

Senate Minutes

**November 19, 2021
MS Teams**

The Chair, T. Urbaniak, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

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:

Faustina Amoako, Catherine Arseneau, Sahand Ashtab, Carol Beaton, Tanya Brann-Barrett, Mark Campbell, Logan Collins, David Dingwall, Mary Beth Doucette, Ayse Ersoy, Terry Gibbs, Ava Graham, Michael Henick, Jasmine Hoover, Patrick Howard, Katherine Jones, George Karaphillis, Mary Keating, Janet Kuhnke, Doug Lionais, Jason Loxton, Gordon MacInnis, Richard MacKinnon, Marjorie McGillivray, Martin Mkandawire, Mandy Nguyen, Madlyn O'Brien, Marcia Ostashewski, Joe Parish, Rick Pierrynowski, Michelle Prendergast, Mohammed Faraaz Rahman, Scott Rodney, Karen Rowe, Laurianne Sylvester, Éric Thériault, Tom Urbaniak, Wendy Wadden, Audrey Walsh, Lacie White, Bilynda Whiting, John Mayich, Terry MacDonald

Regrets:

Stephen Augustine, Bettina Callary, Lloyd Chartrand, Simon Chen, Bernie MacLennan, John MacMillan, Andy Parnaby, Ann Sylliboy

2. Consent Agenda – N/A

3. Confidential Business – N/A

4. Reports and Items for Information

4.1 President

President Dingwall reported that work continues on how best to model microcredentials at CBU, he congratulated Jasmin Alam on her appointment as the Academic Director for the Centre of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, that work on the multi-year strategic enrolment plan continues and from that discussions have taken place with Cineplex to utilize their facilities for

offerings starting in January. He noted that representatives from Summa Strategies were on campus in late October to prepare executive members for government relation initiatives and is hoping to have a second session in early 2022. He suggested that if any Senator is interested in building their skills as it relates to government relations, he would open to hearing from them.

On the question of the enrolment plan, President Dingwall responded that the size of programs is being discussed as is the assessment of resources needed to offer programs.

4.2 Vice President Academic

R. MacKinnon provided an updated on the activities of the Vice President Academic's activities including the Board of Governors met on October 22nd, he provided opening remarks at the Health Research Conference, the SSOB Dean search has begun, he attended the Summa session President Dingwall noted, several MPHEC meetings have taken place, and he attended the Black Lives Matters Summit in Halifax.

On the question of the reference to classroom offerings at the Cineplex, R. MacKinnon responded that CBU is preparing for a potential influx of enrolment for January. With many international students still having issues obtaining their study VISAs, it is unknown if they will indeed be on campus. In the event they are, this initiative will be focused mainly on offerings in the Shannon School of Business and more detail will be circulated to the University community as it becomes available.

4.3 Student's Union

L. Collins reported that they restructured the role of the Women's Centre Coordinator and now have two individuals in this role. In the coming week the Union will be hosting an event on Indigenous Perspectives on Environmental Sustainability and that the week is also advocacy week for Student's Nova Scotia. During this time the CBU SU will be advocating for MSI coverage for international students and OER. With regard to OER he reported that in the first round of the grant application, eight were received for a total of \$33, 000 and hopes the OER Grant Program will be renewed because of the substantial savings for students.

4.4 Executive Committee

A. Walsh reported that the Executive Committee met on November 5th to set the agenda for this Senate meeting. The Committee made some moderate changes to the agenda in hopes to create a smoother flow of reports. A Take Note Debate on the graduation experience was determined for today's meeting and Planning & Review will present on the pre-budget in December. The Committee will also be reaching out to Dr. Marie Battiste to have a special presentation to Senate on Indigenizing the Academy and possibly adding this item as a regular reporting item.

4.5 Changes to the Graduation List

B. Whiting referred to the memorandum circulated in advance of the meeting which detailed all those that were moved from conditionally approved to approved.

5. Take Note Debate: Graduation Processes & Experience - Bilynda Whiting

In a PowerPoint presentation, B. Whiting provided members with an overview of the current practise as it relates to Convocation at CBU. She noted that current process has its challenges with very tight timelines for the processing of parchments after Senate's approval and the many competing institutional priorities. She also detailed the presentation of the graduation list at Senate and suggested how this might be streamlined. She noted a need to change the process would be supported by the growth in enrolment, three intakes a year, changes in student demographic, a way to enhance the student experience, increased quality assurance on graduation audits, and more manageable timelines. She detailed the following changes that might be considered:

Spring

- Final Grades Due Date: Change April 25 to the 27
- Final Grades Accessible: Change from April 27 to the 29
- Senate Date: Move to the Second Monday in May
- Graduation List Posted the following Day
- President's Dinner: Wednesday Prior to Long Weekend
- Convocation Days: Thursday/Friday prior to Long Weekend

Fall

- No Changes to Senate Date
- Move Convocation to the First Friday in November (currently first Saturday)
- Times of and number of events would be determined in September

During Senate

- Graduation List is sent to Senate in advance (current practice)
- University Registrar to Present full numbers by Academic School not by program

In conclusion she thanked Senate for their time today and welcomed any comments, questions or feedback.

J. Loxton noted that he has previously raised the issue of short turn around for grades and that a 48-hour turn around is near impossible for large class and creates unfair time pressure. He noted that he supports these dates based but expressed concern about extra costs to students if they need to stay longer or return. B. Whiting responded that they will be imitating a student survey to ensure they have student input on the suggested changes.

J. Parish suggested the convocation date be moved to June to which B. Whiting replied this was considered but as previously noted this may cause undue hardship to students but it is an option still being considered.

M. O'Brien questioned that if a change is introduced to when grades are published, would it be possible to give priority to graduating students, to which B. Whiting noted this has been a topic that has been discussed and certainly on that will be further explored.

É. Thériault noted that the Department of Psychology deals with an additional issue when ceremonies are split as these graduates come from both the School of Arts and Social Sciences and the School of Science and Technology and the split can cause some difficulties for students, such as not graduating with their peers, colleagues and friends. B. Whiting was thankful for this input and will add this to the discussions.

S. Rodney was also in support of the later dates but questioned that if a student were to need proof of graduation in advance of the actual convocation if the dates were moved, if there is there a letter that could be produced if the student is clear to graduate. B. Whiting responded that yes indeed there is such a letter of completion for this situation.

Senators will be provided with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation and were requested to share with their Schools requesting any feedback/suggestions be shared.

6. Question Period – N/A

7. Approval of Minutes - October 15, 2021 (Confidential & Regular)

It was moved by C. Arseneau, seconded by D. Lionais, the **approval of the minutes of the confidential and regular session of the October 15, 2021. Motion carried.**

Abstentions: 1

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

8.1 Notice of Motion: It was moved by S. Rodney, seconded by M. Keating, that administration is requested to put forward a plan for faculty and staff hiring procedures and also to update the Senate regularly on process and development of such procedures.

S. Rodney reiterated that, despite this issue being brought up during his time on Senate, he believes the current hiring practices for faculty, staff and ICA's has not improved. He noted that many discussions have taken place at Senate, department and School meeting and that G. MacInnis has acknowledged that issues do exist and to that end requested that administration provide improvements to the best practices, procedures and planning as it relates to hiring at CBU. He also noted that starting in January he will be on sabbatical but would welcome the opportunity to join Senate if the topic is being discussed.

G. MacInnis thanked Senate for the opportunity to provide detail on the hiring plan. In a PowerPoint presentation, he provided the current budget practice with respect to hiring proposals. He expressed one of the main issues in this process is of course, enrolment and the reality of a continued increase of international enrolment has created a further volatility in the planning process. To address this, the plan is to realign budget processing by bringing the budget forward in March with the draft budget in complete form by February. This will bring the hiring process ahead by two months. He noted that this, as S. Rodney suggested, is not

going to fully address the issues but that a Strategic Enrolment Plan is being developed. This Plan will be looking at market demand, policy decisions, consultation with Schools and Departments, quality assurance and considerations for collective agreement parameters. Once complete this document would feed in the financial planning process. He also noted that this plan should also greatly decrease the need for ICAs.

M. Keating thanked G. MacInnis for the presentation and noted that an enrolment plan should help address the hiring issues. She suggested the model of posting faculty positions in advance of the budget noting that it is pending budget approval ought to be considered. This would allow the process to begin at the same time as most other universities and give CBU equal opportunity at quality candidates. She also suggested that planned growth is another area that should be considered.

President Dingwall noted that CBU has never had an enrolment plan and that the creation of one, along with the Academic Plan, will enhance the budget process and in his view, result in more permanent staff and faculty and less contracted employees and ICAs.

J. Loxton provided an example of why he strongly supports the motion especially because ICA and overload contracts, for labs that were full, were not received until late August and early September.

S. Rodney was thankful for the presentation but noted that his concern is not only with the current budget process but rather how faculty are hired at CBU. He suggested that items such as deadlines for contract development, contract signing and submissions are missing from the process. He also provided examples of employees not signing contracts until the end of the term. He suggested that two-year projective budgeting would greatly assist in this process and is encouraged, if done correctly, with the enrolment plan under development.

M Keating agreed that the enrolment plan is well overdue and glad to see it as part of the Strategic Plan. She suggested that consistency with regard to hiring also needs to be addressed and that any request for a hire should also be required to show how it will feed in to the Academic Plan.

G. MacInnis shared the concerns expressed with regard to the impacts of contract signing and the need to improve these processes. He also noted that he is encouraged by the enrolment planning process and the improvements that will result from its implementation once complete.

S. Rodney thanked Senators for acknowledging the importance of the issue and the thoughtful debate. With no further comments or questions, **motion carried.**

8.2 Working Group on Structure and Succession

M. Mkandawire reported that the Committee has been meeting bi-weekly and thanked Senate for extending the deadline for their submission. The Committee will be attending School meetings for feedback and will add these comments in to the report. He also noted that the preliminary report will be circulated to Senators and requested that it be brought to the Departments and Schools.

9. Reports of Other Committees of Senate

i) Academic

M. Keating referred to the material circulated with the meeting material. She noted that the committee is working on two policies; the Appeals Policy and the Academic Performance Policy.

ii) Planning & Review

R. MacKinnon reported that the Committee has met several times and elected Co-Chairs, J. MacMillan and K. Oakes. They have begun their work on the pre-budget report and are planning a Take Note Debate for the December meeting of Senate.

iii) Bylaws – No report.

iv) Research

É. Thériault noted in the Teams chat that the Committee is working on updating both the Policy on Commercialization and Intellectual Property, and the Policy on Research Centers and Institutes.

v) QA

K. Jones noted in the Teams chat that the Committee continues to work on the Graduate Attributes, CTL received their review on their self study, and are in the preliminary stages of establishing the virtual site.

vi) TLEC – No report.

10. Board of Governors' Report

Due to the short notice of the request to provide this update, S. Rodney noted that the Board of Governors met on October 22nd where members were provided with financial statements which reflect positive cash position and they were also presented with the Capital Projects updates Senate received during the October meeting. He suggested he could give a more fulsome update during the December meeting.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, **it was moved** C. Arseneau, seconded by M. Mkandawire, to adjourn the meeting at 4:05. **Motion carried.**

Jasmine Hoover
Secretary to Senate