Senate

Minutes

**January 19, 2024**

**CE339**

The Chair, C. Kreber, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

**1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum and Land Acknowledgement**

The Chair advised that the quorum has been met and began with the Land Acknowledgement.

**Present:**

Catherine Arseneau, Tammy Bernasky, Melissa Bishop, Colton Burke Tanya Brann-Barrett, Martin Chandler, Sahilpreet Singh Chatha Paula Condon, Mary Beth Doucette, Phillip Eappen, Kylie Ewing, Harmanjot Singh Ghuman, Virginia Gunn, Jan Hancock Michael Henick, Samantha Hodder, Carrie Karsgaard, Harkanwal Kaur, Karen Kennedy, Carolin Kreber, Janet Kuhnke, Kimberley Lamarche, Tracy Lillington, Doug Lionais, Jason Loxton, Ellyn Lyle, Gordon MacInnis Stephanie MacQuarrie, John Nadeau, Rod Nicholls, Felix Odartey-Wellington, Andy Parnaby, Michelle Prendergast, Erin Robertson, Nancy Spina, Laurianne Sylvester, Éric Thériault, Jamie Tunnicliff Viviana Paz Contreras Venegas, Bilynda Whiting, Terry MacDonald, John Mayich

**Regrets:**

Hamid Andishan, Sahand Ashtab, Danielle Boudreau, Sean Campbell, David Dingwall, Ayse Ersoy, Hannah Lewis, Brandi Jean Lind, Gideon Otoibhi, Folorunsho Oduloye, Joe Parish, Karen Rowe, Juveriya Samreen

The Chair reminded Senators that Senate is looking for a new chair of TLEC. The current chair, Jason Loxton, has provided much-valued leadership on this committee for the past few years but new responsibilities do not allow him to continue in this role and it needs to be filled ASAP. She asked those who would like to come forward to take on this important role or would like to recommend another faculty member for this role, to contact her and Éric Thériault to let them know. The person does not yet need to be a Senator. Deans may wish to share this message with their faculty.

**2. Consent Agenda**

**2.1** Approval of confidential minutes from December 15, 2023

**It was moved** by C. Arseneau, seconded by E. Lyle, to approve the Consent Agenda.

**Motion Carried.** (1 abstention)

**3. Reports and Items for Information**

**3.1 President N/A**

**3.2 Vice President Academic and Provost**

R. Nicholls provided updates on the following:

* The winter enrollment update is slightly under 9000 students which includes 890 new students. Deans are now regularly monitoring enrolment numbers in their programs to ensure SEM alignment. Efforts to understand retention challenges and provide more student success opportunities will continue this semester.
* Along with the President, he attended a Strategic Plan Renewal consultation with Unama’ki College and then the Library to discuss strategic direction.
* Over the last week, himself and Andy Parnaby, vice-Provost, have been reviewing and looking at ways of enhancing existing programs. They have started to meet with individual school Deans to get a specific sense of ideas that are bubbling up within schools and to assess how those ideas, should they to fruition, fit into CBU’s overall academic ecosystem.
* He strongly encouraged to have SEM groups within all schools.
* He met with the Senate Parliamentarian on microcredentials and had a very productive discussion on the need to define policies and procedures, and also possible models consistent with other universities whereby Senate and microcredential (and other extended learning) initiatives can be harmonized.
* CBU does not have an Endowed Chair Policy. He will be meeting with Development and University Counsel in the development of a policy before filling those chairs.
* CTL is hosting a Scholarship of Teaching & Learning on Campus Practice 4 session series again this semester. Participants will brainstorm, workshop and develop a SoTL project with guidance provided by Carolin Kreber. It will start next Thursday during collaborative time. Limited spots are available.
* Two weeks later ORGS and CTL are collaborating to host a panel discussion on “Artificial Intelligence: Balancing Invention and Prevention.” This event will feature CBU faculty from various academic schools, with Andy Parnaby as the panel moderator. This is something you’ll need to RSVP.

In response to questions, on the future of the Bras ’d Or Institute and the potential Caps on enrollment by the Federal government. R. Nicholls advised that the discussion on the Bras ’d Or Institute will be brought to the Provost Group for discussion within the next month or so. He reiterated that there will have the service component and the research component. In regards to the enrollment CAP, CBU is working within the trusted intuition policy and the President is working with the provincial and federal government on the issue.

The Vice President of finance advised that the Council of Nova Scotia university presidents did meet with the deputy minister in regards to the Enrolment Cap issue. He explained that not all the details are known but that they are looking at this very carefully.

When asked to share the May and September enrolment numbers, it was advised by the Vice President of finance that there are roughly 8300 students enrolled for the 2024/25 year, which is down as part of the strategy to effectively manage decline over the next few years.

**3.3 Unama'ki College**

L. Sylvester provided updates on the following:

**Community Engagement Lead** - Ann Denny is now fully retired after 26 years. Interviews for her position (Community Engagement Lead) will begin next week (January 22- 26).

**Strategic Plan (UC)updates/presentation** - On January 8, Unama’ki College presented to the President, some highlights and work on the strategic plan. For information purposes, the document was forwarded to Senators via email.

**L’nu Education Council -** One of the goals for this year is to re-establish the former Advisory Committee for Unama’ki College. The goal is to engage community members who represent the 7 districts of Mi’kma’ki.

**L’nu Nursing Initiative -** Working collaboratively with CBU Indigenous Health Chair, Tajikemik, Dept of Advanced Ed, and the NS Chair in Indigenous Health Nursing on an **L’nu Nursing Initiative**. This initiative intends to strengthen L’nu Nursing Education across NS by prioritizing student success through sharing best practices across all sites, taking a student-first approach.

The committee is currently gathering feedback from the Schools of Nursing across the province and buy in to the initiative. The province of NS has provided funding for 2023/2024.

**Wikuom**- The wikuom located at the front of the university has been dismantled with plans to rebuild in the spring. Students will collaborate with the Kisiku on Campus/Knowledge Holder in the new structure. The wikuom will be used for cultural learning and ceremonial purposes.

**Elders’ Tea**- To start of the new year, UC held an Elders’ team for students and staff.

**Talking Circle**- As a tool to support students, the first Talking Circle was held yesterday for students. Both Kisiku’k (Lawrence and Shirley) took part with Chris Bourque, counselling therapist.

**Student orientation-** An orientation at UC was held and 10 more students were registered. This activity is one of the strategies for increasing student enrolment for Indigenous students.

**L’nu Health and Science Advantage Program-** UC is collaborating with CBU’s Dean of Science & Technology, Dal and Memorial on a 5-year pilot program to promote science in Indigenous students and how it fits with the LHSAP. They are looking at a conference for grades 9-12 to take place in the summer to jump-start the LHSAP that will continue through the 2024 school year.

**3.4 Students' Union**

S. Sahilpreet Singh Chatha presented the Students’ Union Report highlighted the following:

**Past/Ongoing Events/Projects**

Since the last senate meeting, the team at CBUSU has been working relentlessly on behalf of CBU students.

**Centre Updates**

Virtually all of our centres have re-invented the wheel with regard to events on campus. The women’s centre would be organising and working on a consent week for our students. Multi cultural 4321

**Welcome Week Events:**

Since we welcomed a new cohort of students, the Students Union organised some events, such as the pre-game social, the Taylor Swift experience, poetry night, and the SU party welcome back bash. Turban Day, Soulvaria Virtual Reality I would like to thank our VP of Promotions, her team, and the Centres for putting up these events.

**Food Bank:**

The CBUSU food bank has continued to see increased usage over the last months, and just in January, the food bank received a check for $15,290.00, which was great work put together with the student union general manager. Alex MacNeil and the food bank outreach coordinator, Destiny Tobin, and a very special thanks go to Director, Student Affairs, John Mayich, for reaching out with guidance and connecting with the student union.

**Academic Appeals Update:**

The final week following our break proved to be exceptionally busy with assisting students with grade appeals and navigating course-related challenges. There have been over 30 emails addressed from students on these matters, diligently addressing their concerns and providing appropriate guidance to ensure a fair resolution.

**Students Nova Scotia Update:**

Reflecting on the conclusion of the last semester, G. Otoibhi collaborated with the committee on significant projects for our organization.

Three years after Students Nova Scotia's support for the Atlantic OER pilot launch, government investment has been confirmed in one-time grants and OER funding for postsecondary affordability. So nearly 12,000 students, residents of Nova Scotia will be getting a grant of $1,350 for to invest into stuff books and their academics.

The Students Union is still investigating with the government for 2 years MSI for international students

**Graduate Scholarship Program** - CBU has not been on the list for any allocations of money for the graduate scholarships. They want to work with the academic chairs to find out how can this be addressed.

**Upcoming Events / Projects**

**Cultural Fest Update: Gideon is working on this and his team**

Gideon has been actively engaged in various initiatives to enhance our upcoming cultural festival. The committee is making progress in planning and working collaboratively to ensure a well-coordinated event.

**CBUSU Town Hall:**

Planning to have their town hall by the end of January to engage with CBU students.

**3.5 Board of Governors N/A**

**3.6 Executive Committee**

É. Thériault provided an update from the Executive Committee.

* The Senate Executive Committee convened on January 15th to establish the agenda for the current Senate meeting.
* An update was received from the Advising sub-committee of the Senate-SEM committee, which included a list of recommendations on advising. The update also encompassed details on the extent of consultation undertaken to formulate these recommendations. It was agreed that E. Robertson would present these recommendations to the Senate for information and discussion at today’s meeting.
* The Executive was requested to ask Allison Boutilier, Chief Information Officer, to provide an update on the CBU network transformation process and issues related to Moodle.
* The Executive also suggested that the interim Vice-President Academic should include updates on Microcredentials in their report. This led to a broader discussion about the role of the Senate and the increasing necessity for the Senate’s integration within various university committees. A subsequent discussion was held about the potential need to review the terms of references of the Senate committees.
* Updates were presented by the various committees.
* The next meeting of the Senate Executive is scheduled for February 2nd.
* A lab instructor was found and added to the Attendance Committee.

**It was moved by** É. Thériault, seconded. D. Lionais, to approve the 2nd lab instructor for the Attendance Ad hoc Committee. **Motion Carried.**

1. **Special Presentation: Senate SEM Committee ‘s Recommendations on Advising: 55:36**

E. Robertson provided an update from the Senate SEM Committee working group on student advising, as outlined in the Senate meeting package. She advised that the recommendations are brought to Senate for information and discussion at this stage, and further discussions will take place in departments and schools.

She began by identifying the 3 actions from the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan that are related to student advising.

**SEM Action:** Design practices to help make faculty advising of students more efficient, effective, and user friendly

**SEM Action:** Provide access to mandatory first-year advising\* for students no later than 2 weeks after the release of the timetable, and ensure transfer students receive advising from faculty no later than 2 (two) weeks after transfer credits have been assessed

**SEM Action:** Ensure first-year students\* can register for courses at least 6 (six) months prior to the start of fall term and that returning students can register for the next academic year prior to the end of the previous winter term

E. Robertson continued the presentation and highlighted the following:

* The Committee focused on program advising of students in their second year and higher – advising that is carried out by faculty members. In the recommendation file that was sent, the word “faculty” comes up many times. This refers to anyone from the two academic unions who is currently involved in advising.
* The first-year advising centre carries out advising of first-year students and this is special and distinct from upper-level advising. The director of Student Affairs is currently performing an overview of first-year advising in relation to the SEM actions.
* The group collected data from two sources. The SEM Committee interviewed department chairs from all schools and Gideon led a focus group with students from different disciplines. We aimed to understand the current practices for student advising and identify strengths and challenges. To understand how these may change when implementing the SEM actions noted earlier.
* With respect to input from department chairs, there were some similar patterns across departments but there were unique practices, strengths, and challenges as well. Many of the student comments complement the faculty input. The student's data indicates they want to be advised by their instructors – the people who teach them.
* In writing up these recommendations the committee attempted to provide some general guidance on how to proceed while realizing that each department should have its own discussion with faculty members. The Provost Group has these recommendations now and they can be circulated to departments through the Deans’ offices.
* With respect to how to prepare for the earlier release of the timetable and earlier two broad themes emerged across the recommendations. One involves system level changes and organizational flow. A second involves the role of faculty members and other employees at the university and how to make advising more efficient and effective.
* Recommendation 12 makes reference to a ‘regular advising period from May to early September” – this was based on the data received from the majority of the chairs on when faculty members in their departments structured appointments with sign-up times in CRM advise. We acknowledge there are departments that have a different structure in place for their programs. Additional advising takes place throughout the entire year across all departments.
* With an earlier release of the timetable and earlier registration students will need advising earlier on compared to previous years. There is potential to use some of the winter term faculty office hours to facilitate this in a timely manner.
* Our recommendations are academic. These are presented as an item of information and discussion – the committee does not have the authority to carry out these recommendations, that lies within the jurisdiction of the Provost Group. The committee have been discussing the recommendations with the SEM Provost Group – and the Provost is considering which units should be involved in carrying out each recommendation. As mentioned at the end of the document the collective agreements from both academic unions are being consulted by the Provost Group. More information will be communicated to faculty members through school deans in the near future.

Following the presentation, the Registrar advised that the office of the Registrar also assists with advising and commented on the academic calendar and the course timetable when it comes to regulations.

**5. Update on CBU Network Transformation process:**

Allison Boutilier provided a presentation and update on the following:

**IT SERVICES NETWORK RENEWAL INITIATIVE**

2022

* + Purchase Core Network Equipment
  + Identify Server Room Requirement

2023

* + Equipment programming begins (ongoing)
  + Server Room Location identified
  + Telecommunications Guidelines published
  + Fiber Replacement Project (85% complete)
  + RfP for Server Room Construction

2024

* + Server Room Construction (January – May)
  + Completion of equipment programming (January – April)
  + Network Cutover and Start-up (June – August)

Updated Heat Map & Wireless Access Point Replacement (TBC)

May 31, 2024

* Target Completion/handover of newly constructed server room

June 1, 2024 - August 31, 2024

* Network cutover to be completed in three phases
* Anticipate planned outages
* ITS team working with vendors to complete a detailed cutover plan (target February 20-23 for initial draft)

**Anticipated Benefits**

* Updated infrastructure, scalable for campus growth and expansion
* Improved network performance (built for current population)
* Anticipate less “traffic jams” on the network
* Increased cyber protection

**Potential Issues & Challenges**

* Timing & Resources - delays in construction or cutover will have a domino effect
* After September - some locations may require additional cabling upgrades to optimize network performance

**Network performance a core factor in stability and performance issues with Moodle**

* IT Services team is focused on a number of initiatives to improve Moodle performance and ensure a stabilized, dependable environment for CBU’s Learning Management System (Technical enhancements, Version Upgrade, Load Balancing, additional oversight)
* Moodle Guidelines provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning are an additional support to help prevent technical problems (eg. limit # questions/page, randomize questions)

Following the presentation, the reasons for the missing technical infrastructure and resource availability were discussed. It was also noted that funding is currently not an issue and that they are well-positioned but the process will take time.

C. Kreber thanked Ms. Boutilier for the presentation.

1. **Approval of Minutes from:**

* Special Senate Minutes - December 8, 2023

**It was moved** by T. Brann Barrett seconded by D. Lionais, to approve the Special Senate meeting minutes from December 8, 2023. **Motion Carried**. **(5 abstentions)**

* Senate Minutes - December 15, 2023

**It was moved** by G. MacInnis seconded by C. Arseneau, to approve the Special Senate meeting minutes from December 8, 2023. **Motion Carried**. **(2 abstention)**

**7. Business Arising from Minutes – N/A**

**8. Report from Senate Committees**

**8.1 Planning and Review 13903**

V. Gunn advised that the Committee will be working on reviewing the most important activities in the upcoming months.

**8.2** **Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation - N/A**

**8.3 Academic Committee: - N/A**

**8.4 By-Laws and Procedures**

J. Tunnicliff provided an update on behalf of the Bylaws and Procedures Committee and advised that they are reviewing the mandate letter for 2023/24. The Committee sent out an email regarding updates to new bylaws to various schools and departments. Once they receive those they will review them and take them before Senate. They also discussed a document repository with Mark Tambal, Records Management officer, and the use of TEAMS, SharePoint and OneDrive.

Following the update, senators discussed the importance of department bylaws being kept up to date and the struggle that the By-Laws and Procedures Committee has at times to get more current updates from other Committees.

**8.5 Quality Assurance – N/A**

**8.6** **Research**

J. Hancock provided an update from the Research Committee and advised that the Committee has accepted the task of adjudicating nominations and making recommendations for SSHRC Impact awards from amongst CBU faculty. The committee is presently formalizing an internal policy to ensure transparency in conducting this process. It is anticipated this policy will be brought before Senate at its February meeting.

**9. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

**Éric Thériault**

**Secretary to Senate**