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SENATE MEETING MINUTES October 20, 2018

The 595th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, October 19, 2018, at 2:00 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr M. VanderPlaat, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr Butler, Dr Smith, Dr Bhabra, Dr Francis, Dr Grandy, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Hall, Dr Kehoe, Dr Khokhar, Dr Power, Dr Rahaman, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Dr Twohig, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Warner, Mr Brophy, Ms van den Hoogen, Mr Nasrallah, Mr Mahmudur Rahman Shovon, Mr Archibald, Mr Southwell, Ms Sargeant Greenwood, Ms Milton and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Sarty, Dr MacDonald, Dr Loughlin, Dr Doucet, Dr McCallum, and Ms Witter,

Meeting commenced at 2:04 P.M. Dr M. VanderPlaat presiding. Senate acknowledged our presence today in the traditional lands of Mi'kmaq, the ancestral lands of the Mi'kmaw nation.

18013 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**

The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted. Members were advised that a reorder of the agenda may be necessary to address the Anthropology one-year report before 3:20 pm. Also, we will start with the VPAR report since the President is delayed.

18014 **PRESIDENT'S REPORT** attached as *Appendix A* (10 min)

Summerby-Murray advised members of the following:

There will be an announcement soon regarding the membership of an external advisory committee consisting of representative from SMU and indigenous leaders.

MOU update

- The current agreement with the government expires in 2019. Our relationship with Government is very important for our sector and especially for Saint Mary's.
- The market adjustment ends in March 2019.
- Significant work done has been done with sister institutions over the past number of months. In early October a final (CONSUP), MOU proposed

funding allocation document was presented to the Government. We requested additional funding in the following areas:

- We requested a 3% annual increment to the operational grant but we expect to see no change from the current 1% and perhaps a commitment to specific funding for accessibility, infrastructure, IT or other specific areas.
- Tuition Policy – we expect the status quo for annual change of 3%
- Research and Innovation – no commitment yet but we have asked for more money.
- Infrastructure Renewal – no change but Government noted that accessibility funding is a big question. This area remains a high priority for the Minister. We are in better shape than other institutions since we took down the old rink.
- Student Experience – no change but all areas are a high priority for the Government.
- International Student Recruitment and Retention – significant change – recommendation that LAE should supplement its annual commitment of \$100k to EduNova with another \$100k program funding.
- We have a reasonable expectation that most of the areas above will be addressed in the MOU and we should have something in place by December. Our President was asked to rewrite the preamble for the MOU.

Academic and Research Plan

- The plans have been introduced to very favourable response.

Town Halls

- There will be two town halls on Oct 29 and 30.

18015

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT (10 min)

Butler advised members of the following:

- The Academic Plan and Strategic Research Plan work is underway. On Monday of next week there will be a website initiated with information on events. Based on the feedback on the first round of consultations work will be done and we expect to have another round of town halls in January. The themes are consistent with the previous plan and with the President's Strategic Plan.
- Next month the Animal Care and REB reports will be submitted to Senate.
- Senate Agendas/Minutes are not posted due to a continuous issue with broken links. This will be discussed with Beckett to get the problem solved and the material posted.
- There has been clear interest for cooperative collaboration with the Mi'kmaw nation in various areas.

18016

QUESTION PERIOD (length at the discretion of chair based on business volume)

- Question: A Senator asked if there had been any consideration of increases to Graduate tuitions? Is this part of the MOU discussions? Answer: This is not part of the MOU. Answer: The President responded that they reviewed this in 2015-2016 but the changes that were made were significant. It is

time for further review. SMU is not bound by the MOU for Graduate or International Student tuition. We need to consider the marketplace in this regard.

- Question: A Senator asked if there was an ideal completion date for the Academic Plan? Answer: April 2019.
- Question: A Senator asked if there was a goal that could be shared for the External Advisory Committee on External Affairs. Answer: The President advised that this group was an external lens for the university overall on indigenous affairs and would advise the president in this regard.
- Question: A Senator asked for an update on the Senior Administrative position. Answer: The VPAR advised that work is underway determining the requirements of Director of Institution Research and Planning. The budget for this position was approved two budgets ago. We need someone to report across the university and provide strategic data wherever it is needed. This is a very competitive market and we have recruited help with our recruiting process.
- Question: A Senator asked if there were any updates from the committee on racism? Answer: The President advised that there was a report at the last Senate meeting. This item will be defer to the November meeting. **Action Item: Bell**
- Question: Do we know the funding levels from the Province that will be received by other universities? Answer: The President advised that SMU remains among the two universities with the lowest amount of the funding. The formula is based on programs. Any university that has a high percentage of programs will get a higher percentage of the funding. It is a reflection of the program mix of a university as defined in 2008. Dal has approximately 55% of their funding supported by the government.
- Question: A Senator asked for an update on the search for Registrar? Answer: The VPAR advised that Smith is in the position until March. Within the next month, we will have a direction.

18017

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2018, were circulated as *Appendix B*.

Moved by Nasrallah, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2018 are approved as circulated.” Motion carried.**

18018

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS

.01 Learning and Teaching Committee – revised terms of reference - *Appendix C*. (Dr Takseva).

Key discussion points:

- This version is the result of extensive feedback. The committee is working very closely with Dr Enns to promote the collaboration with Learning and Teaching initiatives.

Moved by Takseva and seconded, **that Senate approve the revised terms of reference for the Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching. Motion carried.**

- .02 Update – Website Steering Committee (Ms Sargeant-Greenwood, Mr Beckett, Ms Murphy)
- There was an update in the recent E-Newsletter to faculty on the changes.
- Key discussion points:**
- Consolidation was done in early spring to move personnel from ITSS to External Affairs to facilitate the updating, development and improvement of our website.
 - The committee membership is as follows:
 - VP Advancement (E. Sargent Greenwood)
 - AVP External Affairs (M. Murphy)
 - AVP Enrollment Management & Registrar (S. Smith-acting)
 - Dean, SSB (H. Bhabra)
 - Director, Admissions & Recreation (M. Braswell)
 - Manager, Digital Experience, External Affairs (A. Beckett)
 - Mgr. Information Systems and Services, ITSS (Vacant).
 - Web policy and procedures were updated in August 2018 (02-2003)
 - Web Governance TOR is under development
 - Social Media Protection of University identity (Policy 05-1004)
 - Beckett and the University Web Developers have been transferred to External Affairs to consolidate the web team. This should provide better recognition of opportunities for improvement and facilitate addressing issues as they arise.
 - Digital first refers to a shift in organizational culture away from favouring traditional channels to prioritizing digital ones.
 - In the last 30 days, there have been 540,000 page views (20% of that is the home page). There were 128,000 users viewing an average of 2.5 pages per user over a period of 3 minutes.
 - Fundamentals:
 - accessibility
 - usability, and
 - manageability
 - Many websites were considered during the work updating ours. Components of a utilitarian approach are worth considering.
 - Templates are being updated for
 - accessibility (re Bill 59),
 - usability (reduce frustration, add/refresh/update information, accessible formats) and
 - manageability (most used and strategically important content to perform consistently well across platforms (e.g. social media platforms)).
 - As of a few days ago, our pages are HTTPS – secure, encrypted version of regular HTTP pages.
 - Security upgrades: installed code that automatically generates secure pages.
 - Old content purged being found and indexed by Google. There were 7,471 files on the site that were being indexed by Google. The plan is to cautiously initiate automatic removal.
 - A new events calendar has been generated. Users can submit their events which are then reviewed / approved prior to posting. Events can be tagged (coded and embedded) on subject-specific web pages.
 - A new search tool called SiteSearch 360 has been implemented. There is weekly indexing and indexing on demand. Specific search items can be

mapped (e.g. entrepreneurship, scholarship, tuition, president) to specific results.

- SMUCV project is being advanced by Dr Sarty, with technical support and coordination by the Studio for Teaching and Learning. Faculty are still able to define content that appears on their web profiles, but work is being done to improve the way that content gets presented on the site. The back end of the tool is still being powered by Faculty 180 software and its powerful reporting functionality.
- Additional Projects
 - We are participation on a new committee under the direction of the AVP Enrollment Management & Registrar that is working on improving generation process, integration and presentation of Academic Calendar information.
 - Improve organization and content of Finance & Registration content.
 - Improve presence of Recruitment on the homepage and across the site.
 - Create a more focused Advancement section.
 - New forms tool (working on addressing security implications).
 - Develop better feedback mechanisms.
 - Develop metrics for measuring progress; quantitative and qualitative.
 - Working with ITSS to upgrade the campus monitor system, and apply updated protocols to content development for the monitors.
 - Publish an online guide on communications resources, with a special focus on digital platforms.
- Questions:
 - Question: A Senator advised that the shift to HTPPS broke faculty lists in the academic calendar. Is this being addressed? Answer: Beckett advised that this lies with the Application Support people. If they do not fix this quickly, we will turn that functionality off until it can be fixed.
 - Question: A Senator asked if the content being removed from the website was being kept some place? Answer: Becket advised that over the weekend historical items that had not been used in years here removed. Any items removed are being held in an archive.
 - Question: A Senator asked if departments have the ability to post to the News and Events page? Answer: Beckett advised that departments have the ability to submit a posting and once it is approved it can be viewed.
 - Question: Is this a Senate committee Answer: No.
 - Question: A Senator stated that one of the major stakeholders are students. Why are they not involved? Answer: Murphy advised that the Committee may look to student services for this voice at the table. We are trying to keep it at a manageable number. We are considering this.
 - Question: A Senator stated that representation of faculty members on this committee was needed in terms of their input on how things work in the classroom. This is critical. Answer: Murphy advised that the Committee is considering this.

.03 Academic Regulations Committee

- i. Report on Academic Regulations review, *Appendix D1* – Notice of Motion, *Appendix D2* – Revised Academic Regulations. (Dr Smith)

Moved by Smith and seconded, **“that the Senate approve an omnibus motion to approve the revisions to the academic regulations as submitted in Appendix D2.”**

Key discussion points:

- Butler advised that he asked ARC to take a holistic look at the academic regulations in the Spring. That committee took a lot of time consulting with individuals that work with students to identify where there were issues for students. This is coming forward as an omnibus motion. There are implications with governance. Senate is empowered to send things back to committee. The time that Senate considers things in isolation versus the time the committee took to consider the submission is a consideration when Senate decides need more work.
- There are a number of minor changes that have been highlighted in red from the discussion in Senate last time.
- **Academic Regulation #7** - Subsequent to additional consultation, issues were identified with the proposal to increase the minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) to at least 2.0. It is possible to have a CGPA < 2.0 and still have a DGPA > 2.0. The Academic Regulations Committee has removed the proposed revision to Academic Regulation #7 from this submission for further work and will submit a new proposal at a future Senate meeting.
- The Registrar advised that we help our students to be successful by identifying early when they are at risk of suspension. We do not allow student to continue if they are not in a position to graduate.
- Revision to **Academic Regulation #4 Grading System** to articulate that faculty must have provided feedback equal to 15% of a students' grade prior to 50% of the scheduled classes being completed.

4. Grading System

d. Instructors must also provide feedback to students regarding their progress in the course prior to **57.5%** of the scheduled classes being completed. For undergraduate courses, this feedback must equal a minimum of 15% of the final grade.

- A Senator suggested that a percentage of 57.5% would be better and you will see that in highlight.
- A Senator gave an example of teaching directed studies courses, which are delivered differently. Question: How do you apply this revision to the regulation to those courses? Answer: The Registrar advised that when faculty design a course like that, there has to be checkpoints throughout the course. There is an opportunity to provide feedback at those checkpoints.
- A Senator stated that the only grade given in some Masters courses is for the Thesis. Answer: Senators were reminded that this is not a new rule and the revision is only shifting when the feedback happens.
- Butler: MRPs are graduate and these are undergraduate regulations. There are many things that are not scheduled at the graduate level so there is more flexibility for feedback related to the unscheduled activities.
- A Senator stated that this revision takes the flexibility away from the Faculty in Arts specifically. The regulation should state that 15% of the final grade should be provided to student one week before the drop date for the course for the student to receive a W.

- A Senator stated that the word "must" is where the flexibility disappears. Perhaps we should add "for scheduled courses only". A faculty member teaching a non-conforming course needs to be able to get an exception.
 - A Senator stated that it would be difficult for faculty to know when 57.5% would be. Every term should have a date stipulated by which students must drop a course to receive a W.
 - It was suggested that we state that either 5 or 7 teaching days prior to this drop date is the date by which faculty should provide feedback to students to give them time to consult with advising and make well considered decisions.
 - A Student Representative stated that the intent of the request from SMUSA on this regulation was to provide students with the feedback needed for them to understand where they stand in a course with enough time to make informed decisions related to taking a W.
 - A date of October 15 was suggested.
 - A Senator stated that there is a big difference between October 15 and 26 in terms of teaching and the content covered in a course.
 - A Senator stated that he was informed that the SSB did not have sufficient input to the process because their representative was not present at the meeting.
 - A Senator stated that if a Committee member does not attend two meetings the rules say they should be replaced. Response: In this academic year there has only been one meeting of Academic Regulations and the Senate ByLaws state that the seat of any elected or appointed member of a Senate committee or subcommittee shall be declared vacant if the member is absent without explanation for three consecutive regular meetings of the committee or subcommittee of which he is a member.
 - A Senator stated that clarity of presentation of this deadline is needed. Perhaps we should include this date in the Academic Calendar of Events.
 - Question: A Senator asked if the intent is only for **57.5%** of the scheduled classes being completed or for all courses. A revision of the language should be done to indicate all courses that students are taking. Perhaps the word scheduled should be removed.
 - Further discussion was deferred until next meeting.
- Revision to **Academic Regulation #6 Grade Point Average, b and e.**
 - **b.** The cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is based upon all courses taken for credit hours in any Faculty at Saint Mary's other than those for which grades of AE have been given. Courses for which grades of F have been given are included in the calculation of the grade point average. In the case of a repeated course, only the most recent pass grade is included. Repeated courses will only be excluded from the CGPA when the course is passed for credit. A course failed a second or subsequent time will not be excluded from the CGPA until the course is successfully passed.

- A Student Representative asked if, instead of the most recent pass grade, the calculation could use the highest. Student strongly believe it should be the highest.
 - A Student Representative also stated that it seems overly punitive for a students have two Fs included in the CGPA calculation and on their transcript until a passing grade is achieved. This is certainly not good for the student. Answer: The Registrar advised that the intent is to include only one grade in the CGPA calculation.
 - A Student Representative stated that the language "most recent pass grade" is confusing. If the student takes a course and passes it but then takes it again and fails it, the original grade would stand.
 - A Senator advised that a student in SSB could get a D in a course and then decide to repeat the course but get an F. This has happened and would cause an issue. Whether we are going to take the most recent grade or the highest grade needs to be specified. Answer: We have used the most recent grade up to now and that is the intent.
 - A Senator spoke in support of the student view for the highest grade to be selected. This would not damage student morale and our goal is to remove the impediments to student success. If students take a course twice, the highest mark should count.
 - Student Representatives advised that other universities follow the highest grade principle.
 - The VPAR advised Senators that all courses appear on the transcript. It is a question of which courses are used in the CGPA calculation.
 - Further discussion was deferred to next meeting.
- Revision to **Academic Regulations #8 Examinations**
 - We added clarity between take home exams and take home essays which are treated differently.
 - No discussion.
 - Revision to **Academic Regulation #9 Evaluations** – change heading to Final Grade.
 - No discussion.
 - Revisions to **Academic Regulation #11 Academic Appeals – b Other Appeals** – to articulate examples of other appeals.
 - No discussion.
 - Revisions to **Academic Regulation 13 Course Changes** – to decouple the add and drop dates and make them sooner in the academic year.
 - Clarified the language to identify Fall and Winter Terms.
 - No further discussion.
 - Revisions to **Academic Regulation 17 Retaking a Course.**
 - No discussion.
 - Revisions to **Academic Regulation 18 Withdrawal for Academic Reasons**
 - No discussion

- Revisions to **Academic Regulation 20 Advanced Standing**
 - Question: 20 a – highlighted part (Consultation with the ~~Dean of the Faculty~~**Dean's Office**, or designate, is required to ensure transfer credits meet the requirements of the student's intended major.) Does this mean that all student must meet with the advisors? Answer: The Registrar advised that it is up to the Faculty to do this. It should say the Deans Office. This revision was accepted by the Registrar.

- Revisions to **Academic Regulation 21 Transfer Credit Hours** – to articulate that a LOP form must be submitted prior to the start of classes.
 - 21 b – Question: Do we have any program where the student is taking the course by special arrangement? Answer: The Registrar advised that the regulation does not apply in such circumstances. If we have an agreement that does not happen.
 - No further discussion.

- Revisions to **Academic Regulation 24 Requirements of Two Academic Programs (Dual Program) Baccalaureate Degrees**
 - No discussion

- Revisions to **Academic Regulation 27 Convocation, Dates, Degrees, Diplomas, and Certificates.**
 - No discussion

- Revisions to **Academic Regulation #31 Dean's Lists for Undergraduate Programs.**
 - Question: Do we have a calculation on how many students are caught by this situation? Answer: The Registrar advised that at most a handful of students are impacted. This regulation only applies to new students coming in.
 - No further discussion.

- The Registrar noted that the things that are being brought up now in regard to these Academic Regulations, are not the things that were brought up during the last Senate meeting. If this continues, it will be very difficult to get something approved in time for publishing in the Academic Calendar for 2019-2020.
- The Registrar stated that what he was hearing was more work was needed related to feedback to students and how to deal with repeated courses.
- The Motion was withdrawn and the Regulations will once again be sent back to the Academic Regulations Committee for more work.
- A Senator suggested that a review of the regulation that states that student only have to do 50% of their courses here at SMU needs to be undertaken.

ii. 2019-2020 Academic Calendar of Events, *Appendix E*

Key discussion points:

- At the Senate meeting of September 21, 2018, Senate approved The Criteria for Creating the Academic Calendar of Events, submitted as Appendix C for that meeting. The 2019-2020 Academic Calendar of Events has been created using that criteria.
- It was noted that Dec 5-6, 2019 are identified as Wednesday/Thursday but they are Thursday/Friday. This revision was accepted by the Registrar.
- It was noted that in 2020 classes resume on Monday, January 6. The problem is that there is no time for orientation. Classes need to start on Tuesday. The argument was put forward that students would not come to campus until classes started. Even though the academic year starts on January 2, which provides for two working days before classes resume for things like orientation, Senate members were advised that students would not come to campus days before classes start.
- In terms of not starting classes on a Monday, the main challenge in the fall term is the impact of holiday Mondays, and providing 24 teaching days especially for those courses only taught on a Monday. There is no issue in the winter term.
- It was suggested to start classes on January 8 (Wednesday) in the winter term and adjust all following dates according for that term. This revision was accepted by the Registrar.
- The President, SMUSA suggested that Monday was preferred for an Orientation day. It was suggested that students could do orientation on Sunday if the University could support that effort. The Director of Student Services advised that would be challenging because the administration offices are closed on a Sunday and because students would not want to attend orientation on a Sunday.
- In May 2020 the calendar states: 11-15 Monday – Friday Spring Convocation week. The dates of the Convocation Ceremonies are not specified. (Note: Allows for some flexibility related to the Chancellor’s schedule. This is the way it has appeared in the Calendar for the past two years.).
- April 2, 3, 4 are all identified as Thursday. April 2nd is a Thursday, April 3 and 4 are Friday/Saturday. This revision was accepted by the Registrar.

Moved by Smith and seconded, “**that Senate approve the 2019-2020 Academic Calendar of Events represented as Appendix E for this meeting with revisions as indicated above.**” Motion carried.

18019

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01

Academic Appeals Committee

2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix F – for information only*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

.02

Academic Planning

a) 2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix G - for information only*

Key discussion points:

- A Senator suggested that reference to a review of the Terms of Reference should be included in the report going forward.
- Accepted into the record.

b) Anthropology Program – 1 Year report *Appendix H1, H2, H3 & H4*.

Key discussion points:

- Dr Higgins, Department Chair is in Ottawa and unable to attend.
- Question: Recommendation 16 suggested that a socio-cultural future hire should be at the humanistic end of the discipline and perhaps in a First Nations specialization. Has the department considered this?
Answer: The Associate Dean of Arts advised that the Dean is satisfied that the Department has considered this recommendation and is approaching it appropriately.
- A Senator suggested that the department may benefit from undertaking broader conversations within the community on this topic. Response: The Associate Dean of Arts advised that the Department has reviewed the language used by the Department of English in a recent add in terms of future postings.
- There was consensus that the one-year follow-up report of the Anthropology Program meets the requirements of Section 5 of the Senate Policy on the Review of Programs at Saint Mary's and is accepted into the record

.03 Academic Regulations
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix I*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

.04 Agenda Committee
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix J*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. Accepted into the record.
- A Senator stated that in September and October the Senate materials did not come out a week in advance and requested that the Agenda Committee ensure that documents were circulated on time.

.05 Curriculum Committee
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix K*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

.06 Elections Committee
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix L*

Key discussion points:

- Six special requests were listed not 18. Accepted into the record as revised.

.07 Executive Committee
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix M*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

.08 Library Committee
2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix N*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

18020 **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**

Honorary Degrees Committee 2017-2018 Annual Report attached as *Appendix O*

Key discussion points:

- No discussion. No questions. Accepted into the record.

18021 **NEW BUSINESS FROM**

- Floor (not involving notice of motion)
- Question: Recently there was a policy circulated to employees on drugs and alcohol on campus. Does this apply to everyone on campus including students? Answer: The Director of Student Services advised that there is a student only policy in final approval now and should be circulated next week.

18022 **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate