

Office of the Senate Secretariat

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The Senate of Acadia University acknowledges that we are located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

Dear Member of Senate:

I advise you that a meeting of the Senate of Acadia University will occur from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Monday 13th January, 2020 in BAC 132.

The agenda follows:

- 1) Approval of Agenda**
- 2) Minutes of the Senate Meeting of 9th December, 2019**
- 3) Announcements**
- 4) New Business**
 - a) Motion that Senate adopt the recommendations from the Senate Honours Committee to replace the Honours Thesis “external” review process, as administered by Research and Graduate Studies, with Thesis review by an internal second reader. (*A. Redden*)
 - b) Academic Planning Committee process
- 5) Other Business**
- 6) Adjournment**

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Rosie Hare
Recording Secretary to Senate

Announcements

PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS TO SENATE:

January 9, 2020

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Senators a very happy New Year. Sadly, 2020 has started out with some tragic events. On Christmas Day, we lost one of our long-time Board members, Bruce Phinney ('81), and the entire Acadia community was saddened by his untimely passing. Bruce was one of Acadia's most enthusiastic supporters, and this was evident at the Celebration of Life that was held at Acadia on 4th January. It was a lovely and emotional event, and it was fitting for his family and friends that the service was held here on campus. Bruce will be sorely missed by us all.

Then we had the plane tragedy in Iran that claimed the lives of many students and families returning to Canada. While we were fortunate that none of Acadia's Iranian students were involved, you will know by now that Saint Mary's and Dalhousie have lost students, as have another 8 universities across Canada. We grieve with our sister institutions at this tragic loss for their communities and for Canada as a whole.

Acadia 2025

In my December report, I promised to speak to the revised strategic plan at the January meeting of Senate. I have attached to this report a revised plan that incorporates many comments, suggestions, and proposals received from Board, Senate and community members during this final consultation phase.

The major changes are as follows:

- the overall structure has been simplified and background text has been removed, and will be captured as a separate document on the web site
- the final draft has been reduced and reformatted to provide a more succinct and pleasing presentation of the plan; this version includes the Key Objectives but the KPIs are not included. The KPIs will still be included in an Operational Plan document which will be our working document for implementing the plan. This reformatted version is the public document that will be used. Please note that the formatting for this document is simply my effort, and we will have it professionally designed once the general format and content are confirmed
- the end year for the plan is now 2025
- some revisions/refinements have been made to the message from the President
- the description of the planning process and the document layout has been moved up and shortened

- the Caring for Our Community’s Health and Wellness goal now becomes Caring for Our Community’s Safety, Health and Wellness with references to safety added in the text, as well as adding a specific reference to sexual violence.
- Vision, Mission and Values statements have been modified in response to Board, Senate and community suggestions, and the strategic values have been re-ordered to highlight the student/community characteristics on the left and institutional characteristics on the right
- Pillars have been eliminated
 - they were valuable in plan development but a source of confusion for many and unnecessary for the plan itself
- Number of strategic directions have been reduced from 8 to 5
 - some merging has been done to achieve this, hence remaining true to the directions recommended by the Task Force
 - Increased profile for students/employees and environmental stewardship, climate change and sustainability
- Number of goals and objectives have been reduced:
 - some previous goals have been moved to objectives (*e.g.* campus master plan review) and some objectives have been merged and overlaps eliminated
- KPIs have been removed but remain in a larger Operational Plan that will be used to monitor implementation and progress
- Strengthened commitment to inclusion, diversity and equity
- Increased references to research
- Priority Implementation Plan has been revised to reflect the simplified structure of the plan

I welcome comments from Senators on this final plan, and the next steps are to present it to the Board Executive later this month and then, hopefully, to the Board for approval on February. 7. I will report back to Senate on the final plan at the February 10 meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

Peter Ricketts
President and Vice-Chancellor

PROVOST AND VICE-PRESIDENT ACADEMIC ANNOUNCEMENTS TO SENATE:

PROVOST AND VPA REPORT TO SENATE – JANUARY 2020

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone back to campus for the winter term. I hope everyone had an opportunity to relax and spend time with family and friends over the break. I’ll take this opportunity to formally welcome Dr. Janet Dymont, who joins us as the Director of the School of Education. Dr. Dymont comes to Acadia from the School of Education at the University of Tasmania.

Acadia Colleague Enhancement (ACE) Project

The ACE project continues and is on schedule with an anticipated go live date of May 2021.

	2019												2020												2021											
INITIATION	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Project Planning / Kickoff																																				
Colleague Infrastructure																																				
FINANCIAL SYSTEM																																				
General Ledger																																				
STUDENT SYSTEM																																				
Colleague Admissions																																				
Curriculum and Faculty Information																																				
Records/Registration																																				
Student Accounts AR/CR																																				
Financial Aid																																				
Degree Audit and Student Planning																																				
HUMAN RESOURCES																																				
Human Resources/Payroll and Time Entry																																				
ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS																																				
Elucian Project Management Services																																				
Core																																				
Data Migration																																				
Integration Planning and Build																																				
Intelligent Learning Platform (ILP)																																				
Ethos Integration Services																																				

Maple League Innovative Pedagogies Fund

- Interactive online concussion education tool
Principal Investigator: Dr. Colin King (Acadia)
Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Loriann Hynes (York University)
Co-Investigators: Tara Sutherland (St. FX), Jocelyn Dowling (Mount Allison), Katrina Lambert (Bishop's), Curtis Arsenault (Acadia)

Maple League Research Fund

- Accessibility as a Collective Practice
Co-Principal Investigators: Dr. Katie Aubrecht (St. FX, Sociology), Dr. Erin Austen (St. FX, Psychology)
Co-Investigators: Dr. Cynthia Bruce (Acadia, Education), Dr. Jane Dryden (Mount Allison, Philosophy)
Collaborator: Dr. Mary Ellen Donnan (Bishop's, Sociology)
- The preservation and accessibility of audiovisual materials at the Maple League universities
Principal Investigator: Jennifer Richard (Acadia)
Team Members: Margaret Vail (St. FX), Anne LePage (Mount Allison), Sarah Heath (Bishop's)
- Semi-conductors: fundamental and applied photochemical research
Principal Investigator: Dr. Geneice Hallett Tapley (St. FX)
Team Member: Dr. Matthew Lukeman (Acadia)
- Mathematical graph theory
Co-Investigators: Dr. Margaret-ellen Messinger (Mount Allison), Dr. Stephen Finbow (St. FX), Dr. Nancy Clarke (Acadia)

Dean of Professional Studies

The position closes on January 15, 2020. The plan is to have interviews in February/March with a recommendation to the Board at its April meeting.

University Librarian

The board of governors has approved an internal/external search for the next University Librarian. The process to staff the committee is starting with a goal to have an advertisement posted by the end of February.

What follows are announcements from the faculties and the division of research and graduate studies.

FACULTY OF ARTS

Two successful Sociology MA defenses took place on December 2 – Carly Connolly and Brittany Pulsifer (supervised by Heather Dahringer and Lesley Frank, respectively).

Erin Crandall's co-edited volume *What's Trending in Canadian Politics: Understanding Transformations in Power, Media, and The Public Sphere* (UBC 2019) was recognized on *The Hill Times* list of 100 best non-fiction Canadian books in 2019.

The Acadia Women in Philosophy (AWIP) Group, coordinated by Dr. Anna Wilks, held a very successful meeting and dinner in late November. Approximately 15 Acadia students who identify as female attended.

Christian Thomas published a book review of: Birgit Tautz, *Translating the World: Towards a New History of German Literature around 1800*, in *Seminar. A Journal of Germanic Studies* 55.3 (2019): 298-301.

FACULTY OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

School of Education

David Rabak and Rachel Johns, Year 2 B.Ed. students, were selected to participate in an international practicum placement at the Derrick Smith School and Vocational Centre in Barbados from November 11-December 6. The Derrick Smith Centre is a purpose-built facility in Barbados designed to support the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of adolescents and young adults with disabilities. The Acadia student teachers created and facilitated "Passion Project" activities based on student interest and aptitudes with the end goal being participation in a school-wide STEAM Fair. This international placement is part of an ongoing collaboration between Dr. M. Lynn Aylward (Acadia) and Dr. Cheryl Rock (Derrick Smith School, Barbados).

The School of Education is delighted to welcome Dr. Janet Dymont, new Director of the School effective January 1. Dr. Dymont comes to Acadia from the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania, where she has been teaching in Curriculum and Pedagogy since 2005. She earned her Honours Bachelor of Science from Trent University in 1994 followed by a Bachelor of Education from Queen's in 1995, a Master of Science (Resource and Environmental Management) from Simon Fraser University in 1997 and her Ph.D. (Educational Studies) from Lakehead University in 2005. In addition to the University of Tasmania, she has taught at Lakehead University and Boston University. An internationally recognized scholar, Dr. Dymont has been recognized both within her university and across Australia as an outstanding teacher, in 2017 receiving the Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning from the University of Tasmania as well as the Australian Teacher Educator of the Year Award from the

Australian Teacher Education Association. In 2019, Dr. Dymont was presented the Australian Award for University Teaching from Universities Australia.

FACULTY OF PURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

Psychology graduate student **Marissa Walter** secured a \$1,000 grant to support her Master's thesis research. This is a competitive external award sponsored by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) for master's research related to issues of sexism, racism, or prejudice.

Dr. Melanie Coombs, new faculty member in **Biology**, received the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute (BHCRI) New Investigator Award. The BHCRI New Investigator Awards are intended to provide funding that will allow a new investigator to gather pilot data and launch their cancer research program in such a way as to enhance competitiveness when applying for other sources of external funding. This award is for two years and is valued at \$25,000/year.

Dr. Kirk Hillier, **Biology**, was awarded a Mitacs Accelerate Grant to support a new Postdoctoral Fellow in his research group. The title of the project is: Development of Bacterial Semiochemicals for Insect Pest Management and the partner organization is Sylvar Technologies. We welcome Dr. Catherine Scott to Acadia.

RESEARCH & GRADUATE STUDIES

New Research Agreement with Natural Forces expands Acadia's bird migration research in relation to wind energy developments

An additional Collaborative Research Agreement was recently signed with Natural Forces, a wind energy company based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, to expand their work with Acadia on a large NB regional avian migration study led by **Dr. Phil Taylor** (Biology). This project supplements a larger project involving academic and institutional partners, government and NGO funders/supporters. **A consortium of four wind farm developers has invested over \$670,000** for radar and acoustic monitoring of birds to better determine the altitudinal distribution of migrating birds, as well as the density and species of birds in the area to determine potential risk factors and identify options for mitigating risks.

Acadia faculty continue to access Mitacs internship funding to support graduate students:

- **Dr. Amitabh Jha** (Chemistry) and Paraza Pharma Inc (Saint-Laurent) are collaborating on a \$15,000, 8-month Mitacs project. A graduate student will be working on the *Development of Novel Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulators*.
- **Dr. Michael Stokesbury** (Biology and Canada Research Chair) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (Amherst, NS) were successful in applying for funding for a \$15,000, 12-month project titled *Quantification and Improvement of Juvenile American Eel Passage Through Fishways and Wetland Water Control Infrastructure*.

NRC-IRAP CTO Projects (2) – Acadia Faculty Members collaborating with local companies:

- Spirits by the Sea is a Nova Scotia-based company extracting valuable products from organic waste materials. **Dr. Allison Walker** (Biology) is working with the company to look at new methods of lactic acid production, while adding value to waste seaweed.

- **Dr. Matt McSweeney** (Nutrition & Dietetics) is working with Cove Kombucha, a small Nova Scotia start-up that produces kombucha products. Dr. McSweeney is developing and delivering tutorials for Cove Kombucha on the basic principles of sensory evaluation.

ACADIA STUDENTS' UNION ANNOUNCEMENTS TO SENATE:

COLLEGE OF DIVINITY/FACULTY OF THEOLOGY ANNOUNCEMENTS TO SENATE:

Motion from the Senate Honours Committee to Revise the Honours Thesis Review Process

Motion: That Senate adopt the recommendations from the Senate Honours Committee to replace the Honours Thesis “external” review process, as administered by Research & Graduate Studies, with Thesis review by an internal 2nd reader.

Preamble

One of the main duties of the Senate Honours Committee is to regularly review policies and practices governing Honours theses and to recommend changes to Senate as necessary. As part of our most recent review, the committee conducted a survey which included a detailed examination of the current external reader process, wherein all Acadia University Honours Theses are received by the Division of Research & Graduate Studies (RGS) and distributed to faculty members outside of the unit from which the Thesis is produced for a final read/review. Final edits, if needed, are made by the student before resubmission to RGS.

Upon careful review of the survey data and the workload involved in the current process, the committee puts forth two recommendations. They are presented in bold below, with a brief rationale and background information following each recommendation.

Recommendation #1: Discontinue the current external reader process.

This recommendation comes after careful consideration of several factors.

1) The administrative workload that the external reader process places on Faculty and Staff

The current role of Research and Graduate Studies staff in vetting the External Reader procedures in relation to about 100 Honours theses annually is a significant administrative burden at a busy time in the fiscal year (Feb-Mar). The process is cumbersome (wherein Theses change hands many times, and must remain accounted for), and very lengthy (steps in process span February to April). Faculty members who serve as external readers are also burdened at a busy time in the academic year.

2) Faculty Members attitudes toward the external reader process

A survey was conducted in May of 2019, shortly after the honours thesis review process for those honours students planning to graduate in spring. The survey evaluated attitudes toward the external reader process both from the perspective of honours supervisors and external readers. The results of the survey were disseminated at all three Faculty Council meetings held in November 2019. As discussed at these meetings of Faculty, the results showed a high amount of ambiguity toward the current process. Thesis supervisors were significantly less positively disposed to the process than external readers, and those who served in both roles had a relatively negative opinion of its usefulness.

Those who maintain positive attitudes toward the current process believe that the process increases rigor in the Honours Thesis, provides a good experience for Honours Students, and note enjoyment in learning about student research work being done across campus. By contrast, those who have negative attitudes toward the process believe that it cannot provide rigor (nor is it intended to do so), is often a negative experience for Honours Students (due to inappropriate or rude commentary), represents a large administrative burden to faculty who are already overworked towards the end of semester, and is redundant given existing internal processes involving a second reader. Moreover, removing the external

reader process would free up an extra 3 weeks for internal processes that help to improve rigor and maximize positive outcomes.

3) Existing practices at other institutions

Acadia's Registrar conducted a search of existing honours thesis practices in other universities in the region and across Canada. The review showed some heterogeneity in honours thesis practices, but whereas most Universities require an internal second reader for theses, none appear to require that theses be sent to readers external to the unit for an additional read/review.

Recommendation 2: Any unit offering an Honours Program to have a mandatory internal second reader process.

This recommendation is designed to address the idea that additional review by a second reader is needed to ensure a rigorous Honours process, within units and across campus. The committee concluded that the current external review *does not ensure rigor*, nor is it designed to do so. External readers are instructed to attend only to peripheral aspects of the thesis, and are explicitly prohibited from providing comment on the research methodology, analyses or interpretation. While the work of the external reviewer can sometimes make a positive contribution to a thesis (by improving clarity and catching formatting errors or typos), these contributions can also be made by an engaged second reader who is internal to the unit or from a cognate unit. Moreover, internal second readers are also in a better position to comment on methodology and results. The Committee feels that empowering and supporting internal processes would be more time efficient and would serve to ensure that Acadia Honours Theses are of high quality prior to their publication.

Following presentations at 3 Faculty Council meetings in November, the Chair of the Senate Honours Committee surveyed Heads and Directors in December to better understand current Honours Thesis practices across the various units at Acadia. This survey revealed that nearly all units at Acadia already have a robust second internal reader process in place. Nevertheless, to ensure that internal processes remain robust, we have the following sub-recommendations.

Recommendation 2.1: Each unit should develop (or maintain) an internal process and ensure that second readers are available for the review of Honours Theses. Second readers may come from within the unit, or from another unit with relevant expertise on the topic of the Thesis (e.g., from a cognate unit at Acadia).

Recommendation 2.2: All units are encouraged to coordinate with their Dean of Faculty to ensure that they have a proper second-reader plan/policy in place, and that it is documented and available to students and Faculty for reference (e.g., an Honours Handbook).

Recommendation 2.3: Each unit should provide second readers with standardized instructions on how to review the thesis. In addition to domain-specific instructions determined by units (e.g., evaluative guidelines/criteria), these instructions should also ask that second readers pay attention to aspects of the thesis that would otherwise have been asked of the external reader (i.e., check theses for conformity to mechanical matters, such as style, format, grammar, spelling, as well as for structure, logic, consistency, and clarity of argument).

All other existing processes would remain unaffected:

- All units will submit Thesis course grades to the registrar (as usual);
- Research and Graduate Studies will receive completed Honours theses by the due date (as per the University Calendar), and confirm receipt with the Registrar;
- the Chair of the Honours Committee will sign the theses; and
- all Theses will be sent to the Vaughan Library for publication.

Academic Planning Committee process

From Senate Meeting on January 14, 2019:

Revised decision-making process for allocating permanent faculty positions

Process for Allocating Permanent Faculty Positions:

1. Academic Faculties and the Library are requested to develop short-term (one year) and long-range (3-5 years) academic plans which demonstrate anticipated permanent faculty hiring needs linked to the unit's academic plans. By July 1st, those requesting permanent positions in the next hiring cycle will be provided with the opportunity to update their academic plans, in consultation with the relevant Dean(s), in order to contextualize their requests and to provide guidance in planning to the APC.
2. During an August meeting of the APC, the Faculty Deans and the University Librarian (UL) will present short-term hiring requests in the context of longer-range faculty planning. Individual faculties may choose to rank requests or group them by priority, and the Deans/UL will communicate to the APC the priorities of their respective faculties/library. In the case of interdisciplinary requests, the relevant Deans will confer and present.
3. Each year the APC will rank the requests for the University. In doing so, the APC will consider alignment with the Strategic Plan and other strategic planning priorities, program and institutional integrity, the Acadia mission of providing a personalized and rigorous liberal education, historical and current and projected enrolment trends, and potential interdisciplinary synergies. These APC rankings will be communicated to Senate as a report at the September meeting of Senate.
4. On the basis of the APC report, the VPA in consultation with the Deans and UL will decide on hiring priorities for the academic year and will present this decision, with rationale and full justification for any deviation from APC recommended ranking, including positions not in the APC Report, at the October meeting of Senate.
5. Senate will review this process in January 2020.

From Senate Meeting on March 11, 2019:

Revised Academic Planning Committee membership terms

Type: Standing

Status: Active

Mandate:

The Academic Planning Committee shall make recommendations to Senate on matters relating to academic principles and planning.

In carrying out its work, the Committee shall consult widely with all stakeholders and relevant bodies on campus.

The APC shall report regularly to Senate, no less than two times per year.

Membership (10)

1 Vice President Academic (Chair)

1 Dean of Arts

1 Dean of Prof. Studies

1 Dean of P&A Sc.

1 University Librarian

1 Faculty Member from the Faculty of Professional Studies

1 Faculty Member from the Faculty of Arts

1 Faculty Member from the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science

1 Faculty Member from an IDST Program

1 Student VP Academic

Procedures for Appointment:*

Vice President Academic (ex officio)

Dean of Arts (ex officio)

Dean of Prof. Studies (ex officio)

Dean of P&A Sc. (ex officio)

University Librarian (ex officio)

Student VP Academic (ex officio)

Faculty members - elected from the Faculty as a whole**

*Initial term is 1 or 2 years to stagger retirements going forward starting March 15th 2019.

** Eligible faculty members are those with continuing or tenured status. They shall be elected by a general call for nominations from the Faculty Elections Officer.