

## MINUTES

Present: M. Bluechardt (Chair), P. Barry Mercer, P. Cantelo, A. Card, R. Charlton, E. Church, P. Cormier-MacBurnie, P. Crouse, T. Findlay, D. Fisher, T. Harriott, T. Harrison, E. Henderson, N. Kayhani, K. Kienapple, S. King, G. MacDonald, J. MacLeod, C. Matta, M. Mitchell, S. Orlov, S. Perrott, D. Plumb, S. Seager, J. Sharpe, D. Shiner, C. Slumkoski, B. Taylor, D. Whalen, R. Zuk

Guests: K. Smyth

Regrets: R. Farmer, S. MacIntosh, K. Ritchie, D. Séguin, J. Wallace

*The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. D. Whalen, Interim Vice-President Administration, was welcomed to her first meeting. As well, K. Smyth, Director of IT&S, in attendance to present on Cybersecurity, was also welcomed. There were no observers present.*

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

**Moved** by R. Charlton, seconded by G. MacDonald, to approve the agenda as circulated.  
CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes of March 1, 2019

**Moved** by M. Mitchell, seconded by G. MacDonald, to approve the meeting minutes of March 1, 2019, as circulated. CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1. Cybersecurity Presentation (K. Smyth)

S. Orlov introduced K. Smyth, Director of IT&S, in attendance to present on cybersecurity.

K. Smyth provided an overview of the current cyber threat landscape and outlined the unique challenges for universities as identified in a report produced by Deloitte. She noted the high percentage of the Mount's incoming e-mail that is spam and is blocked from entering the University's system as well as the significant numbers of malicious attacks per day and firewall violations per month. The threat is constant and serious.

She outlined recent incidents at Canadian universities which were impacted by cybersecurity attacks and methods used to compromise and infiltrate university systems. She then spoke to a Cybersecurity Governance Model in place at the Mount and developed by the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) and the Canadian University Council of Chief Information Officers (CUCCIO). Each stage of the model (prepare, prevent, respond and improve) involves people, processes, and technology. Several instances where phishing attempts were successful in the Mount community were noted, and actions taken to mitigate the risk of cybersecurity were outlined and briefly discussed. Efforts to educate members of the Campus Community on the threat of cybersecurity were outlined, and the Mount was compared across the higher education sector in Canada.

S. Seager questioned the safety of logging into the Mount's network to download a presentation versus bringing the presentation on a flash drive. K. Smyth advised that since classroom computers are frozen (units are wiped clean at shut down), classroom and lab computers do not serve as an entry point for malware.

G. MacDonald initiated a brief discussion on the cyber security incident at University of Calgary and the importance of educating faculty on protecting research data both on Campus and at home. Not all research data can be stored in an Office 365 environment, so faculty are encouraged to contact K. Smyth regarding other solutions.

K. Smyth was thanked for her presentation and excused from the meeting.

#### 5. President's Announcements

The President spoke to the recent announcement of the Federal and Provincial budgets and the disappointment of NS university presidents on the 1% increase in funding received from the Province. Upcoming meetings and discussions with other Nova Scotia university presidents on both the Federal and Provincial budgets were highlighted.

She then provided a summary of internal and external stakeholder meetings and events that she attended or is scheduled to attend including the Mount Mystics Awards Dinner, Research NS meetings, the Students' Union Awards Night, and the Transforming Health and Nutrition Panel discussion. Faculty and staff supporting the Mount's athletes were acknowledged and thanked for their continued support.

Senators were reminded of the process and upcoming deadline for the nomination of Honorary Degree recipients and were encouraged to consider nominating a worthy candidate; they were also encouraged to attend the upcoming Convocation events. The President updated Senators on recent renovations completed in the Seton Auditorium to make the venue accessible and outlined feedback received on the modifications.

## 6. Question Period

An update was requested on a question raised at the last Senate meeting regarding the heat in faculty offices and classrooms in Seton during the summer months. Brief discussions were held on when there might be a solution, whether a petition would help reinforce the need for action, and whether installing window screens might be an option. Senators were advised that, given the age of some of the buildings, retro fitting with air-conditioning is expensive and not always feasible. The issue of how to address temperatures in all non-air-conditioned buildings has been raised with the Director of Facilities Management, who will attempt to find solutions for individual offices. The director is consulting with colleagues at other universities and with an engineer for solutions. Senate discussion and suggestions will be brought back to the Director of Facilities Management. (N. Kayhani, E. Church, J. MacLeod, D. Whalen)

S. Seager expressed appreciation for classroom clocks that were reset to the correct time following the change to Daylight Savings time.

T. Findlay requested an update on the status of a policy on take-home exams; the Registrar advised that the examination policy has been presented to CAPP for consideration.

An update was requested on the searches related to the Academic Vice-President and Provost and the Dean of Arts and Science and when faculty might expect to meet with the candidates for each of the positions. A discussion was held on the current Academic Vice-President and Provost search including search timeline, planned visits where candidates will meet confidentially with selected clusters of campus constituents, the confidential (closed) nature of the search and similar practices at other Canadian universities, past practices and changes in the hiring environment over the past years, the risk of losing strong candidates in open searches, the size of the clusters (groups) invited to meet with candidates, how participants of clusters are chosen, who chooses participants, and how to become a cluster participant chosen to meet candidates. The role of faculty members on search committees was questioned and briefly discussed. The importance of ensuring faculty representation from disciplines—not just Faculties—was noted. (R. Zuk, M. Bluehardt, C. Slumkoski, J. MacLeod, S. Seager, T. Findlay, N. Kayhani)

An update was provided on the interview and hiring timeline for the Dean of Arts and Science. A question arose on whether this search was also closed; it was noted that the search is open until a potential candidate requests that the process be closed. The search recently conducted for the Dean of Education was referenced; during this search, faculty had the opportunity to meet with the candidate, but the session was not publically announced. (R. Zuk, E. Church)

A brief update was also provided on the search for the Vice-President Administration that is in its very early stages.

Finally, Senators were invited to attend the Academic Awards presentation on April 9<sup>th</sup> where faculty will present students with awards.

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

### 7.1. Academic Policy and Planning

#### 7.1.1. Academic Calendar Dates for 2020-2021

E. Church presented the academic calendar dates for 2020-2021 for information.

### 7.2. Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Permanence for Academic Administrators

#### 7.2.1. Nominations for Professor Emeritus Status (Confidential Business)

**Moved** by E. Church, seconded by D. Fisher, to move into Confidential Business. CARRIED

**Moved** by E. Church, seconded by J. MacLeod, to move out of Confidential Business. CARRIED

### 7.3. Research and Publications

#### 7.3.1. Revision to Faculty Release Time Awards Policy

Appreciation was expressed for the changes made to the policy to date; however, concern was expressed that the wording on page 44 that states that *“All criteria being met, priority will be given to an MSVU principal investigator or MSVU co-applicant of an externally funded research grant...”* would unfairly disadvantage those who are part of a grant being administered by a larger university but who play an integral role in the grant. Rationale considered by the Committee in revising the policy was provided, and examples on both sides of the discussion were considered. (T. Findlay, G. MacDonald)

**Moved** by G. MacDonald, seconded by D. Fisher, that Senate approve the proposed changes to the CRP Faculty Release Time Awards Policy, to be effective upon approval by Senate. CARRIED with 4 opposed and 2 abstentions

## 8. Other Reports

### 8.1. Students' Union

M. Mitchell and R. Charlton shared responsibility for the Students' Union report, highlighting the success of the recent Students' Union elections and upcoming transition process, the Students' Union AGM, several successfully hosted events, attendance at a rally and meeting with local university presidents regarding the MOU, and town halls held with students. As well, they spoke to upcoming events, an interview with CBC on menstrual products in washrooms, discussions with students

on co-op and practicum fees, participation of students on search committees, and a speaking engagement at the launch of Sexual Violence Awareness month.

## 9. New Business

### 9.1. Enrollment Report

P. Barry Mercer, Associate Vice-President Student Experience, presented on and spoke to a full-year comparison (as of January 31, 2019) of student enrollment (Education, Graduate, and Undergraduate). Unit counts over the same period were reviewed; with the exception of Undergraduate (-27 or -0.3% units), all other areas are up.

Online enrollments (summer, fall, winter and total) were reviewed and discussed; total online enrollment has increased 6% over the past year. It was noted that online enrollments were higher in the winter than the summer term. As well, international student enrollment saw a small increase over last year (the first in four years); it is hoped that with ongoing recruitment efforts, this will continue.

Brief discussions were held on part-time enrollment and online enrollment trends, fees associated with online learning, how a department's decision to offer courses online can impact online learning, the number (75%) of graduating students who have taken at least one online course, and the number of students (20%) taking five online courses. It is hoped that the numbers will be similar in the fall with regard to increased enrollment. (G. MacDonald, S. Seager, B. Taylor, M. Mitchell, D. Plumb, E. Church, P. Barry Mercer)

The presentation then focused on the retention rate of all students (by academic level); retention has been scrutinized only since 2015 but will be a focus going forward. Undergraduate retention rates of all students over the past four years by degree were reviewed and discussed. As well, retention rates by degree (1st year only), by admit status, and by self-identified ethnic diversity were reviewed and discussed. Overall, retention rates have increased over the past four years.

P. Barry Mercer concluded by speaking to the success of the Centre for Academic Advising and Student Success since its opening, the Mount 101 program and its completion rate of 87%, and the Right Start Program that has received 156 faculty referrals since fall 2018 (compared to 61 in the fall of 2017). These initiatives are seen as having a positive impact on retention and overall student success and experience; feedback from students has been positive, and 80% of those completing the Mount 101 initiative have indicated that the program was helpful.

Brief discussions were held on the use of retention strategies, points/levels where retention/momentum changes, reasons students leave before finishing their degree, 2+2 agreements with NSCC, and a new program that was announced by the Province

in this year's budget to forgive student loans. (N. Kayhani, C. Slumkoski, B. Taylor, G. MacDonald, P. Barry Mercer, D. Whalen)

Ms. Barry Mercer was thanked for her presentation.

#### 10. Items for Communication

Senate approved

- Minutes of the March 1, 2019, meeting
- The awarding of the status of Professor Emeritus on Dr. Leslie Brown, Dr. Michael MacMillan, and Dr. Susan Walsh
- Revisions to the Faculty Release Time Awards Policy

Senate received for information:

- Academic Calendar dates for 2020-2021
- Enrollment report
- Presentation on cybersecurity

#### 11. Adjournment

**Moved** by S. Orlov, seconded by J. MacLeod, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.