



An emergency meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Wednesday, 7 November 2007 beginning at 10:11 a.m. with Chair Ian Wilks presiding and 50 present.

1) Introduction

I. Wilks called this emergency meeting of the Acadia University Senate to order and noted that the agenda was to address the feasibility of extending the Fall 2007 Term and to make a decision on that issue. This situation was the result of a three-week work stoppage action held by the Acadia University Faculty Association. He added that the regular scheduled November meeting of the Senate had been cancelled and that regular business would continue in December.

Notice of motion requirements for calling meetings and for introducing substantive motions at meetings have been waived owing to the circumstances. He noted that without this waiver we would vacate our responsibility to deal with the business at hand.

I. Wilks said that the meeting would proceed with an update from the President and VP (Academic) and then deal with the issue of how to handle the remainder of the Fall 2007 Term. He broke the issue into three questions: 1) Do we extend the term or not? 2) If so, how long is the term to be extended? 3) What would the student evaluation process be, given the length of term extension decided upon? The Chair noted that additional motions on this issue could be considered.

2) Announcements and Communications

a) From the Chair  
-re Regrets

Regrets were received from A. Irving, M. Trask, and J. White.

b) From the President &  
Vice-Chancellor

G. Dinter-Gottlieb expressed appreciation that the Senate had taken on the responsibility of adjusting the Fall 2007 Term schedule following the three-week strike by AUFA.

c) From the Vice-President  
(Academic)

T. Herman echoed the President's appreciation and noted that the Registrar was prepared to answer questions on the mechanics of how various scenarios might work.

3) Business of the Day

a) SRC - Academic Integrity  
and Alteration of Academic  
Calendar (**078-18-SRC**)

It was moved by C. Hoult and seconded by A. Wilson *that*  
***Be it Resolved That*** the Senate alter the academic calendar dates to preserve the integrity of the semester.

C. Hoult spoke to this motion as indicated on a handout (**APPENDIX A**) and said that this motion represented the suggestions of the student body and looked for guidance from faculty on this issue. I. Wilks noted that this was the second of two motions and suggested that the first was already implicit in the second. A. Wilson spoke to this motion and said the students in general wished no further disruption in the academic calendar and no compromise of academic integrity.

Discussion continued with the following points brought forth:

- ▶ Without a significant extension of this term the integrity of course standards could not be assured. It was suggested that academic integrity at Acadia University was compromised during the strike of 2004.
- ▶ The representative from the School of Music supported an extension of two weeks' teaching time.
- ▶ The representative from the School of Computer Science said they definitely needed an extension of teaching time but desired it within the existing term dates.
- ▶ It was agreed that travel plans made according to dates published in September are a concern. Some students have paid for travel to other parts of the world; others will finish studies or go into co-op programs at the end of this term, so to extend the first term into January 2008 would be a problem for many. Parents are concerned and want to know that their children are getting the education they sent them to Acadia for.
- ▶ It was recognized that this has been a stressful time for students and to alter their pre-made and well-anticipated Christmas plans would add insult to injury. The representative from Earth and Environmental Science hoped for a flexible solution, such as an extended class time date and a revised exam schedule.
- ▶ Decision for the whole should not be made on special cases that can be dealt with by instructors individually, as has always been the case.

**MOTION WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

b) Alternate 2007-2008  
Academic Calendar  
**(078-19-TIE)**

I. Wilks began the next phase of the discussion by inviting Senators to propose realistic options for altering the academic calendar dates.

- ▶ It was argued that the second term should not be altered as some students are not returning for various reasons. Many faculty members anticipated this situation and have done some pre-strike preparation with their courses. Some teach follow-up courses based on the Fall Term and would be in a position to cover previous material.
- ▶ P. Corkum asked to go on record as stating that the School of Business did not compromise the academic integrity during the previous strike in 2004.
- ▶ The rule of no testing ten days prior to exams should be reduced or lifted as it eliminates the opportunity for a midterm, resulting in all material being tested on a final exam.
- ▶ It was suggested that as a one-time rule and as part of the evaluation process, students could submit papers later, after the examination period.
- ▶ Student Senators said that the Fall Term should not be extended into

January. Rather, we should make up the 3½ weeks of lost classes by teaching on the one study day, on the Remembrance Day observance holiday, and into the examination period.

- ▶ The Registrar noted that there are 65 undergraduate and 9 graduate students completing their programs this term. 232 undergraduate students not registered for the Winter Term (due in part to co-op programs, exchange programs, entrance to other institutions) and 156 students who have no examinations at all. Therefore to move the evaluation period to January would be a serious complication for many.

- ▶ To condense the exam schedule would likely result in major changes to ensure that students do not have three days of exams in a row (which is against Senate regulations) nor any other conflict. R. Jotcham noted that several hundred students would have their examination period extended beyond their anticipated date of leaving for the Christmas break, by moving just the first week of exams.

- ▶ The representative from the Department of Psychology said it was important to cover material fully and expressed a desire for a minimum two-week teaching extension to cover the remaining course content and do an evaluation of students (by various methods), thus eliminating final examinations.

- ▶ It was felt necessary to have a basic and uniform policy on student evaluation, because students have classes across different disciplines. However, such a policy should have flexibility in the evaluation process.

- ▶ Student Senators said that eliminating the ten-day grace period for in-class testing would be dangerous and would take away student final examination preparation time.

- ▶ Although three-hour examinations have been the norm, it may not be necessary for examinations to be that long. Perhaps this is an opportunity to re-consider this policy.

- ▶ In reply to a question from the floor, G. Dinter-Gottlieb replied that there were no funds available for reimbursement to students should there be any travel change costs.

- ▶ Changing the exam schedule to coincide with the last day of individual classes was discussed; however, it was felt it would not be feasible as students could be writing exams for some classes on days when they were suppose to be in class for others. Also, there would be disadvantage as one class could be finished four days into the exam schedule while another took ten days.

- ▶ Instructors must be sensitive to appeals from students. Special cases must be dealt with on an individual basis.

- ▶ Classes were held every Saturday at one time, so perhaps this could happen now in addition to extending the class period one week; however, Student Senators felt this would not be an appropriate option for students who needed weekend time to do assignments, projects, or for students who have paying jobs.

- ▶ A lengthy discussion was held regarding the Remembrance Day holiday (this year, November 12<sup>th</sup>) as a teaching day, since it is a day of observance and not the actual Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Day itself. As this holiday is in the various contracts of AU employees, it was suggested that Senate could not deem it a work day.

- ▶ Options considered during the discussion included continuing classes until December 7, until 14, or until 17.

- ▶ R. Jotcham noted specific examinations, such as many introductory

language labs and a number of common exams for economics, would be difficult to find alternate means of evaluation. Some could be moved to later in the schedule, but not all. Sunday would work as long as it did not have students writing three days in a row.

It was moved by C. Hoult and seconded by A. Wilson *that a 10-minute recess be held to allow Student Senators an opportunity to discuss the many options put forth for consideration.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

Following a 10-minute recess and on behalf of Student Senators, C. Hoult introduced the following proposals:

- ▶ Reduce the ten-day end-of-term no-testing period to four days.
- ▶ Have one, rather than three, exam sessions on Sundays - between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- ▶ We need clarification on the status of the Remembrance Day Holiday in the AUFA contract before designating that day as a teaching day.
- ▶ Having classes until December 17<sup>th</sup> is not an option as the economic impact on students is huge (not just in travel, but also in loss of job opportunity/income).
- ▶ Having classes until December 14<sup>th</sup> causes the same concerns.
- ▶ The most favourable solution is to schedule the last day of classes on December 7<sup>th</sup>, teaching through the Study Day, and having examinations begin on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

It was moved by T. Herman and seconded by S. Barkanova *that the teaching period for the Fall 2007 Term is extended from December 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> with appropriate compression of the examination schedule to end on the current date.*

Discussion on this motion included the following points:

- ▶ Some Senators continued to argue that we should eliminate the examination period and teach until December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- ▶ Student Senators said any change would impact the students, but to continue classes until December 17<sup>th</sup> would be too much of an impact. This motion represented their choice of this issue.
- ▶ Some Senators argued that one week was not enough of an extension to preserve the academic integrity of all courses.

MOTION WAS CARRIED WITH A VOTE 22/14.

c) Remembrance Day  
Observance 2007 as a  
Teaching Day (**078-20-TIE**)

It was moved by S. Markham-Starr and seconded by S. Barkanova *that 12 November 2007 be considered a teaching day, subject to the approval of the Joint Committee.*

Discussion on this motion included the following points:

- ▶ This could be in violation of the AUFA contract where it is listed as one of the entitled holidays.
- ▶ S. Markham-Starr quoted the Remembrance Day Act of the Province of Nova Scotia as saying that observing the day is only required on

November 11<sup>th</sup>, which is a Sunday this year.

- ▶ Declare Saturday a Monday and leave the 12<sup>th</sup> alone.
- ▶ Such a decision could impact other employees on campus; however, as Saturday exams are held without support staff this day of teaching could be conducted without support staff as well.
- ▶ P. Hobson believed that Senate could not over-ride the AUFA contract by removing a holiday.
- ▶ To compress 3½ weeks into four days is almost impossible and every day becomes crucial in order to get material covered. This is particularly true of classes held on Monday and Wednesday.

A friendly amendment was made to add the following to the motion: "*subject to the approval of the Joint Committee*", as reflected above.

MOTION WAS CARRIED WITH A VOTE OF 25/9.

There was one abstention by P. Hobson.

d) Student Evaluation Process  
for Fall Term 2007  
(078-21-TIE)

In reply to a question from the floor, R. Jotcham confirmed that exams would not be scheduled on Sunday if enough of them were withdrawn from the schedule and she would ensure no student had three exams in a row. An assessment of how many instructors are willing to change their evaluation process must be done and then a new schedule can take shape. Previous approval for alternate evaluation would be carried over. R. Jotcham felt there would be serious implications if take home exams were not to be returned until the next semester.

It was moved by A. Wilson and seconded by D. Symons *that examinations begin Saturday, 8 December 2007 with no in-class testing the four days prior, i.e. 4, 5, 6, or 7 but allowing for in-class testing on previous teaching days.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

e) Extension of Due Date for  
Take Home Examinations  
(078-22-TIE)

B. Moody noted that shortening the exam period and encouraging alternate evaluation processes could result in more take-home examinations than usual. Typically such evaluations must be submitted the last day of examinations. Therefore, an extension of the due date for such take-home examinations as well as any supplementary essays was advisable.

R. Jotcham said that for any course having no examination, the current grade deadline of seven days following the last day of class would automatically move forward based on the previous motion. Students need to have their grades no later than the beginning of the second semester.

It was moved by B. Moody and seconded by C. Hoult *that Senate extend the due date for take-home examinations to 21 December 2007.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED

- f) Deadline for Application of Alternate Evaluation  
(078-23-TIE)

It was moved by D. Seamone and seconded by S. Markham-Starr *that Department Heads and Directors submit any request for alternate means of evaluation and changes to the examination schedule to the Registrar's Office by noon on 13 November 2007.*

R. Jotcham said that with this deadline a new schedule would be posted by the 15<sup>th</sup> and contain as few changes to the remaining schedule as possible. She confirmed that previous approval given for alternate evaluation would be carried over to new timetable.

MOTION WAS CARRIED

- g) Sunday in the Examination Schedule (078-24-TIE)

It was moved by K. Whetter and seconded by G. Hepburn *that the Registrar is empowered to schedule examinations between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. only on the Sundays of the examination schedule, should it be necessary.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

- h) Alternate Evaluation for Fall 2007 (078-25-TIE)

It was moved by S. Barkanova and seconded by T. Herman *that Senate encourage faculty members, where appropriate, to seek alternate methods of evaluation in lieu of examinations this term.*

R. Jotcham noted that if some form of evaluation beyond normal, weekly testing is required then it can be done during the examination period in some other form, such as a take-home examination, project, etc.

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

- i) Last Day to Drop a Course in the Fall 2007 Term (078-26-TIE)

It was moved by T. Herman and seconded by P. Corkum *that the last day to drop a course from the Fall 2007 term be extended to 7 December 2007.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

- j) Last Day to Apply to Graduate in May 2008 (078-27-TIE)

It was moved by T. Herman and seconded by R. Perrins *that the last day to apply to graduate for May 2008 Convocation be extended to 15 November 2007.*

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

The VP(A) said that his office would distribute all these decisions to the University Community as soon as possible.

P. Hobson noted that only the AUFA and BOG Executives may refer a

matter to the Joint Committee. Also, any decision of the Joint Committee is subject to the five-day rule, during which time it may be rejected, or invoke an AUFA or BOG meeting. Therefore, he believed Senators should not leave this meeting thinking that the motion on the Remembrance Day Observance Holiday becoming a teaching day would work. I. Wilks proposed to communicate with the AUFA President requesting the Association's support towards making 12 November 2007 a teaching day. The results would be communicated as soon as known.

5) Adjournment

N. Clarke moved this meeting be adjourned. It was 12:20 p.m.

---

D. Murphy, Recording Secretary