

MINUTES

Present: R. Lumpkin (Chair), M. Atwater, S. Badali, P. Barry, C. Blayney, K. Blotnick, P. Cantelo, E. Church, P. Crouse, M. Eskritt, R. Farmer, M. Forrest, J. Fraser-Arsenault, R. Gechtman, A. Grant, M. J. Harkins, T. Harrison, B. Jessop, N. Kayhani, K. Kienapple, G. MacDonald, A. MacGillivray, R. MacKay, S. MacMillan, J. Mills, R. Nearing, A. Pottie, D. Rodrigues, J. Sawler, L. Steele, B. Taylor, M. Whalen

Regrets: R. Green, S. MacIntosh, K. Ritchie, M. Smallridge, P. Watts

Guests: C. Doe, H. Wang

The meeting was called to order at 2 p.m. and Senators were encouraged to use the mics when speaking. R. Lumpkin noted that the Senate meeting is being held in the Faculty Lounge to facilitate the scheduling of the Girls 2017 Conference which has approximately 300 participants.

As K. Ritchie ends her service on Senate, appreciation was expressed for her strong contributions to Senate and engaged participation over the past year.

1. Indigenous Land Recognition
R. Lumpkin provided an acknowledgement that the Mount is built on traditional Mi'kmaq territory and paid respect to the Indigenous peoples of the land on which Senate meets.

She reminded senators that the wording is not written into the Senate Rules of Order to allow for future language changes; she has consulted with C. Martin, Nancy's Chair in Women Studies, who is sharing the wording with others for further input. The wording will also be considered at the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Appreciation was expressed to A. Grant for her work on the initiative.

2. Approval of Agenda
Moved by L. Steele, seconded by G. MacDonald, to approve the agenda as circulated. CARRIED
3. Approval of Minutes of January 27, 2017
Moved by R. Farmer, seconded by R. Nearing, to approve the meeting minutes of January 27, 2017, as circulated. CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

5. President's Announcements

R. Lumpkin provided an update on Aboriginal initiatives including an overview of the internal and external Aboriginal Advisory committees and the work they have accomplished since 2011. She spoke to the completion of the top priorities identified within the "Plan for Action" that was developed in association with the external Aboriginal Advisory committee.

With these priorities completed, the University is looking to develop a new plan to expand and deepen the Mount's commitment to the Indigenous community and to respond to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Report, a number of which are relevant to post-secondary education.

She spoke to the increase in voluntary self-identified Aboriginal/Indigenous students (from 30 to over 150) and acknowledged the need to continue to ensure the needs of these students are being met, while developing friendship and community with all Indigenous communities throughout the province and the country.

She provided an outline of outcomes of a November meeting between the internal and external Aboriginal Advisory committees to "dream" about next priorities and/or actions the Mount should attempt over the upcoming years. Areas of focus included support to students, program development, indigenizing courses, faculty and staff development to better understand Indigenous culture, funding, and priority setting. The Mount was cautioned by previous Board member and Honorary Degree Recipient, Donald Julien, not to over promise but to decide what fits with the strengths, nature and aspirations of the Mount. The two chairs have begun meetings to consider the list of possible priorities and will meet with members of the internal and external Aboriginal Advisory Committees to talk further about priority setting and the next stage planning.

6. Question Period

None.

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Ratification of Change to BEd Practicum Requirements

E. Church outlined the impact of the teachers' work to rule on BEd students' practicum, the discussions held at Senate Executive, and the decision made to approve a shortened practicum that would satisfy the provincial teacher certification requirements while allowing BEd students to graduate in the spring and begin teaching in the fall.

A. Grant raised a concern that these students would be less advantaged with eight weeks of practicum than past or future students in terms of job competition.

S. Badali, Dean of Education, clarified that the standards and performance levels students will demonstrate at the end of April will be the same as those of previous years. He outlined the practicum process, spoke of another university with a shorter practicum, and reassured senators that, given the Mount's commitment to its students and field partners, a recommendation for an eight-week practicum would not have been made if faculty thought that students would not be prepared for the classroom.

M. J. Harkins outlined the shortened practicum timeline that allows for an additional two weeks that could be used should a student require it. Need-specific professional development seminars are available to these students.

M. Atwater read into account a letter written by fellow Senator and Education Representative, M. Smallridge, on behalf of herself and fellow BEd students impacted by the work to rule, imploring Senate to approve the shortened practicum of eight weeks and outlining hardships that may befall them if the practicum is not approved.

A. Grant questioned whether the workshops offered through the summer would create an accessibility issue for those who live outside the district. Clarification was provided on the timing of the workshops (May and summer) and the possible use of technology to access the courses. Student-identified, skill-specific areas of professional development will be addressed as required.

Moved by E. Church, seconded by R. Nearing, that Senate ratify Senate Executive's approval of the one-time change to the BEd practicum requirements. CARRIED

7.2. Academic Appeals

7.2.1. Change to Terms of Reference—**Notice of Motion**

N. Kayhani put forward a notice of motion for a slight change in the terms of reference for the Academic Appeals Committee to clarify the roles of regular and alternate members of the committee.

She also reported on the Academic Appeals Committee activities including meetings and decisions on two cases, with three more in the process.

A brief discussion was held on trends experienced by the Academic Appeals Committee in its larger volume of cases. While some cases are straightforward and policy is clear, others are vague and policies lack clarity. She inquired whether the process for reviewing policies and

procedures could be sped up so that some of the “grey area” can be eliminated and the Committee could ensure it is making better decisions.

E. Church, Chair of CAPP, reported that CAPP has established a sub-committee with membership from the Academic Appeals Committee to look at policies and procedures for academic appeals; it is hoped that a report and recommendations will be ready in the upcoming months. As well, E. Church noted that faculty have expressed interest in receiving guidance as they head into exams; E. Church and N. Kayhani will prepare a memo to faculty with guidelines.

7.3. Academic Policy and Planning

7.3.1. Academic Calendar Dates 2018-2019

E. Church presented the academic calendar dates for 2018-2019 for information.

R. Farmer noted that the change of the last Wednesday to a Monday needs to be clearly highlighted to faculty. As well, he advised that, for a course meeting once a week on a Monday, such a change means that 25% of the course is scheduled in the last week and a half of the semester; he asked that the committee making calendar considerations keep in mind that a Wednesday earlier in the term may be more appropriate. P. Cantelo made note of this.

7.3.2. Proposal for MA, MEd, Certificate, Diploma in TESOL (for approval)

E. Church presented the proposal; the process and next steps were explained. Once approved by Senate, the proposal will go to MPHEC for further approval; it is hoped that it can be in place by the fall.

R. Gechtman questioned the need for two degrees; clarification was provided by C. Doe, H. Wang and E. Church.

M. Whalen questioned why the field is not wider for the range of undergraduate degrees noted in admission requirements. A discussion was held and several language changes were considered. P. Barry suggested, and it was agreed, that the piece being questioned be changed to read, “*Students are required to have completed an undergraduate degree in a related field; preference will be given to students with applied linguistics or Education.*”

Moved by E. Church, seconded by M. J. Harkins, that Senate approve a Master of Arts, a Master of Education, two Certificates, and two Diplomas in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) as amended. CARRIED

C. Doe and H. Wang were thanked for their work on the proposal.

7.4. Undergraduate Curriculum

7.4.1. Applied Human Nutrition

7.4.1.1. Changes to Existing Program

7.4.1.1.1. BScAHN Dietetics and Internship Education Program
Moved by S. Badali, seconded by P. Cantelo, that Senate approve the changes to the eligibility and requirements for the BScAHN Dietetics and Internship Education Program as proposed by the Department of AHN. CARRIED

7.4.1.1.2. Science Minor in AHN
Moved by S. Badali, seconded by J. Fraser-Arsenault, that Senate approve the changes in requirements to the Science Minor in AHN as proposed by the Department of AHN. CARRIED

7.4.2. Child and Youth Study

7.4.2.1. MOU and Articulation Agreement with Holland College
Moved by S. Badali, seconded by A. MacGillivray, that Senate approve the new MOU and Articulation Agreement with Holland College as proposed by the Department of Child and Youth Study. CARRIED

7.4.3. Communication Studies

7.4.3.1. Change to Existing Course

7.4.3.1.1. Deletion of PBRL/COMM2205
Moved by S. Badali, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that Senate approve the deletion of PBRL/COMM 2205, as proposed by the Department of Communication Studies. CARRIED

7.4.4. Course Changes

7.4.4.1. Applied Human Nutrition

7.4.4.1.1. New prerequisites for NUTR 1010, 2204, 2211, 2300, 3315, 3326, 4444
7.4.4.1.2. Deletion of prerequisites for NUTR 1106
7.4.4.1.3. New prerequisites for NUTR 3330/GAHN 6330, NUTR 4400/GAHN 6400, NUTR 4414/GAHN 6414

7.4.4.2. Psychology and Biology

7.4.4.2.1. New cross-listing and prerequisites:
PSYC 2217/BIOLOG 2217

S. Badali presented items listed under 7.4.4.1 and 7.4.4.2 for information; there were no questions or comments.

7.5. Library

T. Harrison provided an oral report on behalf of the Senate Library Committee. She outlined student concerns raised about noise, temperature and Wi-Fi within the library and provided feedback from investigations into the complaints.

She reminded senators about the request made to the Board of Governors regarding security at the library and updated them on initiatives the library has undertaken to monitor security, promote reserve services, and track costs of replacements of requested missing material. The Library plans to conduct a sample inventory during the summer session in order to establish a comparison of loss rate and begin the process of determining what material should be replaced and what the cost will be.

Finally, she advised that the Library will be investigating forming a “Friend of the Library” group, that two cash awards of \$345 will be awarded to students for their outstanding research papers written using the library’s resources, and that the Chairs, Library Coordinators, and All Faculty meeting date is confirmed for Friday, April 21, at 11:30 a.m.

8. Other Reports

8.1. Board of Governors

R. Farmer provided a report on outcomes of the Board meeting held last evening and outlined the reports received at the meeting: Academic Plan implementation update; enrollment; academic reviews; presidential transitioning process; Board committee reports from Finance, Human Resources and Governance, and Investment; and constituency reports from the alumnae, faculty and students. Faculty member K. Whitfield gave a presentation on her research. The Board passed a motion to begin Board meetings with the reading of an Indigenous Land Recognition statement.

8.2. Students’ Union

R. Nearing reported on four areas of operations: (Governance – update on general elections, counselor positions, and Annual General Meeting; Advocacy – support of BEd students, welcome to the new University President and transition plans, report to the Budget Committee, hiring staff positions; Student Life – Let’s Talk Sex and Pride Week, Awards Night and Convocation). As well, he updated on the attendance of Students’ Union representatives at Converge 2017 in Ottawa (facilitated by Universities Canada) and the National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) national conference.

8.3. Mount 2017: Making a Difference

R. Lumpkin spoke to the winding down of the strategic plan and the posting of the President’s Report to the Board which contains updates from across campus clustered within the goals and strategies of the strategic plan.

9. New Business

9.1. Consequences of Late Payment of Tuition Fees

R. Gechtman raised a concern about the academic impact on students whose technology access has been cut as a consequence of not having paid their tuition fees. He believes these consequences are hindering students' access to education, impeding their overall success, and creating stress for them. He suggested that, given the Mount's focus on social responsibility and social justice, Administration consider the option of approaching students before they get into this situation instead of punishing them afterward.

He further clarified that Senate does not have authority over financial issues but does have authority over academic issues. Because this financial issue impacts academic issues and the teaching of students, senators should recommend to the Board of Governors and Administration that they take some measures to address it. The following motion was made:

Moved by R. Gechtman, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that in light of cases of students in financial distress who are unable to pay on time their tuition and are further penalized by being cut off services, adversely affecting their academic performance, the Senate of MSVU recommends to the Board of Governors to review punitive policies. We recommend to put in place a system to help students before they get into financial trouble and ask to review policies that hinder their ability to succeed in their studies (such as cutting them off Moodle, e-mail, library services, UPass). *(This motion was later modified)*

R. Lumpkin provided additional background information on the agenda item and stressed that the practice of eliminating students' access to Moodle and their Mount email accounts is undertaken only after multiple failed attempts to reach out to students with overdue accounts. The action is meant to alert and motivate them to contact Financial Services regarding their account so that Financial Services can help them work out a payment plan, access an emergency bursary, and tap into other resources. She noted that implementing the practice in 2012 has proven effective in substantially reducing Student Accounts Receivable from nearly \$500K to \$120K and helps confirm whether the student is still, in fact, in the class. She also outlined suggestions from the meeting with the Students' Union Executive that included adding wording to the Students' Union Orientation handbook and the faculty handbook.

An in-depth discussion ensued; feedback below is summarized:

Student Senators raised the following concerns/considerations:

- Noted that marginalized students who have student loans and incur late and interest fees end up paying more for their education than those who don't have financial restrictions; this leads to further marginalization (A. Grant);

- Commented that students in blended classes whose class mark is partially based on their participation in Moodle discussions can be impacted by having their user access suspended (A. Grant);
- Suggested that the bursary program be reviewed and possibly revamped; several considerations related to the application process were outlined including total income, timing, and justification of funding (M. Atwater);
- Questioned the feasibility of pushing the deadline for drop out or the tuition due date toward the end of January to help to resolve the problem (A. Grant);
- Suggested that consideration be given to having tuition due half way through the course to give students the time to make enough money to pay tuition (similar to the process used within the Co-op program) (A. Grant);
- Shared responses received from students on their personal financial hardships and agreed that communicating with students about the resources available and how to access them is important to student success (M. Atwater);
- Questioned the content of the “Alert” pieces being sent to students regarding their accounts and whether information on the resources available to them is included (M. Atwater);
- Suggested a generic statement be added to course syllabi about whom in Financial Services to contact for assistance (M. Atwater).

Senators discussed the impact to students’ academic well-being:

- Commented that only the students whose classes involve Moodle or technology are restricted when their tuition is unpaid; this is discriminatory (K. Blotnicky);
- Outlined how material retrieved from in the Library would not be impacted by this decision and noted access options available to off-campus affiliated researchers which could also be offered to students. (T. Harrison);
- Commented that as a professor in Information Technology, her students are immediately impacted when they lose their access to their user accounts, whereas students in some classes may not be as readily affected. She asked for clarification and direction on whether “workarounds” should be considered and what would be acceptable (P. Crouse);
- Questioned how the University knows the reduction in accounts receivable is a result of students actually being helped, what policies or other supports are in place to help these students, and whose responsibility it is (M. Forrest);
- Spoke of the policies surrounding the consequences of late payment of tuition fees and the message it sends from a university whose focus is social justice (R. Gechtman);
- Questioned whether the University can minimize the penalty by not recording the final grade and giving the student the opportunity to continue in the courses and access the technology but not graduate unless tuition is paid (N. Kayhani);
- Spoke of a potential unanticipated consequence to do with the decision of students to enroll in a course in the first place. Students, investing in themselves when they decide to enroll in a course, are less likely to invest

when there is a higher degree of uncertainty. Because their financial situation is often uncertain, students may decide not to enroll in the course if the condition exists where there is no opportunity to complete the course and pay before they graduate (J. Sawler);

- Suggested that a memo or email be sent to all faculty two weeks prior to the cutoff deadline to request that they announce the deadline to students in their classes (J. Mills, E. Church);
- Suggested that information on payment deadlines and/or resources available to students with financial need be included in the First-Year Orientation Course (S. MacMillan).

Further discussion was held and clarification provided on:

- The process (six separate and timed notices) undertaken to prompt students to contact Financial Services where staff can determine the students' situations and to refer them to the appropriate support service (B. Jessop);
- Deregistering processes used at other universities that are more punitive in nature; the Mount would like to avoid this (G. MacDonald, B. Jessop);
- The difference between accounts receivable and bad debt and the efficiency of the current process (B. Jessop, R. Lumpkin);
- A strategic initiative to look at an online application for the bursary program (B. Jessop, P. Barry);
- The establishment of a bursary fund to support students in the short-term and considerations of an endowment opportunity for the bursary program (B. Jessop);
- Workaround solutions: these are for the most part discouraged (E. Church, B. Jessop);
- Work underway by P. Barry and P. Cantelo to revamp the bursary application procedures to make the process and application clearer and easier. It is hoped to have this in place for the bursary program in November (P. Barry);
- Student penalties: Students are not subject to penalties before the end of January (B. Jessop);
- Being more proactive about discussing financial aid at the student recruitment stage with prospective students. Students' Union assistance in this was requested (P. Barry);
- Putting some onus on students to think about how tuition will be paid and opening discussion with them including how we can help (P. Barry).

It was agreed that communication is key. The Alert message content will be reviewed to ensure it is an encouragement for students to contact Financial Services so they can be assisted in finding solutions. It was also agreed that payment deadlines and/or resources available to students be included in the First-Year Orientation Course and that faculty members be encouraged to direct students with financial needs to Financial Services.

A. MacGillivray noted that financial literacy in Canada is low and that there is a CPA Canada volunteer program that deals with financial literacy. She offered her

services as a volunteer to talk to students one on one or in a group on financial literacy. Senators expressed appreciation for this offer.

R. Nearing thanked senators for their multiple perspectives, thoughts, and respectful conversation. He noted that we all know that at the core of this issue is a small but substantive group suffering; we know that the resources are available, but how do we connect those two dots? He stressed that there is a joint responsibility for all stakeholders represented around the table (students, administration and faculty) to ensure there is awareness and connection to those resources.

R. Gechtman provided final comments that he could see that there is wide consensus on what the “carrot” is; it’s education. We want to avoid the “stick”—the punishment of discontinuation of academic services. He stated that he did not hear a convincing argument that is effective or ethically correct to use this point to further marginalize students who are already struggling by making it more difficult to finish their courses. He suggested that the business will not close because students don’t pay. The motion made earlier was revised to:

Moved by R. Gechtman, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that in light of the cases of students in financial distress who are unable to pay on time their tuition, and are further penalized by being cut off from services, adversely affecting their academic performance, the Senate of Mount Saint Vincent University recommends that the Board of Governors review punitive policies. We recommend putting in place a system to help students before they are in financial trouble and ask to review polices that hinder their ability to succeed in their studies (such as cutting them off access to Moodle and the university network).

R. Lumpkin corrected two points that R. Gechtman raised. She noted that it was not correct to say that if people didn’t pay, the business would not close as, in context of how universities are funded in North America, the business would indeed close if people did not pay. As well, she noted that it is not correct to say that the method used was not effective; in fact, it has reduced the unpaid tuition substantially since it was put in place. She noted that she doesn’t argue ethics with him because that’s the point we are all struggling with; what is the ethical way to solve this problem for our students?

L. Steele expressed discomfort in making a decision on the motion without a delay/thinking period. R. Lumpkin provided clarification on the process related to a “Notice of Motion”. Questions were raised and clarification provided on the intent of the original motion and why there is a need to table it. It was at this point, the motion to table the first motion was voted on and carried.

Moved by R. Farmer, seconded by M. Whalen, that the motion be tabled to the next meeting. CARRIED (15/28)

It will be brought back for further discussion at the next Senate meeting as Business Arising.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved:

- Minutes of January 27, 2017, meeting
- The ratification of a one-time change to the BEd practicum requirements
- The proposal for an MA, MEd, Certificate and Diploma in TESOL
- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- A MOU and articulation agreement between MSVU's BA in Child & Youth Study and Holland College's Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education

Senate received for information:

- Notice of Motion re change to Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference
- Academic Calendar Dates for 2018-19
- Undergraduate curriculum changes
- Senate Library Committee report

11. Adjournment

Moved by M. Whalen, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.