

Senate Minutes

**October 16, 2020
MS Teams**

The Chair, M. Mkandawire, called the meeting to order at 1:35.

He began with the acknowledgement that Cape Breton University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

Present:

Amar Anwar, Catherine Arseneau, Stephen Augustine, Tanya Brann-Barrett, Debbie Brennick, David Dingwall, Mary Beth Doucette, Emma Drohan, David Gerbasi, Jim Gerrie, Terry Gibbs, Michael Hennick, Jasmine Hoover, Patrick Howard, George Karaphillis, Mary Keating, Janet Kuhnke, Geoff Lee-Dadswell, Hayley Langlois, Doug Lionais, Gordon MacInnis, Richard MacKinnon, Bernie MacLennan, Emily MacLeod, John MacMillan, Ryan Magee, Martin Mkandawire, Joe Parish, Andy Parnaby, Rick Pierrynowski, Leigh Potvin, Bill Robinson, Scott Rodney, Harsha Sai Bandari, Tom Joseph Scaria, Manini Sethi, Amrinder Singh, Ann Sylliboy, Michael Tanchak, Éric Thériault, Tom Urbaniak, Audrey Walsh, Richard Watuwa, Bilynda Whiting, John Mayich, Terry MacDonald

Regrets:

Pat Bates, Stephanie Gilbert, Makayla Townsend, Wendy Wadden

2. Consent Agenda – N/A

3. Matters to be Considered in Closed Session

It was moved by L. Potvin, seconded by M. Keating, to move into Closed Session for the purpose of conducting confidential business. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by M. Keating, seconded by A. Parnaby, to move to Open Session following the completion of confidential business. **Motion carried.**

4. Matters Forwarded for Information – N/A

5. Report of the President and Vice-President Academic (Provost)

5.1 Report of the President

President Dingwall reported that during October the University has begun collecting student fees and those in default have been notified. He updated Senate on the request to have five specific classrooms updated; this process has begun but some delays should be expected due to the immediate availability of the equipment. He also reported on scholarship funding and congratulated Andy Parnaby for his work on the virtual gift agreement with the McLachlan family which will now be house at CBU. With regard to Indigenous scholarships, he noted that CBU is in the final stages of an arrangement with the Johnson Scholarship Foundation. He advised that the Board of Governors' meets on October 23rd. He also suggested that the Senate Executive Committee form a group, that he would be please to meet with to discuss succession planning and professional development.

MB Doucette noted that the Bylaws Committee has been tasked with creating an ad-hoc committee and possible terms of reference for succession planning.

5.2 Report of the Vice President Academic (Provost)

R. MacKinnon reported that with the announcement that CBU will be largely online in January and hoping to have face-to-face in May, his office has been busy with those preparations. As a member of the MPHEC Commission and Quality Assurance committee he been attending these meetings and noted the improved timelines MPHEC has implemented. Proof of this improvement, is that recent submission from CBU that took just four to five weeks to be approved; which also speaks to the quality and completeness of the submission. MPHEC is also conducting a survey on the impacts of COVID-19 and he noted the results of these surveys will be on their website in early November.

6. Special Presentation and Take Note Debate

6.1 Academic Advising – John Mayich & Shannon Garnier

In a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. John Mayich and Ms. Shannon Garnier, provided Senators with information on the future of academic advising at CBU. He provided a brief overview and background information on current practices. He detailed the various recommendations to bridge the gaps that exist in the current model. With respect to the new system Ms. Garnier then provided highlights and improvements to the current process that the new system, CRM-Advise from Ellucian, will provide. With this new product, she detailed the benefits to students as follows:

To get the most out of the CRM-advise platform:

- A lead is needed for each school/program.
- Students should be assigned to advisors by program.
- Advisors become the central check-point for all academic concerns and help students navigate the many different student services available.
- Deadlines around acceptance and registration need to be set, so that tailored communication plans can be leveraged for specific groups of students – removing communication workload from advising & marketing/communications teams each semester.
- Ability to connect with Moodle – gradebook to link with supports for student.

Each advisor would be responsible for providing the following for their assigned program(s):

- Initial, first-year advising mandatory for all new students in their program for all 3 intakes.
- Communicating with school leads on: program updates, program capacity needs (in conjunction with advising team and manager), returning student advising plan for each academic year, midsemester returning student advising appointments, and student success intervention plans for at risk students (in conjunction with registrar's office).

In conclusion, J. Mayich highlighted the following steps on how Senate can help:

Standard Development

- Need an assigned Faculty lead from each school and program
- Ongoing support and staffing for CRM Advise – it is more than “Advising”
- Many resources/communication plans will require structure from schools to build

Questions for Consideration

- What is the Advising Standard and CBU’s adopted model going forward?
- What are consistent advising definitions across schools?
- How will First-Year Advising look without continued Enrolment Services academic advising support?

Take Note Debate

Prior to the beginning the debate, T. Urbaniak thanked those involved in the presentation and then provided ground rules for how the Take Note Debate will proceed and he set a time limit of 20 minutes. He also noted that the Bylaws Committee will be paying particular attention to the debates as they may be developing a mandate statement for a working group on advising.

With respect to how CBU has performed with academic advising in comparison to other institutions, Mr. Mayich responded that many were quite in envy of the amount of time spent on first year advising and it was noted an area that is certainly a missing piece for CBU, is a mid-way check in for returning students.

S. Rodney thanked J. Mayich and S. Garnier for the exciting presentation on a system that could provide so much needed guidance for students, especially for the paths they need to take and a warning grade system that would come directly from the system. He noted that at CBU students are not required to declare their major early and this could be problematic in subsequent years.

J. Hoover noted that she used Advise previously and that it worked well, but CBU would need additional advising staff for every student to be assigned to someone and that a course release may be needed for the faculty lead. J. Mayich responded these additional resources have been part of the ongoing conversation and that advising with regard to faculty are in keeping with the collective agreements.

G. Lee-Dadswell also thanked J. Mayich and S. Garnier for the presentation. With regard to early intervention, he noted that a few years back, an SST ad-hoc committee looked at how to effectively reengage faculty in this process and suggested that he and J. Mayich meet to discuss the findings from this committee. He also noted that he to, was excited with the possibility that faculty would easily be able to provide early intervention for students. He also suggested caution with how the system will interact with the Moodle Gradebook. S. Garnier responded that criteria can be set in the system to

address a wide variety of situations and that a key to have it work at maximum capacity would be to provide thorough training for all users. B. Robinson agreed that this new capability for CBU and its connecting with Moodle could generate false flags within the system.

T. Urbaniak asked G. Lee-Dadswell if any of the suggested follow up items from the presentation might fall under, or be of interest, to TLEC. G. Lee-Dadswell responded yes because they all deal with establishing practices that are related to faculty teaching and assessments. He suggested TLEC could look to provide some reasonable recommendations.

In response to D. Brennick's question on support from Enrolment Services, and M. Keating's question on what first year look like, J. Mayich responded that with some recent organizational changes in the Department, they have limited advising staff and their hope is that in conjunction with Senate, a strategy can be developed.

J. Gerrie commented on the integration with Moodle Gradebook, and how optional exercises would be handled with respect to differentiating them from mandatory assignments. He also commented on an issue that could arise with respect to academic freedoms when faculty might be required, or encouraged, to use pedagogical tools. S. Garnier responded that the presentation provides the maximum capabilities of the tool and where CBU could be if the tool were used in that way.

P. Howard suggested that a session on Moodle Gradebook, to get the most out of its functions, weighting, recording formative assessment versus summative etc. would be helpful, but it should be understood, that not all faculty will use it.

On the question from R. MacKinnon on the implementation and success of CRM-Advise in institutions in our region, R. Warren noted that no local institutions are currently using it, but that UPEI and Acadia are looking to implement the system. He noted that he will follow up with other Canadian universities and provide a list of those using the system.

With the speakers list complete, T. Urbaniak suggested, and MB Doucette agreed to add an item to the agenda of the Bylaws & Procedures Committee to provide a brief mandate statement for a Senate working group, with a time limit, to address the questions that were presented at the end of the presentation. The Executive Committee would then receive this report and assign tasks to the Senate committees by the next meeting of Senate. It was also agreed that the Executive Committee would have the authority to receive the report of the Bylaws Committee with a mandate statement and begin the process. It was further agreed that the representation of the committee would be broad and not limited to just Senators.

It was moved by M. Keating, seconded by M. Mkandawire, to allow the Executive Committee to start the process of developing the working group, its mandate and with a motion to confirm, be brought to the next meeting of Senate. It was suggested that J. Mayich, S. Garnier or A. MacDonald be included if the representation is broad. **Motion carried.**

7. Question Period – N/A

8. Approval of Minutes

8.1 September 18, 2020

It was moved by É. Thériault, seconded by S. Augustine, the approval of the minutes from the September 18, 2020 meeting. It was noted that during the President's report the "deficit" noted was actually "revenue shortfall". G. Lee-Dadswell referred to the conversation with respect to hiring delays and that it was not properly reflected. The long-standing issue was not fully represented and it was suggested that the minutes be edited to include "It was further noted that these problems with delays in hiring have been a longstanding issue, which has been made worse by the pandemic." **Motion carried as amended. Abstentions: 4**

9. Business Arising from the Minutes

In response to the amendment to the minutes with regard to delays in hiring, S. Rodney requested a reply in how the issue is being addressed. The Chair suggested this be added to the question period for the next meeting, to which S. Rodney agreed.

10. Report of the Executive Committee

D. Brennick reported that the Executive Committee met on October 2nd to set the agenda for this meeting. During the meeting the Committee also discussed the Fall online delivery of courses, and noted that they met with President Dingwall to discuss the trajectory of the winter term; decisions had not been finalized at that time. Succession planning was also discussed at length. It was also decided to have the presentation on advising received by Senate today. The Committee also discussed the graduation lists and the Volunteer Advantage Committee.

11. Students' Union Report

On behalf of the Student's Union A. Singh reported that the Union has been aiding 15 returning students in self-isolation and are prepared to help others as they return. A grad gown program has been set up to allow students to borrow gowns to take graduation photos. The food bank has been very active and the Union has been doing home deliveries to approximately 40-50 packages in the past week. He also met with VPA, R. MacKinnon, to discuss students being asked to purchase third party access to text books even if they have a hard copy of the book. The Union has also been offering various online events to engage students. The Union is very excited for the opening of Library, and thanked C. Arsenault for the tour she provided and noted they look forward to its opening.

12. Reports of Other Committees

(a) TLEC – It was moved by G. Lee-Dadswell, seconded by S. Rodney, **that the Policy on Online Exams be approved as presented.** G. Lee-Dadswell noted that privacy issues may present themselves and that permission from the students must be sought prior to the exam and that accommodations may be needed should the student refuse. He noted that the policy presented is one that is purposefully loose as it is not possible to address all of the potentials of how a faculty member

may conduct an online exam. The presented policy also tries to allow the faculty member to ensure privacy protection for the student is maintained if the exam is being monitored.

M. Tanchak expressed concern with privacy concerns and that too much ground has been ceded from a practical perspective. He suggested that the policy should state that students should expect that online exams will be monitored and then allow for the accommodations. He was also concerned with who would confirm the proctors. He agreed that the policy presented has its merits but has some implementation issues.

An extended discussion ensued on the confirmation of proctors, privacy issues, the actual operationalizing of the policy especially in large classes, an explicit statement that online exams will be proctored/monitored, the age of the student and how a faculty member is to know or obtain if the student is of legal age, that the proctoring be included in the course outline, how to proceed if the student is ill, and the legal challenges that CBU could expose themselves to and how to avoid such challenges. On the question of legal opinion that could be sought, R. MacKinnon noted that he will follow up with legal counsel and provide their feedback as soon as possible. He also suggested that consider the many concerns and issues raised, and the now request for legal counsel, that the item be tabled until this advice can be provided. **It was moved** by T. Urbaniak, seconded by M. Keating, **to defer consideration of the Policy on Online Exams** until the next Senate meeting and that legal advice be sought in the meantime. **Motion carried. Abstention(s): 1**

The Chair noted that the time allocated for the meeting had lapsed and that Senate must now agree to extend the meeting or defer all remaining items on the agenda to the next meeting. M. Keating requested that the meeting be extended to ensure the items of the Academic Committee be considered. **It was moved**, by M. Keating, seconded by S. Rodney, to extend the meeting to complete the business as presented on the agenda. After further discussion members fully agreed that the items could wait until the November meeting and the **motion was withdrawn to extend the meeting.**

14. Adjournment

With the time allotted for the meeting reached, all agenda items not address will be deferred to the next meeting and **it was moved** by T. Brann-Barrett to adjourn the meeting at 4:00pm. **Motion carried.**

**Debbie Brennick
Secretary to Senate**