



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, September 11, 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
Brennand, Tracy
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Bubela, Tania
Chapman, Glenn
Collard, Mark
Denholm, Julia
Eftenaru, Cristina
Everton, Mike
Faris, Reema
Fisher, Brian
Fung, Aaron
Gray, Bonnie
Hall, Peter
Hendrigan, Holly
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Jordan, Mark (for Gwen Bird)
Karaivanov, Alexander
Kerr, Jeannie
Krogman, Naomi
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Lysova, Alexandra
Magnusson, Kris
Manzer, Mussaab
Martell, Matt
Masri, Kamal
McKenzie, Janis
Muntean, Reese
Nahmiash, Amanda
Nelson, Todd
O'Brien, Mary
Parent, Michael
Parmar, Abhishek
Percival, Colin
Pratt, Elspeth
Rassier, Dilson

Tom Nault, Senate Secretary
Steven Noel, Recording Secretary

Reilly, Katherine (for Carman Neustaedter)
Rincon, Laura
Saeedi, Parvaneh (for Eugene Fiume)
Sawan, Amani
Schiphorst, Thecla
Schmidt, Michèle
Singh Walia, Harkirat
Stockie, John
Sutherland, Jill
Thornton, Allen
Traversa, Marissa
Tucker, Rochelle
Vuong, Quang
Weldon, Laurel
Whitehurst, David
Williams, JF
Williams, Vance

Absent:

Bird, Gwen
Dhesa, Priyanka
D'Silva, Tyler
Fiume, Eugene
Hodaly, Alexander
Kayande, Ujwal
Kessler, Anke
Myers, Gord
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Neil, Dugan
Pantophlet, Ralph
Shinkar, Igor
Szymczyk, Barbara
Vrooman, Tamara
Zuluaga, Natalia

In Attendance:

Blomley, Nicholas
Blue, Dan
Heer, Karamjeet
Mason-Innes, Tracey
Naqvi, Zareen
Perl, Anthony

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of July 10, 2023

The minutes of the open session on July 10, 2023 were approved as distributed.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair, on behalf of Senate, welcomed the following new members:

- Dr. Dilson Rassier, SFU's new Provost and Vice-President, Academic;
- Dr. Mary O'Brien, the new Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies;
- Dr. Dan Laitsch, formerly elected as a Senator for the Faculty of Education and now as the Dean of the Faculty of Education;
- Dr. Peter Hall, professor in Urban Studies, the new Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic.

The Chair reported that Dr. Ujwal Kayande, Dean of the Beedie School of Business, will be leaving SFU at the end of the year. The Chair thanked Ujwal for his service and contributions to SFU and to Beedie and noted that, as per Policy A13.05, the University will be forming a committee and launching the search for a new dean in 2024.

The Chair reported that the annual Senate-Board of Governors retreat will be happening on November 24th. Senators are asked to save the date and watch for an invitation.

The Chair reported that since the launch of *What's Next* earlier this year, SFU has been working to ensure that there is a plan to implement the strategy across the University. An important part of implementation will be making sure that activities are aligned with and supportive of the academic mission. Over the summer, each strategic priority co-lead met with their Strategic Priority Teams -- made up of key stakeholders from leadership and programs across SFU -- and completed draft one-year strategic plans. These plans include high-level goals, objectives, metrics and actions to drive SFU's work as a leading research university, advancing an inclusive and sustainable future.

The Chair reported that construction began this summer on the First Peoples' Gathering House, a space long advocated for by Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

The Chair reported that on September 6th, Chief Jen Thomas of Tsleil-Waututh Nation and herself, in her role as President, signed an inaugural relationship protocol agreement between SFU and the Nation. SFU's Burnaby campus is located in the core territory of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation and this protocol agreement will help deepen this relationship to address Tsleil-Waututh Nation priorities and guide SFU on the path of Reconciliation.

The Chair reported that on Wednesday, September 13th, SFU will hold its first-ever Welcome Feast for new and returning Indigenous students.

The Chair reported the following achievements by SFU faculty members:

- Five SFU researchers were awarded as new and renewed Canada Research Chairs;
- Nine faculty members were recognized as 2023 Distinguished SFU Professors;
- Three SFU scholars were recently named to the Royal Society of Canada – Canada’s highest academic honour. Congratulations was offered to Caroline Colijn, Isabelle Côté, and Bohdan Nosyk.

The Chair reported that work on the medical school continues. With the business case having been submitted to government, one of the challenges being faced is with the government’s desire to have those materials embargoed until they go to Treasury Board. Given the desire for transparency, the University is pushing to have those materials available before that time.

The Chair thanked Senate for its collaboration on changes to the Research Ethics Board Policy and Procedures. With an interim policy in place until December, based on the work of the Senate/Board Special Joint Committee, consultation with the wider community has now begun and the final materials based on that consultation will come to Senate for approval in January.

The Chair reported that the federal government recently announced they are looking to address international student enrolments, which they contend are putting unprecedented levels of demand on the housing market. One proposal included putting a cap on the number of international student visas issued each year. The B.C. Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills is also floating the idea of a cap on international student numbers. As an executive member of University Canada, the Chair noted that the whole sector is very concerned about this proposal and it is top of mind for post-secondary institutions across the country. Over the coming months SFU will be working to help people understand everything that international students bring to the campus community and highlight the work being done to decrease pressure on the housing market, including building on-campus housing.

The Chair reported that SFU broke ground on the Marianne and Edward Gibson Art Museum during an Indigenous-led ceremony on August 1st, recognizing a donation from Marianne Gibson and contributions of \$1 million or more from the Djavad Mowafaghian Foundation, the Tuey Charitable Foundation and an anonymous donation in honour of SFU president emeritus Andrew Petter.

i) Report of the Provost

The Provost expressed his gratitude in joining the SFU community and being a member of Senate. Since his arrival less than a month ago, he has been meeting with as many people as possible, including deans, administrators, staff members, and students and looks forward to providing Senate with updates at future meetings. He then passed things over to Senator Magnusson for an update on the medical school.

Senator Magnusson reported the following updates on the medical school:

- SFU submitted the revised version of the business case on August 31st. Between May 31st and that time the University worked on a series of iterative consultation processes within the ministries to shape and refine the proposals, culminating last week in a series of deep dives -- line by line assessments of each of the key elements of the proposal. These deep dives assist the government in understanding the thinking that went behind each element so it can better support the proposal when it moves forward to Treasury Board, which is expected to be in either late October or early November.
- While waiting to hear the result of Treasury Board deliberations, SFU has to keep working to build the foundations for a school. As such, the University has been trying to do a parallel structure of what a faculty would typically look like and then looking to hire medical leadership into each of those roles. The first of those was the hiring of Dr. David Price, who started last week as the interim Dean. Work is being done with Dr. Price to fill out the next layer of interim medical school leadership in areas like curriculum and accreditation and maintaining external relations. SFU does have promissory notes on interim funding so that there is no financial risk to the University in proceeding with this process.
- Work is being done on the foundations for both planning and participation in critical decisions that will ultimately come to Senate. A plan is in place to present available information at the next meeting of the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) and there is a plan to form a pan-university committee to review the proposed three different models for governance of the medical school.

ii) **Annual Financial Report (S.23-105)**

Senate received the Annual Financial Report for information.

Karamjeet Heer, Associate Vice-President, Finance, and Dan Blue, Director - Financial Services, were in attendance to respond to questions.

5. **Question Period**

No questions were submitted.

Citing the government embargo, a question was asked as to why Senate is not allowed to see the business case for the medical school, either in an open or a closed session of Senate, given that the business case is an internally generated document. Senate was informed that briefing notes that go to Treasury Board are embargoed until Treasury Board makes a decision about how they're going to deal with them. It was noted that SFU is doing everything it can to ensure that the University can have full information as quickly as possible, including investigating whether those materials could come to SCUP, with members having to sign non-disclosure agreements.

A question was asked to address a memo submitted to the Vice-President, Academic concerning a defeated motion at the June meeting of the Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries (SPCSAB) to discontinue the undergraduate Open Scholarship, effective Spring 2024. Senate was informed that the Provost has been briefed on and provided a copy of the memo and that a more fulsome response will be provided at the November Senate meeting.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR)

i) Senate Review (S.23-106)

Senate received the Senate Review document for information.

Citing the proposed membership of the Senate Review Committee (SRC), a question was asked as to why the Chancellor and convocation Senators were not included. Senate was informed that due to the Chancellors busy schedule and other commitments to the University, she declined to be included. As to the inclusion of a convocation Senator, Senate was informed that consideration will be given to including one position for a convocation Senator.

A comment was made that membership on the SRC should have more student representation. Senate was informed that SRC membership was based on the University Act, which sets ratios for the number of administrators on Senate, and thus the number of faculty members and students on Senate.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Full Program Proposal for a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Worlds (S.23-107)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by A. Parmar

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for the Urban Worlds Major in the Urban Studies Program within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Department of Geography within the Faculty of Environment.”

Nicholas Blomley, Professor of Geography - Faculty of Environment, and Anthony Perl, Professor of Urban Studies and Political Science - Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, were in attendance to respond to questions.

Noting that some of the lower division requirements are similar to those of other social sciences courses, a concern was raised about course availability. Senate was informed that efforts were made to limit the number of bottlenecks to ensure that students can access courses. It was noted that within FASS, where potential bottlenecks were identified in the required introduction to Indigenous Studies, both the Deans Office and the Department of Indigenous Studies made commitments to increase capacity and resources to alleviate bottlenecks.

A question was asked about what makes this program distinct from similar programs offered at other institutions. Senate was informed that very few similar programs were identified, especially within BC. The program offered by UBC is an alliance between geography and planning, whereas the SFU program consists of two separate faculties with two distinct streams that then combine to form a major. It was added that this is the only urban studies program that has opportunities in both streams for students to be directly engaged in city making, working with the local governments through the CityStudio program in the Urban Change stream and with the Urban Studies partnership with the City of New Westminster in the Urban Studies stream. Also, this is the only program in Canada that offers the option for a five-year combined accelerated undergraduate and master's degree.

A concern was raised about a lack of archeology courses embedded within this program and that most of the historical courses are Eurocentric. Senate was informed that the Indigenous Urbanism component of the curriculum will be looking at community life that is pre-contact, and that as the curriculum evolves, archaeology courses can be potentially built into future developments once the program is up and running.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Renewal Extension for the Centre for Forensic Research (S.23-108)

Senate received Renewal Extension for the Centre for Forensic Research for information.

C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) Aboriginal University Admission Policy Name Change (S.23-109)

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by T. Schiphorst

“That Senate approve the policy name change from Aboriginal University Admission Policy (AUAP) to Undergraduate Admission Policy for Indigenous Students (UAPI).”

A question was asked regarding if this program is available to Indigenous applicants outside of Canada. Senate was informed that this specific pathway is designed for Indigenous applicants from within Canada. Indigenous applicants from outside of Canada can apply to SFU through the diverse qualifications admissions policy.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Duolingo English Test Pilot (S.23-110)

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by V. Williams

“That Senate approve the extension of the Duolingo English Test pilot for the Spring 2024 through to Fall 2024 terms.”

A question was asked regarding if the Duolingo English Test has been reviewed for its suitability in testing language proficiency. Senate was informed that it has been reviewed. Duolingo was introduced during the pandemic when there weren't many suitable options available for English testing, which is why it was put in place as a temporary measure. A number of institutions across North America are using this test, with many now in the review stage, and an extension will allow for the collection of more data to assess student performance.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) Guidelines for Courses in the Event of a Labour Dispute (S.23-111)

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by K. Masri

“That Senate approve the revised Guidelines for Courses in the Event of a Labour Dispute.”

A concern was raised about the language used in the *Assignment of Grades* section of the guidelines. It was argued that the language in the proposed guidelines seem to be circumventing Labor Relations and setting up a plan for how to get struck work completed by others. It was also suggested that it could be taken as a sign of bargaining in bad faith and puts union members who do not want to cross the picket line in a position to have to consider crossing a virtual picket line.

Noting that the decision to provide academic concessions is up to the individual instructor, a question was asked about instructors providing more information to students ahead of having to make a decision to cross a picket line. Senate was informed that based on the SFUFA collective agreement, SFU cannot compel instructors to grant academic concessions. University administration has provided guidance to instructors about trying to be as supportive as possible when receiving concession requests from students, but due to matters of academic freedom, they cannot be coerced into doing so. It was added that these guidelines do not preclude a committee like SCUS from applying other potential remedies, like extending the Withdrawal under Extenuating Circumstances (WE) period, nor does it preclude future policy work on this issue, provided it respects various collective agreements.

Given that the guidelines apply to both undergraduate students and graduate students, a question was asked as to why these guidelines are coming solely from SCUS. Senate was informed that SCUS initiated the updating of the guidelines, but that consultation could be sought with the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) if instructed to do so by Senate, or if there are major concerns from the Dean of Graduate Studies on the way this policy is currently written.

A comment was made asserting that it would be helpful to define what it means for a student to have a legal right not to cross a picket line. Senate was informed that students have the right to make the choice to not cross a picket line, but that is a choice that comes with consequences given that professors can make a decision around where the concessions would be offered or not.

A question was asked to explain the consultation process and if the TSSU was consulted. Senate was informed that the consultation process was through SCUS, which includes an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee chair from each faculty, as appointed by the respective dean.

Citing conflicts between TSSU policy and the proposed guidelines, a question was asked regarding if there would be consequences for a sessional instructor if they follow TSSU bylaws rather than SFU policy. Senate was informed that this policy would apply in a situation where SFUFA was on strike and was picketing the campus and TSSU members did not want to cross that picket line, in which case the policy would require that the TSSU instructor inform the chair, or the dean, in that particular situation.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

With the motion having been approved, the Chair suggested that the feedback provided at Senate, especially from graduate student Senators, be taken back to SCUS for consideration, with the expectation that the guidelines return to Senate with amendments at a future date.

iv) Program Changes (S.23-112)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a program change in the Faculty of Education.

v) New Course Proposals (S.23-113)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Urban Studies Program), and the Faculty of Education.

vi) Course Changes (S.23-114)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Education, and the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology).

D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)**i) Program Changes (S.23-115)**

delegated authority, approved program changes in the Beedie School of Business, and the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Centre for Digital Media).

ii) New Course Proposals (S.23-116)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved a new course proposal in the Beedie School of Business.

iii) Course Changes (S.23-117)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Economics), and the Beedie School of Business.

E) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)**i) Senate Committee Elections (S.23-118 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**i) Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) Report: 2022/23 Grades Report (S.23-119)**

Senate received Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) Report: 2022/23 Grades Report for information.

Zareen Navi, Director - Institutional Research and Planning, and Tracey Mason-Innes, Executive Director - Student Affairs, were in attendance to respond to questions.

Citing concerns over the impact of the pandemic on the preparedness of students coming into the university, it was suggested that follow-up could be done to determine the effect of COVID on grades and reported to Senate at a future meeting. Of particular interest would be the question of the impact on grades as compared to pre-pandemic data.

ii) Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) Report: 2022 Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) Report (S.23-120)

Senate received Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) Report: 2022 Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) Report for information.

Zareen Navi, Director - Institutional Research and Planning, and Tracey Mason-Innes, Executive Director - Student Affairs, were in attendance to respond to questions.

Noting that course availability, variety and scheduling is the third top issue students are concerned about, a request was made for future reports to include a breakdown of responses by faculty to the question *If SFU could do one thing to improve your experience here, what would it be?*

8. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, November 6, 2023

Open session adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Tom Nault
Senate Secretary