

Senate Minutes

December 11, 2020
MS Teams

The Chair, M. Mkandawire, called the meeting to order at 1:34.

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, Courtney Degiobbi, Mary Beth Doucette, Terry Gibbs, Stephanie Gilbert, Michael Hennick, Jasmine Hoover, Patrick Howard, George Karaphillis, Mary Keating, Geoff Lee-Dadswell, Doug Lionais, Gordon MacInnis, Richard MacKinnon, Emily MacLeod, John MacMillan, Ryan Magee, Martin Mkandawire, Joe Parish, Andy Parnaby, Rick Pierrynowski, Bill Robinson, Scott Rodney, Tom Joseph Scaria, Manini Sethi, Amrinder Singh, Michael Tanchak, Éric Thériault, Tom Urbaniak, Wendy Wadden, Audrey Walsh, Bilynda Whiting, John Mayich, Terry MacDonald

Regrets:

David Dingwall, Emma Drohan, David Gerbasi, Jim Gerrie, Janet Kuhnke, Bernie MacLennan, Harsha Sai Bandari, Ann Sylliboy, Makayla Townsend

Before beginning the Chair noted that this is the last meeting for Board of Governors' representative Mr. Pat Bates as he is completing his second term on the Board. He thanked Mr. Bates for his many contributions to Senate and to Cape Breton University.

2. Consent Agenda

It was moved, by M. Keating, seconded by C. Arseneau, **to accept and approve the items of the consent agenda as listed below.**

2.1 Committee Reports:

a) Academic

- New course ENGI 2XXX: Modelling and Optimization.

- Changes to Minor Program Change BASE requirements in their Biology and Psychology Concentrations.
- Changes in the BSc Psychology Honours Thesis grade requirement.
- Change to numbering of the BBA Post Baccalaureate capstone course, 5800, to clarify which section is connected with which diploma.
- Change to the requirements for the French Concentration, and the minor wording changes (adding French to Core 4 and changing "Area Major" to "Multidisciplinary BA/BACS Major) to the Calendar language.
- Change to the requirements for the BA/BACS Major, Concentration, Minor/Academic Field, Multi-disciplinary BA/BACS Major, and BA/BACS Double Major in Mi'kmaq Studies.
- Change to the Folklore degree requirements for the BA/BACS Major, Concentration, Minor/Academic Field, Multi-disciplinary BA/BACS Major, and BA/BACS Double Major in Folklore. This is to remove a course that has been discontinued and add its replacement.

b) QA – Items for information only.

c) Bylaws – Items for information only.

d) TLEC– Items for information only.

e) Research – No report.

It was suggested that in future the new course proposals presented ought to have the School votes to ensure completeness, to which M. Keating replied this is being addressed with the development of a fillable PDF form.

Motion carried.

3. Matters to be Considered in Closed Session – N/A

4. Confidential Business – N/A

5. Matters Forwarded for Information – N/A

6. Special Presentation

6.1 Report of the Committee on Academic Advising & Take Note Debate

It was moved by G. Lee-Dadswell, seconded by D. Brennick, **to allow speaking privileges** to non-Senate members of the ad hoc committee; Mary Jane Morrison and Ayse Ersoy. **Motion carried.**

The Chair welcomed MJ Morrison and she referred to the report circulated with the meeting material. She detailed the members of the committee: Mary Jane Morrison – Chair, Tom Scaria, Todd Pettigrew, Ayse Ersoy, Geoffrey Lee-Dadswell, Holly MacDonald, and John Mayich, and the timeline the committee followed. She reviewed the recommendations suggested in the report as:

Regarding Implementation of CRM Advise

1. In the short term, all faculty must be given basic training/access to printouts in the use of CRM Advise, at least to the point where they can access student information which they need while engaged in their teaching responsibilities.
2. A set of programs (one per school) should be chosen as “Champions” for both the new model, and for the rollout of CRM Advise. Faculty who take a lead advising role in those programs will need to receive training on using the software, policies and procedures, contact points with Student Affairs, the Appreciative Advising model, etc.
3. The champion programs must develop their own communication strategies for ongoing advising, in consultation with Student Affairs.
4. A longer-term set of training materials need to be developed for faculty, staff and students. In the case of students this might be integrated into the Start Smart program.
5. Decisions need to be made about early alert policies and procedures.
 - a. What sorts of early alerts should be available?
 - b. What is the result of each type of early alert?
 - c. Faculty need to be trained in the early alert system. Early after implementation faculty will likely need reminders to use the system, to improve uptake of the program.
 - d. If automated early alerts are to be generated, using integration with moodle, careful thought will need to be given to avoid generating false alarms, etc. Faculty will need training in the use of the moodle gradebook as part of this.

Regarding Student Affairs – Advising/Academic Success Coaching

1. With the removal of Enrolment Services professionals from advising, Student Affairs is currently under resourced, and cannot meet commitments that have been expected of it in the past.
2. Staff in Student Affairs are the true professionals with regards to advising, and have more training in this area than faculty have, or could reasonably have. So even if an increased part of the role of advising falls to faculty, there will be a continued need for staff in Student Affairs who are dedicated to advising.
3. The need to improve training for faculty will create an additional load on staff at Student Affairs which cannot currently be met.

Regarding Faculty Roles in Advising

1. Notice to PP&T about advising as a component of service work.
2. Assignment of hours – advising is to become a year-round responsibility for faculty who are involved in it, and at the same time many faculty are also teaching over the summer. In the past there was no conflict between advising and other responsibilities such as office hours because they happened at different times of year. This is no longer the case and must be recognized in resource planning, recognition of faculty work, etc.
 - a. Decisions need to be made about how many students should be designated to each faculty member, and what the time expectations are for faculty. This will involve detailed human resource planning and will be contingent on careful thought about the desired standard of advising.
 - b. The time expectations for faculty should be set in recognition that there is a desire to maintain a personal touch in the student experience at CBU. If insufficient time is allocated then this is likely to impact retention, recruitment, and reputation.
3. Changes to expectations around advising by faculty will almost certainly require changes to the collective agreements.
4. If some faculty are going to take on a larger role advising then this must be recognized somehow. There are a number of possibilities:
 - a. Make it an explicitly recognized part of service work so that faculty who are designated as program leads have a reduced expectation to be involved in other service work.
 - b. Give course releases or stipends.
5. Faculty who are heavily involved in advising should be expected to engage in regular training. Training opportunities should be created which can be completed on demand, such as moodle courses.

Following the presentation, T. Urbaniak thanked members of the Committee for their exceptional work in such a compressed timeline. He then detailed the process for the Take Note Debate and posed the following questions for Senators to consider in response to the report: What is unclear? What is good? What is missing? What is next? He also noted that during Senate's Executive Committee meeting they requested some initial reactions from the Vice President Academic and the Provost Group. R. MacKinnon responded that the Provost Group reviewed the report and the recommendations during their recent meeting. They felt that they would need more time to fully understand any implications and implementations of the recommendations and that they looked forward to learning more from the fulsome discussion today.

S. Rodney strongly agreed with the importance of academic advising and that some programs may have higher numbers than others, but he noted that he is not in favor of course relief for advising unless it was one faculty member responsible for the entire Department. He also noted that he was uncomfortable with the Moodle gradebook sending notifications or alerts to students and that official notices or letters ought to come from Registrar's office. With regard

to the student feedback survey, he suggested that the number of participants seem quite low and the results may not be fully representative and also suggested that senior students, unless somehow required, should not be advising first-year students. For clarification, J. Mayich noted there were over 300 respondents.

MJ. Morrison agreed that the variance of advising from program to program can be quite significant, however those that experience an extraordinary level of advising it is believed that some sort of recognition ought to be considered; comments that were echoed by G. Lee-Dadswell. In reply to concerns expressed with notifications being sent from Moodle, she noted that the expectation is not that the faculty member sent these notices rather they would indeed be official communications from the Registrar's Office or Student Affairs. G. Lee-Dadswell also noted that the capabilities of CRM would eliminate the need for manual entering of information but agreed, that the full use of Moodle, or lack thereof, could create problems. He also suggested that point two under Regarding Student Affairs – Advising/Academic Success Coaching might need more detail, as faculty members are far better suited to advising with regard to academic success.

Referring to page 22 of the report, M. Tanchak questioned the faculty involvement being after those indicated on the chart, to which MJ Morrison responded that this chart is referring to students without a transfer credit and that they would be set up with a first-year advisor and then given to a degree program coordinator (which would be determined by the School and this could be a faculty member or an experienced staff member).

T. Gibbs requested more information on the champion program and if the intent is to give the responsibility of advising to the schools rather than student affairs. She also requested more detail on the expectations for faculty in their use of Moodle. MJ Morrison responded that during their deliberations, the Committee discussed those faculty members that have a passion for advising and thought it might be an idea to have these individuals facilitate advising within the schools. J. Mayich added that the idea of program champions was one that would have individuals identified who would assist through the implementation process of CRM to ensure its roll-out is effective and efficient. In response to the expectations for the use of Moodle, it was noted that this is not fully understood at this point and could vary from program to program.

On J. Parish's question of what information students will see in CRM with regard to programs that are available and their descriptions, J. Mayich responded that automated messages will be sent but that the direct face-to-face interactions will most certainly remain important and necessary.

S. Rodney suggested that students be required to declare their degree of study after their first year, which of course could be changed, but changing to this process would allow for a more productive and meaningful advising process. MJ Morrison responded that this was not considered by the Committee as it stands outside the set Terms of Reference.

T. Urbaniak acknowledge and thanked the Committee for their work on the report and **it was moved** by M. Keating, seconded by S. Rodney, **to receive the report of the Committee on**

Academic Advising. Motion carried.

It was moved, by G. Lee-Dadswell, seconded by É. Thériault, **to refer the report to Senate’s Executive Committee, who would then take the notes from this debate and the report, and delegate any implications to the standing committees, especially on any item that is time sensitive. Motion carried.** There were no objections that a progress update on the Senate floor, facilitated by the Executive Committee, be provided in two or three months.

7. Report of the President & Vice-President Academic (Provost)

7.1 Report of the President

President Dingwall sent his sincere regrets for not being able to attend the meeting today, and R. MacKinnon provided a report on his behalf. President Dingwall has met with numerous community groups and individuals with respect to the Centre for Discover & Innovation (CDI) and that more than 300 letters of support have been sent to elected officials and over 950 individuals have signed the online petition (<https://innovateourfuture.ca/support/>). As noted during the last meeting of Senate, the classroom updates continue with all expected to be completed by May 2021. Succession planning continues to prepare for expected retirements in the coming years. He also passed on congratulations to the three nominees for the Discovery Centre’s Science and Technology awards: Corrine McIsaac (Innovation), Dr. Peter MacIntyre (Professional of Distinction), and Chantelle Cormier (Science Champion – 2020 recipient).

7.2 Report of the Vice-President Academic (Provost)

R. MacKinnon reported that he has been meeting with representatives from the Canadian Coast Guard College with regard to enhancing their relationship and collaboration with CBU. As a member of MPHECs Commission and QA Committee, he meets regularly with them and noted a survey that was circulated with respect to how maritime universities are responding to the COVID-19 situation; the results will be available on their website once complete. He noted that CBU has recently signed an MOU, which was led by Dean Parnaby, with the Cape Breton Pipeband. In a recent meeting with LAE, preliminary discussion began with regard to micro-credentials.

On the question with regard to micro-credentials and CBU’s approach, R. MacKinnon responded these discussions are in their infancy and that competencies, quality assurance and all other aspects are still being explored.

On the question of the CDI’s environmental sustainability is being considered and if emphasis is being place on prioritizing local contractors, suppliers and business when entering phase, G. MacInnis responded that the current design is very energy efficient and that, as has been the case with most of the work on the CBU campus, the CDI will be locally sourced as much as possible.

8. Question Period – N/A

9. Approval of Minutes

9.1 It was moved by M. Keating, seconded by C. Arseneau, **the approval of the confidential and regular meeting minutes from the November 20, 2020 meeting. Motion carried. Abstentions: 1**

10. Business Arising from the Minutes

{Original Text}

With regard to 7.1 and the noted suggestion that efforts should be made to avoid late hires, S. Rodney requested information on any actions that have been or will be taken to address this issue. G. MacInnis noted that discussions have taken place with regard to processes and planning but that a resolution has not yet been determined. S. Rodney further suggested that issues with the hiring practices, outside those created by COVID-19, has created much anxiety and frustrations for the Department Chairs of SST and that the Dean should have a fulsome discussion with them to attempt to find a way forward.

{Revision after review}

With regard to 7.1 and the noted suggestion that efforts should be made to avoid late hires, S. Rodney requested information on any actions and policies and that have been, or will be, undertaken to address this long-standing issue as expressed by Chairs of SST. G. MacInnis agreed and noted that discussions have taken place with regard to process and planning but that a resolution has not yet been determined and further indicated that investigations into systemic hiring issues is needed. S. Rodney further suggested that issues with hiring practices, outside those created by COVID-19, has created much anxiety and frustrations for the Department Chairs of SST and that the Dean should have a fulsome discussion with them to identify/develop policy to address these issues. M. Keating echoed the concerns and suggested that the Enrolment Management Plan should be able to resolve most of these issues through policy.

11. Report of the Executive Committee

D. Brennick reported that the Executive Committee met on December 4th to set the agenda for this Senate meeting. The Committee reviewed the report presented today from the Academic Advising Committee and agreed to have the report presented today. The report of the Volunteer Advantage Program was also received and will be placed on the agenda for the January meeting. The Committee also discussed the Decision Matrix and the possible need to make it a more readable and understandable document.

12. Students' Union Report

Students' Union President, A. Singh reported that the Union has been working closely with CBU to support students who living off-campus. The Union has been actively engaging with stakeholders with respect to the Sydney Airport operations. During a meeting with Mayor MacDougall the Union provided their intentions for community engagement. The food bank is undertaking new initiative of delivering Christmas bags to over 70 students. He referred to Government's announcement of a \$750 one-time grant for university student but unfortunately that it is not being made available to international students; during an upcoming meeting the Union plans to raise this concern.

13. Reports of Other Committees

(a) Planning & Review – S. Gilbert reported that the Committee is in the process of preparing the Pre-Budget Report and that with the many changes from last year to this, the Committee has decided to garner input from Senate on what they see might be the key academic priorities. On the request for input she welcomed comments and suggestion from the floor but also encouraged members to email her with their thoughts. It was noted that this process is not like any other, with the many unknowns being experienced and especially taking in to account things that may no longer be place at the end of the fiscal year. G. MacInnis added that enrolment is one of the top unknowns and no modeling can be used, as CBU is truly in a situation never experienced in its history. He also noted that Government grant revenues, nine months in to the fiscal year, is also another unknow as well as the impact of the recent announcement by Air Canada.

T. Urbaniak suggested that Senators join the next meeting of the Planning and Review committee to provide any input or feedback to the Committee. S. Gilbert accepted this suggestion and indicated that a meeting invite would be sent for anyone who could attend. She welcomed emails suggestions for anyone unable to attend.

14. Board of Governors' Report

S. Rodney reported that the Board of Governors' were provided with updates on the Back to Campus planning from Dr. Brann-Barrett, a presentation on the CDI and a motion was passed to provide an extension of terms for Board members. He noted that a governance issue is being dealt with and details were provided on the University investments. He also noted that President Dingwall is in discussion with NS Power with regard to the wind farm outputs. In addition to Mr. Pat Bates, he noted that Mr. Steve Parsons also concluded his term with the Board.

15. Adjournment

Prior to adjournment, all Senators were wished a very safe, restful and happy holiday season. There being no further business, **it was moved** by G. Karaphillis to **adjourn the meeting** at 3:52pm.

Debbie Brennick
Secretary to Senate