

Item: Senate Minutes, January 2011

Call Number: Senate fonds, UA-5

Additional Notes:

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
***Approved* MINUTES**
OF
SENATE MEETING

Senate met in regular session on Monday, January 10, 2011 at 4:00 p.m., in University Hall, Macdonald Building.

Present with Lloyd A. Fraser in the chair were the following: Barker, Barkhouse, Boran, Campbell, Castleden, Chen, Cochrane, Cox, Croll, Gantar, Gardner, Garduno, Gilbert, Gorsky, E. Hughes, J. Hughes, Karabanow, LeForte, Leon, Lovett, Mansour, Marche, Marrie, MacLennan, McConnell, Mechoulan, Meynell, Milson, Moore, Nicholson, Noble, Pegg, Pinder, Rapaport, Ross, Sadek, Saulnier, Schellinck, Shepherd, Shukla, Singleton, Summerby-Murray, Szumilas, Thomas, Tillotson, Traves, Wach, Watters, Wedge, Westwood.

Regrets: Bennett, Canning, Couban, Crago, Gassmann, Hewitt, Maes, McClure, McLarney.

Absent: Adshade, Amirault, Cunningham, El-Masry, Farina, Lee, Macy, Pelot, Smith, Thorburn, Webster.

Mr. Fraser called the meeting to order, and welcomed two new Senators: Mr. Stephane Mechoulan, Faculty of Management, and Ms. Elizabeth Hughes, Schulich School of Law. Mr. Fraser thanked Mr. Mark Gilbert, Faculty of Management, and Ms. Esmeralda Thornhill for their service to Senate.

2011:01

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was **ADOPTED** as circulated.

2011:02

Consent Agenda

Approval of Draft Minutes of November 22, 2010 Senate Meeting

THAT the Senate approve the draft minutes of November 22, 2010 Senate Meeting as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

2011:03

Matters Arising from the Draft Senate Meeting Minutes of November 22, 2010

There were no matters arising.

2011:04

Senate Honorary Degrees Committee: Nominations

Mr. Fraser announced that the Senate session would now go in camera, and asked that all non-senators please leave the Senate meeting. When Senate returned to open session, Mr. Fraser announced that the slate of Honorary Degree nominations had been approved.

2010:05

Chair of Senate Report

Mr. Fraser began his report by noting the deaths of two members of our community who had passed away since the last meeting. Charles Armour, Dalhousie's first University Archivist, died on December 4th and, he noted with deepest

sadness the death of one of our students, Alex Zolpis, who was in the Bachelor of Management program, who died as a result of an accident in Ottawa on December 24th. To family and friends, and to all affected by the loss of these members of our community, he extended sincere sympathy on behalf of Senate.

Mr. Fraser made reference to items attached to the Senate Agenda for information, the quarterly report on ratification under the Faculty Discipline Process, and the approval of a graduand for convocation between convocations.

2011:06

President's Report

Mr. Traves updated the Senate on the circumstances surrounding the University's negotiations with the provincial government with respect to the operating grant and the three-year memorandum of understanding (MOU). Mr. Traves noted there will be a different approach to the MOU with the province's goal to ultimately balance the budget in the next three years. The province was clear about budget and operating cuts in its ministries and industries, preparing for a potential 5% cut in a three year period, with 3% in the next year, 1% in the following year, and another 1% in the third year. The province made no pronouncement concerning the tuition rates. While there were general expectations that tuition would rise, there were equal expectations that the fee increase would be moderate. There would likely be some adjustment to the financial aid program of the province.

The University was still struggling with the pension situation. Mr. Traves noted the desirability of the province waiving the solvency test for the University and noted that the province had indicated serious reservations concerning the structure of Dalhousie's pension plan. He believes the Province expects the University to make some changes to its pension plan before the Province would consider waiving the solvency test.

Over the next three years, if the university were to receive a 3%-1%-1% budget cut in provincial funding, this would translate into roughly \$9 million, and if the pension problem were not removed, the entire budget shortfall would total \$75 million. Mr. Traves proposed five ways to counter this situation:

- Reform the pension plan;
- Continue, in accordance with the strategic plan, with moderate enrolment increases;
- Adjust the formula determining how the provincial funding is distributed amongst the universities;
- Cut the university budget; and
- Increase tuition.

Mr. Traves noted that the more the University could do in the former three areas, the less it would have to do in the latter two. Mr. Traves further pointed out that the University had a clear understanding of its situation, and was in as good shape as it could possibly be, under the circumstances.

2011:07

Senate Committee on Academic Administration

Faculty of Health Professions: Inter-professional Education Courses & Program Requirement Proposal – IPHE 4900 "In Progress" (IP) Grade

Ms. Watters, Acting Vice-President, Academic & Provost, noted that a proposal was submitted to the Senate Committee on Academic Administration (SCAA) to approve the grade "In Progress" (IP) for IPHE 4900. IP is a grade used at the graduate level; however, IP is not an approved grade at the undergraduate level. Ms. Watters further noted that in review of the proposed undergraduate grade, the SCAA determined that 'IP' would be appropriate for all undergraduate courses which have a weight of zero credit hours and extend across academic years.

On behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Administration, Ms. Watters **MOVED:**

That Senate approve the use of the "In Progress" (IP) grade to appropriate undergraduate courses with a weight of zero credit hours, that extend across academic years.

The motion **CARRIED**.

Faculty of Dentistry request to opt out of Fall Study Day

Ms. Watters noted that the Fall Study Break affected the Dentistry students' educational experiences, and challenged the Faculty of Dentistry in providing continuous patient care and smooth operation of the clinical hospital facility. Ms. Watters further noted that in consideration of the request by the Faculty of Dentistry to opt out of the Fall Study Day, the Senate Committee on Academic Administration recommended that the current Academic Schedule Principles be revised to exempt all students engaged in co-op, clinical work or internships from the Fall Study Day.

On behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Administration, Ms. Watters **MOVED**:

THAT Senate approve the amended Academic Schedule Principles to include a notation to the section on the Fall Study Break which shall read: "except students engaged in co-op, clinical work, or internships".

The motion **CARRIED**.

2011-2012 Academic Schedule

On behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Administration, Ms. Watters **MOVED**:

THAT Senate approve the 2011-2012 Academic Schedule.

It was noted that the standard number of teaching days at Dalhousie is between 60 and 62 per semester.

The motion **CARRIED**.

2011:08

Student Experience at Dalhousie Data

Ms. Bonnie Neuman, Vice-President, Student Services, presented to Senate the student satisfaction survey data from the Canadian University Survey Consortium 2003-10, and highlighted student engagement experiences and Student Services' role in developing a two-fold strategic focus for outstanding student experiences at Dalhousie. Ms. Neuman indicated that the University participates in this survey every year. Last year first year students were surveyed, graduating students the year before, and this year all students would be surveyed.

During the discussion of the presentation the following points were noted:

- Traditionally the survey was paper-driven and limited to 1000 students. Last year there were 1500 surveyed and this year the survey would be conducted on-line. The response rate was about 32%.
- Three Vice-Presidents have been working on a new international strategy, and the University is hiring an Executive Director for international strategy. There have also been efforts to add additional support for English as a second language. The three Faculties which had the most significant intake of international students were Engineering, Computer Science, and Management. Efforts have been made with the Dean of Engineering to allocate additional support on Sexton campus. As most international students face notable challenges in both language and culture, assistance has been provided to faculty in understanding these challenges.

2011:09

Schulich School of Law: Name Change: Bachelor of Laws to Juris Doctor/Retro-active Juris Doctor:

Mr. Fraser noted that the motion related to this item would come forth in the next meeting. Mr. Vaughan Black, Professor, Schulich School of Law, noted that the proposed move to the Juris Doctor (J. D.) from a Bachelor of Laws

(LL.B.) represents simply a change of designation and does not indicate any change in academic status of the law degree program. In 2001 the University of Toronto switched to the J.D. Currently, nine Canadian Law Schools have changed to the J.D. and the issue is under consideration at most others. The Schulich School of Law has expressed the fear that, in the future, some potential applicants would not apply to Dalhousie because of a perception that the LL.B. was inferior to the J.D. Law School students and alumni have been surveyed concerning their experience and views related to the two degree designations. Among Law School alumni responding to the survey, who had worked in legal fields outside Canada, over half indicated that they had experienced, or were aware of others experiencing, confusion or adverse employment treatment in non-Canadian jurisdictions resulting from the LL.B. designation. Mr. Black also pointed out the need to offer graduates of the Bachelor of Laws program the option to convert their degrees from LL.B. to a J.D., if desired.

Mr. Jade Buchanan, President, Law Students Society, outlined how the students had brought this name change to the Faculty roughly two years ago, and noted its importance for alumni relations. It was noted that the J.D. degree remains a first professional degree to which students are usually admitted following three or four years of undergraduate study. The name change would not affect a student's pursuit of further graduate studies.

2011:10

Senate Steering Committee: Draft Senate Constitution

Mr. Fraser highlighted some changes in the draft Senate Constitution which was circulated to Senators in early December for review. He noted that the Constitution was being completely re-written, in some cases documenting current practices that had not previously been documented. The current Constitution is about 60 pages including Standing Committee Terms of Reference and some commentaries. The draft Constitution is much shorter, placing Standing Committee Terms of Reference in separate documents, to enable them to be more easily amended. The University Statutes are vague concerning the jurisdiction of the Senate, indicating simply that the internal regulation of the University was committed to the Senate, subject to the approval of the Board. The draft Constitution added a new jurisdiction section, which clarifies Senate's jurisdiction and specifies which Senate decisions would require Board approval. Mr. Fraser noted the proposed changes in approval and amending processes and the provision for electronic voting. Mr. Fraser also highlighted the new provision for dealing with urgent matters, when Senate could not meet, authorizing the Senate Planning and Governance Committee to act on behalf of Senate until the next meeting, when the Committee's action would be subject to ratification. Mr. Fraser outlined the proposed schedule for discussion and approval.

During the discussion of the presentation the following points were noted:

- In response to a question concerning the ability of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee to meet in a strike situation, Mr. Fraser indicated that several of the members of the committee—including Senate officers, students, and members of the university administration—were excluded from the Bargaining Unit.
- A concern was raised relating to the voting membership of standing committees. Should the constitution specify that elected faculty should constitute the majority of voting members on all standing committees? Mr. Fraser indicated that Standing Committee Terms of Reference would be discussed in detail at the February 14th meeting. The current draft provided for Committees' voting membership to be clearly defined in the Committee Terms of Reference. These would be approved by Senate and require a two-thirds majority to amend.
- Clarification was requested on who would be considered ex-officio for Standing Committees. Further clarification would come in the February Senate discussion of the committee Terms of Reference.
- A concern was raised that the conventions for interpreting Senate's jurisdiction are not reflected in the draft document. In response, it was noted that jurisdiction is defined and interpreted by the legislation governing the University, which specifies that the internal regulation committed to Senate is subject to the approval of the Board.

2010:11**Budget Advisory Committee: Report XLIV – Context for Development of the 2011-12 University Operating Budget**

Ms. Watters introduced the current members of the Budget Advisory Committee: Carolyn Watters (Chair), Acting Vice President, Academic & Provost; Tom Gill, Food Science; Tom Vinci, Philosophy; Rita Caldwell, College of Pharmacy; Josh Leon, Dean of Engineering; Katherine Sheehan, Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources; Ken Burt, Vice-President, Finance & Administration; and Mike Porter, Student Representative. Ms. Watters also introduced the committee's three resource persons: Ian Nason, Assistant Vice-President, Financial Services; Elizabeth Lane, Director of Institutional Analysis and Research; and Susan Robertson, Director, Budgets and Financial Analysis.

Ms. Watters noted that this year's report began by outlining the principles of the committee, followed by a summary of the background issues discussed. Ms. Watters highlighted the four significant budget issues outlined in the report, which are: provincial operating grants, tuition revenue, compensation, and strategic initiatives. Ms. Watters indicated that the purpose of the report was to get people talking about the budget process, and encouraged comments via email. Due to time constraints, there will be an opportunity at the next Senate meeting for Senators to ask questions on the Budget Advisory Committee Report XLIV.

2010:12**Question Period**

There were no questions.

2011:13**Other Business**

There was no other business

2011:14**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.