



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

April 24, 2026
2 p.m.

MINUTES

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

Regrets: A. Benzaquén, S. Brigham, J. Gahagen, I. Nault, L. Paul, S. Reddington, J. Ryuzaki, J. Valcke, K. Whitfield

Observers: K. Allan, G. Batten, N. Davila, J. Lamb, L. MacFarlane, P. Otiora, M. Paul, L. Sobey-Skinner, K. White

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

Observers were identified and welcomed with special acknowledgment made to incoming SU members. 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.

J. Dickinson, also at this time, acknowledged the work of the SU members who have served on Senate and congratulated them on their work and advocacy on behalf of MSVU students.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by S. Hale Wills, to approve the agenda as amended.
CARRIED.

Confidential Business was moved to the end of the meeting and a JBSL report was added as item 7.4.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. March 27, 2026

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by E. Ballantyne, to approve the minutes of March 27, 2026, as amended. CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Articulation Agreements with Math Requirement (A. Card)

Regarding the articulation agreements between NB Community College and MSVU that were approved in March, A. Card clarified that, as with other 2+2 agreements, the higher math requirement will be waived.

4.2. In-course scholarships

S. Hale Wills reminded Senate of her presentation on this topic at the March meeting and invited questions.

The discussion focused on a proposed shift from a scholarship system combining GPAs and faculty recommendations to a strictly GPA-based model and the goal of having an equitable process. Several members raised concerns about equity, noting that marking practices vary by Departments within Faculties and that a pure GPA cutoff might unfairly disadvantage certain programs. S. Hale Wills was asked to expand upon the pros and cons UASAC identified per model. Additional comments included a request that UASAC consider more than two years' worth of data; the value of faculty nominations in the Mount's context; introduction of student self-nominations and related barriers; support for the proposed change; and to balance inequities, per-capita distribution of monies by Department. While expressing appreciation to UASAC for bringing this discussion to Senate, Senators asked UASAC to continue its work on proposed changes to the in-course scholarship system. (G. Boulet, J. Dickinson, D. Piccitto, S. Hale Wills, K. Schlieff, B. Russo, C. McLean, L. Francis, K. Jones, E. Ballantyne, K. Allan)

During the discussion, a question was asked about the responsibility of the Senate in decisions about the scholarship program and policy. Comments were offered with reference to UASAC's Terms of Reference (Functions and Purpose), the Policy on Policies and the Charter. (C. McLean, L. Francis, P. Crouse, D. Piccitto)

While not part of the in-course scholarship program, it was suggested that equity among programs be reviewed for those scholarships externally funded. (G. Boulet, J. Dickinson)

M. Minocha followed up on an inquiry raised during the previous meeting regarding students' eligibility for in-course scholarships if registered with Accessibility Services

and taking only two courses. Since the Registrar's Office database system cannot capture certain details (e.g. FT or PT status of students registered with Accessibility Services), it was recommended that the Registrar's Office and Accessibility Services coordinate a clear message to students who are clients of Accessibility Services to provide instructions and remove the burden of self-advocacy from those facing systemic barriers. It was noted that IT&S's work on the admissions portal will include improvements in how data are captured. (M. Minocha, S. Hale Wills, J. Dickinson, S. Zegarra, L. Francis, K. Jones)

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson congratulated Dr. Gerald Tembrevilla who, in collaboration with Dr. Mike Bowen and Dr. Don Haas (Paleontological Research Institution), received a 2026 Atlantic Open Educational Resources Development Grant. Congratulations were given to MSVU Librarian Sandra Sawchuk who, with a colleague in Victoria, received a SSHRC Connections grant for a research data management training event to be held in Halifax September 2026 and it was noted that she also received an Explore grant to further support this event.

J. Dickinson's report continued with condolences and acknowledgement of the passing of English Department Professor Emeritus Dr. David Monaghan (March 8) who taught at MSVU from 1970 until retiring in 2009.

J. Dickinson thanked everyone who attended the "Three B" Campus Exchange session as well as the "Come Chat With Me" session.

The topic then turned to a Provincial Government update: regarding Bill 12, a possible pulling back from Board governance matters; a change to the Nova Scotia student loan program making a zero-percent-interest loan easier to obtain; the appointment of a new deputy minister in the Department of Advanced Education, Karen Gatien, a portfolio that had until recently been combined with Early Education and Child Development.

J. Dickinson reported that she had attended the Universities Canada Board retreat, Board meeting and membership meeting and heard about federal government changes that will positively impact students. She noted that a pre-budget submission is being prepared to ask for larger HST and GST tax breaks for universities. She concluded her report by sharing that the Deputy Minister of Global Affairs Canada has committed to a more streamlined process for visas and that central Canadian universities are already seeing an increase in applications from international students.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis reminded Senators of the Celebration of Teaching and Learning event on April 28 and highlighted increased registration numbers for the May 8 early advising day for new students.

In the research area, L. Francis reported that much of the Tri-Council funding is still under embargo but highlighted substantial successes in number of projects and award amounts. She extended thanks to J. Gahagan who worked on securing an additional Canada Research Chair at MSVU.

Thanks and accolades went out to organizers of the *Three-Minute Thesis* session including O. Wokoma and S. Trenholm, noting 11 participants with the winner going to regionals in early June. L. Francis congratulated students who were celebrated at several recent awards events and acknowledged the organizers of those events.

L. Francis concluded her report with a budget update acknowledging that the MSVU budget is very tight and that difficult decisions have been made including a very difficult decision to halt three tenure-track faculty searches.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

J. Dickinson noted in I. Nault's absence that the budget decision will take place on April 30 at the Board.

6. Question Period

Noting that the summer session has already begun in the Faculty of Education, G. Boulet inquired about how faculty will be notified that Senate in March approved a revision to the course outline policy. L. Francis responded that the information will be circulated via each Dean. E. Ballantyne noted that the TLC contacted Department Chairs and Coordinators regarding feedback on the course outline template and that a new compliance checklist currently is in draft format.

C. Barker requested an update of a recent Canada Research Chair interview. L. Francis responded that the National CRC Review Panel will report by the end of April as to whether that CRC position is approved.

M. Matthews noted a concern regarding two cancelled faculty searches in her Department and asked how many positions went through and how many did not. L. Francis expressed the support the Administration had for the three halted faculty searches and continued by explaining that, with the exception of a key library position, the searches that remain open all have external funding. She noted that Library overall staffing over the next three years will be well below normal allocation and that the recommendation for a position in Education beginning May 1, 2026, had been submitted in December.

C. McLean noted the negative impact on students and enrollment in the Child and Youth Study Department due to two resignations, a loss of a limited-term position and no hires. D. Piccitto, whose Department experienced a cancelled search “very late in the game,” asked how this happened despite academic program planning and the significant efforts expended in the hiring process, and raised a concern about MSVU’s reputation and how to move forward. J. Dickinson responded that these points had all been taken into consideration and also taken very seriously. L. Francis reiterated that excellent academic programming is a priority, that the budget planning process has faced a lot of uncertainty and that new position requests will go out in May as usual. G. Boulet raised a further question about how the budget forecast changed so drastically and requested a more thorough explanation. J. Dickinson responded that a Senate special session is ahead, once the budget has been approved by the Board.

A. Thurlow inquired if MSVU is experiencing a hiring freeze. J. Dickinson responded that each position is evaluated with its impact on the whole MSVU community, noting, too, that a tenure-track faculty position is a commitment for many years.

B. Russo inquired regarding the EDIA Governance Committee, for which the FA is soliciting for three positions, asking if this is the committee that was defunct for several years and, if so, why they have heard nothing about the five seats previously filled through the Senate Nominations Committee. J. Dickinson responded that the committee has been renamed and that she will check with C. Hattie on the Senate nominations. D. Piccitto expressed frustration and confusion about how the committee was being reconstituted, how decisions are being made and by whom, and if the past efforts of the committee and its Terms of Reference are being disregarded. M. McGonnell, SNC Chair, confirmed that the SNC had not been asked to fill seats on this committee, which represents a change from common past practice, and asked for a rationale. B. Russo suggested, and J. Dickinson concurred, that C. Hattie could be invited to Senate to explain. B. Russo requested better communication and transparency. (B. Russo, D. Piccitto, M. McGonnell, J. Dickinson)

T. Findlay reiterated that, while she would like a special Senate meeting regarding Schedule H and for it to be an opportunity for open dialogue, a student had approached her about an upcoming special meeting, and T. Findlay asked for clarification since she was unaware that such a meeting was being set. L. Francis responded that she had forwarded a student to the Senate Secretary to inquire about attendance at a special Senate meeting regarding the budget. (T. Findlay, B. Russo, L. Francis)

T. Findlay inquired regarding efforts to fill the position of Mi’kmaq representative on Senate. J. Dickinson reported that Administration is engaging with the community and that she has forwarded to C. Hattie suggestions resulting from three recent meetings, as the

Bylaws state that the person needs to be a member of the L'nu Advisory Circle, a first step. She noted that limitations include the time that Senate meets and the possibility of a conflict of interest.

K. Allan asked for an update regarding adding to the Senate an Indigenous student designated position or a part-time Faculty designated position. J. Dickinson responded that a notice of motion is on the agenda regarding the student position but that no motion has come forward regarding a part-time Faculty position so is not currently being considered.

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Revisions to Bylaw 1.1 (Notice of Motion)

S. Zegarra referred to the Notice of Motion and requested comments or questions.

G. Boulet asked why the Indigenous representative could not be found within the six existing SU positions, and clarification was requested as to why this was not a change to the SU Bylaws instead of the Senate Bylaws. Student Senators responded that the goal is to represent the MSVU Indigenous student community without taking away other important voices at the table, e.g. students from each Faculty. (S. Zegarra, G. Boulet, K. Schlieff)

The constituency of the Faculty member to fill the additional Faculty seat required by this proposed Bylaw change was revisited, and it was confirmed that the motion states an “at large” position to keep the position as flexible as possible and ensure that the seat will not be left empty. Further discussion included reserving the Faculty seat for an under-represented group, such as an African Nova Scotian, or a part-time Faculty member. J. Dickinson acknowledged these suggestions and noted that P. Crouse had recently contacted librarians and lab instructors regarding a designated seat and that while interest exists, it is not practical for them. She noted that if a seat were reserved for a part-time Faculty member, additional parts of the Senate Bylaws would need to be revised. (J. Dickinson, N. Deal, G. Boulet, K. Allan)

J. Dickinson thanked the SU and noted that this motion will be brought to a vote at the May Senate meeting.

7.2. Academic Policy and Planning

7.2.1. Admissions requirements BBA and BTHM

Moved by L. Francis, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate revise the mathematics admission requirements under 2.1.6 (Additional Admission Requirements) of the Academic Calendar for the Bachelor of Business Administration and the Bachelor of Tourism and Hospitality Management to

the following: *In addition to the General Admission Requirements, grade XI academic or advanced mathematics or grade XI Math at Work (with a minimum grade of 70%) and grade XII academic or advanced mathematics or grade XII Math at Work (with a minimum grade of 70%) are required.* CARRIED

T. Findlay inquired if a document from Economics regarding a math prerequisite is missing. L. Francis offered to provide the Senate Secretary with a document indicating that Economics supports this change.

7.2.2. Admissions requirements Aging and Family Science

Moved by L. Francis, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that Senate add a header for Aging and Family Science to 2.1.6 (Additional Admission Requirements) in the academic calendar, with the following admission requirements: In addition to the General Admissions Requirements, grade XI academic or advanced mathematics, or grade XII Math at Work (with a minimum grade of 70%), or MATH 0027 (with a minimum grade of C) taken in the first year of study is required. CARRIED.

7.3. Undergraduate Curriculum (A. Card)

7.3.1. Humanities

7.3.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.3.1.1.1. Bachelor of Arts (General Studies) and Core Group List
Moved by A. Card, seconded by C. Dawson, that Senate approve the Calendar revision proposed by the Faculty of Arts & Science to clarify how HUMS 1100 is counted. CARRIED.

7.3.2. Politics, Economics, and Canadian Studies/Sociology & Anthropology/Women and Gender Studies

7.3.2.1. New Course Proposals

7.3.2.1.1. POLS 4595/SOAN 4595/WOMS 4595 – Interdisciplinary Seminar

Discussion ensued with Senators supporting, in general, the new course but noting that the course proposal lacks detail and does not provide examples that are interdisciplinary. It was noted that EX had asked UCC to review the course proposal and possibly ask the Departments to provide more detail so that Senate would have sufficient information upon which to vote. (T. Findlay, D. Piccitto, G. Boulet, B. Russo, C. Barker, A. Card, J. Dickinson)

UCC member C. Dawson informed Senate that the Departments had been working on this course for two years and since UCC found precedent in other advanced seminar courses, and since it had been submitted by three Chairs and undergone plenty of consultation already, UCC decided to send it back to Senate.

During the discussion, B. Russo **moved**, seconded by C. Barker, that the motion be tabled. DEFEATED.

Moved by A. Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the new course POLS 4595/SOAN 4595/WOMS 4595 to take effect in the next Undergraduate Academic Calendar.

The numbers of those voting for and against and abstaining were recorded, and the Parliamentarian would confirm following the meeting the result of the vote. Therefore, the following two Calendar revisions (7.3.3 and 7.3.4) were removed from the agenda and the last UCC item was renumbered.

7.3.3. Changes

A. Card presented the following change for information.

7.3.3.1. Humanities

7.3.3.1.1. New Calendar description for HUMS 1100

7.4. Recommendations from the Committee on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure or Permanence for Academic Administrators

7.4.1. Professor Emeritus Nominations

This item was covered later in the meeting.

7.5. Joint Board Senate Liaison

J. Dickinson shared that the Board Chair has suggested the evening of June 11 or 22 to hold the Joint Board/Senate event for Schedule H discussion and asked Senators for feedback. She noted that the event could be hybrid, and while some preference was indicated for June 22, she asked that Senators contact her by email if they have additional input.

8. Other Reports

8.1. Students' Union

Members M. Minocha, S. Zegarra, and O. Wokoma presented a summary of the SU AGM and thanked Senate for feedback, recommendations and the opportunity to participate at the Senate table.

9. New Business

9.1. Honorary doctorate nominations

This item was covered later in the meeting.

9.2. Indigenization MSc in Natural Sciences

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by G. Boulet, that the new MSc in Natural Sciences, in year three of its existence, provides Senate a written update of their efforts to Indigenize the program. CARRIED.

It was noted that the motion requests accountability for carrying out calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation report and is an interim measure in advance of institutional policy. (J. Dickinson, B. Russo)

Moved by S. Hale Wills, seconded by B. Russo, that the *in camera* session begin. CARRIED.

The following two items were covered out of sequence.

7.4. Recommendations from the Committee on Appointment, Promotion and Tenure or Permanence for Academic Administrators

7.4.1 Professor Emeritus Nominations

9.1 Honorary doctorate nominations

During the confidential session, **moved** by M. McGonnell, seconded by B. Russo, to extend the Senate meeting until 5:30 p.m. CARRIED.

Moved by S. Hale Wills, seconded by B. Russo, to come out of the *in camera* session.

During the confidential session, Senate approved two nominations for Professor Emeritus status and five nominees to be added to the roster of potential Honorary Doctorate candidates.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved

- Minutes of March 27, 2026
- Admission requirements to BBA and BTHM
- Admission requirements to Aging and Family Science

- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- A timeline for Senate to receive an update on indigenizing the new MSc in Natural Sciences Program
- Awarding the honour of Professor Emeritus on Dr. Ardra Cole and Dr. Arthur McCalla
- Five nominations for honorary degrees

Senate received for information:

- A Notice of Motion for revisions to Bylaw 1.1
- An undergraduate curriculum change

Senate thanked student Senators whose terms end in April: M. Minocha, J. Ryuzaki, O. Wokoma, S. Zegarra & K. Schlieff and L. Paul who will be returning to Senate.

11. Adjournment

As the agenda was exhausted, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.