

SENATE MEETING MINUTES
December 14, 2007

The 506th meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, December 14, 2007, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Butler, Dr. Charles, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Enns, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Kimery, Dr. Konopasky, Dr. MacKinnon, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Pendse, Dr. Pe-Piper, Dr. Power, Dr. Stinson, Dr. Vessey, Mr. Hotchkiss, Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Webster, Mr. Gillingwater, Miss Schaller, Mr. Risser, Mr. Dong, and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Wicks, Dr. Crocker, Dr. Van Proosdij, Miss. Cunningham, Dr. Dawson, and Dr. Rand
Meeting commenced at 2:36 P.M.

07028 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

07029 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
.01 Minutes of the meeting of October 19, 2007, were *circulated* as ***Appendix A.***

The following amendments were noted:

- Page 5 & 6 - Correct the spelling of Archbishop and Archdiocese.
- Page 6 – second bullet of president's report – correct 'an new MOU' to read 'a new MOU'.

Moved by MacKinnon and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of October 19, 2007 are approved as amended.”**
Motion carried.

07030 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
None

07031 **MEMBERSHIP ON SENATE COMMITTEES FOR 2007-2008**
.01 circulated as ***Appendix B.***

The following changes/additions were noted:

- .0101 ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
- Dr. Cristian Suteanu (Arts) (replacing Dr. Asp)

.0102 PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Due to an error, this committee was listed under Joint Committees and was mistaken for the Board Property and Development Committee. The Board Property and Development Committee was recently restructured and no longer requires Senate representatives. The committee has been removed from the Senate Joint Committee listing.
- The Senate Property and Development Committee was inserted into Section A and is a standing committee of Senate. The By-laws committee will review the terms of reference of this committee and make a recommendation to Senate regarding continuing or disbanding this group.

Moved by MacKinnon, and seconded, **‘that the updates to the Membership on Senate Committees 2007-2008, are approved as presented.’**
Motion carried.

07032

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Annual Reports submitted for information only.

.01 Academic Planning

Academic Plan “Engaging the Vision” circulated as ***Appendix C***.
Discussion covered the following key points.

- This Academic Plan is the result of a fairly extensive consultation process. ‘One-on-one’ meetings were held with various groups across the University community. The Senate Committee on Academic Planning met several times to consider and revise this document. Subsequent to that, two town hall meetings were held to gather additional input which was incorporated into the document.
- This is a refocusing and refreshing of the original 2002 – 2007 Strategic Plan Framework document.
- Concern was expressed that the numbering of priorities could create the perception of a hierarchal order of importance. If that perception was used a method of deciding which proposals for the future to development over others, the issue becomes even more of a concern.
- Members were advised that under the sub-title ‘Conditions for Success’ on page three it states that the priorities are mutually reinforcing. They are not listed in an order of priority. The order is not strict but the first priority orders the whole document as the defining priority. Priorities four, five and six are not new ones. Saint Mary’s has made demonstrable progress in these areas in recent years. The progress on priorities two and three has not been as good.
- The following statement was also noted on page two – “Momentum must be sustained in areas where major advances have occurred, though the pace of growth need not be so rapid. Increased attention must be paid to improvements in areas where progress has been slow.” Members were advised that this statement was an attempt to capture the essence of the previous point.
- The emphasis on citizenship of the world is more distinctive in this plan.

- Discussion touched on the Mission Statement and whether the priorities (as listed) are in-sync with that. It was suggested that the priorities are mutually reinforcing, support academic priorities, and are in-line with the mission statement but more strongly align with the vision statement. There is a direct link between the title 'Engaging the Vision' and our Vision Statement. The vision is an academic one and the purpose of the academic plan is to engage with that academic vision.
- A review of plans at other academic institutions; showed that they tend to be full of 'motherhood and apple pie' statements. This plan is focused on the values espoused by the university.
- Suggestions were 1) to enhance the statement about the priorities not being listed in order of importance. 2) separate them into Academic and other priorities (regrouping). 3) at the bottom of page three insert a box that clearly states 'The six priorities of the university are: and then a bulleted listing ("Priority number one" implies a hierarchy to it.)
- Student representatives expressed support for the plan. The plan encapsulates the student's vision and differentiates Saint Mary's from other institutions. It sets us apart in a way that may attract new students.
- Caution was urged regarding how student success is evaluated. Students use SMU as a platform leading to programs offered by other institutions. The plan addresses student completion rates and discusses improving this area. Graduation does not equal student success. The opinion was expressed that a higher percentage of students completing their degrees would be a measure of success for both sides.

Moved by McCalla, and seconded, **"that the Senate approves the Academic Plan 2008-2011 'Engaging the Vision' as circulated."**
Motion carried. (two abstentions)

.02 Academic Regulations

2008-09 Academic Calendar of Events circulated as **Appendix D**

- Dixon noted a typographical error (2007 to be corrected to 2008 in two instances).
- The following constraints were identified:
 - Remembrance Day is on a weekday and the University will be closed.
 - The two fall holidays occur in different teaching cycles.
 - Labour Day is early and results in an early end to the term.
 - Exams run to Dec 17. An additional exam day has been added to both semesters because of the difficulty experienced this year with scheduling all required exams into the exam period.
 - In 2009 classes start on a Monday.
 - Winter Break coincides with the schedules of Dalhousie and Mount Saint Vincent. .
 - There are 12 ½ weeks in the second semester - classes end on April 7. There is one day of exams scheduled for the Thursday before Easter break.
 - Members discussed the issue of having teaching and exams days when the administrative offices are not open (e.g. Monday April 13). It was noted that if this were to change we would also need a

decision to have no classes/exams on Saturday. The loss of Saturday exam dates would extend the exam schedule by three days. It was suggested that it was typical to have exams on Saturday.

- The University Day Care is closed on holidays. Day care is problematic for both faculty and students. This was noted as a union issue. Hotchkiss will investigate the potential for a solution to the issue of day care.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the 2008-09 Academic Calendar of Events as circulated.”**
Motion carried. (three against, one abstention)

.03 Continuing Education

Annual Report attached as **Appendix E**

.04 Literacy Strategy

Annual Report attached as **Appendix F**

Discussion covered the following key points:

- The suggestion was for the Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy to focus attention on reading skills.
- The focus to date has largely been on written skills.
- The committee is working according to the terms of the 2002 Senate report on literacy. The committee would appreciate some input at this time.
- Student input this term has indicated that there is also an issue with reading, which could be a key component of student success.
- It was noted that under Priority 4 – Objectives on page 7 of the new plan it states, “Re-assess the campus wide literacy strategy, amend it as necessary, and take steps to implement all of its provisions.”
Action Item: Members requested that a letter be sent from the Senate to the Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy, to identify the need to focus some attention on reading skills.
- It was noted that Julie-Anne Stodolny-Vincent has done an excellent job drawing attention to writing.

.05 Quality of Teaching:

Annual Report attached as **Appendix G**

.06 Research Ethics Board:

Annual Report attached as **Appendix H**

Key Discussion points:

- Members complimented the Committee Chair for a particularly comprehensive report.
- The report includes a lot of hard hitting recommendations. It was noted that these recommendations are essentially the same as those put forward last year.
- Concern was expressed that the chair and the committee may be overwhelmed by the volume of proposals.
- The REB comes under the FGSR budget. There was an extra 5 hours added to secretarial resource for REB support. FGSR had a meeting on this recently. The message has been heard and there will be a proposal within the budget committee process for this.

- A recent tri-council audit raised issues around the tracking of REB cases. This area was improved but we were still cited on it.
- It was noted that in table 6 there were large variations in the amount of time committed by board members to reviews. The Chair reviewed an incredible 192 submissions.
- Question: Is there any mechanism for sharing the load more evenly?
Answer: Members were advised that all board members are volunteers. Some spend more time reviewing submissions than others. There is no stick to facilitate those reviews. These other members attend meetings and provide valuable input. Reviewing files is not all of the work of the REB. We are grateful for the work and efforts of everyone on the board.
- Some departments are higher consumers of the board's services than others. It was noted that out of the 230+ cases, approximately 100 came from Psychology and 50 came from Management. The bulk of the services of this committee are being used by these departments.
- Members were advised that there is no correlation between the number of reviews a member does and their department affiliation. An objective reviewer with no direct affiliation can often provide better insight and input into the application process.
- We need to ensure that members are not burdened excessively.
- Question: REBs were mandated by Ottawa a decade ago. This has been a fiscal burden on institutions. Is there any fiscal funding attached to this requirement? Answer: There is a measure of acknowledgement in the funding of these projects in the allocation to indirect costs.

07033 REPORT OF AD HOC COMMITTEES

None.

07034 REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES

None.

07035 REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES

.01 University Advisory Committee on Athletics & Research

- Annual Report attached as ***Appendix I***

07036 NEW BUSINESS FROM

None

07037 PRESIDENTS REPORT

Members were advised of the following:

- There was a presidential wager between SMU and U of M that depending on the Vanier Cup winner, the opposing team's president would wear the winning team jersey at their next Senate meeting.
- Pe-Piper and David Lane were both nominated as finalists for the Science Champion Award from the Discovery Centre. Dr. David Lane won last night at the 2007 Discovery Awards for Science and Technology
- The Saint Mary's University Act was passed last night in the legislature.
- The MOU discussions are currently underway for next year.

07038 **QUESTION PERIOD**

➤ None.

07039 **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate