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## SENATE MEETING MINUTES October 10, 2014

The 559<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, October 10, 2014, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

**PRESENT:** Dr Dodds, Dr Gauthier, Dr Dixon, Dr Bradshaw, Dr MacDonald, Dr Smith, Dr Vessey, Dr Naulls, Dr Power, Dr Austin, Dr Bjornson, Dr Campbell, Dr Francis, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Kozloski, Dr Secord, Dr Short, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Warner, Ms Marie DeYoung, Mr Hotchkiss, Mr Patriquin, Mr Feehan, Dr Barr, Dr Singfield, and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

**REGRETS:** Dr Gilin-Oore, Dr Secord, Mr Gordon Michael, Mr Hamilton, and Mr Rice

Meeting commenced at 2:32 P.M.

### 14013 REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE

The following requests were considered and approved:

1. Advance the President's Report and Question Period for consideration immediately after the graduation list.
2. Defer agenda items 5.2 and 5.3 – to the November 2014 Senate meeting.
3. Advance agenda item #7 on the Going Forward task force for consideration immediately after the advanced President's report and question period.

### 14014 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of September 19, 2014, were *circulated as Appendix A*.

The following revisions were noted:

- Add Patriquin to the section for regrets.

Moved by Bjornson, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of September 19, 2014 are approved as revised.” Motion carried.**

### 14015 FALL GRADUATION LIST

- The listing of graduates was circulated to Deans with a copy for Senate.
- Convocation is next week on Friday/Saturday in the McNally theatre auditorium. The Faculty of Graduate Studies ceremony will be on Friday, Oct 17, Arts and Science will follow in the morning, and Commerce in the afternoon on Saturday Oct 18.
- This is a large graduating class with 449 graduates and 33 Distinctions being awarded. The graduate studies section is the largest graduating class.

- The ceremonies on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon will be tight in terms of the number of guests per graduate that we can accommodate. The ceremonies will be approximately 1.25 hours.

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. Smith, and seconded, **“to enable the Registrar to add such graduates to this list as may be identified subsequent to this meeting.”** Motion carried unanimously.

**14016**

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**

.01 Status, revised report on ‘Positive Action To Improve The Employment Of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible Minorities And People With Disabilities’.

**Key discussion points:**

- The report was tabled last year. Concerns were raised on the method of calculation used when representing the data reported. There have been meetings between Dr Gauthier, HR and Dr Power to review this issue and revisions have been done. Before a revised report is submitted to Senate, Dr Power will be asked to review the revised report. A meeting has been requested and will occur in the near future so that this report will be able to be resubmitted in November.
- A number of Senators were concerned that the methodology of the presentation of facts and figures was not the only issue. Another issue was concern of action being taken as a result of the report rather than just reporting information.
- Item forwarded to next meeting for further discussion.

.02 Geology Program Review Documentation – *Appendix C* – Notice of Motion, *Appendix D* – Recommendation/Response Comparison, *Appendix E* - Self Study Report, *Appendix F* - Self Study Appendices (1-8), *Appendix G* - Deans Response to Self Study, *Appendix H* - External Review Committee’s (ERC) Final Report, *Appendix I* - Department Response to ERC Report, *Appendix J* - Dean’s Response to ERC report.

**Key discussion points:**

- Deferred to November Senate meeting.

.03 Biology Program Review Documentation - *Appendix K* – Notice of Motion, *Appendix L* - Recommendation/Response Comparison, *Appendix M* - Self Study Report, *Appendix N* - Self Study Appendices (1-11), *Appendix O*- Deans Response to Self Study, *Appendix P*- External Review Committee’s (ERC) Final Report, *Appendix Q* - Department Response to ERC Report, *Appendix R* - Dean’s Response to ERC report. Dr Bjornson available for questions.

**Key discussion points:**

- Deferred to November Senate meeting.

.04 Further Discussion - Final Recommendation Report of the APC Sub-Committee for the Assessment of the ENGL 1205 Requirement and Institutional Survey,

attached as **Appendix S 1 and S 2**. Revised Recommendations/ Motions from Academic Planning, attached as **Appendix T**. Drs Singfield and Barr attending.  
**Key discussion points:**

- Dr Singfield presented a history of the requirement for English and specifically ENGL 1205 within all degree programs. The 2011-2012 English Program Review and the subsequent recommendations of the External Review Committee were also covered, as was the mandate of the task force subsequently established to assess ENGL 1205.
- The 2011-2012 English Program Review Self-Study reported that:
  - 9 – 14 part-time instructors were instructing ENGL 1205 every term. Instructor concerns centered on frustration with the wide-ranging literacies and language proficiencies of first-year students. This course has no common curriculum. The instructors have had total autonomy with designing and delivering their section of ENGL 1205. There was a common requirement of an essay and a final exam in most of the 40 sections offered each academic year.
  - ENGL 1205 is not considered as a course that sets the foundation for academic literacies in the various programs – or as an introduction to the analytical work and persuasive writing that will be required of students in their future university career.
  - ENGL 1205 is a study of literature, and the department and students question the basis of this requirement in relation to upper level study in non-English disciplines.
- The External Reviewers' Report stated that ENGL 1205 “should not be allowed to continue in its present misconceived terms, and that it is long past time that all parties currently having investment in its structural logic and pedagogical justification enter into serious consultation about where its future lies.” The ERC went further to suggest that if an English course is mandatory, it should be a composition course used to address literacy. Further to this, they stated that there was no evidence of the ENGL 1205 experience increasing the literacy skills of students.
- The department's response to this was that they would be happy to respond to any initiative arising from the recommendation but that they would not be addressing the recommendations directly because the recommendations were not addressed to the department.
- The Dean acknowledged the department's stated willingness to respond to any initiatives involving ENGL 1205, but pointed out a number of implications – including resource implications – of which to be mindful should a review of the requirement ensue.
- Senate then tasked the APC to propose a composition and terms of reference for a committee to do a university-wide assessment of ENGL 1205 under the auspices of the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Research.
- The ENGL 1205 requirement was originally intended to address the literacy needs of all incoming students to the university.
- The mandate of the committee was, through consultation with the University community, to propose recommendations on first-year course offerings and structure that would address the literacy needs of all first-year students.
- Consultations were done with the following groups: English Department, CAID, Current 1205 students, Faculty Deans, Faculty Councils, Registrar, Writing Centre, Library, Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy and the Senate Committee on Learning & Teaching.

- The committee also undertook a review of literacy at SMU, the 2011-2012 English Program Review, the current literature on literacy issues, other institutional practices, 2001-02 Senate Task Force on University-wide English Requirement and complete review of all of the ENGL 1205 section course outlines.
- The committee assessed the relationship of offerings to the original intent of ENGL 1205 as a pan-university core course for all undergraduate students. They also looked at the continued need for an existing (or modified) ENGL 1205 course, as well as the potential for development and implementation of new courses.
- Historical Academic Calendar requirements were presented:
  - In 1956, critical study was assessed on written tests. Composition and communication were included in the curriculum in each of the four years of Arts, Commerce and Science degrees.
  - Ten years later (1965), we had a requirement for English in each year of 2 years of degree programs. A pass on and English Placement Test was required or a special English non-credit course.
  - Ten years later (1976), the requirement was EGL 200.0 and there was also an English exam.
  - In 1990 the English exam disappears. 201.1 English Composition (many sections are offered) and 202.2 Intro to Literature are required in two years of the degree programs.
  - In 2000, the requirement was EGL 201.1 English Composition and EGL 203.2. An Introduction to Literature I or EGL 204.1(.2) An Introduction to Literature II.
  - In 2001/2002, Senate initiated a task force to review the English requirement for all undergraduate programs. The outcomes of this task force were the development of a university literacy policy, establishment of the writing centre, a commitment to writing across the curriculum program, and that all undergraduates take a minimum 3 credit hours in English and that each faculty should specify additional requirements specific to their degree programs.
  - In 2005, EGL 205 Introduction to Literature came into existence. This became ENGL 1205.
- In 2013, the English Department released a mission statement, which did not include composition as part of that mission.
- In the fall of 2012, there were 22 sections of ENGL 1205 plus 2 on-line delivered courses. Of these, 18 were taught by part-time faculty.
- English is now a required part of the degree requirement across the university. Presentation concluded.
- Senate members were advised that the Academic Planning Committee did not mean to convey that ENGL 1205 would be removed from the curriculum. The intent of the first motion was that there should be a requirement for an English literacy component in all programs at Saint Mary's and that may include ENGL 1205 as a component.
- Question: Should the proposed cross-faculty working group include a representative each from the Writing Centre and the Library? Answer: APC is not trying to be prescriptive in terms of the membership of the working group. APC is looking to Senate to endorse the formation of this group. The composition can be considered by the Senate, but the APC recommendation was that the composition of this working group be broad.

- Members expressed concern that the first motion still allows for the possibility that some graduates will choose, of their own free will, not to engage with an English course.
- The English Department Representative advised that the department is generally happy with the revisions to the APC motions. They still express concern that there is not much of a shift in the overall approach. A definition of Academic Literacy is required. A resource investment will have to be made in order to deliver this approach. What is being proposed in this report is already being done in a large number of the courses around the university. Members were advised that the English Department asked to be relieved of the responsibility for delivering instruction on composition and grammar. The Writing Centre was established not to be remedial but to help students with their challenges.
- It was noted that this is not a case of English literacy but one of academic literacy. Each faculty has to decide what academic literacy means within the context of their degree programs. The next phase is to consider how each faculty will address this gap within their own Faculties.
- It was noted that there is nothing in this report that in any way indicates a withdrawal from a liberal education. There is no change in regard to the degree program requirements for literacy and liberal education components. The University needs to decide how each Faculty is going to address the academic literacy requirement within their programs. The University needs to collegially decide on what academic literacy is and then consider how each faculty is going to address this requirement.
- Members were advised that:
  - the English Department defined common guidelines for the ENGL 1205 course. The department revised this course many times to make it more effective for the purpose for which it was being used.
  - that the numbers of international students in ENGL 1205 is not a specific issue.
  - the recommendations that the Department did not respond to were the ERC recommendations that were not addressed to the department directly. These recommendations were summarized within their response.
- Dr Singfield, Chair of the ENGL 1205 Assessment Committee advised that the committee was not recommending eliminating the English requirement for students or removing ENGL 1205 from the curriculum. The goal is to provide a cohesive package of learning where academic literacy skills are not being taught in isolation. We want to make it apparent throughout the whole degree structure, that in order to become a successful person, academic literacy skills have to progressively develop and be reinforced throughout all years of our degree programs. No one department or program should be required to meet this requirement alone. We need to decide what our vehicle is going to be to enable us to deliver this approach. The content is the vehicle and there are well written texts in every discipline. Academic Literacy is a broad area and it is expected of the students. We have to decide on a common goal in terms of what we want our students to become.
- It was suggested that most of the previous discussion is actually the job of the working group and not the job of Senate. The report of the assessment committee discussed a new requirement or requirements. Question: What is the responsibility of the Faculty subsequent to establishing those requirements? Within the context of each course, the approach to literacy

may be very specific. Answer: This needs to be identified. We are not suggesting each Faculty define a literacy strategy. We want a strategy that works best for the students.

- We are discussing an institutional requirement. We need to engage the Faculties to define what is required within their degree programs. We need a wide range of requirements that builds throughout the degree programs. The cross-faculty working group can investigate this.
- A student representative commended the committee for their work and their recommendations and stated a personal interest in learning more about imaginative thinking through learning in the student's own area of interest. Students need to have a choice. Students are more inclined to become engaged in learning when they study something that they care about.
- Concern was expressed that downstream, an approach like that within the degree programs may lead to students taking only those courses that interest them and thereby defining the composition of their individual degrees. This would not work.
- Members were again reminded that ENGL 1205 was never a University requirement. Each Faculty chose to use ENGL 1205 as their requirement.
- The English representative suggested that the first APC motion assumes that ENGL 1205 is a university requirement.
- It was noted that the 2001 report suggested that there was room for both and the report suggested that the Faculties need to respond with a requirement of their own in addition to the 3 credit hour English component. The 3 credit hours in English requirement is as old as the university. When it was referred to specifically in the report it was stipulated as '3 credit hours plus'.
- It is important to look at literacy requirements across the whole degree. Ideally Arts should have a leadership role in this working group and the Department of English should have a role in this as well.
- A friendly amendment was requested to motion two to include at least one member of the English department selected by the English Department and one representative each from the Writing Centre and Library.
- The APC will be tasked with recommending the composition of the work group and their terms of reference. APC will do the preparation and bring it back to Senate.

the Academic Planning Committee has the following revised recommendations/ motions subsequent to the discussion at the September Senate meeting:

Moved by Gauthier and seconded,

**“that the current three credit-hour English Literature requirement (ENGL 1205) for the degrees of B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com., be replaced with a new requirement or requirements (which may include ENGL 1205) targeted directly at helping to lay the foundations for academic literacy development in our students.”**

**Motion carried.**

Moved by Gauthier and seconded

**“that Senate approve the formation of a cross-Faculty Working Group to present options on operationalizing recommendation #2 of the Report of the Committee on the Assessment of ENGL 1205. This committee should**

**include in the membership, one member from the Department of English appointed by the Department of English, one representative of the Writing Centre and one representative from the Library, appointed by the Library. For continuity, the Committee should also include at least one member from the Committee for the Assessment of ENGL 1205.”**  
Motion carried.

Moved by Bradshaw and seconded  
**“that the proposed cross-Faculty Working Group identify the core set of academic literacy learning objectives for any University course considered to address the literacy requirements of the university replace ENGL 1205.”**  
Motion carried.

Move by Gauthier and seconded,  
**“that the University make available online and/or workshop resources to assist students requiring improvement of their literacy skills.”** Motion carried.

Moved by Bjornson and seconded,  
**“that Faculties actively review their programs to ensure clear opportunities exist for the continuous reinforcement and progressive development of skills; to make sure that these opportunities are visible to the student as they become relevant to learning and communication in their program and/or discipline; and to articulate the goals for academic literacy in the program. During their review, the Working Group is asked to review possible linkages to the Senate Policies on Course Outlines, Submissions to the Curriculum Committee and Program Reviews.”** Motion carried.

Moved by Bjornson and seconded  
**“that the Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy create a definition of Academic Literacy as described or related to the working definition presented in the final report of the Committee for the Assessment of ENGL 1205, to be delivered to the Senate by December 2014. The Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy is further tasked with collaborating with the representatives from the Faculties on their committee in the establishment and subsequent monitoring of any changes to the academic literacy strategies in the degree programs.”** Motion carried.

14017

#### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- a) Academic Planning
  - i. MPHEC termination proposal and cover letter – German Major, attached as *Appendix U* (info only).  
There being no discussion or objection the proposal was approved for furtherance to MPHEC.
- b) Agenda Committee Annual Report attached as *Appendix XA*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- c) Academic Appeals Annual Report attached as *Appendix XB*  
Subsequent to the meeting, at a request of a Senator, this report will be carried forward to the November Senate meeting.

- d) Academic Discipline Appeals Board attached as *Appendix XC*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- e) Academic Regulations Annual Report attached as *Appendix XD*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- f) Curriculum Annual Report attached as *Appendix XE*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- g) Elections. Annual Report attached as *Appendix XF*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- h) Library Committee annual Report attached as *Appendix XG*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.
- i) AST-SMU Joint Academic Committee Annual Report attached as *Appendix XH*  
There being no discussion or objection the report was accepted into the Senate record.

**14018**

**NEW BUSINESS FROM**

- a. Floor (not involving notice of Motion)
  - o Question: How will the ‘Going Forward Task Force’ interact with Academic Senate on the review and the future of academic programs at Saint Mary’s University? Document attached as *Appendix XI*.  
**Key discussion points:**
    - Senate was asked if the members would agree to have a part of Appendix XI read. The section that was read began “On Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, the President..... and it ended with the bullet point “If not, why not?”
    - Members were advised that this item arose during the town hall meetings. The SMU Act 1970 stipulates the powers of the Board of Governors and the Senate. The powers given to the Board are for the government, conduct, management and control of the University and of its property, revenues, expenditures, business, and affairs and has all powers necessary or convenient to perform its duties and achieve the object of the University and without limiting the generality of the foregoing may, (a) provide for, establish, maintain or discontinue faculties, schools, institutes, departments, chairs, fellowships and courses of instructions. In the act, it says that subject to the powers of the Board, the Senate shall be responsible for the educational policy of the University and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing (c) may determine the course of study, admission standards, qualifications for diplomas, certificates and degrees,



examinations. The Board bylaws make reference to Senate and reflect what is stipulated in the Act. The Senate By-laws give further detail and also deal with the standing committees of Senate. Article 4 of the Senate By-laws talks about education policy. It repeats what is in the Saint Mary's Act in terms of language. The Senate By-laws empower committees of Senate with powers. Of those committees, the Academic Planning Committee has the role to provide recommendations for any new programs or for the discontinuance of all existing programs and shall propose revisions to Senate. Any matter relating to the creation, modification or termination of programs and courses of study falls under the power of the Senate (subject to the powers of the Board). The Going Forward Task Force does not have the power to make decisions on academic programs. The Task Force cannot make a decision that takes away the powers of Senate. The powers of Senate are set within other legal statues. Board and Senate are conditioned under the law of NS and also by the collective agreements.

- There was never any intent to circumvent any of this structure by initiating the Going Forward Task Force.
- Suggestion: A greater number of faculty and students should be included as representatives on the Going Forward Task Force.  
Response: It will be taken under advisement.

b. Floor (involving notice of motion)

c. Chair

- Appointment of two faculty members to a review committee for the position of Vice-President Finance and Administration.

**Key discussion points:**

- The Senators were advised of the requirements of the Board By-law in this regard. Should the Board choose to proceed with the option of a review or a search committee, the Senate is asked to nominate two representatives to serve in that regard.
- Moved by Takseva, and seconded,  
**“that Don Naulls and Tom Kozloski be nominated to serve on a review or search committee of the Board for the position of Vice-President Finance and Administration.” Motion carried.**

14019

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dodds advised Senators of the following:

- Congratulations to James Patriquin who has been elected President of SMUSA.
- The government announced a series of public meetings on the future of post-secondary education. They will engage with the various faculty associations and student groups in the near future. They will also be inviting the public. The corporate entity Halifax Global will be doing some of the organizing. Please consider going to one of these meetings.
- The MOU process is on-going. There is an innovation table and there are six subsequent tables to that. Vessey has been nominated for the R&D Table. None of these meetings have taken place yet.

- Bi-laterals still have not been signed by the Government. These are between the government and the individual institutions. They have asked for our thoughts on the sector.

14020

**QUESTION PERIOD**

- Questions: Is this process we are going through in Nova Scotia similar to what Ontario is going through? Answer: Yes and no. We were asked to provide four or five bullet points focusing on our unique areas of strengths. We were also given the opportunity to review and add to those bullet points. There are areas in which Saint Mary's does not offer programs or courses. They want to take a look at engineering at SMU.
- Members were advised that there is public access to all of the strategic mandate agreements with the various colleges and universities in Ontario at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/>. Each of these strategic mandate agreements include a differentiation statement. There are also priorities that individual institutions are setting for themselves with the agreement of the Government.
- Question: Is it your perception that this process is going to be predictably systematic? Answer: I am not sure how they are going to do the reviews of areas of nursing and engineering for example. There was a report in the later part of the 90s on Postsecondary Education Systems in Canada. In the P-12 system there was a report that was just released and was compiled from the survey responses of 1800 respondents. Whether they will follow up with a similar process for the post-secondary sector we don't know. There may also be a timetabling issue involved in the decision. They expect to have an MOU by March of next year.
- Question: Can we have an update on the role of the consultant in regard to the going forward task force? Answer: The first reason we decided to involve an external consulting group was to address a lack of resources within this University. Marc Lamoureux, Jeff Power, SMUFU were invited to meet with the executive management group on this issue. That meeting occurred on Monday.
- Members were advised that Dr Dodds was recently interviewed by the media and was asked to address the question; "What is the business of a university in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?" We have to recognize there are issues with government and enrollment that are being addressed right across the country. Saint Mary's currently has the issue of a budget shortfall but that is being addressed by using reserve funds. The Academic Task Group met, and concluded that more members were needed. The first meeting of the expanded group was held on Friday and there was an open conversation around the terms of reference for this group. The group came to a consensus that it was inappropriate to use a consultant at this stage of our process and that we should wait until we have identified what we need to have a consultant do for us. The task group wanted to have a higher level engaged discussion around the Academic review process.
- Question: Has the relationship with the consultant been fully terminated? Answer: The contractual relationship between the consultant and the Task Group has been terminated.
- Question: Is the task group currently composed of 21 members? Answer: Confusion is arising between this group and the Going Forward Task Force.

The request for more faculty representation on the Going Forward Task Force is being taken under advisement.

- Members were advised that, for the first time in ten years, students are not being invited to be involved in the negotiations on the MOU. There are a number of approaches being taken to gain feedback from the public. Students have been advised that public feedback is the only way students will have an opportunity to participate.
- The student representatives were advised that the Academic Task Group made a decision to have student representation on the group. This will be happening in the next few working days.

**14021**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Barb Bell,  
Secretary to the Office of Senate