



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on  
Monday, June 8, 2020 at 5:30 pm via Zoom Video Conferencing

## Open Session

**Present:** Andrew Petter, Chair

Bartram, Lyn  
Bird, Gwen  
Brennand, Tracy  
Bubela, Tania  
Burley, David  
Chapman, Glenn  
Coleman, Gordon  
Collard, Mark  
Daniel, Bryan  
Denholm, Julia  
Derksen, Jeff  
Driver, Jon  
Elle, Elizabeth  
Everton, Mike  
Favere-Marchesi, Michael  
Fiume, Eugene  
Gildersleve, Corbett  
Gray, Bonnie  
Gunn, Alexandra  
Hall, Peter  
Hendrigan, Holly  
Hoffer, Andy  
Johnson, Joy  
Kench, Paul  
Kim, Woo Soo  
Krauth, Brian  
Krogman, Naomi  
Lam, Allan  
Lam, Daniel  
Laitsch, Dan  
Liosis, Gabe  
Lord Ferguson, Sarah  
Luu, Susan  
Martell, Matt  
Masri, Kamal  
McTavish, Rob  
Mirhady, David  
Modi, Nafoni

Mohamed, Osob  
Myers, Gord  
Nepomnaschy, Pablo  
O'Neill, Susan  
Parkhouse, Wade  
Parmar, Abhishek  
Percival, Colin  
Pulkingham, Jane  
Raza, Samad  
Singh, Harry Preet  
Singh, Tanishvir  
Spector, Stephen  
Tingling, Peter  
Underhill, Owen  
Walsby, Charles  
Weldon, Steve  
Wong, Alan

**Absent:**

Andreoiu, Corina  
Chenier, Elise  
Dastmalchian, Ali  
Giardini, Anne  
Hogg, Robert  
Nguyen, Candy  
Planchenault, Gaelle  
Plettner, Erika  
Shaw, Chris  
Stockie, John

**In Attendance:**

Birnie, Steve  
Khan Hemani, Rummana

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

**New Faculty Senators:** Gordon Coleman, Michael Everton, Danny Leznoff, Kamal Masri

**Re-elected Faculty Senators:** Corina Andreoiu, Tracy Brennand, Glenn Chapman, Pablo Nepomnaschy

**New Student Senators:** Bryan Daniel, Corbett Gildersleve, Allan Lam, Daniel Lam, Gabe Liosis, Nafoni Modi, Osob Mohamed, Candy Nguyen, Harry Preet Singh, Tanishvir Singh, Alan Wong

**Re-elected Student Senators:** Alexandra Gunn, Sarah Lord Ferguson, Susan Luu, Abhi Parmar, Samad Raza

**New Convocation Senators:** Matt Martell, Rob McTavish, Stephen Spector

**Re-elected Convocation Senators:** Colin Percival

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of April 6, 2020**

The minutes of the open session on April 6, 2020 were approved as distributed.

**3. The Minutes of the Open Session of May 19, 2020 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on July 6, 2020**

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

At the April meeting Senator Hendrigan asked a question about how to encourage or incentivize the uploading of faculty journal articles into Summit. A response will be brought to the July meeting.

**5. Report of the Chair**

The Chair reported that efforts to address challenges resulting from COVID-19 and its consequences are ongoing:

- The University continues to be guided by health authorities and the Province to ensure the health and safety of the SFU community.
- The Provost's recent update (May 20<sup>th</sup>) notes that the majority of staff and faculty remain working remotely, with the exception of those required to work on campus to support essential services and priority on-campus research.
- The University is working carefully and cautiously to allow additional on-campus research when possible, as well as limited in-person instruction and activities in the fall.
- Faculties have been working on their fall course offerings, and making recommendations as to which courses, or parts of courses, should include in-person components.

- In order to ensure consistency and maintain safe numbers of people across all campuses, authorization for in-person instruction will be made by a university committee co-chaired by the VPA and AVPA.
- Decisions are expected this week, and information about modes of delivery will be available before registration for fall classes begins.
- The University is working to provide resources for instructors and students who will be engaging in remote learning, and will be paying particular attention to the needs of new students.
- It will take time to develop a university-wide process to oversee health and safety compliance and to ensure physical distancing for people on campus. Guidelines are being developed for all areas to follow, with different groups helping to inform and coordinate recovery efforts.
- In addition to academic and research groups, committees have been established to determine the requirements for PPE, cleaning, physical distancing and health screening on campus.
- The Provost, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Vice-Provost Students & International and the Chair, in his role as President, participated in a virtual Town Hall with students last month and another is being planned for Faculty and Staff.
- Appreciation was expressed for the dedication and resiliency of faculty, staff and students.

The Chair reported that recent incidents of anti-Black racism and violence in the United States and Canada have been deeply disturbing for the university community. Across the university we've heard an outpouring of opposition to racially motivated violence and discrimination, and of support for Black students, faculty and staff, as well as members of other marginalized groups. In addition to issuing a statement condemning anti-Black racism, SFU is providing additional resources and support to those working to break down barriers to inclusion through the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion process led by Joy Johnson.

The Chair reported that SFU faculty members continue to combat COVID-19 through research and other activities:

- In May, SFU presented at the Virtual GovTech Summit, to leaders of government organizations that included Canada Border Services Agency, Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada. The presentation by Fred Popowich, Scientific Director of SFU's Big Data Initiative, focused on how governments can use data responsibly and ethically to solve COVID-19 challenges.
- SFU Gerontology professor Andrew Wister is co-leading a new study with 11 other Canadian institutions, to provide new insights into the impacts of COVID19 on aging populations.

The Chair reported on recent research successes:

- 50 SFU researchers were awarded a total of \$11,312,360 from the Natural Science Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) as part of the Discovery Grants - Individual Program. This was awarded amongst 50 projects.

- Four SFU researchers were awarded a total of \$1,582,076 from Canadian Institutes of Health Research as part of the Project Grant Program.

The Chair reported that SFU extended the terms of the two Scholars at Risk, who were scheduled to finish their attachment at the end of the summer semester. Their positions have been extended to the end of December in light of COVID-19 and the challenges it presents to finding paid positions in Canada.

The Chair reported on the announcement last week that the Board of Governors has appointed Tamara Vrooman to become SFU's 12th chancellor effective June 13, taking over from Anne Giardini who has served in this role since 2014. Tamara is currently the President and CEO of Vancity credit union, and next month takes over as CEO of the Vancouver Airport Authority. Tamara and Vancity have worked closely with SFU on many initiatives, including the creation of the Vancity Office of Community Engagement, support for RADIUS (SFU's pioneering social innovation hub), and sponsorship of the annual SFU Public Square Community Summit. She is a visionary leader who brings a wealth of experience, a passion for social justice and a strong commitment to community engagement.

The Chair reported that all are invited to join the virtual Convocation ceremony on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 6:00 pm to honour our Spring 2020 graduates. The online celebration will be hosted by the Chancellor and the President, and includes the granting of degrees, messages from spring honorary degree recipients and other special guests. In addition to the Virtual Convocation Celebration, the Indigenous Honouring Ceremony takes place on June 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 pm and celebrates 140 Indigenous graduates in 2019-20. It was noted that this Convocation is Anne Giardini's last as Chancellor of SFU. A tribute video to Anne will be shown during Convocation to thank her for the extraordinary service she has provided to the university over the past decade, as Board of Governors member and Deputy Chair and as Chancellor.

## 6. Question Period

i) Senator Percival submitted the following questions:

1. *How have course registration numbers turned out for the Summer 2020 term, compared to a normal Summer term? In addition to the overall number of course registrations, are there differences across the University, e.g. between faculties or with domestic vs. international students?*

Wade Parkhouse, Associate Vice-President, Academic, responded to this question.

Senate was informed that in comparison to Summer 2019, which was a typical year in terms of course registration, Summer 2020 saw 13.3% more seats filled over last year. 8.6% more undergraduate students have registered for classes, while 7.2% more AFTEs have been generated, with domestic students generating 9.1% more than last summer and international students generating 2.6% more. All faculties, with the exception of Education, generated more AFTEs over last summer. Education is down only 2.6%, whereas FCAT is up 18% and Environment is up 35%. The remaining faculties all ranged in increases from 2.7% to 8%.

2. *Have the numbers, or the process, for Fall 2020 admissions been affected?*

Rummana Khan Hemani, Associate Vice-President, Students and International pro tem, and Wade Parkhouse, Associate Vice-President, Academic, responded to this question.

Senate was informed that the admission process was impacted, with in-person recruitment and conversion activities that would normally be taking place in late March to late May moving to online platforms including webinars and other digital content. Confirmed new student enrollment numbers are stable, with the decision to announce what the Fall term would look like in terms of remote learning helping conversion efforts and being clear with students what to expect this Fall. Overall, there is a strong pool of international applicants, however there is still some uncertainty in terms of new international students, particularly those coming from outside Canada who may face delays with study permits or travel restrictions. With the confirmation deadline having passed, focus is now shifting to staying in touch with students that have accepted their offers and making sure they are ready for enrollment and arrival to our virtual campus.

In terms of graduate registration some challenges are being faced, with confirmed domestic admission down about 12% and international down about 6%. Part of the issue is that the Beedie School of Business decided to postpone the start of their program run through KPMG. It was noted, however, that it's still early in terms of decisions at the graduate level, especially for the professional programs in Education and Business.

A question was asked how this compares to other universities. Senate was informed that similar patterns are being seen at other institutions in BC. At the undergraduate level, SFU is not far behind UBC, which is roughly 8% above their projections for undergraduate domestic admissions. It was noted that a major contributing factor to these positive admissions numbers is the \$9 billion support package from the federal government which provides significant increases in both grants and student loans for students who choose to continue their studies.

ii) Senate Laitsch submitted the following questions:

*It was recently announced that the VPA search will conclude with a recommendation to the Board of Governors without the traditional public presentation of the preferred candidate and a concomitant consultation process.*

*I note that GP 29, Revision B (February 10, 2006) Search Committees for Vice-Presidents and Associate Vice-Presidents, Search Committee Procedures, 2. Terms of Reference, B. states: ... the responsibilities of the Search Committee for a Vice-President shall include: vi. establishing such further operational procedures as it may require, including open meetings for short-listed candidates for Vice-President, Academic, Vice-President, Research and Associate Vice-President, Academic, and others where appropriate...*

*It has been historical practice of the University to have the preferred candidate(s) for VPA make a public presentation and to offer the academic community the opportunity for feedback. The public presentation is a key part of building trust between the academic community and the*

*University administration. I'm disheartened to know that even this basic opportunity for engagement in collegial self-governance has now been taken away. We have no public searches, no public presentations, no public engagement of the academic community and ultimately, no public accountability. I realize that times are "different" but we do have the technological ability to provide the SFU community with a public presentation and consultation process. Collegial governance is a critical aspect of University governance, and undermining collegial processes ultimately undermines what it means to be a University.*

*I have two questions for the President as Chair of Senate:*

*Is it deemed appropriate within policy GP 29 to eschew "open meetings for short-listed candidates for Vice-President, Academic?"*

*and*

*Does the University intend to engage Senate or the broader Academic Community in any capacity regarding confirmation of the preferred candidate for VPA?*

*I realize that Committee conversations are privileged and I'm not asking about protected conversations. Rather, I'm interested in interpreting GP 29, and understanding SFU's commitment to collegial governance and public consultation in the hiring of senior academic leadership.*

The Chair, in his role as President, and Joy Johnson, President-elect and Chair of the VPA search committee, responded to these questions.

In terms of appropriateness, Senate was informed that with respect to community consultation, GP 29 stipulates that the responsibilities of the Search Committee include:

- i. inviting the University community to an open meeting to present their views to the Committee on what qualities the Committee should look for in a candidate; [and]
- vi. establishing such further operational procedures as it may require, including open meetings for short-listed candidates ... where appropriate.

This provision makes clear that it is within the committee's jurisdiction to determine whether holding open meetings for shortlisted candidates is or is not appropriate.

This reflects the view that the committee, which in the case of a VP Academic search includes faculty members from every faculty, two deans, the president of the faculty association (or designate) and two student representatives, is well equipped to evaluate the candidates based on prior community consultation and a rigorous evaluation process involving presentations, interviews and reference checks, and is best positioned to decide whether open meetings for short-listed candidates should be held.

During the past ten years, search committees for the Vice-President Academic and Vice-President Research have decided not to hold open meeting for shortlisted candidates, recognizing

that this would discourage candidates who currently hold senior positions at other institutions from applying.

What the committee has chosen to do instead is to invite the recommended candidate to make an open presentation before finalizing the appointment, though the Chair noted that he finds this particular option to be unsatisfactory, since it raises unrealistic expectations that community feedback at this late stage might cause a committee which has already deliberated and made its decision to reconsider about a candidate who has been told that they have been recommended.

In terms of engaging Senate or the broader Academic Community regarding confirmation of the preferred candidate for VPA, Senate was informed that it is within the purview of the search committee to make decisions about consultation and at this time the committee has decided to not seek further engagement. As per GP 29, SFU constituencies elected representatives on the twenty-member VPA search committee, including faculty members, deans, vice-presidents, the faculty association, staff and students. Six of the committee members are members of Senate and as per GP 29, the profile was developed through consultation which included multiple opportunities to contribute to the profile in-person through an online survey, or by letter or email. Because of a commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion the search committee also engaged in unconscious bias training and then after that training held interviews with long-listed and then short-listed candidates. As per best practice, and in particular in relation to concerns about Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the interviews were based on the competencies and the role profile developed. The short-listed candidates were then interviewed again by the committee chair, vice-presidents, direct reports and the deans. In addition to the interviews, the committee checked external references and the feedback from stakeholders who met with the candidates. Through this process a preferred candidate was identified, with each committee member dedicating over 30 hours to the process. The committee followed a rigorous process with duly elected representatives and determined that no additional engagement with the university community is required. It was noted that multiple opportunities will be presented to the community to meet and engage with the new Provost when they begin their term.

## **7. Reports of Committees**

### **A) Senate Appeals Board (SAB)**

#### **i) Annual Report 2019 (S.20-70)**

Senate received the Senate Appeals Board (SAB) Annual Report 2019 for information.

Steve Birnie, Associate Registrar - Information, Records & Registration Services, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Noting that nearly 80% of appeals are approved, a concern was raised that such a high approval rate may indicate that many students don't know how to successfully navigate the appeal process, thereby creating inequity between certain student populations. Senate was informed that every student seeking an appeal is advised to speak with the Ombudsperson for guidance on the process and that outreach is done ahead of a decision being made. It was noted that one of the reasons for the high approval rate is that many of these cases see significant additional

information being submitted that was not previously submitted, and had that information been available earlier, the case would not have needed to come to SAB.

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

**i) Program Changes (S.20-71)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Humanities), the Faculty of Environment (Environmental Science Program, Geography), and the Faculty of Science (Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Statistics and Actuarial Science, Data Science Program).

**ii) New Course Proposals (S.20-72)**

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 Mechatronic Systems Engineering), the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology, Geography), and the Faculty of Science (Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology).

**iii) Course Changes (S.20-73)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science, School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (First Nations Languages Program, Humanities, Hellenic Studies Program), Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Environment (Archeology, Geography), and the Faculty of Science (Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology).

**C) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)**

**i) New Course Proposals (S.20-74)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science), and the Faculty of Environment (School of Environmental Science).

**ii) Course Changes (S.20-75)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science).

**iii) Graduate General Regulation (GGR) Revisions (S.20-76)**

Moved by J. Derksen, A. Parmar

“That Senate approve the revisions to GGR 1.11.3 (Postponement of Publication).”

A question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED



**D) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)**

**i) Senate Committee Elections (S.20-77 Revised)**

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

**8. Other Business**

**9. Information**

**i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, June 8, 2020**

Open session adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Kris Nordgren  
Senate Secretary pro tem