



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, January 4, 2016 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)

Open Session

Present:

Petter, Andrew
Baharmand, Iman
Budra, Paul
Chapman, Glenn
Chen, Larissa
Cupples, Claire
Curry, Joanne
Dastmalchian, Ali
Driver, Jon
Easton, Stephen
Eikerling, Michael
Gajdics, Sylvia
Giardini, Anne
Glässer, Uwe
Hans, Prabhpal
Hedley, Nick
Johnson, Joy
Kirkpatrick, Ted
Kropinski, Mary-Catherine
Laitsch, Dan
Leacock, Tracey
MacAlister, David
Magnusson, Kris
Marks, Laura
McTavish, Rob
Mundy, Arjan
Myers, Gordon
Nabbali, Essya Mabrouka
Najaf, Ali
Ng, Dorothy
Owen, Brian (for Gwen Bird)
Parkhouse, Wade
Paterson, David
Percival, Colin
Percival, Paul
Peters, Joseph
Pulkingham, Jane
Shaw, Chris
Stefanovic, Ingrid
Szymczyk, Barbara

Tingling, Peter
Weng, Enoch
Yang, Kathleen
Yano, Brady

Absent:

Abramson, Neil
Arzanpour, Siamak
Bartram, Lyn
Bird, Gwen
Birmingham, Elina
Brennand, Tracy
Burley, David
Jermias, Johnny
Kessler, Anke
Lewthwaite, Jayme
Mac Namara, Aoife
Menon, Carlo
Nanjundappa, Abhishek
O'Neil, John
Pappas, Panayiotis
Somers, Julian
Spector, Stephen
Williams, Tony
Zaranyika, Rudo

In Attendance:

Hanna, Carolyn
Hinchliffe, Jo
Kim, Christine
Leung, Helen
McAllister, Kirsten
Venditti, Jeremy
Zachs, Carol

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed, with one correction.

2. Minutes of the Open Session of December 7, 2015 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on February 1, 2016.**3. Business Arising from the Minutes**

Business arising from the December 7, 2015 meeting will be presented at the Senate meeting on February 1, 2016.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that to date, in fiscal 2015/16, SFU researchers have been awarded over \$5.5 million from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) from 116 proposals, including 3 SFU led partnership grants and one recently announced SFU led development grant. Philosophy professor Lisa Shapiro is the principal investigator for the development grant, which is a three year development partnership project titled *New Narratives in the History of Philosophy*, and is designed to create activities and tools, including an open access website, to raise the profile of women and non-canonical philosophers in the narrative of our philosophical past.

The Chair noted that he, along with Vice-President of Research Joy Johnson and Vice-President of Advancement and Alumni Engagement Cathy Daminato, participated in a productive mission to China and Hong Kong. Meetings were held with university and industry partners, potential donors, and SFU hosted three well attended alumni receptions in celebration of our 50th Anniversary, drawing more than 300 alumni and guests at events in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong.

On the academic side, we signed two particularly significant agreements. The first is a memorandum of agreement with Hanhai Zihye Investment Management Group to create the Hanhai-SFU China-Canada Commercialization and Acceleration Network (C2-CAN). This will establish a relationship with Hanhai, one of the leading enterprises in China trying to support innovation and entrepreneurship, and it will enable us to bring Hanhai into a partnership with our innovation initiatives, particularly our Venture Labs and will mean the ability to attract venture capital from China and elsewhere to build relationships between our students, our faculty, entrepreneurs and our partners in China.

The second agreement we signed was a letter of intent with Zhejiang University to establish a Joint Center on Big Data (JCBD). This agreement comes out of the relationship we forged educationally, and the dual degree program that we have with Zhejiang which has won a number of awards, and which has been extended from undergraduate to graduate programming. As a result of that program and the relationships formed among faculty, research interest has begun to grow, so the development of a centre for big data is significant.

The Chair reported that he, and Vice-President Research Joy Johnson, travelled to Ottawa to meet with representatives of the research councils, government and Universities Canada to gain better understanding of the newly elected government's plans and policies and determine where SFU might be able to take advantage of its strengths and have voice in Ottawa. Importance is being placed by government on science, research, and innovation, and on other key areas to increase educational support and other kinds of support for Indigenous peoples. The fiscal

situation is more challenging and is proving to be even more challenging than the government had at first appreciated, so how and when this will translate into meaningful initiatives and commitments is not yet clear. In terms of advocacy, SFU weighed in on a number of issues with the granting councils and representatives from Industry Canada. For research funding, we argued for the need to increase research funding and unrestricted tri-council funding. With respect to innovation, SFU maintained there should be a significant role for universities in the government's innovation agenda, given their role in driving innovation, in mobilizing research, and in terms of entrepreneurship. We are hopeful that the ten million dollar grant that we received will be renewed and that we may extend it from areas like digital technology into areas like clean tech and health technologies, such as we are doing at Surrey Innovation Boulevard.

The Chair noted that the Research Universities Council of BC published its 2nd annual report *Putting Degrees to Work*, which featured a study of university student outcomes from 2008 to 2012. It found that university graduates are finding well-paying jobs and they are finding jobs in which the educational discipline they studied is relevant.

The Chair reported on some positive trends in engaged learning, student demand and student success. In terms of engaged learning, our co-op placements have risen from 2330 in 2010/11 to 2948 in 2014/15, which represents an increase of twenty-seven percent in co-op placement in four years. This is an important component of our commitment as a university to engage students through co-op, as well as to engage them in the classroom in terms of their academic studies. For student demand, our average new student admission grade for BC new admits, which is our largest base for admission, has risen from 80.6% in 2008/9 to 87.4% in 2014/15. On student success, our year one to year two retention rates went from 80% retention in 2010/11 to 87% retention in 2014/15.

The Chair highlighted some upcoming events: the President's Dream Colloquium starts on January 12th, with the topic being *Engaging Big Data*; it was announced that the Vice President Academic Provost Search Committee has come forward with Peter Keller as the preferred candidate for the VPA Provost position. Peter has served two terms as the Dean for FASS at the University of Victoria, and is a professor in the department of Geography. His full CV is available on the VPA search website, and an open forum will take place at the IRMAX theatre on Burnaby Campus with interactive webcasting at both the Surrey and Vancouver campuses. He will make a presentation on his academic and administrative career but then turn to the key opportunities and challenges facing SFU and specifically the VPA. There will be a question and answer section and then an opportunity for people to provide feedback which the committee will take into consideration when finalizing its decision and will be taken into consideration in the recommendation taken to the board.

The Chair, on behalf of Senate, welcomed two new Deans:

Ali Dastmalchian – Beedie School of Business

Jane Pulkingham – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

5. Question Period

A question was asked regarding support being offered in response to the Syrian refugee crisis and what steps have been taken since the December Senate meeting. Senate was informed that we do want to support refugees and are looking to allocate funding over the next three years. We

are also looking at bringing in additional students through the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) student program. Also, these students would pay domestic, rather than international fees. It was noted that follow-up would be sought from the Associate Vice-President, Students for the February meeting.

A question was asked about accommodation for a student registered with the Centre for Students with Disabilities. Senate was informed that question period is not the place to address individual student cases, and that this case should be brought to the attention of the Director of the Centre for Students with Disabilities, or barring that, the Executive Director of Student Affairs or the Associate Vice-President, Students. To better respond to questions, it was noted that it is general practice at Senate to submit your question before the established deadline.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) External Review of the Environmental Science Program (S.16-1)

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by I. Stefanovic

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Environmental Science Program that resulted from its External Review.”

Jeremy Venditti, Director, Environmental Science Program, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Institute for Transpacific Cultural Research (S.16-2)

Moved by J. Driver, seconded by P. Budra

“That Senate approve the establishment of the Institute for Transpacific Cultural Research (ITCR) as an Institute for a five-year term.”

Christine Kim, Associate Professor, Department of English, Helen Leung, Associate Professor, Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, and Kirsten McAllister, Associate Professor, School of Communication, were in attendance to respond to questions.

Question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) External Review Update for the Department of Archaeology (S.16-3)

Senate received for information the External Review Update for the Department of Archaeology.

iv) SFU Strategic Review 2015 (S.16-4)

Senate received for information the SFU Strategic Review 2015.

B) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) International Services for Students – New Course Proposal (S.16-5)

Carolyn Hanna, Director, International Services for Students, and Carol Zachs, Director, International Partnerships and Protocol, were in attendance to respond to questions.

A concern was raised about the consistency of the language used, noting the word “course” being used in some places, while “program” and “courses” are used in others. It was also noted that though there does seem to be a need for a new way of applying credit to study abroad students, this is not a single course for which SCUS has authority to approve. Senate was informed that this is new application of a procedure already in use. Credit is not associated with either course and will follow the standard procedures already in place by departments and faculties to determine if they will allow credit. These courses will be treated in the exact same manner as current Formal Exchange Program (FEP) courses.

A question was asked if these courses will be listed on student transcripts. Senate was informed that the courses will appear on the student’s transcript as non-credit, indicating that the student participated in a study abroad experience, but they do not carry credit. It was noted that they are treated as placeholders so it is known that the student is registered and is supported by the university.

ii) Curriculum Revisions – Beedie School of Business (S.16-6)

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

iii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (S.16-7)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, made revisions to existing courses in the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts; School of Interactive Arts and Technology).

iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.16-8)

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 Science (Earth Sciences; Statistics and Actuarial Science; Physics; Biological Sciences; Molecular Biology and Biochemistry; Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology).

Questions were asked about STAT 240 and if required establishment of a database has been met, and where this is documented. Senate was informed that answers would be sought and brought back to the next Senate meeting.

Questions were asked about what the prerequisite changes are to BISC 313 and where this documentation can be found. Senate was informed that answers would be sought and brought back to the next Senate meeting.

C) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

i) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (S.16-9)

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 (School for the Contemporary Arts).

ii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Education (S.16-10)

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

iii) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Environment (S.16-11)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, reinstated a course in the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management).

iv) Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (S.16-12)

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

v) Temporary Withdrawal of Courses (S.16-13)

Senate received for information a list of courses to be temporarily withdrawn.

D) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)**i) Elections by Senate (S.16-14)**

There was no business to report.

7. Other Business**i) NWCCU Accreditation: Comprehensive Self Evaluation Report (S.16-15)**

Senate was reminded that SFU is seeking accreditation from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The accreditation at the institutional level assesses the institution's ability to successfully undertake its mandate while conforming to some widely accepted standards of practice. It has similarities to a departmental review in terms of the way the review is structured but focuses more on institutional planning, the administration, and the governance of the institution, rather than on the details of academic programs. Having been involved in this process for seven years, we are now entering the last six months of the process. The last major event is a site visit by a team of reviewers taking place in April, with the review team receiving this self-evaluation report which is intended to be a comprehensive self-evaluation report which explains the university in relation to the NWCCU set of standards, and also reflects on our mission, our vision, our values, and assesses how well we are doing in terms of meeting these criteria. This will be the primary document the review team will look at before their visit and it will be the document upon which they will base their questions to members of the university.

Concern was raised that, given the length of the report, Senate and the university community would not have adequate time to read and then submit comments in time to meet the January 13, 2016 deadline.

Comment was requested regarding the potential imposition of learning outcomes. Senate was informed that great effort was made to resist the imposition of a process that doesn't fit the model for SFU and Canada in general. Previous lengthy discussions occurred about how to evaluate student performance against the goals of the university in terms of education, and in terms of what people learn and it was clear that faculty members would not be willing to follow a model used in many other universities and as a result our approach changed. Senate had extensive debate about this and approved a process where we signaled a change in attitude by no

longer talking about learning outcomes, and instead talked about our educational goals and implemented a SFU specific process. A concern when compiling this report is whether our approach will be acceptable to NWCCU, as it does not follow a standard learning outcomes approach and we are not requiring faculty members to develop detailed accessible learning outcomes for every course. Most of the work is being done at the program level, though there are some areas of the university, notably engineering, business, and health sciences that have a detailed learning outcomes approach self-imposed by their own professional organizations. Though there is no plan to do this across the university, efforts have been made to work with departments on a cyclical basis to think about their educational goals and to think about how they are going to assess student performance against those goals.

A question was asked about the Emergency Preparedness and Operational Continuity project mentioned in *Standard Three – Institutional Planning* section of the report and if there are items to be brought to Senate relating to academics. Senate was informed there are some areas of risk management and continuity in academic operations. We have a data center that has been housed in the same building for forty years, facing problems around temperature control and there is risk of having that data center insufficiently cooled and insufficiently powered. More time has been spent on the institutional level, rather than on the academic, thinking about how we would respond to a major disaster, notably an earthquake. Part of good institutional planning is to have emergency planning in place, and in particular to have planning in place for continuity after an emergency has occurred and attention to these issues has increased in the past three or four years.

A concern was raised that more substantive examples need to be provided for our learning outcomes and educational goals, given that they will be reviewed by a committee unaffiliated with the university. Senate was informed that this section may well be strengthened with more examples, but we are to some degree constrained by the format imposed by the review team.

Addressing concerns over the deadline to provide feedback, it was noted that when the review team comes to SFU they are going to want to speak with students, faculty members and staff members, so there will be opportunities for people to make their comments to the review team. They will be particularly interested in hearing the views of people who were not involved in the writing of this report, as they want to assess the extent to which this is a valid description and interpretation of what is going on at the university.

Comment was made that this report is a validation of how this university takes academic planning and accountability seriously and reflects on our need to be an institution that has our own unique culture, history, approach to education, and how we are determined to keep this process on course and offer serious evaluation of ourselves. It also speaks to the importance of Senate in influencing the academic direction of the university.

8. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, February 1, 2016.

Open session adjourned at 6:37 p.m. and Senate moved into the closed session.