



Senate Meeting
McCain 105/106 and MS Teams

April 25, 2025
2 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: L. Francis (Chair), E. Ballantyne, J. Bail, C. Barker, A. Benzaquén, R. Bursey, A. Card, P. Crouse, G. Durepos, M. Eskritt, J. Gahagan, S. Hale Wills, D. Hazelton, E. Henderson, S. Huntemann, K. Jones, S. Kaur, M. Matthews, M. McGonnell, M. Minocha, I. Nault, D. Piccitto, B. Russo, K. Schlieff, G. Sneddon, M. Siddiquee, L. Steele, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, T. Yu

Regrets: C. Cameron, C. Dawson, J. Dickinson, M. Gonick, C. McLean, J. Sawler, E. Copeland Solas, J. Valcke

Observers: G. Batten, N. Bowes-Cashen, M. Caswell, J. Lamb, K. White

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

Observers were identified and welcomed. Student Senators whose terms are ending were thanked: C. Cameron, D. Hazelton, S. Kaur, M. Minocha, K. Schlieff.

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

1. Indigenous Land Recognition

L. Francis 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 T. Yu, to approve the agenda as circulated. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. March 28, 2025

Moved by R. Bursey, seconded by B. Russo, to approve the minutes of March 28, 2025, as circulated. CARRIED.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Revision to Senate Bylaw 12.1, Nomination for Honorary Degrees

D. Piccitto introduced the proposed changes to Bylaw 12.1, noting that they are in line with other institutions.

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the revision to Senate Bylaw 12.1, Nomination for Honorary Degrees, effective immediately. CARRIED.

- 4.2. Revision to Tributes Committee Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.1.1
D. Piccitto introduced the proposed change to the Tributes Committee Terms of Reference.

Moved by D. Piccitto, seconded by R. Bursey, that Senate approve the revision to the Tributes Committee Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.1.1, effective immediately. CARRIED.

- 4.3. Revision to UASAC Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.11
S. Hale Wills introduced the proposed changes to Bylaw 14.11.

Moved by S. Hale Wills, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the changes to the current UASAC Terms of Reference to update position titles and be consistent with the committee's name, effective immediately. CARRIED.

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

L. Francis shared a written report from J. Dickinson, which included:

- Update on Universities Canada's board and membership meetings in Halifax, which included discussion regarding issues institutions nationally are experiencing with their provincial governments.
- A welcome to Karen White, AVP University Relations.
- Update on the review timeline for applications to the President's Fund
- Afrocentric Leadership Summit that was held at MSVU on April 16
- Her invitation to join the WUSC Board

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

L. Francis and I. Nault reported collaboratively on the recently released bilateral agreement. Their report focused on several key areas:

- Timeline of the bilateral agreement
- Operating grant increase and holdback amounts
- Tuition rates and required predictability model for 2027-2028
- Continuation of health program utilization rate introduced in the previous bilateral agreement
- Numerous reports required over the next two years

Moved by G. Durepos, seconded by L. Steele, to extend the Administrative Updates by 15 minutes. CARRIED.

Further items covered in their report included:

- NS student bursary guidelines
- Benchmarks required to prove our financial health

- Student housing requirements, including vacancy rates and consequences of not meeting these requirements
- Admission policy, including the stipulation that preferred admission be given to domestic students applying for the BEd or undergraduate health programs
- Strategic alignment actions and required reports
- New Provincial Government's academic program review, noting that we are fully adherent with MPHEC's quality assurance metrics and unclear how these reviews would differ from MPHEC's.
- Standing committees which will be meeting regularly to discuss and address bilateral agreement issues and compliance
- Experiential learning definitions

I. Nault noted other agreements signed with the province, including the Child Study Centre, PsyD program, Post-Secondary Accessibility Capacity Building Collaboration Program, Aboriginal Academic Post-Secondary Agreement and PhD Educational Studies. She also highlighted that our investment disclosure reports are posted on our website, with a link to be sent out to Senators.

L. Francis added that the TLC Celebration scheduled for Tuesday, April 29, includes a "Community Connections" event followed by a World Café which encourages participants to provide feedback on TLC services and scope. She also noted the upcoming Campus Exchange on the federal election.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

I. Nault and L. Francis reported jointly above.

6. Question Period

In response to the stipulation in the bilateral agreement for no more than a 5% vacancy rate in our on-campus residences, B. Russo noted that many U.S. universities require first-year students to live on campus. It was highlighted that a significant number of MSVU students are already Halifax-based, and that while historically, the University has provided residence space to students from NSCC and NSCAD, demand for this is declining. The University is exploring ways to address this matter and gather evidence indicating residence utilization is not a current concern for MSVU. (B. Russo, L. Francis, A. Benzaquén)

B. Russo inquired about the status of loaner laptops and phones for U.S. travel. L. Francis indicated that guidance on securing devices is still being developed, including recommendations for data removal and the potential implementation of a loaner device program. With many faculty members historically attending conferences in the U.S., it was noted that the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) updated its advisory on April 14, recommending academic staff travel to the U.S. only when essential. Additional instructional support is being considered to help protect academic freedom and freedom of expression during such travel. (B. Russo, L. Francis, I. Nault, T. Yu)

B. Russo announced that Teresa Meuse will host a MMIWG2S Red Dress Event on May 5 and 6 that will include an opening ceremony and exhibits.

D. Piccitto requested clarification on the use in the bilateral agreement of the terms “revitalization” and “rationalization.” L. Francis explained that the province is asking institutions to proactively identify recommendations for program modernization, revitalization, and rationalization. I. Nault emphasized that this request is not in response to any institutional failure, noting that all universities are being asked to undertake this process regardless of their performance.

Additionally, D. Piccitto noted a recent increase in the number of late document submissions to Senate and urged Senators to adhere to submission deadlines to ensure adequate review time. She also requested that relevant policies be included with Senate submissions.

A. Benzaquén sought clarification on the tuition predictability model, asking whether it would result in students paying different tuition rates based on their start date. I. Nault confirmed that this is what the province is proposing, acknowledging that it would create inequities for students and pose significant administrative challenges.

A. Benzaquén emphasized the value of the budget reports and recommended broader communication to the MSVU community, suggesting a town-hall style event. I. Nault agreed on the importance of disseminating this information, noting similar feedback from the Board of Governors and committing to work with University Relations to share the information more widely following the upcoming budget meetings. L. Francis added that the timing of information sharing is complex. Other Senators supported the town hall idea, noting it has been a recurring request at Senate meetings and expressing concern that Campus Exchange events are not suitable venues for these types of discussions. L. Francis acknowledged that the matter has been raised at multiple Senate meetings and committed to bringing the feedback to the appropriate teams for further discussion. (A. Benzaquén, I. Nault, L. Francis, T. Yu, C. Barker)

C. Barker sought clarification on the health seats utilization ratio, asking whether it is assessed in aggregate or by individual program. L. Francis explained that, at present, the ratio is based on accepted admissions and shared her reservations about the metric.

Moved by G. Durepos, seconded by D. Piccitto, to extend Question Period by 10 minutes. CARRIED.

G. Durepos requested an update on Ministerial appointments to the Board of Governors and inquired about any changes to Board compensation. I. Nault provided an overview of the adjustments required under Bill 12.

G. Durepos also raised questions about the program review process, asking whether institutions will now be subject to two separate review metrics—one from MPHEC and another from the province. L. Francis responded that the structure, frequency, and MPHEC's role in the provincial review process is unclear.

Additionally, G. Durepos inquired whether terms such as “comparative advantage,” “modernization,” and “rationalization” are defined in the bilateral agreement. I. Nault and L. Francis confirmed that, to their knowledge, specific definitions have not been provided and further review of the agreement is still required.

B. Russo revisited the discussion on the humanities course from the previous Senate meeting, emphasizing the importance of considering the needs of neurodivergent students, who may not be adequately served by the current course design. A. Card noted that the course revisions were approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and will return to Senate for further discussion and/or voting. E. Ballantyne added that she submitted a detailed memo analyzing the course through a UDL lens, which will be included with the Senate documentation.

S. Huntemann raised the concern of faculty members opting not to travel to the U.S. and inquired whether this could be acknowledged in annual reviews, RTPP and similar processes. L. Francis agreed to bring the matter to the Joint Committee and encouraged S. Huntemann to raise it with her faculty representatives as well.

M. Matthews raised concerns about the increasing use of AI by students and asked about potential measures to support faculty in addressing this challenge. Suggestions included discussing the matter at Senate Standing Committees (in particular, CAPP) to develop policies and collaborating with the Teaching and Learning Centre to develop services and support for faculty. (M. Matthews and L. Francis).

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.1.1. Applied Human Nutrition

7.1.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.1.1.1.1. Calendar revision for MAHN and MScAHN

S. Trenholm introduced the following motion by clarifying that not all graduate elective courses are offered every year in MAHN and MScAHN.

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve an updated Calendar entry for MAHN and MScAHN programs. CARRIED.

7.1.2. Education: TESOL

S. Trenholm presented items 7.1.2.1.1 to 7.1.2.1.3 in an omnibus motion.

7.1.2.1. New course proposals

7.1.2.1.1. GTSL 6372: TESOL in the Elementary Context

7.1.2.1.2. GTSL 6373: TESOL in the Secondary Context

7.1.2.1.3. GTSL 6374: Forced Migration and Education

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that Senate approve the new courses GTSL 6372, GTSL 6373 and GTSL 6374. CARRIED.

7.1.2.2. Course Deletion

7.1.2.2.1. GTSL 6367: TESOL Instruction in P-12 Classrooms

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by A. Card, that Senate approve the deletion of GTSL 6367. CARRIED.

7.1.2.3. Change to Existing Program

7.1.2.3.1. Requirements for TESOL Certificate and Diploma

Moved by S. Trenholm, seconded by M. McGonnell, that Senate approve the change in requirements for the TESOL Certificate and Diploma. CARRIED.

7.2. Undergraduate Curriculum

7.2.1. Applied Human Nutrition

7.2.1.1. New Course Proposal

7.2.1.1.1. NUTR/WOMS 3408: Queering Foods, Nutrition and Bodies

Moved by A. Card, seconded by R. Bursey, that Senate approve the new course NUTR/WOMS 3408. CARRIED.

7.2.1.2. Changes to Existing Program

7.2.1.2.1. Calendar description for Food and Nutrition Practicum

Moved by A. Card, seconded by K. Schlieff, that Senate approve the Calendar description for the Food and Nutrition Practicum. CARRIED.

7.2.1.2.2. Requirements for Professional Minor

Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that Senate approve the requirements for the Professional Minor in Nutrition. CARRIED.

7.2.2. Communication Studies

7.2.2.1. New Course Proposal

7.2.2.1.1. COMM 3016: Communication Research Methods

Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Hale Wills, to approve the new course COMM 3016. CARRIED.

- 7.2.2.2. Changes to Existing Program
 - 7.2.2.2.1. Requirements for Bachelor of Arts – Communication Major
Moved by A. Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the change in requirements for the Bachelor of Arts – Communication Major. CARRIED.
 - 7.2.2.2.2. Requirements for Combined Major in Communication
Moved by A. Card, seconded by L. Steele, that Senate approve the change in requirements for a Combined Major in Communication. CARRIED.
- 7.2.3. Politics, Economics and Canadian Studies
 - A. Card presented items 7.2.3.1.1 to 7.2.3.2.3 in an omnibus motion.
 - 7.2.3.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.3.1.1. CULS/POLS 2022: Wizards & Elves: Exploring Culture/Politics through Dungeons & Dragons
 - 7.2.3.2. Changes to Existing Program
 - 7.2.3.2.1. Requirements for Political Studies Major and Combined Major
 - 7.2.3.2.2. Addition to Political Studies Areas of Concentration course listing
 - 7.2.3.2.3. Requirements for Public Policy Studies Major
Moved by A. Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the new course CULS/POLS 2202; requirements for the Political Studies Major and Combined Major; the addition to the Political Studies Areas of Concentration course listing; and requirements for the Public Policy Studies Major. CARRIED.
- 7.2.4. Cultural Studies
 - 7.2.4.1. Changes to Existing Program
 - 7.2.4.1.1. Requirements for Major, Combined Major, Concentration and Minor
Moved by A. Card, seconded by B. Russo, that Senate approve the requirements for the Major, Combined Major, Concentration and Minor in Cultural Studies. CARRIED.
- 7.2.5. Political Studies/Canadian Studies/Cultural Studies
 - 7.2.5.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.5.1.1. POLS/CANA/CULS 2302: African Nova Scotian Politics and Culture
Moved by A. Card, seconded by R. Bursey, that Senate approve the new course POLS/CANA/CULS 2302. CARRIED.

- 7.2.6. Sociology/Anthropology
 - 7.2.6.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.6.1.1. SOAN 3534: Immigration
Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Hale Wills, that Senate approve the new course SOAN 3534. CARRIED.
- 7.2.7. Chemistry and Physics
 - 7.2.7.1. New Course Proposal
 - 7.2.7.1.1. PHYS 2214: Introduction to Differential Equations
Moved by A. Card, seconded by S. Huntemann, that Senate approve the new course PHYS 2214. CARRIED.
- 7.2.8. Changes
 - A. Card provided the following changes for information only.
 - 7.2.8.1. Child and Youth Study
 - 7.2.8.1.1. Changes to description for CHYS 2209: Issues of Childhood
 - 7.2.8.2. Communication Studies
 - 7.2.8.2.1. Changes to description for COMM 2101: Relational Communication
 - 7.2.8.2.2. Changes to prerequisite for COMM 4200: Senior Seminar in Communication
 - 7.2.8.3. History
 - 7.2.8.3.1. Change to course title for HIST 2302: Rome's Heirs: The European Early Middle Ages
 - 7.2.8.3.2. Change to course title and description for HIST 2303: Medieval Renaissances: The European Late Middle Ages
 - 7.2.8.4. Public Relations
 - 7.2.8.4.1. Changes to description for PBRL 1188: Co-Op Term I
 - 7.2.8.4.2. Changes to description for PBRL 2288: Co-Op Term II
 - 7.2.8.4.3. Changes to prerequisite and description for PBRL 3014: Managing Organizational Public Relations
 - 7.2.8.4.4. Changes to description for PBRL 3388: Co-Op Term III
 - 7.2.8.4.5. Change to prerequisite for PBRL 4014: Advanced Public Relations Management
- 7.3. Appointment, Promotion and Tenure or Permanence for Academic Administrators
 - 7.3.1. Professor Emeritus Nominations **Confidential**
Moved by M. McGonnell, seconded by S. Hale Wills, to move in-camera to discuss confidential business. CARRIED.

Moved by B. Russo, seconded by S. Trenholm, to move out of the in-camera session. CARRIED.

While in-camera, Senate approved nine nominations for Professor Emeritus/Emerita status.

7.4. Student Judicial Committee

7.4.1. Revision to Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.14

L. Francis brought forward a Notice of Motion on behalf of the SJC for revisions to the Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.14.

7.5. Student Discipline Appeals Committee

7.5.1. Revision to Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.15

L. Francis brought forward a Notice of Motion on behalf of the SDAC for revisions to the Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.15.

8. Other Reports

8.1. Students' Union

S. Kaur provided an update on several ongoing initiatives, including the recent multi-disciplinary research series and the Standards of Excellence grant.

M. Minocha reported on the onboarding of new student representatives and full-time staff for the Students' Union.

D. Hazelton shared the date of an upcoming SRC meeting and highlighted that the MSVUSU Flickr account is now live.

The Students' Union issued a joint statement expressing concern about recent Senate discussions on international students' language skills, AI usage and attendance, describing the comments as stereotyping and gross overgeneralizations.

Senators commended the MSVUSU representatives for their thoughtfully worded statement, adding some of their own insights and comments. Discussion also took place on how the FA could support international students in terms of AI usage. (L. Francis, K. Jones, B. Russo, T. Yu, S. Kaur, A. Benzaquén).

9. New Business

9.1. Presentation re Student Orientation

N. Bowes-Cashen presented on student orientation, covering key areas such as Fall Orientation, the schedule of events, the series of individual orientations, and communication strategies.

Moved by G. Durepos, seconded by B. Russo, to extend the Senate meeting by 15 minutes. CARRIED.

B. Russo inquired if Mount Mentors could make classroom presentations, to which N. Bowes-Cashen confirmed they could. She also asked about a sexual assault component in orientation, and N. Bowes-Cashen confirmed that it is included in

Mount 101 as a mandatory module, with additional bystander training planned for this fall.

D. Piccitto raised a question about the transition from high school to university and expectations around university study. N. Bowes-Cashen explained that one day of orientation focuses on academics, featuring a Dean and Degree event, as well as opportunities to meet with faculty and programs. K. Jones suggested that faculty encourage their students to complete Mount 101 early for comprehensive coverage of these topics.

K. Schlieff asked about the approach during orientation to AI use and its consequences. N. Bowes-Cashen mentioned that an AI module is being worked into Mount 101. While an AI session was offered during Winter Orientation, attendance was low, and N. Bowes-Cashen emphasized the need for faculty support to encourage student participation in future sessions.

K. Schlieff also inquired about strategies for attendance retention at orientation events during the month. N. Bowes-Cashen responded that faculty buy-in and support are essential, with suggestions to incorporate event details into Moodle pages and syllabi. C. Barker suggested that the FA could help disseminate information to faculty members, potentially through slides that they could include in their lecture PowerPoints.

T. Yu asked about the transfer student orientation event, specifically for international students, noting that five students will be joining the Mount in the fall from Jinshan College. N. Bowes-Cashen confirmed plans to reach out to A. Braye and S. Bond to encourage attendance and suggested that the International Education Centre may host a separate event for Jinshan College students.

S. Trenholm thanked N. Bowes-Cashen for her presentation and collaborating on the graduate student orientation, noting academic integrity is highlighted at that session.

B. Russo asked about orientation for non-traditional students. N. Bowes-Cashen confirmed that a transfer and mature student orientation is held and includes an evening session for working students and a parents' session for students with children.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of March 28, 2025
- Revisions to:
 - Senate Bylaw 12.1, Nomination for Honorary Degrees
 - Tributes Committee Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.1.1

- UASAC Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.11
- Graduate and undergraduate curriculum changes
- Awarding the honour of Professor Emeritus on Dr. Robert Berard, Dr. Robert Farmer, Dr. Michelle Forrest, Dr. Áine Humble, Dr. Daphne Lordly, Prof. Linda Mann, Dr. Stephen Perrott, Dr. Randi Warne and Dr. Rhoda Zuk

Senate received for information:

- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- Notice of motion for revisions to
 - Student Judicial Committee Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.14
 - Student Discipline Appeals Committee Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.15
- Presentation on student orientation

Senate thanked student Senators whose terms end in April: C. Cameron, D. Hazelton, S. Kaur, M. Minocha, and K. Schlieff.

11. Adjournment

As the agenda was exhausted, the meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.