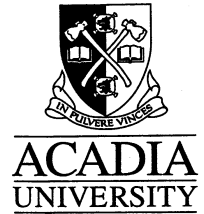


Office of the Senate Secretariat

Acadia University
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
Canada B0P 1X0

Telephone: (902) 585-1617
Facsimile: (902) 585-1078



Minutes of the Senate Meeting of Monday January 13, 2020.

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Monday January 13, 2020 beginning at 4:00 p.m. with Chair A. Kieft presiding and 47 present, and one guest. The meeting took place in BAC 132.

1) Approval of Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to order, noting that there was quorum at present. The Chair noted to Senators that the most recent version of the agenda was version 2, circulated on Friday.

Motion to approve the agenda. Moved by D. Benoit and seconded by C. Shields.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA CARRIED.

2) Minutes of the Meeting of Senate on Monday December 9th, 2019

Motion to approve the Minutes of Monday December 9th, 2019 as distributed. Moved by M. Lukeman and seconded by D. Benoit.

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

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES CARRIED. EIGHT ABSTENTIONS.

3) Announcements
a) From the Chair

The Chair identified and welcomed new Senators and those who were returning after an absence from Senate: H. Teismann, J. Dymont, A. Pash, J. Richard and A. Mitchell.

The Chair announced regrets from S. Thomas, Z. Whitman, S. Hayes and J. Stanley.

The Chair noted that J. Hayes was a guest from the Department of Psychology and Chair of the Senate Honours Committee.

b) From the President

President Ricketts welcomed everyone but noted that it had been a sad end of the year with the death of B. Phinney on Christmas Day. A celebration of life was held on January 4th at Acadia and President Ricketts noted that he had been friends to many people in the room and that this was a great loss. A scholarship will be started in B. Phinney's name.

President Ricketts also referred to the tragedy of the Ukrainian International Airlines flight from Tehran which was later shown to have been brought down. He commented on the fact that the whole country had been impacted dramatically and that Universities were the focal point with their loss of faculty, staff and students. Ten universities suffered losses and in addition there were many others on the flight. Although Acadia lost no students it

seemed likely that those that were attending Acadia would likely know some of the victims. President Ricketts noted the far-reaching impact of the tragedy and that both Dalhousie and St. Mary's Universities had suffered losses. President Ricketts asked that on behalf of Senate Acadia note the sadness and extend condolences and sympathies for the victims of families and friends, and also for the institutions that had been so badly hit.

President Ricketts stated that Universities Canada planned to hold a minute of silence all across the country on Wednesday January 15th, at 2:00 p.m. A notice will go out to the campus and President Ricketts asked for the Chapel bell to be rung at the start of the minute of silence.

President Ricketts had provided the revised and updated version of the Strategic Plan. Changes had been detailed in the written announcements. He thanked Senators for providing input and suggestions. Formatting and presentation had been changed to create a more succinct, shorter and more precise document; recognizing that the Plan still needed to be strategic and focused.

President Ricketts stated that there was also a four page Executive Summary which just included strategies and goals. This could be used as a distribution document to the public.

The Strategic Plan will go to the Board in February and President Ricketts welcomed further input from Senators.

P. Abela asked about the removal of the KPIs and the decision to place them in the Operational Plan. He asked whether this Plan, which would have most impact on the operations at Acadia, would come to Senate.

President Ricketts agreed that this would happen. This was the original document that Senators commented on. In addition, there would be the public facing document and then a shorter Executive Summary.

M. Adam stated that while he was in support of the optimal rates of student enrolment, he was concerned at the goal of increasing international student enrolment to at least 20% of the student population. He remained concerned that adequate supports be put in place and asked whether the increased tuition income would be put to use in this way.

President Ricketts agreed that this was a valid point and stated that in the area of Student Support Services there were objectives to ensure that they reflected and supported the increasing diversity of the student body. He expected that as the proportion of international students on campus increased, the University would direct a proportion of that revenue to ensure that support service for those students increased. Resources would also be used to increase internationalization across the campus.

c) From the Provost and Vice-President Academic

D. Keefe extended a warm welcome to J. Dymont, Director of the School of Education, and to J. Richard, Acting University Librarian.

A. Redden pointed out that the written report should include four categories under the Maple League initiatives. She stated that of the nine awards given out, eight included Acadia faculty members who were either leading or co-collaborating.

D. Keefe offered to provide an update at a later date.

d) **From the ASU President**

K. Vandertoorn reported that interviews had been completed for the ASU General Manager position and that they expected to have someone in place in February.

K. Vandertoorn stated that Frosh week was in progress and that various initiatives were taking place: self-care programming, live music, ski trip, concert and other events.

K. Vandertoorn noted that the ASU elections would be taking place on February 13th, 2020 and that nominations would go out in mid-January, 2020.

G. Whitehall asked the AGS representative to inform Senators about the Research Creative Works Symposium that would be taking place at Acadia.

M. Penney stated that this would take place on February 7th and 8th, 2020 and would be open to both graduate and under-graduate student presentations. Posters, art pieces, oral presentations and performance pieces would all be accepted and he could receive submissions until January 16th, 2020. He asked faculty to encourage any students that were carrying out research to contact him and noted that there were prizes to be won. Registration was free.

A. Redden agreed that there had been financial support for the conference provided by all of the Faculties.

M. Penney thanked every academic unit that had provided financial assistance.

e) **From the Faculty of Theology/College of Divinity**

A. Robbins stated that two faculty members had recently published books.

Dr. Melody Maxwell with T. Laine Scales:
Doing the Word: Southern Baptists' Carver School of Church Social Work and Its Predecessors, 1907-1997, University of Tennessee Press, 2019.

Dr. Matthew Walsh, *Angels Associated with Israel in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Angelology and Sectarian Identity at Qumran*, Mohr Siebeck, 2019.

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.**

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. Moved by A. Redden and seconded by M. Penney.

A. Redden explained that the current process created extensive work for her office because the thesis would come to R&GS four times over a period of 2 months, and that the review of the thesis was currently being done by members external to the academic unit. Results of the survey suggested that faculty did not see a lot of added value in the current process.

A. Redden felt that it was unrealistic to expect a new staff person to take this on. She felt that the current process was inefficient. A period of three weeks was taken up with the external reader which meant that a student needed to submit their thesis three weeks prior to the due date.

A. Redden noted that most academic units already had a second reader process in place. The proposed changes would require a mandatory second reader process which could be discussed in each Faculty to decide how best to implement this change. She expected that each unit would develop their own internal processes and that there would be standardized instructions that would be provided for second readers. Research and Graduate Studies could provide this.

J. Hayes commented that there had been extensive consultation with the Heads and Directors and the faculty in order to assess the impact of discontinuing the external review process. He noted that each unit already had a system in place, but he wanted units to plan ahead to decide what process they wished to use for an internal second reader.

J. Hayes pointed out that the internal second reader would increase rigor in the thesis process.

G. Whitehall asked when these changes would take effect.

A. Redden stated that it should be adopted in time for April 2020. She felt that it was not a large change and noted that her unit would develop a checklist for internal readers to make use of.

J. Banks suggested making the dates for July 1st, 2020.

A. Redden stated that although the Calendar currently described the process of going through Research and Graduate Studies, she was asking for the change to be made immediately and hoped that this would not cause a problem for students.

P. Abela was concerned that a student could make an appeal if they felt that the expected procedure had not been followed.

A. Redden noted that this was a process and not an evaluation because the external reader only provided comments and not a grade.

P. Rigg stated that in her department the grade was determined by both the supervisor and the second reader.

C. Shields pointed out that if a student received a poor grade as a result of the changed process, that could be a problem.

P. Callaghan suggested remaining with the current wording in the Calendar but not assigning the external reader.

C. Mutlu asked what the students thought about this change to the process and questioned whether they had been consulted.

A. Redden and J. Hayes stated that the Honours committee had student representation from each of the three Faculties.

A. Wilks stated that the function of the external reader was not part of the evaluation process so there was no likelihood of the student wanting to appeal. Most units already had their own second reader in place. She asked whether the date should be delayed just for those units that did not already have a second reader.

J. Hayes stressed that the recommendation was not to change the evaluative criteria; only to remove the external review process. He noted that different units already approached the grading of a thesis in different ways. Some units allowed the supervisor to give 100% of the mark, while still consulting with the second reader. In other units the second reader gave a portion of the grade.

J. Hayes stated that the Honours committee was not recommending any change to the way that units marked theses now or in the future. He expected that if a unit decided to change their approach they should do so in consultation with the Dean. He encouraged units to make sure that they had internal readers in place to read theses from their unit.

J. Hayes expected that at the next Senate meeting a revision of the March 23rd date that currently showed in the Calendar would need to be made. There would be no change to the April 17th submission date in the Calendar.

M. Jarvin stated that students had let her know that they were in favour of the proposed change.

G. Whitehall asked the Registrar to comment on the process with respect to changes to the Calendar halfway through the year. He was concerned that it could be unfair to make any change in the middle of the academic year. He noted that any student could graduate under the Calendar year that they entered Acadia but did not feel that making the change mid-year would be good governance.

M. Bishop agreed that the Calendar referenced March 23rd as the deadline for the thesis to be with the external reader, followed by April 17th which was when the thesis was finally due. M. Bishop felt that the Institution would be challenged to change this for a student that had already started the Honours thesis process.

M. Bishop pointed out though that there were situations whereby an exam or test could be moved to a different date from that originally publicized, if the whole class had been consulted and was in full agreement. In these instances there was flexibility and if the students felt it to be a positive change, it could move forward. If there were students that were not in favour of the change, they would have the right to say that the Calendar remain unchanged.

M. Lukeman spoke in favour of the motion and clarified that the only reference in the Calendar stated 'Monday March 23rd is the last day to submit Honours theses for external review for Spring Graduands', and secondly '17th April, deadline for approved Honours Theses for Spring Graduands'. At no time was Research and Graduate Studies mentioned so he pointed out that the external review process could instead be carried out in the academic units.

M. Robertson stated that in his academic unit two faculty were in favour of keeping the present process because they believed that it increased rigor in the Honours thesis and provided a good experience for students and also provided interest for those external readers who learned about research being carried out across the campus.

President Ricketts noted that there was a statement in the Calendar that allowed for changes to be made at any time. He noted that no change should be made to the Calendar that would make things more difficult for a student or raise the expected standard in some unexpected way.

President Ricketts felt it unlikely that a student could complain about the proposed change and did not feel that it could affect any student that was in-stream.

H. Teismann suggested making the process voluntary on the part of the students and allowing those that wanted an external reader to be able to apply for one.

J. Banks was comfortable with the proposed change and pointed out that the on-line Calendar was the one that the University went by.

C. Shields noted that Senate was voting on discontinuing the external reader process. He stated that an internal review would now be mandatory and that those units not currently having a second reader would be required to put this in place. He asked whether this could impact a student.

J. Hayes stated that in discussions with the Heads and Directors, every unit had an internal reader in place for this year. Only the IDST units operated differently but they also had a second reader in place. J. Hayes stated that although it would now be mandatory to have a second reader, the second read was not necessarily evaluative, with a stake in the student's grade. Whatever the units had intended to do this year would continue unchanged.

C. Shields pointed out that the idea that it would be easier for students to complete their thesis because they would now have more time was probably incorrect because they would now spend until April completing their thesis and have to go straight into their final exams at that point.

J. Hayes stated that academic units were encouraged to keep whatever deadlines they wanted prior to the final date of April 17th.

L. Aylward was appreciative of the presentations that J. Hayes had given to all three Faculties and the comprehensiveness of the information. She recommended moving forward on the information Senate had been given.

B. Anderson also expressed support from the School of Nutrition following the detailed presentation. Barb noted that in Nutrition internal readers were sometimes from outside of Acadia. This was because a specialization or area of interest was better commented on by someone outside of Acadia. She asked whether this needed to be clarified with language.

A. Redden agreed that whoever was the second reader needed to have a natural interest and expertise in the subject and could comment on it while helping the student. This would help to produce the best thesis possible.

J. Hayes agreed that this approach should continue.

P. Abela supported the motion but knew that he would miss reading theses, having spent the last 18 years doing so. He noted how much was learned from the students and the positive side to faculty reading outside of their area of research.

P. Abela recognized that there was a lot of work involved in the administration of the thesis process which would no longer happen, but he hoped that the administration would continue to support the pedagogical interests of students and faculty.

V. Provencal asked whether the wording in recommendation 2: *Any unit offering an Honours Program to have a mandatory internal second reader process* could be changed to include a date by which this was required and also softened to make this a recommendation rather than a requirement.

A. Redden pointed out that a recommendation would not be followed through on. In order to maintain rigor it was essential to have a second reader.

M Adam commented that the conversation had moved off topic. He saw no problems with maintaining what was in the Calendar and approving the process.

J. Richard asked whether Librarians could still be second readers.

A. Redden agreed that there would be exceptions, such as IDST programs or small departments, and that she expected that the appropriate people would be serving as second readers.

J. Richard stated that in the Library, in spite of second readers and external readers, it was not unusual to receive a thesis with spelling errors or an error on the front page. Library staff tended to catch these errors but if a thesis came to them as PDF format it was difficult to make changes. Now that the theses were available on-line it was important that they be correct since they represented the level of rigor.

MOTION TO AMEND THE MAIN MOTION:

**Motion to read ‘*any unit offering an Honours Program to have a mandatory internal second reader process no later than July 2020.*’
Moved by A. Redden and seconded by D. Seamone.**

President Ricketts pointed out that this could be a friendly amendment if both the mover and seconder were in agreement.

Z. Goldsmith asked whether the external reader was to be removed immediately at the same time as delaying the process by which an academic unit needed to have a second reader in place, if they did not already have one in place. He asked whether the external reader process would be in place if a student wanted it.

J. Hayes pointed out that he had not identified a single academic unit that did not already have a second reader in place.

President Ricketts asked whether this allowed for an Honours thesis to be graded solely by the supervisor.

A. Redden agreed that it did.

President Ricketts was not in agreement with that process because a second pair of eyes needed to see the thesis.

D. Benoit agreed but noted that currently the external reader had no ability to influence the mark that the supervisor was giving. In the event of a unit on campus not currently having a second reader, the external reader was not empowered to grade the thesis or influence the mark being given by the supervisor.

D. Benoit stated that since all units already had a second reader this was not an issue.

P. Abela agreed that there was therefore no need for the amendment.

AMENDMENT TO THE MAIN MOTION FAILED.

M. Adam asked whether the proposed changes would come in immediately.

The Chair confirmed that this was the case.

D. Seamone noted that with the proposed changes something would be lost across the campus in that faculty would not know as much about what was going on elsewhere. She suggested that the Honours committee work on ways to replace what will be lost.

A. Redden agreed that the committee had already had this conversation and was interested in finding ways to celebrate research on campus, e.g. poster sessions. She noted that when peers were reviewing the work of a student they might comment if the supervisor had become over-involved in the writing of the thesis.

Glenn Wooden asked whether the main motion required that the external reader be dropped, or that it not be overseen by R&GS.

A. Redden stated that currently Research and Graduate Studies vetted and oversaw the process which was laborious.

Glen Wooden suggested that academic units could continue with external readers if they wished to do so. He felt that the wording of the motion could be changed to reflect this.

The Chair asked for clarification and asked whether with the proposed process, R&GS would still receive the final thesis in April.

A. Redden agreed that this was the case still.

C. Mutlu spoke against this idea and noted that the Honours committee had carried out a lot of work to get to this point and that to suggest changes on the floor of Senate was not the right approach. He noted that the conversation had already taken 50 minutes.

The Chair asked B. Anderson whether an amendment would be needed to satisfy the School of Nutrition practice of using readers external to Acadia.

B. Anderson pointed out that *Recommendation 2.2* encouraged all units to coordinate with their Dean of Faculty, and she expected that would be discussed at that level.

MAIN MOTION CARRIED. THREE ABSTENTIONS.

**b) Academic Planning
Committee Process**

The Chair reminded Senators that this item was from discussions one year earlier and documentation from 2018-2019 had been included starting on page 10 of the agenda.

A. Pash pointed out that the APC provided rankings for faculty, librarians and instructors but that this was not formally articulated in the document.

A. Pash also asked that a Librarian be added to the APC membership in addition to the University Librarian.

C. Mutlu asked what was to be reviewed.

The Chair stated that it had been stipulated that this process would be revisited at this time but that there wasn't any model for review to be followed. At this point, Senators were free to make any comments they wished to make. If Senators wanted to bring a motion forward for a future meeting that would be in order.

C. Rushton noted that this was an opportunity to reflect on how the current process was going, having been in effect for a one-year period.

C. Mutlu asked for clarification because in September a short report from the Chair of the APC had stated that the process had gone well, but there had been a request from Senate to make the APC report more detailed.

G. Whitehall provided comments on the process from the point of view of being the Head of a Department: Firstly he commented that it was healthy to review the process and that the purpose would be to improve the process that had been passed a year previously. He felt that Senators were comfortable with the rationale for the changes; mainly to create a more flexible and long-sighted process and wished that the APC become an effective, transparent, insightful and accountable committee.

G. Whitehall felt that some Senators had expressed reservations about the proposed committee structure and that those concerns were directed towards the logistical working of the committee and the process. G. Whitehall wanted to ensure that in the name of flexibility and expediency, Senate did not abandon important values such as transparency, accountability and democracy.

G. Whitehall found that the flow of submissions the previous year had been very cumbersome and had felt rushed and unclear. He noted that it was not clear from the schedule when the documents were supposed to be written, when they would be discussed at different governing levels, and what should or shouldn't go into each submission. G. Whitehall noted that only end dates were provided. He hoped that this would change as the APC went through the second year of the process and stated that he would appreciate some guidance on how to make that happen.

G. Whitehall discussed the report from the APC back to Senate and noted that when the report came to Senate in the Fall there had not been sufficient information included in the report for Senators to be able to appreciate the rationale for decisions with respect to the rankings by the APC. He expected that a more fulsome report would be provided the following year and noted that issues of transparency were important.

G. Whitehall discussed the accountability to Senate of the APC. This was an ideological and philosophical concern that some Senators had to the process. He stressed on a world-wide level people were confronted by a desire for executive expediency at all levels of governance; at international and national levels, at Provincial levels and at corporations and institutions. G. Whitehall noted that it was possible to be shocked when leaders of foreign governments

behaved in this way or when the Prime Minister was acting in this way. He saw this as a trend that was also occurring in academic institutions, noting that the decision-makers were finding the democratic model to be cumbersome and time consuming. G. Whitehall felt it important not to yield to the temptation to abandon the liberal arts values in favour of desire for expediency and flexibility. He pointed out that the Senate of a liberal arts university should model the sort of governance that was championed in the University mission, the classroom pedagogy, community relations and historic values.

G. Whitehall was concerned that moral standing would be lost when Senate no longer had the right to rubber stamp the APC report by means of a vote. He noted that currently the APC report is received by Senate as a report. He felt that Senate should have the right to exercise its duty under the bi-cameral legislation that governed the University.

D. Keefe, Chair of the APC, stated that in November the APC had struck a sub-committee of four members: himself, S. Currie, A. Quema and D. Silver; to look into the process of academic planning. He expected that some of the issues raised by G. Whitehall would be part of that discussion. D. Keefe suggested that the sub-committee solicit information from Senators and from the Heads and Directors who had been involved in the process last year, before coming back to Senate with recommendations based upon that feedback.

D. Keefe expected that this would occur during the Winter term and that the APC would report back to Senate in April the feedback that they had received and information on adjustment to the current process if deemed necessary.

The Chair asked that the feedback already received today at Senate be recorded as input for the APC sub-committee. D. Keefe agreed that it would be noted.

L. Aylward recalled that when the APC report had been given it had been mentioned that not all steps had been followed during the last year because of the lateness of the process getting started. For this reason, she did not feel that the full process had yet been worked through with respect to the academic planning piece, which was a very important part of the process. She was pleased that the committee had begun to envision what the planning piece might look like. She hoped that information would be given to the academic units to outline what this would look like, so that all could engage in discussions around academic planning.

D. Benoit stated that there were no issues in the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science around the providing of data for the allocation of positions. He felt that the reporting back to Senate in the Fall had fallen short but that this had already been discussed. D. Benoit stated though that the first 10 units were ranked by the APC, and no other units were ranked further down the list. This meant that he had no indication of whether information that he provided in the dossier had been considered relevant or not.

D. Benoit was looking for this type of feedback from the committee so he would know whether he should continue to request positions. He rotated Core courses on a regular basis and enrolment was increasing but he also recognized that other units were facing greater challenges.

D. Benoit noted that for several years Senate did vote on the ranked list from the APC. However, although he liked the list coming to Senate and Senators being able to ask questions, he did not feel the need for Senate to rubber

stamp the list. He recognized that the committee had already carried out a great deal of work and come in with a solid list.

The Chair pointed out that it was now almost 6:00 p.m. and offered options to either extend the meeting, or to put this item on the agenda for February, or to ask the APC to seek feedback outside of Senate and bring this back to Senate in April.

Senators were in favour of the APC seeking feedback and returning in April.

G. Whitehall asked what would be reported back in April.

D. Keefe agreed that the APC could provide the feedback that they received and report with a summary.

It was agreed that the APC would seek feedback from appropriate places and that the APC would report back in April 2020.

5) Other Business

There was no other business.

6) Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m. Moved by D. Benoit.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

R. Hare, Recording Secretary

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 Dyment, who joins us as the Director of the School of Education. Dr. Dyment 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																																				
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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.