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SENATE MEETING MINUTES January 18, 2008

The 507th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, January 18, 2008, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr. Dodds, Dr. Murphy, Dr. Butler, Dr. Charles, Dr. Dawson, Dr. Dixon, Dr. Enns, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Kimery, Dr. Konopasky, Dr. MacKinnon, Dr. McCalla, Dr. Naulls, Dr. Pe-Piper, Dr. Power, Dr. Van Proosdij, Dr. Vessey, Dr. Wicks, Mr. Hotchkiss, Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Webster, Miss Schaller, Mr. Risser, Mr. Dong, Miss. Cunningham, and Ms. Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr. Crocker, Dr. Stinson, Dr. Pendse, Dr. Rand, and Mr. Gillingwater,

Meeting commenced at 2:39 PM.

07040 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

07041 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
.01 Minutes of the previous meeting of December 14, 2007, were circulated as ***Appendix A***
The following amendments were noted:
➤ Correct spelling of MacKinnon on page 1 & 2.
➤ Fix action item on Page 4 as follows: **Action Item:** Members requested that a letter be sent from Senate to the Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy, to identify the need to focus some attention on reading skills.”

Moved by MacKinnon, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of December 14, 2007 are approved as amended”**.
Motion carried with one abstention.

07042 **WINTER GRADUATION LISTING**
Dixon distributed the Winter Graduate list identified as ***Appendix B*** on the Agenda.
Moved by Dixon, and seconded “to confer degrees and distinctions on those represented on the list (circulated as Appendix B) and

enable the Registrar to add such graduates to this list as may be identified subsequent to this meeting.” Motion carried.

07043

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

Dodds presented a brief summary of the submission from Dr. W. Katz. Discussion covered the following key points:

- Kennedy spoke about the exceptional contributions made by Dr. Katz both to the department, as well to the university as a whole. This nominee is an authority on Victorian literature, children’s literature, and nonsexist language.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

07044

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

07045

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01

Academic Planning

Recommendation to approve MBA Program Response to ERC Final Report circulated as **Appendix D**

- *Key Discussion points*
 - Murphy advised that an effort is being made to do more external reviews of programs.
 - The MBA Program Council considered a small number of the recommendations of the external review committee as not advisable at this time. The Council was of the opinion that some recommendations needed more consideration. They are currently discussing these and have been asked to report back to the Academic Planning Committee by May on the progress. A number of the recommendations have been accepted by the council.
 - Question on Recommendation #1 – Do we routinely accept applicants who have a GMAT score less than 550? What percentage would this represent? There is no information on how this is going to be addressed. Answer: Wicks reported that the normal GMAT score will remain at 550. The GMAT is only one of the criteria used to assess an applicant. The percentage of those admitted with scores lower 550 is small and an admission with a score below 500 is rare. Vessey – The calendar states that the average in the last two years has been 600, but that 550 is usually the minimum. It does not specifically state that this is the minimum to give the flexibility to consider other factors.
 - Question: Recommendation #1 – How many applicants does the program get annually? Answer: 150 per year. We encourage all applicants to ensure a quality selection.

- Question: There are also different reviewing methods used because the Council members can not be everywhere. Concern was expressed about inconsistency and fairness in interview techniques. Answer: Wicks – We feel that a large number of interviews are beneficial . The Council recognizes that it is appropriate to have a more formalized process, particularly for non-local and international students. Murphy advised that the program will develop a new guide for interviewing.
- Question: Recommendation #3 – The MBA Council has recommended removing all concentrations. Is this sensible? Answer: Wicks advised that most programs don't have formal concentrations. The goal was to avoid restricting students in their choice of courses and focus. We also wanted to avoid restricting the number of concentrations.
- Question: How does the potential candidate know about this level of flexibility? Couldn't a stated list of concentrations be used as a marketing point? Answer: Wicks advised that students would be advised of their options through the calendar and course materials. The Council also decided that in a 60 credit hour program, to have only 12 credit hours directed to a specialization was not enough. If areas for concentration are not defined it provides students with more flexibility. Our experience does not substantiate the value of specifying areas of concentration.
- Question: There appears to be a disconnect between the ERC recommendation and that adopted by the department. The ERC recommended a reduction and not elimination of concentrations. Answer: Vessey – This recommendation was a result of the fact that there were 6 or 7 areas of concentration offered and many were not being pursued. The reviewers suggested removing those that were not popular. The Council has taken a larger view of this situation.
- Dixon provided background information on the program. The MBA program was originally a generalist program. About 12 years ago it evolved with the option of declaring a concentration. Most of our students did not declare a concentration and it did not seem to be a big issue among the students.
- Question: Recommendation # 3 –Concern was expressed about the time commitment required of MBA staff responsible for the preparation/delivery of the courses and the organization of how they are taught. Are faculty to be recruited to do this from outside or within the university? If faculty are to be recruited from within, how are they going to be able to handle their undergraduate teaching load? Answer: Wicks – This is currently being discussed by the Council. The MBA Council is acting like a department in this situation. The intent is for this group to take on a larger role. The reviewers suggested that this group should be in control of the whole program. This is being examined by the program Council. They are required to report back to the Academic Planning Committee by May on the progress of those discussions.

Moved by Dr. Murphy, and seconded, **“that Senate approve the changes accepted by the MBA Council for immediate implementation.”**

Motion carried unanimously.

.02 Academic Regulations

Policy on re-scheduling final examinations, circulated as **Appendix E**

➤ *Key Discussion points*

- Dixon – As we approached the final exams in October 2007, there was the threat of a storm with the potential to cause an exam cancellation. There was no policy for rescheduling exams. At that particular time the next available date was Saturday, December 8th (Patronal Feast Day) on which the university has historically has not held university activities. This was forwarded to the Regulations Committee who then developed this policy. In the event of a disruption in university business (e.g. snow storm or fire), if the University determines a Registrar scheduled examination can not be held at its scheduled time, then this policy would be followed.
- Question: How much notice will students and faculty be given? Answer: In the case of a closure, the current university policy would be followed. A notice would be posted on the storm hotline. Concurrently with that notice an additional notice on the rescheduling of exams would be added. For example “and for rescheduling of exams please go to the university website for the date of rescheduling.”
- Question: What about power outages that happen with no notice? Answer: As an example, if an evening exam were cancelled, it would be rescheduled for the next evening. There will be a minimum of 24 hours notice.
- Question: A student with special circumstances generally gives sufficient notice. Rescheduling due to emergency situations can create complications of a family or religious nature. How will these be dealt with? Answer: An appeal provision exists but requests for special examinations are considered by the Dean.
- The following friendly amendment was suggested and accepted: *“The Registrar will communicate the new examination date, time and location through Banner and the University website as well as emails to the Deans and affected students, faculty, department chairpersons and secretaries.”*
- Question: Are statutory holiday dates being considered, for example Easter in the Spring? Answer: These are not currently being considered.
- Question: Can this information be published in the calendar? Answer: It was felt that if we publicized this information along with the storm warning it would be a more effective way to communicate.
- Question: Does this policy apply to spot problems such as bomb scares, power outages, or fire? Answer: Yes.

Moved by Dixon, and seconded, **“that the Policy on re-scheduling final examinations be approved as amended”**.

Motion carried unanimously.

.03 Curriculum

Semi-Annual report circulated as **Appendix F**

➤ *Key Discussion points*

- Members were advised that the committee met 12 times with meetings between 1.5 and 3 hours on average. The process was long and the volume of documentation reviewed was significant. The documentation was present so Senators could see the volume.
- Committee members have expressed their concern regarding the sheer volume of submissions and the process by which those submissions come forward.
- Members were advised that after being reviewed at the department, faculty council and executive council, submissions were still coming forward with numerous spelling and grammatical errors, poor phrasing poor and descriptions that lacked clarity. The quality of the work submitted to the committee in some cases is definitely not up to academic standards. The committee should not have to go through the depth of review that is being required by the current situation. Significant follow-up investigations have been required.
- The deans and associate deans have attempted to provide summaries of the changes submitted but when the committee started drilling down to the material in the actual submissions, many errors were identified.
- Question: A significant number of new course proposals were noted with no mention of courses being dropped. In particular it was noted that there were two new courses in Chaucer to add to the existing one that hasn't been offered for a while. Is demand there? Answer: Course changes are in response to hiring new faculty and faculty retiring. It is up to the departments to submit any course deletions.
- Question: What about courses in the calendar that are not being offered? Answer: Departments are being encouraged to only list courses that will be offered in the next two years. To make such a change effective for the departments, we are trying to build a report in banner that will include all approved courses complete with their descriptions. This task is still pending.
- Concern was expressed about the truth in advertising in the academic calendar. Even two years is not enough. We need to think about students looking ahead for three years worth of courses. If there is a good chance the courses may be offered they should be included in the calendar.
- Question: Some Biology courses indicate they will not be available to 2010 – 2011. Will they appear next year? Answer: They need to be included for planning the program two years out. This has happened in the past when a faculty member was going on sabbatical and their courses would not be available during that timeframe.
- Students advised that it was frustrating when courses in the calendar have not been offered in many years and are not likely to be offered in the future. Students should be able to make decisions based on what is actually being taught.
- Additional concern was expressed that two years is not enough time. It was suggested that four years would be fair. Tracking this would be significant work for curriculum committee. Unless the department comes forward to ask for a course to be suppressed, it is left in the calendar.

- Members were advised that the committee has developed a suggested template for creating a calendar entry. The biology and environmental studies sections that have been provided with the report follow that format. This was an effort to improve readability and make it easier for the student to understand what is required to graduate.
- Butler advised that science departments are working on a template for planning course offerings on a three year cycle.
- Question: Three new courses in Directed Studies were noted. Is this necessary? Answer: The curriculum committee has moved to resolve this situation. They propose the following allocation of numbers to identify certain course types: 9 = transfer credits and advanced standing; 8 = Directed Studies/Selected/Special Topics.
- Question: Is Green Chemistry cross-listed with chemistry? Answer: Yes. This should have an indication of a cross-listing.
- An error was noted on the Environmental Studies calendar section – remove dean emeritus next to R. Richardson.

Moved by Dr. Dixon, and seconded, **“that the curriculum report is approved as amended for use in generating the 2008-2009 Academic Calendar”**.

Motion carried unanimously.

- 07044** **REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEES**
None
- 07045** **REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES**
None
- 07046** **REPORT OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEES**
None
- 07047** **NEW BUSINESS FROM**
None
- 07048** **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**
Murphy advised members of the following:
- Negotiations are underway in relation to the MOU. These negotiations are intensive and confidential. There is student representation at these meetings. In a matter of weeks we will have an outcome.
 - The Government will live up to their commitment to move tuition levels closer to the national average.
 - The search for a University Librarian is in process. Yesterday there were interviews with four candidates. These will be reviewed and two will be chosen for presentations to the community.
- 07049** **QUESTION PERIOD**
- 07050** **ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate