Minutes of the Senate meeting of Tuesday 16th June, 2015

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Tuesday 16th June, 2015 beginning at 1:00 p.m. with Chair Paul Doerr presiding and 27 present with 3 guests.

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| **1) Approval of Agenda** | **Motion to approve the agenda.  Moved by G. Bissix, seconded by J. Banks.** |
| | The Chair informed Senators that incoming Senators had been invited to attend the June meeting of Senate, and noted that H. Kapoor, M. Lukeman and P. Abela were present. |
| | There were no objections to the incoming Senators attending. |
| | D. Seamone pointed out that the motion from the IDST committee had been circulated a week prior to Senate. |
| | AGENDA APPROVED. |
| **2) Minutes of the Meeting of 6th May, 2015** | **Motion to approve the Minutes of 6th May, 2015.  Moved by A. Quema, seconded by R. Raeside.** |
| | L. Price requested an amendment on page 10 of the minutes to read as follows: "L. Price agreed and stated that Psychology sometimes taught more BA Psyc students than BSc Psyc majors and also provided a lot of service courses for Arts students.  Courses were also cross-listed with WGST." |
| | H. Wyile requested that in item 11 on page 15 a typo be changed to say "departments" instead of "department".  Item 15 on page 16 also needed a minor change with the word "to" changed to "of". |
| | MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED CARRIED. |
| **3) Announcements** **a) From the Chair of Senate** | The Chair noted regrets from H. Hemming, S. Hewitt, D. MacKinnon, I. Hutchinson, R. Worvill, R. Murphy, D. Green, P. Connelly, J. Yang, A. Smith, |

B. Brackney, S. Mesheau, R. Ivany, R. Perrins, D. Benoit, S. MacCullough, P. Townsend, A. Loder and C. Visser.

The Chair also noted that there would be a meeting of the Senate Executive on Wednesday June 24th at 2:00 p.m. in the Alumni Board Room.

J. Banks reported that two students were added to the Spring Convocation List after the May 6th, 2015 Senate meeting. These were Amanda Morris (Bachelor of Music) and Josey Lee Allen (Honours Conversion in Psychology).

P. Williams reported on behalf of D. MacKinnon to give an update on relations with the Tri-Councils. A meeting of the AAU Deans and VPs of Research took place recently. P. Williams noted that in the past this group had been reluctant to approach NSERC and voice concerns about the differential impact that some of the changes proposed by the Tri-Councils were having on small universities, but that they were now working together to draft something to pass on to the Tri-Councils.

**b) From the President**

No report.

**c) From the VP Academic**

No report.

**4) Senate Committee Annual Reports**

**i) Senate Research Committee Report (*attached*)**

No member of the Senate Research Committee was present to speak to the report, so it was just noted as received by Senate.

**ii) Academic Technologies Committee Report (*attached*)**

J. Banks reported that the Academic Technologies Committee had met three times during 2014-15. Discussion had focused on the possible purchase of 'clickers' (Student Response Systems) with a site license that would cover the whole university. J. Banks mentioned that because of changes to the technology recently, there was a possibility that the University would instead adopt a 'bring your own device' for student response systems.

J. Banks stated that a consortium of Atlantic Universities had looked at an RFP for a new Cloud Based Learning Management System. Moodle is used at Acadia (also known as Acorn). The Consortium chose "Desire to Learn" as a Learning Management System. Acadia would be eligible to purchase the software at the price that had been agreed but would have to go through further consultation before making the decision to change to this new Learning Management System.

J. Banks stated that Cloud Computing had been discussed during the year, noting that there were some legislative difficulties with a move to Cloud Computing. Microsoft was currently offering Microsoft Office 365 to university faculty and students free of charge and the committee was looking into that option.

P. Abela asked whether the Academic Technologies had concerns about privacy issues and whether there were issues around where the servers were kept.

J. Banks agreed that there were concerns and some difficulties within Nova Scotia. Cloud services did not respect international borders.

J. Banks provided an explanation of what student response systems were.

P. Williams asked when a selection might be made.

J. Banks noted that Top Hat Monocle had been considered but that recently other student response systems had become available. He expected that by the end of the year a system would be in place at Acadia.

**5) New Business**

**a) Report from the IDST Ad-hoc Committee of Senate (*attached*)**

D. Seamone presented the interim report from the IDST Ad-hoc committee and noted that part of the report provided the background to the committee coming into being. The committee had met on several occasions and wished to make recommendations regarding each of the issues that had been identified as being important. Recommendations would both respect the diverse history of programs and the differences between them, but also provide some structures that were needed by all the programs without enforcing uniformity.

D. Seamone noted that the committee met and identified common issues identified in the motion and then decided that they needed to meet with both the VPA and the Deans. Three meetings had since been held; one with the VPA and the Dean of R&GS, one with all the Deans and one with H. Hemming and J. Hennessy. A draft recommendation was discussed at length and it was agreed that on a one-year trial basis, the Dean of R&GS should assume an administrative role over IDST programs that were not formerly embedded in another academic unit.

D. Seamone stated that the IDST Ad hoc committee will remain active for at least another year.

**b) Motion from the IDST Ad hoc committee of Senate (*attached*)**

**Motion from the IDST Ad hoc committee of Senate that the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies (R&GS) shall on a trial, one-year basis assume an administrative oversight role over Interdisciplinary Studies (IDST) programs not formally embedded in another academic unit. The Dean of R&GS will hold responsibilities for advocacy, administration, communication and facilitation of IDST programs within the academic administrative structure. The Dean of R&GS will convene an IDST Committee, chaired by the Dean, and comprised of IDST Program Coordinators. Moved by D. Seamone and seconded by G. Poulter.**

P. Abela asked which programs were excluded.

D. Seamone stated that Earth and Environmental Science was the only program and that they were happy to operate within the Environmental Science unit.

A. Quema asked whether the Dean of R&GS would receive additional resources.

G. Poulter responded that one of the reasons for a one year trial period was to establish whether or not the office of R&GS would be overloaded or not.

J. Hennessy also felt that a discussion needed to take place to consider how Acadia values and serves IDST programs, and what the role of IDST programs is to be at Acadia. Taking a year to consider these factors was a prudent move.

V. Zamlynny asked whether the Dean was willing to assume the role.

D. Seamone confirmed that D. MacKinnon was prepared to take this on.

P. Williams felt that Acadia had been unable to absorb IDST or get other programs to work well with IDST and that the discussion needed to be broadened to consider whether Acadia had the right mix of units. P. Williams also wanted to know how they would decide at the end of the year whether or not the proposal had worked.

D. Seamone stated that she expected that all the parties that were involved would evaluate what worked and what didn't and circulate a report. D. Seamone felt that a broader discussion could certainly be held at Senate.

L. Murphy noted that on the original Ad hoc IDST committee there was a student member but that a student was not now listed in the membership of the committee in the motion.

D. Murphy responded that this was a higher level administrative committee and one on which a student would not normally serve. She explained that the IDST Ad hoc committee would continue for another year and would still have a student member.

B. Anderson supported the motion and felt that it showed value for the IDST programs. She suggested that Senate define what success would look like. B. Anderson echoed how important IDST programs were to the life of the university.

A. Quema was also in support but asked why there would now be two committees. She also referred to the large body of work that had already been conducted through previous years by many individuals and hoped that the committee would avail themselves of previous proposals.

A. Quema also suggested that in advocating for an inter-disciplinary approach

to knowledge there was nothing to prevent Acadia from establishing an inter-disciplinary administrative structure. A. Quema suggested that the committee meet with the Registrar, the ASU, other Dean's and other interested parties. Discussions should also be organised with colleagues on campus which would help to bring perceptions of IDST programs into a more positive light.

MOTION APPROVED.

**6) Carried over from Senate Meeting of May 6th, 2015**

**a) Senate Executive White Paper (*attached*)**

The Chair noted that Senate Executive would not be meeting until the following week but had been asked by Senate to come up with some specific items to be discussed by Senate.

G. Poulter was concerned that the initiative should continue to move forward.

G. Phillips felt that a mechanism needed to be put in place to allow Senate to move forward on important items.

V. Zamlynny felt that if the issues were important ones it would be preferable to deal with one issue only at a Senate meeting.

P. Williams felt that Senate Executive needed some guidance from Senate as to which issues should be pursued.

G. Gibson suggested having the discussion now.

L. Aylward pointed out that Bill 100 was a big idea and even mentioned Senates in the legislation. L. Aylward raised points about the way in which the world was changing and what would need to happen in small universities to ensure that they stay alive. L. Aylward asked for time to be made on the Senate agenda every month for conversations about policy and planning, and the procedural elements.

G. Poulter did not feel that the Senate forum was conducive to free flowing conversation and asked whether smaller groups could be facilitated to change the way that discussions unfolded.

D. Seamone stated that she was comfortable bringing forward items for debate at Senate but noted that some Senators were reluctant to speak in a large forum. D. Seamone was in favour of a 30 minute period every meeting being used for discussion.

D. Seamone disagreed with Question 1 in the Senate Executive white paper and felt that it bore little relation to reality. Discussion of Question 2 would however be useful. D. Seamone suggested that Senate sub-committees bring forward to Senate items that they felt were big issues.

H. Wyile reminded Senate that the 'White Paper' came out of the By-laws committee review of the committee structure of Senate. The By-laws

committee had stated to the Senate Executive that there was much more that needed to be considered in terms of how Senate worked and the culture of deliberation at Senate. Members of Senate Executive later drafted the 'white Paper' to keep the ball rolling.

H. Wyile stated that Senate sub committees tended to be mostly reactive and that year after year the committees they had very delineated tasks that they focused upon. It was important for Senate to see what was coming down the pipe; an example being Bill 100. H. Wyile felt it important to expand the way that the committees think about what they do but also focus on where deliberation on issues should take place, since the focus could be the sub-committee, Senate Executive or Senate.

L. Murphy agreed that committees needed to re-think the way that they functioned and bring larger discussions to Senate or Senate Executive. L. Murphy disagreed with the need to have smaller break-out sessions and then come back to Senate, rather than having the discussion at Senate which was where it really needed to happen.

J. MacLeod asked where Senate Executive sat in the general hierarchy of Senate.

The Chair stated that Senate Executive was a sub-committee of Senate.

J. MacLeod felt that there was confusion about which issues should go where.

P. Williams questioned what the role of Senate Executive was; noting that one of the roles of Senate Executive was to prepare the agendas for Senate. This was not being done at present. P. Williams noted that Senate Executive had become more active some years ago and had received some push back from Senators. P. Williams felt that the role of Senate Executive needed to be defined.

J. MacLeod pointed out that it was quite possible for Senate to have 'committee as a whole' which would allow for open discussions without motions, and then come out of committee as a whole.

The Chair stated that there was a long period when Senate Executive didn't meet at all but that now it tended to meet four times a year.

B. Anderson stated that there were many ways to get to an end point for discussion. Deciding what the role of Senate is and then deciding on multiple ways of how to get there would be useful. Small groups could be very effective, as could 'committee of a whole'.

B. Anderson discussed the role of Senate Executive and noted that the By-laws committee had talked about the importance of monitoring achievements of the Senate sub-committees. Priorities needed to be set at the start of the year and Senate Executive needed to monitor at the end of the year, whether the sub-committees really did what they had set out to do.

B. Anderson noted that rules of order were created to allow Senate to get to

decision points but that it was also necessary to create sufficient space to allow for discussions, in order to get to those decision points.

A. Quema agreed but found that Senators spoke in silos. However, if dialogue remained respectful it generally shed light on items and progress could be made. A. Quema also felt that Question 1 should be re-phrased and currently meant different things to different people. A. Quema suggested that there was some disconnect between the Senate and life in the Faculties or departments. Senate reps and Faculty meetings were the only opportunity to connect to what was being discussed at Senate. It was difficult to persuade faculty members that Senators were working on their behalf. A. Quema felt that Senate Executive could serve as a hinge between the Faculties and Senate. This would break down silos and make sure that communication existed at all levels.

A. Vibert expressed her interest in the points that had been raised. A. Vibert noted that there was currently a huge discussion about governance of institutions in general which was being conducted around the Province in Public school settings. Conversations about how to get the managerialism out of the way in order to have substantial conversations. A. Vibert stated that 'new managerialism' tended to create institutional complexities that take up everyone's time, to such a point that it became impossible to get to substantial issues.

A. Vibert felt that unless the structures were simplified and the management tasks shortened, it would never be possible to get the substantive issues. These questions were inter-related and the essential issue was time. A. Vibert felt that it would be really important to put on the Senate agenda important issues, but that it was also essential to simplify the managerial structures.

G. Gibson felt that the true innovation needed to be coming from the departments. Senate did need a way to engage departments more than at present and suggested that perhaps the Curriculum Committee could in future come up with a process to engage the departments more openly and try to come up with some common curriculum reform that crossed different disciplines.

A. Kiefte recalled the talk about re-imagining the university and the role of departments and programs. This might not be the responsibility of Senate but it should be possible for other group's conversations to come back to Senate for more discussion.

J. Hennessy agreed with A. Vibert's earlier comments. Everyone was forced to deal with the procedures that had been put in place on campus and this created a great deal of work. J. Hennessy felt that it was unlikely that great ideas could come out of Senate bodies and that it was more likely that creative ideas could be generated by smaller conversations between people with common ideas. Once a good idea had been fleshed out it could be brought to Senate for debate and adoption.

A. Kiefte asked how Senate could ensure that people who were interested in being a part of these discussions could be included.

J. Stanley commented that the conversation had been refreshing and was an important one for Senate to have. He felt that some of the threads for the need to have this conversation were coming from various Senate sub-committees and J. Stanley felt that from a Governors perspective this was a fundamental conversation that Senate and the University needed to have. J. Stanley felt that there were occasions when committees and Senates had co-created fundamental strategy for an institution like Acadia on a go-forward basis. J. Stanley noted that the three Board of Governor reps on Senate report back to the Board of Governors and that although they had been able recently to report on very positive initiatives, he felt that this was one of the most important areas to make progress on. This would require good leadership.

P. Abela noted that when he served on Senate previously during G. Dinter-Gottlieb's Presidency, it was a busy time on Senate. P. Abela pointed out that Senate can also act as a brake on certain matters and offer sober reflection on various proposals that had come forward to the floor of Senate. The notion of critical reflection and being careful of the institutional capital that there was at Acadia was an important part of the process.

G. Phillips appreciated the earlier discussion and noted that Acadia was in a time of change and that the change presented an opportunity for Senate to determine which direction the change might be for academia. G. Phillips suggested that in the fall, one out of every four Senate meetings could be devoted to discussion of the future direction of the University.

L. Price felt it was important to have these conversations on the floor of Senate and that both she and others would feel better about their role on Senate if this was taking place.

J. MacLeod asked how the Acadia Senate agendas compared to Senates in other institutions in terms of the topics covered.

The Chair stated that D. Holmberg had been in contact with other Senates and provided them with information on the Senate sub-committee structure at Acadia, and that they had been impressed at what had been accomplished in the space of a year.

B. Anderson asked whether Senate Executive now had enough information to go back and continue the discussion, but also whether Senate had a responsibility to continue some of the dialogue. How could Senators influence others within their own sphere and then make sure that Senate Executive members saw the outcome of those sorts of discussions?

The Chair responded that Senate Executive would be meeting the next week and would formalize a process for the September meeting of Senate.

D. Seamone stated that the Ad hoc IDST committee might have ideas to put forward to senate Executive but would be unlikely to be ready with anything by June 24<sup>th</sup>.

J. Banks took the opportunity to thank P. Doerr, the outgoing chair, and

welcomed the incoming Chair of Senate, A. Vibert.

Motion to adjourn by G. Bissix at 2:20 p.m.

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**


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R. Hare, Recording Secretary

**Senate Research Committee**
**Annual Report to Senate**
**May 2015**

Committee members:

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| Abramson, Z. (Arts) | MacKinnon, D. (R&GS; Chair) |
| Brackney, W. (Theology) | Redden, A. (Research centre director) |
| Colton, J. (Professional Studies) | Robicheau, W. (Library) |
| Fuller, C. (Undergraduate student) | Silver, D. (Pure & Applied Science) |
| Klapstein, S. (Graduate student) | Trofanenko, B. (Canada Research Chair) |

The Senate Research Committee met on four occasions: October 21, November 18, November 28, and May 19. The work of the Committee this year has continued to focus on the development of Acadia's Strategic Research Plan (SRP). The Committee also "met" online on numerous occasions throughout the year.

**Strategic Research Plan**

As stated above, the work of the Senate Research Committee was again this year focused on preparation of the revised Strategic Research Plan. That document was finished in draft form in December, 2014. As I was on administrative leave from January through April, Dr. Perrins instructed that the campus consultations on the Plan should wait until my return in May.

Those consultations are now underway. A meeting was held with members of the Faculty of Theology on April 27<sup>th</sup>. The outline of the Plan's strategic focus and theme/capacity areas was presented and discussed. Further meetings are being planned for June and July, starting in the week of June 8<sup>th</sup>. As agreed in a 2014 submission to Senate, the consultations will include the Canada Research Chairs, the directors of formal research centres on campus, focus groups within each of Arts, Professional Studies, and Pure & Applied Science, IDST coordinators, and senior administration. This will be followed by an open campus forum. Feedback from all of these groups will be discussed by the Senate Research Committee. The draft Plan, including any changes resulting from these meetings and discussions, will be presented to Senate in the fall (likely September).

**Mentoring Workshops**

Research & Graduate Studies and the Senate Research Committee will once again be offering Tri-Council grant writing workshops, tentatively planned for June and July. In addition, we have invited Dr. Dawn McArthur to conduct a one-day generic workshop on grant writing. Dr. McArthur was at Acadia two years ago for a very successful one-day workshop, jointly sponsored by Acadia and Mount Saint Vincent University.

Respectfully submitted,

David MacKinnon, Chair, Senate Research Committee

Academic Technologies Committee Report

**Academic Technologies Committee**
**Annual Report to Senate for 2014-2015**
April 30, 2015

<u>Members for 2014-2015:</u>
Robert Perrins, Acting Vice-President Academic, Chair
Jeff Banks, Director of Open Acadia
Gary Doucette, Executive Director of Academic technologies
Duane Currie, Coordinator , Academic Technologies
John Savklovski, Faculty of Arts
Robert Pitter, Faculty of Professional Studies
Darcy Benoit, Faculty of Pure and Applied Science
Mike Beazly, Library
C. Thompson, Student Rep, FA
H. Rode, Student Rep, FPS
R. Densmore, Student Rep, FPAS

The ATC met 3 times over the 2014/15 academic year; Nov. 3, Nov 24 and May 4.

The committee discussed the possibility of licensing a common Student Response System (SRS). Presently faculty members are using numerous systems from various vendors. Licensing agreements are possible but difficult to compare. As well, some new vendors have recently entered the market. For the time being no system has been licensed but this will be monitored over the course of the upcoming year.

A consortium of Atlantic Universities recently went through a Request for Proposal process for a cloud based LMS system. Acadia took part in the evaluations process. The consortium chose D2L (by Brightspace) as the vendor. Acadia can obtain the license for this LMS das part of the consortium but it was decided to remain with Moodle (Acorn) for the time being.

Cloud computing was also discussed and there is potential for Acadia faculty and students to obtain licenses for Microsoft Office 365. There are some concerns amongst fauclty and students regarding privacy. It is not thought that these will be prohibitive and TS is looking into the specifics.

The ATC and the FDC were merged and this will take place in the upcoming year.

INTERIM REPORT OF THE IDST AD HOC INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
COMMITTEE OF SENATE

The Mandate and task of this committee is as outlined in the authorizing motion passed by
Senate at the April 2014:
"BE IT MOVED THAT Senate establish an Interdisciplinary Program Committee that will make
proposals for:
(a) the rationalized governance and administration of IDST programs;
(b) the representation of IDST faculty on major decision-making committees, including hiring
committees to ensure that IDST programs are supported when hiring is done;
(c ) the support of IDST programs through curriculum visibility, flexibility, and procedures such
as systematic cross-listing and cross-coding; and
(d) mechanisms by which departments will be advantaged by supporting interdisciplinary studies
and programs.
BE IT FURTHER MOVED THAT the proposed committee be composed of a representative
from each of the IDST programs chosen by the respective IDST program, as well as a faculty
representative from each of the faculties, elected via the appropriate faculty elections officer and
a student preferably from an IDST program and chosen by the SRC. [1]

It is significant to remember that in the report of the Academic Program Review Committee to
Women's & Gender Studies, it was suggested that recommendations regarding governance of
IDST programs should be referred to the APC, which identifies this as a priority area for
attention. The Coordinators of interdisciplinary programs on campus met several times in order
to discuss shared challenges and opportunities for collaboration.  They identified numerous
issues affecting IDST programs, submitting them to the APC and requesting the APC look at the
range of issues identified and ask Senate to strike an interdisciplinary committee to make specific
recommendations on these issues. The APC recommended that the coordinators make this
request of Senate expressing the APC's support. The scope of the concerns raised and contours
of these deliberations are embodied in the authorizing motion passed by Senate.

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[1] **http://senate.acadiau.ca/tl_files/sites/senate/Minutes/2013-
2014/Senate%20Minutes%20April%2014%202014%20final.pdf**

The Ad Hoc IDST committee was constituted over the summer months and began its work in September 2014.

Members of the committee are as follows:

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| Clare Kellock | Acadia Student's Union Representative |
| Alice Cohen | Elected Rep Fac. Pure & Applied Science |
| Vernon Provencal | Elected Rep Fac. of Arts |
| Alan Warner | Elected Rep Fac. of Professional Studies |
| David Duke | Environmental and Sustainability Studies |
| Stephen Henderson | Canadian Studies |
| Gillian Poulter | Women's and Gender Studies |
| Donna Seamone | Comparative Religion |
| Ian Spooner | Environmental Science |
| Geoffrey Whitehall | Social and Political Thought |

It was agreed at the outset of meetings that the committee would work to maintain difference between program histories of emergence and needs and would strive recommend changes that would respect those differences while establishing common structures promoting the flourishing of existing IDST programs and the interdisciplinary environment at Acadia. The committee met extensively toward the goal of formulating recommendations to Senate, including meetings with the VPA academic and the Deans for consultation, to seek input, and to discuss potential changes at the administrative level to provide for support of IDST programs. The outcome of those meetings is represented in the motion before Senate at the June 2015 meeting concerning a trial period for delegation of responsibility for IDST, at the diaconal level, to the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies as well as the subsequent creation of an IDST Steering Committee.

Rather than proceed with an omnibus motion that addresses all issues at once the committee will continue deliberation and make recommendations in the future concerning the range of issues identified as concern by this committee that are clearly within Senate's purview and which will need to be taken up by Senate in due course. These areas of concern currently include: establishing a process for consultation with Department heads to ensure offering of courses that sustain IDST programs, representation on Senate and relevant committees where needed, representation of IDST on APC, cross-coding of courses, and the need for adjustments in the institutional financial support environment to provide interdisciplinary students with access to financial support.

We intend to remain active, as a committee, for at least the next 12 months. Depending on the action taken on the motions before senate at the June meeting we will report more fully on the R&GS "experiment", together with motions emanating from that "experiment", and with other motions as it sees as essential to IDST programming.

Respectfully submitted.
Donna Seamone
Chair, Ad Hoc Senate IDST Committee

**WHEREAS Senate established an Ad Hoc Interdisciplinary Program Committee, at the April 2014 meeting,[2] mandating this committee to make proposals for the rationalization, representation, and support of interdisciplinary studies and programs,**

**BE IT MOVED THAT** the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies (R&GS) shall on a trial, one-year basis assume an administrative oversight role over Interdisciplinary Studies (IDST) programs not formally embedded in another academic unit. The Dean of R&GS will hold responsibilities for advocacy, administration, communication and facilitation of IDST programs within the academic administrative structure. The Dean of R&GS will convene an IDST Committee, chaired by the Dean, and comprised of IDST Program Coordinators.

Rationale / Background:
- Creation of this position gives IDST a clear place in the administrative structure and enables the routine flow of information and governance between senior administration and the units.
- Administrative responsibility at the decanal level provides for a person who can envision and work broadly for the values of interdisciplinarity in the university.
- IDST programs cross faculties and hence are not well represented by any of the roles of the existing three deans. The Dean of R&GS is already functioning in a cross-faculty, interdisciplinary way for research and grad studies. At present IDST programs directly report to the VPA but the VPA has many things to balance structurally and cannot necessarily fully attend to this area when needing to balance concerns of the Deans of existing faculties. There are not the resources to create a new Dean solely for IDST and the current size of programs does not warrant it.
- The IDST Committee is an important element as an administrative body overseeing interdisciplinary academic programs and supporting them to ensure their viability. It also allows for the effective flow of information back and forth between senior administration and IDST program coordinators and committees.
- The Senate Ad Hoc Interdisciplinary Program Committee will monitor the administrative structure through the trial period, will report to Senate concerning its suitability, and will make recommendations to Senate regarding its continuation, termination, or permanent establishment as an administrative structure for Interdisciplinary Studies.
- In the absence of any action from Senate, the trial period of this administrative arrangement will expire on June 30, 2016.

Moved by Donna Seamone, Chair, Senate IDST Ad Hoc Committee

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[2] **http://senate.acadiau.ca/tl_files/sites/senate/Minutes/2013-2014/Senate%20Minutes%20April%2014%202014%20final.pdf**

**Senate Discussion Paper**

At the October 9, 2012 meeting of Senate the following motion was passed

*D. Holmberg stated that the last time the standing committees of Senate were reviewed was in the early 1990's. Based on an informal vote of members present, it was agreed that there was a need for a new review now. H. Kitchin suggested striking a committee to undertake the work. D. Holmberg suggested that the Bylaws Committee has this task as part of its mandate, so it would be the logical choice (i.e., By-laws committee's mandate includes "To monitor the evolution of the academic committees and to recommend changes to the committee structure of Faculty Councils and other bodies at the University for which it is responsible"). It was moved by S. Major, that the matter be referred to the Bylaws Committee.*
*D. Holmberg indicated that Robert's Rules of Orders suggests that adding a date for committees to report back to the full body is generally helpful. S. Major suggested that a preliminary report be ready for the January 2013 meeting. T. Herman seconded the motion.*
*S. Henderson requested that formal opportunities for input from faculty members be provided by the Committee. K. Powers requested that some preliminary information be provided by the committee before input was sought. A. Quéma suggested that there might even be an appetite for new committees.*
MOTION CARRIED.

Recently, some of the members of the Bylaws Committee, at the request of the Bylaws Committee, met with Senate executive to discuss their recommendations and experience with this review.
The Committee members pointed to the limitations of the process they had gone through and indicated that they felt their mandate did not enable them to make more substantive recommendations for change.
This prompted a somewhat larger discussion at the Executive meeting about how Senate was functioning and whether Senate, as the senior academic decision making body, was grappling with some of the larger academic issues that the university faces. A straw poll of the Senate executive revealed that no one felt Senate was focused on big picture issues that are clearly important to the academic core and future of the University.
One example that was raised is the Strategic Mandate Agreement process. On several occasions the President has briefed Senate on the Strategic Mandate Agreement process that has been underway in Ontario and indicated he felt it was quite likely that some version of that process would come to Nova Scotia sooner or later.
Another example cited was the national enrolment trends that are placing significant strain on universities across the country. Some of these are related simply to a decline in the number of traditional university students – the 18-22 demographic. Strains are also being experienced as a result of significant shifts in the types of programs that students are enrolling in.
The Senate Executive felt this warranted further discussion and held a special meeting for the purpose of framing the questions in the form of a discussion paper for Senate to consider.
The questions we settled on are:

1.  Why do Senate Committees feel so restricted/defensive/hampered in doing their work? A common theme in meetings of Senate Committees is related to the likelihood of things getting approved by Senate and we typically present "safe" options.
2.  Why do some of the big questions never seem to get debated at Senate?
a.  Strategic Mandate Agreements
b.  What is our academic mission/vision? We have heard calls for "leadership" and "vision" in various forms and yet Senate does not seem to respond.
c.  How will we respond to the various external pressures?
3.  How do we get these bigger questions onto the Agenda so that they get addressed?

4.  Is there a role that Senate Executive could be playing in ensuring some of these items get onto the agenda? Is some other Committee more appropriately tasked with this job?