



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on  
Monday, September 12, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)

## Open Session

### **Present:** Andrew Petter, Chair

Andersen, Holly  
Baharmand, Iman  
Bartram, Lyn  
Beg, Faisal (for Uwe Glässer)  
Binotto, Jordan  
Bird, Gwen  
Birmingham, Elina  
Brennand, Tracy  
Budra, Paul  
Burley, David  
Chapman, Glenn  
Chen, Larissa  
Cupples, Claire  
Dale, Nadia  
Dastmalchian, Ali  
Druick, Zoe (for Aoife Mac Namara)  
Farah, Arr  
Gajdics, Sylvia  
Gray, Bonnie  
Han, Richard  
Hans, Paul  
Haywood, Weldon  
Hedley, Nick  
Ige, Adebola Abayomi  
Johnson, Joy  
Keller, Peter  
Kirkpatrick, Ted  
Laitsch, Dan  
Leacock, Tracey  
Leznoff, Daniel  
MacAlister, David  
Malhan, Blossom  
McTavish, Rob  
Miller, Tatum  
Moens, Alexander  
Myers, Gordon  
O'Neil, John

Parkhouse, Wade  
Paterson, David  
Percival, Colin  
Peters, Joseph  
Pooghkay, Curtis  
Pulkingham, Jane  
Ruben, Peter  
Sekhon, Gurbir  
Shaw, Chris  
Spector, Stephen  
Szymczyk, Barbara  
Tabin, Yvonne  
Tingling, Peter  
Wiese, Kay  
Williams, Tony

### **Absent:**

Abramson, Neil  
Christians, Julian  
Giardini, Anne  
Glässer, Uwe  
Kropinski, Mary-Catherine  
Lewthwaite, Jayme  
Mac Namara, Aoife  
Magnusson, Kris  
Mongrain, Steeve  
Percival, Paul  
Stefanovic, Ingrid

### **In Attendance:**

Hedberg, Nancy  
Hinchliffe, Jo  
Naqvi, Zareen  
Sixsmith, Andrew

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session on July 4, 2016**

The minutes of the open session on July 4, 2016 were approved as distributed.

**3. Business Arising from the Minutes**

At the July Senate meeting a question was asked about the breakdown of the non-tenure track faculty who are teaching upper division courses. Senate was informed that an answer would be provided at a future Senate meeting.

**4. Report of the Chair**

On behalf of Senate, the Chair welcomed Dr. Peter Keller, our new Vice-President, Academic and Provost. The Chair also welcomed back Gord Myers, our Associate Vice-President, Academic, who was away over the summer for health reasons and thanked Senator Wade Parkhouse for stepping in during his absence.

The Chair reported that the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities approved accreditation for Simon Fraser University. Senate was thanked for its contribution throughout the accreditation process, with a reminder that accreditation is an ongoing process and in order to maintain good standing with the Northwest Commission we will have to continue to examine our programs and demonstrate progress. In addition to granting us accreditation, the commission commended SFU for our achievements and for the role of the University's governance process in maintaining academic freedom.

The Chair reported on a number of construction projects: construction is complete on our new downtown graduate residence and innovation centre, with students having already moved in; we are hoping to move forward with the first phase of the residence expansion plan for the Burnaby campus. The goal is to double our residence capacity on this campus starting with undergraduate accommodation, but moving to some graduate housing as well; UniverCity has decided to proceed with a rental apartment facility that will target the low-end-of-market in terms of trying to create affordable family housing suitable for graduate students; construction is underway on the new student union building near convocation mall, with credit to the SFSS and the student body for their support; we are still awaiting a formal response to our applications for capital projects under the Federal Provincial Strategic Investment Fund. We're optimistic that one of our applications, for the first phase of the Surrey Expansion, will be approved for a new Sustainable Energy and Environmental Engineering Building. We are less optimistic that the replacement of the Biology Building with a new Life Sciences Building will be approved, but we will continue to push this as a high priority project; we are likely to see the approval of funding for upgrades to the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre, which is a collaboration amongst five universities; we have seen a significant increase in the allocation of funding from the provincial government for routine maintenance. This year will see around \$17 million allocated, with hope it will rise to \$20 million in each of the next two years; and the construction of the new CompuCanada Data Centre is well underway.

The Chair noted a number of Strategic Initiatives: SFU Innovates, our new innovation strategy, continues to gain recognition and support. Sarah Lubik, Director of Entrepreneurship, was named one of Canada's 10 Innovation Leaders helping to shape Canada's Innovation Strategy; work is well underway on the development of our Big Data Initiative, overseen by our Vice-

President, Research Joy Johnson. This initiative looks to provide service and capacity to the entire university community, on both the teaching and research side in terms of the uses of Big Data, how Big Data can inform the way we understand, the way we research, and the way we affect both its uses and abuses; work is underway to develop our response to the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and develop an agenda for the university with respect to Indigenous programming and initiatives. It's being co-chaired by our Dean of Education, Kris Magnusson, and a member of our Board of Governors and an Alumnus, Chris Lewis, from the Squamish First Nation. Their goal is to listen, consult, and provide feedback as to how we can best respond to the calls to action for reconciliation through our educational and non-educational activities; and we are seeking to place major focus in the coming year on how we can improve the quality of student life at SFU. Though we already do a lot, we can do better job in informing people about the services we already provide and the opportunities that already exist, but also to work with our students to increase the quality of their experience at SFU.

The Chair reported that the Vice-President, Research has undertaken major consultations towards the development of a new Strategic Research Plan. The plan was recently considered by the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) and will be coming to Senate later this fall. Also, the process that was launched last year to develop a new policy on Sexual Violence and Misconduct continues. The process was being led by John Driver as Provost and he has agreed, despite no longer being Provost, to continue to lead that process through the fall. We hope to have a draft policy to share with the SFU community later this fall. We need to get this policy right and ensure that we create the safest and most supportive campus environment for students, for faculty and for staff.

The Chair noted some research updates: a number of months ago we signed a memorandum of understanding with the Societe d'Acceleration du Transfer de Technologies (SATT) Grand Centre and the City of Surrey to collaborate on a range of innovative projects involving SFU's Digital Health Hub within Innovation Boulevard. SATT Grand Centre is a key player in France in advancing technology transfer, with a broad ecosystem that includes seven universities, two science and technology centres, and six graduate schools. Their focus on diagnostics and medical devices aligns with some of the work being done at our Gerontology Research Centre and Digital Health Hub in conjunction with *AGE-WELL* network; Gerhard Gries, Professor and NSERC Industrial Research Chair in Multimodal Animal Communication Ecology, received a Recognition Award in Insect Physiology, Biochemistry, and Toxicology from the Entomological Society of America for his research, teaching and outreach contributions in urban entomology; and Blaize Reich, former Dean of the Beedie School of Business and now RBC Professor of Technology and Innovation, received an Academic Fellow Award from the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes for her leadership in furthering innovations between academia and the management consulting profession.

The Chair reported that Zoya Jiwa, a fourth year sociology student, was named YWCA Young Woman of Distinction for 2016. During her fellowship with RADIUS, our social and innovation lab and venturing incubator, Zoya, who has lupus, founded *As We Are*, an online forum where people with health challenges can share their stories and discuss functional fashion. That is just one example of the huge amount of student engagement going on across this university and an example of some of the recognition that our students are getting.

The Chair highlighted some recent and upcoming events: the first lecture of the *President's Dream Colloquium: Returning to the Teachings: Justice, Identity and Belonging*, by Chief

Robert Joseph, was well attended, with further lectures through the fall by some very exciting speakers. Of note, Wab Kinew, a well-known broadcaster and Aboriginal leader will be speaking at the Playhouse Theatre, on September 29<sup>th</sup>; our Terry Fox Day Walk & Run is on September 30<sup>th</sup>; and Convocation is coming up on October 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

## 5. Question Period

Senator Leacock asked the following question:

*How does Senate ensure it stays well-informed on the trends and patterns relevant to academic governance at SFU and beyond?*

*With a strong committee structure, Senate shouldn't generally need to pay close attention to every isolated change. Indeed that's why most change requests are "for information" by the time they reach us – and why there is often pressure to "get this request through," so that the relevant unit can get on with its activities.*

*Instead, where it seems that a body that has such broad representation from across disciplines and roles is most useful is in staying abreast of the patterns of change. Yet that seems to be precisely what Senate doesn't have good mechanisms to do.*

*Each change request is typically considered on an individual basis (both as it is approved & when Senate committees submit annual reports with tallies of umpteen changes to individual, courses, programs, etc.). But it's not clear when or how Senate has the opportunity to, ideally, be proactive in recognizing when systemic changes may be relevant, or, at the least, consider the cumulative impact of a thousand small changes.*

*That handout that each of you has in front of you has several examples, with context, of the types of forests – patterns – that Senate may be missing because our processes tend to keep us focused on the trees – the isolated change requests. These examples include specific questions that I ask all Senators to at least take a quick glance at, and that I hope Senate will respond to.*

*Overall, these questions can be summed up by the question: What processes ensure that Senate committees proactively keep Senate (and by extension all of the units represented in Senate) abreast of overall internal and external trends and patterns, and how can these existing processes be improved?*

The Chair, in his role as President, responded to this question.

Senate was informed there are a number of mechanisms in place that allow Senate to engage in a consideration of broader trends. Academic administrators such as the Vice-President Academic, Associate Vice-President Academic, and Deans, all of whom serve on Senate, are a resource for this kind of information and these individuals participate regularly, as do other academic leaders who are represented in Senate, in national and international conferences, so they have not only a good sense of university wide trends, but also of national and international trends. One of their roles is to stay educated about general trends in education and monitor what is happening at SFU. In the case of disappearing masters' theses, I would expect the Dean of Graduate Studies to raise this as an issue if he were concerned that we were moving in the wrong direction, or out of step with the rest of Canada. If other Senators have questions about those broader trends, he's available to answer those questions in committee or at Senate.

Committees that involve consideration of academic programmatic issues enjoy broad representation across the university from people who can inform the committee with that broader knowledge. In addition, knowledgeable individuals are members of or serve as resource people to committees that produce material for such committees. These include faculty members and senior staff members, or experienced students, and these individuals can raise and respond to issues at Senate committee meetings, and the committee can decide to forward a document to Senate asking for a discussion or decision or Senate can refer matters back to committee based on questions raised.

Senate committees responsible for academic programming, in particular, have representatives from across the university who can share trends from their disciplinary fields with respect to both graduate and undergraduate education. Senators can themselves ask for an issue or concern to be discussed by Senate or its committees. For example, a Senator could ask Senate to review the requirements for a master's degree at SFU. If Senate felt that such a review was warranted, it could then refer the matter to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee for consideration. In addition, Senate receives various annual reports that contain broader information and can prompt questions that allow Senate to consider whether a broader analysis or policy review might be required. It's not unusual for Senate to request that a following years report contain additional information so as to better inform Senate discussions.

External Reviews, including disciplinary and institutional accreditation processes bring broader information, context and issues to the attention of Senate. External review committees will inform us about whether programs are out of step with those of other institutions or are out of step with disciplinary requirements. The expertise of leaders in academic units familiar with the evolution of their disciplines, dedicated to improving their programs, is the driving force behind most proposals for program change, and the self-studies and retreats within external reviews are central to long-term planning. The knowledge and recommendations of external reviewers which informs those reviews is also an important source of information that comes to Senate. The accreditation processes that we are going through at a university wide level through the Northwest Commission has provided us with some useful contextual information about how our programs work together and helps to inform Senate.

In the end, it's a matter of proactive Senators and informed advisors providing information to Senate working together to ensure that individual decisions are viewed in that broader context and are informed by those who have that broader context and information to share.

A comment was made that the initial question seemed less about where we get specific information and more about how we can have a proactive discussion on helping shape the trends and use that as a guiding set of criteria in making future decisions.

A comment was made that the real issue at hand is about Senate having awareness of the larger patterns and issues and having the opportunity to discuss and ask questions. Given that the university is becoming more interdisciplinary, it is important to understand what happens in other areas of the university. Senate is a body offering a wide range of perspectives and it is valuable to allow that body to stay informed about the patterns that are evolving at the university, and that is very different from Senate being more directive in its scope.

A conversation ensued on how best to foster a sense of community within the Senate and across the university as a whole, creating better opportunities for understanding, discussion, and the

sharing of information. Considerations included: using pre-Senate dinners to allow Senators to gather informally and discuss broader issues; holding a retreat, potentially including the Board of Governors, with a more formal agenda; having Senate committees generate big picture questions to be discussed at Senate; allowing time in Senate to consider big picture issues alongside with more programmatic agenda items; considering which reports coming to Senate could stimulate useful discussions and ask that those items be reported to Senate annually.

## 6. Reports of Committees

### A) Calendar Committee (CC)

#### i) Academic Dates 2017-2019 (S.16-90)

Moved by S. Spector, seconded by C. Percival

"That Senate approve the Schedule of Academic Dates 2017-2019."

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

### B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

#### i) Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Certificate in the Linguistics of a First Nations Language (S.16-91)

Moved by P. Keller, seconded by P. Budra

"That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Certificate in the Linguistics of a First Nations Language in the Department of Linguistics within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, effective Summer 2017."

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

#### ii) Suspension of Admission to the Graduate Diploma in Global Health Program (S.16-92)

Moved by P. Keller, seconded by J. O'Neil

"That Senate approve the suspension of admission to the Graduate Diploma in Global Health Program in the Faculty of Health Sciences, effective Spring 2017."

A question was asked if suspension of the program signifies a future termination of the program. Senate was informed that the original diploma program was designed with the idea that students would come from around the world to take these classes but that just has not proven true given the limited interest on the part of people working in global health. Consideration is being given to revitalizing the program in next few years, but that development will take time.

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

#### iii) The Science and Technology for Aging Research (STAR) Institute (S.16-93)

Moved by P. Keller, seconded by C. Shaw

"That Senate approve the establishment of the Science and Technology for Aging Research (STAR) Institute as an Institute for a five-year term."

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)**

**i) Enrollment Priority for Newly Admitted Secondary School Students  
(S.16-67 Revised)**

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by G. Myers

“That Senate approves, effective Fall 2016, newly admitted secondary school students be assigned priority enrollment for their first two consecutive terms e.g. Fall Term 2016 and Spring Term 2017. Subsequent enrollment priority will be based on current rules for continuing students. A review of this process is to be conducted two years after implementation.”

After clarifying that enrollment priority for their first two terms does not have to be consecutive, an amendment was made to remove the word *consecutive* from the motion.

A comment was made that this seems to move the hardship of course access away from first year students and onto second year students. Senate was informed that some analysis was done, particularly with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, to determine where course access problems exist. If first year students can gain access to the courses they need, they will be in a better position to declare their majors in their second year and will continue to progress. There will be challenges in this transition but by taking a targeted approach at the faculty level we hope to reduce potential hardship.

A suggestion was made that enrollment priority should be given for a full year rather than two terms since students beginning in Spring term would likely not have difficulty getting courses during the Summer term. Also, a question was asked if enrollment priority could be provided to students who had been previously left on waiting lists. Senate was informed that because enrollment priority only applies to incoming high school students we have very few actually starting in the Spring or Summer terms. Communication will be sent out to those incoming students so that they understand that they do have priority in their first two terms and to take a full course load if possible. In regards to waitlists, it was noted that there are limitations within the student information system, but solutions are being sought.

A question was asked if any enrollment priority initiatives exist for transfer students. Senate was informed that transfer students do not receive enrollment priority, but that they do tend to have earlier enrollment dates due to their transfer credits, which play a part in determining enrollment priority.

A question was asked about areas experiencing course availability issues and if information could be provided to Senate identifying those areas. Senate was informed that preliminary work has been done on this topic but that work still remains before it is finalized.

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**ii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Applied Sciences (S.16-95)**

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

**iii) Curriculum Revisions – Beedie School of Business (S.16-96)**

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

**iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (S.16-97)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to an existing programs and courses in the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Publishing Program, School of Interactive Art and Technology).

**v) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.16-98)**

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, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry).

**D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)****i) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (S.16-99)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing programs in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Sociology and Anthropology).

**ii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (S.16-100)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to an existing course in the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Publishing Program).

**iii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Environment (S.16-101)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to an existing course in the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology).

**iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.16-102)**

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

**E) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)****i) Senate Committee Elections (S.16-103)**

Senate received a summary of the nominations, positions elected by acclamation, positions requiring an online vote, and outstanding vacancies for the Senate committees.

**7. Other Business****i) Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) Reports (S.16-104)**

Senate received the 2015/16 Grades Report, and the 2015 Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) Report for information.

Zareen Naqvi, Director - Institutional Research and Planning, was in attendance to respond to questions.



A question was asked about the disparity existing between expected credential completion time and actual completion time. Senate was informed that commonly cited reasons for taking longer include course availability, taking a reduced course load, participation in co-op, and employment.

A question was asked about the impact of average grades awarded within a particular faculty with respect to scholarships awarded across the university. Senate was informed that preliminary findings for open undergraduate scholarships show that roughly 30% of the money would go to different students if some form of correction were applied based on differing grading practices across the university. It was noted, however, that analysis is still being done and once completed, the results would be brought to the Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries, and then to Senate.

It was noted that there is no right answer as to what a grade measures, but coming up with a fairer way to distribute university funds so that students are not being penalized for taking courses in certain faculties would be a better way to approach the problem.

A question was asked if more detail could be provided in future surveys as to why students are not able to get into certain courses. Senate was informed that the questionnaire does ask for reasons and that answers included the course was not offered, all course sections were full, or the course had a conflict with my work schedule. The full list for lower and upper division courses was quite long and was included in the full report.

**8. Information**

**i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, October 3, 2016.**

Open session adjourned at 8:36 p.m. and Senate moved into the closed session.

Rummana Khan Hemani  
Registrar (pro tem)