



Senate Meeting
Alice Egan Hagen Boardroom; MS Teams

October 28, 2022
2 p.m.

MINUTES

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

Regrets: G. Chan, J. MacLeod, J. Valcke, A. Xia

Observers: D. Bernard, K. Gallant, J. Lamb

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 p.m.

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. She also acknowledged and thanked the LOUA who developed the new land acknowledgement statement in consultation with P. Small Legs-Nagge, Special Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs, and the L'nu Advisory Circle.

R. Zuk shared that there is a translation of the land acknowledgement done by Language Keepers from Membertou and that the MSVU Faculty Association paid half of the translation fee.

P. Crouse reviewed the voting rules for those who were in person and online.

J. Dickinson welcomed observers and guests.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by S. Hale, seconded by S. Brigham, to approve the agenda as presented. CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. September 23, 2022

Moved by T. Franz-Odendaal, seconded by C. Hardy, to approve the minutes of September 23, 2022. CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Annual Reports of Senate Committees

4.1.1. Academic Appeals

4.1.2. Academic Policy and Planning

4.1.3. Appointment, Promotion and Tenure or Permanence for Academic Administrators

4.1.4. Executive

4.1.5. Graduate Studies Scholarships, Assistantships and Awards

4.1.6. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

4.1.7. Information Technology and Services

4.1.8. Library

4.1.9. Nominations

4.1.10. Research and Publications

4.1.11. Student Experience

4.1.12. Student Judicial

4.1.13. Student Discipline Appeals

4.1.14. Teaching and Learning

4.1.15. Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarships and Awards

4.1.16. Undergraduate Curriculum

4.1.17. University Research Ethics Board

4.1.18. Writing Initiatives

No discussion or questions were raised.

4.2. Annual Report of Nancy's Chair Committee

No discussion or questions were raised.

4.3. Annual Report of Gail and Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Learning Disabilities

A. Card shared that the committee hadn't met in the last year but will be meeting in the fall and is looking for a new external member.

4.4. Merit Scholarship System

S. Hale shared that IT&S now has a dedicated staff member working on the process for awarding merit scholarships and testing should begin in the next few weeks.

4.5. Response to staffing concerns

J. Dickinson brought forward some data from HR regarding staffing positions: from January 1 to October 10, 2022, HR successfully completed 55 searches, 10 of those failed, and 16 searches are outstanding as of October 10. She reported that on average 6 to 8 weeks are required to complete a search, depending on management participation, and that HR will continue to be monitored to see if they require extra resources.

4.6. Accessibility Review of Collaborate features

S. MacMillan met with G. Johnston, Accessibility Services, and K. Cantelo, Online Learning, regarding accessibility features in Collaborate, which doesn't have an automatic closed captioning feature. He noted two options currently used: (a) a closed captioner which is provided by and paid for by Accessibility Services and (b) a Google Chrome feature that allows for closed captioning in the Collaborate system. While the closed captioning in Google Chrome is not a perfect system, he indicated that both G. Johnston and K. Cantelo believe it is working well.

S. MacMillan announced that a new relationship between Moodle and Microsoft will see the integration of Office 365 (which includes MS Teams) into Moodle and that following testing and a possible soft launch next summer, MS Teams may replace Collaborate.

T. Findlay spoke in favour of an improved system that would provide closed captioning for all students and not just those registered with Accessibility Services.

P. Crouse commented that, without purposely turning it on, closed captioning began in one of her Collaborate classes while using Chrome and that the captioning was in the way of content being displayed. She also spoke to the necessity of consulting faculty from various disciplines before changing the online teaching platform as some of the tools do not work for all courses such as when teaching technology with technology. S. MacMillan agreed that they will do their due diligence.

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

J. Dickinson shared that she participated in her first Mount convocation over the weekend and that she received great feedback from students and parents. She thanked everyone for their hard work behind the scenes and referred to the honorary doctorate recipient's speech at the Chancellor's Dinner and a poem written and presented by Damini Awoyiga.

J. Dickinson referred to the recent AMI conference for International Day of the Girl, where she first heard Damini Awoyiga present her spoken word, and noted that the event included a speech from Karen Oldfield.

J. Dickinson expressed her thanks for those who helped organize the Alumni Week and to those serving on the search committees for the VP Admin and VP Academic and Provost. She updated Senators on the first committee meetings, town halls, surveys that were sent out, plans to post the ads and the aim for a list of candidates by early January.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

B. Taylor updated on the Indigenous cluster hire, including a letter of understanding that has been completed with the Faculty Association, the advertisement language which is currently being reviewed by P. Small Legs-Nagge, the intent to place the advertisement next week, and work with P. Small Legs-Nagge and the L'nu Advisory Circle on the confirmation of self-identification.

B. Taylor reported that he has received a mid-term report from the consultant from Academica hired to review our strategic enrollment management and that the review is considering recruitment, admission, retention and graduation rates and processes; undergraduate, graduate, domestic and international data; and University commitments to EDIA and Truth and Reconciliation.

B. Taylor congratulated Stephanie Hale on being appointed to the position of Registrar.

5.3. Vice-President Administration

G. Morrison reported on the following IT items:

- Changes for the Graduate Admissions Project were implemented in October for applicants, and the second phase of the project, to be implemented next week, is for applicants from Indian and Nigerian agents.
- Multi-factor authentication has blocked 50% of attempts to use student accounts to send phishing emails, and to increase this percentage, a campaign to raise awareness about not sharing MFA codes is underway.
- Google Classroom for Education students has moved in-house as of September, and phase two is underway for a single sign-on for Google Classroom and Office 365.
- Wireless expansion and classroom upgrades that were approved are in the planning stages.

G. Morrison announced that Human Resources and Counselling Services will be offering Mental Health and First Aid training to faculty and staff, the first round to be held early November with more sessions offered throughout the year.

G. Morrison shared a report from T. Strapps, Facilities Management Director, regarding safety for those with hearing loss, including the option to request a strobe light and speaker in their workspace and to receive an alert from the Everbridge Mass Notification system and Safety Officer S. Song's related work with Accessibility Services.

6. Question Period

C. Dawson requested more lead time when additional Mental Health First Aid training sessions will be offered.

T. Franz-Odendaal asked J. Dickinson how the Dimensions action plan will be rolled out, actioned and reported to the MSVU community. J. Dickinson responded that she and D. Bernard are starting by seeing how Dimensions actions will fit into the EDIA Action Plan. Noting that several committees are doing EDIA work, she referenced work on a communications structure and how the University Advisory Committee (previously the President's Advisory Committee) will be the umbrella structure to communicate activities. She indicated that a presentation has been made to the Board, a website is being developed, and the EDIA Is All of Us campaign and Dimensions action plans will be tied into the Equity Hub pilot project. In addition, J. Dickinson noted that the Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan will also be started.

S. Trenholm thanked her IT colleagues for moving along the Graduate admissions project, noting the pilot has gone well so far.

G. Durepos asked B. Taylor about the credentials of the consultant working on the strategic enrollment plan and whether or not they were looking at internal or external processes. B. Taylor responded that the consultant is from Academica, a Canadian firm that also did the 2014/15 report, which is now outdated. B. Taylor shared that this report is also important because the Atlantic region is attracting international immigration so they are looking at pathways for underrepresented groups. G. Durepos asked if the rise in international students will mean increased resources for the International Student Centre. B. Taylor responded that, if the student body is altering, we need to adapt and this is why he has asked the consultant to look not just at recruitment but also retention through graduation. J. Dickinson added that the proportion of international students has gone up, but the raw number of students has dropped.

M. Gonick, while pleased to hear of the new admissions system in place for Graduate students, asked about communication to staff and faculty regarding the change. S. Trenholm shared that, following the pilot, communication and training will take place.

M. Gillis expressed the concern of many students who are finding out more about the precarious working conditions of contract faculty and are appalled by it, both at MSVU and other universities. Both M. Gillis and C. Cameron noted that, in the event of a strike, students will be supporting contract faculty.

S. Brigham asked for a follow up on the safe and welcoming community email that J. Dickinson had sent out. J. Dickinson shared that three known instances of racism and homophobia occurred on campus. In response, she noted the written notice for the community, plans for two town halls—one for students and one for faculty and staff—and the hope that the Equity Hub pilot project will be able to address some of these issues. She thanked people for having the conversations and hopes they continue.

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Announcement of Senate Master Graduation List approval

J. Dickinson reported that on September 27 Senate EX approved the Fall Senate Master Graduation List with 476 students cleared to graduate and authorized the Registrar to move an additional 7 from the enabling list if conditions were met. She further reported that at convocation on October 23, 479 students graduated from 36 different programs; 75 graduated with distinction; 5 graduated with first-class honours and 24 students received the Senate Medal of Distinction.

7.1.2. Ratification of Senate Executive Motion re Academic Calendar Dates

B. Taylor invited S. Hale to explain the rationale behind the motion. S. Hale explained that the motion addressed making up time since two Mondays were missed due to the Queen's funeral holiday and Hurricane Fiona. She noted that the motion adds an alternative class day, if faculty choose to use it, and that the exam period is reduced from eight days to seven.

C. Schneider shared that she heard from a faculty member who felt pressure was put on tenure-track, junior faculty to make an unpopular decision by adding a day of class and that it appeared that the University couldn't make a decision so put it on the instructors. While she participated in the discussions at EX, she noted that junior voices were not at that table.

B. Taylor thanked C. Schneider for her point and noted that the intent is to give instructors flexibility. G. Durepos expressed that she was pleased with the motion and the flexibility as pedagogy styles and topics range so much it will allow the greatest benefit to the students.

Moved by B. Taylor, seconded by S. Hale, that Senate ratify Senate Executive's approval that, given the cancellation of classes on Monday, September 26, 2022, the approved 2022-2023 academic calendar dates be amended as follows to ensure that no course is adversely affected by the cancellation, while also preserving instructor discretion about how to best use the added class day:

- End classes on Friday, December 9 instead of Thursday, December 8.
- Designate Friday, December 9 as a "Monday in lieu" class day to allow course instructors an opportunity to make up the missed day on December 9, if they choose, or on another day or in another way following consultation with students and agreement of the majority.
- Move Reading Day from Friday, December 9 to Saturday, December 10.
- Change the Fall Exam Period *from* Saturday, December 10 – Monday, December 19 *to* Monday, December 12 – Monday, December 19.

CARRIED

7.2. Academic Policy and Planning

7.2.1. Revision to Calendar Entry for Deans' List Regulation

C. Dawson spoke to the proposed changes to the Deans' List regulation, noting that the proposed changes would see more part-time students make the list, it would be easier to administer and the increased GPA would be in line with other universities. She cited the substantial growth in the list since 2017/18 and suggested that growth may be making the Deans' list less meaningful.

While voicing support for changing the criteria for part-time students, some Senators expressed concern over the increase in GPA requirement, specifically the number of students who wouldn't make the Deans' List. They proposed that increasing the GPA requirement may encourage grade inflation and take away the confidence boost the lower GPA offers (C. Hardy, M. Gillis, K. Allan)

K. Blotnicky shared concern about students who would be bumped off the Deans' list, despite maintaining their grades, with the current wording of the motion being effective immediately. It was clarified that removing the phrase 'effective immediately' would make the motion effective as of September 2023.

Resistance over enacting part of the new regulations to benefit part-time students without increasing the GPA requirement at the same time was expressed. It was proposed that those in the 3.5-3.6 GPA range should still be acknowledged, and S. MacMillan noted that his team is looking into a way to do this through Moodle.

Discussion ensued around reasons for such an increase in the number of students on the Deans' list in the last few years. (R. Zuk, K. Blotnicky, C. Hardy, C. Dawson)

K. Allan and C. Hardy both expressed concern over the present motion and asked that more data be brought forward on how students will be affected by the change and why the number of students on the Deans' list has increased. CAPP was asked to revisit the motion and bring it back in a different format with further information.

Moved by C. Dawson, seconded by S. Hale, that Senate approve the revisions to the undergraduate calendar entry for Academic Regulation 2.2.18 Deans' List and its corresponding glossary entry, effective immediately.

Moved by K. Allan, seconded by C. Hardy, that the motion be withdrawn.
CARRIED

7.2.2. Review of Graduate Program in Woman and Gender Studies

B. Taylor brought forward the review of the Graduate Program in Woman and Gender Studies for information.

General questions, including process and budgeting, about external reviews were posed, and J. Dickinson asked that they be held until the next Senate meeting.

B. Taylor added that this review document may be misleading as CAPP voted in favour of using Saint Mary's template which is more abbreviated than MSVU's normal approach. He noted as well that CAPP supported the Deans' responses.

A. Thurlow questioned a connection between the low number of students and lack of funding. J. Dickinson clarified that MSVU is trying to increase support for students and has secured funds for scholarships. C. Dawson responded that we need to keep in mind that SMU is a larger school; offers more funding, research and teaching assistantships to students; and has also asked for administrative support. K. Allan also underscored that the program should be given support it needs as women's studies is a core tenet of MSVU.

M. Gonick, who coordinates this program, shared that it is complex to administer, funding at MSVU is not close to matching what SMU offers, and with reference to the PhD program, hiring a support person across two universities would not be unique.

8. Other Reports

8.1. FA President's Report on Board of Governors' Meeting

S. Brigham reported that an orientation was held October 6 and a retreat is scheduled for November 24 and 25. She referenced a report called "Culture of Entitlement" that would be helpful for Board members to read and concluded by mentioning the strike at Dalhousie and that the Board of Governors should want to understand what that is about and be prepared.

8.2. Students' Union

K. Allan reported on the following items: food bank and Captain Crow Café demand, use of the Wellness and Parental Lounge, the pilot of the outdoor play centre and the need for additional tutors for Nimbus Tutoring.

N. Buchanan shared that the new Students' Union website was launched; CBC Radio interviewed one of their members for Gender Fluidity and Visibility Week; elections (with an impressive turnout) have concluded, resulting in four new team members; and society life is very active.

C. Cameron reported on recent initiatives: a focus on EDIA education; Indigenous Canada training, a program out of the University of Alberta; and harm reduction work with Residence Life and RAs. She noted that K. Jones is preparing Robert's Rules of Order training and that a thesis presentation may be scheduled for the Pride Centre.

T. Findlay suggested that, as in the past, a food donation box could be available at Senate meetings. K. Gallant noted that those attending the campus lighting event in December will be encouraged to bring food or gift card donations.

C. Schneider requested assistance for the BEd Society that is getting up and running. K. Allan offered to reach out with resources.

9. New Business

9.1. Annual Report AMI

C. Dawson welcomed questions on the AMI report, submitted by T. Zimmerman, AMI Chair, on behalf of Leanne Birmingham-Beddo.

S. Brigham asked about fundraising and funding for AMI, noting that it would be helpful to include this information in the report. C. Dawson explained that less fundraising occurred over the last two years and having the Girls Conference online had fundraising implications. J. Dickinson added that, where AMI is a core unit of MSVU, it will fall under the umbrella of fundraising.

9.2. Presentation on Scarborough Charter meeting in Vancouver

D. Bernard joined Senate to present on the key elements of the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education and what it would mean for MSVU.

D. Bernard outlined MSVU's engagement to date, highlighting the conference she had attended in Vancouver which was an opportunity for those who signed on to the Charter to discuss how they were going to follow through with their commitment. She emphasized the importance of tracking progress of establishing the Charter so that the historical data is available and can be honoured.

D. Bernard indicated that mapping is underway at the Mount to identify overlap and intersection between the Dimensions project and the Scarborough Charter. She noted that the key messaging from the conference centred around commitment, data and resources and referenced four guiding principles and the desired commitments, actions and outcomes of the Charter.

D. Bernard concluded by identifying the way forward for MSVU: developing a Scarborough Charter Strategy, working with communities of practice who are already

involved, focusing on data collection opportunities, and developing an internal reporting mechanism.

T. Findlay noted how often the word “governance” was used in her presentation and, given the ongoing discussion about governance at the Board level and the relationship between MSVU’s Board and Senate, suggested that D. Bernard provide to the Board an idea of what governance should be from an EDIA lens.

A. Card shared that the Canadian Association of Deans of Education endorsed the Scarborough Charter on October 24, that significant support and awareness of this Charter exists across the country and that MSVU should be proud to be one of the first to sign up for it.

B. Taylor said that he hopes to hold a day-long retreat with VPAC and look at Dimensions and the Scarborough Charter and assess an action plan on how to move forward with different elements. D. Bernard agreed that a map of commitments is needed.

M. McGonnell stressed the importance of determining how data is going to be collected, stored and accessed. J. Dickinson has had some conversations with HR and will be reaching out to other institutions to see how they went about it.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of September 23, 2022
- Ratification of Senate Executive Motion re Academic Calendar Dates

Senate received for information:

- Report on external review: Graduate Program in Women and Gender Studies
- Annual report of AMI

11. Adjournment

Moved by A. Thurlow, seconded by S. Hale, that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.