

Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada, B3J 3C3
Senate Office, MS 114
Tel: 902-420-5412
Fax: 902-420-5104
Web: www.smu.ca

SENATE MEETING MINUTES January 16, 2009

The 514th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, January 16, 2009, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Dodds, Dr Murphy, Dr Butler, Dr Dixon, Dr Enns, Dr Vessey, Dr Beaulé, Dr Bjornson, Dr Charles, Dr Dawson, Dr Kimery, Dr McCalla, Dr Naulls, Dr Pe-Piper, Dr van Proosdij, Dr Russell, Dr Stinson, M. Bennett, M. DeYoung, K. Hotchkiss, B. MacDonald, S. Cunningham, A. Dong, Y. Hanna, A. Harris, C. MacDougall, visitor G. Westin, Dalhousie, and B. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate

REGRETS: Dr. Crocker, Dr Kennedy, Dr Pendse, Dr Rand, and Dr Wicks,

Meeting commenced at 2:37 PM.

08041 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

08042 **WINTER GRADUATION LIST**
Circulated at the meeting as **Appendix A**
The Registrar presented the following points:

- This is the third year Senate has considered a winter graduation list.
- An increasing number of students require earlier access to their parchment for employment purposes. This year approximately 200 students have applied to graduate in January. These graduates are invited to participate in the May Convocation.
- Senators were advised that the timelines were very tight in relation to doing grad checks and resolving outstanding issues such as transcripts from other institutions or academic appeals. The issue of timing is further exacerbated by the Christmas break. A specific enabling motion will be necessary to resolve issues related to students who have applied to graduate in January.
- The Registrar asked for any guidance or suggestions Senators may have regarding the challenges faced in resolving the issues in time for the January Senate meeting.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded "to confer degrees and distinctions on those represented on the list (circulated as Appendix A). Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded “to enable the Registrar to add to the graduate list, the names of students that have applied but have outstanding issues that are outside of the student’s control and are resolved by the end of January.”

Motion carried.

08043

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

.01

Minutes of the previous meeting of December 12, 2008, were circulated as **Appendix B**

The following amendment was noted:

- Page 6 middle of the page – delete the amendment “Page 26 – ENVS 4440.1(.s).....” The original submission was correct.

Moved by McCalla, and seconded, “**that the minutes of the meeting of December 12, 2008 are approved as amended**”.

Motion carried.

08044

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

.01

Murphy advised that during the last Senate meeting there was discussion on revisions to the scholarship policy related to students needing to take five courses per year to qualify. SMUSA will submit a proposal for a change to this policy in the near future.

.02

Revision to Saint Mary's University Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship and Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Scholarly Misconduct, attached as **Appendix C** (deferred from Dec).

The following key points were covered:

- Vessey advised that this policy was approved by Senate in 1995. It has been updated because The Tri-Council Agreement requires that we have a conflict policy. The proposed policy is an item on the agenda.
- The changes are as follows and are not extensive:
 - There is expansion of the definitions.
 - The research officer is changed to the Dean of FGSR throughout the policy.
 - Section – Part 1 subsection 2 – the components were enhanced and include items that came from The Tri-Council Policy on Integrity in Research. The changes were not substantive but bring the document up-to-date with the current Tri-Council Policy Agreement.
 - The document was reviewed by the University Lawyer to ensure the appropriateness of the language.
 - Amendment: The revision(s) approval date should be today’s date.
- Question: Does #3 “University Community” cover Professor Emeritus? Answer: The consensus was that emeritus appointments should be included. Also correct typographical error “faulty” to “faculty”. Vessey will update.
- Question: In Appendix 1 (page 13) Recommendation #2 – Does this mean that every time faculty want to publish a paper the department chair’s approval is necessary? Answer: This was in the original policy. The research committee did not address this section. To our knowledge this is not happening and it is not the intention of Senate.
- Question: If Appendix 1 is considered a part of the policy – why are recommendations included and what do they mean? To list

recommendations under a guideline is not appropriate. Appendix 1 is unclear and includes outdated language. More reflection is necessary.

- Suggestion: Remove Appendix I from the document.
- On page 4 in number 6 – add the word “interest” after the word financial in the first sentence. In the second sentence “dictatorship” should be “directorship”.
- Page 2 and continuing to page 3 covers most things in Appendix 1 and the language is very good. If you remove the paragraph at the end of page 3 starting “The faculty of the university” and ending “as Appendix I”, then Appendix 1 can be deleted. Consensus was to delete that paragraph and Appendix 1.
- The opinion was expressed that on page 3, subsection 2 ‘Integrity in Scholarly Research’, numbered bullet 11 covers the more detailed research activities.

Moved by Vessey, and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the revision to Saint Mary’s University Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship and Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Scholarly Misconduct as amended, including the deletion of Appendix I, and the last paragraph in Section two. ”**
Motion carried.

- .03 Recommendations from the National Council on Ethics in Human Research arising from the March, 2008 site visit, attached as *Appendix D* (deferred from Dec).

There being no further discussion on the recommendations of the National Council on Ethics in Human Research, or objections to the response of the REB to those recommendations, the submission is approved as presented.

- .04 Discussion - What approach might be taken in cases where a department is intractable regarding the recommendations of the program review report?

The following key points were covered:

- This discussion item arose as a result of a Senate discussion regarding a significant time delay between the report of the Program Review Committee and the submission of that and the Department response to the Senate.
- There is a general consensus on campus that there is very little accountability within these reviews and also no process for enforcement.
- The review committee is generally comprised of peers within the discipline that have been recommended by the members of the department being reviewed.
- In the proposed new Program Review Policy/Process, a process related to enforcement may be included.
- It was suggested that the Senate has significant power when a program is created and may or may not approve submissions. Proposals may frequently be sent back to departments for revisions before they are submitted for Senate approval. A process is necessary in which Senate has a similar degree of power during the review process
- If there are reasoned excuses why recommendations are not appropriate, those should be considered and may be sufficient.

- In a situation where a department accepts a recommendation and then does nothing about it, or where a department is intractable, Senate should have some recourse.

08045

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01

Academic Planning

.001 MPHEC Assessment Report and Recommendations, attached as *Appendix E* and Proposal for a revised Review Policy and Procedure that addresses the points brought forward in the MPHEC assessment attached as *Appendix F*.

The following key points were covered:

- The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) is responsible for quality assurance of all publicly-funded universities in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The Commission carries out quality assessments of degree providers established under provincial Degree Granting Acts. The objective is to ascertain that the procedures used by institutions to assess the quality of existing programs, and other functions as appropriate, are performing adequately as quality control and quality improvement mechanisms. The assessment team provides their findings in a report that includes recommendations for improvement. This is a formative process that allows the individual institutions to develop their own policies and processes.
- It was noted that at the top of page 7 under the student centered item, the report refers to including non-academic units. Notes say there have been reviews of TESL, the Library etc. Question: Are they suggesting applying the process to non-academic units? Answer: During the assessment, we pointed out that some of the ancillary units are not under the power of Senate. However, the new act ensures the quality of education for students and MPHEC have interpreted that to include the contribution of non-academic units to the quality of student experience.
- Question: What is the schedule for these assessments? Answer: MPHEC recommends every five years. SMU has limited resources to bring to this task but intends to address this issue. We identified this area as a weakness in our self-study.
- During the interview in which Student Services participated, the panel asked if Student Services had ever been reviewed. The response was no, however we have modified and improved our services over time and would welcome the opportunity to participate in the review process.
- Members expressed support for the following proposed concepts: 1) involving the Faculty Deans early in the process; 2) follow up report after 2 years; 3) defining the assessment criteria; and 4) providing a 'terms of reference' for the reviewers to follow.

- A more significant involvement/participation for students during the review was suggested by student senators. It was noted that students can be intimidated in an environment with academics and that should be considered when writing the process for student participation. Some guidelines for the reviewers in relation to the student interviews would be very beneficial.
- Senators were advised that with the current process, each program surveys the students enrolled in the program for their input and that all levels of students are represented during interviews with the reviewer.
- Experts in the field/discipline should be the ones to make the decisions on how programs should be organized and delivered. A balance needs to be struck between the units and the institution. One of the underlying issues is the authority of Senate in relation to the whole process. The key issue is whether the unit reviewed has made a constructive and adequate response. When units do not, that should tie that back to the authority of Senate.
- A suggestion was to institute a policy, that until units satisfy Senate on these issues, there would be a moratorium on other issues that Senate has control over.
- A cultural change is needed. One that promotes embracing the quality assurance process.
- Organizational culture change takes time. Perhaps champions might be identified across the university that will support the process (Senators?).

Moved by Murphy, and seconded, **“that Senate authorizes the creation of a revised Review Policy and Procedure to address points brought forward in the MPHEC assessment and that it is to be submitted to Senate no later than April 17, 2009.”**

Motion carried unanimously.

.002 Proposal for a Certificate in Child Learning and Development (Undergraduate Level) attached as *Appendix G*

The following key points were covered:

- This certificate program was developed to enable the professional development of people (like teachers) that work with children. It complements the teaching certificate offered by the Department of Education and programs at MSVU. It also builds on strengths that the department has developed over the years.
- The registrar advised that he supported the proposal and offered the following suggestions:
 - 2.3 Admission Requirements and 2.4 Listing of courses required/program requirements: These sections appear ambiguous and contains no statement of graduation requirements or minimum standing. 2.3 states that the program is for those that have graduated from a teaching

certificate or other relevant professional program. Then is continues to say it is also open to students in BA/S.Sc.

- Question: Does this mean that excludes those already graduated? What happens if they don't complete the degree but have successfully completed the requirements for the certificate? Do they still get the certificate? If the program is a stand-alone program, we should say that it could be done with or without a degree. If a student meets the requirements of the certificate, they should be able to receive the recognition. Suggest admission requirements be equivalent to graduation in a BA - GPA of 2.0. Answer: The primary purpose is professional development and it was designed with that purpose in mind. In the scenario where a student drops out of the degree program it might be of benefit to allow students to receive a certificate.
- It was noted that under the teacher's qualification system in the province, if this certificate was taken prior to the B.Ed. it would not have the same application/import.
- Teachers are the substantive focus and the issue of timeliness would be a matter of advising.
- Senators were advised that the department was open to modifying the submission to include graduation requirements.

Moved by Butler, and seconded, **“that Senate approves the Certificate in Child Learning and Development (Undergraduate Level) as amended for submission to MPHEC.”**

Motion carried unanimously.

.003 Follow-up – MBA External Review attached as *Appendix H*

- The MBA Program responded in a timely process to the greater number of the recommendations coming out of their review. There were two recommendations that were deferred with a request for more time to consider a response.
- In item two, the rationale that the ERC based their recommendations on their experience with different types of structures and cultures is irrelevant as that is what they are supposed to do.
- Consensus was that further information was required in relation to item one.
- An opinion was stated that Senate should respect the approach and the decision of the department in this case. This is an interdisciplinary program. It is the nature of the interdisciplinary program that results in this large core. A suggestion was that the unit should put forward reasons from the perspective of curriculum.

Moved by Murphy, and seconded, **“that Senate accepts the response of the Faculty of Commerce subject to further clarification on the recommendation to reduce the size of the MBA Core.”**

Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by McCalla, and seconded that the Senate accepts the council's response presented as #2 and requests additional information on #1. Motion carried.

- .02 Research Ethics Board
REB Membership Report attached as **Appendix I** (for information only).
➤ In the absence of objections, the report was accepted into the record.

08046 **REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEES**
None

08047 **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**
None

08048 **REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES**
None

08049 **NEW BUSINESS FROM**

.01 **Floor (Not involving notice of motion)**

.02 **Floor (Involving notice of motion)**

.001 Conflict of Interest in Research Policy attached as **Appendix J**

The following key points were covered:

- Note a typographical error on page 7 in the second last line first bullet point - “serve on the supervisor committee”. Change ‘supervisor’ to ‘supervisory’.
- In the MOU signed by Dodds, SMU was required to have a conflict of interest policy specifically related to research. The FGSR Research Committee developed the document. Similar policies from other universities were reviewed and are referenced at the end of the document. This draft was reviewed and approved by the University Lawyer.
- Concern was expressed regarding the broad definition of Conflict of Interest on page two and that it could be interpreted to include publications. A member expressed the opinion that academic freedom would be signed away by this document. The following change was suggested: “conflict between the University Member’s *professional obligations*, duties or responsibilities to The University.....”. Consensus was to delete the entire second bullet point underneath this one.
- At the top of page 3, members expressed concern that the implication was that any action to improve status would be in conflict. It also places the researcher as subsidiary to the interests of the university. As stated, any action to preserve your professional reputation needs the authority of the university.
- It was suggested that the draft be referred to the faculty union for comment.
- Point of order was called as the scheduled time for the meeting had elapsed.

Moved by Vessey and seconded, **“that the Senate continue the Senate meeting until such time as a resolution of this business item is achieved.”**

Motion carried.

Further discussion covered the following key points:

- An objection was raised to the definition of Personal Interests. Delete “These can include ...to .. or professional reputation.”.
- An example was provided - a faculty member is in conflict by requiring students to buy their text book even though it is not used in the course. That could be interpreted as going to the faculty member’s personal gain.

Moved by Vessey, and seconded, **“that the policy submitted by the FGSR Research Committee entitled Conflict of Interest in Research Policy is accepted in principle as amended and subject to advice of legal council.”**
Motion carried unanimously.

.03 At the last Senate meeting, changes were approved to certain academic regulations. Senators were advised that these changes also impact those in the Graduate Academic Calendar.

08050

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate