



Senate Meeting
MCC 105/106; MS Teams

April 21, 2022
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

MINUTES: Special Meeting

Present: R. Lumpkin (Chair), K. Allan, A. Benzaquén, S. Brigham, A. Card, G. Chan, P. Crouse, C. Dawson, G. Durepos, T. Findlay, T. Franz-Odendaal, J. Fraser Arsenault, G. Fraser, J. Gahagan, M. Gillis, S. Hale, T. Harriott, T. Harrison, E. Henderson, J. Lumsden, J. MacLeod, S. MacMillan, M. Nadeem, D. Piccitto, M. Ralston, J. Roberts, B. Taylor, A. Thurlow, J. Valcke, R. Zuk

Regrets: G. Boulet, N. Buchanan, C. Hardy, L. MacCallum, C. Schneider, M. Shortt Robertson, S. Trenholm

Observers: S. Davis, A. Major, P. Small Legs-Nagge

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. Observers were identified and welcomed.

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

1. Indigenous Land Recognition

R. Lumpkin 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 S. Brigham, seconded by E. Henderson, to approve the agenda as presented.
CARRIED

3. Administration Update

3.1. Vice-President Administration (*Budget Presentation for Information and Discussion*)

R. Lumpkin provided some opening remarks and stated that she was satisfied that the budget contains important investments in our academic staff and issues of importance to students including academic advising, increased course offerings, and accessibility and counseling services.

She referred to a recent discussion at Senate regarding the Mount's ability to provide a living wage and confirmed that, based on our payroll, 88.5% of employees are paid at or above a living wage and that all are paid at least at

minimum wage, which is not the case among all our sister campuses. She stated that increasing all wages to a living wage would have significant budget implications to ensure equity among entry-level employees and more senior staff; however, in preparation for the next fiscal year, an analysis will be completed to determine the impacts of setting a wage floor comparable to the living wage.

T. Findlay asked for clarification regarding the statement that other universities are not paying a minimum wage. R. Lumpkin confirmed that at a recent CONSUP meeting one president indicated that some students were not paid minimum wage as there are programs where a minimum wage is not mandated, although they expressed, they would like to move in this direction.

M. Nadeem presented the 2022-2023 budget for information and discussion. He spoke to the following three items in detail:

1. Overview of the budget development process
2. Context for 2022-23 fiscal planning
3. Key budget assumptions, investments, and risks

He reviewed the budget guiding principles and the membership of the University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) and highlighted the work being done in consultation with the EDIA Advisor to apply an equity lens to the budget development process. A budget summary was presented and reviewed. He noted how this budget aligns and supports the Strategic Plan and was developed with the same theme as return to campus 'Onward Together'. He then discussed the budget risks, the capital budget and issues to be addressed during the next budget planning process including providing more time for the campus community to review the draft budget as well as investigating the gender pay gap at the Mount. He also explained how any budget surplus is placed into a reserve that can be invested in strategic projects identified by the University.

4. Question Period

J. MacLeod asked for details regarding the reserve fund and its current balance, the amount of COVID relief funding that was received and what it was spent on. M. Nadeem confirmed that the Mount received approximately \$1.4 million in COVID relief funds of which approximately half has been committed or spent on supporting the AV and IT upgrades on campus as well as additional hires in areas providing pandemic-related support to the campus community. He identified moneys committed last year for the strategic initiatives reserves and additional money set aside this year for different initiatives, including an amount dedicated to the implementation of the strategic plan. He also stated that the Board is provided with a semi-annual report which outlines where and how the COVID relief and reserve funds have been spent. J. MacLeod asked if the reserve or COVID funding could be used as strategic investments to offset any budget cuts caused by avoiding a tuition

increase. M. Nadeem stated that the decision to use reserve funds to offset budget cuts would not ensure long-term fiscal sustainability, that sister universities have not financially recovered when overspending reserves, and that this would not be something he would be comfortable recommending to the President or Board.

T. Findlay asked about the possibility of an Indigenous cluster hire, given the Strategic Plan, the recent commitments made to the Indigenous community and the equity-based lens information provided in the budget presentation. M. Nadeem confirmed that, although no Indigenous cluster hire is planned for this budget cycle, he did refer to funds set aside to support Indigenizing our curriculum, the auntie in residence program, and the additional financial support announced recently for Indigenous students. B. Taylor added that equity-deserving-based hiring is being done through cross appointments in Education/Psychology and Marketing/Business and Education designated a position for an Indigenous scholar. He noted future discussions regarding increasing the Indigenous faculty complement each year and confirmed that currently seven self-reporting Indigenous faculty members are on campus.

J. Roberts asked if an increase in enrollment because of a tuition freeze is factored into the budget projections under the assumption that more students would choose to attend the Mount and therefore would increase revenue from student fees and ancillary fees. M. Nadeem explained that this approach would be an aggressive assumption and is difficult to predict, but he agreed to investigate this idea and present the data as part of the next budget cycle.

J. Roberts referred to a point in the budget presentation about projected loss of residence occupancy due to construction noise and asked why this would be of concern considering noise pollution bylaws in the city. M. Nadeem confirmed that this projection is based on an experience he had at another institution that saw a decline in residence occupancy because of ongoing construction in the area.

Moved by J. MacLeod, seconded by S. Brigham, to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.
CARRIED

J. MacLeod asked about current data regarding gender equity and the pay gap at the Mount. M. Nadeem confirmed that the next budget cycle will include a gender pay gap analysis and stated he is under the impression that the Mount is in a better position than other institutions with respect to this issue. J. MacLeod referred to a recent round of bargaining in which this data was analyzed and suggested that this could be updated in the analysis undertaken during the next budget cycle. T. Findlay asked that the gender pay gap analysis include part- and full-time faculty, administrators, and staff. M. Nadeem agreed that this is a reasonable request.

J. MacLeod ask if there was data available regarding the breakdown of salary and benefits for teaching faculty compared to administration. M. Nadeem agreed to investigate and include his findings in his next budget summary.

S. Brigham asked about overall cost of strategic initiatives, specifically academic planning. M. Nadeem confirmed the amount over a three-year period.

M. Gillis stated that, as a residence student, he was wondering if any efforts will be made to inform students about the construction that will begin over the summer as he was only privy to this information as being part of the Students' Union. M. Nadeem indicated that, in consultation with the developer regarding specific timelines, a website will be created with all relevant information, FAQs and timely updates for students regarding the construction.

5. Adjournment

Moved by C. Dawson, seconded by J. Lumsden, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.