



Minutes of the Senate meeting of Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2017

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 beginning at 4:00 p.m. with Chair A. Kiefte presiding and 34 present.

**1) Approval of Agenda**

**Motion to approve the agenda, moved by J. Hollett, seconded by R. Seale.**

The Chair noted that the Faculty Support Committee report had not yet been received but that a member of the committee might speak on the subject. Also J. Banks was unable to be present and the Chair asked that item 4) b) be removed from the agenda and covered at the December meeting of Senate.

AGENDA APPROVED AS AMENDED.

**2) Minutes of the Meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017**

**Motion to approve the Minutes of Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 as distributed. Moved by D. Benoit, seconded by G. Bissix.**

The Chair asked for any errors, omissions or changes to the Minutes.

There were none.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES CARRIED.

**3) Announcements**

**a) From the Chair**

Regrets were received from J. Richard, H. Hemming, J. Hooper, J. Hennessy, S. Landry, M. Robertson and J. Banks. A number of Senators would be arriving late due to class commitments.

**b) From the President**

President Ricketts welcomed M. Bishop, the new Registrar, to Senate. M. Bishop had joined Acadia from the University of New Brunswick Saint John campus.

President Ricketts thanked Senators and the University for putting on such a warm and engaging ceremony in the Manning Chapel for his Installation. He noted that those attending from a distance really felt that they had experienced something traditional and very special from Acadia with the Chapel being a perfect setting and the choir performing magnificently.

President Ricketts had recently attended two other Installations: D. MacLatchy, President of Wilfrid Laurier University (and an Acadia *alumna*), and M. Bluehardt, President of Mount Saint Vincent University.

President Ricketts had two items to report on, the first being a meeting between CONSUP and the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education to initiate discussions about the renewal of the MOU between the Government and the Universities. This marked the start of a dialogue between CONSUP and the Ministry of Labour and Advanced Education and began by listening to the priorities of the Government and seeing how the universities might align to those priorities and help the government achieve their goals. It was also an opportunity for the universities to let the government know what our priorities are, and this was done with a preliminary discussion about sustainability and key issues facing the universities in NS.

President Ricketts stated that the Minister expressed his support for continuing annual increases and made it clear that there would be no winners and losers in the new MOU. The Minister stated that the Government priorities were in the areas of economic development and growth, innovation and the linking of research to economic development. President Ricketts noted that the universities all spoke about the need for increased operating grant funding beyond the current 1% per year, and the fact that universities were not only important for the economic growth of the region but also for the social and cultural development and growth of the region. This was all part of the package that Nova Scotia promotes when trying to attract people to come to the Province as it underlines the quality of life and the quality of the communities. President Ricketts felt that these arguments had been well received by the Minister and noted that it also responded well to a proposal by the universities to establish a cultural and social innovation table. This would allow the universities to sit down with the Government and discuss ways in which progress could be made on social and cultural innovation.

President Ricketts also noted that the Minister is interested in helping the universities to cover one time funding for certain critical issues. This could be for infrastructure renewal, addressing deficits in IT systems, vulnerability to cyber-attacks and other such issues that require significant funding.

President Ricketts reported that the next meeting with the Government would take place in December and it was hoped that financial analysis reports from the universities would be ready at that time so that substantive arguments could be made to the Government.

President Ricketts pointed out that one of the big issues for costs would be accessibility on the campus. The Accessibility Act was now in force and an Executive Director had been appointed. Acadia would be working with the directorate and the other institutions through CONSUP to develop standards for accessibility. He noted that Acadia could be facing substantial costs and considerable challenges in this area given the age of our campus and many of our buildings.

To emphasise this point, President Ricketts noted that he had a delegation of 15 Community Development students in his office recently who pointed out that their building at 24 Highland Avenue is not accessible, and that they wished to raise awareness about the issue. President Ricketts expected that the Government will provide financial assistance to Universities as they bring their buildings up to code.

The second item that President Ricketts reported on was his attendance at his first University's Canada Member's meeting. He stated that a set of principles and an action plan had been approved unanimously for inclusive excellence in

post-secondary education. Rick Hansen provided an excellent presentation and President Ricketts stated that it was hoped that he could be invited to visit the region and discuss different ways of approaching inclusivity and accessibility. He pointed out that the principles commit everyone to think seriously about ways in which the campus can be made more inclusive and could help by addressing barriers that currently exist on the campus. President Ricketts hoped that over the coming years Acadia's commitment to equity and diversity, inclusiveness and accessibility would increase.

President Ricketts announced that the deadline for nominations for Honorary Doctorates would be November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017. He encouraged Senators to consider potential nominees and to use the template that had been circulated.

D. Holmberg was pleased that progress was being made in the above areas.

L. Aylward had been asked by Community Development students what they could be doing to promote accessibility on campus. She pointed out that an audit had been conducted some years ago on campus and asked President Ricketts whether this had been mentioned during his meeting with the students.

President Ricketts responded that C. Callbeck was also at the meeting with the students and that he had mentioned the audit and asked that it be updated in anticipation of both the legislation and because it would be useful when making pitches for funding to the Government. This will also serve to identify the priorities for the University. President Ricketts noted that M. Falkenham and his team are working on a ramp for 42 Highland and this is one of the priorities for accessibility improvements on campus.

L. Aylward felt that a lot of work had already done on this topic in the past.

The Chair stated that an Accessibility Committee existed in the past and would have worked on the audit. She asked whether the committee had been an offshoot of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

President Ricketts did not think that the committee was currently operating.

**c) From the Vice-President  
(Academic)**

No report as H. Hemming was not present.

**d) From the ASU President**

No report as G. Hamilton-Burge and S. Nixon were not present.

President Ricketts complimented the students on the excellent renovations to the AXE Lounge.

**e) From the Divinity  
College President**

H. Gardner reported that B. Brackney had recently retired and that a celebratory retirement dinner took place last week. B. Brackney had been approached by Carey Theological College to fill a Chair position in Vancouver and H. Gardner noted that he would now have served in three of the four Baptist Seminaries in Canada. H. Gardner reported that two new faculty had been hired recently: S. Bligh and D. Hunt. The College also expected that two more new faculty hires would be needed in the area of theology and church history.

H. Gardner updated Senate on the enrolment figures for 2017-18, noting that numbers had dropped for the Master of Divinity level and the Bachelor of Theology level. The College would soon be hiring a Manager of Recruitment and Admissions and hoped that student numbers would increase.

H. Gardner stated that a major refurbishment of the College of Divinity would commence in the spring of 2018.

President Ricketts reported that two very successful Open Houses had been held during the last few weeks. Both were extremely well attended and in total 635 students attended compared to 645 the previous year and 497 two years previously. He noted that St. F.X. had also offered an Open House this year for the first time. Applications at this time were also looking promising and the Admissions Office was submitting offers as early as possible.

**4) Reports from Sub-Committees**

The report from the Archives Committee was received by Senate.

**i) Archives Committee  
(attached)**

No report was received from the Faculty Support Committee. The Chair asked whether a Senator from the committee wished to provide an update.

**ii) Faculty Support Committee**

P. Abela recalled that the report had been withdrawn from the previous meeting of Senate and that this month it had not appeared. He noted that Senators were anxious to read the report but pointed out that although motions were required to be on the Senate agenda one week before the Senate meeting, reports were added to the agenda up to 24 hours before a Senate meeting. This provided very little time or opportunity to read a report and P. Abela asked whether it might be necessary for Senate to pass a motion requiring that reports were submitted a week before the meeting. This could make the Senate meetings more productive.

The Chair felt that if that was the preference of Senate this could be insisted upon but that it could result in a one month delay for discussion of reports.

P. Abela noted that while flexibility was often appreciated by the committees, there was a point beyond which it became impossible for Senators to scrutinise a report. This could then defeat the point of the report. P. Abela suggested either a motion for the next meeting of Senate or that a requirement be put in place.

The Chair agreed to check the Robert's Rules of Order and the Senate By-Laws to establish whether reports needed to be submitted one week in advance. If there was no wording at present a notice of motion would be required to introduce the change to the Senate By-Laws.

D. Holmberg clarified that under Robert's Rules and the Senate Constitution although motions required a seven day notice of motion, reports did not as long as they did not include a motion. She agreed that it was often very hard to get reports from the committees and felt that another option might be for Senate to receive the report and any individual Senator could request that the report be added to the next Senate agenda if they felt that there had not been

an ample opportunity to digest the material. Some reports were very straight forward while others were more complex.

The Chair and P. Abela agreed.

D. Benoit pointed out that there had been a significant turnover on the Faculty Support Committee and that the previous chair was no longer on the committee. However, a substantial amount of work remained to be done. The interim chair was planning to step down and D. Benoit offered to follow up about holding another meeting so that a new chair could be elected and the committee could move matters forward.

The Chair requested an update from the Faculty Support Committee at the December meeting of Senate.

B. Anderson appreciated the request by P. Abela that Senate reports be provided in a timely fashion. She preferred not to see the late submission of reports becoming the norm.

The Chair agreed that in order to facilitate this, the Chair of Senate and Recording Secretary would continue to communicate in August with sub-committees to alert them to the fact that they would be expected to provide a report at the September or October meeting of Senate.

R. Hare noted that all sub-committees had been contacted in August or September this year and that this was indeed the normal practice.

## 5) New Business

### a) **Big Picture Discussions: items passed by Senate in September 2016**

The Chair reviewed the documentation from the September 2016 Senate agenda. She noted that all of the chairs of the sub-committees had been contacted and that some had already provided updates to Senate. Some sub-committees were just getting meetings going at present but some had completed their requested work from the 'big picture' exercise.

The Chair noted that the T.I.E. Committee had reported back last spring and made a recommendation to urge departments and schools to better utilize the current slot system. This item will be discussed at the next Senate Executive committee meeting later in the month to see if additional recommendations can be made.

The T.I.E. committee was also asked to consider the feasibility of better integrating Open Acadia courses with regular course offerings. The committee determined that this item was beyond their current mandate. Jeff Banks will lead a discussion on this at the December Senate meeting.

The Chair reminded Senators that the work coming from the 'big picture' exercise was on-going and that recommendations were gradually coming to Senate from sub-committees.

D. Holmberg asked about the items that had been earmarked for the Academic Program Review Committee as part of the review of the B.Sc and B. A. programs, since those reviews were not taking place at this time.

The Chair responded that she had asked the Chair of the APRC and had yet to receive an answer. She offered to discuss these items at the Senate Executive meeting at the end of the month.

D. Holmberg stated that she sat on the APRC and that there had been no discussions yet as to where the four items should be discussed and she was concerned that they not get lost.

K. Ashley asked about the mandates of committees and wondered why the Faculty Support Committee had been charged with examining and updating what a credit hour might be.

The Chair stated that at the time of the 'big picture' discussion it was felt that the Faculty Support Committee worked with the on-line offerings and it was felt that hybrid models could be developed. She noted that any changes that were proposed by the committee would come through Senate for further discussion.

L. Aylward asked whether all of the ad-hoc committees were meeting.

The Chair agreed that all of the ad-hoc committees met last year and that this year some had already met and that two would be meeting shortly.

D. Holmberg asked for a brief update from R. Raeside from the Curriculum (Policy) committee.

R. Raeside confirmed that this committee had reported to Senate in October but that they had been waiting to take on the more substantial items now that the new Registrar was in place. The committee would be meeting on Friday and introducing the Registrar to the work of the committee.

P. Callaghan pointed out that the Curriculum committee was looking to get some clarity on the definitions of all programs at Acadia with respect to specializations, minors, majors etc. He expected that support would be needed from the Registrar's Office in order to carry out this exercise.

President Ricketts asked which committee was involved with the request to respond to 21<sup>st</sup> Century concerns and looking at new curricula and ways to make it relate to 21<sup>st</sup> Century issues.

The Chair felt that this item had not been assigned to any particular committee but felt that the Curriculum (Policy) committee could be well placed to capture that point.

President Ricketts also asked whether the issue of student retention had been allocated to a sub-committee.

The Chair noted that a question regarding retention of students from certain demographics had been asked at a previous Senate meeting, and she felt that the Ad-hoc Diversity and Inclusion committee would be the logical place for this item. With respect to general retention the Chair stated that no committees were investigating this at present.

The Chair explained that the terms of reference for Senate sub-committees were in the By-Laws and that these items from the 'big picture' discussions

were all additional work that had been assigned to the committees based on the motion passed at Senate in September 2016.

J. Hollett reiterated his interest in enrolments for the Institution and felt that if the University was moving towards accessibility and inclusivity it was important to identify certain populations and track the success rates of the institution. He felt that once a year a thorough presentation on enrolment should be provided which would include information on retention of certain populations. He recognized that this might not fall to a particular Senate sub-committee but considered that there would be great value in being able to see and understand those kinds of trends on the campus. This would help to inform pedagogy.

The Chair asked Senators how they might wish to proceed. One option would be to make a motion related to an action plan for collection and analysis of qualitative information relating to enrolments and retention.

President Ricketts noted that he had given a detailed presentation on enrolment to the University Faculty meeting as part of the Report from the President and asked whether a variation of that report could be given to Senate. He noted the disparity between the entrance GPA and the retention rate during the first and second year. This was an academic issue and therefore Senate needed to be involved. Students from particular backgrounds and sub-groups were not continuing.

D. Benoit pointed out that at Acadia faculty did not have the ability to collect the data that would be needed in order to make these decisions. While other universities had easy access to comparative statistics and were able to make predictions based on that information, Acadia's system did not provide the ability to do this, or allow for going back to look at data from the previous year, especially with regards to Math in his experience. Although some of this data could be pulled from the system it was reliant on one individual finding time to extract it, but that could involve a lengthy wait. This was the data that was needed to inform decisions about where to go with the curricula.

D. Benoit noted the difficulty of starting with 60 students in a program and not having access to data that would allow him to recognise that a portion of them needed additional tutorials if they were to advance successfully. Although some students might switch to other programs at Acadia there would also be a percentage that left the University altogether.

D. Benoit felt that this was a money issue and was likely beyond the purview of Senate.

P. Abela stated that S. Mesheau had presented enrolment data to Senate but that the presentation did not include any information pertaining to retention. With regard to the system currently being used for data analysis he felt that it was penny wise and pound foolish not to invest in a more modern system and felt that it would pay for itself in improved tracking results.

D. Holmberg agreed that having the means to easily extract the data would be very advantageous. She noted that in Psychology it seemed as though there was a big melt between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year but they were not able to know whether this was consistent with other programs at the University. Knowing whether a student was switching to another program or leaving altogether was important to know.

L. Aylward also wanted to see who was coming into programs, how they were performing and what they were doing because this would inform her teaching.

The Chair noted that C. Callbeck had indicated that they were looking into collecting some of this information, some of which could be available but is not being collected.

L. Aylward wondered whether the admission form might have identification information included.

P. Callaghan felt that it would be important to determine what sort of reporting was needed and go forward with asking the Registrar's Office to provide the information.

M. Bishop responded that there were two qualifiers, the first being that the current admission form did ask for self-identification of First Nations and Black Nova Scotians. The form now also allowed a student to list 'other' with relation to the sex of the student so that there would now be some data in the system. However, because it remained voluntary for a student to provide this information, it will therefore always be incomplete.

M. Bishop stated that the second qualifier related to retention and pointed out that it was very important to define exactly what was meant by 'retention'. He noted that an MPHEC definition was one yardstick to use which allowed for graduation within five years (this had now been updated to six years). Another, broader definition of retention, was knowing that the Institution had achieved the result that the student desired. He acknowledged that this was difficult to try to put on paper but pointed out that a student may come for one year with no intention of staying longer, so in that case the student had completed their intended plan. Currently these students would not be covered under any definition of retention.

J. Hollett felt that this was about Acadia setting out to analyse the behaviour of its students. He agreed with M. Bishop that students often chose to transfer.

J. Hollett explained that a university would normally develop goals and targets and start to broaden the questions on the admission form. He offered to work with other Senators if they wished to strike a sub-committee.

The Chair asked whether a notice of motion was necessary or whether this was something that could be acted upon prior to the next Senate meeting with a brief report coming to Senate.

J. Hollett noted that other committees were already further down the road with this, for example, the Disability Policy committee or an Accessibility committee.

M. Lukeman pointed out that a significant number of students in Chemistry were accepted into Pharmacy or Dental School after their second or third year. This could only be looked upon as a good thing but in the system they would appear to have dropped out. The Chemistry department manages to track some of their students, but in a more informal way which did not feed into the broader university system.



R. Murphy noted that in the past a student was required to complete a form when they returned their leased laptop which provided a better perspective on why they were leaving the University. There was no longer an exit survey of the students and R. Murphy asked whether something like this could be resurrected.

D. Benoit agreed that some information can be teased out of the current student data management system (EDEN) but not by individual faculty members. He felt that EDEN was archaic and needed to be replaced. The current situation was that faculty had only one person, originally a computer science student, who they could approach for assistance with obtaining the data.

President Ricketts appreciated hearing the comments and felt that it was a 'big picture' issue that had not yet been captured. He asked whether the Academic Planning Committee could consider what the issues were and he also saw this discussion going on into the strategic planning process because it would be an area of strategic direction that the University would want to look at, in order to support the success of the students and also to support the faculty and staff with information to enable them to make good decisions.

The Chair asked whether information was available on students who were eligible to register but then chose not to register, or who registered but then did not attend. Some could be on dismissal but others could have various reasons for not returning.

A. Vibert noted that she had served on the selection committee for the new Registrar and knew that Acadia had hired a Registrar with a considerable background and experience in data analytics. A. Vibert felt that M. Bishop could be the person to investigate this.

A. Vibert felt that if faculty at Acadia did not have the ability to access clear data analytics this left them open to manipulation of the data in ways that could be unhelpful. Requesting data to support an argument may not be helpful to the University community in general or to the decision-making within the University. She noted that she had brought these issues up with the Registrar recently and encouraged Senators to take advantage of M. Bishop's expertise to work out what is currently available.

D. Holmberg suggested that the Academic Planning committee be asked to look at this issue, but noted that neither the Registrar, or a student, currently served on that committee. D. Holmberg suggested therefore that the Senate Executive committee look at the issue and decide which sub-committee this might be referred to.

The Chair asked Senators whether they would like the Senate Executive committee to add this to their agenda because SE would be meeting at the end of the month.

There was general agreement.

B. Anderson noted that when she was involved with the external review of Nutrition several years ago she was asked by Labour and Advanced Education and other institutional groups to describe where their students were going after graduation. She felt that there had been no clear process to be able to answer

that question but noted that other universities do have this information more readily available.

The Chair noted the larger conversations that the Admission and Academic Standing (Appeals) committee had been having recently around student success and felt that some of those topics were related to what Senate was discussing here and that those might also go to other committees.

**Motion to adjourn at 5:30 p.m. moved by D. Benoit.**

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

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R. Hare, Recording Secretary

**Report of the Senate Archives Committee, 31 October 2017**

The Senate Archives Committee met at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, 4 October 2017 in the Esther Clark Wright Archives. Acting Librarian Ann Smith served as transition chair, and the committee selected Stephen Henderson as chair for the coming year. Brenda Trofanenko will serve as secretary. The archivists, Pat Townsend and Wendy Robicheau, presented a report on the use of the archives by external researchers, students, and visiting classes. The report also detailed the summer term's social media postings promoting various collections, the professional development activities of the archivists, and their extensive work with the collections.

The committee then reviewed the mandate of the committee and the general policies of the archives. Questions were asked about the collection and digitization priorities. It was noted that the last survey of users was conducted in 2012, and it may be time for another to capture the needs and interests of the community.

The committee agreed to meet again at 4 p.m. on a Wednesday in March. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Submitted by Stephen Henderson, Chair