

## **SENATE MEETING MINUTES**

### **October 17, 2008**

The 512th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, October 17, 2008, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

**PRESENT:** Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Butler, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Bjornson, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Kimery, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Pendse, Dr. van Proosdij, Dr. Stinson, Ms. Marie DeYoung, Mr. Hotchkiss, Ms. MacDonald, Miss. Cunningham, Mr. Dong, Miss. Hanna, Mr. Harris, Mr. MacDougall, Dr. Peter Twohig (FGSR), and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

**REGRETS:** Dr. Enns, Dean Wicks, Dr. Vessey, Dr. Beaulé, Dr. Charles, Dr. Crocker, Dr. Dawson, Dr. Pe-Piper, Dr. Rand, and Dr. Russell,

Meeting commenced at 2:37 P.M.

#### **08015 REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**

The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted as circulated.

#### **08016 PRESENTATION – SUSTAINABILITY TASKFORCE**

Presentation by Gabriel Morrison, Chair of the Taskforce.  
Shelly Price, Cathy Conrad, and Laura Simms

Key Points:

- The committee has been active for over a year now.
- Many initiatives are being implemented across campus.
- This discussion document is being presented to encourage feedback and includes background on the initiative.
- Price presented the following key items:
  - The presentation has been created by the multi-stakeholder Task Force.
  - In 2007, The Board of Governors mandated “the development and implementation of a sustainability strategy appropriate for the campus environment”.
  - Sustainability was also added to the University’s core values.
  - It is included in the President’s “Strategic Pillars 2008-2012” <<to build on existing strengths and initiatives as well as developing new areas where there is identified need and convincing opportunities for improvement.>>
  - Academics (teaching, research and service), Students (SMUSA, Societies) and Operations are all significant contributors to the ongoing evolution of the University’s sustainability commitment.

- The purpose of these presentations is to secure buy-in from the various groups around campus.
- Conrad presented the following key items:
  - SMU has a critical role to play in educating youth.
  - Research and education allow us to lead in the area of sustainability.
  - Saint Mary's is a member of AASHE: Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education - founded in 2006 with a mission to promote sustainability in all sectors of higher education - from governance and operations to curriculum and outreach - through education, communication, research and professional development. We need to remain current and competitive with other institutions. We also need to stay ahead of change or we risk difficult transformations later.
  - There are opportunities for funding to support sustainability issues.
  - Specific Key Goals were identified in the areas of; Academic Opportunities, Learning and Working Environment, Awareness/Communication and development plans to achieve those were outlines.
- Simms presented the following information:
  - There has been a strong student voice on the task force – awareness and communication applies to the students as well. Good communication of initiatives, goals and initiatives will translate directly to success.
  - Many individuals and groups that did not participate on the committee have contributed in a significant way to the initiative.
  - There have been numerous short term initiatives, such as the launch of a sustainability website, hosting an annual Sustainability Day/Week, the Sustainability Conversations Speaker Series as well as developing the Task Force.
  - The regenerations brand will be used over time to focus the initiative.
  - Question: How would you manage the impact of the work required? Answer: Sustainability is a slow and progressive process. We are currently attempting to engage individuals in the process. Our intent is to regenerate interest and participation, and not to police. The committee will be a support structure for those who want to make things happen.
  - Question: How are you going to measure the effectiveness of this initiative? Answer: Over time, we have audited and measured the results of initiatives that have already been implemented, to determine if we are making progress.
  - Question: Some other goals may be harder to measure and perhaps a longer term system of checks should be in place. Answer: Similar initiatives are underway at many universities and a significant set of resources are available to us, including measurement systems that have been successfully used by other institutions.
  - Question: Are you thinking about the backward linkages – such as university suppliers? Answer: We have addressed

two areas of activity here. Green chemicals purchasing and developing a procurement policy. There have also been meetings related to developing a system wide approach.

- Question: Do we have an idea of the impact of physical cost to operations, for example in the area of facilities? Answer: We have implemented a multi year conservation project that will have an overall positive impact and will offset costs of initiatives like this one.
- Question: On page 5, the lists of goals, economic and social justice goals are included? Why are these listed as a part of sustainable practices? Answer: The accepted model has these three aspects included in it. An example given was the pay equity policy. Outreach and connectivity to international development studies was another example. This is an opportunity for future development but the current focus is on the environment.

**08017**            **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting of September 19, 2008, were *circulated* as **Appendix A.**

Moved by McCalla, and seconded, **‘that the minutes of the meeting of September 19, 2008 are approved as circulated.’**  
**Motion carried.**

**08018**            **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None

**08019**            **FALL GRADUATION LIST**

Documentation circulated by the registrar as **Appendix B.**

Members were advised of the following:

- No comparison statistics were available for the meeting.
- There are about 400 credentials being awarded, including a first PhD.
- The convocation ceremony will take place at the World Trade and Convention Centre in the Port Royal Room on Oct. 26 starting at 2 p.m. Dixon advised that last year the lack of faculty participating in convocation was embarrassing. We only had 20 out of a possible 250 faculty attending. The stage has been configured this year so that if the same thing happens, it won't look so bad. Deans were asked to encourage their faculty to attend. Dean Butler asked for a list of attendees from last year to facilitate recruiting attendees.
- Question: At what point does the list become definitive? Answer: Monday morning. There are some issues related to the Honors Thesis graduates. There are also a couple of letters of permission from other institutions that we have not received and therefore we are unable to sign off on those parchments at this time. In the past, graduates have been inserted right up to minutes before the ceremony but their names obviously don't get into the official program.
- Dixon advised members that other institutions are not as flexible in adding graduates to convocations. SMU has been remarkably liberal

in this respect. This flexibility tends to increase the workload, but is fairer to the students.

- It was noted that the international character of the graduate listing is impressive. The multicultural character of the student body has made a difference in the teaching environment. During a recent discussion on migration and how that influences our culture, one student volunteered that push factors (conflict, war, poverty) were the reason they were at Saint Mary's. That type of feedback has a significant impact in the classroom.
- Student Recruitment at Saint Mary's has focused on international recruiting through representatives and using agents to attract a diverse student population.
- It was also noted that the MFIN program is more culturally diverse this year.
- Members were advised that following the external review of the TESL centre, the university has been developing more support services for students to be available once they are into their degree programs. These are specifically useful in extending the support to "English as a second language" speakers enrolled in degree programs at Saint Mary's.
- There is a 7% increase in international students at Saint Mary's and they now constitute 15% of our full-time student body. At this time, we have more international students than Dalhousie and the largest component in Atlantic Canada.
- We also had a significant increase in the number of students without a country to go back to. This becomes a problem if we have to dismiss a student and they don't have a place to go home to.

Moved by Dr. Dixon, and seconded, **"to confer degrees and distinctions on those represented on the list (circulated as Appendix B) at the Fall Convocation"**.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Moved by Dr. Dixon, and seconded, **"to enable the Registrar to add such graduates to this list as may be identified subsequent to this meeting."**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**08020**

**MEMBERSHIP ON SENATE COMMITTEES FOR 2008-2009**

**.01 SECTION A & B** circulated as *Appendix C*.

**.0101 CONTINUING EDUCATION**

- **TBA** (Part-time student) – Adam Harris to advise.
- **TBA** (Part-time student – OPTAMUS rep)

*Director of Continuing Education to nominate outstanding position at earliest opportunity.*

**.0102 LITERACY STRATEGY**

- **Dr. Hugh Millward (ARTS/Geog)**

- .0103 STUDENT DISCIPLINE
  - **Dr. Veronica Stinson (Science/PSYC)**
- .0104 JOINT ACADEMIC COMMITTEE OF THE ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY
  - **Dr. Paul Bowlby (ARTS/Religious Studies)**
- .0105 BUDGET
  - **Dr. Goran Stanivukovic (ARTS/English)**

Outstanding member nominations to be provided as indicated, and ratified at the next Senate meeting.

Moved by DeYoung and seconded, **“that the nominations for Section A&B of the Membership on Senate Committees 2008-2009, are approved as presented above.”**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**08021      REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- .01      Agenda Committee  
 Annual Report 2007-08 circulated as **Appendix D**.  
 There being no discussion and no objections, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .02      Academic Discipline Committee (annual report circulated as **Appendix E**)  
**Key Discussion Points:**
  - Question: Why has there been a delay in completing the two outstanding cases? Answer: The students were out of the country and had requested a delay in proceedings until such time as they returned to campus at the beginning of the fall semester.
  - Questions: Delays can create problems for graduation or in registering for pre-requisites/subsequent courses. Answer: These cases are not so affected.
 There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .03      Academic Planning (annual report circulated as **Appendix F**)  
**Key Discussion Points:**
  - Question: Geology's program review was completed 14 months ago. Why have the reports not come to the Senate? Answer: The Academic Planning Committee was not satisfied with the department response. The Dean is working with the Geology Department to produce an amended response. The MPHEC Quality Assessment report highlights this particular issue. In cases where a department is intractable regarding the recommendations of the program review report, a simple blanket rejection is not acceptable and the university is reluctant to accept that. Unfortunately we can not insist that they accept the reviewers recommendations. As a Senate we need to work on this and a discussion in Senate on this issue would be appreciated and helpful. .

- Question: Is there any timeline for responses from the departments?  
Answer: Yes there is, but the process is also currently under revision. We will be giving the Deans a larger role in the overall process.
  - Question: How much ahead of time do departments know that they will have a review? Answer: This is an area we need to improve. We are working on extending those timelines. Delays are often related to the availability of the department self study. A more focused and rigorous self study would also help facilitate the process.
- There being no further discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.

- .04** Academic Regulations (annual report circulated as **Appendix G**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .05** Bylaws Committee (annual report circulated as **Appendix H**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .06** Continuing Education Committee (annual report circulated as **Appendix I**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .07** Curriculum Committee (annual report circulated as **Appendix J**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.
- .08** Elections Committee (annual report circulated as **Appendix K**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.

**08022**      **REPORT OF AD HOC COMMITTEES**

None at this time

**08023**      **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**

- .01** Joint Academic Committee of the AST and SMU (Documents circulated as **Appendix L**)  
There being no discussion and no objection, the annual report was accepted into the record.

**08024**      **REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES**

none

**08025**      **NEW BUSINESS FROM**

None

**08026**      **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Dodds presented members with the following information:

- The Chinese flag is flying because the Canadian International Council (CIC) and Saint Mary's University are hosting an afternoon discussion forum today that features Ambassador Mei Ping. Ambassador Ping

served as Chinese Ambassador to Canada from 1998 until 2005. Ambassador Ping is Chairman of the China National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation. The ambassador and his colleague Ambassador Jiang Chengzong are in Canada for September and October as a Senior Visiting Fellow and Visiting Fellow respectively at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) in Waterloo, Ontario. They are conducting a research project on the future of Canada-China relations. This afternoon's presentation is called "A Strategic Partnership? The Future of Canada-China Relations".

- Enrolments are down everywhere. AAU figures are available now. Saint Mary's is down on first year students according to the Oct 1 figures (Dal, St. FX and Acadia are up slightly). Visa students and transfer students are up (2%). The major intake is generally in January and May for international students. Overall the area of most impact is in rural Nova Scotia where applicants are down by 25%. Efforts are underway to address this. Recently we held a show in Bridgewater that was well attended. There are 9 or 10 of these shows planned between now and the first week in Dec. We have moved these presentations that we used to do in the winter into the fall semester.
- There are a number of requests for faculty to make presentations to high school classes. These presentations work and are good initiatives to undertake. Dr. Stinson advised that she was asked to do such a presentation. Dodds suggested that faculty contact recruiting and collaborate with them to do strategic presentations that would coincide with the university recruiting efforts.
- Open house is next Friday. Tours will be going on all over campus. Welcome these groups to SMU if you happen to see them.
- When negotiations open for the next MOU, there will be a significant negative impact to Saint Mary's resulting from the decreases in enrollment we have experienced in the last three years.
- Convocation is a week from Sunday. Saint Mary's will confer honorary degrees on three of the individuals that were approved by the Senate: General John de Chastelain, poet George Elliott Clarke and local community builder Carol D. Young.
- There has been a committee formed in relation to the upcoming MOU negotiations. It would be beneficial if there was someone from the ARTS faculty on this committee. McCalla volunteered to participate and was accepted.

**08027**

### **QUESTION PERIOD**

#### **Key points:**

- Question: What strategies appear to work at the High School level? Answer: Dalhousie's strategy has been to send senior students into the high school classes. The high school administration does not like a hard sell recruitment approach. The soft approach works better.
- Once students get on campus they get an entirely different perspective.
- We need to develop a research expertise database and get this information into the schools so that they are aware of the

expertise that exists at Saint Mary's. Involvement in cultural fairs might also be a good thing to initiate.

- Recruitment needs to know when and if there is an opportunity to match up their efforts with those of faculty or students when they are visiting the various schools. This will also help to send the message that SMU is coordinated in their efforts.
- Question: Why has there been no communication received at the department level regarding setting up displays etc within the departments? Answer: The University is trying a new approach. An attempt is being made to remove distractions and use the student tour guides to supply information on the various areas. The tours include visits to selected labs. These tours seem to address that feeling of comfort that is so important in helping the prospective student and their families make their decision. We currently have 150 students registered for the Open House.
- Question: Is there a set route for the Open House? Answer: There are multiple routes to avoid conflict and congestion at any one location. It takes an hour and a half for each tour.
- Question: Is there any harm if departments set up displays in their own department? Answer: Displays will have to be along the major tour routes or in the lobbies or common areas along the route. On-going, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of tours. It would be appropriate if departments would consider setting up permanent displays that outline the current research going on within the department, and highlighting student achievements.
- Question: How do students make a decision on what university they attend? What are they concerned about in making that decision? Answer: It depends upon the student. Rural students may be concerned about the crime in a large city. We did a survey of applicants last year and there were strong indications that this is not a straightforward area. A student from Moncton stated that the place felt right and they actually went against the decision of friends who made their choice to attend FX based on the ring. For a lot of the students surveyed, it was the fit of the institution. Fees were not a factor. It was more of an emotional decision. Even the enrolments at Memorial University are down over the three year period.
- Student Recruiting has increased the initiatives they are doing. The Student Recruiting Group asked (through Dixon) to be able to communicate with the community on the initiatives they are initiating. This is to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
- It was suggested that students from rural areas should be involved as agents to recruit in rural areas.
- Hotchkiss advised that some students have indicated their reasons for attending SMU were the lure of friends, the Criminology/Forensics program and the number of available scholarships.



- Suggestion: Agents should be given a clear, concise guideline related to who they recruit. Saint Mary's is also spending significant money on messages and promotion that are reactive rather than proactive.
- **ACTION ITEM: DIXON** was asked to report to the next meeting of Senate on the list of issues below - all related to recruitment:
  - recruitment practices
  - admission standards (and how they compare to other institutions)
  - the relationship between applications and registrations
  - reasons why students choose Saint Mary's (more than anecdotal evidence ... is hard data in existence?)
  - exit surveys of what students thought of their Saint Mary's experience. This should be based on real evidence, if it exists, and not just 'stories'.
  - How we as individuals, and collectively as an institution, can address the concerns of students and build on the strengths of the institution in recruiting students?

**08028**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Barb Bell,  
Secretary to the Office of Senate