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Minutes of the Senate meeting of Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 beginning at 4:00 p.m. with Chair A. Vibert presiding, 41 present and 4 guests.

1) Approval of Agenda

**Motion to approve the agenda, moved by J. Stanley, seconded by P. Williams.**

The Chair informed Senators that she had invited members of the Senate Research Committee to attend Senate and asked whether there were any objections to A. Redden, D. Silver and T. Dow attending.

The Chair also stated that A. Robbins would be attending Senate in place of H. Gardner.

There were no objections.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA CARRIED.

2) Minutes of the Meeting of  
13<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

**Motion to approve the Minutes of Tuesday October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015 as distributed. Moved by D. MacKinnon, seconded by B. Brackney.**

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

A. Kiefte requested two changes to the minutes. On Page 2., paragraph 4, the italicized "*Where did Senate see itself in 10 years*" should be changed to read '*Where did Acadia see itself in 10 years*'. A. Kiefte also requested that on page 9, paragraph 9 be changed to read "*A. Kiefte asked whether the committee had considered different cut off averages for students entering into different Faculties or programs*".

J. Banks requested that on Page 8, paragraph 2, the sentence "*Some of these scholarships had specific criteria towards Arts or Science and tended to be in a range of \$5,000 - \$6,000*" should be changed to read "*Some of these scholarships had specific criteria towards Arts or Science and tended to be in a range of \$5,000 - \$60,000*".

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS REVISED CARRIED.

3) **Announcements**

a) **From the Chair of Senate**

Regrets were received from President Ivany, R. Perrins, L. Aylward, J. MacLeod, I. Hutchinson, G. Phillips, H. Gardner, R. Murphy, H. Kapoor, S. McCullough, and E. Samson. R. Densmore would be arriving late.

The Chair welcomed A. Robbins from Divinity and A. Redden, D. Silver and T. Dow from the Senate Research committee.

The Chair reported that Ad hoc sub-committee of Senate Executive had met on October 14<sup>th</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, to organise a process for “The Big Picture” discussions at the December Senate meeting.

4) Carried Forward from October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Senate Meeting

a) VPA Report on Budget Actuals 2014-2015

R. Perrins was absent so this item was moved to the December meeting of Senate.

P. Abela asked whether this information was time sensitive.

The Chair responded that the report referred to the previous year so was not likely to be time sensitive. She suggested that both this item and the President’s Report could be moved to the January agenda of Senate.

There were no objections.

b) Reports from Senate sub-committees

The Chair asked that Senate hear all reports first, before asking questions that could be directed to specific committees. Following that, the Chair asked that Senate move acceptance for all of the reports.

There were no objections.

R. Raeside assumed the Chair.

i) Senate Executive committee report to Senate (*attached*)

A. Vibert reported that Senate Executive would meet four times during the year and that the committee would consider matters that called for Senatorial action and to consider matters referred to it by Senate.

A. Vibert noted that at the September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting the committee identified the planning and monitoring of the initiatives discussed in the June meeting, as being the central issue for Senate Executive during 2015-16.

A. Vibert resumed the Chair.

ii) Archives Committee Report to Senate (*attached*)

J. Richards stated that she had been appointed the Chair of the Archives committee and that they had met on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 and will be meeting again later in the week. The major task for 2015-16 was to work on policies relating to artifacts.

iii) Awards Committee

The Chair noted that as President Ivany was absent this report could be held

- (*attached*) over to a later meeting of Senate.
- iv) By-laws Committee  
(*attached*) H. Wylie reported that the main piece of work for the By-laws committee was to implement changes to the By-laws ensuing from the two year review of Senate committee structure and the mandates of various committees. H. Wylie stated that the committee was waiting to receive proposed language from committees that were affected by the changes.
- v) Curriculum Committee  
(*attached*) J. Banks reported that the Curriculum committee met on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and that S. Hewitt had been elected Chair. It was agreed that the current Curriculum committee would continue to do the work of what will become the Curriculum committee (Administrative). The committee members were now discussing the mandate that would be required for the new Curriculum committee (Policy). These recommendations will be forwarded on to the By-laws committee and to Senate. J. Banks stated that a second meeting had been held and that the committee members intended to meet with some other Senate committees in the near future.
- vi) Faculty Development Committee (*attached*) J. Banks reported that the Faculty Development committee would be merging with the Academic Technologies committee and that the two Chairs and others that were important in the process had met to discuss how the merged committee would work. They will be bringing recommendations to the By-laws committee and Senate. The Faculty Development committee was continuing to offer workshops for faculty and work with the AAAU on teaching awards. They were also working on the necessary language and mandate of the new Faculty Support committee.
- vii) Graduate Studies Committee (*attached*) D. MacKinnon stated that the Graduate Studies committee had met on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015. They would be looking at a quality standards framework for graduate studies. This came out of the idea that historically graduate studies would have been reviewed as part of the departmental review. D. MacKinnon expected that in the future graduate studies would be reviewed as an entity unto itself. Quality standards across the campus were being looked at, as was a recruitment strategy.
- viii) Honours Committee  
(*attached*) D. MacKinnon noted that A. Redden was now the Chair. The Honours committee had met on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- ix) Library Committee  
(*attached*) B. Brackney reported that the Library committee had met once. A sub-committee had been appointed to look into the current role of the committee and B. Brackney stated that it would be reporting back in February. It was felt that they had an advocacy role but that they wanted to better understand what that was, and also understand any policy role. In December the committee planned to have a presentation on the Library's Open Access policy and then another in February on Research Data Management. B. Brackney invited any Senators with questions about these areas to contact him.

- x) Nominating Committee  
*(attached)* A. Mitchell stated that the committee had met and that he had been reelected as the Chair. The committee will continue to fill vacant positions on Senate when needed.
- xi) Research Ethics Board  
*(attached)* D. MacKinnon reported that the committee was carrying out its regular business.
- xii) Research Committee  
*(attached)* D. MacKinnon would be reporting on the Strategy Research Plan later in the meeting.
- xiii) T.I.E. Committee  
*(attached)* J. Banks reported that the TIE committee met on September 24<sup>th</sup> and elected R. Mehta as Chair. The committee will work on the slot system, the examination timetable, exam locations, and calendar dates and their underlying principles as they build in Calendar dates for next year.

The Chair asked if there were questions for any of the committees.

A. Quema asked what the change in the mandate would be for the By-laws committee and when it would be introduced.

H. Wylie responded that during the review of the Senate committee structure and mandates, members of the By-laws committee felt that it should not have been the responsibility of the By-laws committee to implement the changes. They felt that another body of Senate with more authority needed to address this. As a result, the By-laws committee will be bringing forward a motion that particular aspects of the mandate needed to be moved elsewhere, or struck off.

G. Poulter asked the TIE committee about the possibility of a common slot time in the timetable.

J. Banks confirmed that this was being discussed.

H. Wylie asked about the quality standards framework review by Graduate Studies. He asked what prompted the review and what it would entail.

D. MacKinnon responded that two years earlier when T. Herman was VP Academic discussions had taken place around program reviews. The idea had been floated that there could be value in having a review of the overall graduate programs of Acadia. D. MacKinnon stated that the quality standards framework review came out of a discussion with the VP Academic at Cape Breton University. D. MacKinnon has broached it with the Graduate Studies committee members as a discussion item.

F. Thompson asked what the membership of the Faculty Support committee would be.

J. Banks stated that this would not be known until the winter term when the new mandate would be brought to Senate.

P. Abela asked about a centralized recruitment strategy for Graduate Studies.

D. MacKinnon stated that recruitment has mostly been done within each School or Department. The Graduate Studies committee is just discussing whether they would like to consider a centralized recruitment strategy.

D. Holmberg reported for L. Price that because the mandate and the membership of the Faculty Support committee would be altering, it was unlikely that a Faculty workshop would be offered in the spring.

**Motion to accept the reports as presented. Moved by D. Benoit, seconded A. Kiefe.**

5) New Business

a) Strategic Research Plan  
(*attached*)

The Chair welcomed members of the Senate Research committee T. Dow and D. Silver, noting that A. Redden would arrive shortly.

D. MacKinnon reported that he and a small group of research administrators had met recently with Gilles Patry – President of Canadian Foundation for Innovation – to discuss the future of CFI going forward. CFI will support the purchase of equipment across all Faculties.

D. MacKinnon noted that building capacity narrowly, in small areas, was discussed.

The second thing discussed was to do with strategic research funds. Until now, a faculty member making an application for CFI funding needed to link their application to the University's Strategic Research Plan. It was felt that in the future the CFI may relax this requirement and merely include a box on the application form to be ticked if the application is linked to the University Strategic Research Plan.

D. MacKinnon noted that the Strategic Research Plan at Acadia was linked to the Canada Research Chair program and was important to have in order for Acadia to attract Canada Research Chairs. This was developed in 2000 with six theme areas and many faculty members were unhappy with the emphasis. Getting CRC funding was linked to getting funding through the tri-councils NSERC/SSHRC and CIHR. D. MacKinnon noted that during the last several years funding for Acadia had dropped and had then come back up, but that this had influenced the CRC Program. There are now 5 Canada Research Chairs on campus and they were within the first three theme areas.

D. MacKinnon noted that there were four theme areas identified in the Strategic Research Plan. There was now a focus which was quite different. D. MacKinnon reviewed a five year period and looked at all of the funding that came through Research and Graduate Studies and established that 226 code categories could be identified. The Research Committee reviewed this information and determined how to bring it down into four areas:

- Community Life and Cultural Diversity

- Natural Resources and Environmental Resilience
- Human Health and Wellness
- Innovative and Enabling Technologies

The committee asked whether these themes should represent broad areas of research capacity and whether they could move in the direction of being inclusive. This was the wish of faculty members on campus.

D. MacKinnon used the example of community life and cultural diversity to show that many areas were clustered under this theme heading and that the research of many faculty would be included under this theme.

D. MacKinnon reported that as the committee worked through the process a theme for the Plan itself started to emerge:

- Rural
- Coastal
- Local to Global

D. MacKinnon gave as an example a University in Quebec that developed a Strategy Research Plan with one central focus area: the north.

D. MacKinnon stated that in the past Acadia had been unsuccessful in SSHRC's aid to small university funding for a period of nine years until it narrowed a request for funding to one very specific area, at which point it was successful in obtaining funding.

D. MacKinnon met with most Heads and Directors across the campus and asked what they thought of the idea of a plan that had a rural focus. There were mixed responses. Members of the Research Committee suggested adding coastal to the focus to make it rural and coastal.

D. MacKinnon stated that at this point consultations were held across the campus and that in the Faculty of Arts to concept of global was raised which led to the sub-title of local to global being included.

D. MacKinnon felt that this differentiates Acadia from other institutions and that there was a base of research included in these themes. This will allow for broader participation and there would be a possibility to build on this. He stated that the Strategic Plan was more than an outward looking document unlike most strategic research plans. This represented an opportunity to do something different to increase a sense of community and strengthen our research culture.

D. MacKinnon stated that strategies had been put into the plan to address the various objectives. This would be a five year plan because it would take time to address the priorities. With that in mind, D. MacKinnon was bringing the Strategic Research Plan to Senate to ask Senators to buy into the concept.

D. MacKinnon noted that wide consultation occurred prior to deciding on an action plan.

D. MacKinnon pointed out the members of the Research committee and

thanked Senate.

The Chair asked for any questions and it was pointed out that Senate would not be voting on the document, just discussing it.

P. Abela thanked D. MacKinnon for the huge amount of work that had gone into the preparation of the Strategic Research Plan, and liked the 'wild idea'.

D. Holmberg also thanked D. MacKinnon and asked about goals that might be established within the five year plan.

D. MacKinnon responded that the committee had not really talked about priorities yet and that a strategy would be needed for those. D. MacKinnon felt that a first step would be to develop a repository of material that referred to rural and coastal.

H. Wylie commended D. MacKinnon for the work that had gone into it. He liked the way in which the focus was articulated in relation to a broader range of research activity. H. Wylie felt that this strategy should bring faculty on board and prove to be a way to get a ground swell of support for the vision.

J. Yang stated that D. MacKinnon had visited the School of Business faculty to discuss their concerns recently. The Business faculty felt that more space could be allowed for emerging research, to include entrepreneurship, economic development and organization, because it was hard for them to see themselves in the plan.

J. Yang asked whether he or others would still be able to get internal or external funding, if their research area was not included in the plan.

D. MacKinnon agreed that faculty who did not see themselves under the four headings could be unhappy and that therefore inclusion was very important. He felt that the language could be massaged somewhat. D. MacKinnon wanted to support a broad-base of research at Acadia and felt that 25.55 funding would continue to be broad based and not be based only on rural and coastal.

A. Quema did not see herself reflected in the Strategic Research Plan but was still pleased. She noted that her research was urban and would not fit these areas, but that there were strong research areas on campus under rural and coastal. She also saw many opportunities for Women's and Gender Studies. A. Quema felt that good efforts had been made not to be exclusive but that there was a performative approach to a certain identity. She was concerned that future employees could look at these areas and decide that they were not for them. In these cases departments would need to convince a future employee that although those areas were mentioned in the Strategic Research Plan it did not mean that research was limited to these areas.

D. MacKinnon agreed.

P. Williams felt that most people around the Province lived in either a rural or coastal location.

M. Lukeman followed up on the point made by A. Quema. He wondered whether future hires could be focused on the areas where research was being focused at Acadia.

D. MacKinnon expected that this would be up to the individual departments. He noted that when Acadia was hiring faculty departments were primarily looking at the courses that needed to be taught within departments. From a capacity point of view in a small university, there were not many faculty researching in any one area, and most individual research programs were transferrable if a faculty member retired or moved to another institution.

J. Stanley thanked D. MacKinnon for his work on the document and liked the way that it knitted together both from a research perspective with the institution in the centre and the focus of research across the university. J. Stanley felt that it was a good time to be focusing, without being exclusive, partly because of the election of the new Federal Government and the possibility of a focus on the Atlantic Region to look at some of the challenges that are being faced, and partly because of the response to the Ivany Commission.

J. Stanley felt that this was a good time to be building a society that functioned well and was sustainable. Focussing carefully at Acadia could draw opportunities and resources to the university that Acadia might not otherwise have access to.

D. MacKinnon pointed out that the work of the committee began well before the Ivany Commission came out, but noted that there were areas that fit with the Ivany Commission.

B. Anderson congratulated D. MacKinnon and was looking forward to the implementation plan. B. Anderson noted that this would be a difficult and reflective process. She would like to see some monitoring on a regular basis over the five year period to see what the achievements had been and asked that regular reports come back to Senate.

G. Gibson also liked the document and noted that a number of Senators had talked about what makes research distinctive at Acadia, but that there had not been much discussion about undergraduate research. Any other institution across the country looking at Acadia, would find that it was the undergraduate research component that really stuck out, rather than the particular themes of research. It would be wise to take this into account. G. Gibson noted that small private liberal arts universities in the States were racing to develop funding for undergraduate research also. G. Gibson hoped that Acadia would remain at the front of that wave during the next ten years.

A. Quema asked whether undergraduate research was part of Acadia's promotion to high school students.

S. Mesheau confirmed that this was promoted and helped to set Acadia apart.

G. Poulter asked what the intentions were for the Strategic Plan now.



D. MacKinnon responded that the Plan had been made available to faculty by request and that many had now looked at it. It was not yet in the public domain because it was not an approved document. A message had been sent out campus wide.

G. Poulter felt that it would be a good idea for a reminder to go out to all departments and schools.

D. MacKinnon had some slight changes to the wording that he wished to do before the document became public.

A. Quema agreed with G. Poulter that it should not be necessary to contact a support staff member to request access to the Strategic Research Plan. She recommended using the office of the Dean to circulate the document through each Faculty.

D. MacKinnon had been hesitant to do this without direction from Senate.

D. Holmberg also suggested that the student reps be encouraged to circulate the Plan.

**Motion that the Deans be directed to circulate the draft Strategic Research Plan and ask for any comments before the December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Senate meeting. Moved by G. Poulter, seconded by D. Holmberg.**

D. Benoit felt that this could just be emailed to the faculty-staff mailing list rather than circulating first to the Deans which created an extra unnecessary level. Members of the faculty-staff mailing list could be advised to provide feedback directly to D. MacKinnon.

G. Poulter offered to change the motion to read:

**Motion that the Dean of Graduate Studies distribute the draft document by the faculty-staff email list. Moved by G. Poulter, seconded by D. Benoit.**

D. MacKinnon will massage the language slightly to make it a little more inclusive. He apologized for the length of time that it had taken for this to come to Senate.

P. Williams noted the comments that G. Gibson had made about the way in which undergraduate research is performed at Acadia, noting that the plan should reflect that point. He also agreed that the document was very forward looking and felt that this went hand in hand with the hiring of new individuals.

G. Gibson stated that Biology was in an unusual position whereby 90% of their 1<sup>st</sup> year students were pre-med or pre-health which was not really reflected in the Plan.

The Chair read the motion again.

A. Kiefte asked whether approval of the Strategic Research Plan would be coming in the form of a motion to the December meeting of Senate.

The Chair agreed that it would be covered at the December meeting.

MOTION APPROVED.

b) Big Picture Items for  
December discussion  
(attached)

The Chair provided some background and reminded Senators that in the spring there had been talk about the fact that substantial issues did not get onto the floor of Senate. In September Senate Executive identified some substantial issues and Senators were asked to also identify issues. One of the questions raised was “Where does Acadia see itself in 10 years”. To discuss an issue that was so broad needed quite a bit of prior organization. The Chair reported that an Ad-hoc committee had been formed comprising A. Vibert, J. Hennessy, P. Williams, F. Thompson and G. Gibson and that this group had met twice.

The Chair stated that the December meeting of Senate was the earliest that this could be discussed and that discussion would be organised using a pedagogical approach: small groups would report back to the whole group. The Chair expected that there would be 10 groups of 5-6 Senators. Members of the Academic Planning Committee had been invited to serve as scribes for each group, many of which were already members of Senate. D. Duke, T. Weatherbee and J. Hooper would be invited to attend Senate if there were no objections from Senators.

There were no objections.

The Chair noted that it would be important for the notes from the scribes to be retained as this would be the start of an on-going discussion of where we wanted to be in 10 years. The Chair expected that the discussion on December 14<sup>th</sup> would be quite wide ranging but that there would be concrete and specific actions further down the road that could go forward to Senate sub-committees.

P. Abela was concerned about the preamble provided by the Chair of Senate. He felt that this initially had begun with a sense that Senate had a certain vacant place for discussing issues and conceptual aspects, which was useful because those sort of issues came to Senate and it was important to have a place where they could be discussed. P. Abela was concerned that the APC would now be involved in the exercise and that ‘concrete plans’ would result from the discussions. He asked for clarification about the process of breaking out into rooms for small discussions and the suspension of Roberts Rules. P. Abela felt that it was important that Robert’s Rules be applied. He also asked the Chair what the Senate meeting would look like next month and how discussions assigning Senators to groups and providing scribes fitted inside the domain of Robert’s Rules and how this approach fitted inside the operation of Senate.

The Chair responded that in order to invoke these sorts of conversations, Senate would move into a *Committee of the Whole* so that the normal operation

of Robert's Rules could be suspended. This would enable Senators to hold a much more open ended conversation.

P. Abela was concerned that when the groups returned to Senate, each scribe would give two or three key points from the group that would be shared with the Senate body. He did not see that there would be an opportunity for individual members of the groups or Senators to share their views or ask questions. P. Abela was keen that when the groups return to Senate, all members of each group should be given opportunity to speak and express their views.

The Chair confirmed that this was what was expected to happen. For the purposes of efficiency each group would be encouraged to provide two or three key points from their discussions but that this would be followed by an opportunity for open conversation in Senate.

P. Abela was concerned that the time constraint could result in not every Senator being able to ask sufficient questions or voice concerns, nor would there be time for Senate to engage in a full discussion.

A. Kiefte asked whether the notes taken by each scribe would be made available to all Senators after the fact so that the complete notes would be made available.

The Chair confirmed that this was the intention.

G. Gibson responded to P. Abela's concerns and stated that this approach was not intended to circumvent the normal practises of Senate, but was intended to provide a forum for informal discussions and encourage more input from both Senators and student Senators. Ideas that come forward from the informal groups will be ideas that Senate can discuss in the future.

The Chair noted that this was an unusual approach for Senate but that it was felt that the time was right for a more open, unfettered conversation about some of the more difficult and substantive issues that Acadia faced.

E. Patterson asked whether the groups might meet ahead of time in order to avoid the time constraints of a Senate meeting.

The Chair responded that she did not want to impose the business of Senate on Senators outside of Senate time and pointed out that it was expected that this would be an on-going conversation at Senate.

F. Thompson agreed that this would be on-going and stated that the initial discussions were intended to spark interest. The APC would be involved with a lot of the issues that Senate Executive had brought up during the summer. If there turned out to be common ideas that came out of the discussions it would be possible to ask particular Senate sub-committees to review them.

D. Holmberg suggested that Senate could agree to come out of the *committee of the Whole* 30 minutes before the end of the meeting, to allow time for a fulsome discussion. It was also possible under Robert's Rules to *postpone definitely* the

discussion and continue it at the next Senate meeting.

C. Rushton suggested that when the groups moved to discuss question #2 the members of the group could be re-shuffled in order to avoid certain Senators monopolizing the conversation and others not having sufficient opportunity to voice their concerns.

The Chair agreed that this could be considered.

A. Quema suggested that the time of the Senate meeting could be extended by 30 minutes. A. Quema acknowledged that this was an experiment and that Senate might find that the approach did or did not work, but that there was nothing tying Senate down to continuing with the exercise if it was felt to be unworkable.

The Chair agreed that the Senate meeting could be lengthened if Senators were asked ahead of time.

D. Benoit pointed out that examinations would be in progress on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and that Senate could therefore start 30 minutes earlier than normal. He understood P. Abela's concern with the possible lack of time and felt strongly that Senate should take as much time as was needed in order to properly discuss this topic. It was important to put time into proper discussion now in order to ensure that Acadia was heading into the right direction.

A. Quema felt that Senate could consider dealing with just the first question to see how things went, possibly delaying discussing the second question until the January meeting of Senate.

The Chair agreed and asked Senators whether they would be open to starting at 3:30 p.m. and continuing to 6:00 p.m. on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**Motion that the December 14<sup>th</sup> Senate Meeting be extended from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Moved by D. Benoit and seconded by P. Williams.**

**Motion Approved.**

There was no further business.

**Motion to adjourn at 5:50 p.m. moved by P. Townsend.**

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

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R. Hare, Recording Secretary

## **SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT TO SENATE**

**October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

The Senate Executive Committee met on Monday September 28, 2015. This committee will meet again on the following dates: November 23, 2015; January 25, 2016 and April 13, 2016. The most significant mandates of the committee, according to the Senate constitution, is “to consider matters that in its judgment call for senatorial action” and “to consider matters referred to it by Senate.” At our meeting on September 28 we identified the planning and monitoring of initiatives following from the Senate Executive White Paper (i.e. discussion and action on the Senate endorsed list of potential topics for consideration 2015/2016) to be the central work of Senate Executive for this year.

A. Vibert  
Senate and Senate Executive Chair

**Report of the Senate Archives Committee  
October 2015**

A meeting of the Senate Archives Committee was held on October 1, 2015. At that meeting, Patricia Townsend was elected as the committee's secretary and Jennifer MacDonald as chair. The committee reviewed its mandate and discussed its plans. The committee agreed that it would normally meet face-to-face, while taking care of minor business via email if necessary. Tentative meeting dates were set for November and February. Beyond its regular business, this year the committee will work to clarify policies relating to artifacts held within the archives. The chair's next order of business will be to ensure that the vacant membership positions be filled.

Jennifer MacDonald

### **Senate By-laws Committee Report to 13 October 2015 Senate meeting**

The Senate By-laws Committee met on numerous occasions over the 'past year, plus' to oversee and conduct an extensive review of the Senate Committees pertaining to mandates, possible redundancies, etc.

Subsequent to this comprehensive review of the Senate Committees during this period, four motions were passed at the Senate meeting 13 April 2015:

Academic Technology Committee and Faculty Development Committee to be merged to form the Faculty Support Committee

Admission and Academic Standing Committee (Appeals) to be changed from a standing committee to an Ad Hoc Committee

Academic Discipline to be changed from a standing committee to an Ad Hoc Committee, and

Curriculum Committee be divided into two standing committees,  
Curriculum Committee (Administration), and  
Curriculum Committee (Policy)

For the coming year, the By-laws committee's mandate is to get the proposed language for the changes from the committees, review them to see that the language reflects the agreed changes, and then the By-laws Committee will revise the Senate By-laws accordingly once the changes have been approved by Senate. One item in the By-laws to look at is the creation of a category of Committees called 'Ad Hoc'. Another goal is to revise the mandate of the By-laws committee itself so that undertaking such reviews is no longer one of its responsibilities. By-laws will provide during this term the context for this proposed change to Senate, and in doing so will make a suggestion as to where that authority to review should go.

Respectfully

William Brackney  
Herb Wylie  
Glenys Gibson  
Jim MacLeod, Transitional Chair, By-laws

## **Report from the Senate Curriculum Committee (FDC), October 2015**

The Senate Curriculum Committee had its transition meeting on October 6, 2015 with J. Banks as the transition Chair. At this meeting R. Raeside agreed to remain as Secretary for the upcoming year. J. Banks called for nominations for Chair for the upcoming year and S. Hewitt was nominated to be the Chair (by P. Rigg). This went unopposed so S. Hewitt won by acclamation.

The committee discussed the motion approved in Senate (April, 2015) to split the committee into two committees (CC Administrative and CC Policy). It was recognized that some work will be needed to figure out how the two new committees should be populated. As well, it was recognized there is now an opportunity to review the duties of the current committee before splitting them up. It was agreed to meet again in two weeks with the main focus the consideration of the structure and mandate of the two new committees. This work will be done and recommendations made to Senate. It was also decided that the current committee should complete the 'normal' December/January committee work this year, thereby functioning as the Curriculum Committee (Administrative).

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Banks, Transition Chair



### **Report from the Faculty Development Committee (FDC), October 2015**

Since our last report to Senate (May, 2015), we have had a change in membership. Jonathon Fowles (Prof. St.) was replaced by Ann Dodge and Danny Zacharias (Theology) has yet to be replaced. The Faculty Development Committee has had three in-person meetings-one in June and two in September. We also had a number of discussions over email during the summer. In September, Lisa Price agreed to continue serving as Chair of the committee for either the 2015-2016 year or until the Faculty Support Committee is created. The FDC has agreed on three goals. First, we agreed to continue organizing workshops during the study breaks in October and February to support teaching excellence at Acadia. The upcoming workshop on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015 will include a presentation on gender bias in academia from Randy Newman, Psychology, and a presentation on blended learning by Sharon Churchill and Susanne Campbell, Open Acadia. We will be providing certificates of attendance to faculty who attend the workshop.

Second, we have agreed to continue working with the Deans and the Associated Alumni of Acadia University (AAAU) to harmonize the existing Teaching Awards in each of the three faculties. L. Price met with a representative of the AAAU (Oonagh Proudfoot) in September to discuss the AAAU teaching award. The winner of the AAAU award will be selected from recipients of the teaching awards from each of the three faculties. The winner of that award will be announced at convocation in May and nominated for an Association of Atlantic Universities Teaching Award.

The third goal of the FDC is to work with the Academic Technologies Committee to create the Faculty Support Committee. Over the summer, L. Price had a number of meetings with B. Anderson (former Chair, By-Laws Committee), Jim MacLeod (Prof. Studies rep., By-Laws Committee), and Jeff Banks (Chair, Academic Technologies Committee) to discuss the merger of the Faculty Development Committee and the Academic Technologies Committee into the Faculty Support Committee (Motion passed by Senate in April 2105). A number of members of both committees met on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss the possible mission statement and committee membership. Based on those discussions, L. Price created a draft of the mission statement and membership and sent it to all members of both committees for feedback. We have received that feedback and are now looking for guidance as to how to proceed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Price, Chair

**Senate Committee on Graduate Studies  
Interim Report to Senate – October 2015**

The Senate Committee on Graduate Studies held its open meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The agenda for this meeting included an overview of roles and responsibilities, a discussion of various administrative issues, and the identification of two primary objectives for the 2015-2016 academic year:

- A quality standards framework for graduate studies at Acadia
- A possible recruitment strategy for graduate studies at Acadia

Subcommittees are being struck to (a) address current administrative issues related to graduate student registration and thesis defenses, and (b) to adjudicate the various awards (e.g., Gold Medal, Tri-Council; NSHRF; Provincial Scholarships). The discussion of quality standards is tentatively planned for a December retreat.

Current membership:

David MacKinnon	Chair; Research & Graduate Studies
Susan Potter	Psychology
Mark Mallory	Biology
Andre Trudel	Computer Science
Pat Rigg	English
Lynn Aylward	Education (Ph.D. program)
Gregg MacKinnon	Education (M.Ed. program)
Rachel Brickner	Politics
John Colton	Community Development
Zelda Abramson	Sociology
Wilson Lu	Mathematics & Statistics
Sandra Barr	Geology
Sherrri McFarland	Chemistry
Bill Brackney	Theology
Ian Spooner	Applied Geomatics
Geoffrey Whitehall	Social & Political Thought
Christine Anderson	Graduate Student – Pure & Applied Science
Elise Snow-Kropla	Graduate Student – Arts
Kayleigh James	Graduate Student – Professional Studies
TBA	Graduate Student – Theology

Submitted by:

David MacKinnon  
Chair

**Senate Honours Committee**

**Interim Report to Senate – October, 2015**

The Senate Honours Committee will hold its opening meeting on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, to establish its agenda for the year. The first order of business will be to select a Chair.

Current membership:

David MacKinnon	Research & Graduate Studies ( <i>ex officio</i> )
Jeff Banks	Interim Registrar ( <i>ex officio</i> )
Marc Ramsay	Philosophy
Cynthia Alexander	Politics
Chris Shields	Kinesiology
Jun Yang	Business
Jeff Hooper	Mathematics & Statistics
Anna Redden	Biology
Liam Murphy	Honours student (Arts)
Maya Basa	Honours student (Professional Studies)
Rylee Oosterhuis	Honours student (Pure & Applied Science)

Submitted by:

David MacKinnon  
Transition Chair

**Senate Committee on the Library  
October 2, 2015**

As requested, the Committee held an initial meeting on October 1 to review its mandate and set goals for the year. We heard a report updating the work of the Library since June. Kelly Bennett was designate secretary to the Committee.

We agreed to review our mandate thoroughly and we designated a sub-committee to report by our February meeting. Concerns include our advocacy and policymaking roles. The sub-committee includes library professional staff and department representatives.

At a meeting planned for early December, we agreed to have a full discussion of the Open Access Policy and in February we will review our Research Data Management Policy.

We continue to affirm the importance of a Senate Committee on the Library.

We also expressed concern for the appointment of a permanent University Librarian before the term of the Interim UL expires.

Respectfully for the Committee,

William Brackney, Chair

## **Transition Chair's Report – Senate Nominating Committee**

The senate nominating committee for 2015-16 (consisting of consisting of Ian Hutchinson, Eva Curry, Romira Worvill, Ana Saroli, David Piper, A. Mitchell and Ray Ivany) met on Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup> 2015 to elect a chair for the upcoming year and review our goals and priorities. A. Mitchell was re-elected as chair, and, after a healthy discussion, we decided that our goals and priorities would not be much different than in previous years, i.e. to fairly and impartially circulate open calls for nominations to all eligible persons for the vacancies we are called upon to fill, and pass the names of all nominees received on to the appropriate authority for further action when required. The committee only plans to deviate from this procedure if insufficient nominations are received to fill an open position, in which case we will attempt to find nominees by further publicizing the call and/or approaching individuals directly.

Our only item of unfinished business from last year consisted of determining the rules of eligibility for the position of Faculty Elections Officer. We made a recommendation to Senate in our 2014-15 yearend report that this matter be referred to the bylaws committee for clarification. We hope to receive their ruling before the incumbent's current term expires.

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Mitchell, Chair  
Senate Nominating Committee

## **RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD TRANSITION CHAIR REPORT, 2015–2016**

**Committee membership:** Joan Boutilier (Community), Graduate Student Representative (Emily Chase)\*, David Duke (Arts), Anita Hudak (Community), David MacKinnon\* (RGS), Stephen Maitzen (Chair), Susan Potter (PAS), Anna Robbins (Theology), Conor Vibert (FPS)

\* non-voting

**Schedule of face-to-face meetings:** 3 September, 1 October, 5 November, 3 December, 14 January 2016, 4 February, 3 March, 7 April, 5 May, 2 June, 7 July

**Goals and priorities:** The timely review of research ethics applications in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, Second Edition (TCPS2), and the resolution of any other issues that arise with respect to the ethics of human-subjects research at Acadia

**Committee Chair for upcoming year:** Stephen Maitzen

Submitted by: Stephen Maitzen (Transition Chair)

## Senate Research Committee

### Interim Report to Senate – October, 2015

The Senate Research Committee has been active throughout the summer, holding public consultations on the draft Strategic Research Plan. The meetings and consultations have occurred on the following dates:

- June 11; meeting with CRCs and directors of formal research centres at Acadia
- June 25; meeting with IDST coordinators
- June 30; meeting with Faculty of Pure & Applied Science focus group
- August 18; meeting with Faculty of Arts focus group
- August 20; meeting with Faculty of Professional Studies focus group
- September 11; Committee meeting

The Committee is currently conducting the final consultations, with the intent of submitting the draft to Senate for the November 2015 meeting.

Current membership:

David MacKinnon	Chair; Research & Graduate Studies
Zelda Abramson	Sociology
John Colton	Community Development
Danny Silver	Computer Science
Bill Brackney	Theology
Erin Patterson	Library
Brenda Trofanenko	Education (Canada Research Chair)
Anna Redden	Biology (Director, ACER)
Sara Klapstein	Graduate student
Todd Dow	Undergraduate (Honours) Student

Submitted by:

David MacKinnon  
Chair

**Timetable, Instruction and Examinations committee**

The TIE committee met on September 24, 2015, and elected Rick Mehta as Chair for the 2015 – 2016 academic year. We will meet again during the Fall reading week to discuss a meeting schedule for the semester. This committee will meet face-to-face, and will be working on four issues over the upcoming year (in addition to whatever is requested by Senate).

The first issue is the slot system. There are many problems with the current system, which is making course selection challenging for students; in some cases, students have been forced to take summer courses due to lack of access to required courses during the fall/winter academic terms.

The second issue is the exam timetable. One problem identified was that too many faculty members are putting in requests for accommodations (there were 115 in the winter of 2015), which causes problems with scheduling of final exams. The committee believes it is important that the same rules and principles apply to both faculty members and students (e.g., don't book flights until after the exam timetable has been released).

The third issue was the location of the exams. Many of them are held in the Gymnasium, which is stressful for some students. Other issues that need to be considered with respect to location are class size (large versus small) and the number of sections (a course with a single section versus a course with multiple sections).

Finally, the committee thought it would be important to review Calendar dates and their underlying principles.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Mehta, Chair, TIE Committee



# **RURAL AND COASTAL**

## **LOCAL TO GLOBAL**

Strategic Research Plan (DRAFT)  
Acadia University  
2015 - 2020

## Framing

Acadia University has been among the best in its category in Canada since national ratings for universities were established. We create and nurture a strong culture of academic inquiry and innovation by building on the outstanding skills of our researchers, by maintaining a focus on our core research disciplines, by celebrating the importance of student research, and by facilitating an increasingly collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to research initiatives.

Acadia's first Strategic Research Plan (SRP) was constructed in 2000 and updated in 2006. Its intent was to engage the university community in the continuing development of a strong and vibrant research community. This renewed and revised SRP continues that engagement, but also carves out a niche that situates Acadia within the Canadian research montage. It reflects the evolving values and strengths of the institution, demonstrates respect for a diversity of research choices, and names our commitment to research growth and excellence at the undergraduate and graduate student levels. It signals our commitment to serve as a driver for innovation, socio-cultural enrichment, health and wellness, and economic growth in Nova Scotia, by deepening and extending our partnerships with external organizations. It does this while recognizing the value of all forms of research within the humanities, social and physical sciences, and professional schools, and by identifying strengths on which to build the research capacity required to pursue new opportunities and to enrich and expand our external impact.

Small liberal universities occupy increasingly rare but vital space in Canada. With scholars in multiple disciplines, such institutions seldom have the opportunity to establish a sizeable pool of expertise in one area. Acadia has responded to this challenge by supporting research across a range of disciplines and by encouraging collaborations with researchers at other national and international institutions, as well as partnerships with industry, government, community health and social agencies, and other external organizations. Research is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary as the questions asked become more complex and permeate porous disciplinary borders. That said, Acadia's broad commitment is to structure an environment with available resources that nurtures high caliber research programs: individual, collaborative, interdisciplinary. Nurturing a strong research culture comes not only from active faculty research programs, but also from the work of our ten formal research centres, three institutes, our library and archives, as well as our continuing investments in the development of research facilities and centres, and the programs of our Canada Research Chairs. Our students derive substantial benefits from such a rich and engaged environment and are subsequently well positioned and sought after for advanced study here and at other universities. The experience for many students is further enhanced through exposure to research opportunities with community, government, and industry organizations.

## Focusing

Decidedly rural and positioned on the shores of the renowned Bay of Fundy, within the stunning Annapolis Valley, our strategic focus – **RURAL AND COASTAL** – reflects our geography and its people, as well as the international reach of many of our researchers and the impact of their work. While rural and coastal is our strategic focus, it does not confine or restrict the breadth of research that takes place at Acadia.

Our strategic focus names an evolving institutional awareness at Acadia and a commitment to contribute to the betterment of the health and life circumstances of those who live in these regions, to the revitalization and growth of their communities, and to the protection and sustainability of their environments and resources.

## Objectives

The objectives of this Strategic Research Plan are:

- a. To deepen and increase research activity within the four theme areas (below) especially, but not exclusively, as it strengthens the rural and coastal focus:
  - **Community Life and Cultural Diversity**
  - **Natural Resources and Environmental Resilience**
  - **Human Health and Wellness**
  - **Innovative and Enabling Technologies.**
- b. To strengthen Acadia's research culture in its breadth, foci, interdisciplinary potential, and opportunities for student engagement at undergraduate and graduate levels;
- c. To foster and expand research connections within the University and between Acadia and its numerous and expanding regional, national, and international partners and collaborators;
- d. To expand Acadia's contributions to the economic and cultural development of rural and coastal regions locally, nationally, and globally.
- e. To encourage innovation at Acadia and the potential for such innovation to have a positive impact locally, nationally, and globally;

In so doing the SRP ensures that the full range of research activity of a faculty with diverse interests is valued and accommodated. It integrates research preparation for undergraduate and graduate students. It recognizes the value of collaborative and interdisciplinary research activity which leads to the creation of innovative theories, practices, and solutions. It acknowledges that high quality interdisciplinary research builds on a strong foundation of disciplinary excellence. Underlying the Plan is the conviction that opportunities to associate research activity with teaching and service to the greater community constitute an institutional strength and responsibility.

As evidenced by the focus of the Plan, Acadia is committed to fostering and encouraging research that contributes to the betterment of rural and coastal regions. This will involve not only supporting current research programs that have rural and coastal relevance, but also nurturing research clusters across campus that work in and with communities and external organizations to collectively address problems and identify opportunities.

To accomplish this, Acadia will continue to develop and maintain major research facilities and initiatives that support multiple disciplines, which will build institutional research capacity and bolster our strategic focus. We will further build research capacity and impact by fostering collaborations and partnerships with other academic institutions. We will be selective in undertaking such initiatives and will ensure that best use is made of limited resources, and opportunities for enhancing these, by considering the following:

- the fit with this Strategic Research Plan;
- the potential for broad, interdisciplinary participation;
- the strength and leadership of key researchers;
- the potential to strengthen undergraduate and graduate student research;
- the potential to make powerful regional, national, and international contributions; and
- the potential to contribute to economic and cultural development in rural and coastal regions.

## Themes

***Acadia's Commitment: Acadia will actively, and by diverse means, support research within these four theme areas, especially as that pertains to the sustainability, health, economic growth, and cultural richness of rural and coastal regions locally and wherever Acadia researchers work.***

### Community Life and Cultural Diversity

Throughout its long history, Acadia has been intimately connected to its local communities and deeply immersed in the realities of rural and coastal life. Romanticized images associated with life in these regions call to mind simplicity, idyllic surroundings, traditional values, and hard but healthy physical work. Counter to this, research by some Acadia scholars indicates that a more common theme associated with rural life is departure and loss. Rural communities have witnessed mass out-migrations as youth, in particular, leave for urban areas or resource-rich regions with better job opportunities. Yet, there is emerging evidence that many youth are opting to remain local in resistance to the go-elsewhere message. This points to an urgent need to deepen and utilize existing and emerging knowledge on rural and coastal communities, to actively develop sustainable circumstances that will provide opportunities for youth and others to remain in or migrate to these regions, and to work with municipal, provincial, and national political bodies in creating a rural imperative and innovative approaches to the revitalization and well-being of rural and coastal Canada, as well as similar efforts in international settings.

Understanding community life, historically and currently, homogenous and culturally diverse, is the work of a number of researchers and research programs at Acadia. Some within the social sciences and humanities conduct research that connects to community life in a plethora of ways, including aboriginal ecotourism, music therapy and technology, the history of land use and settlement, community theatre, leadership and management of community institutions, cultural rituals, organizational and community narratives, media studies, religious life, and the sociological, economic, and political trends affecting labour, health, and indigenous peoples.

Connected to community life is a critical mass of faculty and student researchers engaged in scholarship on cultural diversity and social justice. Several scholars across disciplines are exploring the circumstances of girls in rural communities. A related train within the social sciences and humanities focuses on the everyday experiences of individuals through the lenses of sexed bodies and gendered lives. Researchers working through the Acadia Centre for the Study in Ethnocultural Diversity, as well as many working independently, are establishing a rich scholarship on equity and diversity within schools and other organizations, and within and between communities and community groups. A particular imperative is building links with three local populations that have been historically marginalized but remain vibrant and resilient: the Mi'kmaq, the African Nova Scotian, and the Acadian communities. In addition, the work of a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Education, Culture, and Community brings a multidisciplinary focus (history, anthropology, museum studies) to the educational mandate of public institutions. This work also engages the sub-field of critical public pedagogy.

Many of these areas actively engage undergraduate and graduate student researchers. As a result, these students have opportunities to undertake research that connects with external agencies on issues of social and cultural relevance, which not only broadens their academic experience but also serves to enrich Acadia's engagement with and connection to its external communities.

### **Natural Resources and Environmental Resilience**

Acadia has a well-established strength and reputation for research related to natural resources and the environment. This is especially prominent in terms of our integrated research into ecological systems, the interaction of organisms with the environment, and the environmental implications and impacts of human activities. Research programs span the evolution of the earth over geological time to the recent and often short-term dynamics of local populations, both essential to the understanding of environmental change. This research has been greatly enhanced by the presence of outstanding facilities, most notably the KC Irving Environmental Science Centre, a gift from the Irving family of New Brunswick. It is also augmented by the presence of three Tier II Canada Research Chairs whose work focuses on the environment: one in Environmental Biogeochemistry, another in Coastal Wetland Ecosystems, and a third in the Ecology of Coastal Environments. In addition, this theme is supported by a Chair in Ornithology whose research is housed within an ecological resilience framework. Acadia also has many formal research centres and institutes that work within this theme area and across disciplines, including the Acadia Centre for Estuarine Research, the Acadia Tidal Energy Institute, the Acadia Institute for Data Analytics, and the Centre for Analytical Research on the Environment. Off-site research facilities include field stations at Beaubassin in New Brunswick, Bon Portage Island in southwestern Nova Scotia, and the Morton Centre on the South Shore of Nova Scotia.

Of particular significance is the recognition that a growing body of research conducted at Acadia extends beyond descriptive accounts of natural resources and environmental circumstances to a focus on sustainability and growth. Much work within this theme area reveals a concern for the natural environment and its resources, and the importance of applied research into environmental processes. It recognizes the deleterious impacts of climate change and the significance of understanding its origins and constructing acceptable paths forward. It pedestals the imperative of creating sustainable environments for all organisms on earth. It speaks to the complex

relationship among human cultures, natural resources, and environments, including connections to human and community well-being, aesthetics, textual expression, ethical behaviour, and our historical and spiritual approaches to the environment. It also seeks means to utilize the natural environment and its resources for human benefit in ways that minimize harmful impacts and supplant non-sustainable techniques.

Acadia's approaches to natural resources and environmental inquiry are manifest in research in such areas as non-toxic insect management, developmental plasticity, animal migrations, aquaculture, tidal energy development and modelling, environmental policy, materials science, and sediment depositions and mineral exploration. It also includes water quality and environmental contaminants, biofuels, waste management, biodiversity and the natural history of species of concern, the preservation of coastal wetlands and fragile Arctic ecosystems, the resilience of the Bay of Fundy to oil spills, fisheries resource sustainability, and digitizing the complete register of flora and fauna of the Acadian Forest Region.

Most of the research conducted within this theme area actively engages undergraduate and graduate students. In so doing, it provides them with rich opportunities to work with external partners that in many cases leads to thesis research that assists industry in addressing pressing issues and opens or extends innovative opportunities.

### **Human Health and Wellness**

Health and wellness are intertwined concepts. Health is a multi-dimensional condition that includes physical, psychological, spiritual, and occupational health, and its social determinants. It is a process of continuous adaptation to the many microbes, irritants, pressures, and problems of varying internal and external environments. Wellness is an inclusive concept that speaks not only to good health, but also to quality of life and contentment with one's overall life circumstances.

Research into human health and well-being at Acadia is greatly enhanced by the presence of a Tier I Canada Research Chair in Occupational Health and Well-Being, as well as three formal research centres: the Centre for Organizational Research and Development, the Centre of Life-Style Studies, and the Centre for the Sensory Research of Food. Within the Centre of Lifestyle Studies, substantial research is being done on physical activity as a prevention and rehabilitation tool. Additionally, there are evident links through the study of contaminants to the previously-mentioned Centre for Analytical Research on the Environment. Both undergraduate and graduate students are actively involved in the research of these centres, as well as with faculty research throughout this theme area.

Broadly speaking, the multiple prongs of health-related research cluster around foods, as well as physical, social, and psychological/emotional health and wellness. They also reveal linkages to research named in other themes. Food and agri-food activity includes established areas of research such as water quality analysis and product testing, but also incorporates newer programs focusing on food security, probiotics, food citizenship, feeding in hospitals, and wine research, including wine tourism.

Health and wellness includes excellence in research on the connection between physical activity and diabetes management, the role of relaxins in treating conditions associated with aging, physiological responses to stress, athletic therapy, cancer and infectious diseases, alcohol harms, ligament injuries, and drug abuse. Social health and wellness includes research on parent-child relationships, workplace civility, in-home care of seniors, circumstances of rural youth, infant food insecurity, and a host of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary investigations concerning equity and social justice. The results of some health and wellness research has resulted in nationally and internationally recognized programs such as the Sensory Motor Instructional Leadership Experience (SMILE) and Kinderskills. Research of a psychological and emotional thrust includes extensive work in attachment theory, personality, counselling, and sexual health.

### **Innovative and Enabling Technologies**

Innovative and enabling technologies include research conducted by some Acadia faculty members and students on the theoretical and scientific foundations of many technologies. Coupled with this is research into the pedagogical and methodological applications of technologies, and the utilization of technology in support of faculty and student research programs.

The heart of the Innovative and Enabling Technologies theme casts a double spotlight on the technologies that are present on campus to support high-quality research, as well as research on the technologies themselves. These technologies cluster into information and communication technology, applications for materials science, modelling, and data analytics.

Foundational research in ICT occurs within selected units on campus, while applications, often occur across all faculties and with external partners. Researchers are studying the interactions of hardware and software and the world-wide web, the interfaces of peoples and communities with ICT technologies and how they impact broad social issues, and the role of technologies in engaging diverse cultural groups. ICT extends to research on issues of technology and public policy, political debates, production and reproduction of creative practices within the arts and sciences, and the preservation of artistic and scientific works in digital form as part of cultural heritage and workplace literacy, health, and productivity. Library and archives initiatives, including the digitization of unique local archival material and the E. C. Smith Digital Herbarium, have facilitated research across the disciplines and beyond Acadia.

The materials science, modelling, and analytics capacity areas are undergirded by two research centres and one institute: the Acadia Centre for Microstructural Analysis, the Acadia Centre for Mathematical Modelling and Computation, and the Acadia Institute for Data Analytics. The microstructural analysis centre provides a cluster of micro-analytical equipment, several of which are unique in Nova Scotia and the Maritimes. It also represents a forum for multidisciplinary research and collaboration at the interface between physical and life sciences.

Work associated within the Centre for Mathematical Modelling and Computation, and the Data Analytics Institute has application across the natural, biological, and social sciences, and in some instances within the humanities. Quantitative modelling enables researchers to describe, assess, and predict a wide range of phenomena, from subatomic behaviour to climate change. The

Analytics Institute is especially focused on local agricultural, environmental, health care, and green energy issues. Beyond this, analytics covers a broad spectrum, including data management, mathematical, statistical, and machine learning methods for data modeling, and techniques for data visualization in support of decision making. The library is taking the lead in developing digital research data management services and resources to support data organization, preservation, discovery, and sharing.

## **External Engagement**

Research is traditionally conceptualized as pure (curiosity-driven) or applied. Both occur at Acadia in multiple ways and have varied impacts, intentional and inadvertent. In constructing our Strategic Research Plan with a deliberate focus – Rural and Coastal – we are staking claim not only to a particular geography, but also to a commitment to apply our considerable research expertise to bring positive and powerful impacts to these regions by contributing to their cultural, economic, and environmental growth. Fostering deep and meaningful relationships between and among our university scholars, library and archives, research centres and institutes, and external organizations is a critical aspect of our Strategic Research Plan.

An example of the way this happens is through Acadia's Rural Innovation Centre. With funding from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Province of Nova Scotia, Acadia established a combined incubation and innovation facility to nurture local start-up businesses and deliberately located them in the same physical space as three research institutes: the Acadia Tidal Energy Institute, the Acadia Institute for Data Analytics, and the Atlantic Wine Institute. The work of these institutes is predominately focused on issues that impact rural and coastal regions. Co-locating institutes with start-up businesses creates a dynamic and synergistic environment where discussion of research and applications thrives.

Leadership in facilitating external research-related partnerships emanates from the Office of Industry and Community Engagement, a division of Research & Graduate Studies. Following from a focus group session with local industry, government, and funding agency representatives in 2010, ICE established a multiple component strategy to guide its operation. At its core, this strategy has focused on developing more personal engagement and closer relationships with industry organizations and economic development agencies which themselves work directly with businesses, and seamless lines of communication which expedite problem-solving collaborations between Acadia researchers and external organizations. The Office recurrently hosts information sessions and workshops that bring together external industry, business groups, and provincial and national funding partners, with Acadia researchers to focus on emerging opportunities and problem-solving strategies.

In recent years, research activity has evolved to include hundreds of external partners on projects ranging from large multi-partner collaborations examining the environmental effects of installing tidal turbines in the Bay of Fundy, to the art and narratives of Inuit elders, and to consulting projects involving laboratory analytical services. These collaborations frequently involve international partners. In some cases, research done by Acadia faculty has led to commercial application resulting in royalty revenues and the creation of spinoff companies. Collaborations



like these are examples of applied research contributing to solutions to local issues and problems.

Further examples of these collaborations are represented by Acadia activity levels on NSERC Engage and Engage Plus programs, which foster the development of new partnerships between researchers and companies. From its launch in 2010 to 2015, Acadia has established over 24 Engage projects, garnering almost \$550,000 for faculty and students, making us the most active of all small universities in Atlantic Canada. Other industry connections and partnerships have garnered millions in research dollars and created exceptional opportunities for both faculty and students. These include programs through the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, including its Atlantic Innovation Fund and the Innovative Communities Fund.

### **Canada Research Chairs**

A principal imperative of the 2000 Strategic Research Plan was the deployment of Canada Research Chairs. The CRCs have brought extensive scholarly, technical, and intellectual expertise to the campus community and beyond. Each of these CRC positions substantially strengthens and provides scholarly leadership within their primary theme areas. With the conclusion of some Chair positions and the initiation of others, the current CRC distribution at Acadia is:

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
<b>Tier I</b>	<b>Occupational Health and Well-being</b>	<b>SSHRC</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Tier II</b>	<b>Environmental Biogeochemistry</b>	<b>NSERC</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Tier II</b>	<b>Education, Culture, and Community</b>	<b>SSHRC</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Tier II</b>	<b>Ecology of Coastal Environments</b>	<b>NSERC</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Tier II</b>	<b>Coastal Wetland Ecosystems</b>	<b>NSERC</b>	<b>2011</b>

As new Canada Research Chair opportunities become available, the Vice President Academic and the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies will work with Faculty deans and selection committees to actively recruit candidates whose work strengthens our rural and coastal focus, with a concerted emphasis on attracting individuals from minoritized populations.

### **Review and Assessment**

Assessment of this plan by the University will be accomplished in 5-year cycles, drawing on multiple benchmarks appropriate to various disciplines. Common indicators of success, including publications, awards, and honours, will be complemented by other indicators of accomplishment. This may include creative works and performances, public speaking engagements, hosting and/or chairing conferences, presentations at professional meetings and colloquia, patents, licenses, industry engagement, commercial start-ups, as well as other indications of public and professional interest. In addition, the year in which the SRP is being reviewed will include campus consultations.

On the direction of Senate, this process will be led by the Division of Research & Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Senate Research Committee, and will result in a report to Senate. This report will include recommendations, which may lead to modifications to the Plan.

## Action Plan

***Acadia's Commitment: Acadia will actively, and by diverse means, support research within the four theme areas, especially as that pertains to the sustainability, health, growth, and cultural richness of rural and coastal regions.***

Achieving the objectives of this Plan requires a combination of new initiatives, bolstering and extending existing activities, new resource commitments and realignment of existing allocations, and mechanisms that increase cross-disciplinary research in accord with the four theme areas.

Not all objectives may be achieved within the Plan's 5-year scope. Some will certainly prove easier to accomplish than others. Initiatives or changes that entail a change in ethos will, of necessity, require more time and careful nurturing. We undertake these because they will strengthen us considerably as a community of researchers, assist in establishing a campus-wide appreciation of varying research foci and methodologies, and reveal opportunities for collaboration and discovery.

We also undertake them because they will deepen our connection to external communities, locally and globally. Changing government and societal expectations of universities has created a national and international dialogue on the role of post-secondary institutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, resulting in an animated dialectic on the merits of traditional roles versus newer conceptualizations. But connection to community has been a constant theme since Acadia was founded in 1838. In this Plan we seek to deepen that focus and identify additional ways in which the University can contribute to its external communities, and especially to the economic, socio-cultural, health, and environmental improvement of the rural and coastal communities around us, and in locations around the world where Acadia researchers work.

On page 3 we identified five objectives for this Plan. The action items listed below are organized on the basis of how they link to each of these objectives.

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**Objective (a):** To deepen and increase research activity within the four theme areas (below), especially as it strengthens the rural and coastal strategic focus:

- Community Life and Cultural Diversity
- Natural Resources and Environmental Resilience
- Human Health and Wellness
- Innovative and Enabling Technologies.

In order to achieve this objective, we will undertake the following:

1. *Theme leaders.* Each of the four theme areas will be overseen by a faculty lead and a small working group. Their responsibilities will include exploring potential research collaborations within and among themes, advancing faculty and student research within the themes through multiple engagement and dissemination strategies, and, by working with the Office of Industry and Community Engagement, seeking opportunities for expanding research connections with external groups and organizations in order to contribute to the socio-cultural, environmental, health, and economic growth of rural and coastal regions.
2. *Chair of Rural and Coastal Research.* Working with the Office of Advancement, Acadia will seek to establish a social sciences and humanities Chair of Rural and Coastal Research. The work of the Chair will complement the work of research chairs within the Faculty of Pure & Applied Science currently engaged in research on rural and coastal regions.
3. *Centre for Rural and Coastal Lifeways Research.* Story is a powerful means of making sense of who we are and how we connect to the land and places where we live. In order to establish a collaborative and interdisciplinary space for life story research, we will establish a Centre for Rural and Coastal Lifeways Research, under the direction of a faculty member. This research will cut across the disciplines within the sciences, humanities, social sciences, and professional schools in order to collect, produce, and preserve the life stories of the people, places, animals, and inanimate objects that define rural and coastal cultures.
4. *Open Access and Data Management.* In order to facilitate collaborative and iterative research, the Vaughan Memorial Library will support open and accessible scholarly publishing and data management. The *Acadia Scholar* institutional repository will be a platform for preserving publications and research data and for promoting and sharing Acadia's contributions to the national and international research community.

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**Objective (b):** To strengthen Acadia's research culture in its breadth, foci, interdisciplinary potential, and opportunities for student engagement at undergraduate and graduate levels.

In order to achieve this objective, we will undertake the following:

1. *Industrial Research Chair.* An objective of the Plan is to establish a NSERC Industrial Research Chairs within the Natural Resources and Environmental Resilience theme area. This Chair, in concert with other theme-based Canada Research Chairs and directors of centres and institutes, will provide additional strength and leadership related to natural resources and the environment.
2. *Who We Are.* To deepen our institutional research knowledge and connections, we will encourage a variety of internal celebratory and revealing events, coordinated by Research & Graduate Studies, which can include:

- i. Short-episode show ‘n’ tell presentations where faculty and students have 2-3 minutes to talk about their research, but with different departments and schools spotlighted at any given event.
  - ii. Semi-regular coffeehouses or mixers that bring faculty and students together for discussions of the research they are doing and its implications. These can be theme or topic focused, but structured to be intentionally transdisciplinary.
  - iii. A series of “Wild Idea” presentations intended to stimulate interdisciplinary thinking and engagement.
  - iv. Calls for works of art and other SSH contributions based on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) themes, and a similar call for STEM contributions to SSH events and initiatives.
- 3 *Undergraduate Student Interdisciplinary Initiative on Rural Health.* Acadia has an excellent reputation for the quality of research undertaken by undergraduate students. While student research commonly takes place within disciplinary clusters, a great advantage of interdisciplinary research is that it mines multiple knowledge bases and brings a more holistic approach to the study of problems and issues. While this can adopt multiple foci, Acadia will seek to develop a stream of (primarily) undergraduate student research on rural health. This can adopt a narrow emphasis on personal health, but can also include a multilateral focus on socio-cultural, environmental, and economic health. This will be coordinated through the theme leaders.
4. *SSH Initiative.* This 5-year Plan incorporates an explicit, though not exclusive, focus on research within the social sciences and humanities. Of all disciplines, active research programs in these areas have been inordinately impacted by diminished success rates in external funding and limited availability of external grant and contract opportunities. While strong and focused support for grant applications and applicant mentoring will continue for all faculty, regardless of discipline, in order to rebuild and strengthen research in SSH, the Division of Research & Graduate Studies will:
- i. Where possible, arrange for one-on-one start-to-finish grant preparation assistance for those faculty members applying for funding (primarily) to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This will be prioritized as follows: (1) scholars within first 8 years post-PhD; (2) those who have applied to SSHRC previously, but who are not currently grant holders; and (3) those who have never applied to SSHRC but who wish to apply.
  - ii. Establish a formal mentor network of current and recent SSHRC holders, within Acadia and at sister institutions, to support new and returning scholars in the development and growth of their scholarly careers.

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**Objective (c):** To foster and expand research connections within the University and between Acadia and its numerous and expanding regional, national, and international partners and collaborators.

In order to achieve this objective, we will undertake the following:

1. *Network Connections.* In order to further expand our internal connections and collaborations, we will:
  - i. Create an active network among the directors of our formal research centres and institutes, which will provide mentorship in research leadership and assist in developing research capacity by building new collaborations among faculty and students.
  - ii. Working with the Office of Communications and Marketing, we will seek to provide opportunities for media training for researchers in order to enhance skills in speaking with media organizations and addressing public assemblies. This is part of our commitment to communicate Acadia research to a broader community.
2. *External connections.* In order to further expand our external industry and community connections, we will:
  - i. Develop a feasibility plan that will seek to expand the human resources of the Office of Industry and Community Engagement.
  - ii. Build a collaborative research network among our U4 partners: St. Francis Xavier University, Mount Allison University, and Bishop's University.
  - iii. In support of (ii), Acadia will host a first U4 Research Leaders Workshop and Symposium within the 5-year window of this Plan.

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**Objective (d):** To expand Acadia's contributions to the economic and cultural development of rural and coastal regions locally, nationally, and globally.

In order to achieve this objective, we will undertake the following:

*Industry and Community Research Summit.* Through the Division of Research & Graduate Studies, Acadia will host an Industry and Community Research Summit at least once in this 5-year renewal cycle of the Strategic Research Plan. This summit will explore key issues (possibly theme based) related to rural and coastal communities, and provide an opportunity for extending our external research network and expanding our participation in, and commitment to, the socio-cultural, environmental, health, and economic life of these communities and regions.

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**Objective (e):** To encourage innovation at Acadia and the potential for such innovation to have a positive impact locally, nationally, and globally.

In order to achieve this objective, we will undertake the following:

*Innovation and Commercialization.* Through the Office of Industry & Community Engagement and the Rural Innovation Centre, we will continue to foster entrepreneurship on campus and increase the external impact of research that has commercial application. We will do this by offering funding programs and workshop opportunities for faculty, staff, and students on intellectual property, commercialization, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer.

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Submitted by the 2015-2016 Senate Research Committee:

Zelda Abramson	Faculty of Arts
Bill Brackney	Faculty of Theology
John Colton	Faculty of Professional Studies
Todd Dow	Undergraduate (Honours) student
Sara Klapstein	Graduate student
David MacKinnon	Research & Graduate Studies, Chair
Erin Patterson	Library
Anna Redden	Research Centre Director
Danny Silver	Faculty of Pure & Applied Science
Brenda Trofanenko	Canada Research Chair

**DRAFT**

**APPENDIX**

**The Process**

**Senate only**

## Revising the Strategic Research Plan

The revision of the SRP has been on the agenda of the Senate Research Committee for the last three years. By Senate mandate, one function of the SRC is to develop a process for conducting regular reviews and updates of the Plan, and, once approved, putting the process into place. Early discussions focused on structure and dynamics of a review process, with a significant diversity of opinions offered by Committee members. Following a review of plans from other universities, within Canada and beyond, a structure and process was created and submitted to Senate.

### The Original Process and Timeline

In February of 2013 Senate agreed to a process that included active participation by departments and schools. Unit engagement was to follow visits by the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies with all heads, directors, and IDST coordinators to discuss research activities within their units and programs. This original process, including guiding principles and departmental/school questions is outlined in the figures below.

**Fig. 1.** Original timeline and process approved by Senate (2013)

<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Process Activity Explanation and Justification</u>
February	Request for Senate approval of the Guiding Principles and revised review process
Throughout	Dean of Research and Graduate Studies meets individually with all unit heads, directors, and IDST coordinators to discuss research activity and culture in their disciplinary or interdisciplinary areas.
April	Unit/program engagement with the review questions on (a) research strengths, (b) research connections, (c) strength building, and (d) the perceived utility of the current SRP. Unit submissions will be forwarded to the appropriate faculty dean or, in the case if IDST programs, the appropriate deans.
Spring	Preliminary analysis by Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) and the Senate Research Committee of the unit/program responses to the questions, in conjunction with the faculty deans.
Spring	Focus group sessions, to be held initially within each of the four faculties, to discuss the preliminary analyses by RGS and the SRC and identify thematic faculty-wide research activity. Each unit will have a representative at the focus group session, chosen by that department or school. A fifth focus group will concentrate on interdisciplinary research, and will include a representative from each IDST program. These sessions will be followed by meetings with other stakeholder groups: students, CRC holders, directors of formally identified research centres, librarians and archivists, and senior administration.
Summer	RGS and the SRC prepare a preliminary draft of the revised Strategic Research Plan, in consultation with the faculty deans. Open forum discussion of the draft plan to be held in late summer.
September	Draft SRP submitted to Senate for discussion.



## Fig. 2 Guiding Principles

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- The review of the SRP will be conducted in an open, inclusive, and transparent manner.
  - The purpose is to review and revise Acadia's Strategic Research Plan, in order to:
    - Identify research foci which currently represent, or have demonstrable potential to become, areas of outstanding research strengths that are nationally and/or internationally recognized;
    - Identify research foci which currently represent, or have demonstrable potential to become, areas of strategic external alliance.
    - Reaffirm the University's commitment to a culture of individuality in research, where, regardless of strategic focus, faculty members are free to pursue individual research interests.
  - The resulting Strategic Research Plan is intended to identify areas of strategic research focus for the University, and is not designed to represent a mosaic of cross-campus research activity.
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## Fig. 3 Department and School Questions

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### Research Strengths

1. Given the changing research landscape in Canada, and our considerable cross-campus expertise, identify one or more major research initiatives at Acadia that have become or could become areas of national/global prominence. Why?
2. (a) Name up to four areas in your unit or program that represent research strengths, as manifest by (i) critical capacity, (ii) greatest activity, and/or (iii) greatest impact.  
  
(b) Which of these areas of research strength are nationally and/or internationally recognized? How is this demonstrated (examples)?

### Research Connections

1. What areas of research within your unit or program involve or encourage collaborations or partnerships with community groups, government, NCOs, industry, and/or other academic institutions?
2. How **is** the expertise within your unit being utilized, or how can it be utilized, to address local, national, or international needs and opportunities (environmental, economic, social, etc.)?

### Strength Building

1. In addition to the commonly-identified need for additional financial and human resources, (a) what would be necessary in the years ahead to further advance and distinguish your unit or program nationally and internationally, and (b) what area or areas would you consider to be your strength-building priorities?

## Utility of the Current SRP

The current Strategic Research Plan identifies six (6) theme areas:

- Environment • Cultures, Civilizations, and Citizenship • Health and Wellness • Information Technology and Society • Materials Science • Modelling
1. To what extent do one or more of these themes:
    - (a) reflect research that has taken place in your unit in the last decade? Examples?
    - (b) reflect research that is currently taking place in your unit? Examples?
  2. What influence, if any, did the current Strategic Research Plan have in establishing or enhancing research initiatives within your unit

## Delay and Modification

The original engagement plan (above) called for a draft SRP to be presented to Senate in September, 2013. This was delayed by a limited response to the proposed unit questions. Following the first call for participation, four units engaged the questions and responded. A subsequent call for participation, at the request of Senate, produced two additional departmental responses.

In between the first and subsequent calls the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies proposed an alternative process to Senate, involving the coding and analysis of all research grants and contracts processed through RGS over the previous 5-year period. This included all University Research Fund (Article 25.55) awards, recipients of SSHRC Aid to Small Universities, SSHRC Institutional Grants, Tri-Council awards to faculty members, and research grants and contracts with industry, NGOs, and community organizations. This analysis produced a total of 226 code categories. A workshop in the spring of 2014 involving Research & Graduate Studies and the Senate Research Committee helped to collapse these codes into 5-6 theme areas. These were further collapsed into the existing 4 themes. The analysis group included:

Zelda Abramson (Sociology)  
 Bill Brackney (Theology)  
 Josh Budish (Graduate student – Community Development)  
 John Colton (Community Development)  
 Callie Latham (Honours student – Sociology)  
 David MacKinnon (Research & Graduate Studies)  
 Anna Redden (Acadia Centre for Estuarine Research; Biology)  
 Wendy Robicheau (Archives)  
 Danny Silver (Computer Science)

A smaller writing group – Abramson, MacKinnon, Redden, Silver – prepared the current draft over the summer and fall of 2014, with modifications extending into 2015.

## **The Process that Followed**

The document was ready for focus consultations by December of 2014. However, as the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies was on leave from January through and including April of 2015, the Vice President Academic advised that the process should wait until his returned.

Consequently, and following approval by the Senate Research Committee, a series of focus group consultations were held during the spring and summer of 2015:

- June 11: Canada Research Chairs and Directors of Research Centres
- June 25: Interdisciplinary Studies Coordinators
- June 30: Faculty of Pure & Applied Science
- August 18: Faculty of Arts
- August 20: Faculty of Professional Studies

The Committee discussed the feedback from these meetings and made a number of modifications to the draft. The process also involved discussions with representatives of senior administration (President, Vice President Academic, Vice President Advancement), as well as executive members of the Acadia Graduate Students and the Acadia Students Union.

The draft was submitted for the November 2015 meeting of Senate.

## **Introduction to “Big Picture” Discussion to be initiated at the December Senate Meeting**

### **Preamble:**

Much of the agenda of the December Senate meeting will be dedicated to the substantial issues discussion Senate requested at the September meeting. An ad hoc sub-committee of Senate Executive has been working with Senator Glenys Gibson (who proposed the specific question for the discussion focus) to flesh out specificities of substance and process for this/these planned discussions. The sub-committee has been organizing the discussion around Glenys’ question “Where do we want Acadia to be as a university in 10 years?”

The committee sees the December discussion as a big picture/broad strokes discussion, the initiation of a continuing conversation about the future of Acadia and the kind of university which we as a community would like to see. This continuing conversation is not intended, however, to remain merely at the conceptual level. Through these discussions, we would aim ultimately to identify emergent themes/principles/actions to be forwarded to relevant Senate sub-committees (e.g. Curriculum, APC) for consideration in informing concrete plans to be brought before Senate. Recognizing that change is an inevitable feature of the Acadia context as well as the contexts of Nova Scotian and Canadian universities in the coming years, we understand Senate to be launching these discussions as a means to participation in shaping the direction of those changes, particularly as they pertain to the academic identity of the University. We believe that shaping is best initiated through a broad-ranging, big canvas discussion of our shared vision for Acadia as a beginning point.

### **Process:**

For the discussion, senators will be randomly assigned to a small group (5-6 members). We have invited members of the APC to act as scribes for each group. Groups will spend the first half of the discussion period addressing question 1. Then we will reassemble as a full body and hear 2-3 key points from each group. Groups will then meet again to discuss question 2, culminating in a similar reporting back following those discussions.

Keeping in mind the guiding question above, and drawing upon your view of the distinctiveness of Acadia, here are the group discussion questions:

- 1) What are the preeminent curriculum/academic program principles and priorities you want to see a future Acadia work toward and/or enact?
- 2) Given our current strengths and resources, and given the current university context provincially and federally, how would you imagine operationalizing these principles and priorities? What supports /obstacles might you expect?

Ad Hoc Committee Members: Glenys Gibson, Jeff Hennessy, Fallis Thompson, Peter Williams, A. Vibert.