



Senate Council
Minutes of the Friday, March 21, 2025 Meeting

Present: Peter Meehan (Chair), Carol Ann MacGregor (Vice Chair), Carol Acton, Michelle Atkin, Steven Bednarski, Honor Brabazon, Susan Brophy, Roberta Cauchi-Santoro, Tristanne Connolly, Andrew Deman, Carm De Santis, Alishau Diebold, Maureen Drysdale, Scott Kline, Carlie Leroux-Demir, Clayton McCourt, Carl Rodrigue, BJ Rye, Yuri Sangalli, David Seljak, Toni Serafini, Mark Spielmacher, Andrew Stumpf, Anastasia Tataryn, Bruno Tremblay, Cristina Vanin, David Williams, Chad Wriglesworth

Recording Secretary: Christine Schwendinger

Absent: Rosina Aiello, Veronica Austen*, Chris Burris, Serena Catania*, Fred Desroches, Stephanie Gregoire*, Jesse Hutchison*, Norm Klassen, Diana Lobb*, Jane Nicholas, John Rempel, Siobhan Sutherland, Ryan Touhey, Nikolaj Zunic

**regrets*

On Sabbatical/Leave: Kieran Bonner, Alysia Kolentsis, Sylvia Terzian, Denise Whitehead

Note: Twelve members joined the meeting via the online video conferencing platform, Zoom.

Open Session

1. Territorial Acknowledgement and Prayer/Reflection

A. Deman opened the meeting with a territorial acknowledgement followed by reading an excerpt from the novel "Stoner" by Dr. J. Williams.

2. Chair's Remarks

The Chair asked for people's patience with the technology. For those joining online who have questions or comments, he asked that they raise their hand to speak (instead of using the chat).

Last night's Lectures in Catholic Experience (LCE) featured Dr. C. Clifford, one of two lay women asked by the Pope to attend the recent Synod. Clifford's talk was titled, "From Vatican II to a Synodal Church." The next and last LCE will be on May 15, 2025, with Fr. G. Boyle, SJ presenting, "Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times." Boyle recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his work with intercity gang rehabilitation in Los Angeles.

On March 1, 2025, students from the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) came together for a friendly Inter-College Cup competition. The Chair noted that the graffiti on campus (in chalk) was harmless.

3. Agenda Review, Declare Conflicts, Additions, Changes

No conflicts, additions, or changes to the agenda were declared.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved: A. Stumpf, **Seconded:** S. Bednarski, **Carried.**

Consent Agenda

4. Minutes of the January 24, 2025 Senate Council Meeting

Motion: To approve by consent item 4 above.

Moved: A. Stumpf, **Seconded:** C. Rodrigue, **Carried.**

Regular Agenda

5. Business Arising from the Minutes of the January 24, 2025 Meeting

There was no business arising from the minutes.

6. Governance Committee Report

- a. *Academic Operations Manual*: The Committee on Research and Scholarship (CRS) has developed a new policy for the new Faculty Research Release Pool (FRRP) in the renewal Collective Agreement (full-time unit). The Research Officer explained that six FRRP course credits are available annually, but this number could be more depending on the pool leftover from the other internal research support adjudication, or less (e.g., CRS dipped into the next year's allocation; Vice President Academic and Dean [VPAD] has the discretion to reduce the amount as outlined in the Collective Agreement). The CRS researched definitions used by the University of Waterloo (UWaterloo) and other bodies to apply equity, access, and fairness. The CRS proposes adjudicating applications using a point system to rank based on adherence to proposed criteria, being mindful of differences between disciplines and other situations for applicants (e.g., service duties, leave). Once completed, FRRP holders will submit a brief completion report to the VPAD, which will be used by the CRS as guidance if the holder applies again. Discussion on the policy followed. The Research Officer confirmed that the CRS's adjudication in this first year was without precedent and prejudice and next year's adjudication will be subject to the processes in this policy and people who were selected this year are eligible to apply next year. In response to comments heard that it will be an ongoing issue whether the CRS will dip into the next year's pool for those who apply for two consecutive FRRPs, the Research Officer noted it is natural caution of extending forward without being certain of the next year's available number. Opinions were heard that the policy creates a competitive way of reviewing applications for one course release (not a major grant), the FRRP is an investment in faculty research that all are deserving of so a rotation through faculty should be considered, the policy should not restrict people currently completing a FRRP to apply again, and it can be difficult to justify/explain the impact of teaching one less course; the Research Officer noted that a rotation was not bargained for and parameters and standards need to be put in place for the CRS to follow and apply when adjudicating. The VPAD noted that the Employer is happy to get a legal opinion on whether this policy violates the Collective Agreement.

Friendly Amendment: Section 4.3.3, "favours objective assessments" changed to "use more subjective assessments."

Motion: To give the new *Faculty Research Release Pool* policy a first reading as amended.

Moved: S. Bednarski, **Seconded**: D. Seljak, **Carried**. (27 Votes: 14 Yes, 11 No, 2 Abstain)

7. Vice President Academic and Dean Report

The VPAD referred to her written report and highlighted a few items.

The VPAD received nice notes from students involved in the Inter-College Cup held on March 1, 2025, commenting that this event was one of the highlights of their university experience thus far.

Tuesday this week, University of Waterloo (UWaterloo) department chairs in the Faculty of Arts were invited to a five-hour meeting to receive updates on the Arts reorganization from the Dean, the Executive Officer and a staff representative on the Working Group about staffing structure, and the other members of the Working Group. Chairs then broke out into the proposed schools for discussion. The Working Group takes feedback seriously. The proposal will come to Arts Faculty Council (AFC) for a vote. AFIW faculty are invited to attend AFC, however, according to the AFC

constitution, the AFIW only vote on curricular matters and this matter is considered operational. The VPAD has been receiving questions on what the reorganization means for SJU, our representation on the Undergraduate Affairs Group, who our departments will report to in these schools, etc., and this will be determined by the structure of the schools and what ultimately gets approved by UWaterloo Senate.

Renison University College is in a serious financial situation and sadly has declared two academic programs redundant. These will now move through UWaterloo shared governance processes.

8. President Report

Thank you to those who came to the Town Hall last Monday where the decision not to replace the Executive Director, Finance and Administration (EDFA) role was reported. There were a number of reasons for the decision, including financial challenges and already having staff with the necessary skills and requirements (e.g., the EDFA role requires a CPA on campus which the Director, Finance and Accounting holds). Updates on the organizational structure had been provided showing how the responsibilities the EDFA role oversaw will now be distributed across other roles and one new role (Director, Development and Ancillary Services). The new role will report to the President and he will work with the Director on strategy and culture of philanthropy.

The UWaterloo/AFIW Memorandum of Understanding has been officially signed. This framework agreement provides a high-level understanding of the UWaterloo/AFIW relationship, how UWaterloo and each AFIW partner work together, recognizing our uniqueness but also shared endeavours in the student educational experience, and the potential of these relationships. During these discussions, it had been advised that we have a UWaterloo member on our Board of Governors. The President searched for someone who shared SJU's mission and at last night's Board meeting, it was announced that Dean of Arts A. Tcheuyap will serve as a member at large. The President responded that there are no details yet on when discussions will happen on the equity agreement.

9. Academic Plan Update

The VPAD provided an update on the SJU 2023-2026 Academic Plan, what we have achieved to date in the three major pillar areas and where some attention needs to go in the next year. As a reminder, she noted that scheduled updates on SJU's Strategic Plan and Academic Plan provide accountability and share where we are, what is being worked on, and an opportunity to get feedback (midway through a Plan there may be shifts). The VPAD invited people to let her know what they or their department are doing that contributes to the priorities in the Academic Plan. Updates are frequently shared on the Academic Plan [website](#) including noting where initiatives are complete or in progress.

- *Keeping Our Promises, Living Our Mission: SUCCESSES:* (1) The Wellness Implementation Team continues its work towards completing the recommendations received from the consultant; the VPAD applauded Dr. M. Drysdale and Student Affairs staff who are ensuring these recommendations are implemented or adapted for SJU context. (2) A working group struck to think about how to make co-registration mean something academically, an opt-in program (students can co-register and never take a class here), decided after a call for interest to move forward with one SJU Start course, to be taught by Dr. C. Wriglesworth under the HUMSC 101 code. (3) Pursuing nominating our faculty for teaching awards continues. Wriglesworth won the Arts Teaching Award in 2024, and this year we have nominated two faculty for Distinguished Teacher Awards. ONGOING: (1) Many at SJU teach courses in the UWaterloo Arts First program requirement. ARTS 130 and 140 are being combined into one course, ARTS 160. Honours Arts and Honours Arts and Business students will be blocked-enrolled in different terms and the Arts Undergraduate Office has asked if SJU could block-enroll our co-registered students into one

course. Arts First is different than SJU Start because it is not as mission-aligned, but we will need to see how this works. (2) With budget realities, ongoing work is needed on how we can continue to have the type of academic student experience that we are proud of.

- *Leveraging Our Strengths to Reach New Audiences:* **SUCCESES:** (1) We look forward to growing the Certificate in Catholic Leadership program, a credential recognized by the Diocese of Hamilton. The Department of Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies offered the Sexual Attitude Reassessment program in June 2024 and the hope is to offer this again in the future. (2) Discussions are ongoing about service learning and if other audiences could participate, those who may not have an opportunity for transformative learning in another context. Local service learning will be held this summer on food justice for participants in the Certificate in Catholic Leadership. Thank you to Dr. C. Vanin for coordinating. **ONGOING:** (1) The VPAD invited others to let her know of ideas for other micro credentials, using resources we already have. (2) The consultant report came back in January on the revitalization of the Master of Catholic Thought (MCT) program. The MCT Advisory Committee will be working on the recommendations including potentially Work Integrated Learning which is a priority in the UWaterloo Strategic Plan for graduate education. (3) Fundraising to support three lecture series named in the Academic Plan continues.
- *Enriching Lives Through Research:* **SUCCESES:** (1) The VPAD thanked the CRS for their work on the FRRP policy. The FRRP was in part a response to the academic planning initiative to explore ways to give time instead of money for research. The University does value research and it costs money to support (six course releases is a minimum \$60,000 investment by the University in faculty research). (2) There is a lot of potential in the SJU archives as a site of scholarly activity. The Associate Librarian is working with the library co-op students on projects that leverage archival objects in displays accessible to our community. (3) The Research Officer is mentoring junior colleagues on the process of Tri-Agency funding. We are looking at ways to celebrate the research being done on our campus. **ONGOING:** (1) Over the next year, we will be thinking about the item in the Plan related to some sort of research institute, what makes sense for SJU and what is possible in the context of budget realities.

10. Indigenization and Decolonization

The second of three planned meetings this academic year of the Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC) took place on February 14, 2025. IAC is working on an Indigenous Strategic Plan for SJU. Discussions are good and the Plan is taking shape. The third and final meeting will occur in June. The hope is to bring the Plan to Senate Council in the fall. The Plan will help with work on indigenization and decolonization.

The DRAGEN Lab's Indigenous Research Fellow completed his MSc at UWaterloo on the sedimentology in the region around Herstmonceux Castle, United Kingdom. He has now begun his PhD in the Faculty of Environment and his dissertation will combine Indigenous ways of knowing about the land with western scientific analyses.

11. Announcements and Events

The Health Humanities mixer will be held on March 28, 2025, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM, SJ2 1002. There will be presentations by students in the diploma program, a keynote address by visiting Fulbright scholar Dr. R. McCrary, and lunch.

The first SJU Research Salon on March 11, 2025, was a great success with Dr. K. Bonner presenting on his new book. The next event will be end of April with Dr. V. Austen. These are opportunities to hear about faculty's ongoing research.

The 12th annual Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies Research Symposium will be held on April 7, 2025, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM, SJ2. The keynote speaker is Professor Neil (social media name).

The Catholic Higher Education Reading Group meets today from 12:00-2:00 PM, White Room.

12. New Business

There was no new business.

Motion: To adjourn the Open Session and move into Confidential Session.

Moved: C. Rodrigue, **Seconded:** M. Atkin, **Carried.**

March 21, 2025

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