

SENATE MEETING MINUTES
May 11, 2018

The 593rd meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, May 11, 2018, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. M. VanderPlaat, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr Butler, Dr Naulls, Dr Bradshaw, Dr Sarty, Dr Smith, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Doucet, Dr Francis, Dr Grandy, Dr Grek-Martin Dr Hall, Dr Khokhar, Dr Loughlin, Dr Rahaman, Dr Stinson, Dr Warner, Dr Twohig, Mr Webster, Mr Nasrallah, Sk Mahmudur Rahman Shovon, Mr Archibald, Ms Sargeant Greenwood, Dr Muir and Ms Bell, Secretary of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Hlongwane, Dr MacDonald, Dr McCallum, Dr Peckmann, Dr Takseva, Mr Brophy, Mr Southwell, and Ms Crystal Witter.

Meeting commenced at 2:37 P.M.

17082 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**

The agenda was accepted.

17083 **SPRING GRADUATES**

Documentation presented at the meeting and designated as *Appendix A* (hard copies to Deans and Senate file only).

Key Discussion Points:

- a) There will be 760 designations awarded to 701 graduates.
- b) There are 146 distinctions also being recognized.
- c) More faculty are needed to attend Convocation for the stage parties.
- d) There was a discussion related to a new graduation program design. If the information is not about convocation, it is not included in the program.
- e) It was noted that in the summary, the diploma in FRSC is still listed. There is no diploma program. Only a certificate program remains. This should be corrected for future listings.

Moved by Naulls, and seconded, **“to confer degrees and distinctions on those represented on the list (circulated as Appendix A) at the Spring Convocation”.** Motion carried.

Moved by Naulls, and seconded, **“to enable the Registrar to add such graduates as may be identified subsequent to this meeting and also to include the first cohort graduating from BNUZ (81 students) to this list.”** Motion carried unanimously.

17084

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of April 13, 2018, were circulated as *Appendix B*.

- Page 2 – The Question should read: On page 5 of the report under item number three it specifies four faculty members, one from each of: Arts, Sobey School of Business, Science and Graduate Studies and Research. Can you confirm that still to be valid? Answer: Yes.
- Page 1 - second to last line and first line – ‘dispersed’ instead of ‘scattered around’.

Moved by Bradshaw, and seconded, ‘**that the minutes of the meeting of April 13, 2018 are approved as revised.**’ Motion carried.

17085

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

.01 Learning and Teaching Committee – revised terms of reference - *Appendix C*.

Key Discussion Points:

- The Learning and Teaching Committee representative provided a historical background of the Committee. He is a long serving member of this committee.
- Based on the direction from Senate, committee members met and modified the terms of reference to address the issues raised by the Senate.
- A faculty led committee on learning and teaching is the correct group to be leading initiatives related to excellence in teaching.
- The committee did some research related to how the issue of teaching excellence was addressed at other universities across Canada.
- In reference to the section related to the relationship with the Studio: The committee will be generating initiatives looking at feedback on campus about learning and teaching as well as looking at best case examples. The Committee will be looking to the Studio to assist with the initiatives arising from these activities.
- In 5.2.14.8 – 3. “A faculty member from each of the four faculties, nominated by the Committee to serve for a term of three years.” It would be helpful to name the faculties (Arts, Sobey School of Business, Science and Graduate Studies and Research).
- In 5.2.13.5- It was suggested that the Studio operationalizes the work of the Senate Committee.
- Question: 5.2.13.2 states “To this end, the Committee shall provide governance oversight and shall advocate for and support the development of teaching and Learning excellence at the University.” Clarification was requested on what that statement meant. Answer: Senate is the governing body. The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible for bringing issues to Senate related to Learning and Teaching. It could be anything coming from the institutional grass roots, from the Deans or from inside the Studio. The committee should have oversight in that regard.
- Question: Does the Senate have overall responsibility here? Answer: Yes but this committee is a standing committee of Senate and therefore represents the Senate.
- Discussion related to 5.2.13.6: A senator stated that this committee is allocating budgets to do work. That type of activity is operational instead of being governance. The Learning and Teaching Committee representative responded that some examples are of activities that fall under this category

are the travel grant program and the teaching grant program. The Committee also has some funds allocated to offering a seminar/workshop.

- Suggestion: The Senate Standing Committee should have a criteria for the awarding of funding for learning and teaching initiatives and for travel initiatives. The criteria should be reviewed by the Committee and the funds should be allocated by the Studio. The Learning and Teaching Committee representative advised that this is not the view of the committee. It was suggested that the budget item be moved into the Studio budget. The Studio is the body that does the work. This Committee should be in oversight of the work of the Studio. Otherwise there are two bodies doing work and that is contradictory.
- Question: What is the size of the budget? Answer: About \$17,000 per year.
- It was suggested that the Senate Committee establish the criteria for travel awards and the Studio administer the funding and report to the Committee. The Committee should have oversight over the policy.
- Members were advised that the Senate does not have a budget for this type of activity. This budget is provided by the AVP's Office.
- Question: If there were a separate committee of faculty members to review the submissions, would there be some overlap between this committee and the Senate Committee? Answer: Yes.
- Clarifying the operational and governance responsibilities of this committee is critical. The Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching should consider this.
- The Learning and Teaching Committee Representative stated that it would create inefficiencies if one body decides how to spend the money, and another body disperses those funds.
- The feedback of Senate will be taken back to The Learning and Teaching Committee. This would be a practical change in direction for the Committee. Having to run things through the Studio may be problematic.
- **Action Item: Bradshaw** will email Crooks with her suggestion.

.02 Status update - Academic Regulations Sub-Committee to Review Principles Used to Generate the Academic Calendar of Events – Dr. Smith

Key Discussion Points:]

- The committee met and established the criteria for constructing the academic calendar. Currently 10 years of calendars are being generated to assess the impact related to the position of Labour Day in the month of September.
- Question: Did the committee address the structure of the summer and spring in terms of teaching hours and an exam period as exists with the fall and winter? Answer: Yes. We are considering scheduling exam periods and creating an equal term.
- Question: Would this new structure take effect for the 2019 – 20 academic year? Answer: That would be up to Senate.
- Question: Will there be some consideration to adding a day to the deadline for the declaration of a major? Answer: The First Year Experience Committee discovered that, in past years, one day used to be included in the Academic Calendar of Events for Major Day. That deadline was subsequently expanded to one week and then it was taken out of the Academic Calendar. It was removed because we established a requirement in the calendar that, after 60 credits and before a student can register for additional courses, they have to declare a Major or speak to an advisor.

- Question: Has there been any discussion about decoupling the last day to register and withdraw? Answer: We decoupled those two dates and made the add date three days sooner.
- It was suggested that Major Day was not successful because students had no incentive to do this. There was no requirements for students to declare a Major. We need to think about an Academic Regulation that would support this type of addition to the Academic Calendar of Events.

.03 Update on the Cross-Faculty Working Group on Academic Literacy & First Year Learning.

Key Discussion Points:

- We have not been able to schedule a meeting between the last Senate meeting and this one. The committee is meeting in June to finalize their thoughts. There will be a report to Senate in September.

.04 Update – President’s Ad-hoc Committee on Racism on Campus

Key Discussion Points:

- A written submission from Mr Brophy was read.
- Nasrallah advised that research is being done and will be reported to Senate in the fall.

17086

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01 Academic Planning Committee

a. Finance (Major/Certificate) 2014-2015 Program Review documentation circulated as: **Appendix D** – APC Notice of Motion, **Appendix E** – Recommendation-Comparison summary, **Appendix F** - Self Study Report, **Appendix G** - Self Study appendices (1-9), **Appendix H**– Dean’s Response to Self Study, **Appendix I** - External Review Committee’s (ERC) Final Report. [Please note that the Department and Chair’s Response to ERC Report are found in Appendix E recommendation summary.] (Dr Rahaman)

Key Discussion Points:

- Note change in Appendix D – revise ‘Management Undergraduate’ to ‘Finance (Major and Certificate)’.
- Dr Rahaman is in attendance to answer any questions that Senators may have.
- **Recommendation 1** Senate agrees with the Dean’s perspective. The program is not correct in discounting the DFW rates, which do in fact affect the students’ ability to progress through the program. The department has to be cognizant of the impact of this on the B. Comm. Degree Program and the viability of the program as a whole.
- **Recommendation 2** In a well-structured and well thought out program this should never happen in a fourth year course. As part of a broader review the Department needs to think about the appropriate sequencing of materials and learning outcomes appearing in the courses to ensure the teaching and learning expressed through the courses is set to meet the needs of the students. Senate also concur with the reviewers that no course should ever be a gatekeeper course particularly in the fourth year.
- **Recommendation 3** Senate agrees with the Dean’s perspective on this and recommends that the Department work with the B. Comm. Program structure as a whole.
- **Recommendation 4** Senate suggests that the Department engage an

external person in a top Finance Department from another university to join the Finance faculty in a curriculum retreat with a trained facilitator to assist with the process, including looking at learning outcomes, course mapping, accreditation requirements, etc. Senate requests a report on this exercise, which is to be convened no later than the fall of 2018. Senate encourages the Department to consider all issues related to course mapping.

- **Recommendation 5** Senate recommends that the path outlined in its response to Recommendation 4 can also be used to address this recommendation.
 - **Recommendation 6:** The existence of a society does not depend on a student being major. Senate is concerned that adequate faculty are not dedicated to advising as per the Collective Agreement. The Department needs to appropriately delegate responsibility for advising as is the chair's responsibility.
 - **Recommendation 7:** Senate supports the Department in moving forward on this recommendation and asks the Department to refer back to Recommendation 6 in this regard.
 - **Recommendation 8:** This is largely outside of the Senate program review process. Senate wishes the program success in their on-going work in this regard.
 - **Recommendation 9:** This is largely outside of the Senate program review process. Senate encourages the Department and Dean to work together to resolve this.
 - **Recommendation 10:** Senate agrees with the Dean's response and asks the program to refer back to recommendation 6. Faculty do in fact have responsibilities in relation to student advising. The department needs to look at their workload allocation and delegation as it applies to student advising as per the Collective Agreement.
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- Question: A Senator asked why the consultations with students appear somewhat limited? Answer: This is not uncommon and we are looking at how we can enhance this going forward.
 - Senators were advised that the Department Chairperson had submitted a response to the APC recommendations. The program has significant concerns about the first Senate motion for the program to submit an action plan to APC in July 2018 based on the recommendations of the Senate.
 - The Department agrees with recommendation one: that a FINA course in the second year is needed. This is a structural issue. There are too many prerequisites in the commerce program and it is impossible for students to take the required finance courses by the end of their second year. The commerce program will have to be reviewed overall before this can be considered.
 - The Department agrees with recommendation seven that more needs to be done on experiential learning and thanks the Dean's Office for the offer of more support.
 - The Department agrees with recommendations six, eight and nine regarding student advising.
 - There are some issues: In relation to Recommendation one, faculty disagree that the failure rate is too high. D is not a failing grade. If you look at the students that received an F – out of students that complete all the work, the failure rate is 4 – 5 %. The students that fail do not complete all the work. A

careful reexamination of the statistics is needed. The recommendation infers that the program courses are too hard and the program disagrees with this. Our graduates are in the top 1% and that should say something about the quality and relevance of the program. The program was ranked 6th in Canada. We are able to offer CFA scholarships, and we can only do this if we meet the standards. The student-instructor teaching evaluations are 4 consistently high as well. The Department would like Senate to note this. We worry that this might infringe on the academic freedom related to what and how the program should be taught.

- Recommendation two suggests that we should potentially offer two streams. We disagree. This is not a common practice in any finance program.
- Recommendations two and four suggest that we bring in external reviewers to review our course content and pedagogy and the Department believes with is unnecessary due to the high standing of the program. We already had two external reviewers review the program.
- Recommendation six and eight – The Department wants to point out that the external reviewers are primarily concerned about career advice for students. The collective agreement 15.1.13 Articles (a) to (f) state that the faculty members should give academic advice. The Chair states that they are already doing this.
- Recommendations four and five touch on ownership of courses. This would be better identified if the word ‘specialization’ was used. We should align research with courses and call it specialization instead of ownership.
- Comments:
 - Academic freedom is about peer advice around how courses are developed and taught in terms of content and not how they are taught.
 - Service courses have to provide service to the broader group taking the courses. The role of those courses are not just for finance students but all students in the B. Comm.
 - It was noted that in Science there are streams for that purpose. It is based on the needs of the students in those areas.
- Question: A student representative asked to what date range the 4-5% failure rate was related? Answer: The faculty member that did that work presented it at the meeting but did not provide that specific information. Response: There is a date range of 2008 – 2016 in the report. On page 40 there is notation of the average failure rate. The Department acknowledges it is too high and has already removed some of the conditions. Immediately the passing criteria was over 50%.
- The Associate Dean of Science suggested that the Department’s dismissal of the DFW rate is of concern. For many students there are student loan and visa implications related to taking a W. These students are forced to stay in a class and cannot drop the course. If the student had fewer constraints, they would be included in the W statistic. We need a more student focused lens to look at this issue. The VPAR advised that DFW rates are a very well established measure of student success. This outcome needs to be analyzed. Recommendation four is an aggregate recommendation of all of the concerns that were raised and would allow the program to consider all of the concerns and issues that have been raised. We want to see continuous improvement of programs.

- A student representative suggested looking at the students that are completing all the requirements in their courses. Their results would give a perspective that may be valuable.
- In Recommendation two it states that the teaching and learning outcomes expressed in the course should be set to meet the needs of the student. Should we be doing this or designing the course to meet the need of the discipline and job market expectations? The Dean, SSB strongly encouraged Senate to move the recommendations as they have been submitted by APC. To treat this report as if this is an action plan is not appropriate. The Dean of Science suggested that the needs of the student are to be successful after they complete their programs. It appears as though this program feels that the needs of the program are the priority. Concern was expressed about the program response to the APC recommendations.
- Student representatives supported the recommendations of APC.

Moved by Butler and seconded, **“that the Finance (Major / Certificate) Program submit an action plan to Academic Planning Committee in July, 2018 based on the responses above.” Motion carried.**

and

Moved by Butler and seconded, **“that in May, 2019, the Finance (Major / Certificate) Program submit a one-year report to the Academic Planning Committee on the progress made on the Action Plan according to Section 5 of the Senate Policy on the Review of Programs at Saint Mary’s University.” Motion carried.**

- b. Computer Science – *Appendix J1* - APC Notice of Motion, *Appendix J2* - 1-Year Report, *Appendix J3* – Comparison/Recommendation Report.
- Key Discussion Points:**
- This report states that a large number of the updates will happen soon.
 - Members were advised that APC continues to monitor the process.

Moved by Butler and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the one-year follow-up report of the Computer Science Program Review as meeting the requirements of Section 5 of the Senate Policy on the Review of Undergraduate Programs at Saint Mary’s.” Motion carried.**

- c. Economics program review *Appendix K1* - APC Notice of Motion, *Appendix K2* - 1-Year Report, *Appendix K3* – Comparison/Recommendation Report.

Moved by Butler and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the one-year follow-up report of the Economics Program Review as meeting the requirements of Section 5 of the Senate Policy on the Review of Undergraduate Programs at Saint Mary’s.” Motion carried.**

17087

REPORTS OF JOINT COMMITTEES

Honorary Degrees Committee – to be circulated at meeting in hard copy as *Appendix L*

An omnibus motion was moved by Dr Summerby-Murray and seconded, **“that the Academic Senate approves the recommendations presented above for forwarding to the Board of Governors for awarding.” Motion carried.**

17088

NEW BUSINESS FROM

a) Floor (not involving notice of motion)

Can we get an item added to the Senate Agenda to get updates on Senior academic appointments? Deferred to the Agenda Committee for consideration.

We are in the final stages of the Librarian appointment.

The SSB Dean search process is in progress and close to completion.

The position of acting Registrar is currently in discussions at this time.

Discussion of structure of Senate minutes

- There has been a discussion about the form and structure of the Senate minutes. Is there any interest in seeing a change in the format of minutes?
- There should be a place holder for things that are to be supported by a future report.
- How about tracking software? Answer: A member advised that the Board of Governors has tracking software, and that may be able to be extended to Senate.
- A member requested an update on the Calendar situation but the acting Registrar was not in attendance.
- The idea of tracking software would be a very important improvement. This discussion item was referred to the Agenda Committee.

Moved by Loughlin and seconded, **“that the Agenda Committee report back to the Senate by the next Senate meeting with recommendations in regard to changes to the Senate Agenda Structure”.** Motion carried.

b) Academic Suspensions Appeal Process:

Moved by Nassralah and seconded, **“that Senate moves to create an academic suspension appeals committee as well as a suspension appeal form, starting May 2018, allowing dismissed students that want to appeal the decision to go through a formalized and consistent appeal process.”**

and

Moved by Nassralah and seconded, **“that Senate moves to review the length of academic suspensions and consider shortening it to be consistent with the shift to the 3-credit hour system.”**

- The students expressed concern regarding Academic Regulation 7 g. and the process followed when the University places a student on Suspension. Discussion established that students receive an email to advise them they are dismissed for 12 months. This is the only process that does not have an appeal process. There is significant negative impact for international students and this also forces domestic students to go elsewhere. Suspension notices are received on or about May 1. Annually, at the end of the academic year, a student’s standing is reviewed and if the requirements have not been met, the notices are sent out. If the student’s GPA is below 1.00 after they have attempted at least 24 credit hours, they are dismissed immediately.

- The past Associate Dean of Science advised that the Faculty of Science went through several iterations of a process to help students that were in danger of dismissal and none of those processes showed any promise. To say yes to everyone is being unfair to the student, because they are not going to succeed.
- Members were advised that there is currently a review of the academic regulations being undertaken by the Academic Regulations Committee. This item is already on the radar. This motion is not being dismissed but should be referred to the Academic Regulations Committee.
- A student representative advised that the communication to the student is far too stark. This method of communication should be reviewed and revised. The VPAR advised that there has been a recommendation on this specific issue. A review of the full scope of communications with students is being undertaken.
- It was noted that academic suspension is not a punishment. Are the conditions in place if the student was allowed to enroll prior to the end of the suspension? We need to make the policies on academic suspension best serve student success.
- A student representative suggested that students need to have a right to appeal the suspension process. If a process is developed, it would absolutely have to be standardized. Fundamentally we need to look at probation and how it works. Currently, it can be manipulated. We need to look at what kind of support those students are getting.
- Dalhousie University has a two-week course at the end of the summer to address these situations. If students are successful, they are allowed to register for the next academic year.
- Over the years the numbers of students that stay out has remained stable. Numbers vary from faculty to faculty.
- Student appeals related to their suspensions are very confidential. If we pass this motion now, it would not change the implementation date.
- It was suggested that the Academic Regulations Committee hold discussions with the Faculty Academic Advisors and the Associate Deans to attempt to unify the process.
- Nasrallah withdrew the motions.

Moved by Stinson and seconded, **“that the Senate meeting be extended 15 minutes to allow for completion of remaining business items.” Motion carried.**

Moved by Bradshaw and seconded, **“that the Academic Regulations Committee be tasked with the requirement to report to Senate in September on this issue. That the Associate Deans (including FSGR), immediately confer on a more compassionate and consistent approach to the suspension process.” Motion carried.**

17089

PRESIDENTS REPORT (posted as *Appendix M*)

Commend senators and student senators for the discussion

Discovery and Innovation in a Learning-centered environment.

- The launch of the Saint Mary’s University Entrepreneurship Centre, formerly the Sobey School Business Development Centre, was a resounding success.

The event both celebrated the launch of the new Centre, while paying homage to the close to 30 years of cultivation of entrepreneurship at Saint Mary's.

- I provided welcoming remarks and participated in an ideation session at the recently-hosted Saint Mary's hack-a-thon – with the theme of this particular event being poverty and service delivery. The hack-a-thon was held in partnership with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).
- As an example of our continued initiatives in recruitment, I met last Sunday morning with a group of international students from New Brunswick high schools as part of their campus tour and interest in Saint Mary's.
- At the invitation of the Honourable William Morneau, Minister of Finance, I attended a dinner on the occasion of the Fulbright Canada Award for Outstanding Public Service. This award was made to the President of Microsoft, who spoke to issues around information technology, cyber-security and the role of governments, business and the academy.

Intercultural Learning:

- We hosted a senior delegation from Beijing Normal University Zhuhai. Key events, in the course of this multi-day visit, included tours of the University; a partnership discussion designed to further evolve our relationship in a number of areas; and a luncheon event attended by members of faculty, management, our Board Chair, Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, and members of the wider community.
- I signed an Agreement with Campeche University in Mexico. The five-year Agreement was executed in consideration of mutual benefits and interests between, Universidad Autónoma de Campeche and Saint Mary's University, and speaks specifically to a co-operative agreement relating to research, exchange of students and faculty, and associated educational and cultural matters

Institutional Sustainability:

- Together with the Chair of the Board, I was incredibly pleased to host Nancy and Glen Holmes at an official Gift Signing Agreement. The Holmes' have made a substantial gift to the University and we look forward to an opportunity to both acknowledge and celebrate this incredible generosity at an event to include the wider university community in the coming months.
- In our continuing focus on building and expanding our alumni partnerships, I hosted a small, but engaged, group of Alumni coincident with my Universities Canada meeting in Vancouver

External Relations and Communications:

- Last evening, the University paid tribute to Dr. Jack Keith as he retires from the Sobey Advisory Board. Dr. Keith has been an indefatigable champion of Saint Mary's University for decades, and I was pleased to offer remarks at the tribute dinner to thank Jack for the contribution he has made to the University and to countless students.

Senior Administrative Update:

- An offer has been made to our preferred candidate in the University Librarian search and we await a response at present. I fully anticipate being in a position to confirm the appointment within the coming days.
- We continue to work on completion of search process for the Dean of the Sobey School. We hope to announce our progress on this shortly.

- Significant progress has been made in the search for a new University Secretary, with an offer now in process. I look forward to sharing what I hope to be the positive result of this search, in the very near term.
- Launch of a Patio by the students is applauded.
- The President highlighted the service of Dr Bradshaw as Dean SSB and thanked her on behalf of the SMU Community for her commitment and dedication as Dean.
- Thanks was expressed to the members of the Senate for their continuing efforts on behalf of our students. Senators make a real difference every day. On behalf of our students please accept my sincere thanks for the positive impact you have made in their lives.

17090

QUESTION PERIOD

Question: Has there been any progress regarding the recommendation of the taskforce on aboriginal education: Answer: There have been many positive steps taken. There has been progress in hiring, allocations in budgets and allocations in post docs. The Chief of the Millbrook First Nation sits on our Board of Governors. A board member and our President that have established a President`s Advisory Council. Progress is never fast enough but it is being made. AAU has reported on this issue. All universities are working to improve Indigenous relations. Over the last year we have done a number of things to move these issues forward.

17091

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary of Senate