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SENATE MEETING MINUTES November 17, 2017

The 587th Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Friday, November 17, 2017, at 2:30 PM, in the Secunda Marine Boardroom. Dr M. VanderPlaat, Chairperson, presided.

PRESENT: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr Bradshaw, Dr Sarty, Dr Doucet, Dr Francis, Dr Grandy, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Hall, Dr Hlongwane, Dr McCallum, Dr Peckmann, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Warner, Ms DeYoung, Mr Brophy, Mr Nasrallah Ms Ali, Ms Caswell, Mr Oshobu, Ms Delorey, Ms Rebecca Brown (Business Reporter, allNovaScotia). Mr Sisk, Mr Schmeisser, Dr Bannerjee and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Naulls, Dr Butler, Dr Smith, Dr Khokar, Dr Loughlin, Dr MacDonald, Dr Rahaman, and Ms Bhaskar,

Meeting commenced at 2:30 P.M.

17023 **REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE**
The report of the Agenda Committee was accepted.

17024 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
Minutes of the meeting of October 20, 2017, *Appendix A*.
The following revisions were noted:

- Page 9, fourth bullet point down – related to the changes in SOCI/CRIM -
- In item 1705-01 there was a discussion related to the form students in the Faculty of Science complete when they miss a test or exam. Brophy asked to be included in the planned review and revision of the form for campus-wide use. Dr Francis agreed to include him in the process.

Moved by Doucet, and seconded, **“that the minutes of the meeting of October 20, 2017 are approved as revised.” Motion carried.**

17025 **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**
.01 Discussion Item Classroom Technology and room design issues – update from Classroom Planning Taskforce (7 April 2017 - P. Sisk & G Schmeisser).
Key discussion points:

- There have been a few changes in classroom technology. Projector refreshes and other scheduled change-outs were done but nothing else substantive has been done due to budget restrictions. There are some classrooms that need

renovations but the cost is significant. Those renovations have been deferred due to budgetary restrictions.

- The second Burke theatre is scheduled for renovation. Unfortunately, the cost of that renovation is about 2 million. The University is currently looking for the funding to initiate that work.
- When a classroom is scheduled for renovation, the Registrar will be contacted for the names of faculty members that use those rooms. Those faculty will be contacted for their feedback.
- Facilities is working on some classrooms to provide flexible spaces that include lots of white boards. Investigation is being carried out on typical programs and technologies that can augment this goal.
- A request was made in regard to Loyola 170
 - Keep it large.
 - Include a second projector and two screens. This same request was made for the McNally Auditorium.
- Question: What is the status of the requests that have been submitted for Loyola 170? Answer: The committee and Facilities Planning have looked at the request for Loyola 170. Funding restrictions have delayed action on this request during this academic year. Facilities is attempting to make that a priority for the next academic year.
- Question: Itinerant professors are seldom in the same program or classroom repetitively, but they would also have relevant feedback on classrooms. Answer: The Director, ITSS advised that they would attempt to make a more general call for feedback.
- The scheduling of classes at Saint Mary's appears to done on a precedent-based system and does not include completion of a form for faculty to identify their classroom requirements. Question: Is there another way to handle room scheduling? Answer: The Deans create the schedule and submit those to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar looks at the conflicts and then sets the schedule. There has been some discussion in regard to trying to identify a better way to do this but it is not a simple task. The reality of scheduling classes and classrooms is very complicated. It is difficult / challenging to fit each year's classes into the classrooms that are available. If Senate wants more information on this subject, the Registrar's Office should be asked to respond.
- Members were advised that between 10 am and 4 pm there is 100% usage of classroom spaces.
- Question: How is accessibility factored into the renovations of classrooms? Answer: Facilities Management has a number of different approaches to this depending on the configuration of the classroom. The university community has to live with the fact that construction of a new building is not possible, and we have to do the best with the classrooms currently existing. Given the recent accessibility legislation and a number of recently identified issues, more consideration is needed to address accessibility from a physical/structural perspective.
- A Senator advised that lights are needed over the desks in Burke as the lighting in that building may not be adequate for students and faculty to see at desk-level.

.02 Update on progress subsequent to the report of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on the Website (**Appendix B** - for information only) (8 April 2016, 14 October 2016 and 7 April 2017 – P. Sisk).

Key discussion points:

- Some progress has been made. The Registrar's Office has the Academic Calendar on-line and the program pages are now linking directly to content in the Academic Calendar. ITSS is currently working on the Departmental pages to link them to Program pages and the Academic Calendar Content. These changes are to address outdated curriculum information on sites and solve the confusion over which are the Program pages and which are the Department pages.
- The Success Map Project has been launched.
- Faculty 180 is still a challenge. The Studio is responsible for Faculty 180 and they are addressing the issues as they are able. They will be reaching out to the faculty to identify the issues and work with them to address those errors.
- The Web Policy has been updated to address Senate's concerns.
- UTube videos are now able to be imbedded into pages.
- A new events calendar has been developed by External Affairs and it is active.
- The Studio is responsible for training. Faculty should contact them if there is a need.
- There remains a challenge with communication on upgrades and revisions.
- A position has been created for a writer. It is being actioned in terms of the hiring process.
- ITSS looked at the structure of the navigation bar and will be doing some clean-ups.
- ITSS is working with Terminal4 to fix some of the issues.
- A Science Faculty Senator expressed concern in regard to the accuracy of the Academic Calendar information that was being linked to. Members and the ITSS Director were informed that the program pages are completely wrong for every Science department. The information that is being pulled is from a previous academic calendar and not from the current one. The situation is critical and one with legal implications. For example, if there is a mistake in the Engineering program requirements shown from the Program Page, and students in the program follows that direction when registering for courses, they will not be able to take the articulated programs because they have not taken the required courses. There is no time to take any length of time to review this issue. This situation must be addressed immediately. The links need to be removed until a resolution can be found so that no more students are negatively impacted.
- It was suggested that this needs to be addressed with the Registrar. If the system is not drawing from the current calendar, that office needs to deal with this.
- The Senator advised that the Registrar's Office refers the issue to ITSS.
- Members were advised that students can find the selection of courses confusing enough at the beginning of the year. It can also be difficult to get an appointment with an advisor due to the volume demand at the beginning of a semester or academic year.
- Question: Is a review being done of the website in regard to accessibility issues? There are a number of issues that exist. For example, people who

are colour blind might not be able to see text on a blue background. Answer: ITSS is addressing some of these issues and will continue to address these as time and funding permit.

- Question: In the report of the Ad-Hoc Committee, one recommendation was to devolve some of the web governance to a department representative. Why has nothing been done about this? Answer: Three of the people on the committee meet on a regular basis with the Faculty Communications Officers to discuss any issues. This is also a standing agenda item on the Web-Steering Committee agenda to address the feedback received from those officers.
- One of the key goals is that the SMU site must be structurally consistent throughout. There is structural control over that. There is the authority to change some of the other pages on the site. There is contributor status to change some other items. To change the more significant website components, full administrative rights are required and that provides too much ability to be allocated to a department representative.
- It was noted that the Academic Senate has an academic issue with the calendar functionality. Question: How can Senators ensure that those academic issues are resolved quickly? **Action Item: Sisk** will meet with Dr Francis in the Registrar's Office to understand where the problem is occurring and look for a resolution.
- **Action Item: Bell** to invite Mr Sisk to the December meeting to report.
- A request was made to have a student representative on the Web Steering Committee.

17026

OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS AGENDAS

None

17027

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

.01

Academic Planning Committee

Centre of Excellence in Accounting and Reporting for Co-operatives (CEARC) – *Appendix C1* - APC Motion Memo, and *Appendix C2* – CEARC Self Study Report and Strategic Plan 2015-2017

Key discussion points:

- No discussion

Moved by Bradshaw and seconded, **“that the Senate accepts the self-study Report of the Centre of Excellence in Accounting and Reporting for Co-operatives (CEARC) as meeting the requirement of section 3.3 of the Senate Policy 8-1009, Senate By-Laws Governing the Establishment, Reporting and Review of Research Institutes and Centres at Saint Mary’s and that CEARC be authorized to continue for a further period of five years from the date of review.”** Motion carried.

.02

Academic Regulations Committee

2018-2019 Academic Calendar of Events, attached as *Appendix D*

Key discussion points:

- There may be a subsequent revision to the fall break related to a SMUSA request for one-week fall break. Review of the impact to the exam schedule is needed.

- The President, SMUSA advised that the students that have requested the five-day fall break have been advised that the exam period would move two days out to accommodate.
- It was suggested that this change would improve student's mental health.
- Senators were advised that there is no research or evidence that a longer fall break period actually improves mental health. Response: Students advised that Brock University did research on this with the result that there was evidence that mental health was improved.
- Members were advised that this year the Santamarian ceremony is included in the calendar of events. The Director of Student Services advised that they did not have full feedback on that and asked that it be withdrawn from the calendar for the 2018-2019 academic year.
- It was suggested that the fall break seems to be motivated by Remembrance Day. It might make sense to schedule it for another time altogether.

Moved by the Academic Regulations Committee and seconded, **“that Senate approve the 2018-2019 Academic Calendar of Events as revised.” Motion carried.**

17028

REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEES

.01

Honorary Degrees Committee – documentation circulated at meeting as *Appendix E*. The Senate moved ‘in-camera’ for this agenda item.

- This is a joint committee of the Senate and the Board of Governors and includes representatives from SMUSA.
- The committee solicits nominations (through a general call) and reviews submissions mindful of a number of criteria including gender and diversity.
- Question: Is there a report related to the balance in gender and diversity generated at the end of one year and based on the number of recommendations received and awarded? Answer: The committee is tracking and reviewing that information.

Moved by Bradshaw and seconded, **“that all recommendations, with the exception of the one referred back to the Honorary Degrees Committee for further investigation, are approved for furtherance to the Board of Governance for awarding.” Motion carried.**

17029

NEW BUSINESS FROM

- Floor (not involving notice of motion)
 - i. Presentation from SMUSA (Mr Ossama Nasrallah and Ms Lexa Ali)

Key discussion points:

 - SMUSA is an independent organization working for the students with a commitment to maintain communication with all students.
 - There are 4-5 Board members elected by the students.
 - This is a 4.3 million dollar organization. SMUSA hires 90 students around campus.
 - The SMUSA President reviewed tasks and a list of committees on which he serves.
 - The SMUSA VP Academic & Advocacy reviewed tasks and a list of committees on which she serves.
 - Other Board members (not present):
 - Denis Amirault – VP Communications – reviewed tasks and committees.

- Mary Nevas – VP Student Affairs – responsible for 50 + groups on campus and Welcome week.
- Lawson Morassutti - VP Equity and Wellness – Wellness Week
- Services:
 - Information Desk
 - Transit U Passes.
 - Husky Patrol (drive safe home – Sun to Friday)
 - Gorsebrook Lounge
 - Wellness Lounge
 - Health and Dental Plan
 - On-line Database for Tutors
 - Advocacy – provincially and federally
- Priorities of the Year: Student Engagement & Involvement, Mental Health initiatives, Student Academics
- Question: SMUSA Executive is heavy on Commerce student participation. Has there been consideration related to a better balance? Answer: Last year there were more Arts students involved. SMUSA is trying to be as inclusive as possible. It all depends on who submits for consideration as members of the Board.

ii. Discussion on potential review and revision of the Student Discipline Code

Key discussion points:

- Members were advised that the issue discussed at the last meeting (racist incident in the classroom) is not the only situation that needs to be addressed. As a university, we need to address the development of healthier relationships in the classroom.
- Senate is discussing a culture of respect and values that offers inclusion. There is room for revision to the Student Code and there needs to be inclusion of this type of behavior.
- Question: What is the vehicle to revise this Code? Answer: There is a Senate Standing Committee established to review these processes. The Senate Secretary read the terms of reference of the Senate Standing Committee on Student Discipline from the Senate By-Laws. The discussion around this established that revision was needed to the terms and membership of this committee.
- Brophy advised that the policy is in the 2018-2019 calendar and that he would appreciate being part of the membership of this Standing Committee.
- Members were advised that the composition of this committee could be broadened with individuals with more expertise.
- Question: A call was made for someone to replace Dr Stinson during her sabbatical. Dr Hlongwane volunteered.

iii. Racism on Campus (Dr Takseva)

Key discussion points:

- This is a collective problem and it is not just a Saint Mary's issue. It is much wider than that.
- A solution might be to think more about class etiquette and where that intersects with the values of SMU.

- There is a need to look at this issue in the context of human rights and existing policies on discrimination and harassment. The University needs a strong institutional and administration support system that will support and reiterate these messages.
- More consideration is needed in relation to hiring and retaining minorities. Retention is not just an HR issue but as an employer, the university needs to ensure that new hires are made to feel welcome and valued.
- Initially a new hire may feel they are working in an inclusive and safe environment but this can soon change.
- It was noted that the 2017 Report on Positive Action to Improve the Employment of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible minorities, and People with Disabilities at Saint Mary's University is generally submitted for consideration at the December Senate meeting.
- Members were advised that Saint Mary's has had a Diversity and Inclusion Advisor for a year. It was suggested that Ms Brothers-Scott organize some workshops on this issue.
- The President advised that Ms Brothers-Scott is integrated within HR. She participates on the search committees and advises in relation to sensitivity on these issues.
- The critical mass is key. Question: How does the University communicate certain policies to the departments that are involved in this work? It was suggested that education on the issues and sensitivity workshops would go a long way to addressing the issue.

Moved by Hall and seconded, **“that the Senate meeting be extended for 15 minutes in order to conclude the outstanding business on the agenda.” Motion carried.**

- It was suggested that the SMU faculty should reflect the international student body. Members were advised that the university is working on that but it was acknowledged that there is still work to do.
- Fostering a respectful workplace is important and integral to avoiding the development of toxic work environments. This is a situation that exists everywhere. One possible way to address this are Policies and Practices that provide for consequences when they are not followed.
- A member suggested that it is not only student conduct needs to be reviewed. The Saint Mary's faculty and staff also need to look at themselves in this regard.
- Question: Is there a relationship between the new Diversity and Inclusion advisor and the Positive Action Report? Could Ms Brothers-Scott be invited to the next Senate meeting so that Senators could hear her perspective on the 2017 Report on Positive Action to Improve the Employment of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible minorities, and People with Disabilities at Saint Mary's University?
Action Item: Bell to invite Ms Brothers-Scott to attend.
- A student representative advised that there have been student complaints on faculty members in regard to discrimination in grading. Question: What can students do about this? There is a

form for situations focused on student behaviour. There should also be a form to report faculty members.

- There needs to be a general Discipline Code.
- A general Code of Conduct would need to take into consideration the SMUFU Collective Agreement. The Faculty Union would need to be included in the conversation. The Faculty Union has a committee on equity and diversity that needs to be part of that discussion. Stronger language in this regard would have to be included in the collective agreement.
- This issue also ties to the Strategic Plan in the area of Value and Values. As a community, we need to imbed this in all of our day-to-day actions. This could be a strategic issue.
- The President will give some thought to how to proceed with this and commits to discuss this with Student Services and SMUFU.

17030

PRESIDENT'S REPORT attached as *Appendix E*

Summerby-Murray advised members of the following:

Discovery and Innovation in a Learner-centered environment.

- A new position has been created in Institutional Analysis in the Registrar's Office to address the need for improved baseline data, especially in relation to "student success" data such as retention rates.
- I was pleased to join MP Andy Fillmore, as well as representatives from our neighbouring universities, for the recent announcement of SSHRC funding support through the Insight, Partnership and Talent Grant competitions. This event was a testament to Saint Mary's recognized expertise in research.

Internationalization and intercultural learning

- Saint Mary's, in partnership with the Confucius Institute, Xiamen University and the Sobey School of Business, hosted The Nova Scotia Sino-Canadian Trade Summit yesterday. This well attended and received Summit explored trade and business relationships between Nova Scotia and China, as well as the means by which educational and cultural understanding might be deepened.
- While in Halifax as the keynote speaker at an APEC Conference, Ambassador John McCallum, Canada's Ambassador to China, accepted an invitation to participate in a roundtable discussion with Saint Mary's students, in the course of which the Ambassador shared his view on the benefits students would glean from spending time in China.
- At the request of the provincial government, Saint Mary's hosted a luncheon in honor of Chinese Ambassador Lu Shaye. The luncheon, ably orchestrated by our External Affairs team, included Presidents and their representatives from across Nova Scotia, along with members of the provincial government, including Minister of Labour and Advanced Education Labi Kousoulis. The luncheon provided the opportunity for a number of our Chinese students to greet the Ambassador upon his arrival, as well as giving all of us an opportunity to inform the Ambassador of the many initiatives Saint Mary's has underway in and with regard to China.

Institutional Sustainability

- In readying for the upcoming budget planning process, Financial Services will be embarking, in the very near term, on a communication roll out related to the budget development process.
- Earlier this month, and in partnership with the VP Advancement, I was pleased to host a small reception for the inaugural recipients of the Fred and Nali George Scholarship in Entrepreneurship and the Fred and Nali George Scholarship in Geology/Business Studies. The reception provided the student award winners the opportunity to meet their benefactors, Dr. Fred George and Mrs. Nali George, and to share with them directly the significant impact these endowed scholarship have made in their lives.

Senior Administrative Updates:

- I am pleased to advise that Mr. Scott Gray, has arrived on campus and on November 6 assumed the role of Athletics Director. An Academic All Canadian, Scott's positive approach and depth of experience, make him an excellent addition to the Senior Management Team.
- The University is well into the processes for hiring a new University Librarian and new Dean of the Sobey School of Business and continue to be on schedule.
- In concluding this report, I would share with you that much of the past couple of weeks has been devoted to the football eligibility issue. This is a complex issue that goes well beyond a single player and reminds us of the importance of the student in our student athlete programs. Saint Mary's has an outstanding reputation and we continue to work hard to create a playing environment that is fair, clear and equitable. I am confident in the approach we have taken and in the outstanding and diligent work of so many people over the past few weeks in particular. There has been significant external pressure and I thank all of you for your support of Saint Mary's at what has been a challenging time.
- The President applauded the Husky team and the athletic team that work to address the current situation. Saint Mary's has an agreement on the issues.

17031

QUESTION PERIOD

Key Discussion Points:

- Question: Hires and Searches – Is there a process in place to replace the acting Registrar? Answer: The President will follow-up to identify the status of that initiative.

17032

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary to the Office of Senate