



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, June 5, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

Open Session

Present: Joy Johnson, Chair

Abu-Samhan, Mishael
Barlow, Leanne
Bhalloo, Shafik
Bird, Gwen
Brennand, Tracy
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Chapman, Glenn
Collard, Mark
Denholm, Julia
Derksen, Jeff
Dhesa, Priyanka
D'Silva, Tyler
Eftenaru, Cristina
Elle, Elizabeth
Everton, Mike
Faris, Reema
Fiume, Eugene
Fung, Aaron
Gray, Bonnie
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Hodaly, Alexander
Hogg, Robert (for Tania Bubela)
Karaivanov, Alexander
Kayande, Ujwal
Kerr, Jeannie
Laitsch, Dan
Lysova, Alexandra
Magnusson, Kris
Manzer, Mussaab
Martell, Matt
McKenzie, Janis
Muntean, Reese
Myers, Gord
Nahmiash, Amanda
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Neil, Dugan
Pantophlet, Ralph
Parent, Michael

Parkhouse, Wade
Parmar, Abhishek
Percival, Colin
Pratt, Elspeth
Schiphorst, Thecla
Shinkar, Igor
Singh Walia, Harkirat
Slaney, Kate (for Laurel Weldon)
Stockie, John
Sutherland, Jill
Szymczyk, Barbara
Thornton, Allen
Traversa, Marissa
Vuong, Quang
Whitehurst, David
Williams, Vance
Zuluaga, Natalia

Absent:

Bubela, Tania
Hendrigan, Holly
Krogman, Naomi
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Masri, Kamal
Nelson, Todd
Rincon, Laura
Sawan, Amani
Schmidt, Michèle
Vrooman, Tamara
Weldon, Laurel
Williams, JF

In Attendance:

The Chair, on behalf of Senate, welcomed the following new and re-elected Senators:

New Faculty Senators: Jeannie Kerr (EDUC); Alexandra Lysova (FASS); Allen Thornton (FASS); David Whitehurst (HSCI)

Re-elected Faculty Senators: Tracy Brennand (ENV); Glenn Chapman (FAS); Michael Everton (FASS); Daniel Leznoff (SCI); Kamal Masri (BUS); Ralph Pantophlet (HSCI)

New Student Senators: Mishael Abu-Samhan (FASS); Tyler D'Silva (FAS); Aaron Fung (FASS); Alexander Hodaly (FASS); Mussaab Manzer (ENV); Amanda Nahmiash (BUS); Laura Rincon (FASS); Amani Sawan (SCI); Marissa Traversa (FASS); Quang Vuong (SCI); Harkirat Singh Walia (BUS); Natalia Zuluaga (FASS)

Re-elected Student Senators: Priyanka Dhesa (HSCI); Reema Faris (FASS); Reese Muntean (FCAT); Todd Nelson (EDUC); Abhishek Parmar (BUS)

New Convocation Senators: Cristina Eftenaru; Jill Sutherland; Barbara Szymczyk

Re-elected Convocation Senators: Colin Percival

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. The Minutes of the Open Session of May 15, 2023 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on July 10, 2023

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that June Convocation runs from June 6th to 9th. Honourary degrees will be conferred to seven individuals: Adelle Blackett, Donald Dingwell, barbara findlay, Dany Laferrière, Joy MacPhail, Svend Robinson, and Zainub Verjee.

The Chair reported that last week, SFU launched What's Next: The SFU Strategy at an event with over 150 people, including many dignitaries, board members, donors, business leaders and members of the SFU community. The event allowed the University to share its new vision, purpose and framework for action.

The Chair reported that today, she, in her role as President, attended the Indigenous Honouring Feast, hosted by the Indigenous Student Centre. Indigenous faculty, staff, students, representatives from the Host Nations and guests raised their hands with respect and in honour of the achievements of graduating Indigenous students. Several attendees wore traditional ceremonial regalia, underpinning the importance of connection to the community.

The Chair reported that last week, the Times Higher Education 2023 Impact Rankings were released and SFU was recognized as number one for its global impact on sustainable cities and communities – and fifth in the world for its response to climate action. The annual rankings measure universities' strengths in advancing the United Nations' sustainable development goals, which call on developed and developing countries to partner on critical global issues.

The Chair reported that last week, she, in her role as President, was invited to speak at the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, sharing the role SFU plays in building a more innovative, sustainable, and prosperous economy and future for all British Columbians.

The Chair reported that the Provost model continues to be strengthened at SFU in support of the academic mission and delivering on the priorities outlined in What's Next: the SFU Strategy. Over the past year, two key governance committees have been implemented and empowered:

- The Integrated Planning Committee (IPC), responsible for long-range planning and ensuring that budgeting is aligned with the strategic priorities, and the mission, vision and values of the university. This committee is chaired by the Provost;
- The Budget Planning Committee, responsible for development of SFU's budget. This committee is chaired by the Provost and VP Finance and Administration.

The Chair reported that SFU will be welcoming Dr. Mary O'Brien as the new Vice-Provost and Dean, Graduate Studies, formerly the role held by Jeff Derkson, Dean and Associate Provost, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Studies.

The Chair reported that Francesca Hennigar has been appointed General Counsel. Francesca previously served as Acting General Counsel, and following a rigorous external recruitment, is being appointed permanently to the role.

i) Report of the Provost

The Provost reported the following Summer enrollment updates:

- New undergraduate students are down 13 to 14% from last year, which is similar to targeting. This means there are 13% fewer undergraduate students enrolled than anticipated.
- Full-time student enrollment has decreased by 8.5%. Part-time enrollment is also down.
- Total AFTEs are down 5%.
- Co-op enrollments are down 22% and as such, is contributing a 3% decrease in total AFTEs.
- Non-Co-op students taking regular courses are down 2.5%; Non-Co-op international AFTEs are down by 190.
- For the Fall term, new fall enrollments for international undergraduates by head count are fifty ahead of target from this time last year.

The Provost reported that SFU's new Provost starts on August 15th and onboarding has begun. Onboarding has also begun for the new Dean of Graduate Studies. The University is also finalizing the appointments for the Dean of Education and the Associate Vice-President,

Academic. The call for committee members for the Dean of Medicine should be forthcoming later this month.

The Provost provided the following updates on the medical school:

- A draft interim business case for the medical school was submitted on May 31st.
- Revisions are already being made to the draft and are due mid-June.
- The ministries are currently looking at the draft to make recommendations for adjustments.
- The University is also analyzing the business case submitted by Fraser Health Authority to see where there is overlap or congruencies.
- The anticipated submission of the full business case in final form is the end of September, which is when it goes to Treasury board.
- The draft interim business case submitted on May 31st will continue to be worked on for the remainder of the summer.
- It is intended to initiate the search for the dean of the medical school in September.
- The decision on funding from the provincial government is expected in March 2024.
- The internal approval processes for the creation of a medical school will be initiated in Spring 2024, with the goal of bringing it to Senate in around April or May of 2024, once the funding decision has been announced.
- A decision on the founding dean is anticipated to be around the same time period of April 2024.
- The submission of the Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) program, once it's gone through the various levels, and if approved, would be expected at Senate in about June 2024.
- The first accreditation meeting material deadline for submission is in September 2024 and the first onsite review by the Committee on Accreditation of Medical Schools (CACMS) would take place in January 2025.

A question was asked regarding the amount SFU has requested in terms of provincial grant funding for the medical school. Senate was informed that SFU has prepared an initial ask which needs to be validated against a number of parameters and that the final numbers will be prepared for September, after which time Senate will be informed of what those numbers are, likely at the October meeting. It was added that the University will be working closely with both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Advanced Education to refine the business case before it gets submitted to Treasury Board.

Noting that the Chair reported that the Provost will be chairing a committee dealing with university priorities while also chairing a committee dealing with university budgets, a question was asked to clarify how this differs from the Provost being Chair of the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP). Senate was informed that the University needs a three-year planning window to think about priorities and to do much of the work over a longer period of time. Reports coming out of IPC and the Budget Planning Committee do go to SCUP but much of the work is done by other committees in advance of going to SCUP.

Citing an email sent to faculty members on May 25th from SFUFA commenting on the collective agreement and concern about SFU's commitment to the authority of Senate, a request for assurance was sought that the authority of Senate would be upheld in the collective agreement process. Senate was informed that SFU wholeheartedly believes in collegial governance and that one of the best ways this is accomplished is through robust discussion at Senate and ensuring that Senate's authority is respected.

5. Question Period

No questions were submitted.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Program Correction: Program Name Change for the Master of Science in Professional Computer Science (S.23-79)

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by A. Parmar

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program name change from the Master of Science in Professional Computer Science to the Master of Science in Big Data within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, effective Spring 2024.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

B) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) Blended Learning Assessment (S.23-80)

Motion 1:

Moved by E. Elle, seconded by H. Singh Walia

“That Senate approve the adoption of Blended courses as a permanent course section classification and expand the scheduling patterns available for use for the in-person component of blended courses.”

A question was asked if this proposal would open space for high-flex learning with blended and in-person synchronously. Senate was informed that consideration has not been given to this at this time, but that SCUS would like to hear from people who want to go in that direction and could possibly create a pilot if enough interest is expressed.

Citing concerns over academic dishonesty and online courses, a question was asked if actual assessment in terms of exams would be conducted during the in-person component of these courses. Senate was informed that such decisions are up to the faculty members teaching the courses, but that most have chosen to conduct their assessments during the in-person component of their classes.

A request was made that the next time Senate receives the annual report on Student Discipline Matters, notably the section which discusses the academic integrity issues, have some indication of the number of issues that arose in blended courses versus regular.

Noting that TA workload has increased with blended learning, a question was asked regarding how TA workload is being considered under this classification. Senate was informed that some of this increase was due to figuring out how to appropriately recognize TSSU members work in the Time Use Guidelines forms. Now that this issue has been identified, it's something instructors can consider when assigning work to TSSU members.

A question was asked about the implications for international students who sometimes have restrictions on online courses. Senate was informed that these courses are handled differently by the Ministry because they have that in-person component. It was noted, however, that one identified area of risk would be with students who are in United States financial aid programs, whose regulations state that a student would be ineligible for funding if even one part of a course or degree is online. Lobbying efforts have been made to get the U.S. regulations changed, but such changes have not yet occurred.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

Motion 2:

Moved by E. Elle, seconded by A. Fung

“That Senate approve as a two-year pilot, a new designation that replaces the in-person component of blended courses with a synchronous online component, provided the synchronous online component is scheduled during Low Utilization Period as defined in the Classroom and course scheduling procedures (e.g. 4:30 PM or later). The new designation will be called BLS, to distinguish from the typical BL courses.”

A question was asked to explain how the format of a BLS course is distinct from an online course. Senate was informed that fully online courses are always fully asynchronous, so that the entire course is done at the time and place of the students choosing, whereas a BLS course would allow part of that online component to be synchronous to help build community among the students.

A question was asked regarding what is expected to be learned from the pilot. Senate was informed that from the pilot SCUS expects to learn if times after 4:30 pm will be attractive for that community building synchronous components and if those synchronous components support student learning experiences during that synchronous component online instead of together in a classroom.

A question was asked regarding if there will be the same amount of mentorship in the online synchronous version versus the classroom. Senate was informed that these courses are still being taught by regular faculty members, and that the people that want to try this tend to be early adopters and are excited about the potential to build those online communities.

A comment was made that any evaluation of the pilot should include looking at the size of the class using this designation, given that problems may arise with larger class sizes.

A question was asked regarding if there will be an opportunity to increase the accessibility to blended courses, should the pilot prove popular. Senate was informed that the goal of the pilot is to increase flexibility and options for students and to increase the flexibility in how instructors teach. This pilot is part of a larger initiative looking at degree completion times and assessing all the factors to help students complete their degrees at the pace they choose.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Program Changes (S.23-81)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Linguistics, World Languages and Literatures), and the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts).

iii) New Course Proposals (S.23-82)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Science (Mathematics).

iv) Course Changes (S.23-83)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (English, History, Indigenous Studies, Labour Studies Program, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology), the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences, Mathematics, Physics).

C) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)

i) Senate Committee Elections (S.23-84 Revised)

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

7. Other Business

8. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, July 10, 2023

Open session adjourned at 6:19 p.m.