

SENATE MEETING MINUTES October 19, 2007

The 505th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2007, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Butler, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Crocker, Dr. Dawson, Mr. Hotchkiss, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Kimery, Dr. MacKinnon, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Pe-Piper, Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Webster, Mr. Gillingwater, Miss Schaller, Mr. Risser, Mr. Dong, Miss. Cunningham, and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Murphy, Dr. Wicks, Dr. Pendse, Dr. Charles, Dr. Van Proosdij Dr. Stinson, Dr. Enns, Dr. Vessey, Dr. Konopasky, Dr. Power and Dr. Rand,

Meeting commenced at 4:37 P.M.

07015 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**

- The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

07016 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

.01 Minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2007, were *circulated* as **Appendix A.**

The following amendments were noted:

- Page 9 – correct spelling of ACENET.

Moved by Dr. Butler and seconded, “**that the minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2007 are approved as amended.**”

Motion carried.

Members asked for the minutes to be posted on the website. Please see <http://www.smu.ca/academic/senate/meet.html> for the **approved** minutes of Senate meetings.

07017 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None

07018 **FALL GRADUATION LIST**

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

Members were advised of the following:

- This is a slightly larger graduating class than in previous years. A contributor to this is the Certificate Program in Mathematics which is graduating the first cohort.
- There have been a lot of regrets from faculty regarding participation in the convocation ceremony. Senators were asked to participate fully.
- The Student Senators requested an invitation to Convocation.
- Question: How do students apply for convocation in January?
Answer: The process is the same as for the others but the student has to indicate the January time frame. Approximately 12 applications have been received to date. There is no ceremony in January but a parchment is prepared. January graduates are invited to participate in the Spring ceremony.

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.

07019

MEMBERSHIP ON SENATE COMMITTEES FOR 2007-2008

.01 circulated as ***Appendix C.***

The following changes/additions were noted:

.0101 QUALITY OF TEACHING COMMITTEE

- Dr. Adam Sarty (Science)
- Dr. Tom Rand (Science)
- Dr. Roxanne Richardson (Science)
- Mr. Ranitha Rapasinghe (part-time student)

.0102 ELECTIONS

- Dr. Diane Crocker

.0103 STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- Miss Laura Weeden (student representative appointed by SRC)
- Miss. Christine Estrada (student representative appointed by SRC)

.0104 STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- Mr. Ryan Murphy (student representative appointed by SRC)
- Miss. Ritu Gautam (student representative appointed by SRC)

.0105 CONVOCATION

- Miss. Meghan van Gaal (student representative appointed by SRC)
- Mr. Ryan Murphy (student representative appointed by SRC)

- .0106 JOINT ACADEMIC COMMITTEE OF THE ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY.
- Dr. Shelagh Crooks replaces Dr. Geraldine Thomas

Moved by Mr. Risser, and seconded, **“that the updates to the Membership on Senate Committees 2007-2008, are approved as presented.”**
Motion carried.

07020 REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES
Annual Reports submitted for information only.

.01 Agenda Committee

Annual Report attached as ***Appendix D***

- A member pointed out that recommendations are included in this report. Discussion covered how these should be presented and/or implemented. Members were advised that it is the responsibility of the committee chairperson to bring the recommendations forward in Senate.

.02 Academic Appeals

Annual Report attached as ***Appendix E***

- This report also contains recommendations. The Registrar will look at the Appeal form to implement the recommended changes.
- The Regulations Committee will look at Regulation 19 in regard to cautioning students using or providing editing/mentoring services stating that course materials involved are strictly confidential to the key parties. A breach of this trust will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken by the University.
- Members thought that the number of appeals upheld appeared to be high; 10 of 12 were upheld.

.03 Academic Discipline and Academic Discipline Appeal Board

Annual Report attached as ***Appendix F***

.04 Academic Planning

Annual Report attached as ***Appendix G***

- Members asked if the Academic Plan was still scheduled to come before Senate as planned. Answer: Yes

.05 Academic Regulations:

a) Annual Report attached as *Appendix H*

b) Proposed revision to The Senate Policy on The Academic Implications of Disruptions of University Business attached as *Appendix I*

Key Discussion Points:

- Members were provided with background to the development and revision of this policy. Key Points:
 - A large number of Canadian Universities do not appear to have a policy in place for such events.
 - The York University Policy was used as a basis for the revised policy. Revisions have been made to bring the policy more in line with the environment at Saint Mary's.
 - The proposed policy is based on what procedures will be followed and where responsibilities lie for decision making in these events.
 - If the disruption is longer than a week the Senate Executive should be stepping in.

- Question: Members asked for definition/clarification of 3.3.2.2.
Answer: An example in extended situations might be that the Senate may act to decide situations that might otherwise be decided in the Appeals Committee.
- A spelling mistake was noted in 3.3.2.2. “foregoing” is the correct spelling.
- The decision for closure of the university will not be the responsibility of the Senate Executive.
- Members requested that the approved Senate policies and procedures be made available on the Senate website. Please see: <http://www.smu.ca/academic/senate/policies.html> for approved policies and procedures.

Moved by Dr. Dixon, and seconded, “**that the Senate approves the revision to ‘The Senate Policy on ‘The Academic Implications of Disruptions of University Business’ with the spelling correction as noted.**”

Motion carried.

.06 Admissions Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix J**

Members noted that the report indicated the committee did not meet. Question and suggested that if the committee is redundant it should be disbanded. Members were advised of the background of the development of this committee and that the committee’s terms of reference overlap with other committees. Consultation has been done and a recommendation to disband will be made to the By-Laws Committee.

.07 By-Laws Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix K**

.08 Curriculum Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix L**

.09 Elections Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix M**

.10 Scholarship Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix N**

Members noted that this committee has no meetings in the previous year. The chair informed members that he had called for member availability with the focus of convening this committee again.

.11 Student Discipline Appeal Board

Annual Report attached as **Appendix O**

.12 Student Participation Committee

Annual Report attached as **Appendix P**

Members noted that this committee had no meetings in the previous year. This committee will also be reviewed by the By-Laws Committee.

.13 Honorary Degrees Committee

Annual Report circulated at meeting as **Appendix Q**

Members were advised of the following:

- The term outstanding means that the candidate has not been informed of the honor. The listing does not include those approved at the last Senate Meeting.

- 07021** **REPORT OF AD HOC COMMITTEES**
None at this time.
- 07022** **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**
.01 **Honorary Degrees**
Annual Report attached as **Appendix Q**
- 07023** **REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES**
None
- 07024** **NEW BUSINESS FROM**
a. **Floor (not involving notice of motion)**
Proposed Changes to the Saint Mary's University Act (1970),
circulated at the meeting as **Appendix R**
- Dr. Dodds stated that the document is being circulated for information only.
 - The Archdiocese has approved the proposed changes.
 - A private members bill was needed to accomplish this. There is a potential that the bill will go before the legislature in the Fall but more likely it will be the Spring session.
 - Members were given a brief background on the environment existing at the time of the 1970 Act.
 - Significant consultation and discussion has been done relative to moving to a more modern practice.
 - The Board has a committee that would review applications for this position.
 - In keeping with traditions, the Archbishop would assume the position of 'visitor' which is a common honorary position. The role of the visitor is to maintain the historic link with the Roman Catholic Church.
 - Question: Why was this a good time to make the change?
Answer: It was a convenient time to change because the Archbishop was transferred to Ottawa. Dr. Dodds discussed this with the Archbishop who took the proposal forward to the Archdiocese and approval was received.
 - Question: Does this constitute an addition to the membership of the board. Answer: There is a net gain of one. The new configuration will also state that Vice-Presidents will be Ex-officio members of the Board.
 - Question: There have been three or four requests over the last couple of years regarding Senate membership and it was consistently stated that there were risks to opening the act. Is this risk inherent in this bill? Why was this change so pressing when other requests from Senate were not? Answer: Dr. Dodds advised that the request before the legislature is singular in purpose. It has private member support and it was thought that we should take the opportunity of the changing incumbent in this role to update the Saint Mary's University Act. Members were advised that there is an opportunity for anyone to voice concerns with the proposed change. This was a sensitive change in relation to the Archdiocese. The Board did not want to muddy it up with other issues.

- Question: What about the concern about opening the act?
Answer: There is always potential risk. Since this is a joint proposal of all three parties, they may accept the amendment as is.
- Question: Assuming this goes through, what role does Senate have in choosing who the chancellor would be? Answer: The nominating committee was merged into the Board of Governors Committee. This committee is comprised of members of the board, and that includes faculty who are also members of the Board. The Board makes the final decision. Dr. Dodds offered to take the request for Senate input to the chair of the Governors Committee. If Senate would like to nominate someone that can also be taken back to this committee.
- Question: Why was it thought this was a good time to do this? Answer: The Archbishop asked Dr. Dodds if it was a good time to replace him as Chancellor. That was in the early part of this year. When he was moved to Ottawa, they discussed this again. He agreed that it was time for change. He agreed to talk with Bishop Champagne and to leave a note for his incoming replacement. Dr. Dodds discussed this with the Bishop and after consultation within those circles they were in agreement that it was time for change. Dr. Dodds will write to the university community to inform them of this situation.

b. Floor (involving notice of motion)

c. Chair

07025

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Members were advised of the following:

- Convocation is in a week.
- The MOU expires on March 31, 2008. We are at the stage of CFO and Vice Presidents discussing operating costs. That information was submitted and is being reviewed. A new MOU will follow. The funding base is 224 – 225 million. The actual amount universities will receive is 270 million which includes tuition rollbacks. Further discussions are not likely until January and the role students will take in those discussion is unknown at this time.
- There is no new funding promised as of April 1.
- Tuition is an issue in the news today. If we are going to come in line with the national average we need to reduce by \$1000.00. The funding will have to increase in order to do this.
- On the issue of emergency preparedness, we are monitoring the mumps outbreak. There has been no significant outbreak here. At the end of the academic year Dalhousie reported a minimal number of cases. Vaccinations were available for our students. SMU has had two confirmed cases and we continue to do the free clinics. 13 – 14 hundred students currently have been inoculated. Should we have an outbreak, we do not have spare rooms in residence to isolate those infected.
- Historically we had two closures as a result of hurricane Juan and the snow storm White Juan which were 2 days and 1 week duration respectively. On this basis the decision was made in consultation with Dalhousie to close campus. This process would work for short

closures. Over the years we have put in physical plant measures to mitigate some situations. For example, the library would run on generator power in the event of a power outage. The university is also currently consulting on alternate heating. Discussions are currently underway with Heritage Gas but should this go forward, boilers will have to be replaced.

07026

QUESTION PERIOD

- Question: What about impact to universities inherent to doing away with mandatory retirement? If faculty members continue to earn top dollar after retirement years, won't that have impact? Answer: The universities are looking at 2009 for potential legislation being enacting. This will have to be considered when budgets are prepared. The cost base will have to be projected accordingly. SMUFU has provided some information related to this situation. The University Presidents have advised the Government that this will financially impact the Universities and compensation will have to be forthcoming as a result

07027

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate