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SENATE MEETING MINUTES November 14, 2014

The 560th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, November 14, 2014, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr D. Naulls, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Dodds, Dr Dixon, Dr MacDonald, Dr Smith, Dr Vessey, Dr Naulls, Dr Austin, Dr Bjornson, Dr Gilin-Oore, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Secord, Dr Short, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Warner, Ms Marie DeYoung, Mr Gordon Michael, Mr Rice, Mr Dhaduk, Mr. Hamilton, Dr Keeble, Mr Hotson, Ms. Yetman, Ms Stover, Dr Fleming, and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Gauthier, Dr Bradshaw, Dr Power, Dr Campbell, Dr Francis, Dr Kozloski, Mr Hotchkiss, Mr Feehan and Mr Patriquin.

Meeting commenced at 2:35 P.M.

14022 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

14023 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
Minutes of the meeting of October 10, 2014, were circulated as *Appendix A*.
• It was noted that the Geology Department Chair asked that the Senate review of the Geology Department Program Review documentation be deferred until the December Senate meeting.
Moved by Dodds, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting October 10, 2014 are approved as circulated.” Motion carried.**

14024 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

.01 Status, revised report on ‘Positive Action To Improve The Employment Of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible Minorities And People With Disabilities’.
Key discussion points:

- Item deferred to December Senate meeting.

.02 Revision to the Senate Policy on the Review of Programs at Saint Mary’s University, circulated as *Appendix B, C & D*.
Key discussion points:

- Vessey advised that this submission is in response to a request by a Senate member at the October Senate meeting. The request was to revise the

Senate Policy to require a development plan which would be consistent with the Handbook.

Moved by Vessey, and seconded, **“the Academic Senate approves the revision to the Senate Policy on the Review of Programs at Saint Mary’s University.” Motion carried.**

.03 Biology Program Review Documentation - *Appendix E* – Notice of Motion, *Appendix F* - Recommendation/Response Comparison, *Appendix G* - Self Study Report, *Appendix H* - Self Study Appendices (1-11), *Appendix I*- Deans Response to Self Study, *Appendix J*- External Review Committee’s (ERC) Final Report, *Appendix K* - Department Response to ERC Report, *Appendix L* - Dean’s Response to ERC report. Dr Bjornson available for questions.

Key discussion points:

- A Senate Member noted that the comparison document was very helpful. Appreciation was expressed to Michelle Malloy in this regard.
- There was a question related to recommendation #1 - program level which was: “Consider reducing number of courses that include laboratory learning to reduce scheduling conflicts for students and time demands for the available teaching laboratories.” Question: What was the rationale behind that recommendation? Would that lead to a watering down of the courses? Answer: The Department has discussed this and feel that courses should not be offered without the labs. The lab component facilitates application of learning and that is what distinguishes the department from other departments. We may not implement this recommendation.
- Question: Why was the pre-health stream discontinued? Answer: With the help of the Dean we discussed this as a department. The department cannot sustain the pre-health stream for a number of reasons but especially from the perspective of expertise. A select number of courses within the health stream will be offered. The department has decided to discontinue both streams and offer a broader selection of courses. Six credit hours in physiology have been retained to help students in certain health related streams.
- Question: The previous program review recommendations resulted in the creation of these two streams. Are you still offering appropriate courses for students that want to pursue the health stream? Answer: We are offering a limited number of courses that will be useful to those students.

The following motions were presented.

Moved Vessey, and seconded,

“that the Biology Program respond to the recommendations of the external reviewers as articulated in the Dean’s response dated April, 2014 and specifically recommends that the Department implement the following recommendations as soon as possible – Department: #2 and #3, and Program: #1 through #4.

and

“that the Biology Program submit an action plan to APC in February 2015.”

and

“that in November, 2015, the Biology Program submit a one-year report to the Academic Planning Committee on the progress made during the year on the Action Plan according to Section 5 of the Senate Policy on the Review of Programs at Saint Mary’s University.” Motions carried.

- .04** Academic Appeals 2013-2014 Annual Report circulated as *Appendix M*, 2013-2014 Case summary circulated as *Appendix N*
Subsequent to the October 10th Senate meeting, at a request of a Senator, this report is resubmitted with additional information.

Key discussion points:

- The Terms of Reference for the committee were requested to be read.
- Question: Do faculty members have the opportunity to respond to the academic appeal? Answer: Yes. They have an opportunity both before the meeting and after the decision is communicated.
- Question: How many of the instructors actually request interviews? Answer: About 45%. The specific faculty representative on the Academic Appeals Committee also consults occasionally with the instructor in person.
- Question: How is grading that has been identified as unfair evaluated? Answer: Another instructor with comparable expertise reviews the situation and provides an opinion. It should be noted that, as stipulated in the academic regulation, grades can go up, down or remain the same subject to this review.
- Question: Are the results of academic appeals reported to faculty? Answer: Yes. Faculty are copied on the final decision by email.
- Senate members were advised that the focus of the Academic Appeals Committee is on the student’s academic work.

There being no objections or further questions, the report was accepted into the Senate record.

- .05** APC Notice of Motion circulated as *Appendix O*, Proposal for a Terms of Reference and Membership for formation of a cross-Faculty Working Group to operationalize the Senate recommendations arising from the Report of the Committee on the Assessment of ENGL 1205, circulated as *Appendix P*

Key discussion points:

- Vessey advised that during the October Senate meeting, the Academic Planning Committee was tasked with defining a terms of reference and membership for the working group.
- The mandate follows: to articulate the criteria for the satisfaction of the three credit hour Higher Learning Foundations requirement of all students pursuing an undergraduate degree; and to present options for the University community to cooperatively operationalize and support the specific requirement and the progressive development of students’ academic literacy skills throughout the degree. The Senate approved definition of Academic Literacy, provided by the Senate Committee on Literacy Strategy, will be central to the considerations of the Working Group.
- The Cross-Faculty Working Group will consider the articulation and operationalization of the new Higher Learning Foundations requirement targeted directly at setting the foundation for this development.
- Concern was expressed in regard to the following stipulation in the mandate of the Cross-Faculty Working Group: “to articulate the criteria for the satisfaction of the three credit hour Higher Learning Foundations

requirement of all students pursuing an undergraduate degree”. It was stated that this leads to a perception that ENGL 1205 will be replaced with another three credit hour course. It was suggested that would be contrary to the ENGL 1205 Assessment Committee report recommendations. It was suggested that the phrase “three credit hour” be removed from the mandate.

- It was noted that in the APC recommendations that Senate approved, the three credit hour Higher Learning Foundations requirement was only one component. The recommendation states; “new requirements (which may include ENGL 1205) targeted directly at helping to lay the foundations for academic literacy development in students.
- The suggestion to remove “the three credit hour” from the motion, as a friendly amendment, was not supported.
- Concern was expressed on behalf of the Department of English and specifically on behalf of the part-time faculty in the Department. The members of the English Department feel that they are significantly underrepresented on the Working Group.
- The concern of the English Department was noted. Members were advised that the membership was predicated to some extent by the approval of the motion in Senate during the October Senate meeting. The Faculty of Arts already has two representatives on this committee and the representative from the English Department is recommended to be a faculty member with experience teaching ENGL 1205.
- The proposed specific terms of reference of the Cross-Faculty Working Group are:
 1. to identify the core set of academic literacy learning objectives (i.e. student learning outcomes) which must be clearly articulated for any course or proposed course considered to satisfy the Higher Learning Foundations requirement;
 2. to establish and maintain communication with the Deans of the Faculties in their reviews of programs to ensure clear opportunities for the continuous reinforcement and progressive development of students’ academic literacy skills; to make sure that these opportunities are visible to the students as they become relevant to learning and communication in their program and/or discipline; and to articulate the goals for academic literacy in the program;
 3. to review current Senate Policies on Course Outlines, Submissions to the Curriculum Committee and Program Reviews in light of the new Higher Learning Foundations requirement and the Faculties’ mapping of the subsequent progressive development of academic literacies (in 2 above) to identify any possible linkages between these and operational mechanisms related to the new requirement and its support;
 4. to include among the options to operationalize the new requirement, opportunities for new students to improve basic skills and meet an expected level of basic literacy for study at university; and options which can provide opportunities for all students to hone specific academic literacy skills throughout their degree programs; these may include online and/or workshop resources.

The proposed composition of the Cross-Faculty Working Group shall be as follows:

- One member each from the Sobey School of Business, Faculty of Science, and Faculty of Arts
 - Nominated by the Dean of the Sobey School of Business: Dr. Valerie Creelman
 - Nominated by the Dean of Science: Dr. Kathy Singfield
 - Nomination by the Dean of Arts: Dr. Philip Giles
- One member from the Writing Centre appointed by the Writing Centre
- One member from the Library appointed by the Library
- One member of the English Department appointed by the English Department. It is suggested that this be a faculty member that has experience in teaching ENGL 1205 and is also cognizant of the literacy requirements of the university
- At least one representative from the ENGL 1205 Assessment Committee.
- One member from CAID, appointed by CAID
 - Nominated by CAID: Ms Michelle Malloy
- One member from the Division of Continuing Education, nominated by the Director, Continuing Education

Moved by Vessey and seconded, **“that the Senate approves the proposed Terms of Reference and Membership for the formation of a cross-faculty Working Group to operationalize the Senate recommendations arising from the Report of the Committee on the Assessment of ENGL 1205.” Motion carried.**

14025

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

a) Academic Planning Committee

- i) APC Notice of Motion circulated as Appendix Q, 2013-2014 Annual Report, Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (CCEPA), circulated as Appendix R. – Chris Stover attended to respond to questions.

Key discussion points:

- It has been a transition year in terms of leadership but a busy and successful one.
- Dr Gauthier and Ms Stover met to discuss moving this report to the Board of Governors level because CCEPA is not a degree granting Centre and has a significant community outreach focus.

Moved by Vessey and seconded, **“that the Senate accept the 2013-2014 Annual Report of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (CCEPA) as meeting the requirement of section 3.2 of the Senate Policy 8-1009, Senate By-Laws Governing the Establishment, Reporting and Review of Research Institutes and Centres at Saint Mary’s.” Motion carried.**

- ii) APC Notice of Motion attached as *Appendix S*, Saint Mary’s Writing Centre, annual report attached as *Appendix T*. (Mr Brian Hotson attending)

Key discussion points:

- The Writing Centre was approved by Senate but is not covered under the Senate Policy 8-1009, Senate By-Laws Governing the

Establishment, Reporting and Review of Research Institutes and Centres at Saint Mary's.

- Last year was very busy with a number of new programs being implemented through the Student Success Committee. There was a 77% increase in student tutoring. More new programs are being developed and will be implemented in the near future.
- The all night study session was very successful. Sixteen universities across Canada were involved in this initiative. There was good national press coverage that resulted from this event.
- Question: There is significant evidence that sleep deprivation inhibits cognitive function. What was the thinking behind this event? Answer: The issue was acknowledged. Students will do this anyway and Saint Mary's already offers 24-hour service in the Atrium and Library. This service is valued as a positive initiative. This program actually comes out of Germany. During the event, the issues are highlighted and attention is focused on the source of this behavior, being procrastination. The event is held once a year but staying up all night is not promoted.

There being no objection the Senate accepted the report of the Writing Centre into the record as an information item for Senate members.

- iii) APC Notice of Motion attached as *Appendix U*, CN Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CNCOHS), annual report attached as *Appendix V*. Mark Fleming attending.

Key discussion points:

- The year was busy with events. There is transition going on in terms of the participants in the Centre. 175 people from around the world attended an event here at the university during the late summer and the feedback was very good.
- Funding from the GRI has been very helpful but funding remains the biggest challenge for CNCOHS.
- The Canada Research Chairs associated with the Centre are all located at GRI. There is a lot of interest in the Centre funding limits what can be done.

Moved by Vessey and seconded, **“that the Senate accepts the 2013-2014 Annual Report of the CN Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CNCOHS) as meeting the requirement of section 3.2 of the Senate Policy 8-1009, Senate By-Laws Governing the Establishment, Reporting and Review of Research Institutes and Centres at Saint Mary's.” Motion carried.**

- b) Continuing Education Committee
2013-2014 Annual Report, Senate Committee on Continuing Education, attached as *Appendix W*

Key discussion points:

- The numbers in the Program Offerings section show the growth in different program.
- We are considering strategies for attracting young people to the various programs.
- We hosted a very successful Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) Annual Conference in June at the Westin Hotel.

There being no objection the Senate accepted the 2013-2014 annual report of the Continuing Education Committee into the record of Senate.

c) Academic Regulations Committee

i) ARC Notice of Motion, attached as *Appendix XI*, 2015-2016 Academic Calendar of Events, attached as *Appendix X2*

Key discussion points:

- With the implementation of the new exam scheduling program, the number of exam days has been consistently reduced to 11 days.
- This provided the time to add study days and add a mini fall break to the Calendar of Events. By inserting the mini fall break, that facilitated a balance in the number of teaching days in the fall semester.
- Question: Why is Remembrance Day not listed? The administrative offices are closed on that day. Answer: This was considered a friendly amendment.
- Question: Shouldn't the Feb 15th holiday be stated: "Administrative Offices closed - Heritage Day"? Answer: This was considered a friendly amendment.
- Two study days have also been added in the winter term.

Moved by Dixon and seconded, **"that Senate approves the 2015-2016 Academic Calendar of Events as revised". Motion carried.**

ii) ARC Notice of Motion attached as *Appendix Y 1*, Graduate Academic Regulation Revisions, attached as *Appendix Y 2*

Key discussion points:

- These are minor changes to reflect the current practice.
- On the last page of the submission there are two changes that do not refer to a specific academic regulation. Question: What are these referring to?
 - Answer: Anywhere in the regulations where those terms in the current wording section appear, they are to be revised to read Recommendation Form.
 - Answer: In regard to the revision to references on GPA – what is meant is that everywhere there is a statement of standing – no matter what that standing is – we want to add to the statement that it is out of 4.3.

Moved by Dixon and seconded, **"that Senate approves the revisions to the Graduate Academic Regulations as submitted". Motion carried.**

d) 2013-2014 Annual Report, Senate Committee on Scholarship, attached as *Appendix ZA*. (Dr Edna Keeble attending)

Key discussion points:

- The Senate Scholarship Committee deals primarily with academic scholarship appeals.
- There were a larger number of appeals in the past year due to the rules regarding relevant dates (which affect using summer courses as part of required course load). Those rules were recently changed.
- The dates are the concern because the committee believes that the May 1st date establishes a situation that penalizes students.

There being no objection the Senate accepted the 2013-2014 annual report of the Scholarship Committee into the record of Senate.

- e) Senate Committee on Animal Care – (Laura Yetman attending)
- i) 2013-2014 Annual Report, attached as *Appendix ZB*
- Key discussion points:**
- The group recently had an interim CCAC site visit. The recommendations arising from that visit are being addressed.
 - Question: Why was the OH&S representative on the committee deleted? Answer: From the perspective of the committee – the focus of the Committee is on treatment. There is no place in the protocols that requires the Committee to address the health and safety of humans. The CCAC stated that we did not have to address this area. Any faculty member working with animals has to address these concerns but the Committee does not. The position of OH&S (Safety) officer on this committee is redundant.
 - Question: Certain deficiencies were highlighted. What were those? Answer: One issue was deficiencies in the facility. The Dean will address those issues. There were issues related to water for the animals and we have closed down the area that had those issues. We are addressing these recommendations aggressively with our Facilities Management Group and with some contractors. There were also training issues sited and those are being addressed. We have invested in facility upgrades to address the deficiencies and are working on resolving additional issues. There were also improvements related to the area of documentation.
 - Question: What priority was given to addressing this? What is the timeframe for completion? Answer: Tom Strapps in Facilities Management is addressing this. He has been arranging for the contractor who is a sole source contractor. They have been slow giving us a quote.
- ii) Notice of Motion, attached as *Appendix ZC*, Change form - revision to membership – Standing Committee on Animal Care Terms of Reference, attached as *Appendix ZD*

Moved by Smith and seconded, **“that Senate approves the revisions to the Terms of Reference and Membership of the Animal Care Committee”**. Motion carried.

14026

NEW BUSINESS FROM

Floor (involving notice of motion)

- Question: Do we get a report from the Academic Discipline Committee? When is that due? Answer: Soon
- It was noted that there is a significant negative human impact on the students whose cases are not addressed in a timely fashion.
- The Academic Regulations have timelines on appeals. It was suggested that the university adopt stronger language relating to the deadlines for a decision from the committee. There are stipulated timelines regarding responses from the student and faculty levels but not in relation to the committee.
- It was suggested that the regulation could include a maximum time to completion of the appeal process and communication of a decision from the committee.

- Members were advised that there are changes coming forward for that regulation in the near future.
- Congratulations were extended to Bell for winning the President's Award for Exemplary Service.
- Question on the issues related to the ICE reporting. Problems should all be resolved within the next two weeks.
- Question: What happened with the Academic Appeals Committee recommendation related to the problems with the way weighted grades are represented on Blackboard? Has this issue been addressed by ITSS?
Answer: This is a program issue which is being addressed by the original software developer.

14027

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dodds advised Senators of the following:

- The Nova Scotia Government consultative review on post-secondary education is on-going.
- The student, faculty and unions, have been invited to interviews.
- There were a large number of submissions and in October a report was tabled. At some point the government will come back with their synopsis of that feedback.
- There is a meeting between the University Presidents and the NS Government scheduled for next week.

14028

QUESTION PERIOD

None.

14029

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate