



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, April 13, 2015 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)

Open Session

Present: Andrew Petter, Chair

Abramson, Neil
Bird, Gwen
Birmingham, Elina
Budra, Paul
Bueckert, Chardaye
Burley, David
Chapman, Brandon
Chapman, Glenn
Chong, Dion
Chu, Colin
Craig, John
Cupples, Claire
Curry, Joanne
Driver, Jon
Easton, Stephen
Eikerling, Michael
Escarcha, Shirin
Gajdics, Sylvia
Guttman, Julian
Johnson, Joy
Jozaghi, Ehsan
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Magnusson, Kris
McTavish, Rob
Myers, Gordon
O'Neil, John
Parkhouse, Wade
Paterson, David
Percival, Colin
Percival, Paul
Quarmby, Lynne
Rajapakse, Nimal
Schellenberg, Betty
Simpkin, Madelaine
Spector, Stephen
Stefanovic, Ingrid

Tingling, Peter
Underhill, Owen
Wallace, Brady

Absent:

Antle, Alissa
Arzanpour, Siamak
Brennand, Tracy
Delgrande, Jim
Elle, Elizabeth
Flodr, Sarah-Sophia
Giardini, Anne
Hedley, Nick
Kessler, Anke
Leacock, Tracey
Liu, Ting (Emma)
Ossinsky, Dimitri
Pappas, Panayiotis
Pilarinos, Athina
Reich, Blaize
Ruben, Peter
Shaw, Chris
Somers, Julian
Szymczyk, Barbara
Wiese, Kay
Yoon, Paul

In Attendance:

Hatala, Marek
Kropinski, Mary Catherine

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session on March 2, 2015

The minutes of the open session on March 2, 2015 were approved as distributed, with a minor correction.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that he and Nimal Rajapakse, Dean of Applied Sciences, recently accompanied Advanced Education Minister Andrew Wilkinson and Deputy Minister Sandra Carroll on the first leg of their trip to China. In Beijing, the group met with graduate students in the new dual-degree Master's program in Global Communications at the Communication University of China (CUC). In Hangzhou, the group met with 49 undergraduate students enrolled in the Dual Degree Program in Computing Science at Zhejiang University.

The Chair reported that he and Joy Johnson, Vice-President Research, were in Toronto on March 16 to hear Finance Minister Joe Oliver announce \$10.7 million in funding over five years for the Zones of Incubation and Innovation Network, a consortium of SFU, Ryerson University, and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. \$5 million will be coming to SFU to expand its incubation and acceleration programs, including Venture Connection and VentureLabs, and to link to ZoneStartups India, the Bombay Stock Exchange-based accelerator in which Ryerson and SFU are partnered.

The Chair reported that SFU was nominated to host one of Compute Canada's four new national Advanced Research Computing (ARC) systems, a significant milestone given that SFU was nominated to host the largest of the General Purpose (GP) systems.

The Chair reported that he and John O'Neil, Dean of Health Sciences, and others attended the announcement of the First Nations Health Authority Chair in Heart Health and Wellness on March 14. This partnership between SFU, the First Nations Health Authority, and St. Paul's Hospital Foundation is the first of its kind in Western Canada and will lead research and education efforts, and guide policy on First Nations' heart health and disease prevention.

The Chair reported that the Trottier Observatory will officially open on Friday, April 17. The opening will celebrate the contribution of the Trottier Foundation to create this facility, which will be a hub for engagement activities and outreach programs for students, including those outside the University in the high school and elementary school systems.

The Chair reported on alumni receptions in Kelowna, Kamloops, and Toronto. The events were well attended by alumni, who are excited about the upcoming 50th anniversary celebrations in 2015. In Kamloops, the Chair had the opportunity to meet with former SFU president Ken Strand.

The Chair reported that the Louis Riel residence closure was a difficult decision, driven by the overriding need to protect the health and safety of SFU students and their families. The University will be working with those affected by the closure to find alternate accommodations.

5. Question Period

i) A question was submitted by Senator G. Chapman regarding the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results published in the February 2015 edition of MacLean's magazine.

The survey asked university students the following questions:

1. How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?
2. If you could start over, would you go the institution that you are now attending?
3. Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I received.
4. I feel as if I belong to this university.

Senator Chapman noted that in all of these questions SFU ranked near the bottom of the list among first year students and slightly better among senior students, and below UBC, Victoria, and UNBC. Senator Chapman asked the following questions:

1. Do we have surveys of SFU's students that cover these topics and how do the results compare?
2. Given these poor results in a national magazine, what approach is SFU thinking of to improve these scores?

In answer to the first question, Senate was informed that Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) compiles the Undergraduate Survey Consolidation Report, which consolidates the results from the following undergraduate surveys: SFU's internal Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS); NSSE; the BC Baccalaureate Graduate Outcomes Survey (BGS); Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC); and the International Student Barometer (ISB). This report provides a comparison of the results from the various surveys for similar-sized post-secondary institutions. For example, the UGSS results show that overall satisfaction of SFU undergraduate students has increased from 88% to 90% over the past five years; BGS results indicate that SFU students rate their satisfaction with their education experience in the 93-94% range, slightly lower than UVIC and slightly higher than UBC; CUSC results indicate that the quality of teaching at SFU has increased from 82% to 87% between 2008 and 2011, slightly higher than the comparison group of universities. The report has been shared with the Deans and is available on the IRP website (<http://www.sfu.ca/irp.html>).

In answer to the second question, Senate was informed that the focus of the University is not to improve survey scores; rather the intent is to improve the quality of education for students. One of SFU's core themes, engaging students, involves equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and experience to prepare them for life in an ever-changing and challenging world. The Mid-Cycle Self Evaluation Report to the NWCCU includes a list of the initiatives that have been developed or are in development to support this theme, and is available on the Vice-President, Academic website (<https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/accreditation.html>).

A question was asked whether SFU was evaluating the NSSE methodology to try to understand the results. Senate was informed that IRP is working on the empirical analysis to see what can be learned from survey results such as NSSE.

A comment was made that the University needs to work with the Simon Fraser Student Society to create a better social experience to keep students engaged on campus, through activities such as athletics and clubs.

A comment was made that some students may feel engaged in the academic purpose of the University, while not being involved in athletics or clubs.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Appeals Board (SAB)

i) Annual Report (S.15-49)

Senate received for information the Senate Appeals Board annual report for 2014.

Mary Catherine Kropinski (Chair, SAB) was in attendance to respond to questions.

A question was asked regarding the summary of appeal decisions from 2008 to 2014, whether the increase in withdrawal under extenuating circumstances (WE) applications is evidence of increasing academic or personal pressures being placed on students. Senate was informed that there are numerous reasons for the increase in WE applications, including structural changes in the WE process, and that increased student stress may be an additional factor.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Simon Fraser University-Zhejiang University Joint Centre on Big Data (JCBD) Research (S.15-50)

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by E. Jozaghi

“That Senate approve the establishment of the Simon Fraser University-Zhejiang University Joint Centre on Big Data (JCBD) research as a Centre for a five-year term.”

Question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) External Review of the School of Interactive Arts and Technology (S.15-51)

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by O. Underhill

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the School of Interactive Arts and Technology that resulted from its External Review.”

Marek Hatala, Director from the School of Interactive Arts and Technology, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) External Review Update for the Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology (S.15-52)

Senate received for information the external review update for the Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology.

A question was asked regarding the increase in percentage of females in the program as noted in item 1.1.2, “increased quality and quantity of graduate applicants to our program,” and whether the conclusion to be drawn is that females are considered to be better students than males. Senate was informed that the department will be consulted for a response to the question.

iv) External Review Update of the Department of Earth Sciences (S.15-53)

Senate received for information the external review update for the Department of Earth Sciences.

C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)**i) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Applied Sciences (S.15-54)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, added new courses and made revisions to existing courses and programs in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science).

A question was asked whether CMPT 275 will be removed as a course offering since CMPT 276 is replacing it as a requirement for the Computing Science programs. Senate was informed that the intention is to delete CMPT 275 because it has a workload that is considered very difficult to manage for both students and instructors.

ii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (S.15-55)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, added new courses and made revisions to existing courses and programs in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Cognitive Science Program; Economics; English; Explorations Program; First Nations Studies; Centre for Hellenic Studies; History; Humanities; Philosophy; Political Science).

Senator Bueckert commended the Department of Political Science and the undergraduate chair for introducing more W-designated upper division courses.

iii) Curriculum Revisions – Beedie School of Business (S.15-56)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing programs in the Beedie School of Business.

iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (S.15-57)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, added a new course and made revisions to existing courses and programs in the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School of Communication; School for the Contemporary Arts; FCAT Bachelor of Arts program).

v) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Environment (S.15-58)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing courses and programs in the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology; Geography; School of Resource and Environmental Management; Faculty of Environment [ENV] courses).

vi) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Health Sciences (S.15-59)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing programs in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

vii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.15-60)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing courses in the Faculty of Science (Statistics and Actuarial Science).

D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

i) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Applied Sciences (S.15-61)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to an existing program in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Engineering Science).

ii) Curriculum Revisions – Beedie School of Business (S.15-62)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, added a new course and made revisions to existing courses in the Beedie School of Business.

iii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Education (S.15-63)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing courses and programs in the Faculty of Education.

iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Environment (S.15-64)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing programs in the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management).

v) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Health Sciences (S.15-65)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing courses and an existing program in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

vi) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.15-66)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, added a new course in the Faculty of Science (Molecular Biology and Biochemistry).

7. Other Business

i) Election Report to Senate (S.15-67)

Senate received for information a summary of the results of the student election for positions on Senate, the Board of Governors, the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, and the SFU Community Trust Board of Directors, and the results of the faculty election for positions on Senate and the Board of Governors.

8. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting – Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

Open session adjourned at 6:15 p.m. and Senate moved into the closed session.

Mark Walker
Registrar and Executive Director, Student Enrolment