

SENATE MEETING MINUTES **September 18, 2009**

The 519th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, September 18, 2009, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dixon, Dr. Enns, Dr. Vessey, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Sun, Dr. Beaulé, Dr. Bjornson, Dr. Russell, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Charles, Dr. Kimery, Dr. Pendse, Dr. Crocker, Ms. Marie DeYoung, Mr. Anderson, Miss. Dix, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Hirtle, Mr. Mitchell, Dr. Ó Siadhail, and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Butler, Dr. Wicks, Dr. Barr, Dr. Dawson, Dr. Neatby, Dr. Stinson, Dr. Stanivukovic, Ms. MacDonald, and Mr. Hotchkiss,

Meeting commenced at 2:36 P.M.

The new faculty members in attendance were introduced and self introductions were done by the student representatives.

09001 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSON, SECRETARY AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

- .01** Moved by Pendse and seconded, **'that Dr. Naulls is elected as Chairperson for the 2009-2010 Senate year.'**
- .02** Moved by Charles, and seconded, **'that Dr. McCalla is elected as Vice-Chairperson for the 2009-2010 Senate year.'**
- .03** No Secretary was nominated or elected.
- .04** Moved by Charles, and seconded, **'that Dr. Pendse is elected as Parliamentarian for the 2009-2010 Senate year.'**

There being no further nominations, the above slate of executive officers was elected by acclamation.

09002 REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE

The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted with the following amendment:

- Drs Dodds and Murphy could not attend to present the nominations for Honorary Degrees. One was needed for the fall convocation and therefore time was of the essence. The Senate Executive was

therefore asked to review and approve these nominations. They have been circulated as Appendix K for information only.

09003

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of May 15, 2009, were *circulated* as **Appendix A**. The following amendment was noted:

- The line on the bottom on page one is repeated at the top of page two.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **'that the minutes of the meeting of May 15, 2009 are approved as amended.'** Motion carried.

09004

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

09005

MEMBERSHIP ON SENATE COMMITTEES FOR 2009-2010

.01 **SECTION A – NOMINATED BY EXECUTIVE OF SENATE** circulated at the meeting as **Appendix B**.

Members were advised that nominees were listed in bold in Appendix C

.0101 APPEALS

- Dr. Sara Malton (Arts)
- Dr. Don Naulls (Elected Senate member who shall chair)
- (FGSR) (TBA by Dr. Vessey)
- Miss Cait Dix (student rep)

.0102 ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

- Mr. Michael Mercer (student rep)
- Mr. Jeffrey Mitchell (student rep)

.0103 ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE APPEAL BOARD

- Dr. Natalia Kotchetova-Kozloski (Comm)
- Mr. Matthew Anderson (student rep)
- Mr. Alwyn Gomez (student rep)

.0104 ACADEMIC PLANNING

- Miss Cait Dix (student rep)

.0105 ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

- Miss Cait Dix (student rep)

.0106 BY-LAWS

- Mr. Michael Mercer (student rep)

.0107 CONTINUING EDUCATION

- **TBA** (Part-time student).
- **TBA** (Part-time student – OPTAMUS rep)
- Mr. Matthew Anderson (student rep)

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

0108 CURRICULUM

- Miss Cait Dix (student rep)
- .0109 LIBRARY
- Miss Cait Dix (student rep)
- .0110 LITERACY STRATEGY
- Dr. Mark Barr (Arts)
 - Dr. Roby Austin (Science)
 - Dr. Valerie Creelman (Comm)
 - Miss Lisa Courtney (student rep)
- .0111 QUALITY OF TEACHING
- Dr. Diane Crocker (Member of Senate selected by Senate)
 - Mr. Omar Lodge (part-time student).
- .0112 RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
- Dr. Nancie Erhard (Arts)
- .0113 SCHOLARSHIP
- Mr. Matthew Anderson (student rep)

Outstanding member nominations to be provided as indicated, and ratified at the Senate meeting of October 9, 2009.

Moved by Dix and seconded, **“that the nominations for Section A of the Membership on Senate Committees 2009-2010, are approved as presented above.” Motion carried.**

.02 SECTION B – NOMINATED BY SENATE FROM THE FLOOR OF SENATE circulated as ***Appendix C.***

- .0201 AGENDA
- Miss. Cait Dix (student rep)
- .0202 ELECTIONS (elected members of Senate)
- Dr. Genlou Sun
 - Dr. Nicole Neatby
- .0203 EXECUTIVE
- Dr. Susan Bjornson (1 faculty member of Senate)
 - Miss. Cait Dix (student rep)
- .0204 STUDENT DISCIPLINE
- Dr. Ron Russell (1 member appointed by Senate)
 - Mr. Michael Mercer (student rep)
 - Miss Samantha Higgins (student rep)

AD HOC COMMITTEES

- None currently active.

JOINT COMMITTEES

.0205 CONVOCATION

- The committee has been inactive for some time.
- The committee has never made recommendations to Senate and does not set policy.
- The logistics of Convocation have never been run by the committee.
- If there was a desire to change the nature of the ceremony, it is only the President that has the authority to do so.
- Question: Would there be any negative impact if we disband this committee? Answer: There will be no impact. The responsibilities for Convocation show up in several job descriptions. The Registrar's Office handles the organization.
- Question: Is there anything within the organization of this event that would be left out if we abolish this Committee. What mandate would Senate have? Answer: For an example, In the past there was a concern about the number of Honorary Degrees awarded at convocation. This was brought to Senate and the number was capped at three. Senate still has academic control.

Moved by Dixon and seconded, "that the Convocation Committee be disbanded." Motion carried.

.0206 HONORARY DEGREES

- Mr. Michael Mercer (student rep)

Joint Committees

Moved by Vessey, and seconded, **"that subject to the confirmation of those members not present, the nominees for Section B of the Membership on Senate Committees 2009-2010, are approved as stated above."** Motion carried.

09006 PROPOSED DATES FOR SENATE MEETINGS FOR 2009-2010

Circulated as ***Appendix D***.

Moved by Kimery, and seconded, **"that the proposed dates for Senate meetings of 2009-2010 are approved as presented"**.
Motion carried unanimously.

09007 REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01 Academic Planning

- Report of Irish Studies Program Review circulated as ***Appendix E, F & G***. Dr. Pádraig Ó Siadhail attended to answer questions

Key Discussion Points:

- Question: One of the recommendations was the creation of a new certificate program in Irish Studies. The department response indicates the committee was determining if that program would be for credit or non-credit. What was the result? Answer: We are focusing on a non-credit certificate program. There have been a number of meetings on this and we are working with Continuing Education to develop a program. We have thought there would be more demand for a non-credit certificate program that would attract members of the Irish community.
- Question: Concern was expressed in regard to the traditional delivery format of continuing education non-credit courses requiring weekend/evening delivery. Has that been considered? Answer: Yes and location has also been investigated. We are looking at options for location and all options are open at this time. Currently the logistics and pricing are being discussed.
- Question: It does not appear clear if we are removing the language requirements on the Major. Answer: This review was voluntary. The department had already started on a process of renewal. One of the decisions we had taken was that we would remove the language requirement for the Irish Minor. This made sense because we had introduced a number of courses at the introductory level that were non-language directed. As it relates to the Major; our sense was that there was no overwhelming evidence at this point that having the language requirement was a deterrent. We may make that decision downstream given substantive evidence for such a decision. At this point we believe the language component actually opens a number of doors for our graduates.
- Question: Are you the only person that teaches language? Answer: No.
- Question: Is language teaching resource allocation a stumbling block? Answer: Opportunities were identified through the Government of Ireland to bring in an assistant for one academic year. We have secured an assistant that is being largely funded by the Government of Ireland. This individual will be teaching the introductory Irish Language courses. This will release Dr. Ó Siadhail for other duties.
- Question: This process took a long time to complete and the summer break also causes a significant gap between the completion of the process between the Academic Planning Committee (APC) and the Department and submission to Senate. Is it possible that APC meet throughout the summer to speed up this process? Answer: When one enters this process there is an understanding that it will be extended over a significant amount of time. We saw the process as facilitating the department's focus around things that need to be done. The department did not suffer in any way. The delay was a result of meetings with the Dean, the AVP to work with the department through the process of addressing the review and forming a response. That lower level iterative process between a subcommittee of the APC and the department is a very useful exercise. We have had positive

outcome from this review regarding the renewal of our program. This was an overwhelming positive experience for our program.

Moved by Enns and seconded, “that the Irish Studies Program:

- a. continue the initiatives to increase participation in the Program, both in degree-seeking students and members of the wider public;
- b. report back to Senate within a year submitting a five-year plan as recommended by the Review Panel (no later than September 2010); and
- c. provide Senate with an interim report on the implementation of the plan and on the impact of new initiatives on participation of students and members of the public in Irish Studies programming no later than January 2013.”

Motion carried.

.02 Academic Regulations

2010-2011 Academic Calendar of Events circulated as *Appendix H*

Key Discussion Points:

- Question: There is only a week and a half to consider whether a course is the right fit. The first classes are not full classes. This is not enough time, especially for the first year students. Can this period be longer? Answer: Over time the drop/add period has been changed. When it was one week the Deans had to override it too often. When it was two weeks the faculty complained because of the limited teaching days in the term. A period of 8 teaching days was established as the deadline for the add/drop date. The last two years we have had considerable chaos in regards to MATH 1210 and CHEM 1210. There is a MATH requirement that has to be established prior to the course commencing. This will have to be addressed by the Faculty of Science. We have asked the Department of Chemistry why the requirement is there. They have advised us that they don't need it in the first year and that will likely change in this year's curriculum changes.
- Question: Is there anyway the first year students could have an extended amount of time? Answer: There are a significant number of students that have assignments due next week. If we made such a change, the students would be put at an academic disadvantage.
- An opinion was expressed that it was more important for first year students to get settled more quickly because it is hard for them to deal with the demands on them.
- Question: Is there a group that deals with this issue? Answer: Changes to prerequisites come to Senate through the Curriculum Committee. Changes to Regulations come to Senate through Academic Regulations.
- Question: The length of a semester is 11½ weeks. How does that compare to other universities in relation to how much education time we offer our students? We used to be ½ to 1 week less than other institutions. Answer: Labour Day was late this year and we actually have a longer exam period than other institutions. These end up being the ends points of the calendar and we work back from there.

- Question: Do we have less education time? Answer: Sometimes Dalhousie has one day more but most times we are the same.
- It would be useful for Senate to monitor this in comparison to what other the institutions are doing.
- Question: Could the length of the exam period be shortened by doubling up courses in exam rooms? Answer: We have tried that. There are a number of issues related to special requests from instructors that complicate scheduling multiple course exams in the same venue. Using the software program that we have, we are able to build in some of the constraints but not others. The software does the schedule for us. We have to be careful that students are not required to write three exams in any 24 hour period. In the tower we have had five or six courses writing simultaneously. However, because of the variation in exam times and requirements, this resulted in disruption and conflict between the instructors. Once the schedule is developed, we also review it to attempt to spot any significant issues.
- Question: What proportion of courses have exams? Answer: A large proportion.
- There is an additional complication. Our system is different than Dalhousie's in the number of classes taken outside of a student's faculty/discipline. Many professional programs don't allow students to take as many courses outside of their discipline. Because we allow students a wider choice, it creates a more complicated exam schedule.
- Question: On page two in April, if the last day of classes was changed to Tuesday 5th of April, the two semesters would balance. This was accepted as a friendly amendment. This change will affect the next two dates as well and the conclusion of the exam period.
- Members were advised that there would be no exams on Easter Monday. This change is due to the tentative SMUFU collective agreement being negotiated. This day was a holiday for administrative staff and it will also become a faculty holiday.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **“that the proposed 2010-2011 Academic Calendar of Events is approved as amended”**. Motion carried unanimously.

09008 REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES

.01 Honorary Degrees (Documents circulated as **Appendix K**)

- ,0101 Nominations for Honorary Degrees circulated for information only.
- There being no objection the recommendations are accepted as presented.

09009 NEW BUSINESS FROM

.01 Floor (involving notice of motion) (Documents circulated as **Appendix I & J**)

- ,0101 Proposal to create a Standing Committee of Senate on Student Success. Documents circulated as **Appendix I**.

Key Discussion Points:

Establishing Committee

- Dixon advised that in 2004, Dr. Murphy recruited the Working Group on Student Success and charged them with developing a comprehensive plan that would respond to the broad-based concerns raised in regard to enhancing student learning, students' campus experience, student retention, and post-graduate placement. At the January 2007 meeting of Senate, the Committee submitted a final report to Senate entitled "Promoting Student Success: Shared Goals, Shared Responsibilities". This proposal to create a standing committee of Senate is to action the recommendations under the functional area 'Academic Programs and Instruction' arising from this report and to oversee that initiative.
- The Committee Membership is fairly large and includes a number of senior members of our institution. The intent is that the committee would establish sub-committees to work on various initiatives.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **"that the Senate authorize the creation of a Standing Committee of Senate on Student Success". Motion carried unanimously.**

Committee Terms of Reference/Membership

- Question: Under point 3 ii) (research and analysis), what are the budget implications? Answer: Some part of this would come out of Institutional Analysis (IA). The Registrar's Office took over part of the IA and it may come from there. Additional research would be done through the AVP's office.
- Question: Would this group be continually searching for funds? Answer: Dr. Murphy is intending to fund that and it should not be expensive to do this work.
- Concern was expressed that this raises the question regarding a budget for Senate. Senate has no money and to make decisions regarding analysis and research requires money.
- It was suggested that Institutional Analysis should be a member. Answer: The office of Institutional Analysis does not exist anymore. Some of those resources report to the Registrar.
- Question: Why is the Director of Continuing Education on the committee? Answer: In the context of mature students.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **"that the Senate approve the terms of reference for this committee as presented in Appendix P". Motion carried unanimously.**

- The following three faculty members were nominated by Senate: one each from the Faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce (to be confirmed after the meeting):
 - Russell Westhaver, Arts
 - Judy Haiven, Commerce
 - Colleen Barber, Science

Nominations ceased. The question was called. Motion carried.

,0102 Proposal to create a Standing Committee of Senate on Sustainability. Documents circulated as **Appendix J**

Key Discussion Points:

- Dix advised that 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 and included in the President's "Strategic Pillars 2008-2012" document. A Sustainability Task Force was initiated and reported to Senate in October of 2008. The Board of Governors subsequently wrote a letter to Senate asking the Senate to oversee this area in academic programs and research.
- It was noted that if this Committee is approved it would be the first of its kind In Atlantic Canada.
- It was suggested that this is an opportunity for Senate to become more connected with what is going on within this initiative and also have a more visible presence.
- Question: Communication links will be needed. How many committees exist under the banner of Sustainability? Answer: There is currently the Sustainability Committee approved by the Board of Governors but it does not have any authority over the academic side of things.
- The opinion was expressed that this initiative fits with the values of the university.
- A member advised that the leadership taken by the student in this initiative has been amazing. They have, in effect, initiated this whole process. The students were commended for their efforts in this regard.

Moved by Dix, and seconded, **"that the Senate authorize the creation of a Standing Committee of Senate on Sustainability"**. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Dix, and seconded, **"that the Senate approve the terms of reference for this committee as presented in Appendix J"**. Motion carried unanimously.

- The following three faculty members were nominated by Senate: one each from the Faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce (to be confirmed after the meeting):
 - Cathy Conrad, Arts
 - Tony Charles, Commerce (confirmed)
 - Jason Clyburne, Science

Nominations ceased. The question was called. Motion Carried.

09010

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate