

SENATE MEETING MINUTES
April 22, 2005

The 487th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, 22 April, 2005, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Chard, Dr. Richardson, Dr. Miciak, Dr. Vessey, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Pye, Dr. Heukaeufer, Dr. Konopasky, Dr. Pendse, Dr. Bjornson, Dr. Stretton, Dr. Bernard, Dr. Linney, Mr. Hotchkiss, Ms. Lingley, Ms. Lefebvre and B. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Enns, Dr. Dostal, Dr. Bowlby, Dr. van Proosdij, Dr. Russell, Dr. Lee, Mr. Whalen, Mr. Schnare, Mr. Partington, Mr. Shannon,

04291 **CALL TO ORDER**
Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

04292 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

04293 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
.01 The minutes of the previous meeting of March 11, 2005 were circulated as **Appendix A**.

President's Report – Bullet point number one: Remove the sentence beginning "Jeffery Simpson..."

Moved by Dr. Chard, second by Dr. Bernard, "**that the minutes of the meeting of March 11, 2005 be approved as amended.**" **Motion carried unanimously.**

04294 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
None

04295 **OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS AGENDA**
None

04296

.01

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Academic Planning Committee

.0101 The Committee recommends that the Senate approve the proposed modification to the MA Program in Women's Studies. This proposal seeks to change the inter-university MA in Women's Studies from a three university co-operative program to a joint program between Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) and Saint Mary's University (SMU).

Dr. Murphy advised that Dalhousie suspended their involvement a few years ago but the program has been operating successfully, funded by MSVU and SMU. The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) requires that the program be updated to reflect the current situation. The changes are primarily administrative with some minor adjustments in course requirements. Students enrolled in this program have been winning international awards. The MSVU Senate has already approved a similar motion.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, second by K. Lingley, **“that Senate approve the modification to the MA Program in Women's Studies.” Motion carried with one abstention.**

.02

Academic Regulations Committee

.0101 PROPOSED REINTRODUCTION OF REGULATION 8 (c) original Motions by Dr. Richardson and Dr. McCalla.

The Academic Regulations Committee submits the following:

“The Committee recommends to Senate the adoption of the draft of Regulation 8 and asks for approval in principle to pursue it.”

Dr. Murphy reviewed the motions Senate had forwarded to the committee and summarized the Committee's response to those. The reason for the “in principle” was that the Registrar pointed out some logistical problems related to the volume of scheduled assessments. Further discussion may be needed related to the implementation of this change.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Miciak **“that Senate approves the draft of Regulation 8 in principle”.**

Discussion established the following points:

- Restricting the total weight allotted to tests in the last two weeks may not achieve the goals sought.

- Academic Regulations aimed at preventing bad behaviour are not ideal.
- A proactive type of statement might be advised (E.G. “Faculty is reminded that students are under stress in the final course weeks and are encouraged to help this by...”)
- Proposed further change to 8 c. (iii) to add “Notwithstanding the effect of items one and two, tests and examinations are not permitted.....”
- A clearer definition is necessary, especially where the issue of labs is concerned.
- Not to give up on the idea of a minimum or maximum percentage number entirely.
- It was proposed that the regulation might state that there will be a final examination in every course and then list exceptions. If no quiz is to be given in the last two weeks, no students would show up for those classes.
- It was noted that from the student perspective, requirements (assignments, papers, etc) in the third last week of classes were significant and a source of great stress (e.g. Modern Language Courses are highly dependent on quizzes, labs are problematic, and in Chemistry (in first year) weekly quizzes are the norm). Students faced with finishing these assignments or alternatively attending classes, will skip class. Shifting testing to the exam period will allow time for additional study of course material and to facilitate acquisition of knowledge.
- The method of examination is key in the quality of education. Students expect to have an exam in the exam period. Enforcing a scheduled exam period sends a strong message about quality and rigor.
- The general consensus was that members endorsed the proposed draft of Regulation 8 but felt it needed to be referred back to the Committee for a more precise definition.

Motion was withdrawn by Dr. Murphy and will be sent back to the Committee for a more precise definition.

.0102 PROPOSED CHANGES TO REGULATION 4, forwarded from the Senate Meeting of February 11, 2005.

The Academic Regulations Committee submits the following:

“The Committee recommends that Senate adopt Regulation 4 as revised”

Dr. Murphy summarized the source of this motion and the Committee’s recommendations.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, seconded by K. Lingley **“that Senate approved the adoption of Regulation 4 as revised”**.

Discussion established the following points:

- Students are routinely offered bonus points in some courses. Technically it is possible to accumulate 102 points. This practice can continue.
- It was noted that the current regulation allows a course instructor significant latitude to change a course outline; the revised Regulation 4 does not allow change.
- A provision within the regulation to allow for changes in exceptional circumstances and a clear statement of the conditions for change was suggested.
- It was noted that the course outline is akin to a legal contract between the students and the University and that changes in such contracts must be able to stand legal challenges.
- It was suggested that if course enrolment numbers vary radically it might affect the way in which the course is presented and this would require changes after the first class, but before the end of the prescribed period for withdrawals.
- It was noted that input from students at the beginning of classes is often very good and faculty would like to have the flexibility to incorporate these suggestions. A mechanism to change courses, that is fair to all parties, is needed for courses where student input is used to develop the course outline.
- Within the add drop date (10 days) there is still a possibility for a course to only meet once. One course day is not enough to provide professors and students the time to make an informed decision on courses. A syllabus is critical in this decision and needs to be available at the beginning.

Dr. Murphy withdrew the motion. This will be returned to the Committee for refinements.

.0103 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GRADING SYSTEM – original motion by Dr. Bernard

The Academic Regulations Committee submits the following:
“The Committee does not support changing the University’s grading scheme from a letter-based classification to a number-based system at this time.”

The following was noted:

- This motion may be brought forward again (if desired) at an appropriate future date.

.0104 CHANGES TO REGULATION 7

“The Academic Regulations Committee recommends that Senate adopt the proposed changes to Academic Regulation 7 ‘Standing Required’.”

Dr. Murphy advised that this motion was initiated by the implementation of Banner. He noted that the current definition ‘Standing Required’, is not consistent with the requirements for completing a degree. The standard for good standing should be that the student is on track to graduate. This is a shift from the annual quality point average to an annual cumulative quality point average and this change also addresses part-time students. One advantage of this change is the elimination of sudden radical swings in QPA due to students having one bad year.

Discussion established the following:

- Students registered/declared under the old regulation will have the option of applying to remain under the old system.
- Notice of the change to all students is critical
- A complete text of Regulation 7 with the changes incorporated as it would appear in the Academic Calendar was requested.
- It was suggested that students changing the number of courses in their degree program might be disadvantaged. There may be a potential enrollment impact here.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Chard, **“that Senate approve “in spirit” of the proposed change to Academic Regulation 7 ‘Standing Required’. Motion carried with one opposed.**

04297 REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEES

None

04298 REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES

None

04299 REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES

None

04300 NEW BUSINESS FROM

.01 Floor (Not involving notice of motion)

Dr. Murphy advised members of the following:

- .0101 The trend of domestic applications received is lower this year by 6%; a decrease of 200 first year students or about one million dollars a year in revenue. Recruiting is working on this but the marketplace is in a downturn for reasons that are not currently clear.
- .0102 Reports have been received from the federal granting commissions. The faculty has experienced a good rate of success. We have had a 40% success rate in relation to research funding and 2 faculty have been listed on the 4A supplementary list.

In relation to Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), SMU is experiencing an all time high for operating grants or about one million in cash flow. We have a research capacity development grant and also partnership program funding. Total funding of these projects will exceed one million. Ten of 13 proposals have received discovery grants (new or renewal applicants funded for 4 or 5 years). Many other projects at SMU already hold other awards. Of the post graduate submissions, nine were successful (2 at doctorate level).

- .0103 Following a search committee interview, the Board will be asked to approve Dr. Dixon as Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management. This title has been changed from that originally announced - Associate VP, Academic and Research.

The majority of the committees falling within the responsibilities of this position are not Senate Committees. Academic Regulations will be an exception.

04301

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Dodds presented the following information:

- Board of Governors met in March and passed the budget as presented to the Senate. It is recognized that some ongoing adjustments may be needed due to the drop in enrollments
- The Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund (NSRITF - administered by the Canada Foundation for Innovation) has received an additional 5 million in funding. If the provincial budget is approved, there is a potential for a further 5 million dollars in funding.
- ACEnet involves a consortium of seven Atlantic Canada research universities of which Saint Mary's University is one. They are also waiting funding.
- Saint Mary's University is hosting an international conference (April 21-23) on aboriginal knowledge. There has been good subscription to this.

- Dr. Miciak was congratulated on his new position, thanked for his contributions and wished well in his new role as Dean of Business at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.
- The New Academic Calendar is out and faculty is encouraged to familiarize themselves with it.

04302 **QUESTION PERIOD**

None.

04303 **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate