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SENATE MEETING MINUTES April 13, 2007

The 502nd Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, April 13, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Butler, Dr. Vessey, Dr. Bjornson, Dr. Dawson, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Konopasky, Dr. Pe-Piper, Dr. Power, Dr. Stinson, Dr. Stretton, Ms. Lefebvre, Dr. MacKinnon, Dr. Van Proosdij, Mr. Mitch Gillingwater, Mr. Jarda, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Steeleworthy, Dr. Paul Bowlby, and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Enns, Dr. Wicks, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Linney, Dr. Rand, Dr. Russell, Mr. Hotchkiss, Ms. MacDonald, Miss Lopez and Mr. Churchill.

Meeting commenced at 2:39 PM.

06068 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

06069 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
The minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2007 were circulated as *Appendix A*.
The following amendments were noted:

- During the meeting Mr. Jarda noted that the \$440.00 rebate does not accrue to the students from outside of Nova Scotia. Students requested this information included in the minutes.
- Dr. MacKinnon attended this meeting.
- Mitch Gillingwater did not attend but Michael Steeleworthy did.

Moved by Ms. Lefebvre, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2007 be approved as amended”**.
Motion carried.

06070 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
None.

06071 **NOMINATION FOR PROFESSOR EMERITUS STATUS**
Documents circulated as *Appendix B*.

Moved by Dr. Dodds and seconded, **“that the nomination of Dr. G. Richard Chesley for Professor Emeritus Status is approved and will be forwarded to the Board of Governors for awarding.”**

Motion carried unanimously.

06072

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01 Academic Planning

.0101 Proposal for a Certificate in Atlantic Canada Studies circulated as *Appendix C*.

Discussion covered the following points:

- Members were advised that the proposal introduces an additional credential which is entirely based on existing courses.
- The intent is to appeal to various constituencies of students wishing to learn more about Atlantic Canadian Culture.
- There are encouraging reasons to believe that this will be of interest to European students.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, and seconded, **“that the Certificate in Atlantic Canada Studies is approved.” Motion carried unanimously.**

.0102 Proposal for a Master of Arts in Theology and Religious Studies circulated as *Appendix D*.

Discussion covered the following points:

- Dr. Bowlby attended to answer questions.
- This program is the outcome of the affiliation between SMU and AST. This is an initial proposal to establish a working relationship between the two institutions.
- Two and one half years of work have been invested in this proposal. It was vetted by senior faculty. The external review has been done and comments and recommendations coming out of that review have been incorporated into the proposal.
- Subsequent to a recent review by the Academic Planning Committee, the practicum stream was dropped.
- Question: Where are students going to be drawn from? Answer: From the Atlantic region in two different areas: 1) individual upgrading programs for individuals who would come in on a part-time basis from AST and 2) individuals who want to do professional or semi-professional work in a related field of endeavour.
- Question: Who awards the credential; SMU or AST? Is it a joint program requiring special tracking?. Answer: Saint Mary’s students will receive a SMU parchment and those at AST will be awarded there. Our FGSR will track the SMU students.
- Question: Why is there a language requirement and what is the rationale behind the choice of French or German as one of the requirements? Answer: The group looked at alternate scholarly languages where the resources could be easily accessed. It was thought that a language component was important.
- Question: Would the language requirement be a deterrent to registration? Answer: Within humanities programs, it is common to require at least one language component.
- Question: Has the group looked at the baby boomer market that missed out on French immersion programs? Answer: The Master is usually used by students looking for semi-professional work in this area. The base market is already there. Various stakeholders and the three churches (Anglican, Catholic and United) have seen the

proposal and support it. SMU students would primarily be religious studies graduates.

- A member advised that, as part of the academic credential, a language component is required in most full master programs.
- A member expressed reservations related to the decline in enrolment. On page 36 it states: <<In order to accommodate the graduate programme, the Religious Studies Department will in 2006-07 progressively reduce the number of course sections at the 1000 level from six to three full course equivalents (FCEs) by creating large enrolments sections of 200 students or more for each of the 1000 level courses. This strategy will permit an increase in 4000 level courses to accommodate the increasing numbers of majors/honours students and the graduate students.>> That means the first year program will go from small to very large which is in complete opposition to the identity Saint Mary's has and promotes. We can not compete in a market with declining enrolments, but a potential key to success is to keep our niche status with smaller class sizes.
- Question: What about the existing tuition difference between AST and SMU? Answer: Dr. Vessey advised that there is no difference in tuition between the two institutions as they have recently been harmonized.
- Question: The text in 4.1.4 states *"By the end of five years, there will be negotiations beginning in year four for a planned increase in the number of graduate students admitted each year from five (2 AST, 3 RELS) to ten (4 AST, 6 RELS)."* In light of the significant impact to the undergrad program, is there a conflict in relation to the expected numbers of students? Elsewhere in the proposal there is reference to other numbers. What about part-time students?
- In 4.2.2.2 – It seems to suggest that (at least initially) every full-time student that graduates will get a \$7,500 scholarship. This isn't practical, especially in cases where there is no thesis. The option not to do a thesis exists in this program.
- Question: If there are both part-time and full-time students, why are we proposing all students will get a scholarship? Answer: One recommendation coming out of the external review suggested that we keep it flexible. The part-time student issue is minimal. AST's track record has been 2 or 3 students. Part-time students pay a part-time program fee. The program is primarily for full-time students and during the selection process we are going to try to select students in the thesis stream. The Program Committee does all of the admissions and so can control the numbers in the Thesis and Course only streams.
- Question: How will the admission process be managed? Is the goal to limit the program to three (3) students at SMU? Answer: This was the expectation, and will become known once the program runs for a couple of years. The program can be supported by the existing resources.
- Dr. Bowlby advised that the Religious Studies Department and AST share members' concern regarding larger size classes. The course structure is based in WebCT with WebCT based assignments. This allows class-time to be more interactive. Experiments are being done using different instructing techniques to find ways to address

these issues. We need to maintain the personal spirit in our programs.

- A member suggested that the bigger model might provide a higher quality education but only by maintaining our smaller size we can provide more support to students. Management of larger courses is very much discipline based.
- Question: Is the requirement for two coordinators excessive? Answer: This is simply a product of two institutes working together.
- Question: Does the program need a coordinator at all? Answer: In the introduction phase, significant work will have to be done to initiate the program.
- Question: It appears only one teaching resource will be required, is this correct? Answer: It could be 1.5 FTEs. On average only 1 resource or 6 credit hours of teaching resources will be required from the undergraduate program.
- Question: What about graduate fellowships? Is this additional money or will it decrease the existing level? Answer: A proposals will be submitted in 2008-09. It will be up to the decision making body at that time. 2 students could possibly be absorbed into the program. As much as we hope we grow registrations in graduate programs, the reality is that demographic impact will also affect graduate levels. One of the ways to maintain numbers is to provide more offerings.
- Question: What process was used to select the External Reviewers? Answer: The department proposed a group of six names, one of which was chosen. The second reviewer was identified out of discussions between the Vice-President Academic and Research, the Dean of FGSR and the Dean of AST.
- Members were advised that MPHEC has the right to accept this process or to choose their own reviewers. It was suggested that the process that was used to select the reviewers should be included in the proposal to MPHEC. Reference should also be made regarding efforts made to adhere to the guidelines on conflict of interest.
- Question: On page 33 in the second last paragraph: << assuming no change either in the compulsory retirement policy or in the university policy to replace retiring faculty>> There have already been significant course reductions due to retirement. Does this impact the program? Answer: Retirees can apply for a three year contract. SMU has been able to maintain retirement replacements. Institutional stability exists here.

Moved by Dr. Vessey and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the proposal for a Master of Arts in Theology and Religious Studies.”**
Motion carried unanimously.

The efforts of Drs. Bowlby and Dalton and the committee were applauded. They have done a terrific job!

.02 Academic Regulations

.0201 Policy for Awarding Governor General's Gold Medal circulated as Appendix E.

- Dr. Vessey withdrew the motion to approve the policy for awarding the Governor General's Gold Medal.

.0202 Regulation 6 & 30 (corresponding Graduate Regulations 28d & 35a) amendments circulated as Appendix F.

- The Registrar advised that last year we made a change to Regulation 6e related to students studying under a letter of permission and we excluded those grades from the grade point average. The following change was applied last year:

e. Grades for courses taken at other institutions for which advanced standing is given are not included in calculations for a grade point average, a cumulative grade point average, or in calculations for determining awards and distinctions. Grades for courses taken at other institutions for which transfer credit is given are included in these calculations.

- The Registrar received feedback from 3 students studying abroad during the fall term. The grading systems were significantly different and students had an issue with how their grades were translated. The committee decided that this was too problematic and variable to address. There are no issues with translating grades from Canadian schools and so the committee decided to limit Regulation 6/30 to institutions covered by the Pan Canadian Agreement. The following change is proposed:

e. <Last sentence> Grades for courses taken at other institutions covered by the Pan Canadian Agreement for which transfer credit is given are included in these calculations.

Moved by Dr. Dixon and seconded, **“that the Senate approve the amendment to Regulation 6 e. and that the changes be applied retroactively.” Motion carried.**

- There will be no change to the text under 30a.
- In Regulation 30 - Notes a) - in the case of a tie for a medal, it is the Senate Executive that determines the recipient. Also in b) it is necessary to refer to the January graduates.

Moved by Dr. Dixon and seconded, **“that the Senate approve the amendment to Regulation 30 as circulated.” Motion carried.**

06073 NEW BUSINESS FROM

.01 Floor (Not involving notice of motion)

- Discussion touched on the need for regulations restricting varsity training camps during the last two weeks of courses. The following points were made:
 - This practice is very counter intuitive to helping athletes to succeed in their studies.

- Members were advised that this practice was changed recently. Previously training camps were held after the examination period, but experienced low attendance due to the fact that students were going home.
- Question: Is there any way to exercise some control over this? This issue will be taken under advisement by the Senate Academic Regulations Committee.

06074

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Dodds advised that:

- Representatives from MPHEC's Quality Assurance Monitoring Committee were at Saint Mary's on Tuesday, April 10. The initial meeting was to clarify the process and expectations, and to establish a timeframe for each step in the process. Other Universities have been through this review. We will generate a self study document to show what we have done in this area, if gaps were identified during the process and what we have done to address them. The self-study document will be submitted to the committee sometime in September or October. Senate will be involved in that process.
- The MOU is in the process of being revised. Work will continue on these revisions through the summer and fall.
- The government has awarded money to help roll back tuition expense. The details are still being negotiated.
- In relation to the budget – the government's intent is that the \$500 rebate will apply to all students, including international, and will apply to all programs including full cost programs and those previously exempted from this program.
- Further Infrastructure funding is being pursued.

06075

QUESTION PERIOD

No questions.

06076

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate