



SENATE
Approved Minutes of the Meeting held on
Monday, January 10, 2022 at 3:00pm
Via Microsoft Teams

The Senate met in regular session on Monday, January 10, 2022 via Microsoft Teams

Present: L. Spiteri (Chair), G. Adolphe-Nazaire, R. Agu, A. Aiken, G. Alexander, M. Ali Ulku, D. Anderson, M. Aston, D. Bilodeau, J. Blustein, D. Bourne-Tyson, R. Chang, T. Cyrus, B. Davis, K. Dilcher, P. Doucet-Bernard, A. Doucette, P. Doyle-Bedwell, O. Dryden, Y. El Hiani, H. El Naggar, K. El-Sankary, N. Ezzeddine, M. Farrimond, C. Flood, M. Fournier, G. Gagnon, J. Gantar, D. Gray, D. Grujic, H. Hall, J. Hall, F. Harvey, G. Horne, D. Iduye, S. Jeffrey, M. Keinast, S. Keyamo, S. Kirk, W. Lahey, C. Lake, M. Leonard, H. Maambo, C. Macdonald, L. Macdonald, S. McKibbon, B. Merritt, L. Meynell, F. Naghibi, B. Nassar, J. Newhook, H. Niu, R. Orji, M. Pacurar, N. Patil, . Perez, L. Propper, T. Rajack-Talley, A. Rau-Chaplin, C. Richardson, H-S. Ro, K. Rosen, D. Saini, L. Sarson, S. Seth, M. Sharaput, A. Siegel, D. Silvio, M. Stinson, V. Simodoh, V. Turpin, D. Tyers, T. Walker, D. Westwood, D. White, S. Wildeman, E. Yiridoe

Regrets: C. Cameron, D. Grantham, F. Verth, S. Yurgel

Absent: T. Adams, K. Brooks, B. Foster, M. Irwin, D. Jakeman, A. Kermanshahi-Pour, M. MacEachern, C. Macy, M. Nashnoush, F. Taheri, E. Wunker, I. Yakovenko

Guests: Susan Brousseau (Secretary of Senate), Beth Cann (Assistant Registrar), John Hope (Legal Counsel), Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate), Adam Robertson (Registrar), Nakita Strowbridge (Senate Coordinator), Gaynor Watson-Creed (Assistant Dean, Serving and Engaging Society, Faculty of Medicine), Claire Mercer (Student Minute Taker)

The Dalhousie University Senate acknowledges that this meeting is taking place in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was **adopted** as presented.

2. Consent Agenda

2.1. Approval of Draft Minutes of December 13, 2021 Senate Meeting

Approved by **CONSENT**.

2.2. Ratification of SPGC Electronic Vote – Motion re COVID-19 Numbers Requiring Move to Online Fall Assessment

THAT Senate ratify the Senate Planning and Governance Committee's e-vote of December, 2021, undertaken in accordance with Section 5.4(j) of the Senate Constitution, suspending a number of policies and regulations to allow for changes to mode and timing of assessments,

as well as grade submissions, applying retroactively from December 14, 2021 and onward to January 10, 2022.

Approved by **CONSENT**.

2.3. Senate Nominating Committee: Senate Discipline Committee Nominations

THAT the Senate approve the list of nominees to the Senate Discipline Committee as presented.

Approved by **CONSENT**.

3. Matters Arising from December 13, 2021 Senate Meeting

There were no matters arising.

4. Steps to Make Diversity and Inclusion a Reality

Senator Anderson (in his capacity as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine) and Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed (Assistant Dean, Serving and Engaging Society, Faculty of Medicine) presented the Faculty of Medicine's Equity, Diversity Inclusion and Accessibility Report.

The meeting was informed that the Faculty of Medicine's approach to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) was based on the National Collaborating Centre's determinants of health anti-oppression framework. Based on the framework and with the aim of raising awareness of oppression and its manifestations, the faculty had held 25 Knowledge Translation events since March 2021, including bi-weekly white fragility clinics. The faculty would also be refreshing curricular content in the Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) and Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) programs. The meeting was advised that faculty members were beginning to report oppressive practices which reflected both an increased awareness of EDIA and recognition that supports were being developed to address oppression within the faculty. The meeting was also informed about other steps taken to disrupt systemic and organizational oppression, including new approaches to search and hiring committees, inclusive of EDIA expertise.

5. Reports

5.1. Chair of Senate's Report

Senator Spiteri's written report highlighted the forthcoming first meeting of the fully constituted Rapid Task Force on the In-camera Status of Senate Standing Committees, as well as Board of Governors activities and Faculty Council meetings attended in her capacity as Interim Senate Chair. Senator Spiteri noted that the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) would deliberate on the proposed amendment of Section D(5) of the Student Feedback on Learning Experiences Policy at its next meeting.

Senator Spiteri added that two items had been included in the Senate meeting package, for information. These were the approved Senate and Senate standing committee meeting schedules for the 2022-23 academic year approved by the Senate Planning and Governance

Committee (SPGC) on behalf of Senate and the concept paper for a Bachelor of Arts (Major and Honours) in Indigenous Studies program, approved by the Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee (SAPRC) on behalf of Senate.

5.2. Provost's Report

Senator Harvey noted Angela Siegel's appointment as Associate Vice-President Academic (Acting).

Senator Harvey also spoke to the planning underway for return to campus by February, 2022, advising that more information would be communicated to staff and students by the end of the week. Senator Harvey noted that the current return to campus plan was guided by the post secondary education health and safety framework.

5.3. Questions for Report

In response to a Senator's question, Senator Harvey confirmed that the advisory panel to provide information to the President and Provost on key issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic had been formed. Senator Harvey noted that the advisory panel had provided advice on the Omicron variant.

Responding to a query regarding the composition of the advisory panel, Senator Harvey undertook to forward the membership details to Senator Spiteri for Senators' information.

In response to a query, Senator Harvey confirmed that the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) had been included in consultations regarding the return to campus plans, mainly through relaying of draft memos for feedback.

Senators commended the administration and members of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee (SPGC) on the quick steps taken to move to online fall examinations in December 2021, which had resulted in a sharp reduction in COVID-19 cases at Dalhousie.

In response to a Senator's concern expressed about a news report, published in December 2021, on a class action lawsuit by members of the Pictou Landing Indigenous community against Dalhousie based researchers for alleged violation of ethical standards of research, Senator Harvey noted that it had been confirmed that Dalhousie's Research Ethics Board (REB) had not been involved in this particular research and that advice was being sought from the Legal Counsel. Senator Aiken added that all Dalhousie researchers were expected to undertake Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) training, while Senator Rajack-Talley noted that there was direct consultation underway between Milbrook Indigenous community leaders and Dalhousie regarding alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) framework.

**6. Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC)
Credit-No Credit (CR/NCR) Grade Option**

Senator Pacurar gave an overview of the proposed grade option, explaining that while Dalhousie provided multiple grade options for students who faced challenges, this grade option was designed to provide a Grade Point Average (GPA) neutral grade option for students experiencing exceptional extenuating circumstances, when other solutions (such as retroactive withdrawal) were not appropriate.

Senator Pacurar advised that the SLTC considered the proposed Credit/No Credit grade option at its November 3, 2021 meeting and recommended it to Senate for approval.

Senators engaged in discussion of the proposal, with the following being confirmed:

- The proposed option was applicable to 18 credit hours per semester to accommodate the variability within student's courses, including a full term course load.
- Relevant waivers would typically go through an Associate/Assistant Dean and this process would include consultation with professors and instructors.

Moved by Senator Pacurar on behalf of the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee:

THAT Senate approved addition of a Credit-No Credit (CR/NCR) grade option to the Grading Practices Policy, as presented, to provide a GPA-neutral grading option for students experiencing exceptional extenuating circumstances, when other solutions (such as retroactive withdrawal) are not appropriate and subject to program accreditation requirements that may constrain which courses are eligible for a CR/NCR grade.

The motion **CARRIED**.

**7. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)
Election of Chair of Senate (Term: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025)**

Senator Spiteri relinquished the chair to Senator Blustein.

Senator Seth, Chair of the Senate Nominating Committee (SNC), reported that two nominations and one expression of interest had been submitted to the SNC. All were for one candidate, namely Senator Spiteri.

Senator Spiteri confirmed her interest in the position and the floor was opened to questions from the nominee. No questions were put forward and Senator Spiteri left the meeting.

There being no additional nominations from the floor, Senators moved to a vote by secret ballot. The majority of votes cast were in favour of Senator Spiteri being appointed as Chair of Senate.

Moved by Senator Seth on behalf of the Senate Nominating Committee:

THAT Senate appoint Louise Spiteri as the Chair of Senate for the term July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025.

The motion **CARRIED**.

Senator Spiteri rejoined the meeting and thanked Senate for the opportunity accorded to her.

Senator Spiteri returned to the chair.

8. Question Period

Senator Spiteri opened the floor to further questions.

Concern was expressed by a number of Senators regarding return to in-person learning. Senator Harvey responded that based on COVID-19 trends, advice received and student and staff feedback, it was appropriate for in-person learning to resume by February, 2022.

In response to a query, Senator Spiteri advised that the division of duties for the Chair of Senate was 60% Senate and 40% faculty duties.

Senators returned to discussion of the ongoing lawsuit against Dalhousie researchers. It was noted that although Dalhousie may not be a party to the lawsuit, the suit represented a setback to Dalhousie's relationship with Indigenous communities and bridges needed to be rebuilt.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.