



Senate Meeting  
Alice Egan Hagen Boardroom (Rosaria 312); MS Teams

November 25, 2022  
2 p.m.

## MINUTES

**Present:** J. Dickinson (Chair), K. Allan, K. Blotnicky, N. Buchanan, C. Cameron, A. Card, G. Chan, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, G. Durepos, T. Findlay, T. Franz-Odendaal, J. Fraser Arsenault, G. Fraser, J. Gahagan, M. Gonick, S. Goswami, S. Hale, C. Hardy, T. Harrison, E. Henderson, K. Jones, J. MacLeod, S. MacMillan, M. McGonnell, G. Morrison, M. Ralston, J. Roberts, C. Schneider, C. Slumkoski, L. Steele, B. Taylor, A. Thurlow, S. Trenholm, J. Valcke, R. Zuk

**Regrets:** S. Brigham, M. Gillis, A. Xia

**Observers:** K. Gallant, T. Harriott, N. Kayhani

*The meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m. Observers were identified and welcomed. J. Dickinson also welcomed A. Brewster as Recording Secretary for the meeting. J. Dickinson announced that the December Senate meeting has been cancelled and therefore extended thanks to Senator A. Thurlow, whose term ends December 2022.*

*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

An additional agenda item was added under New Business: 9.2 Exam procedures for Winter 2023.

**Moved** by C. Dawson, seconded by T. Franz-Odendaal, to approve the agenda as amended.  
CARRIED

### 3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. October 28, 2022

**Moved** by S. Trenholm, seconded by T. Harrison, to approve the minutes of October 28, 2022, as amended. CARRIED

#### 4. Business Arising from the Minutes

##### 4.1. Questions on external reviews

B. Taylor reported on the costs associated with conducting external reviews, utilizing the recent review of the SOAN Department as a reference. B. Taylor reported that the associated costs include transportation, accommodations, meals and an honorarium received by external reviewers. Variables that influence the cost of an external review could include the distance which external reviewers need to travel and the number of nights they stay. B. Taylor noted that the number of external reviews per year varies but that associated costs may be calculated based on the average provided.

B. Taylor spoke about the associated labour costs of conducting external reviews and noted that common feedback received by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) regards the onerous amount of labour external reviews require. B. Taylor explained the division of labour internally when conducting an external review, which includes the Deans' Office, which is responsible for contacting and confirming external reviewers and coordinating the logistics of the site visit; the VPA&P's office, which provides documentation to the external reviewers; the Institutional Analyst, who provides course enrollment data; department administrative assistants, who collect and collate CVs, syllabi and other relevant materials; the faculty and department Chair, who analyze the data and provide written comment.

In response to T. Findlay's suggestion that TLC be added to the internal division of labour, B. Taylor confirmed that work is currently in the beginning stages to include TLC in these projects.

Discussion ensued regarding MPHEC, their helpfulness and future plans to engage with MPHEC in advance of submissions in order to ease facilitation (C. Schneider, B. Taylor).

A. Thurlow noted that a previous committee was formed to compare how the Mount conducts external reviews vs. Dalhousie. Differences were noted, including that accredited programs at Dalhousie do not conduct full external reviews but rather submit their accreditation to MPHEC.

T. Franz-Odendaal asked about a budget to implement the actions identified by external reviewers. B. Taylor responded that a budget is not set aside in advance but he will note the inquiry.

##### 4.2. AMI Annual Report

T. Findlay asked for transparency on the allocation of the budget of the Alexa McDonough Institute (AMI) to indicate how much is available to run the Institute.

B. Taylor noted that the term “institute” itself can cause difficulty as it implies that it is independently funded and has funding available for donations.

## **5. Administration Updates**

### **5.1. President**

J. Dickinson acknowledged T. Franz-Odendaal as the recipient of the 2022 Professional of Distinction Award at the annual Discovery Awards and congratulated her on this outstanding achievement and representation of the Mount.

J. Dickinson noted that nominations have been received for the vacant seat on Senate held for a member of the L’nu Advisory Circle and that this spot will hopefully be filled by the next Senate meeting.

J. Dickinson reported on her meeting with Dr. Strang regarding the pandemic and the newest wave of COVID, RSV and flu and highlighted recommendations. It was noted that we are currently in a transitional phase rather than an acute phase, meaning that fewer restrictions are required; however, mask mandates in universities are still recommended for this year.

J. Dickinson noted that the VP searches have opened, interest in the positions is high and the first meeting to review the long list is proposed for the week of January 16, 2023.

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

With reference to the enrollment update circulated November 24, B. Taylor reported on Fall 2022 student counts vs. Fall 2021. He noted that unit counts followed a similar trend and that the full report further breaks down each category based on domestic vs. international, individual programs, part-time vs. full-time and more. B. Taylor explained that discrepancies between this report and the AAU report can be mitigated by the fact that the AAU report takes numbers at an earlier date.

B. Taylor announced that Laura Ritchie will be resigning as Art Gallery Director and expressed his appreciation for Laura’s contributions to the Mount’s Art Gallery during her time as Director.

### **5.3. Vice-President Administration**

G. Morrison reported that the second phase of the graduate admission portal is underway with graduate admission agents from India and Nigeria having been introduced to the system and the portal being launched for them soon.

G. Morrison encouraged participation in the safety and security review and survey, noting that results will be used to identify strengths and prioritize areas for improvement across campus in the safety and security programming.

G. Morrison reported that early budget planning is underway and the impact of lower enrollment on next year's budget will be evaluated.

## 6. Question Period

T. Franz-Odendaal brought forward concern that feedback for the Dean of Education review is not anonymous and, furthermore, the opportunity to provide feedback is not open to everyone wishing to contribute. J. Dickinson indicated that a technical glitch has been fixed so feedback should now be anonymous and clarified that those selected to submit a review have a close working relationship with the Dean. B. Taylor added that the selection process was based on past practice of the two most recent Deans' reviews, whereby the selection method patterns were replicated. He noted that the committee received and approved the list, generated by these processes, and that it included all members of the faculty of the Dean, all members on the Senate standing committees on which the Dean has served (including past members during the term the Dean served on the committee) and Presidents of the Faculty Association during the tenure of the Dean. In addition to these internal members who received the survey, he explained that some people external to the University who work closely with the Dean received a standard letter which asked for comments to be submitted anonymously to the committee.

T. Franz-Odendaal questioned why the Dean's review is not opened to more faculty, indicating that having more data would be favourable. J. Dickinson responded that consistency with past reviews was the goal but that a clear policy regarding engagement with stakeholders needs to be written for future reviews.

Discussion ensued on the process to be added to the list if one is eligible but did not receive the survey link. B. Taylor indicated that K. Healy would be the contact for this follow-up. Requests were made that a message be sent out to clarify this process and that submissions are now anonymous. (T. Findlay, R. Zuk)

K. Allan questioned if students who have had a direct working relationship with the Dean could also complete the survey.

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

7.1. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.1.1. Communication Studies

7.1.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.1.1.1.1. Application deadline to MPR

**Moved** by S. Trenholm, seconded by S. Hale, that Senate approve a September only start date for the Master of Public Relations program. CARRIED.

- 7.2. Undergraduate Curriculum
  - 7.2.1. Business Administration
    - 7.2.1.1. Changes to Existing Program
      - 7.2.1.1.1. Addition of Business Minor, Professional degree programs  
**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that Senate approve the addition of a Business Minor for students in Professional degree programs. CARRIED.
  - 7.2.2. English
    - 7.2.2.1. New Course Proposal
      - 7.2.2.1.1. ENGL 2209: Introduction to Indigenous Literatures and Cultures  
**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by G. Fraser, that Senate approve the new course ENGL 2209: Introduction to Indigenous Literatures and Cultures. CARRIED.
  - 7.2.3. Mathematics and Statistics
    - 7.2.3.1. New Course Proposal
      - 7.2.3.1.1. MATH 2500: Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis  
T. Franz-Odenaal noted that the Biology Department would likely amend its major requirements to include MATH 2500 and questioned if the course could handle this influx of students. C. Dawson indicated that additional students could be accommodated and offered to follow up with the Department Chair.  
**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by S. Trenholm, that Senate approve the new course MATH 2500: Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis. CARRIED.
  - 7.2.4. Modern Languages
    - 7.2.4.1. Changes to Existing Program
      - 7.2.4.1.1. Placement test Calendar description  
**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by J. Valcke, that Senate approve the change to the French placement test Calendar description to indicate the test is recommended and not required. CARRIED.
  - 7.2.5. Philosophy and Political Studies
    - 7.2.5.1. New Course Proposal
      - 7.2.5.1.1. PHIL 2208/POLS 2208: Introduction to Political Philosophy  
**Moved** by A. Card, seconded by T. Findlay, that Senate approve the new course PHIL 2208/POLS 2208: Introduction to Political Philosophy. CARRIED.

7.2.6. Changes

A. Card referred to the following changes, which were presented for information.

7.2.6.1. Cultural Studies

7.2.6.1.1. New course name and description for CULS 3306

7.2.6.2. Religious Studies

7.2.6.2.1. New description for RELS 1030

7.3. Nominations

7.3.1. Nominations for Senate Committee Vacancies

**Moved** by J. Fraser Arsenault, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that Senate elect the following faculty members to the indicated committees for the indicated terms. CARRIED.

Committee	Nominee	Term Begins	Term Ends
Research and Publications	Dr. Jennifer Khoury	1 January 2023	30 June 2025
Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarships and Awards	Ms. Jillian Ruhl	When elected	30 June 2025

7.4. Student Experience

7.4.1. Revisions to Non-Academic Discipline Policy

In response to concerns regarding the revisions to the Non-Academic Discipline Policy presented to Senate on April 28, 2022, K. Jones shared that the NADP working group, in consultation the Mount's EDIA advisor, made additional changes that have been incorporated into the policy.

K. Jones noted that these revisions will remove the burden from the Student Judicial Committee of holding an evidentiary hearing through the following proposed process: filing a formal complaint which begins an investigation, followed by confidential conversations with the complainant, with findings being presented to the Student Judicial Committee for policy application and disciplinary action. Furthermore, the respondent will also have a resource person available to navigate them through the process.

Questions arose about getting a plain language version of the policy to aid in understanding, which K. Jones ensured would be forthcoming, as well as clarifying language that both the complainant and respondent can access a support person (C. Schneider, K. Jones, T. Findlay).

A. Thurlow proposed the addition of “or the Complainant” to the first sentence in Section 2.2: “. . . precludes the University or the Complainant from referring . . .” This addition was accepted as a friendly amendment.

**Moved** by K. Jones, seconded by K. Allan, that Senate approve the proposed changes to the Non-Academic Discipline Policy, effective immediately.  
CARRIED.

7.4.2. Revisions to Terms of Reference, Bylaw 14.9

K. Jones brought forward a notice of motion for revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Student Experience Committee.

T. Harrison proposed adding the University Librarian to the membership, a revision which will be reviewed by the Student Experience Committee, possibly necessitating a new notice of motion to be brought forth at a future Senate meeting.

## 8. Other Reports

### 8.1. Students’ Union

C. Cameron reported on the status of various initiatives, including the completion of a harm reduction training session for Residence Life staff, the option to add SRC involvement to a student’s co-curricular record, and the outdoor play space which will be headed by the Child and Youth Society moving forward. C. Cameron reported that SRC team job descriptions were updated and will be passed to the executive team and Student at Large Committee for review. C. Cameron updated that the Girls and Women Exploring Intergenerational Learning for Story-telling event at the Pride Centre will be shifted to a new date and that a counselor will soon be available in the Pride Centre at least once per week. C. Cameron reported on the possibility of funding for a gender affirming care day in collaboration with Dalhousie University, a day in which students could update a driver's license, legally change their name and receive referrals and letters of recommendation from clinicians and advisors. C. Cameron also noted that following one-on-one conversations with students, reoccurring issues regarding professors not understanding accessibility accommodations were common.

N. Buchanan reported that the MSVUSU sent out one newsletter and two bulletins in November and that the reach within the student body is approximately 25%.

N. Buchanan encouraged Senators to direct potential tutors for the NIMBUS program to the bulletin for details and noted that promotion has also been shared on social media. He reported on other activities, including a society fair held on November 16, a story on the student food bank which aired on Global Halifax evening news, and a holiday food drive and winter clothing campaign in collaboration with the Community Matters team. N. Buchanan concluded by noting a significant uptake of students who use the food bank and by encouraging donations from Senators.

S. Goswami updated that the Captain Crow Café has been very well received, citing that they served 50 free meals on November 24 and hope to serve meals 5 days per week in the new year. She also indicated that a new program has been implemented on Mondays where students can receive free coffee at the café.

K. Allan reported about options for hiring a new general manager, the semi-annual AGM scheduled for December 9, recruitment for Students' Union vacancies, a grand reopening planned for the new year, continuing recruitment of tutors for the NIMBUS tutoring program and the possibility that The Rook will start daytime meal and coffee services in the new year.

## 8.2. Strategic Plan Update

J. Dickinson noted that the Strategic Plan report will be tracked and recorded in a new format which was showcased to Senators and will be accessible to everyone on campus to review how work is being conducted in relation to the strategic plan.

In response to J. Gahagan's request for an update regarding Dimensions as it relates to the Strategic Plan's priority on EDIA, J. Dickinson acknowledged that this would be provided in the new year.

## 9. New Business

### 9.1. Presentation: Our Campus from Biology Department Perspective

T. Franz-Odendaal presented on the ways the Biology Department utilizes our campus environment, including a map depicting the various areas of campus being utilized by students and courses. She noted that the NS Bird Society monitors the number of crows that roost on campus and that despite the clear cutting that happened adjacent to our campus, the number of crows has remained stable. She referenced bird habitats of various other species of birds all over campus and concluded by displaying the iNaturalist site, where organisms on campus are recorded for the project titled "*Creatures on Campus: MSVU Community.*"

J. Gahagan thanked T. Franz-Odendaal for the presentation, noted that the clear cutting adjacent to campus will have an impact on the deer and other creatures that call our campus home and questioned whether conversations were had with the developers about these implications. J. Dickinson noted the inquiry and indicated she will pose it to the developers at their next meeting.

### 9.2. Exam Procedures for Winter 2023

B. Taylor brought forward for discussion the return to normal policy regarding proctored exams vs. taking a proactive approach to mitigate the potential ramifications of a viral outbreak during the winter 2023 term.



B. Taylor reminded Senators about our normal proctoring policy and noted that the Registrar's Office communication with institutions who regularly proctor for us suggests that, as of now, it is believed that we can return to our normal proctoring policy for winter exams.

Discussion ensued regarding potential downsides if a return to normal proctoring policy was enacted, which included the potential impact on syllabi, potential financial impact on students who were not planning on having to pay for proctored exams and the potential for students to not complete courses and/or programs due to this change mid-year. The question was posed that even if it is possible to hold proctored exams again, should we do this given that distance and online students may be specifically taking distance/online courses due to being immunocompromised or not wishing to take risks that other students are comfortable taking. It was stated that while the significant disruption policy is in place, those circumstances should be noted and flexibility from instructors is required (L. Steele, J. Dickinson, C. Dawson, B. Taylor, C. Slumkoski, C. Cameron, K. Allan).

Senators voiced their readiness to return to the normal proctoring policy as soon as possible (E. Henderson, M. Ralston, L. Steele, P. Crouse). Others noted that students have already registered for winter courses with certain expectations in mind and are in support of the motion under that consideration (T. Franz-Odendaal, C. Dawson, K. Allan).

**Moved** by B. Taylor, seconded by T. Franz-Odendaal, that Senate endorse the following procedures for examinations for the winter 2023 academic term:

- Courses with only on-campus sections may have on-campus or online examinations
- Courses with only online sections have online examinations
- In the interest of fairness and consistency in assessing all students, Departments with courses that have both online and on-campus sections consider offering an online examination for all sections
- The due date for take-home final examinations be scheduled in the Final Examination Schedule. CARRIED.

### 9.3. Honorary Doctorate Nominations (**CONFIDENTIAL**)

**Moved** by R. Zuk, seconded by S. Hale, that Senate move in-camera to review the nominations for Honorary Degrees. CARRIED.

**Moved** by J. MacLeod, seconded by K. Allan, that Senate move out of the in-camera session. CARRIED.

During the in-camera session, one nominee for an Honorary Degree was approved.

## 10. Items for Communication

### **Senate approved:**

- Minutes of October 28, 2022
- Graduate and undergraduate curriculum changes
- Nominations for Senate committee vacancies
- Revisions to the Non-Academic Discipline Policy
- Procedures for winter 2023 examinations
- One nomination for an honorary degree

### **Senate received for information:**

- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- Notice of motion for revisions to Student Experience ToR, Bylaw 14.9

## 11. Adjournment

**Moved** by N. Buchanan, seconded by S. Hale, that the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.