

MINUTES

Present: M. Bluechardt (Chair), P. Barry Mercer, A. Benzaquen, K. Blotnicky, C. Broughton, P. Cantelo, E Church, P. Cormier-MacBurnie, P. Crouse, A. Cuming, R. Farmer, T. Findlay, M. Forrest, T. Harriott, T. Harrison, N. Jamieson, K. Kienapple, J. MacLeod, M. MacMillan, S. MacMillan, C. Matta, M. McGonnell, S. Orlov, J. Sawler, S. Seager, J. Sharpe, D. Shiner, B. Taylor, R. Zuk

Regrets: J. Fraser-Arsenault, M. J. Harkins, B. Jessop, G. MacDonald, S. MacIntosh

Guests: V. Bacher, G. Batten, K. Gallant, K. Musgrave

New and returning Senators were welcomed, a roundtable of introductions undertaken.

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 P. Cantelo, seconded by K. Kienapple, to approve the agenda as presented.
CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes of May 24, 2017

Moved by P. Barry Mercer, seconded by E. Church, to approve the meeting minutes of May 24, 2017, as circulated. CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

No business arising.

5. President's Announcements

5.1. Conduct at Senate Meetings

M. Bluechardt read the *Conduct at Senate Meetings* statement.

She updated Senators on her upcoming trips to Toronto and Bermuda with members from Alumnae Relations and the Recruitment team where she will host alumnae events and visit seven schools, including Bermuda College.

She spoke to the disappointment and frustration of Nova Scotia universities upon learning that both Acadia and CBU are receiving extra government funding not available to other NS universities. Currently, the Council of NS University

Presidents (CONSUP) is meeting with government and working to secure a meeting with the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education to discuss this further. Data is being collected to review how all NS universities have suffered since changes were made by the provincial government in 2008; B. Jessop and the senior leadership team were acknowledged for their part in lobbying government for equitable funding. As well, M. Bluehardt noted that the students have indicated their willingness to assist in messaging and supporting the Mount in this initiative.

The question was raised and clarification provided on the extra government funding that, unbeknownst to the remaining universities, Acadia has been receiving and CBU will receive.

The President stressed that the Mount intends to continue to conduct itself in an efficient and fiscally responsible way. Information collected and strategies considered to address the Government's funding inequities will be shared with the University community, once developed.

A. Cuming acknowledged Government's part in tuition increases and thanked the University for lobbying for fair and equitable funding; he reiterated the willingness of students to work together with the University for change. Students were asked, and agreed, to give faculty as much notice as possible when planning off-campus demonstrations; this will assist in scheduling midterm exams.

6. Question Period

R. Farmer suggested that, with the start of a new academic year and in light of pending legislation to legalize marijuana, the University review its on-campus smoking policies.

7. Committee Reports (Standing and Ad Hoc)

7.1. Senate Executive

7.1.1. Editorial Changes to Senate Policies

P. Crouse outlined discussions held with past president, R. Lumpkin, and more recently with Senate Executive, on how editorial changes are made to Senate Bylaws and policies; examples including position or department name changes were provided and discussed. Currently, changes to these documents are initiated through the committee or person responsible and documents are presented to Senate for approval. Senate Executive is proposing a change to the Policy on Policies to empower the Secretary of Senate to make editorial changes that would not impact the intent of the policy, without the approval of Senate. The following motion was made:

Moved by E. Church, seconded by J. Sharpe, that Senate approve the addition to the Procedures section of the Policy on Policies, effective immediately. (*This motion was later deferred.*)

The question was raised whether Senate is comfortable with changes, regardless of how minor, being made to Senate Bylaws and policies without Senate's approval; a discussion ensued.

A friendly amendment to add the wording "or substantive content" within the addition to the Procedures section of the Policy on Policies was proposed and accepted. Examples of other potential types of editorial edits, including the change in name of external organizations referred to within policies, or the removal of names of rescinded policies referred to within a current policy were discussed as other possible edits. Revising the policy to include the specific types of edits rather than leaving it open to interpretation, or including the wording "to keep names up to date with current usage" were discussed.

Discussion was also held on Senate Executive's role in the oversight of editorial changes to the Senate Bylaws and policies. The need to ensure that Senate is updated on any changes was noted. The Secretary of Senate advised that current language within the Policy on Policies stipulates that once a change has been made, the chair of the committee responsible is advised of the date the policy has been made public; this language can be revised to include notification to Senate of changes to Senate policies.

It was suggested and agreed that the item be referred back to Senate Executive. The following motion was made:

Moved by R. Farmer, seconded by M. Forrest, that the motion be deferred back to Senate Executive for discussion and incorporation of Senate discussions. CARRIED

- 7.1.2. Editorial Changes to Senate Bylaws (Notice of Motion)
P. Crouse advised that the reasoning for the impending motion is the same as 7.1.1 except that the document referred to is now the Senate Bylaws. This agenda item will be done in tandem with 7.1.1 and discussions from 7.1.1 will be considered when preparing this item for the next Senate meeting.
- 7.1.3. Revision to Policy on Policies
P. Crouse directed senators to the "Procedures" section of the "Marked Up" version of the Policy on Polices and spoke to the inconsistencies identified over the past year in the numbering of policies. Senate

Executive is proposing that the policy number on revised policies only be changed in the case of a name change to the policy; otherwise, the original policy number is retained when revisions occur.

The second proposed change is related to the field on the Policy template identified as “Last Updated”; this field is interpreted and used inconsistently. The correct interpretation would be that this field reflect the date that the policy is approved by Senate. Senate Executive suggests that the field “Last Updated” be changed to “Senate Approval Dates” and that the current Senate approval date and up to the last three approval dates be listed.

Moved by S. Orlov, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that Senate approve the revisions to the Policy on Policies and authorize the Secretary of Senate to begin to make these changes to policies currently in effect. CARRIED

7.1.4. Revision to Senate Bylaws – Senate Membership, Bylaw 1 (Notice of Motion)

P. Crouse outlined the two proposed changes to Bylaw 1. This motion will come forward to Senate at its next meeting.

The practice of giving “Notice of Motion” was questioned and clarified.

7.1.5. Report on Senate Self-Evaluation

C. Matta reported on the results of the annual Senate Self-Evaluation; overall results were positive. Comments within the report included the importance of adhering to timelines, keeping discussions on subject and within a reasonable timeline, and a small number of senators dominating Senate discussion.

A question arose on how to get a better response, and a brief discussion was held on the evaluation process and timeline. With a completion rate of 49%, senators were encouraged to participate in the evaluation next year.

C. Matta was thanked for presenting the report.

7.2. Academic Policy and Planning

7.2.1. Accessibility Policy

E. Church provided an overview of the membership comprising the Accessibility Advisory Committee and introduced members present at the meeting. The Committee is responsible for revising the Accessibility Policy to reflect current Human Rights legislation and requirements; the process used was outlined. Substantive revisions were highlighted, including the addition of Section 6, *Collaboration and Shared*

Responsibility, to outline the responsibilities of students, faculty and Accessibility Services. Changes were made to the appendices to help clarify types of academic accommodations and definitions.

An in-depth discussion was held on the changes to the policy; much of this focused on the new Section 6. Comments included:

Given the increasing number of students with disabilities, concern was expressed about the policy's lack of acknowledgement of undue hardship to faculty and the demand on their time. While the university is expected to experience hardship in its accommodation of students, it was stated that this hardship often falls on faculty. As well, the lack of consideration and acknowledgement for other types of teaching besides lectures (e.g. group work) and the lack of guidelines surrounding how to deal with these specific situations were noted. (S. Seager, R. Farmer)

While the policy outlines the responsibility of Accessibility Services (6.2), concern was expressed about the number of items listed as faculty responsibilities (6.3). It was also noted that the duty to accommodate should include more than just disabilities. (S. Seager, R. Farmer)

A question was raised about whether the policy is redundant given that the NS Human Rights Act would supersede the policy. Caution and concern were also expressed about ensuring the policy lines up with the Human Rights Act. Edits to the policy were recognized as substantive, and more time to review the impact of the edits may be beneficial. (R. Farmer, M. MacMillan)

Clarification was provided on the Human Rights Act, which stipulates that the organization (not individuals) has the duty to accommodate. As well, the collaborative process within 6.3.g of the policy that directs faculty members to contact Accessibility Services if they have questions or concerns on accommodation was noted. The high standard of the Human Rights Act and its expectation of hardship on organizations was explained; organizations are expected to exhaust all reasonable possibilities for accommodations before they can claim that the hardships are "undue". (E. Church, K. Musgrave)

A question was raised about on-campus initiatives related to ensuring that the University is accessible to those with physical disabilities (Section 7). Senators were advised about two audits conducted by external agencies looking at accessibility and a meeting scheduled in the near future to review what needs to be done to ensure accessibility. C. Broughton suggested that a representative of the Students' Union be

included on discussions regarding accessibilities. B. Jessop will be asked to report on these initiatives at the next meeting. (R. Zuk, E. Church, K. Musgrave)

M. Bluehardt asked senators whether they would like to vote on the motion or defer it back to the committee. While there was support for deferring the motion, P. Barry Mercer spoke to the work of the committee to align the policy with the NS Human Rights Act and questioned what the alternative to accommodating students might be.

B. Taylor, a member of the Committee, described the work of the committee and the input of K. MacMillan, Harassment and Discrimination Advisor, to the language and changes to the policy, interpretation of undue hardship and the recognition that it can be about more than financial hardship.

Other brief discussions were held on learning outcomes and situations where accommodation could be deemed impossible, independent studies and other creative solutions as options, the importance of ensuring clarity of learning objectives in the syllabi, expectations of new generation students, and hard copy testing versus other methods. Faculty members were urged to contact Accessibility Services for advice and assistance with situations requiring accommodation. (S. Seager, A. Benzaquen, B. Taylor, K. Musgrave)

Factors that must be weighed when assessing whether the hardship associated with the accommodation is considered 'undue' were outlined. E. Church expanded upon B. Taylor's comment that the clearer that faculty are on course expectations and outcomes, the firmer their ground is when approached by a student requesting accommodation. (E. Church, K. Musgrave)

At the request of P. Cantelo, K. Musgrave outlined best practices developed and processes used by other universities to accommodate students with undocumented or undiagnosed disabilities. P. Cantelo encouraged senators to be aware of the potential impact on academic integrity if accommodations are provided in such circumstances.

M. Bluehardt recapped discussion; she hoped that senators now have a better understanding of the intent of the policy and support that is available through Accessibility Services. To ensure compliance with the NS Human Rights Act, the Mount has the duty to accommodate—it is not a matter of choice; however, accommodation is done on a case-by-case basis. She reminded senators that the policy is not a "one-size-fits all" and that faculty, staff and students will present with different needs

and interests, what will be ever changing. Given the lengthy discussion held on the policy, she made the decision to proceed with the motion.

Moved by E. Church, seconded by B. Taylor, that Senate approve the Policy on Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. CARRIED

The voting results on the motion were confirmed as 14 senators in favor of the motion, 8 against, and 4 abstentions.

- 7.2.2. Revisions to Terms of Reference, Senate Bylaw 14.3 (*Notice of Motion*)
Notice was given on the motion coming forward to the next Senate meeting.

- 7.3. Graduate Studies Program and Policy

- 7.3.1. Calendar Revision: Academic Standing
Background was provided on proposed changes to the Calendar revision on Academic Standing.

Moved by K. Kienapple, seconded by K. Blotnicky, that Senate approve the Calendar revision on Academic Standing as presented. CARRIED

- 7.4. Graduate Scholarships, Assistantships and Awards

- 7.4.1. Revisions to Terms of Reference, Senate Bylaw 14.12 (*Notice of Motion*)
Notice was given on the motion coming forward to the next Senate meeting.

- 7.5. Information Technology and Services

- 7.5.1. Revisions to Terms of Reference, Senate Bylaw 14.5 (*Notice of Motion*)
Notice was given on the motion coming forward to the next Senate meeting.

- 7.6. Nominations

- 7.6.1. Nomination for Senate-Elected Committee
Moved by K. Blotnicky, seconded by M. Forrest, that Senate elect Prof. Jean Mills to the Academic Appeals Committee as a regular member. Her term to begin upon election and end June 30, 2020. CARRIED

- 7.7. Research and Publications

- 7.7.1. Faculty Release Time Awards Policy
In G. MacDonald's absence, E. Church spoke to changes within the Faculty Release Time Awards Policy brought forward to Senate for approval. The following motion was made:

Moved by E. Church, seconded by B. Taylor, that Senate approve the proposed changes to the Faculty Release Time Awards, to be effective upon Senate approval. (*This motion was later deferred*)

Concern was expressed about the increased level of restriction on the eligibility requirement to only principal investigators and no longer for co-investigators. The value of the opportunity to collaborate with a top person in one's field at another institution was also expressed. It was suggested that consideration be given to how researchers would access these awards, if this change is approved. (T. Findlay, J. Sawler)

The validity of the sentence on p. 122 (2nd para) regarding whether or not an applicant, already on a reduced teaching load, would be eligible to apply for an RTA was questioned. Clarification was provided that the word "not" was missing and that it should read "*are not eligible to apply for an RTA.*" (S. Seager, V. Baker)

It was suggested that the bullet "*the amount of the external research grant*" be removed as the grant amount differs by discipline and could be seen as a basis for discrimination. It was also suggested that the bullet at the bottom of p. 122 be revised to read, "*the applicant's track record*", as success is measured by more than just publication and grant success. (C. Matta)

It was questioned whether the policy should go back to the committee with Senate's comments.

Moved by E. Church, seconded by M. Forrest, that the motion be deferred. CARRIED

- 7.7.2. Revisions to Standard Operating Procedures
 - 7.7.2.1. NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards
 - 7.7.2.2. Budget Management
 - 7.7.2.3. Purpose and Envelopes of Funding
 - 7.7.2.4. Deadlines
 - 7.7.2.5. Continuation of Funding
 - 7.7.2.6. New Scholar Grant

E. Church spoke to the changes to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) coming to Senate for information. Changes include revising forms to an electronic form fillable format and to comply with new regulations from SSHRC.

A discrepancy (p. 133) was noted in the change to the level of funding (\$1810 versus \$3010) that was not carried over to the next page, and it

was questioned why the research grants are being reduced to \$5K from \$7K and how decisions are made regarding research funding. These will be referred to the Research Office and/or the Committee for clarification and/or correction. (S. Seager, T. Findlay, R. Zuk)

A question arose and clarification provided that procedural items come to Senate “for information”, policy changes require Senate approval, and edited forms are attached to annual reports as appendices.

7.7.3. Change to Terms of Reference, Senate By-laws 14.8 (*Notice of Motion*)
A notice of motion was provided; the proposed revisions to the Committee’s terms of reference will come to Senate for approval at its next meeting.

7.8. Teaching and Learning

7.8.1. Revisions to Terms of Reference, Senate Bylaw 14.10 (*Notice of Motion*)
J. Sharpe outlined changes to the committee’s terms of reference coming forward to Senate for approval at its next meeting.

8. Other Reports

8.1. Board of Governors

R. Farmer reported on outcomes from the Board meeting including a presentation on enrolment and recruitment initiatives, review of the Board’s annual evaluation, discussion on financial practices in light of the recent situation at the IWK, an update and brochure on the new Research Centre to be used for fundraising activities for the Centre, discussion on the inequities in funding received by two NS universities, and committee and other reports received.

8.2. Students’ Union

A. Cuming thanked Senate for giving students a voice at the table and spoke to student advocacy initiatives that this month will focus on poverty and social inequity. Shinerama, student engagement, the impact of the implementation of the pre-primary program, the SU strategic plan, a recent orientation session and new student representatives slated for Senate membership were also highlighted. Information was provided on the seven positions filled during the Students’ Union election.

9. New Business

9.1. Annual Reports of Senate Committees

9.1.1. Academic Appeals

9.1.2. Academic Policy and Planning

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

9.1.4. Executive

- 9.1.5. Graduate Scholarships, Assistantships and Awards
- 9.1.6. Graduate Studies Program and Policy
- 9.1.7. Information Technology and Services
- 9.1.8. Library
- 9.1.9. Nominations
- 9.1.10. Research and Publications
- 9.1.11. Student Experience
- 9.1.12. Student Judicial
- 9.1.13. Student Discipline Appeals
- 9.1.14. Teaching and Learning
- 9.1.15. Writing Initiatives
- 9.1.16. Undergraduate Admissions, Scholarships and Awards
- 9.1.17. Undergraduate Curriculum
- 9.1.18. University Research Ethics Board

Senators were advised that Senate Committee annual reports are presented for information only. The Nominations Report was received late; hardcopies of that report are available.

- 9.2. Annual Report of Nancy's Chair Committee (*for information*)
B. Taylor noted that it was great to have Catherine Martin as Nancy's Chair for the past two years; he is equally pleased to have El Jones as current Chair.
- 9.3. Annual Report of Gail and Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Learning Disabilities (*for information*)
The report was presented for information.

10. Items for Communication

Senate approved

- Minutes of the May 24, 2017, meeting
- Revisions to the Policy on Policies
- Revisions to the Accessibility Policy
- Graduate calendar changes re academic standing

Senate elected

- A faculty member to the Academic Appeals Committee

Senate received for information

- Report on the Senate Self-Evaluation 2017
- Notice of Motion re changes to Senate Bylaw 1 and 13
- Notice of Motion re changes to the Terms of Reference of CAPP, GSAA, SCOITS, CRP, and SCOTL
- Revisions to CRP Standard Operating Procedures documents
- Annual reports of Senate-related committees

11. Adjournment

Moved by J. MacLeod, seconded by P. Barry Mercer, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.