

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, November 2, 2009 at 5:30 pm in Room 3210 WMC

Open Session

Present

Stevenson, Michael, President and Chair of Senate

Beale, Alison
Brennand, Tracy
Chapman, Glenn
Chiu, Christina
Dow, Greg
Driver, Jon
Easton, Stephen
Fee, Jane (representing L. Cormack)
Fizzell, Maureen
Funt, Elliot
Geisler, Cheryl
Gibson, Eli
Godson, Ali
Harding, Kevin
Hiscocks, Graham
Krane, Bill
Laba, Martin
Leznoff, Daniel
Magnusson, Kris
Myers, Gordon
Nesbit, Tom
O'Neil, John
Owen, Brian (representing L. Copeland)
Parkhouse, Wade
Patel, Ravi
Paterson, David
Pavsek, Christopher
Percival, Colin
Percival, Paul
Pinto, Mario
Popowich, Fred (representing N. Rajapakse)
Ruben, Peter
Russell, Robert
Sahinalp, Cenk
Tiffany, Evan
van der Wey, Dolores
Warner, D'Arcy
Williams, Tony

Ross, Kate, Registrar and Secretary of Senate
Grant, Bobbie, Recording Secretary

Absent

Bezglasnyy, Anton
Francis, June
Golnaraghi, Farid
Gordon, Robert
Hannah, David
Janes, Craig
Joffres, Michel
Lee, Shara
Li, Fiona
Louie, Brandt
MacGrotty, Alysia
Marshall, Beth
McArthur, James
Moubarak, Cristel
Nadison, Ada
Noble, Cameron
Peters, Joseph
Pierce, John
Plischke, Michael
Scott, Jamie
Shapiro, Daniel
Thompson, Steve
Wakkary, Ron
Woodbury, Rob
Zelezny, Joseph

In attendance:

Hibbitts, Pat
Hinchliffe, Jo

1. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of October 5, 2009

Reference was made to the last paragraph of section 5 on page 3. Clarification was made that the discussion on grades related to information on averages for high school grades which is not currently available on the IRP website. A misspelling of Senator Shapiro's name on page 1 was also noted for correction.

Following the above-noted correction and clarification, the Minutes were approved.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

i) Paper S.09-115 – President's Agenda 2009/2010 (For Information)

During discussion of this item, the President was encouraged to establish a priority and put more emphasis on the support of existing programs that were already very successful and productive but very often were overlooked in resource allocation. The Chair indicated it was not his intention to proceed *in a way that overlooked highly successful and productive programs* nor did he believe that *had been the case* in the past but, he recognized that perception was a significant part of reality and he would pay attention to the matter.

ii) SFU Surrey

The Chair reported that resources had been obtained for SFU to occupy Podium 2 at the Surrey campus. Senate was informed that this was part of the planning process for expansion in Surrey and includes the capacity to install laboratories to properly support a full array of programs at Surrey, especially in the Sciences. On behalf of the University, the Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to members of the Senior Administration at Burnaby and Surrey, and to colleagues in the various programs at Surrey for their concerted efforts to make this possible.

iii) SFU Burnaby

The Chair also reported that funding was also available from a grant under the Knowledge Infrastructure Program for the renovation of the Science Chemistry laboratories on the Burnaby campus.

5. Question Period

i) The Chair reported that two questions had been received. The first question from R. Patel concerned a request for information about whether it would be possible to obtain a report comparing the number of classes at various times to the number of classes at the same times the previous year in order to see if any changes have occurred following the

implementation of the new scheduling policy. Senate was advised that information of this kind is generally available on the Institutional and Research Planning website; however, the data for Fall semester 2009 was not yet available. Request has been made for IRP to provide a report, and it is anticipated that the information will be available for the next meeting of Senate.

ii) The second question from E. Tiffany concerned why the final document of the Task Force on Teaching and Learning had not come to Senate for discussion prior to implementation. Clarification was requested about the process to be followed regarding implementation of the TLTF recommendations.

The Vice-President, Academic provided brief background information with respect to the process followed thus far. Senate was advised that although the final report was not yet complete, the Task Force had asked whether consideration could be made to moving ahead on a couple of recommendations which they felt were important. One was the development of an advisory group provisionally called the University Council on Teaching and Learning. That group, which would be broadly representative and include a significant number of faculty members, would review the final recommendations of the Task Force and propose an implementation plan for those recommendations. The initial term for this advisory council would be from December 2009 to August 2010. Establishing the advisory council in advance would allow expeditious review of the recommendation once the final report is complete.

With regard to Senate's role vis-à-vis the final report, Senate was advised that the recommendations of the Task Force would be vetted through the proposed Council, to the Vice President Academic, and then forwarded to the appropriate body for action. In many cases the appropriate body would be a Senate committee and ultimately Senate but recommendations dealing with administrative structures would not necessarily come to Senate. Instead the recommendation would go to the appropriate department in the University where the changes were taking place. So the entire report of the Task Force would not come to Senate for approval but, once the final report was available, it would be brought forward to Senate for information and discussion. Individual recommendations in areas related to Senate's authority would come forward for approval by Senate.

Reference was made to the statement of purpose, a preamble to the Rules of Senate, and opinion was expressed that the recommendations in the report, particularly the creation of the Council on Teaching and Learning, appear to fall under the authority of Senate as outlined in that statement. It was also pointed out that during consultations with the University community strong opposition to the creation of the Council had been expressed by many faculty members and even entire Departments/Faculties and, there appeared to be a broad sense among faculty that much of the criticism and feedback was not taken to heart by the Task Force. The Vice-President, Academic assured Senate that none of the recommendations affecting teaching and learning in the University would be implemented without coming to Senate if that was appropriate given the nature of the proposed change.

A question was posed as to what extent the mandate of the University Council on Teaching and Learning duplicates the mandate of the Senate Committee on University

Teaching and Learning. Opinion was expressed that SCUTL was approved by Senate to deal with many of the same topics as this new Council and suggestion was made that SCUTL would be a more appropriate body to deal with these issues. It was reiterated that the proposed Council would make recommendations to the Vice President Academic who in turn would refer them to the appropriate body which could include the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning.

Opinion was expressed that the concerns being voiced seemed to hinge on the nature of the proposed Council on Teaching and Learning. Opinion was expressed that the title evoked a sense of governance and suggestion was made that perhaps this interim group could be referred to as an advisory committee with a mandate to provide advice on how to deal with the recommendations of the Task Force. A decision as to whether or not to create a new body such as a Council on Teaching and Learning could then be made at a later stage. The Vice-President, Academic indicated he would take the suggestion under advisement.

In response to a question as to how members of the Council would be chosen, Senate was advised that the Council would consist of faculty, staff and students and members would be chosen in various ways depending on their status.

Discussion ensued with regard to the scope of Senate's authority, the difficulties of bicameral government, and the legal jurisdiction of the preamble outlining the purpose of Senate.

It was noted that it was not uncommon for policy to be formulated outside of Senate and then proposals affecting the implementation of policy as a whole or parts of the policy subsequently brought to Senate for debate and approval.

Reference was made to comments characterizing the group currently being formed as an advisory body through the appointment process of University Teaching Fellows. It was noted that in the papers received for the nomination of Fellows, these appointments were not primarily identified as advisory but had fully developed duties with significant responsibilities beyond just advising in areas such as teaching philosophy, capacity to assist colleagues with teaching, and the development of teaching.

An opinion was expressed that although the Task Force took the consultation process seriously, they did not appear to have given serious consideration to the comments received in the process, especially with respect to the opposition voiced against the creation of the Council on Teaching and Learning, and a suggestion was made that a motion to approve the proposed Council should come to the next meeting of Senate for approval.

The Chair informed Senate that debate had considerably exceeded the time allotted for Question Period and that discussion would be closed. Many important issues were raised that the Chair expected would be taken under advisement by the Vice-President Academic.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules

- i) Paper S.09-116 – Revision to University Policy GP 4 – Unscheduled Cancellation of Classes (For Information)

P. Hibbitts, Vice-President Finance and Administration was in attendance in order to respond to questions. Senate received the revisions to Policy GP 4 for information.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities

- i) Paper S.09-117 – Proposal to Dissolve the Centre for International Studies

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by S. Easton

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the proposal to dissolve the Centre for International Studies as a Schedule A Centre based in the School for International Studies within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences”

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

- ii) Paper S.09-118 – Process for Suspension of Admissions to a Program and Program Termination

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by R. Patel

“that Senate approve the process for Suspension of Admissions to a Program and Program Termination”

Reference was made to section 5 on page 2 and concern was expressed that programs could be removed without coming to Senate by departments simply deciding to withhold funding. It was pointed out that the policy was written in such a way that consultations would take place with everyone affected by suspension or removal of the program at every stage in the process. Further concerns were expressed that should faculty positions be frozen in the future, programs could become untenable to teach because there were no replacements for faculty members who had left SFU. Senate was advised that there was a possibility that over a period of years a program could be allowed to disappear as a result of strategic priorities being placed elsewhere but it was fairly unlikely since decisions with regard to faculty positions would be done collectively by the department, the Faculty Dean, and the Vice-President, Academic.

Clarification was requested with respect to the last paragraph on page one which referred to a procedure for fast tracking. Senate was assured that all stages of consultation would still have to take place but if there was agreement among all parties involved, the recommendation could bypass SCUS/SGSC and SCUP and come directly to Senate. A

suggestion was made that this could be better clarified in the detailed writing of the proposal.

In response to an inquiry as to why Senate was not included in the process to suspend admissions to a program, it was pointed out that from time to time there were valid reasons to suspend admissions to a program temporarily when there was no intention of terminating the program. This was more likely to occur in small programs at the graduate level during times when departments were in the process of renewing their faculty and wished to suspend admissions until students could be offered the level of support they needed. A suggestion was made that such matters could be brought to Senate for information.

K. Harding wished to have his concern dealing with service to students recorded in the Minutes. Once declared into a program, students have certain protections under the Calendar but there were undeclared students who were working hard towards a program and, if their program disappeared before they met the specific requirements to declare, the University must make it possible for them to continue in it. He wished to stress the importance of ensuring that all students who have paid their fees in the hope of declaring into a specific program were not entirely put out when suspension of programs and program terminations were being considered.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

- iii) Paper S.09-119 – New Program: Graduate Certificate in Modelling of Complex Social Systems

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by W. Parkhouse

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Modelling of Complex Social Systems”

F. Popowich, Associate Dean, Faculty of Applied Sciences, was in attendance in order to respond to questions.

A question arose as to why there was a difference between the Faculties with respect to courses taken internally and externally. Senate was advised that the Faculty of Applied Sciences and the Faculty of Science normally allowed students to take six credits outside the Faculty, whereas the norm for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was to keep the requirements within the Faculty. All Faculties chose to keep the requirements consistent with their normal practice. It was pointed out that all requirements were consistent with program development for a certificate at the graduate level.

Concerns were expressed about quality control, especially in regards to the required seminar series which did not appear to be under the supervision of any faculty member. Senate was advised that graduate certificates were essentially add-ons to the original degree to reflect that there has been an interdisciplinary component in the graduate program. The purpose of the seminar was to bring groups of students together from a wide range of

areas. A steering committee was responsible for the certificate and they will be responsible for and participating in the seminar process.

Reference was made to the list of principal and supporting faculty members. C. Sahinalp wished to record in the Minutes that the committee responsible for the program be strongly encouraged to increase the participation of additional faculty members in the program. The Associate Dean of Applied Sciences stated that he saw no problem with this and he would encourage more faculty to become involved.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

- iv) Paper S.09-120 – Update – SFU Accreditation with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) (For Information)

In response to a question as to the impulse for getting involved in the accreditation process, Senate's attention was drawn to Section 2 on page one which clearly outlined the reasons. There was no process for accreditation in Canada and the process was well established in the United States and would be useful when the University needs to compare itself with comparable universities elsewhere.

- C) Calendar Committee

- i) Paper S.09-121 – Revised Schedule of Dates 2010-2013

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by K. Harding

“That Senate approve a revised Schedule of Academic Dates for 2010-2013”

J. Hinchliffe, Assistant Registrar and Secretary of the Calendar Committee was in attendance in order to respond to questions.

Surprise was expressed that in 2010-2011, it appeared that exams were scheduled during Easter break in April. Senate was advised that although exams may be scheduled on the Saturday or Sunday, no exams were scheduled on statutory holidays which was consistent with current practice. It was noted that this same situation had occurred in previous years.

Discussion ensued with respect to scheduling exams on a Sunday. Inquiry was made as to whether it was possible to find out how many students claim dispensation for taking an exam on a Sunday. Making accommodation for such students downloaded a significant burden on faculty members. In most cases, dispensations have been for religious reasons and, since faculty members have to confirm these requests with the Interfaith Centre, they might have some data on this issue. Senate was advised that there was currently no data available but the Registrar would try to get some indication of the numbers.

Senate was reminded of the court case currently involving UBC and issues connected with teaching and exams on Sunday and the delicacy of the situation was emphasized.

Inquiry was made as to whether it was possible for the Calendar Committee to consider creating a schedule that would avoid having exams on Sundays but Senate was advised that it was not always possible to have all the exams completed and not use a Sunday in the timeframe required. It was also noted that if there was compliance with Principle 4, as outlined on the first page of the Senate paper, the schedule could possibly be adjusted to avoid Sunday exams.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

D) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

- i) Paper S.09-122 – Revision to the Membership Revisions with respect to Delegates for Faculty Undergraduate Committee ChairsU

Moved by B. Krane, seconded by K. Harding

“that Senate approve a revision to the membership provisions of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, so that in the event that the Undergraduate Committee Chair from a Faculty is unable to attend a meeting of SCUS, the Faculty Dean is authorized to appoint a faculty replacement”

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

- ii) Paper S.09-123 – Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved two new options in the Bachelor of Arts program; restricted the Bachelor of General Studies Degree as a graduation option for FASS students only; and approved new courses and minor revisions to existing courses and programs in the following areas: Criminology, Economics, English, Explorations program, First Nations Studies, Gerontology, History, International Studies, Chinese, Linguistics, Political Science, Sociology/Anthropology, Women’s Studies, World Literature. Senate also received information that SCUS approved, under delegated authority, WQB designations in a variety of courses within the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

- iii) Paper S.09-124 – Faculty of Business Administration – Curriculum Revisions (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new courses in the Faculty of Business Administration.

iv) Paper S.09-125 – Faculty of Education – Curriculum Revisions (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a course deletion and minor revisions to an existing course in the Faculty of Education.

E) Senate Graduate Studies Committee

i) Paper S.09-126 – Faculty of Applied Sciences – Curriculum Revisions (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved the deletion of a course in Computing Science and a revision to the required courses for graduate students in Computing Science to reflect the course deletion.

ii) Paper S.09-127 – Faculty of Business Administration – Curriculum Revisions (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved a revision to an existing course in Business Administration.

iii) Paper S.09-128 – Faculty of Communication, Art & Technology – Curriculum Revisions (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved minor changes to the general Calendar description of the Master of Publishing program, and minor revisions to existing courses in the Publishing program.

F) Senate Nominating Committee

i) Paper S.09-129 – Elections

The Secretary reported that no additional nominations had been received. The only name on Senate paper S.09-129, Rob Gordon was declared elected by acclamation to the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies. All outstanding vacancies would be carried forward to the next meeting of Senate.

7. Other Business

i) Paper S.09-130 – Election of Fourth Convocation Senator

Information regarding the election of a fourth Convocation Senator was presented to Senate by D. Warner on behalf of the Convocation Senators. The election process as outlined in the document would proceed as advertised.

Post Meeting Note: Balloting resulted in tied vote between Aldona Businskas and Cynthia Lewis. In accordance with Senate Rules the Registrar conducted a coin toss to break the tie. Prior to the toss of the coin, one candidate was designated as 'heads', the other candidate designated as 'tails'. The coin was tossed and the winner – Cynthia Lewis – was declared elected as Convocation Senator to replace M. Letourneau for term of office to May 31, 2011.

8. Information

The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of Senate is Monday, December 7, 2009.

The Open Session adjourned at 6:45 pm, and Senate moved directly into Closed Session.

Kate Ross
Registrar and Secretary of Senate