University of Waterloo  
SENATE  
Minutes of the Monday 17 November 2014 Meeting


Guests: Steven Amirikah, Mario Coniglio, Donna Ellis, Peggy Jarvie, Jennifer Kieffer, Zhu Luhua, Kathryn Plaisance, Daniela Seskar-Hencic, Allan Starr, Marilyn Thompson, Bud Walker, Dave Wallace, Hong Ye, Jian Zhang

Secretariat & Office of General Counsel: Logan Atkinson, Tracy Dietrich


*regrets

Organization of Meeting: Feridun Hamdullahpur, chair of Senate, took the chair, and Logan Atkinson, secretary of Senate, acted as secretary. Atkinson advised that due notice of the meeting had been given, a quorum was present, and the meeting was properly constituted.

OPEN SESSION

1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
   Senators were asked to declare any interests they may have in relation to the items on the agenda in open session. No conflicts were declared.

Consent Agenda
Senate heard a motion to approve or receive for information the items on the consent agenda, subject to: noting that Freeman and not Dixon, as stated in the minutes, indicated that Senate ought to be proud “as it passes a model policy on research institutes and centres” [New Policy – Research Centres and Institutes, Graduate & Research Council]; removing motions 1 and 2 from the report from Undergraduate Council to the regular agenda; and removing the COU academic colleague report to the regular agenda.

2. MINUTES OF THE 20 OCTOBER 2014 MEETING
   Senate approved the minutes of the meeting.

3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS
   Executive Committee [report at senators’ places]. Senate received the report for information.

   Graduate & Research Council. Senate received the report for information.
Undergraduate Council

- Honours Biomedical Sciences, Biology, Faculty of Science – motion moved to the regular agenda

- Faculty Information and Regulations, Faculty of Mathematics – motion moved to the regular agenda

- 2015-16 Calendar Dates. Senate approved the calendar dates as presented in the report.

Senate received the remaining items in the report for information.

4. **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**
   - Recognition and Commendation. Senate received the report for information.

5. **REPORTS FROM THE FACULTIES**
   Senate received the reports for information.

6. **REPORT OF THE COU ACADEMIC COLLEAGUE** – report moved to the regular agenda

7. **COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS** [revised report at senators’ places]
   Senate approved the following appointments/reappointments:
   - Amit and Meena Chakma Awards for Exceptional Teaching by a Student Committee: reappointment of Rohan Jayasundera as faculty representative, and appointment of Keemo Delos Santos, Charis Enns, Hadi Hosseini, Zahra Razavi and Junghee Seo as student representatives, terms to 31 December 2015.

   - Distinguished Teacher Awards Committee: reappointment of Monica Leoni and Wei-Chau Xie as faculty representatives, terms to 31 December 2016, and Tiffany Bradley as alumni representative, term to 31 December 2015; appointment of Maxwell Hartt, Hadi Hosseini, Bailey Jacobs, Junghee Seo and Kianna Wan as student representatives, terms to 31 December 2015.

   - Undergraduate Council: appointment of Doug Cowan as the affiliated institutions faculty representative, term to 30 April 2015.

Hamdullahpur and Skidmore. Carried.

Regular Agenda

8. **REPORT FROM UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL** – motions moved from the consent agenda
   - Honours Biomedical Sciences, Biology, Faculty of Science. Senate heard a motion to approve the changes to the Honours Biomedical Sciences plan as presented in the report.

   McMahon and Richter.

   A concern was expressed about reducing requirements in the honours program and whether this is becoming a pattern. Senate was advised that, even with the reduced requirements, students still have a program that has a higher average set of requirements than other honours programs at the university.

   The question was called, and the motion carried.
• **Faculty Information and Regulations, Faculty of Mathematics.** Senate heard a motion to approve changes to regulations governing the English language proficiency requirement as presented in the report.

Richter and Goulden.

Freeman spoke to several points intending to demonstrate that the additional investment in English language courses in the Faculty of Mathematics is not well justified. Goulden spoke in defense of the proposal. Peers also spoke in support, and indicated that sessional lecturers will not be used ordinarily to deliver these courses. Coniglio advised that communications is identified as a significant issue in our strategic plan for improving our student experience and academic offerings. In response to a question as to whether the fee here effectively means that it adds to the amount students must pay for the English elective, Coniglio advised that the English course is a replacement for other courses and does not cost additional tuition. Wray suggested that the proposal would remove the opportunity to take some other course that might appeal more thoroughly to the student. It was further observed that we have no objective evidence that our students are in need of support in their communication skills. Jarvie indicated that the issue is one that has been identified across several reports generated by the Conference Board of Canada and others. Coniglio further advised that every Faculty will likely design its own plan to achieve similar outcomes.

The question was called, and the motion carried.

**9. REPORT OF THE COU ACADEMIC COLLEAGUE** – report moved from the consent agenda

Leat asked about work being done at the Council of Ontario Universities on university pension reform, and was advised that things are still in the exploratory stage and it will take at least a year to move the discussion forward. Wray asked how much Senate will know about negotiations going forward on the Strategic Mandate Agreement for the university. Hamdullahpur stated that Senate was fully involved in the development of the SMA, and will be involved again if changes are required.

**10. TEACHING PRESENTATION** [draft course syllabus at senators’ places]

Coniglio introduced Professor Kathryn Plaisance. Plaisance reported on her teaching in the area of interdisciplinary study in the Department of Knowledge Integration. She focused especially on ways to integrate students into course design and assessment design. Plaisance commented on the enhanced level of engagement demonstrated by students in the course, and attributed that to the collaborative nature of the course. The quality of the work and the ambition that students had for their projects was truly outstanding. The hope is that the idea will be transferable across faculties to promote an understanding of collaboration more broadly.

**11. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Policy 44 – Research Centres and Institutes.** Senate heard a motion to recommend the revised Policy 44 – Research Centres and Institutes to the president for approval.

Orchard and Freeman. Carried.

**12. REPORT FROM UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL**

**Language Certificate Plans, Faculty of Arts.** Senate heard a consolidated motion to approve certificates in languages as follows:

- **Certificate in Arabic Language.** To approve the Certificate in Arabic Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in Chinese Language.** To approve the Certificate in Chinese Language as presented in the report.
- **Certificate in Croatian Language.** To approve the Certificate in Croatian Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in Dutch Language.** To approve the Certificate in Dutch Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in German Language.** To approve the Certificate in German Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in Japanese Language.** To approve the Certificate in Japanese Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in Korean Language.** To approve the Certificate in Korean Language as presented in the report.

- **Certificate in Russian Language.** To approve the Certificate in Russian Language as presented in the report.

Richter and Wray. Carried.

**Climate Change Specialization, Geography and Environmental Management, Faculty of Environment.** Senate heard a motion to approve the Climate Change Specialization as presented in the report.

Andrey and Seasons. Carried.

**Environment and Business Plan, Faculty of Environment.** Senate heard a motion to approve the changes to the Environment and Business plan as presented in the report.

Andrey and Moos.

It was observed that there has been some dissatisfaction with certain courses in this program. Is there a plan to review the course load in this program? Andrey responded, saying that this represents an attempt to introduce some flexibility and to allow students to take courses in other faculties. Coniglio agreed to ensure that the various asterisks in the report are consistent. It was also observed that the proposed changes are intended to be taught by regular faculty and numbers will be controlled through adding sections if necessary.

The question was called, and the motion carried.

13. **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

Hamdullahpur presented a wide-ranging report, including: welcoming new senators Kolentsis and Potter; congratulations to Professor Drew Bennett of the Department of Chemistry and Professor Eduardo Martin-Martinez of the Department of Applied Mathematics and the Institute of Quantum Computing, both of whom have received provincial Polanyi prizes. This represents two prizes to this university out of only five awarded in the province. Senate acknowledged this success with applause.

Hamdullahpur report on the recently held convocation, the last one for Chancellor Prem Watsa, and reminded senators of the importance of faculty presence at convocation for students and their supporters.

A report was provided on the president’s recent town hall meeting showing a high level of engagement by the community during both the town hall and the reception following.
There was some discussion of university rankings. The Maclean’s rankings came out two weeks ago, and the university was named the most innovative university for the 23rd successive year. There were other very strong indicators in the Maclean’s rankings that help to show the excellence of the academic experience here. The university was ranked first in Canada for attracting students with 95%+ entering averages. At the end of October Board of Governors meeting, there was a wide-ranging discussion about rankings, especially the Times Higher Education international ranking. Hamdullahpur was pleased with the depth and breadth of the conversation, and governors agreed that the objectives in the strategic plan ought to drive our behaviors, although rankings are of importance.

At that meeting, the board also approved the proposed new Engineering 7 buildings, and gave supplementary approval for a new student residence.

Hamdullahpur attended the recent Ontario Economic Summit. The focus was on growth, but there were few solid elements to indicate that growth is coming. However, the need for advanced level education was clearly expressed as a key to economic growth.

The university submitted its major capacity expansion proposals, related to both Engineering 7 and an additional Science building, and we now await outcomes. The process is not perfectly clear, but we are hopeful that our proposal will be well received.

Federally, there has been some clarity provided on the Canada First Research Excellence Program. The situation remains fluid, although we think that the fund will be divided into two, a smaller pool and a large one for more ambitious projects.

Hamdullahpur advised that many questions continue to be received on the proposed new budget model, and it remains in development stage.

With respect to retention rates among undergraduate, in 2007 our rate from first to second year was 87.6%. Among comparable universities in Ontario, this was merely average. Our 2012 rate is 91.9%, a significant improvement. We must continue to grow in this positive direction.

Hamdullahpur provided a brief report on his recent trip to South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore. It enabled us to really engage with our alumni, government officials and great universities. On the alumni front, we had more than 300 people attend the dinner in Hong Kong, and several smaller events were also successful and promised a number of development opportunities.

14. Q&A PERIOD WITH THE PRESIDENT

The president was asked if there is a shift from bi-cameral governance to a tri-cameral system, where the government is functioning as the third decision-maker. Hamdullahpur advised that the sector is not shy in expressing its resistance to increased government interference in university decision-making.

On activity based budgeting, Hamdullahpur was asked how faculties will be billed for space, and how we will account for “service teaching.” Orchard responded, and advised that, at the moment, we have a steering committee made up of the deans and some resource people. A set of guiding principles has been generated, including “hold harmless” and “teaching excellence – do it where it is best done.” The guiding principles then generate a set of drivers. It ought to be known as a resource allocation model, rather than an activity based budget. The budget will have to do with revenue generated by each faculty, and expenses charged to each for cross-university functions (library, president’s office, etc.). Many of the drivers are common across universities, typical and obvious. There may be some areas that have a choice of driver, depending on the character of the university. It is anticipated that the new model will lead to greater collaboration and collegiality. The value is its transparency. Deans
will have the ability to model various scenarios based on valid academic reasons. The communication plan will be developed as the details are outlined, and the Finance Committee will be consulted.

15. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC & PROVOST

Enrolment Update. Darling presented a report on the status of undergraduate enrolments for the fall term 2014, and Frank presented a report on the status of graduate enrolments.

Senators had a number of questions about graduate enrolments in particular, including are we perpetually over-estimating our graduate enrolments for domestic students? Is it time to adjust our targets down? Frank responded by saying that it may be that we are seeing a flattening in the demand for PhD seats generally. Are we tracking how many of our master’s students are attracted out of our own undergraduate programs? Frank advised no, but those numbers can be made available. It was observed that, for future reports, it would be helpful to distinguish between research-based and professional master’s programs, and it would be useful to include retention rates and completion times. A senator asked how much we are actually spending to take additional graduate students. Orchard advised that the new budget model will actually address some of this question, and we should have the discussion to determine where we ought to go. Our focus ought to be on attracting the very best PhD students, no matter where they originate. And this university is actually the most generous to international PhD students in providing support.

Slides used in the presentations may be seen at https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/sites/ca.secretariat-general-counsel/files/uploads/files/enrolment_20141117.pdf

16. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

Dixon advised that 140 NSERC discovery grant submissions and 60 SSHRC insight grant applications were submitted in the latest round. With respect to Canada Research Chairs, the university has been awarded four that can be publicly acknowledge: Professor John McPhee (Tier 1 – new); Professor Sriram Narasimhan (Tier 2 – new); Professor Evan Risko (Tier 2 – new); and Professor Carolyn Ren (Tier 2 – renewal). Six additional applications have been successful, but we cannot talk about them till January. Associate Vice-President, External Research Bruce Muirhead has received a research chair for five years funded by the Egg Farmers of Ontario, related to his work in supply chain management. NSERC strategic grant results were announced three weeks ago – submitted 18 grant applications, and of those three were removed by NSERC in a pre-selection process as ineligible, and of the others, 11 were funded. In addition, the three removed were pre-approved for collaborative research and development grants.

In response to a question, Dixon advised that the U15 is the vehicle through which issues such as the return of the long-form census are pressed to government.

17. OTHER BUSINESS

Fall Term Break. Senate was advised that over 70% of students who voted in the referendum on the fall term break supported an earlier start to classes (Thursday after Labor Day) to allow for a fall term break.

Senate convened in confidential session.