



Senate Meeting
Skype for Business

October 30, 2020
2 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: M. Bluechardt (Chair), K. Allan, P. Barry Mercer, A. Benzaquén, G. Boulet, P. Cantelo, A. Card, G. Chan, D. Cox, P. Crouse, K. Darvesh, C. Dawson, G. Durepos, D. Fisher, J. Fraser Arsenault, C. Hardy, T. Harriott, T. Harrison, E. Henderson, E. Hicks, N. Kayhani, K. Kienapple, L. MacCallum, J. McMullin, M. Nadeem, S. Perrott, D. Piccitto, M. Ralston, K. Ritchie, J. Roberts, C. Schneider, J. Sutherland, A. Thurlow

Regrets: T. Sawyer, C. Slumkoski

Observers: N. Buchanan, S. Davis, K. Gallant, K. Healy, J. Lamb, B. MacNeil, L. Ritchie, K. Smyth

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. Observers were identified, welcomed, and reminded that they may be granted speaking privileges but are not eligible to vote on motions. New Senator, G. Durepos, was welcomed to Senate; retiring Senator, T. Sawyer, was recognized for his service to Senate.

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

1. Indigenous Land Recognition

M. Bluechardt 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 oral SCOITS Report was added as Agenda item 7.4, and the course number within 7.2.1.1.2 GCYS 6020: Pedagogical Leadership in Child and Youth Study was revised to 6019.

Moved by E. Hicks, seconded by J. McMullin, to approve the agenda as amended.
CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. September 18, 2020

Moved by G. Boulet, seconded by A. Card, that the minutes of the meeting held September 18, 2020, be approved as amended. CARRIED

3.2. October 2, 2020

Moved by G. Boulet, seconded by P. Barry Mercer, that the minutes of the meeting held October 2, 2020, be approved as amended. CARRIED with one abstention

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

D. Piccitto spoke to the section of the September 18 minutes on the higher than expected enrollment and its impact on the budget and asked that faculty be recognized for their part in student recruitment and student experience over the summer and in providing an excellent educational experience to students in their courses and programs which often leads to students returning to the Mount.

As well, she asked for clarification on the section of the minutes addressing the change in term for the Black Student Advisor, questioned when the position would shift to ongoing 12-month employment, and emphasized the importance of the continued employment of the position in supporting black students year round. She questioned whether similar consideration would be given to the Harassment and Discrimination Advisor position to ensure adequate and ongoing support of students. A discussion ensued and clarification was provided on the University's commitment to review the Black Student Advisor position during the next budget cycle with a view to converting it to a full-time position; the Harassment and Discrimination Advisor position is also being reviewed. (D. Piccitto, M. Nadeem)

G. Boulet referred to the minutes of the September meeting on the faculty staffing requests and asked for clarification on when the planning would begin for faculty hires. An update was provided on discussions held to date on faculty positions; while the number of positions has not been finalized, CAPP has begun discussions on the relationship between black scholar cluster cohort-hiring and filling operational needs and an appropriate process to ensure both. The lateness in the current cycle was acknowledged. (G. Boulet, J. McMullin)

5. Administration Updates

5.1. President

M. Bluehardt provided an overview of continued Federal and Provincial advocacy efforts undertaken and/or planned following the announcement that a \$10B Federal commitment to Canadian Infrastructure did not include funding for PSE and spoke to her continued work with Universities Canada to advance the post-secondary agenda on the national stage.

She advised of the appointment of NS Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, Lena Metlege Diab, and her efforts to forge a relationship with the new Minister. She outlined a number of events she attended and/or spoke at (virtually). As well, she updated Senators on the reconvening of the Searches Working Group and its

continued work on an update to the draft process document for Executive Searches—Academic.

In conclusion, she provided an overview of the Mount's upcoming virtual Convocation and invited Senators to join her at the event on Sunday, November 1, 2020 (3 p.m.) where graduates, faculty and Honorary Degree Recipients will be recognized.

5.2. Vice-President Academic and Provost

J. McMullin spoke to the Mount's continued participation in the Federal Dimensions Program. She acknowledged the work of the Dimensions Team, which has been facilitated by the recent hiring of an EDI Consultant in the Research Office with funding received from a Canada Research Chair's Secretariat Program. The consultant will assist the Mount in conducting an institutional scan that will be used to develop an action plan to increase EDIA in research.

She highlighted the 45th anniversary of *Atlantis*, the personal impact of *Atlantis* on her own feminist learnings, and initiatives underway to celebrate *Atlantis'* anniversary. She advised of a collage of journal covers from the history of the journal available on the *Atlantis* website; a series of short videos where past editors, contributors, and others associated with the journal reminisce and pay tribute to the importance of *Atlantis* and feminist scholarship in Canada; and a fundraising campaign launched by *Atlantis* to solidify the financial future of the journal. Supported by the Library and the Research Office, the journal is now also officially part of the Erudit platform, an initiative which financially supports, and gathers together, many of the major Canadian open access journals for the Social Sciences and humanities.

She announced the Mount's support of tuition for up to 10 people, regardless of age, who grew up in the care system. The Mount is the first Atlantic University to engage in the program; appreciation was expressed to P. Barry Mercer and G. Johnston for their work on the initiative.

In conclusion, she spoke to an upcoming meeting to address process issues related to student accommodations and noted that G. Johnston is working to populate a committee responsible for reviewing the Mount's Accessibility Policy. She also reminded Senators of the upcoming TLCOL Review, outlined the process of the review, and highlighted external and internal reviewers participating in the Review.

Following the update from the Vice-President Academic and Provost, the following motion was made to extend Administration updates:

Moved by G. Boulet, seconded by D. Piccitto, that Administration Updates be extended for 10 minutes. CARRIED

5.3. Vice-President Administration

M. Nadeem provided an update on the search process for the Director, Facilities Management; faculty, students, and staff will be invited to meet preferred candidates before a final decision is made.

He spoke to the Mount's investigation of technology for use in a number of classrooms to ensure that if some classes are able to be held on campus, the classrooms have the ability to facilitate multi-access courses.

In conclusion, he advised that his assistant, M. Innes, is in the process of finalizing the list of University committees. It is expected that the list of committees and committee membership will be added to a central location on the Mount's website in the coming weeks.

6. Question Period

C. Hardy spoke to faculty Senators about the Strategic Plan goal related to building an emotionally safe environment for students; she stressed the increased level of work and anxiety experienced by students in the move to online and the impact other responsibilities (work, family, etc.) has on the ability for students to keep up with classes and coursework. She asked faculty to take into consideration that classes are not easier for students just because they are online; she went on to recognize the stress that must likewise be felt by faculty in the move to an online teaching environment and expressed appreciation for their efforts. Appreciation was expressed to C. Hardy for bringing her comments forward, and the importance of the student voice was emphasized. A number of faculty members spoke to the importance of an emotionally safe student environment, the difficulty assessing the emotional status of students in the online environment, a new Student Pulse survey, collection of data on students by the Office of Student Experience, and whether faculty can have access to the data from these surveys to be better able to determine and address the emotional needs of students. Senators were advised that the data from the Pulse survey will have been received by mid-November; this data and the data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (once finalized) will be shared. (C. Hardy, M. Bluechardt, G. Durepos, P. Barry Mercer, J. McMullin)

K. Darvesh spoke to feedback received from other teaching and learning centers on the increased cognitive load students are experiencing, given the lack of face-to-face options. A discussion was held on the importance of knowing how students are dealing with online learning and their possible hesitation in expressing how they are doing emotionally to University staff or faculty in an online forum. K. Ritchie offered to help students wishing to conduct their own survey or develop their own survey tool; this data could also benefit the Teaching and Learning Committee. It was suggested that completing a student rating of

instruction mid-term as well as end of term could help determine how students are doing. A short discussion ensued with regard to the current process of administering student ratings of instruction (faculty advise whether they want their class/course evaluated), the power discrepancy that can prohibit a student from approaching faculty with a critique or issue, student check-ins currently conducted by faculty members, the reason faculty members can opt out of an evaluation, the use of Moodle to facilitate feedback, the frequency of evaluations, and low student participation levels possibly because of fear of being identified. Information in the latest TLCOL newsletter encouraging faculty to get student feedback on their courses was referenced; this anonymous feedback through Moodle would be for the instructor or for the class if they so wish. It was suggested that the evaluations be completed under course code and not attached to the instructor's name so that the data can be gathered about how the courses are going and what students are experiencing. J. McMullin agreed to look further into the item. (K. Darvesh, K. Ritchie, K. Kienapple, K. Allan, D. Piccitto, J. McMullin, N. Kayhani)

D. Piccitto expressed appreciation to the Registrar and all involved with making the virtual convocation possible, to J. McMullin for her work in the support for people who grew up in care, and to M. Nadeem for his work on the University committee site. Appreciation was expressed to senior administrative staff for supporting the graduate pickup of hoods/gowns and parchments and to the faculty and staff on campus who worked to support students over the past year. N. Jones in Audio Visual was recognized for his work in putting the Convocation video together. (D. Piccitto, P. Cantelo)

D. Piccitto expressed concern about delays in response times experienced by faculty for requests for information from non-academic staff and questioned whether there are particular protocols for responding to queries or requests for help. Brief discussions were held on the efforts of administrative staff in supporting faculty, administration, staff, students, and each other, a helpline recently set up by the TLCOL, the volume of requests that are being received, efforts to reorganize business processes to resolve issues, peak period volumes, methods of triage, ebbs and flows of workloads, and priority work related to protecting the University's IT structure. Whether additional resources or staffing is needed for departments was questioned, and the reallocation of staff was noted. The value of knowing if there are specific areas where the lack of responses is from, ensuring that requests go through the appropriate channels, using one point of contact, and understanding the current priorities were noted. A new tool to enable users to reset their password themselves has been recently initiated; this will positively impact the amount of time currently spent by IT personnel in resetting passwords. An example was provided of where using the correct protocol for technical support was not successful and the need for more tech support reiterated. Faculty members requiring assistance were encouraged to contact individual team managers within the Registrar's Office and instructed to contact the Registrar if their request is not resolved quickly. (D. Piccitto, J. McMullin, M. Nadeem, M. Bluehardt, K. Smyth, K. Ritchie, P. Cantelo)

During Question Period, the following motion was made to extend question period.

Moved by G. Boulet, seconded by K. Allan, that Question Period be extended an additional 10 minutes. CARRIED

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Announcement of Senate Master Graduation List approval

Senators were advised that Senate Executive met on October 1 where a total of 340 names on the master graduation list and 25 on the enabling list were approved. Since then, 21 names have been moved from the enabling list to the list of graduates, resulting in a total of 361 grads.

7.2. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

7.2.1. Child & Youth Study

7.2.1.1. New Course Proposals

7.2.1.1.1. GCYS 6016: Children in International Contexts

Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by D. Fisher, that Senate approve the new course proposal GCYS 6016: Children in International Contexts. CARRIED

7.2.1.1.2. GCYS 6019: Pedagogical Leadership in Child and Youth Study

An email containing a number of minor grammatical changes was referenced; these changes will be undertaken.

Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by K. Darvesh, that Senate approve the new course proposal GCYS 6019: Pedagogical Leadership in Child and Youth, as amended. CARRIED

7.2.1.1.3. GCYS 6025: Equity, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion in Child and Youth Study

Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by A. Thurlow, that Senate approve the new course proposal GCYS 6025: Equity, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion in Child and Youth Study. CARRIED

7.2.1.1.4. GCYS 6035: Critical Perspectives in Child and Youth Study
Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by K. Allan, that Senate approve the new course proposal GCYS 6035: Critical Perspectives in Child and Youth Study.
CARRIED

7.2.1.2. Course Deletion

7.2.1.2.1. GCYS 6011: Developmental Issues for Children and Youth

7.2.1.2.2. **Moved** by K. Kienapple, seconded by P. Cantelo, that Senate approve the deletion of GCYS 6011: Developmental Issues for Children and Youth.
CARRIED

7.2.1.3. Changes to Admission and Program Requirements

Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by E. Hicks, that Senate approve the changes to the Graduate Calendar that result from the new courses and deletion today as well as some other admission clarification to program requirements. CARRIED

7.2.1.4. Changes

7.2.1.4.1. New course name and description for GCYS 6012

7.2.1.4.2. New course name and description for GCYS 6013

7.2.1.4.3. New course name and description for GCYS 6014

7.2.1.4.4. New prerequisites and description for GCYS 6190

7.2.1.4.5. New prerequisites and description for GCYS 6609

The above changes were presented to Senate for information.

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

7.3.1. Professor Emeritus Nomination

Moved by A. Thurlow, seconded by E. Henderson, that the meeting move in camera. CARRIED

Moved by J. McMullin, seconded by K. Allan, that the meeting move out of camera. CARRIED

The in-camera session was used to consider one Professor Emeritus nomination. The one nomination was approved.

7.4. Senate Committee on IT&S (SCOITS)

G. Boulet expressed appreciation for D. Rodrigues' role as Chair of SCOITS over the past year and her willingness to continue this year. She provided an oral report on recent SCOITS initiatives including work of a survey software subcommittee that has been created and will be working closely with the Research Office to build a business case to replace LimeSurvey with a product that better meets the needs of the Mount's researchers and administrative units. Currently, the subcommittee is favoring RedCap as the replacement for LimeSurvey.

8. Other Reports

8.1. Students' Union

In the absence of T. Sawyer, J. Sutherland spoke to the student election process and provided an update on the status of the elections. A call for remaining vacant Council positions is underway.

9. New Business

9.1. Strategic Plan

M. Bluehardt spoke to the Strategic Planning process and the work undertaken since the last round of feedback was received and incorporated into the document. Following approval of the Strategic Plan by the Board of Governors, further detailed ideas that were suggested through feedback will be incorporated into operational planning, including the development of the unit specific objectives and progress evaluation tracking. Once leads for those various plans or units are identified, professional development for this group will be provided to ensure that they understand and are comfortable working on operational and strategic planning for a given unit. Appreciation was expressed to everyone for their part in the plan.

L. MacCallum questioned the origin of the Mount's values, and in particular, the value "Professionalism" and expressed concern that "professionalism" has been used as code for white professionalism. The conscientious discussion and decision of the working group to focus on strategic plan themes and to not change the Mount's Mission, Vision, and Values at this time was noted. It was suggested that the University revisit the values in the future. (L. MacCallum, M. Bluehardt, J. McMullin, D. Piccitto)

D. Piccitto questioned a phrase within a strategy in the teaching section of the plan (1d. *Develop programs supporting faculty and instructors to approach teaching and learning in ways that foster physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually safe learning spaces for all on campus.*) She noted that university is about having intellectually challenging (sometimes risky) spaces on complex matters (gender, race sexuality) and expressed concern that the strategy may restrict academic content and create a different kind of learning space. It was explained that the strategy originated with an indigenous member of the community with the intent of trying to

create a space where people feel intellectually safe within the context of different epistemologies. As well, the meaning of “*emotionally safe learning environment*” was questioned and discussed; this piece is meant to ensure that faculty are aware of and able to respond to potential triggers. (D.Piccitto, J. McMullin)

D. Piccitto referenced an indicator of success under goal #2 (Research, Scholarly Work, and Professional Activity) and expressed concern that indicators of success reference only publications. It was agreed that “publications” be changed to “contributions”. (D. Piccitto, M. Bluechardt, G. Boulet)

D. Piccitto questioned the second “and” within the wording, “...develop exceptional on-line and courses and provide support required...” within strategy 3a on page 10 and whether a revision was needed. It was agreed that “in-person” was missing from this strategy and that it be added to read “...develop exceptional on-line and in-person courses and provide support required...” (D. Piccitto, J. McMullin, K. Darvesh)

L. MacCallum questioned the context surrounding the phrase “open access” within strategy 2b on page 9. It was agreed that it be changed to “open educational resources”. (L. MacCallum, J. McMullin)

K. Allan referenced the section on Truth and Reconciliation and questioned why determining, documenting, and apologizing for the amount of involvement of the University in the residential schools was not included in the document. A discussion ensued, and changes made to the History section of the most current draft were identified. It was noted that discussions on an apology would not be through a Strategic Plan but would require consideration and discussion by the Board of Governors. It was noted that while the commitment to continue looking at the history formally is not within the Strategic Plan, it is implicit in the fact that the plan has a theme based on Truth and Reconciliation. As well, it was suggested that the Strategic Plan be more specific in its acknowledgement of past racism on the part of the Sisters of Charity and in the advancement of women. It was noted that the history section does acknowledge racism and white privilege as an institution and that the University can move forward in those acknowledgments. (K. Allan, M. Bluechardt, J. McMullin, K. Ritchie)

L. MacCallum stated that, while the Mount has recognized inequalities, she is uncomfortable celebrating the history that, for many people, may have been quite painful. She referenced wording related to the celebrating of the 150th Anniversary of MSVU (strategy 3b, page 21). A brief discussion was held, and the commitment of Senior Administration in changing structures and processes within the University to ensure that it does better was acknowledged. This can be further reflected in the operational plans that support the Strategic Plan. It was agreed that “celebrating” be

changed to “recognizing” within this section of the document. (L. McCallum, J. McMullin, M. Bluecharadt, K. Ritchie)

Moved by J. McMullin, seconded by D. Fisher, that Senate endorse the Strategic Plan as amended. CARRIED with two opposed and three abstaining

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved

- Minutes of the September 18, 2020, and October 2, 2020, meetings
- Graduate curriculum changes in Child & Youth Study
- Awarding Professor Emeritus status on Dr. Hazel MacRae
- Endorsement of the Strategic Plan: MSVU 2021 – Strength Through Community

Senate received for information:

- Graduate curriculum changes in Child & Youth Study

11. Adjournment

Moved by K. Ritchie, seconded by C. Dawson, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.