

SENATE MEETING MINUTES March 14, 2014

The 556th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, March 14, 2014, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Dodds, Dr Gauthier, Dr Bradshaw, Dr Vessey, Dr Naulls, Dr Bjornson, Dr Francis, Dr Kozloski, Dr Russell, Dr Secord, Dr Stinson, Dr Sarty (for Dr Smith), Mr Hotchkiss, Ms DeYoung, Mr Bhandari, Mr Loshi, Mr Patriquin, Mr Slaunwhite and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Smith, Dr Enns, Dr Austin, Dr Dixon, Dr Gilin-Oore, Dr Power, Dr Sewell, Dr Street, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr van Proosdij, Mr Coady and Mr Michael.

Meeting commenced at 2:30 P.M.

13050 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The agenda was accepted.

13051 **SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY 2014-2015 OPERATING BUDGET**
The 2014-2015 Operating Budget was presented by Darrell Rooney and Gabe Morrison

Key Discussion Points:

- This is a balanced budget as required by our Board of Governors.
- There is a 3% tuition cap that remains in force. The Province of Nova Scotia has also continued the NS Bursary tuition reduction program.
- Question: In the proposed new process, how will recommendations be initiated? Will they only be addressed at the end of the year as a part of the budget process? Answer: If you have something that can happen immediately those items should go forward immediately. The more strategic items are more complex and will have to proceed through the established process.
- Question: Will the budget committee operate the same as it has been doing? Answer: We are hoping they will operate throughout the year instead of just around the budget process.
- Question: We may have a facilities condition index that makes us look good but there is no academic health index. It is critical that we address the unfunded academic requests.
- It was noted that if we had not experienced the 10% funding cut, we would have had \$3.4 mil more in funding per year. We would have been able to fund all the requests.

- Question: It was mentioned that SMUSA had not provided numbers. Was a request made for this information that went unanswered? Answer: Generally by this time we would have been advised what the student fees were going to be. This year the focus is on the elections but at some point we need that information. **Action Item: Patriquin** will provide this information by email to Ronney.
- Question: What steps are being taken to inform the students about the increases to student fees being levied on Commerce, Arts and Science students? Answer: The consultation process would have updated the SMUSA President and VP of Student Affairs. Unfortunately both of those individuals were absent from the meeting. Rooney met with the VP Student Affairs and discussed this. Follow-up from that meeting has not been received. The Registrar's Office communicates what that fee is.
- Question: Are there any steps to inform the general student population? Answer: This budget proposal has to go through the budget approval process first. Once approved we can deal with notification issues.

13052

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2014, were *circulated* as **Appendix A.**

Moved by Hotchkiss, and seconded, **'that the minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2014 are approved as circulated.'** Motion carried.

13053

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01

Academic Planning Committee

001 MPHEC Proposal to modify an existing program from the Sobey School of Business – Revise MBA-CMA program to MBA-CPA (Canadian Professional Accountancy) program, attached as **Appendix B.**

Key Discussion Points:

- This is a result of a merger of the three professional bodies in Canada and the new professional designation will be CPA.
- Table 2.3 was circulated to the members present as it was missing from the program documentation.
- Question: Why is Appendix 7 missing? Answer: The program proposal is under consideration by the three professional groups. They are in the process of merging and have not responded to our request. All three have given some degree of verbal support but none have provided a formal written approval. Submission to MPHEC will be delayed until those responses have been received
- The following friendly amendments were suggested by the Dean, Sobey School of Business: 1) remove the item of the budget for 70 students. 2) remove Shripad Pendse as a faculty member because he has retired.
- Question: The proposal indicates a start year of 2014-2015? Is this possible? Answer: That is subject to approvals and may not be possible.

- Question: What effect will not receiving the approvals in time have? Answer: We cannot take in new students in the 14-15 academic year and there is the possibility that the program will not operate for a year.
- Question: Are there significant changes from the current program? Answer: No
- A member commended the Faculty and the Department for being so responsive in addressing this change so proactively.

Moved by Gauthier and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the Proposal to Modify the MBA-CMA Program, with the inclusion of the friendly amendments, for submission to MPHEC.” Motion carried.**

002 Academic Program Review – Policy Handbook and templates, **Appendix C, D, E F, G and H (for information only)**

Key Discussion Points:

- The depth of the work involved in a program review is significant. What is intended here is to provide a working document that will guide programs through the process. The policy is a work in progress and will be adapted as the policy and the requirements change. As such, this documentation will be coming back to Senate at various points for information only.

003 Curriculum Committee

- Revision to the Senate Policy on Submissions to the Senate Curriculum Committee, attached as **Appendix D**
- Revision to Committee Terms of Reference as found in the Senate By-Laws, attached as **Appendix E**

The item above is deferred to the next Senate meeting due to the absence of the Committee Chairperson, Dr. Dixon.

13054 **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**

.01 Honorary Degrees Committee

Recommendations circulated as **Appendix G** (detail circulated at meeting)

Key Discussion Points:

The committee receives recommendations from both internal and external sources and attempts to balance the qualities and achievements of the candidates with the values and vision of Saint Mary's. These recommendations are not necessarily for the May Convocation.

Moved by Dodds, and second, **“that the Senate approves the recommendations for Honorary Degrees as submitted by the Honorary Degrees Committee.” Motion carried.**

13055 **NEW BUSINESS FROM**

a) Floor (not involving notice of motion)

2014 Weather Closure Question, circulated as **Appendix F**

Key discussion items:

- A student asked Stinson what happens in a 2.5 hour (3 credit hour) course that is scheduled once a week and classes are cancelled three times in a row in the current semester. This constitutes 25% of her course. This student attends during late afternoon and into the evening. She also raised this as a broader issue and wondered about students who are in a class that has multiple sections. Students in sections of classes not affected by the closures would have received instruction and material that students in courses later in the day didn't. If there was a common exam, the Wednesday night students would be grossly disadvantaged. The student is concerned that she is less prepared than her peers for her exams and any future courses that have her current course as prerequisite. The student also feels that she paid for her course but got 25% less value than her classmates in other sections or other semesters received.
- It was noted that without some remedy to this problem, students are either expected to master the material on their own, without faculty class-time, or faculty simply skip the material. This threatens the integrity of the academic programs affected. The President noted that the student should be thanked for raising this issue.
- It was noted that Senate Policy on the Academic Implications of Disruptions of University Business does not apply in this case. In this kind of situation the short term 7 day disruption does not apply.
- The challenge is that we cannot compel students or faculty to attend classes outside of the class schedule.
- We have a significant number of 3 credit hour courses and labs that were affected by the three consecutive closures on a Wednesday. This translates into a significant number of students that have been impacted.
- This has not been an issue in the past but weather patterns are changing and we are likely going to face issues like this in the future. **Action Item: Senate** should take this under advisement and form an ad hoc committee with representation from the three faculties to address this situation. The committee would investigate what the each of our Faculties do and also what our colleges do to identify best practices. <<this action item was assigned later in the meeting to the Senate Academic Regulations Committee>>
- Suggestion: The new class scheduling program may result in being able to fit in more teaching days. The extra day could be held in abeyance for such events.
- **Action Item: The three Deans** should email the faculty involved in the affected courses to encourage them to address the situation or reschedule make-up classes.
- On the subject of teaching days it was noted that Dalhousie was considering implementing a full reading week around the November 11 statutory holiday. If Saint Mary's were to follow suit, this would shrink the teaching days available in the current schedule.
- Suggestion: We have study days between the end of classes and the start of exams. Some of those study days could be used.
- **Action Item: Dixon** requested to do a compilation of the courses that are taught in this fashion and the enrolments in those courses. That information will provide an understanding of the scope of this issue. At that point the language in the policy can be reviewed to find a way

to address this issue. An assessment of best practices would be a part of that review. It was noted that the Senate Academic Regulations Committee developed the existing policy and has representation from all three Faculties. **Action Item: The Senate Academic Regulations Committee** will be tasked to address this issue. Dixon is the chair of this committee.

- It was noted that in the shorter term, some classes were rescheduled as result of the closures.
- Suggestion: CAID could help faculty create a one-hour taped lecture that could be made available to students on blackboard or in some other way to address this issue.
- Question: Given that we only have three weeks left of classes, how can we address this issue for the current students? Answer: In the short term the Deans could send out a message to their faculty with some suggestions to how they might address this issue. That might take the form of a referral to CAID for taped lectures but that is only one suggestion that could be given.
- **Action Item: The Registrar** should send a letter to the students to advise them of the steps being taken by the Senate to address this issue.

13056

PRESIDENTS REPORT

- The search committee for the Dean of Arts is convening following this meeting. The final candidate made his presentation just prior to this meeting.
- The memorial for L. Saunders was held here on campus. Dr. Naulls represented the university at the funeral. A scholarship in her name was proposed. A letter was sent to the family on Wednesday to ask permission to name it and to ask what criteria they would wish to have stipulated for the scholarship. If they decline we can still proceed with a scholarship for an aboriginal female student.
- The task force that was mentioned is under consideration and an individual has been identified to lead it. They will be approached next week. It needs a base in SMU Community and an outreach to the local aboriginal community as well.
- There was a meeting held with the President's Council Action Team. There are six areas that are being addressed and some of those have already been delegated. We have a three-year window to implement the recommendations of the Task Force and our next reporting date is May-June.

13057

QUESTION PERIOD

Key Discussion Points:

- Question: Has there been consideration to a science representative on the action team? Answer: This matter is still under consideration.

13058

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate