

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Monday, **11 December 2006**, beginning at 4:06 p.m. with Chair Ian Wilks presiding and 43 present.

1) Minutes of the Meeting of  
14 November 2006

It was moved by G. Iwama and seconded by B. Moody *that the Minutes of Tuesday, 14 November 2006 be approved.*

The following amendments were made:

- Pg. 4 Item 4)d) should read "P. Cook MacKinnon said that there was a 6% drop in Acadia's acceptance rate on the Acadia Excellence Awards."
- Pg. 2 change to "proceed"
- Pg. 5 change to "polled"
- Pg. 6 change to "50% of total hours"

MOTION WAS CARRIED AS AMENDED.

2) Announcements and  
Communications

a) From the Chair  
-re Regrets

Regrets were received from P. Corkum, A. Irving, W. McLeod, G. Ness, K. Robinson, and M. Trask.

- re Agenda

The Chair noted that Item 3)a) was on the agenda twice, and would therefore be deleted and covered under 4)a).

- re Guests to Senate

He acknowledged a guest at the meeting: Colin Holt, Deputy Chair of the SRC.

- re *ad hoc* Acadia  
Advantage Review  
Committee

The Chair noted that the Senate *ad hoc* Acadia Advantage Review Committee had not yet convened. It will do so when the final position, that of Director of the Learning Commons, is filled.

b) From the President

The President spoke to the Senate concerns regarding the Office of the Registrar. She said that in the past four years this office has had four different reporting lines because there have been four different Vice Presidents (Academic). She was concerned that the necessary support has not been given to this office. It has encountered various difficulties: the online registration broke down both years it was used, diplomas were wrong, and overall there was a lack of support. Therefore, an initiative to move the office to the control of the VP (Student Affairs) was undertaken. The Registrar has been reporting to the VP (S) for two months and there has been much co-operation and creative thinking. The President noted, however, that there was a genuine and sincere faculty concern that academic processes should be under academic

leadership, and she therefore proposed that she meet with the Senate Chair, the VP (Academic), and the VP (Student Affairs) and determine how the Registrar's Office can have joint/dual reporting. On issues concerning student life and enrolment related activities the Registrar would report to the VP (S); and on academic issues the Registrar would report to the VP (A). This solution would allay concerns about academic integrity as well as allowing changes to go forward that will help with the current enrolment challenges.

Completed figures for this year show that Acadia has the lowest enrolment in eighteen years, at fewer than 3,200. These figures represent a challenge for the University and its mission.

The President announced that the Capital Campaign has raised \$40 toward its goal of \$50 million. The on-campus penny parade for scholarships resulted in \$3,174. The Learning Commons has also attracted much financial support.

c) From the Vice-President  
(Academic)

G. Iwama congratulated all for a successful term.

He shared a communication from an Acadia alumnus regarding the benefit of personal letters from Acadia University to prospective students. He expressed the hope that this sort of letter writing in support of enrolment would continue. He also hoped that faculty would attend an information session on other approaches for dealing with enrolment challenges.

G. Iwama noted that the URC is fully underway, that the budget for the new academic year was under preparation, and that the process of implementing the recommendations of the Strategic Plan was ongoing. He expressed hope that the Acadia Advantage Review would bring recommendations forward by May. A search for the Dean of Professional Studies position has begun. He announced that there would soon be a meeting of the Senate Executive, and said that he believed that this committee could have a beneficial input into the planning process.

He announced that Anne Mercer-Hall has joined the VP (A) office in the position of Project Coordinator and Budget Officer.

In reply to a question from the floor, G. Iwama said that the Senate Executive would determine the frequency of its meetings based on the need to address planning issues. The Chair noted that the Senate Executive will be a useful link between the Senate and the academic management team; its essential role would be to determine which issues should be brought before Senate, and how far Senate should be involved in those issues. The Executive Committee will not be making executive decisions, but play a key role in shaping future Senate agendas.

In reply to a question from the floor about the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, G. Iwama said that ongoing activities such as processing contracts, handling various grants, interacting with industry,

handling graduate awards, distributing and receiving Honours theses, and preparing next year's budget have taken place. He said that the search for a Dean for this office would take place on completion of the review of the Research and Graduate Studies Office

As noted earlier, 3)a) was removed from today's agenda as it was covered in 4)a).

3) Business Arising from the Minutes

b) Motion on Reporting Procedure for the Registrar's Office (**067-29-REG**)

It was moved by K. Whetter and J. Eustace *that the motion regarding reporting procedure for the Registrar's Office as attached to today's agenda be approved.*

J. Eustace referred to the Senate Constitution and By-Laws and the Act Respecting Acadia University, where it states that the Registrar's Office is the operational arm of the Senate, ensuring that academic regulations constituted by the Senate are enacted. He argued that the Registrar's office should report to office of the VP (A), since the latter administers academic issues at Acadia University. As well Senate is the body that legally makes decision on these issues.

A lengthy discussion followed with the following points made:

- How can the transfer of reporting procedure for the Registrar's Office make a difference in student enrolment when it is the Enrolment Office that has the expertise in enrolment and admissions?
- The electronic registration system has been known to crash, and the proposed move will provide more expertise and support for it.
- The academic sector should not be involved in administrative procedures, such as registration support, but concentrate on creating and transferring knowledge.
- There are two elements to consider here: 1) what Senate's jurisdiction on this matter is, and 2) whether the matter should come to Senate for decision.
- It was noted that departmental administrative assistants have been given the instruction and ability to register students at all levels, especially when the system has broken down, and they do it well.
- The President said that, in regard to jurisdiction, the Registrar's Office is part of the administration, and the administration is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors. While the Registrar works very closely with the Senate, the Registrar's Office is not a part of the Senate. The Senate does not have jurisdiction in the administrative function of the Registrar's Office. She believed that the Senate could disapprove of what has occurred, but the Senate cannot direct the President on this matter because the President does not report to the Senate, but to the Board.
- The Chair replied that the Registrar's Office clearly falls under Senate jurisdiction. This is made clear by the fact that if the proposed change goes through it will create a need to make certain changes to the Senate Constitution and By-Laws. This document is designed to reflect a certain reporting relationship for the Registrar's office; a different

relationship calls for different wording in certain places of the document. The fact that this change impacts upon our very Constitution demonstrates that the change is a matter of Senate jurisdiction. It may also be a matter of Board jurisdiction, in which case we are dealing with a matter of joint jurisdiction. But even under joint jurisdiction Senate still needs to be consulted, and its approval given, for a change of this sort.

- It was suggested that the proposed President's committee should include another member of the Senate, preferably one of the movers of this motion. The Chair noted that he himself would not be an appropriate member for the committee, since he would be presiding over the debate on any report it may issue.

- The Chair was asked to elaborate on his claim that changing the reporting relationship of the Registrar's office will create a need to make certain changes to the Senate Constitution & By-Laws. He gave as an example the case of the Admission & Academic Standing Committee (Appeals). This committee includes in its membership the Registrar and the VP (A). If the proposed changes go forward, the committee would also need to include the VP (S).

- The President reiterated that she does not accept that the Senate has jurisdiction in directing the Registrar's reporting line. The Registrar is an administrator of the University. She agreed that Department Heads and Directors all fall under the purview of the Senate, but argued that the Registrar's function is purely the administrative one of scheduling classes, recording grades, or scheduling exams. She said she has respected the Senate and worked with the VP (A) to return Senate power it lost in previous years and give it a meaningful relationship on academic matters. She said that she would not be opposing Senate on this matter if she believed that it fell under Senate jurisdiction.

- One Senator suggested that as Senate does not direct the President, we should communicate this motion to the Board. There is no need to get into a jurisdictional debate regarding Senate directing the President to do anything or not. Any direction should go through the Board.

- A Senator called for a secret ballot.

- Concern was expressed about the language of this proposal. It was argued that Senate should not take it upon itself to "direct" the President.

- Concern was expressed about the timing of this discussion, given where we are in our academic year, and in our enrolment cycle.

It was moved by P. Doerr and seconded by J. Kirk *that this motion be tabled until the next meeting of the Senate.*

MOTION WAS DEFEATED: 17/14.

Discussion continued with the following points made:

- A Senator felt that avoiding this issue is not the answer. Senate must show confidence in the Registrar's office.

- The President said that the compromise offered would help maintain confidence in the academic functions of the Registrar's Office, since these would remain under the VP (A). She said there would be no interference in these academic functions (graduation list, and other

purely academic functions). Only issues of student affairs would go to the VP (S). Academic standards would not be affected. Regarding the duties of the Registrar, she reiterated her willingness to have future discussions.

- One Senator maintained that the fact that this move was presented as a “done deal” did not go over well -- especially as this move does have an impact on the Senate.
- A Senator thought that the proposed committee was a good idea and he predicted that it would receive substantial support from the Senate.
- Referring to the Senate Constitution & By-Laws, the Chair argued that the creators of this document placed much detail in the terms of reference, and intended that the Senate be a body that inspected the academic life of this University down to its very operational details.
- One Senator questioned why the Registrar was not included on the committee to review the proposed reporting relationship for the Registrar’s Office, given that this person knows the demands of the position so thoroughly.
- The Chair noted that this discussion over jurisdiction is a vital part of the ongoing discussion of the role of Senate in the life of this University.

It was moved by R. Perrins and seconded by M. Masters *that the final two paragraphs of the motion be replaced with: the Senate appoint a sub-committee comprised of the VP (Academic), the VP (Student Affairs), the Registrar, and two Senators elected by Senate, to devise a dual reporting structure for the position of the Registrar wherein the office reports to the VP (A) on matters which the Senate deems to be academic in nature and the VP (S) on issues related to enrolment and student services. This sub-committee is instructed to return a report by January 2007 meeting, at which time the Senate will vote on the new reporting structure for the Registrar to be put in place.*

- The Chair emphasized that this amendment does not negate or reverse the main motion, but it does significantly affect it, and represents a compromise position on it. Under the amendment, the Registrar would continue to report to the VP (S) until the proposed committee issues its proposal and that proposal is approved.

THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS CARRIED. 26/8

The Chair noted that if the main motion was to pass as amended, it would be difficult to form this committee by January unless nominations were accepted at this meeting. Also, the amendment says that ultimately the proposal for reporting procedure would be brought to Senate in a report that would then be approved, amended, or rejected by Senate.

One Senator argued that regardless of what happens on this motion, the message is a strong one. Senate is responsible for educational policy at this University and changes in such policy are what Senate wants to be informed of, and influence. Therefore this has been a useful exercise.

The President responded that the message has been heard loud and

clear. She agreed that Senate has jurisdiction over educational policy. The debate is whether the terms of reference for the operation of the Registrar's Office are part of the educational policy of this institution. She argued that a dual reporting structure would be an acknowledgement of Senate jurisdiction over the academic duties of the Registrar.

The Chair noted that the Senate Executive, once it begins functioning, could clarify these sorts of jurisdictional issues before motions are brought before Senate.

The request for a secret ballot on this motion was withdrawn.

MAIN MOTION WAS CARRIED.

It was agreed to extend this matter to the February 2007 meeting.

4) New Business

a) *ad hoc* Need-Based

Financial Assistance for  
Students Committee -  
Membership (067-21-VPS)

It was moved by S. Markham-Starr and seconded by H. Wylie *that the following be accepted for membership on the ad hoc Need-Based Financial Assistance for Students Committee:*

- Faculty of Arts - G. Callon
- Faculty of Professional Studies - R. Lehr
- Faculty of Pure & Applied Science - I. Spooner
- Student Senator appointed by the SRC - P. Eirikson
- Student Senator appointed by the SRC - K. Robinson  
Coordinator of Scholarships, Awards, & Financial Assistance - Scott Robinson

*The mandate of the Committee is:*

- to review the two bursary programs that are currently operating;
- to make recommendations to Senate regarding modifications to the programs with the goal of increased student awareness and improved service delivery; and
- to recommend an appropriate mechanism through which Senate can exercise its continuing responsibility for oversight in the bursary award process.

I. Wilks called for additional nominees three times and hearing none, declared nominations closed.

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

The Chair noted that the Executive had approved this membership list since the last meeting to enable this committee to begin its task.

b) Timetable, Instruction  
Hours, & Examination  
Committee - 2007-2008  
Timetable (067-30-TIE)

It was moved by P. Eirikson and seconded by C. Rivers *that Senate approve the timetable for the 2007 - 2008 academic year.*

Following amendments were made to this timetable:  
omit "January 31 - Last day to decrease Meal Plan for Winter Term";  
add "May 6 – "Faculty meeting to approve spring graduates".

S. Bondrup-Nielsen spoke to his request, presented at the last meeting, to delay the start of the winter term to 14 January 2008, in order to accommodate Department of Biology's move to a new building. R. Jotcham confirmed that the TIE Committee considered this request. But it discovered that it would put the last day of exams on the last day of April 2008, which is the last day of a number of contracts and leases for students. Therefore it was decided to not move the entire term by a week. It was noted that the Department of Biology is at liberty to adapt its own teaching schedule as needed.

On behalf of D. Kruisselbrink, S. Markham-Starr moved *that the timetable be amended to put last day of classes on April 9 and all subsequent dates to be adjusted.*

This motion failed for want of a seconder.

MOTION WAS CARRIED.

5) Other Business

- a) *ad hoc* Committee to Devise Dual Reporting Structure for the Registrar - Membership **(067-31-REG)**

There was no objection to appointing members to the *ad hoc* Committee to Devise Dual Reporting Structure for the Registrar as per Item 3)b) of today's meeting.

The Chair called three times for nominations to fill the two Senator positions on this committee. The following persons were nominated, and declared themselves willing to serve:

K. Whetter  
J. Eustace

As there were no further nominations, the two were declared appointed by acclamation.

A report will be brought to Senate in February.

6) Adjournment

J. Eustace moved that the meeting be adjourned. It was 5:47 p.m.