

SENATE MEETING MINUTES
April 7, 2017

The 583rd meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, April 7, 2017, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Enns, Dr Dixon, Dr Bradshaw, Dr MacDonald, Dr Vessey, Dr Sarty (for Dr Smith), Dr Naulls, Dr Grandy, Dr Hall, Dr Henry, Dr Hlongwane, Dr McCallum, Dr Takseva, Dr VanderPlaat, Mr Brophy, Ms DeYoung, Ms Jones, Ms Bhaskar, Mr Rice, Marie Delorey, Ms Sargeant Greenwood, Mr Sisk, Mr Rajnis, Mr Schmeisser, Ms Rebecca Brown (allNovaScotia) and Ms Bell, Secretary of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr Campbell, Dr Conrad, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Peckmann, Dr Rahaman, Dr Stinson, Dr Warner, Mr Michael, Mr Rahman, and Mr Alanazi.

Meeting commenced at 2:34 P.M.

16059 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The agenda was accepted.

16060 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
Minutes of the meeting of March 10, 2017, circulated as *Appendix A*.

Moved by Henry, and seconded, ‘that the minutes of the meeting of March 10, 2017 are approved as circulated.’ Motion carried.

16061 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
.01 Classroom Technology and room design issues (discussion item - P. Sisk & G Schmeisser).
Classroom technology & related issues:
1) Equipment that is suboptimal in some (many?) classrooms. For example, L 170.
2) Nice/fancy equipment with no instructions/guidance on how to use it. New faculty/instructors to have to guess which unlabeled switches create the desired effect, etc. McNally Theatre Auditorium and L170 are at least two classrooms that leave much to be desired in terms of guidance for instructors. Other classrooms may suffer from similar problems.
3) In some cases, software updates are not installed regularly, so that when faculty try to use it, they receive a message that they have to wait in order for the software to be updated, which in some cases is a matter of hours. (Attempting to find out which software—examples?)

- 4) When logging in from home to Outlook email via SMUport, we are routed through Microsoft Corporation [US], which is potentially alarming in terms of privacy issues. Can we get clarity on this?

Classroom setup/design/functionality issues:

1. Proper screens with the right ratio.
2. Sound
3. Line of sight seating
4. Darkness (so either no windows or proper blackout blinds, low (floor) lights, and the capacity to turn off ALL the lights (in ATR 101— all lights cannot be turned off. When a faculty member asked (repeatedly) about this, she was told to climb up and unscrew the light bulbs).
5. Proper software for streaming video (i.e. Netflix)
6. Ability to use both DVDs and VHS tapes

Key Discussion Points:

- Sisk advised that, because of funding restrictions, the work related to updating classrooms has been spread out over a number of years. Only a few classrooms can be done every year.
- Unlabeled switches – Senators were advised that if there are rooms like this, faculty should report it to the Help Desk or the Classroom Planning Taskforce and we will see that these issues get fixed.
- Updating software in classrooms – There should not be updates being run in classrooms. Every summer ITSS implements updates to the software in the classrooms and then it is frozen for the year. Occasionally there are updates in December. If you see updates happening during the day in any classroom, please report it to the Help Desk and it will be addressed immediately.
- Schmeisser advised that a classroom review was done and it identified which classrooms needed to be done. It costs about a million to do the updates to a classroom. We are spreading these updates over a period because of costs. The Classroom Planning Taskforce provides feedback on these issues.
- We had \$20,000 dedicated to classroom furniture this year to move this process forward. Classrooms are one of our priorities and we are doing our best. Capacity is always a problem and the feedback to get rid of the plastic chairs cannot be acted upon because of this.
- Senators were asked to send any suggestions to Schmeisser.
- Question: There is a repetitive issue in relation to the operating system on the computers in the classrooms. It takes 10-12 minutes to boot the computer and another 10 – 12 minutes to open a PowerPoint file. What is the agreement in terms of the provider of the computers and operating systems? Could we move towards a quicker operating system? Answer: Sisk advised that this is partly an issue with the operating system but there are things that ITSS can do to make this better. ITSS has been in contact with other institutions that have already solved this issue to determine a way to resolve it at SMU. The issue will definitely be solved by September.
- Question: Is the long boot up time due to something in the computer or is it a communicating issue with another source? Answer: It is partly the communication process, but it is also the fact that when a user logs out of one of these computers the profile is deleted from the computer. That means that each computer has to build a new profile for each new user during the

log in process. We identified fixes for this issue and will implement those over the summer.

- Members were advised that ACENET is not so active anymore and the space requirements of the ACENET users have changed. In addition, space requirements on our campus have changed because of how computing is done.
- Question: During the login from home process (through SMUport), faculty are routed through the Microsoft Corporation in the US. This is very concerning. Answer: ITSS went through due diligence to ensure that all of our communications and data remained in Canada. Microsoft opened up facilities in Canada. We ensured through legal channels that we were within the law requirements. All the data is subject to Canadian privacy laws and will remain in Canada. We verified this by doing traces through the internet to identify that this was what was happening. We delayed the project until we could guarantee this was the situation.
- Question: Videoconferencing – Does our system allow for this? Answer: Skype is the Microsoft program we use to do Videoconferencing. We are in the process of installing the capability. We do not have any classrooms equipped at this time, but please let us know if there is a need. There was definitely a need from the business perspective and those have the priority. We are also doing the training rooms as a priority.
- Question: There are also access issues that need to be addressed. A number of faculty did not know about the Classroom Planning Taskforce. It is likely that only the faculty members of the Senate know about this. Will there be an iterative process during which an average faculty member would be made more aware of their ability to contribute? Answer: This will be taken back to the Classroom Planning Taskforce to discuss what should be done.
- Question: In terms of videoconferencing, Skype is clunky. On the other hand, Zoom seems to be the better platform and it never seems to fail. Would it be possible to acquire Zoom? Answer: There are different opinions on the various products. The costs to acquire Zoom would be in the 10s of thousands and we have access to Skype through our contract with Microsoft.
- Suggestion? When there is an initiative to renovate a classroom, it would be beneficial if ITSS would do a poll of the entire faculty that teach in that room to secure their feedback. Mr Sisk confirmed that faculty would be consulted before their classrooms/labs are renovated.
- Members were advised that a faculty member could bring a camera and microphone into the classroom and plug it into the computer to provide videoconferencing in the classroom.

.02 Update on progress subsequent to the report of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on the Website (8 April, 2016 and 14 October, 2016 – P. Sisk)

Key Discussion Points:

- On-line calendar has been constructed and the Registrar's Office is working on finishing it.
- We are working on setting up the defaults on Department webpages so that they will pull their course information directly from the on-line calendar.
- Regarding the issue of Program versus Departmental pages – we still have the need for the pages with language that is focused on high school students. We are still working on links between these pages. What has been done is

the location of the Department pages have the word department in the location so that the visitor knows that they are on the department pages.

- In November 2016, Saint Mary's University launched Success Maps, which is a tool to help students set goals, track accomplishments, discover new opportunities, and prepare for their post-graduation career.
- The Dean, FGSR is the content owner of SMU CV pages. This is a university wide resource.
- We have been unable to build an interface between the Department webpages and the SMU CV page. We are looking at the problems within SMUCV and attempting to resolve those issues. If you see issues please email us.
- Faculty were advised to ask the Help Desk or ITSS if they wanted to know where to go to get certain information on web based issues.
- The Web policy is being updated and will be published shortly.
- There is a new version of the events calendar that will be initiated soon.
- Regarding the issue of consistency of navigation – we have identified two things but a lot of this issue is determined by faculty and departments when they are working with these pages. We will continue to work with these folks to address the issues.
- Question: Can we get some clarity on the move to decentralization the control of faculty/department pages? Answer: The content owner is the person that owns the content. That could be the Department Secretary. This varies from group to group and is very dependent on how the faculty wants it done. Our definition of the content is the information in the middle of the webpage. A banner runs across the top, and a navigation bar runs along the side. These are controlled by ITSS. The content owner owns in the text in the middle and both own the navigation.
- Question: Are secretaries now able to receive training? Answer: Yes they are. When the new system was rolled out all content owners received training of the program.
- There is another issue related to the content owner. Due to turn over or lack of frequency of use, some content owners do not have the experience to do the changes. Sometimes they ask ITSS to do the updates.

.03 March 10th Senate motion to create an ad hoc committee of Senate to review the issue of accessibility in an academic environment – Call for EOI results

Key Discussion Points:

- Expressions of interest were received from the following faculty members:
 - Sailaja Krishnamuti, RELS
 - Tatjana Takseva, ENGL
 - Linda Campbell, ENVS
 - Daniel Hall, LING/ENGL
- The following volunteered for this committee:
 - M. McCallum
 - Ms Jones volunteered the person taking over her SMUSA position for this committee.
 - Brophy suggested Davie Leitch from Fred Smithers Centre.
 - Ms DeYoung, University Librarian volunteered
- There was a suggestion that staff and part-time faculty be included on this committee. It was noted that the Senate does not have any jurisdiction over the staff, and therefore cannot do this.

- A member asked for clarification of the purpose of this committee.
 - This is a preliminary gathering to review the issue of accessibility in an academic environment, and bring suggestions forward to Senate related to addressing the issues identified during the review.

Moved by Vessey and seconded, **“that Senate establish an Ad-Hoc Committee to review the issue of accessibility in an academic environment, and bring suggestions forward to Senate related to addressing the issues identified during the review. The membership will be**

- **Sailaja Krishnamuti, RELS**
- **Tatjana Takseva, ENGL**
- **Linda Campbell, ENVIS**
- **Daniel Hall, ENGL**
- **M. McCallum, ML&C**
- **VP Academic Affairs, SMUSA**
- **David Leitch, Fred Smithers Centre**
- **Ms DeYoung, University Librarian”**

Motion carried.

16062

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- Academic Planning Committee
 - a) Annual Report (information only) Institute for Computational Astrophysics (ICA), *Appendix B*.
 - Key Discussion Points:**
 - There being no discussion or questions, the report was accepted into the Senate record.

16063

REPORTS OF JOINT COMMITTEES

Honorary Degrees Committee – recommendation for Honorary Degrees, *Appendix C* (circulated at meeting)

Key Discussion Points:

- The President regrets not being able to attend today and asked Dr Enns to bring these recommendations forward to the Senate.
- Question: Minimal information is provided in support of one of the recommendations. Members noted that this is the first time Senators have seen a reference to letters of support. Perhaps the letters would provide sufficient information to support this recommendation. Could Senators see the letters of support? The decision on this recommendation is deferred to the next meeting.
- Question: What is a social entrepreneur? Answer: Social entrepreneurs are not aiming to maximize personal fortunes; instead, they are focused on helping communities become self-sufficient and autonomous. To achieve these objectives, they create organizations and use business practices that are similar to those employed by profit-orientated-organizations. However, their organizations may be not-for-profit structures. The difference is that the excess money generated by them is reinvested in order to further serve and benefit the community. Income is a tool that assists the social entrepreneur in pursuing other goals.
- It was noted that the recommendation actually says serial entrepreneur. That is an individual that starts up multiple successful companies over a span of many years.

- Another of the recommendations looked like the articulation of a good deed and not substantive support for an honorary degree. More support information was requested.

Moved by Enns and seconded, **“that the Academic Senate approves the recommendations as submitted, with the exception of the two needing more information, for forwarding to the Board of Governors for awarding.”**
Motion carried.

16064

NEW BUSINESS FROM

a) Chair

Proposal for a sub-committee to review the instructor course evaluation process.

Key discussion items:

- The paper process is hugely labour intensive and the machine that scans these forms is due for replacement at a huge costs.
- Recently, we had a presentation from a Canadian company that has a program used by a large number of universities across Canada. Potential benefits are:
 - Accessibility gains if we were to adopt an on-line process.
 - Ability for professors to petition students during the course of the class and get anonymous responses.
- There are concerns about on-line response rates. Different universities offer different incentives to affect response rates positively.
- With the current process, there are issues with security. This occurs when students have control of the evaluation envelope.
- A few years ago, the existing program broke down rather significantly and for a period of time. This caused a number of issues for faculty.
- The proposal has been to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to start the process of considering the idea of a new delivery system for our Instruction Course Evaluations. The details of the process would not be changed. The only changes would be to the method of delivery.
- Senators were asked to provide any suggestions and/or feedback to the Senate Office.
- Members were advised that the evaluation process was voluntary for full-time faculty but it was required of part-time and contract faculty because participation is stipulated within their part-time collective agreement or contract.
- There are significant environmental costs related to this process for a university that is committed to sustainability.
- A student representative provided the opinion that it would have to be done in the classroom. He expressed doubt that students would download the app in order to do the evaluation. He also expressed doubt that students understood why evaluations are important.
- Question: What is the rationale for this being a voluntary process for full-time faculty? Answer: This was a requirement of the Faculty Union.
- Question: Do we have on-line evaluations at Saint Mary's University? Answer: Yes, for our on-line courses.
- Suggestion: Students should be reminded to read the instructions to the class. The value proposition is required in the course evaluation room.
- This is only a technology implementation and not a change to the process.

- Members were advised that faculty require the Scantron machine and that this is not an issue of not wanting to replace a machine. This year there have been issues with the use of the Scantron to scan tests and exams for courses. Getting this done has been painful in the past year. If we move away from this for ICE, we still need the Scantron to support the instructors who have large classes.

Moved by Bradshaw and seconded **“that Senate establish a committee to review the course evaluation process with the following membership: Hlongwane, McCallum, VP Academic Affairs, SMUSA, Sarty, Naulls and Bell.” Motion carried.**

16065 **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

- This report is available on SMUport with the documentation for this meeting.

16066 **QUESTION PERIOD**
Key discussion items:

- It was noted that this is the last meeting for Mr Rice, Ms Bhaskar and Ms Jones. Senate expressed their thanks and appreciation with a round of applause.
- Members were advised that the Board of Governors has invited Senate members to join them for dinner on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., Loyola Conference Hall. This will be an opportunity to get to know one another and to discuss ways that the Board, Senate and SMUSA can collaborate. How can we work together to achieve great success? Each will give a short informal presentation on their roles, challenges and opportunities. Please R.S.V.P. on or before April 21st at 5:00 p.m.

16067 **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 P.M.

Barb Bell, Secretary of Senate