meeting, and several other Senators echoed concerns regarding difficulties with scanning and printing, including in labs. (D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson, I. Nault, M. McGonnell, P. Crouse, B. Russo)

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson acknowledged the recent passing of Dr. Kim Kienapple, Dr. William Hare and Donald Wyllie. She also recognized several notable achievements, congratulating Dr. Chérif Matta on receiving the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award for the Sciences from McMaster University and the Professional of Distinction Award at the Discovery Awards ceremony and Dr. Janice Keefe on being honoured with the Dr. Janet Fast Research Excellence Award at the 2025 Canadian Caregiving Summit Awards Gala.

J. Dickinson provided updates on several provincial initiatives, including The Excellence in Early Childhood Education Bursary, which offers forty \$4,000 bursaries to support full-time students enrolled in an approved ECE diploma program. In addition, she reported that the Province has increased its financial commitment to the new Child Study Centre, with the project already underway. J. Dickinson updated on Bill 12, noting that the policy framework was informed by an environmental scan conducted with university Presidents and Board Chairs; the Mount, along with Dalhousie University and Cape Breton University, is expected to enter the “Individualized Regulations” phase in the near future.

J. Dickinson also addressed the federal landscape, indicating that the federal budget reflects a continued—though still uncertain—commitment to research funding and deferred infrastructure investments. She further noted changes announced by IRCC regarding international student targets for 2026, including a national cap of 155,000. She indicated that despite this cap, Canadian universities may still see growth opportunities and that the Mount issued 40% of its PAL (Provincial Attestation Letter) allocation in 2025.

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by A. Thurlow, to extend Administration Updates by ten minutes. CARRIED.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis reported on Schedule H, the academic program review arising from the bilateral agreement with the province. She noted that both the template and relevant data are to be shared prior to the holiday closure. She reported that a consulting group has been hired to work with MPHEC and the province on this initiative, and while the work may emphasize a portfolio-level review rather than individual program reviews, the precise scope has not yet been defined. L. Francis shared that, in addition, institutions are being asked to undertake a “pre-categorization” of programs, the full scope of which is unclear.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault reported that year-end budget projections are being finalized and indicated that the previously presented deficit budget is expected to remain. Further details will be provided at the January Senate meeting.

6. Question Period

In response to L. Francis’ update on Schedule H, B. Russo asked about the intended end goal of the process. It was noted that the categorization framework includes modernization, revitalization and rationalization, and J. Dickinson shared that information she has received indicates the overarching objective is to modernize academic programs to align with current standards and to identify skills gaps in relation to labour market needs, likely with an accountability framework that links demonstrated compliance to future funding. It was further noted that Provosts continue to emphasize the importance of institutional context,

including ensuring that review templates capture the full scope of programs beyond individual majors, while acknowledging that program costing is an integral component of the process. (B. Russo, L. Francis, J. Dickinson)

D. Piccitto raised concerns regarding the status of the EDIA committee in light of a recent invitation to past EDIA committee members to consult on the EDIA Action Plan. As a former member of the previous committee, she acknowledged the effort to move the process forward but noted concerns with the timing of the consultation and asked that it be postponed until the full committee is reconstituted. J. Dickinson clarified that this consultation will not be the sole mechanism for input and noted that a call for new committee representatives was issued to constituency groups earlier this week. B. Russo added that issues around transparency continue to be a concern for the EDIA Committee. M. McGonnell noted that the SNC had not been contacted but had participated in the nomination process for faculty members when the EDIA Committee was first established. (D. Piccitto, J. Dickinson, B. Russo, M. McGonnell)

G. Durepos inquired whether Mount 101 has been evaluated recently and, if so, where the corresponding report could be accessed. K. Jones confirmed that the course is reviewed and updated annually, noting that a more comprehensive evaluation was conducted a few years ago and that report could be shared. G. Durepos further asked whether student feedback has been incorporated into the review process, with M. Caswell explaining that students have the opportunity to provide comments at the end of each section of Mount 101, and these submissions are reviewed as part of the evaluation process. (G. Durepos, K. Jones, M. Caswell)

J. Sawler followed up on a September inquiry regarding the distribution of in-course scholarships, specifically asking when Senate would review the decision by UASAC and CAPP to eliminate faculty nominations and award scholarships solely based on GPA and when data on equitable distribution across programs would be presented. L. Francis clarified that the decision to use GPA exclusively was approved by UASAC and brought to CAPP for information. J. Sawler reminded Senate that the Charter states that “Senate deals with all matters arising in connection with scholarships” and that Senate could not fulfill this responsibility without timely access to the appropriate data.

Discussion followed regarding Senate’s responsibility in scholarships policy matters (including as outlined in the University Charter), the Terms of Reference for UASAC, the earliest timeframe in which changes to the scholarship policy could take effect (June 2026) and the need for clarity on instructions to Senate committees. L. Francis confirmed that data on the distribution of scholarships will be brought back to Senate, possibly in February, once UASAC has had sufficient time to review and to allow for meaningful discussion on the topic. It was highlighted that Senate committee Terms of Reference do not override the University Charter. (J. Sawler, L. Francis, G. Durepos, G. Boulet)

During the above discussion, the following motion was made:

Moved by G. Durepos, seconded by S. Huntemann, to extend question period by ten minutes. CARRIED.

M. Matthews spoke about SRIQs for CUPE members, wondering if they would be suspended due to the strike (matching what happened after the full-time faculty strike). It was noted that a Joint Committee decision is pending and will be communicated once finalized.
(M. Matthews, L. Francis, J. Dickinson)

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Ratification of Senate Parliamentarian

Moved by G. Durepos, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate ratify Dr. Elsie Henderson as Parliamentarian for the term January 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. CARRIED.

7.2. Academic Appeals

L. Francis reported that the majority of academic offenses seen recently are related to final exam infringements, including the use of cell phones or AirPods, as well as instances of AI-assisted work and plagiarism. She provided data on the number of reported offenses and subsequent appeals for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years, along with their outcomes.

7.3. Academic Policy and Planning

L. Francis introduced items 7.3.1 to 7.3.3 and opened the floor to questions.

7.3.1. Report on external review of Graduate Education – Literacy

7.3.2. Report on external review of Elementary and Middle School Education

7.3.3. Report on external review of Business Administration and Tourism & Hospitality Management

D. Piccitto expressed appreciation to CAPP for their effort to avoid using the phrase “out of scope” in the reports.

7.4. Academic Policy and Planning and Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.4.1. New Program Proposal for Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School and Child Clinical Psychology

L. Francis introduced the proposal and the relevant channels it went through during the approval process.

Moved by L. Francis, seconded by S. Trenholm, that Senate approve the new Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School and Child Clinical Psychology, effective upon MPHEC approval. CARRIED.

C. McLean spoke to a missed opportunity to consult with the CHYS Department during the development of the PsyD program and proposed exploring collaboration with CHYS moving forward. L. Francis responded that the current priority is securing approval through MPHEC and noted opportunity for collaboration in the future, including in areas such as research.

Similarly, T. Findlay asked whether the L'nu Advisory Circle had been consulted, particularly in light of the harmful legacy of the field of psychology for Indigenous Peoples. J. Dickinson indicated that she was unsure whether this consultation had occurred and committed to bringing the matter forward to the L'nu Advisory Circle.

B. Russo raised concerns about how the program will address the documented harms caused by mental health institutions to Indigenous Peoples, specifically asking whether an Indigenous community practicum placement would be included in the program and whether a designated number of seats would be reserved for Indigenous students. M. McGonnell responded that the proposal currently contains the information required for MPHEC approval, while several program elements—such as practicum locations—remain under development. She also noted that while strong interest in creating practicum opportunities within Indigenous communities exists, the number of placements required would need to be developed over time.

With respect to admissions, M. McGonnell indicated that no formal mechanism to reserve seats for Indigenous students exists, though openness to exploring this approach was expressed. She further elaborated that licensure and registration requirements necessitate early recruitment, as prospective students must complete specific undergraduate psychology degrees. B. Russo suggested the possibility of an annual report to support accountability, emphasizing that given the historical and ongoing harms associated with the field, and in alignment with the institution's mission, the Mount has a shared responsibility to address these issues proactively. (B. Russo, M. McGonnell, J. Dickinson)

D. Piccitto asked how the clinic will sustain itself financially in order to remain low-cost or no-cost for families in the community. M. McGonnell responded that the program and clinic are currently supported by provincial funding

secured for a five-year period and that longer-term sustainability planning will take place as the program progresses beyond that timeframe.

D. Piccitto raised a question about faculty resources, noting that the program would begin with eight students and expand over time, with each student requiring faculty supervision, and asked how this would be managed without negatively affecting other programs for which faculty are responsible.

M. McGonnell responded that funding has been secured for 5.5 faculty positions and that the supervision model will be similar to that used in the MA in School Psychology program, further clarifying that the PsyD does not involve a PhD-style dissertation, resulting in a more contained supervision workload, consistent with the program's focus on clinical training rather than research.

O. Wokoma sought clarification on admission requirements, specifically asking about a pathway for students with degrees in other disciplines to enter the program. M. McGonnell responded that registration as a Clinical Psychologist in Nova Scotia requires a Bachelor's degree in Psychology but noted that the Faculty is always open to advising prospective students on the steps they would need to take to meet this requirement.

Due to the concerns that she expressed in the discussion of the PsyD program, B. Russo proposed the following motion:

Moved that the Dean of Education, in collaboration with the Directors for the PsyD program provide a report to Senate that outlines how the PsyD program has addressed the concerns regarding inclusion of Indigenous content, curriculum, engagement, for next year. WITHDRAWN.

The motion was withdrawn with the intent to address this request at a later Senate meeting.

7.4.2. New Course Proposals

S. Trenholm presented items 7.4.2.1 to 7.4.2.30 in an omnibus motion.

- 7.4.2.1. PSYD 9001: Ethics and Professional Decision Making in Psychological Practice
- 7.4.2.2. PSYD 9002: Developmental Psychopathology for School and Clinical Psychologists
- 7.4.2.3. PSYD 9003: Cognitive Assessment for School and Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.4. PSYD 9004: Academic and Language Assessment for School and Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.5. PSYD 9005: Foundations of Clinical Interviewing
- 7.4.2.6. PSYD 9006: Psychometrics and Test Design

- 7.4.2.7. PSYD 9007: Statistics and Research Design
- 7.4.2.8. PSYD 9008: Introduction to Evidence-Based Psychological Interventions in School and Clinical Settings
- 7.4.2.9. PSYD 9009: Professional Psychology Practice in Educational Settings
- 7.4.2.10. PSYD 9010: Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice in Psychological Practice
- 7.4.2.11. PSYD 9011: Behaviour Assessment and Intervention in School and Clinical Settings
- 7.4.2.12. PSYD 9012: Conceptualizing Learning Disabilities for Assessment, Diagnosis, and Intervention
- 7.4.2.13. PSYD 9013: Advanced Clinical Interviewing for Diagnosis and Intervention
- 7.4.2.14. PSYD 9014: Communication and Consultation for Professional Psychology Practice
- 7.4.2.15. PSYD 9015: Advanced Seminar in Evidence-Based Interventions in School and Clinical Settings
- 7.4.2.16. PSYD 9016: Developmental Neuropsychology
- 7.4.2.17. PSYD 9017: Psychopharmacology for Psychologists
- 7.4.2.18. PSYD 9018: Program Evaluation for Evidence-Based Practice
- 7.4.2.19. PSYD 9019: Clinical Supervision and Interpersonal Relationships
- 7.4.2.20. PSYD 9020: Critical Historical Perspectives on Psychology
- 7.4.2.21. PSYD 9091: Special Topics in School and Child Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.22. PSYD 9092: Special Topics in School and Child Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.23. PSYD 9093: Special Topics in School and Child Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.24. PSYD 9101: Practicum in Psychoeducational Assessment
- 7.4.2.25. PSYD 9102: Practicum in Evidence-Based Psychological Interventions in School and Clinical Settings
- 7.4.2.26. PSYD 9103: Professional Seminar
- 7.4.2.27. PSYD 9104: Pre-Doctoral Residency in School and Child Clinical Psychology
- 7.4.2.28. PSYD 9201: Comprehensive Exams
- 7.4.2.29. PSYD 9301: Clinical Dissertation: Research Proposal
- 7.4.2.30. PSYD 9302: Clinical Dissertation

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the new courses listed under 7.4.2, effective upon MPHEC approval. CARRIED.

D. Piccitto asked for clarification regarding the statement in one of the course proposals that students will have opportunities to supervise other students, seeking confirmation that this is standard practice within such programs and that appropriate safeguards are in place. M. McGonnell explained that this involves

third-year students supporting first-year students, with registered psychologists providing direct supervision, including separate oversight for the supervising and supervised students.

D. Piccitto asked for clarification regarding potential overlap between a PsyD course and coursework in the master's program. M. McGonnell clarified that some content may overlap and that students entering the PsyD program with a completed master's degree may be considered for advanced standing, at the discretion of the admissions committee in future years.

B. Russo asked how the indigenization of the curriculum will be implemented. M. McGonnell indicated that those teaching in the current master's program possess a genuine commitment to do so and that it is a Canadian Psychological Association requirement for PsyD programs.

7.4.3. Calendar copy for PsyD program

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by S. Brigham, that Senate approve the Calendar entry for the PsyD program. CARRIED.

7.5. Undergraduate Curriculum

7.5.1. Communication Studies

7.5.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.5.1.1.1. Requirements for Minor in Communication Technology

Moved by A. Card, seconded by A. Thurlow, that Senate approve the change in requirements for a Minor in Communication Technology. CARRIED.

7.5.2. Changes

A. Card presented the following changes for information.

7.5.2.1. Biology

7.5.2.1.1. New course title for BIOL/PSYC 2260

7.5.2.2. Communication Studies

7.5.2.2.1. New description for PBRL 1188

7.5.2.2.2. New description for PBRL 2288

7.5.2.2.3. New description for PBRL 3388

7.5.2.3. Child and Youth Study

7.5.2.3.1. New prerequisite for CHYS 1140

7.5.2.4. Psychology

7.5.2.4.1. New prerequisite for PSYC 3312

7.5.2.4.2. New prerequisite for PSYC 4499

8. Other Reports

8.1. Students' Union

MSVUSU representatives raised concerns from the student body following the recent part-time faculty strike, including tuition reimbursement, inconsistent implementation of Senate motions post-strike, diminished quality and depth of learning due to condensed course delivery and limited access to support services and academic resources amid heightened demand. (M. Minocha, S. Zegarra)

J. Dickinson noted that she will attend a SU meeting on Monday to hear student concerns directly and is directing feedback received to the appropriate channels and offices. K. Jones provided updates on student support service usage and invited SU representatives to highlight any specific services they feel require attention.

G. Durepos sought clarification about a reference in the supporting materials regarding peer presentations. S. Zegarra explained that, according to student feedback, instead of the instructor resuming classes post-strike, students were asked to divide topics among themselves and present on them.

D. Piccitto asked about the withdrawal date referenced in survey documents, and S. Zegarra clarified that the survey was conducted prior to Senate's decision to extend the withdrawal date.

8.2. Strategic Plan

J. Dickinson reiterated that a supporting document will be provided to Senators via email in December, allowing for a fulsome discussion to take place at the January Senate meeting.

9. New Business

9.1. Enrollment Report

L. Francis presented an enrollment report providing both contextual and comparative data. She highlighted the broader environment, noting that the IRCC cap has contributed to a decline in international student enrollment across Atlantic Canadian universities. The report also included data from the 2025 AAU Report, offering comparisons with other Atlantic universities.

Focusing on MSVU specifically, L. Francis presented enrollment data comparing November 26, 2024, to November 26, 2025, highlighting changes in both student count and unit counts over that period. She noted that the Secretary of Senate would make the slides available to Senators following this meeting.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of October 24, 2025 & November 17, 2025
- Ratification of next Senate Parliamentarian

- New program Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School and Child Clinical Psychology, related courses and Calendar copy
- Undergraduate curriculum change in Communication Studies

Senate received for information:

- Reports on external reviews
 - Graduate Education – Literacy
 - Elementary and Middle School Education
 - Business Administration and Tourism & Hospitality Management
- Undergraduate curriculum changes

Senate thanked Senators whose terms are ending: G. Durepos & J. Sawler.

11. Adjournment

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