

SENATE
Approved Minutes of the Meeting held on
Monday, February 12, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

The Senate met in regular session on Monday, February 12, 2024

Present

L. Spiteri (Chair), R. Affoo, A. Aiken, T. Akay, D. Anderson, J. Andrews, O. Bankole, S. Berge, A. Bernard, D. Black, J. Blustein, K. Brooks, C. Brown, R. Chang, V. Chappe, B. Davis, K. Dilcher, P. Doyle-Bedwell, O. Dryden, L. DuBois, H. El Naggar, R. Ezekiel, M. Farrimond, M. Fournier, M. Goudreault, R. Goyal, S. Harding, F. Harvey, G. Ilie, D. Jakeman, M. Keinast, A. Kermanshahi-pour, N. Kiepek, S. Kirk, M. Knakriah, Y. Kotlyarova, M. Leonard, J. Li, C. Macdonald, L. Macdonald, P. Marignani, S. McKibbon, C. McLarney, R. Meagher, B. Merritt, F. Naghibi, J. Newhook, H. Niu, E. Oguntonna, M. Pacurar, N. Patil, L. Phillmore, T. Rajack-Talley, A. Rau-Chaplin, T. Richard, K. Rosen, R. Sampangi, S. Seth, M. Sharaput, D. Silvio, M. Smit, S. Stone, M. Vandenburg, G. Wang-Pruski, D. Westwood, S. Wildeman, E. Yiridoe

Regrets

E. Black, S. Chitnis, T. Perrot

Absent

G. Adolphe-Nazaire, O. Akinkugbe, S. Bishop, D. Burnay, A. Doucette, C. D'Souza, Y. El Hiani, N. Ezzeddine, S. Forbes, G. Gagnon, D. Grantham, G. Horne, W. Lahey, C. Lake, V. Maselli, R. Orji, Y. Pan, A. Rudnick, L. Sarson, V. Simedoh, D. Tyers, M. Ulku, P. Wani, R. Zaiotti

Guests

Jennifer Bain (Chair, SAPRC Research Sub-Committee), Laura Godsoe (Director, Executive Recruitment and Employment Equity, Human Resources), John Hope (General Counsel & University Secretary), Sapna Natarajan (Student Minute Taker), Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate), Erin Stewart-Reid (Chief of Staff and Executive Director, President's Office), Nakita Strowbridge (Senate Coordinator)

The Dalhousie University Senate acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was **approved** as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Draft Minutes of January 8, 2024 Senate Meeting

THAT the draft minutes of the January 8, 2024 Senate meeting be approved as presented.

Approved by **CONSENT**.

3. Matters Arising from January 8, 2024 Meeting

There were no matters arising.

4. Steps to Make Diversity and Inclusion a Reality

Senator Spiteri invited Dr. Laura Godsoe, Director, Executive Recruitment and Employment Equity, Human Resources, to give a presentation to Senate on the pilot process for senior administrative acting appointments.

L. Godsoe began her presentation by noting that the pilot process was derived from the Employment Equity Plan which aimed to track acting and interim positions at the senior administration level, including self-identification information. L. Godsoe detailed that acting senior administration roles were critical advantageous opportunities that built leadership skills and relationships. L. Godsoe explained that acting appointments were governed by the Senior Administrative Appointments Policy which specified the approval parties for acting senior administrative appointments but did not set out the criteria or process for the candidate selection. L. Godsoe explained that this had resulted in a lack of diversity in senior administrative acting positions and shared data related acting appointments for the 2017 to 2022 period which indicated that individuals not belonging to any equity-deserving group had been over-represented by 15%.

L. Godsoe gave an overview of the pilot process. The meeting was advised that the pilot aimed to include Human Resources in the process from the start and would entail sending out a call for expressions of interest from amongst members of the relevant Faculty. The call could be expanded to a broader pool if deemed advisable. The committee reviewing the expressions of interest submitted would the Employment Equity Policy into account, as applicable and would shortlist and interview candidates, if necessary, before making a recommendation to the President. In closing, L. Godsoe noted the pilot process had so far been applied in two instances of acting appointments.

A question was asked regarding the thoroughness of the self-identification data relating to women, as well as the use of the term racialized. L. Godsoe agreed that further categories should be created in the future considering intersectionality and undertook to provide updated charts to Senate providing more detailed data.

5. Reports

5.1 Chair of Senate's Report

The Chair of Senate's report was submitted in writing with the Senate package and provided an update on the Governance Review recommendations relating to Senate.

Senator Spiteri noted the Senate February 22, 2024 meeting slot would be used for a Senate think tank session on Decolonizing and Indigenizing Curricula.

In closing Senator Spiteri noted items included for information with the Senate package, including the Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee (SAPRC) Report to Senate on Annual Reports of Centres and Institutes, and approval of the Faculty Holistic Evaluation of Teaching Procedures for the Faculty of Management.

5.2 President's Report

The President's report was submitted in writing with the Senate package and provided updates on various projects, initiatives and activities at Dalhousie, including an update on the developments to date of the first round of Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) meetings, the Winter Welcome Day initiative led jointly by the Bissett Student Success Centre and the International centre teams and the achievement of the 150 Dalhousie student athletes who achieved USPORTS Academic All-Canadian status.

Senator Brooks gave a presentation to Senate on the recently released One-Year Provincial Agreement with Universities for the 2024-25 academic year. The meeting was informed of the key components of the provincial government's position namely:

- Revenue changes – a 2% tuition cap for Nova Scotian students in undergraduate programs and fixing of the operating grant at the 2023-2024 level (except for a 2% increase for medium and small sized universities); and
- Potential holdbacks – a satisfactory strategic alignment proposal would need to be provided by the summer otherwise 2% on the base operating grant funding would be held back; 97% of health training seats would need to be filled and if not there would be a 10% hold back; and evidence would have to be shown of a viable plan to add 200 student beds in Fall 2024, otherwise there would be a 10% hold back. Also, it would be necessary to show that construction was planned or underway by October 2025 otherwise student enrolment would be capped.

Senator Brooks highlighted the next steps to be taken by the University in response to the provincial agreement which included the Budget Advisory Committee reviewing the consequences of the budget freeze and tuition increase reduction, various projects to address major components and further discussions with the province. In closing, Senator Brooks provided Senate with a timeline for various key project and initiative deadlines in relation to the agreement.

5.3 Questions for Reports

Questions for reports were deferred to the question period portion of the meeting.

FOR APPROVAL

6. Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee (SAPRC) Proposed Termination of the Mineral Engineering Centre

Senator Blustein presented as Chair of SAPRC.

The meeting was informed that the Mineral Engineering Centre (MEC) was a Dalhousie research centre within the Faculty of Engineering and that since 2018, MEC had operated with only staff members. The meeting was informed that without a research mandate and without a Director and Faculty members associated with it, the centre was operating as a service laboratory. Accordingly, it was proposed that the centre be terminated as it met the circumstances for termination outlined in Section D.6 of the Research Centres and Institutes Policy. It would instead operate as a service laboratory known as the Minerals Engineering Lab.

The meeting was informed that the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Engineering approved the proposed termination at its April 28, 2023 meeting and the SAPRC Research Sub-Committee (RSC) also considered the proposed termination at its meeting held on January 9, 2024 and recommended it to the SAPRC for consideration. The meeting was informed that SAPRC considered the proposal at its February 5, 2024 meeting and recommended it to Senate for approval.

Moved by Senator Blustein on behalf of the Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee:
THAT Senate approve termination of the Mineral Engineering Centre, as a Dalhousie research centre.

The motion **CARRIED**.

FOR DISCUSSION

7. Provost and Vice-President Academic Search Consultation

Senator Spiteri invited Laura Godsoe, Director, Executive Recruitment and Employment Equity, Human Resources to facilitate the Senate consultation, which aimed to obtain the feedback of Senators for submission to the Provost and Vice-President Academic Search Committee, to help inform candidate recruitment, assessment and selection.

L. Godsoe provided Senate with a brief overview of the search process and shared the consultation questions, as follows:

1. What are the main opportunities the new Provost will face?
2. What will be the main challenges for the new Provost?
3. What should the Provost prioritize over their first year?
4. What will the Provost have accomplished over their first term (5 years) to be viewed as successful?
5. What experience, skills, and attributes should the new Provost have?
6. Is there anything you would like candidates to be aware of and understand about Dalhousie University or this role in particular?
7. Can you suggest any candidates for the position, or can you suggest anyone we should speak with regarding candidate referrals?
8. Please share any other comments or suggestions for the search committee.

In response to a request, L. Godsoe confirmed that the composition of the selection committee could be shared. Responding to a query, L. Godsoe advised that no recruiting firm would be used for the hiring process.

The following feedback and recommendations were provided by Senators:

- The candidate should understand and have experience in research-intensive roles.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the potential budget constraints resulting from the One-Year Provincial Agreement with Universities for the 2024-25 academic year, and the impact on the hiring process and the Provost's role once hired.
- Hiring from a designated group be considered.
- The selected candidate be familiar with Atlantic Canada and Dalhousie University.
- Transparency and openness between the selected candidate and the student body would be crucial for student wellness and success.
- The candidate should demonstrate a clear understanding of bicameralism and the Senate role.
- The selected candidate should have a detailed understanding of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) strategies, initiatives and practices at Dalhousie University.

8. Report – Meeting of Representatives of the Board of Governors, Representatives of Senate and the President

Senator Spiteri introduced the item and invited Senator Westwood, one of the four Senate representatives to the meeting, and John Hope, General Counsel and University Secretary, to address the meeting. It was noted the Report on the Joint Meeting of Member of the Board and Senate held on December 12, 2024 was included in the meeting package.

Senator Westwood briefly detailed the discussion points from the meeting, noting that the meeting was productive and should be held on an annual basis.

In response to a question regarding the potential for the new provincial budget agreement to be included in the agenda for the following meeting of member of the Board of Governors and Senate, J. Hope noted that a meeting of the Senate officers, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board and the President was scheduled for March, 2024 and the issue would be on the agenda. It could also be included on the agenda of the next meeting of the representatives of the Board and Senators proposed to be held in the Fall 2024 term.

9. Question Period

In response to a query from a Senator regarding provincial funding beyond the 2024-25 academic year, Senator Brooks advised that university presidents have the opportunity to negotiate the subsequent set of funding with the province in the following four to six months.

Responding to a question regarding funding metrics in the One-Year Provincial Agreement with Universities for the 2024-25 academic year, Senator Brooks explained that context and detail had yet not provided by the province.

Responding to a query regarding the commitment from government to aid with student housing, Senator Brooks explained that there had been discussions with the provincial and federal governments but no financial commitments had been made as yet.

Responding to a further query, Senator Brooks explained that the presidents of the 10 provincial universities met regularly and would meet in the near future to discuss the One-Year Provincial Agreement with Universities for the 2024-25 academic year.

Responding to a query regarding the potential use of low-interest loans to create more student housing, Senator Brooks noted that the University was exploring various funding opportunities.

10. Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.