

**SENATE MEETING MINUTES
April 14, 2023**

The 643rd meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, April 14, 2023, at 2:00 PM, in CLARI, Atrium room 340. Dr Grandy, Chaired.

PRESENT: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Bhabra, Dr Francis, Dr Ingraham, Dr Austin, Dr Brosseau, Dr Grandy, Dr Hare, Dr Irving, Dr Kocum, Dr O'Brien, Dr Power, Dr Sanderson, Dr Stinson, Dr Ylijoki, Dr Zhyznomirska, Mr Peters, Ms van den Hoogen, Ms Tyler, Ms Meyers, Mr Wilson, and Ms Bell, Secretary of Senate.

GUESTS: Dr Kay, Ms Milton, Ms Sargeant-Greenwood, Ms Harding, Ms Tan, Ms Barrett

REGRETS: Dr Barclay, Mr Brophy, Dr Fan, Dr Sarty, Dr Al Zaman, Ms Boudreau, Ms Mihika,

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 pm. Dr Grandy chaired and provided the territorial acknowledgement.

23087 REPORT OF AGENDA COMMITTEE

The agenda was accepted as posted.

23088 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Posted as **Appendix A** for this meeting (10 min).

Key Discussion Points:

The President referred to the report included with meeting materials and highlighted the following:

Discovery and Innovation in a Learning-Centered Environment

- Internal Research Chairs/Professorships have been published.
- Attended and provided remarks at the March 24 conference on Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada hosted by the SMU RELS Department.
- On March 20th at the Conference for the International Day of la Francophonie, one of our students (Grace Hall) was honoured with the Prix d'Excellence in French language studies.

Intercultural Learning

- Provided welcoming remarks and attended a Graduate Student Workshop titled "Walking the Path," hosted by FGSR on April 3.
- The Black Students' Society hosted their last class 'link-up' in CLARI on April 6. The President spoke briefly to the importance of community and mutual support.

Institutional Sustainability

- On March 21 attended the first meeting of the Minister's Roundtable on Immigration and Population Growth. This group is assisting the province in developing strategies and policies around attracting highly qualified immigrants, in lobbying for change in provincial and federal immigration policy, in identifying obstacles to immigration (from policy to housing to community support and beyond).
- Attended the Provincial Budget Stakeholder Lock-up on March 23, noting their singular focus on healthcare but also on strategic government investments.
- The Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP) is negotiating a new agreement with Province.
- The Board accepted the Senate recommendations for Emerita and Honorary Degree and those will be awarded at the Spring Convocation ceremonies.
- A financial recovery plan that is focused on revenue generation will soon be presented to Senate.

23089

VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH REPORT

Posted as **Appendix B** for this meeting (10 min).

Key Discussion Points:

- A 2022-2023 comparison of enrolments was presented.
- **Action for Health: A Strategic Partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia to Transform Healthcare**
The Deans received a call for expressions of interest in designing and implementing the \$25m government investment in three priority areas:
Priority #1
Addressing the factors affecting health and well-being through data analytics: building on the successful data analytics programs at Saint Mary's and across faculty expertise in quantitative research.
Priority #2
Become a magnet for health provider management & leadership training: by providing programming targeting healthcare administrators, office directors and family doctors.
Priority #3
Expand the university's bilateral programs (2+2, 1+3) with NSCC to provide students with a Bachelor of Science in addition to their health-related diploma programs.
- Suzanne van den Hoogen is re-appointed as University Librarian.
- The timetable for 2023-2024 is on Self Service Banner and waitlisting is on 95% of spring/summer courses. Requests have gone out for faculty to consider increasing their enrolment caps.
- A policy on stipends and honoraria for Indigenous scholars was developed and is under consideration.

23090

SMUSA PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Academic focus)

Listed as **Appendix C** (5 min).

Key Discussion Points:

- Ms Tan and Ms Barrett are attending as members of the in-coming SMUSA Senate representatives.

- A survey has indicated that students are unhappy with the current exam model. 93% preferred a 10am-1pm, 2-5pm, 6-9 pm model versus the current model that 81% selected as their last choice. The 7–10 pm exam time is not optimum for many reasons.
- 65% of students responding to the survey were in their first or second year.
- The most prominent concern was around transportation to and from campus for evening exams. During SMUSA's first survey on this question, multiple students proposed the time slots that ranked as the preferred option in the second survey. The proposed, preferred schedule has continued to be the preference of students.
- This is the final Senate meeting for the current student senators. Senate members thanked the 2022-2023 SMUSA team for their hard work throughout the year.

23091

QUESTION PERIOD (length at discretion of chair based on business volume)

Key Discussion Points:

- The Faculty of Arts is extending the time for enrolments.
- Question: Who makes the decision about the exam schedule? Answer: There is nothing in the regulations that dictates this. Tradition guides us. The question students need to answer is if one hour between exams is enough time, especially if students write two exams back-to-back.
- Question: Next year, could SMU pilot an exam schedule of 10am-1pm, 2-5pm, 6-9 pm? Answer: Yes, this is a possibility if the students do not have an issue with the one-hour separation between exams.
- **Action Item: Registrar's Office** to organize a pilot.

23092

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of March 17, 2023, were *circulated* as **Appendix D**.

Key Discussion Points:

- Remove the name of the consultant.
- Correct spelling (Tam to Tan).
- Marie Harding is attending in a technical support role.

There being no further revisions or objections, the minutes of the Senate meeting of March 17, 2023, were accepted as revised.

23093

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

1. Update - 2022 Report on Positive Action to Improve the Employment of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible minorities, and People with Disabilities at Saint Mary's University (Dr VanderPlaat).

Discussion Points

- We received a waiver from the Saint Mary's University Faculty Union for this year. We are revising the reporting structure and working on the report for December 2023.

2. Update – Ad Hoc Education Review Committee (Dr VanderPlaat).

Discussion Points

- The report is almost ready. It will be submitted to APC, and if approved it will be submitted for the May Senate meeting.
3. Requested update on the review process – Termination of the Northern Ireland Program, Appendices E1 & E2.
- Discussion Points**
- This program was not terminated.
 - The Peaceful Schools International (PSI) Board were asked to review the relationship and the MOU between PSI and SMU because the current practice is completely different than articulated in the original agreement.
 - Most of the people on the PSI Board of Directors are SMU employees as are most of those involved in the program.
 - There were issues including risk and liability.
 - SMU needs the PSI Board to develop a proposal that is more firmly based within an academic environment and that has a faculty lead.
 - Question: Where does the MOU stand at the moment? Answer: The PSI Board were asked to review the situation. They have not responded to our request.
 - Question: What is the review process going to look like and will faculty and students have an opportunity for feedback? Answer: We have not made that much progress. We asked the PSI Board for guidance and/or suggestions on a way forward.
 - Suggestion: We need to clarify the situation impacting this traditional experiential opportunity for our students. We also need to align this experience with academic goals.
 - Question: Would it be appropriate for the Senate to ask the PSI Board to consider aligning this experience with academic goals? Answer: This would not be an appropriate subject for the PSI Board being beyond their purview.
 - Question: Are there any plans to put out a call for a member of faculty to champion this program? Answer: It was a suggestion to the PSI Board.

23094 **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

1. Academic Planning Committee (Dr VanderPlaat),
One-Year Follow-up Report subsequent to the MPHEC Institutional Assessment,
Appendix F.

Discussion Points:

- This was part of the Institutional QA Assessment requested by MPHEC. The process requires an Action Plan followed by a one-year follow-up report. In the submission, the text in yellow highlight is the update from the various stakeholders within the University.

- Question: Recommendation: #2 states “To consider how formal communications between Senate and Board can be improved, to facilitate decision making, together with ensuring appropriate representation from Faculty and Academic Support Units. While formal communications between the Board and Senate have improved with the establishment of the Secretariat, that creation does not completely address this recommendation. It was suggested that the response “Completed as of January 2022 be amended to state it is ongoing. Add a line to indicate that more work will be done to improve the Senate connection with the Board and include a timeline of April or May 2024.
- Recommendation 9 on page 5 – Question: What are the benefits of making program review documents accessible for students to review? Answer: Because students have input into the process, they should have access to the outcomes.
- Senators were informed that this information is already publicly accessible through the library archive as it is contained within the Senate archival records. It is also accessible to the SMUSA Senate representatives.
- A student representative advised that access to course evaluation results would positively impact the student experience at SMU. Students already access information in ‘Rate My Professor’ to make decisions on course registration.

Moved by VanderPlaat and seconded “that Senate approves the one-year follow-up report (as revised) for submission to MPHEC.” Motion carried.

Moved by O’Brien and seconded – “that Senate be temporarily adjourned for a five-minute break.” Motion carried.

2. Bylaws Committee (Dr O’Brien)
Revision to 1.2.1, and Section 5, Appendix G.

Discussion Points:

- The proposed revisions are below.
 - a) 1.2.1 For the purposes of these Bylaws, and in accordance with Section 2 (a) of the Act, “academic staff” shall be defined as including all permanent, full-time faculty members (including lecturer-stream faculty) and professional librarians employed by the University.
 - It was suggested that the committee withdraw this motion because the word “permanent” has a specific meaning/interpretation within the collective agreement. This generally means tenured. Response: Agreed

Moved by O’Brien on behalf of the Senate Bylaws Committee and seconded, “that Senate approves the revision to 1.2.1 as presented in Appendix G. **Withdrawn.**

Moved by Power and seconded, “that Senate refers section 1.2.1 back to the Senate Bylaws for further consideration.” Motion carried.

- b) 5.2 Delete Standing Committees and 5.3 Ad Hoc Committees and replace them with a link in article 5.1.
 - Most revisions to the Senate Bylaws result from revisions to the information in 5.2 and 5.3. Governance documents should not have to be revised so frequently. The Committee are attempting to reference out the detailed content.
 - The revisions to article 5.1 are predicated on the Senate approving these revisions.

Moved by O'Brien on behalf of the Senate Bylaws Committee and seconded, **“that Senate approves the revision to 5.2 and 5.3 as presented in Appendix G.” Motion carried.**

- c) 5.1 General Terms of Reference.
 - With the revision to 5.1 withdrawn and returned to the Bylaws Committee, remove the insertion of the word permanent in 5.1.8.
 - Concern was expressed regarding the words, “not on approved leave.” Academic Staff on leave or sabbatical might want to be eligible to serve if they can be available for meetings. They may also want to remain serving on Senate and committees if they are going on leave but will be available when called upon for meetings. Reword to provide that option should an individual so choose. Revision accepted.
 - Addition of links to the web location for the Committee terms of reference and composition.

Moved by O'Brien on behalf of the Senate Bylaws Committee and seconded, **“that Senate approves the revisions to 5.1 as revised above.” Motion carried.**

23095

NEW BUSINESS FROM

a) Floor (involving notice of motion)

1. Discrepancy between the Academic Calendar of Events and the April 4 notice from People and Culture, **Appendix H.**

Key Discussion Points

- The April 4 a mass email notice from People and Culture, advised of the following, which differs from the Senate approved 2023-2024 calendar of events.
December 8 (Friday), Patronal Feast of the University. Administrative offices open.
- The spirit of the email notice was that Saint Mary's University should be either fully open or fully closed to avoid problems with administrative and / or technical support for students and faculty in classes.
- A member spoke against the revision suggested in the People and Culture notice. In addition, in 2023, classes end on December 6, and describing December 8 as a teaching day is inaccurate. This is an error and therefore an editorial revision. Change 'Teaching Day' to 'Study day'.
- Senators were advised that the need to use December 8 as a teaching day is a cyclical event that occurs every three or four years and it only became an issue when SMU initiated the fall break week.

- Senators were advised that it is within the purview of Human Resources to decide when staff return to work after the closure.
- Two days are required at the beginning of each term between the administrative opening and the start of classes to accommodate orientation, welcome week activities, and provide students with time to access advising. This is also how we support the academic mission of our university.
- There is no formal engagement by the University on Patronal Feast Day. There should be communication to the SMU community about this date. The SMU community should have some type of event to celebrate Patronal Feast Day and recognize the roots and history of this institution.

Moved by Peters and seconded, **“that Senate approves the revision to the 2023-2024 Academic Calendar of Events to indicate December 8 (Friday) Patronal Feast of the University. Administrative Offices ‘open’ instead of closed.” Motion defeated.**

- Question: In the second paragraph of the People and Culture notice, it states that a decision was taken. By whom, under what authority, and based on what consideration? Answer: This request was submitted to the EMG as a recommendation and was considered there.
- Discussion on this issue needs to be undertaken at the EMG level.
Action Item: President to inform the EMG that the motion to change the December 8 "Administrative Offices Closed" entry in the Calendar was defeated.
- The outcome here is only an editorial change to the calendar (see below)
December
8 (Friday) Patronal Feast of the University. Administrative Offices closed. **Study day.**

- b) Naming Policy: Centre for the Study of Sport & Health, **Appendix I.** The Vice-President, Advancement will deliver a short presentation to Senate related to a philanthropic gift, with an associated motion to rename the Centre in recognition of this gift in accordance with the University’s Naming Policy, Section 6, 6.1.

Key Discussion Points

- The University Naming Policy (#11-1002) governs the naming of Centres. The naming of Academic Centres and Institutes requires the approval of the Senate.
- Scott and Leslie McCain gave Saint Mary’s University a gift of \$3 million over three years. Due diligence was done in relation to this gift and the gift agreement has been finalized.
- The aim of the gift is to build the reputation of the Centre for the Study of Sport and Health and of Saint Mary’s as a leader in sport and health and in sport and business. The funds will support Centre operations and programming and curriculum development.

- Question: The Faculty of Science was not included under curriculum development. Why? Answer: Since the original proposal, a lot of new areas have been identified. The proposal is not limited, and the Faculty of Science will be included.

Moved by Summerby-Murray and seconded,

Whereas the University has accepted a gift to Saint Mary's University from Scott McCain and Leslie McLean for the purposes directed (as presented to the meeting) and as required by the Naming Policy:

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

**Senate approves the naming of the Centre for the Study of Sport and Health in recognition of the generous gift from Scott McCain and Leslie McLean.
Resolution passed.**

- c) This is the last meeting for the current Vice-Chair of Senate, whose term ends at the end of this academic year. He thanked the members and the Senate Secretary for their assistance during the past year. The Senate thanked Dr O'Brien for his service.

23096

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 P.M.