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A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University was held on Monday, March 8, 2010 beginning at 4:10 pm with Chair Ian Wilks presiding and 32 members present.

1) Minutes of the meeting of
February 8, 2010

It was moved by J. White, seconded by R. Perrins that the minutes of the meeting of Monday February 11, 2010 be approved as distributed.

4 c) to be amended to reference the agenda attachment.

MOTION CARRIED AS AMENDED

Announcements and
Communications

a) From the Chair
Re regrets

Regrets were received from A. Irving, R. Ivany, J. Cottreau, P. Rigg, M. Trask, T. Hergett, D. Seamone, E. Vaasjo, R. Wehrell, J.Banks

Re agenda

Item 3a) to be held over pending the outcome of the decision regarding item 4f)

Item 5a) to be held over until the next meeting when the representatives from the SPAC Committee can be present to speak to the report

Re: Chancellor
Search Committee

I. Wilks outlined a request received from the Board of Governors for Senate to appoint a representative to the Chancellor Search Committee. I. Wilks suggested that he issue a call for nominations to all Senators requesting that the names of nominees be submitted to the Chair of the Nominating Committee with a vote to be held at the Senate meeting in April.

In response to a question from P. Williams concerning the deviation from normal procedure for nominations, I. Wilks stated that there is precedence for this process and expressed a desire to explore ways to diversify Senate's selection procedures.

In response to a question from A. Quema about the process normally followed by the Nominating Committee, I. Wilks explained that the Committee nominates faculty who will best meet the needs of each Standing and Ad-hoc Committee.

Re: Letter to the
Board of Governors
concerning the Foulis
Chair in Engineering.

Ian Wilks read excerpts from the letter he wrote to the Board of Governors as requested by Senate. The letter will be kept on file in the Office of the Recording Secretary of Senate.

b) From the Vice
President Academic

T. Herman highlighted the upcoming Experience Acadia Days as an important recruiting effort.

The Academic Program Review of the School of Business was conducted last week with the report forthcoming. The Review of the Department of Languages and Literature is currently taking place.

Acadia students performed well in the three recent APICS conferences in Biology, Physics, and Environmental Science. Students in the Department of English organized the successful AAUEC annual conference where over 50 papers were presented. Dr. Herman highlighted the importance of these events and expressed his thanks to all involved.

From the School of Music, the Acadia University Wind Ensemble is travelling to the United States this week to perform at the Concert Band Directors National Association conference. Acadia is the third Canadian university to have been invited to perform at the annual conference and the only institution east of Toronto. The students raised almost \$14,000 towards the cost of the trip.

Also from the School of Music, Tundra Songs composed by Derek Charke will be performed by the Kronos Quartet at Carnegie Hall this weekend.

In response to a suggestion from G. Whitehall that the University website highlight academic achievements and upcoming events as a way to increase the culture of academia on campus, T. Herman outlined the planned "*This Week at Acadia*" feature on the Acadia homepage that will display all academic events. D. MacKinnon suggested that this feature should include research at Acadia as well.

When asked by G. Whitehall about possible funding for a regular lecture series on campus, T. Herman expressed support for a continuing fund specifically earmarked for external speakers in general, the challenge being securing the necessary funds. He

noted that there are available discipline-specific funds for speakers and the VPA Office has jointly funded speakers with other offices on campus. T. Herman also suggested collaboration with other institutions as a way to share the cost of bringing speakers into the region.

4) New Business

a) Inclusion of minors on the transcript

It was moved by J. Eustace and seconded by R. Cunningham that *Where students are required to do coursework in Minor subject areas for the completion of their degrees at Acadia University, Senate resolves to acknowledge more fully their academic concentrations and achievements by having Minors recorded on Academic Transcripts.*

J. Eustace spoke to the motion saying that it is a measure to fully acknowledge the work done by students, especially as the University is instituting co-curricular transcripts.

Discussion followed, with the following points brought forth:

- J. Hennessy stated that some Schools do not offer the opportunity for a minor and trusted that this would not be reflected negatively on a student's transcript. R. Jotcham replied that some thought would need to be given as to how a minor would be recorded and appear on the transcript.
- In response to a question from G. Whitehall about whether a minor can be listed as the space is needed for the recording of double majors, R. Jotcham replied that minors cannot be listed on the program evaluation but that they can appear on the transcript.
- R. McIntyre noted that students in Professional Studies do not have the option of pursuing a minor and wondered whether this option should be open to students in all Schools. H. Hemming replied that the Schools often do not have a major but rather offer a degree in a particular area, such as a Degree in Business.
- A. Quema felt that the recording of minors on the transcript is a way to recognize a student's credentials.
- H. Kitchin clarified that the motion requires a student to come forward to declare a minor.
- J. Turner reported that Arts students, especially those with interdisciplinary minors, were surprised that the recording of minors was not already in place. She noted that a record of the minor on the transcript is useful when applying for graduate studies at another university.
- T. Herman suggested that the transcript could display a minor if acquired, but no mention of a minor need appear if there is none.
- D. Holmberg supported the listing of minors as it shows tailored coursework in preparation for graduate work.

Friendly amendments were accepted and are reflected in the motion above.

MOTION AS AMENDED WAS CARRIED.

4 b) Downloading of
lecture notes

It was moved by A. Quema and seconded by G. Whitehall that:

On p.7 of the Calendar, under the section entitled "Acadia's technology –rich environment, one can read the following statement: "Students will be able to download class notes." The Senate Curriculum Committee moves that the statement be altered to read: Faculty members may opt to make lecture notes available to students through downloading.

A. Quema spoke to the motion stating that not all faculty members make notes available for downloading and the statement could create false expectations for students.

Discussion followed, with the following points brought forth:

- R. Cunningham stated that in the opinion of the Faculty of Arts Council, the statement should be removed from the Calendar and not replaced.
- J. Eustace agreed that the intent of the motion remains if the sentence is removed.
- P. Corkum noted that the sentence must be taken in its context within the Calendar. The Calendar lists activities that students can do and the revision may not be compatible with the existing paragraph.

Friendly amendments were accepted to change the second line of the motion to read *"It is moved that the words "download class notes" and the following comma be removed."*

MOTION AS AMENDED WAS CARRIED.

4 c) Membership of the Chair of
the Senate Curriculum
Committee on the Senate
Graduate Studies
Committee

A. Quema altered the motion to read as recorded below. It was moved by A. Quema and seconded by R. Raeside:

According to According to the Senate By-Laws, the duties of the Graduate Studies Committee include the following: "To consider graduate curriculum submissions from Departments, Schools and Faculties and to make recommendations to Senate. Such submissions include changes in existing programs, courses and degree requirements and proposals for new courses, degree requirements and programs" (VIII, ii, b).

On this basis, the Senate Curriculum Committee moves that its chair be an ad-hoc member of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee for the purpose of ensuring coordination in curriculum course proposals where undergraduate courses are also offered as graduate courses.

A. Quema spoke to the motion stating that the intent is not to add another member to the Graduate Studies Committee but rather to create a channel of communication between the Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee.

Following discussion about whether another mechanism such as a revision to the form would achieve the goal of ensuring coordination when a course is offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level, it was moved by W. Brackney and seconded that the motion be tabled until the next meeting of Senate.

MOTION CARRIED.

4 d) Role of the Senate Curriculum Committee

A. Quema spoke to the motion stating that the creation of transdisciplinary programs requires coordination between faculties. Given the motion regarding transdisciplinary programs passed by Senate at the meeting of November 9, 2009, the Curriculum Committee is looking to Senate for guidance regarding their role in the process.

I. Wilks explained that Senate as a body cannot be the recipient of this task; the motion must state who is being requested to determine the role of the Senate Curriculum Committee. He also suggested that the Curriculum Committee may wish to submit to Senate a proposal concerning the role of the Committee.

G. Whitehall questioned whether this was the appropriate time to consider the motion as the Interdisciplinary Committee is currently discussing interdisciplinary programs with the President and Vice-President Academic. He suggested that it might be useful to include the Chair of the Senate Curriculum Committee at their next meeting. T. Herman endorsed the suggestion.

MOTION TO BE HELD OVER

4 e) External review of Honours theses

D. Holmberg requested that the motion be considered in two parts.

It was moved by D. Holmberg and seconded by G. Whitehall that *the requirement for honours theses to be reviewed by an external reader be removed, effective as of the 2010-2011 year.*

D. Holmberg spoke to the motion providing background to the review process. She also stated that the benefits of an external reviewer are minimal and due to administrative demands, the process requires theses to be submitted 3-4 weeks before term end. She has been unable to identify other institutions that require external readers at the undergraduate level.

Discussion followed, with the following points brought forth:

- M. Snyder stated that the review process was handled by the Honours Committee until the volume increased to the point where external readers were required. The process has improved the quality of theses.
- D. MacKinnon commented about the variation in presentation of theses across campus and the importance of ensuring their quality as they represent the work at Acadia. He suggested that the Honours Committee review all theses and submit some for external review.
- P. Hobson stated that “proofreading” understates the nature of the exercise and that a number of theses are poorly presented.
- J. Turner commented that students must finish their theses quickly to meet the deadline imposed by the external reader process. The quality of a thesis can suffer when a student is rushed.
- H. Kitchin agreed that students would be better served if the time was spent focussing on the thesis and not on the external reader process. She also commented that the external reader can be seen as a gatekeeper who undermines the integrity of departments and faculty working with students.
- C. Shields maintained that the external reader should not be necessary if the second internal reader highlights any errors.
- T. Herman stated that although he is conscious of the time constraints for students, he supports the external reader process as valuable contributions from external readers can produce better theses. The fact that other universities do not have an external reader process is not a good argument for Acadia to abandon the practice.
- R. Raeside supported the external review process as a means to improve the quality of theses and interdepartmental communication.
- D. Holmberg commented that the points raised during the discussion were similar to those raised a decade ago. She questioned whether the more fundamental problem surrounds the quality of theses and suggested that the external reader process is not solving the problem.
- R. Sparkman agreed that another solution is needed and noted that substantive flaws in a thesis should be caught before the external reader phase.

- G. Whitehall agreed that the external reader is not the solution and highlighted the importance of an empowered second reader.
- D. Holmberg suggested that the Honours Committee discuss alternatives for improving the quality of theses.

A friendly amendment was accepted and is reflected in the motion above.

MOTION AS AMENDED WAS DEFEATED with 15 voting in favour of the motion and 19 opposed.

4 f) Appointment of Research
Ethics Board members Held over

5 a) Scholarships, Prizes and
Awards Committee report
2007/08 Held over

5 b) Scholarships, Prizes and
Awards Committee report
2008/09 Held over

6) Adjournment R. Cunningham moved this meeting be adjourned at 6:15 pm.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

K. Slater Padovani, Recording Secretary