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Halifax, Nova Scotia,  
Canada  
B3H 3C3  
Senate Office  
Tel: 902-420-5412

## SENATE MEETING MINUTES January 17, 2020

The 608<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, January 17, 2020, at 2:00 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr Takseva Chairperson, presided.

**PRESENT:** Dr Butler, Dr Bhabra, Dr Francis, Dr MacDonald, Dr Sarty, Dr Bannerjee, Dr Brosseau, Dr De Fuentes, Dr Doucet, Dr Grandy, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Hanley, Dr Khokhar, Dr McKee, Dr Panasian, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Dr Twohig, Ms van den Hoogen, Mr de Chastelain, Ms Nankani, Ms Witter, and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

**REGRETS:** Dr Summerby-Murray, Mr Brophy, Dr Collins, Dr Power, Dr Smith, Ms Klajman, and Ms Navas

Meeting commenced at 2:00 P.M with the territorial acknowledgement.

### 20051 REPORT OF AGENDA COMMITTEE

An item was add under 14 a: New Business from the Floor not involving notice of motion. Dr Bannerjee will report on the discussion in the Senate Executive related to populating Senate Standing Committees.

Moved by Khokhar and seconded, “that the Senate Agenda is approved as revised.”

### 20052 PRESIDENT’S REPORT

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

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Butler reported on behalf of the President. The President’s regrets were passed on. He is a member of the accreditation team assessing Capilano University in Vancouver for admission to Universities Canada. This accreditation visit will keep him in Vancouver until late today.
- The University has acknowledged the passing of two MFIN students, Ms. Maryam Malek and Ms. Fatemeh Mahmoodi, the tragic circumstances being the crash of a Ukrainian International Airlines passenger aircraft in Tehran, Iran. The vigil was very well attended. A moment of silence was scheduled on Wednesday.
- Question: Bhabra – Is there a way of recognizing the work of the MFIN students during their time here. Answer: Butler advised that there were processes to deal with that. **Action Item: Butler and Bhabra** will discuss. Dalhousie is addressing this through an honorary process. There is

precedent at SMU as well. Senate Policy 8-1018 on the Awarding of Posthumous Degrees is accessible on the Senate website, but it does not cover this situation. Other methods will need to be investigated.

- Question: Khokhar who brings this issue forward? Answer: The Dean.
- SMU has appointed a new Director of Government Relations. Stephen Moore will be reporting to the Vice-President Advancement.
- The appointment of the African Nova Scotian advisor and community liaison, is about to be completed.

20053

### **VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH REPORT**

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

- Status on creation of University Accessibility Committee
- Status of EDI Plan for the University
- Status re hiring of the African Nova Scotian Student Advisor and Liaison

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Much of the first week of January has been taken up with the tragic incident.
- The University Accessibility Committees have not yet been organized. We will be doing that this spring without fail. The province requires that we have this formed by April 2021.
- Butler spoke to the Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, Brothers-Scott and the plan is a joint EDI presentation to Senate in the future.
- The ad hoc committee on the Faculty of Educ has been formed and will be meeting before the end of the month.
- There were over 50 applicants for the position of the African Nova Scotian Student Advisor and Liaison. This week that list has been reduced to a very strong but manageable pool and interviews are being scheduled.

20054

### **SMUSA PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Posted as *Appendix C* for this meeting (5 min).

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Preferred names report – The Registrar was thanked for her work on this issue. Since the last Senate meeting there have been two students come forward to discuss leaving SMU because of this.
- Stinson and Brophy re working with SMUSA to update the Code of Conduct.
- Academic Appeals – The Registrar and VP Enrolment Services were thanked for their work in this area. There has been an increase in activity and submitted appeals. SMUSA is attempting to deal with issues more proactively. There is a lack of understanding of citation and plagiarism rules. More work needs to be done in this areas.
- SMUSA is forming a SMUSA Academic Committee. We are looking for student volunteers to serve on this.
- The SMUSA Annual General Meeting is on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The more important issues are experiential learning and academic advocacy.
- Question: Is the number available of the appeals cases being reported or those that appeal to the next level. Answer: A number of incidents have been reported, but only one appeal was formally submitted.
- It was identified that the on-line form does not get copied to the Chair. Chairs are not advised until the decision happens. **Action item: Bell** to ensure Smith & Takseva address this at the next training workshop.

- 20055**      **QUESTION PERIOD** (length at discretion of chair based on business volume)  
**Key Discussion Points:**
- Addressed above.
- 20056**      **WINTER GRADUATION LIST**  
Documentation to be circulated at the meeting by the Registrar as *Appendix D*.  
**Key Discussion Points:**
- 311 graduates with 11 dual degrees and 22 distinctions.
  - Question: De Fuentes raised a question regarding an individual student that did not appear on the grad listing. Are they going to be added? Answer: No. The Registrar’s Office will investigate the situation.
- Moved by Killam, and seconded, **“to confer degrees and distinctions on those represented on the list (circulated as Appendix D) at the Winter Convocation”.** Motion carried.
- Moved by Killam, and seconded, **“to enable the Registrar to add such graduates as may be identified subsequent to this meeting.”** Motion carried.
- 20057**      **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**  
Minutes of the meeting of December 13, 2019, were *circulated as Appendix E*.
- Moved by Grek-Martin, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of December 13, 2019 are approved as posted.”** Motion carried.
- 20058**      **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**
- .01      Subsequent to presentation of the 2019 Report on Positive Action, Butler to report on consultation with Brothers-Scott on retention to inform Senate on the related issues.  
**Key Discussion Points:**
- Brothers-Scott will be attending a Senate meeting in the future to address this.  
**Action Item: Bell** to add to Feb Senate Agenda.
- .02      Academic Regulation 20 - Letters of Permission (LoP) - Coordination of a report covering LoPs that is bi-directional to facilitate an informed discussion in Senate. (Dr Smith not attending – deferred to Feb)
- .03      Creation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the status of the Faculty of Education  
**Key Discussion Points:**
- Previously addressed.
- .04      Follow-up on discussion of respectful behaviour on campus  
**Key Discussion Points:**
- This item was brought to Senate’s attention in detail. Members were ask to consider ways to move forward in this regard. A discussion was encouraged.
  - A Senator advised that he had discussions with full and part time faculty members as well as students about these issues. He also engaged with other groups on campus to create a space for stakeholders to have a discussion on these issues. SMUSA may consider participating for the student’s perspective. The Arts Faculty put out a notice for an Arts event. On March 6<sup>th</sup> a follow-up event will be held for all faculty members.

- The President and VPAR have discussed the visibility of the policy on this, which has become imbedded in university policies. There will be some discussion about bringing the focus on this forward during other events like Welcome Week and Faculty Orientation.
- Question: Is there a mechanism behind the statements in the course syllabi to address such situations. Answer: No
- The documents in place are merely guidelines and not regulations or rules.
- Language on respectful behaviour needs to be in place that tells people what is being expected. A discussion about what we are doing on course outlines might be helpful. It was suggested that the advisors may have contributions in this regard and should be invited to participate in any planned review.
- There used to be a session for all faculty that were returning to campus and this might be a way to connect with all faculty in this regard.
- Maybe there is a need for a formal mechanism to address these situations. (Reporting incidents of harassment and assault).
- The Chair is part of a joint initiative to look at students' opinion on these policies. This initiative will collect data and analyze that with the aim of improving existing policies.
- The joint initiative is considering a broader group of issues other than just harassment and assault.
- Question: Are there other committees that are looking at these issues? Answer: No. These initiatives tend to rise out of the work of these groups. There is a need for a discussion on how these incidents arise on both sides (instructor and student). Some off-line conversations will be undertaken between now and the next Senate meeting.
- Support was stated for a more holistic approach that would address both sides of the issue.
- A broader set of principles is needed under which the other policies are engaged.
- There may be a video about respectful behaviour on campus that could be utilized.
- There have been discussions related to how the new code of conduct policy is going to reach faculty and students. There are still students and faculty that are not aware of these policies. There needs to be a better way to reach both of those groups.
- Some universities use their learning management system to make sure that access to this type of information is easier. We do have the tools, we just have to use them better.

## 20059

.01

### **OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS**

Status on the work to enhance student retention and success activities (Dr. Butler will report in the months and years to come on this issue)

#### **Key Discussion Points:**

- Many of the committees are meeting and beginning to engage in this work.
- We looked deeply at the admissions process. At SMU it could take weeks. There were 6 challenges identified in the manual process that were slowing things down. We are addressing that now to improve the situation. We are now receiving transcripts electronically, which helps.
- We had an EAB Workshop this week and the discussion was very good. There will be another session in the near future to further that work.
- Question: Engagement of faculty in the process is important. Can that be done? Answer: Yes. These efforts are being led by Dr Twohig. He will ensure

this will happen. Much of the work on this has been done collaboratively with faculty members.

- There are a lot of investments that appear to be made in a lot of aspects of the administration process to improve the way things are done and create efficiencies.

**20060**

**NEW BUSINESS FROM**

a) Floor (not involving notice of motion)

- Bannerjee advised members that the discussion in Senate Executive was about populating Senate Committees. The discussion related to developing a more equitable process.
- Early in March, there will be an election call for Senate and University Committees. This might be a good time to begin the process for populating Senate Standing Committees. It was suggested to include a description of the work and the expected time commitment.
- The decision of the Executive Committee was that it will remain at the Deans level. The Deans will review the vacancies and review those in terms of how they relate to the required skills, equitability, and diversity on these committees.
- Members were advised that the Board of Governors developed a useful skills assessment document that was used to populate Board Committees. Perhaps this document would be useful for Senate to use in this regard.  
**Action Item: Bell** to consult with Milton regarding whether the list can be shared with Senate.

**20061**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:52 P.M.

Barb Bell,  
Secretary of Senate