

Senate Minutes

January 24, 2025
CE339

The Chair, F. Odartey-Wellington, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum and Land Acknowledgement

The Chair 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.

Present:

Harsimran Kaur Antaal, Catherine Arseneau, Tammy Bernasky, Matthias Bierenstiel, Melissa Bishop, Tanya Brann-Barrett, Karen Butterworth, Geoff Carre, Carrie Karsgaard, Martin Chandler, Paula Condon, David Dingwall, Ayse Ersoy, Kylie Ewing, Ava Graham, Virginia Gunn, Michael Henick, Chad Hillier, Carrie Karsgaard, Janet Kuhnke, Tracy Lillington, Doug Lionais, Terry MacDonald, Gordon MacInnis, Emily MacLeod, John Mayich, Bishakha Mazumdar, John Nadeau, Rod Nicholls, Felix Odartey-Wellington, Olabode Peters Olaniran, Andy Parnaby, Karen Rowe, Nancy Samson, Rebecca Seymore, Nancy Spina, Laurianne Sylvester, Éric Thériault, Jamie Tunnicliff, Bilynda Whiting

Regrets:

Sahand Ashtab, Sophia Butler-Doucette, Sean Campbell, Linda Cavanaugh, Ali Heydari, Harkanwal Kaur, Kimberley Lamarche, Ellyn Lyle, Sophie Mordi, Stephanie MacQuarrie, Kathleen Nash, Marcia Ostashewski, Joe Parish, Michelle Prendergast, Ann Sylliboy

2. Consent Agenda:

- 2.1** New course proposal for ENGL 4XXX: British Literary Modernism
- 2.2** New course proposal for MGMT3XXX: Employee Wellbeing and Safety
- 2.3** Approval of the December 13, 2024 **Confidential** Minutes

Motion:

Moved by V. Gunn, seconded by J. Tunnicliff, to approve the Consent Agenda for January 24, 2025.

Motion Carried.

3. Reports and Items for Information

3.1 President

President Dingwall shared the following updates:

- Strategic cuts and smarter growth initiatives continue with strategic enrolment renewal, academic planning, and effective financial management.
- The Atlantic Association of University Presidents recently commissioned a poll of the Atlantic region, revealing that 82% of the public holds a favorable view of Nova Scotia. Trust and confidence in Canadian universities were reported at 71%. However, 72% of Atlantic Canadians support the federal government's two year stop gap on international students, citing inadequate housing across the region as a concern. Notably, 90% of respondents believe the issue could be resolved if the federal government provided additional funding under the Housing Authority Act.
- The Creative Recruitment Committee is actively developing an innovative recruitment plan to strengthen partnerships with NSCC students. Their goal is to offer incentives for NSCC students to transition to CBU while also expanding outreach beyond Nova Scotia to attract students from across the country through CBU's various articulation agreements.
- The Stop-Out Campaign is a targeted initiative aimed at re-engaging some of the 3,500 individuals in Nova Scotia and beyond who previously left CBU for various reasons. The campaign focuses on reaching out to these former students, encouraging their return. While initial success rates have been modest, there is strong potential for growth as the campaign progresses.
- The alumni engagement program has been expanded from four to six initiatives per year, with additional monthly activities tailored to both international and domestic students.
- In 2019, CBU launched an initiative to engage with various embassies, recognizing that this connection provides direct access to post-secondary engagement officers who can help navigate immigration processes more efficiently. With 129 embassies in Ottawa, the outreach effort includes visits, informational sessions, and branded materials to ensure they are familiar with CBU and its offerings. The ambassadors from all 80 countries would be invited to CBU and Senate colleagues are invited to participate in the engagements to have discussion.
- He is interested to find creative ways to acknowledge the flags of different countries at CBU.
- Exploring innovative options for extended learning as we move forward.
- A CBU podcast called Cape Breton Accents has been developed with the purpose to focus on the student experience. This student-driven approach fosters a deeper connection with the audience and helps shape meaningful improvements at CBU."

During discussion, it was noted that there has been an upgrade of the one-button studio in the CBU library to a podcast creation studio facility which is now available.

3.2 Vice President Academic and Provost

Rod Nicholls provided updates on several key topics:

- The Strategic Plan Renewal document is just about complete with some minor changes. He shared his appreciation to those who submitted suggestions.
- He expressed thanks to the number of people from the Registrar office, Deans, Department Chairs, and other faculty members for their quick turn around time doing performance reviews on a large number of students to determine academic status and progression requirements.
- He provided a strategic enrollment management update, noting that winter enrollment and the overall fall/winter term enrollment reached levels that were lower than expected. He explained that a significant group of post-baccalaureate students completed their degree requirements in December. He emphasized that the initial target for new student enrollment fell short, partly due to the impact of post-baccalaureate completions, and that this shortfall is expected to have a multi-year impact on CBU. He also mentioned that a noticeable drop in enrollment between fall and winter was attributed to financial challenges. The Registrar anticipates a robust graduating class in May.
- The domestic SEM targets have been met largely because of the Bachelor of Education expansion, continued stability in traditional programs such as the BA and the BSC and international demand for the MBA. CBU received its PAL allocation from the province which was a 30 percent decrease from the 2024 allocation. He noted that the demand is not as high as expected and that it is important to know that CBU has increased the on-time conversion rate from 27 percent to close to 50 percent thanks to a new enrolment strategy and improved applicant quality and efficiency in the Registrars' office.
- In support of strategic cuts and smarter growth initiatives, he is working closely with school Deans and academic administrators to achieve the mandated 30 percent reduction in certain budget items. The new SEM Advisory Committee and a dedicated SEM working group are actively engaged, and enrollment projections for the upcoming academic budget year are well underway. Long-term SEM targets are being evaluated as part of ongoing program development and analysis of expansion opportunities. Additionally, efforts continue with Deans and department chairs, while recruitment and retention strategies are receiving increased focus; the Academic Committee and Planning and Review Committee are set to play their mandated roles in this process.

In response to a question regarding CBU representation on MPHEC, R. Nicholls advised that he would follow up.

3.3 Unama'ki College

L. Sylvester reported on the following:

- An Indigenous student is being sponsored by Universities Canada to experience a field

course in Poland with Tom Urbaniak during reading week.

- Sipekne'katik will be starting a cohort on February 3. To date there are 5 In-Community programs taking place throughout Mi'kma'ki.
- Students are now beginning the course work for the BSc pathway. They have completed the intro/prep course work in December.
- Enrolment Specialist for UC left for a new position, and the administrator for Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch will be finished her employment at CBU on January 31.
- They are working with facilities and the architects on the design of the Marshall Legacy Center.
- Mi'kmaw artists who had work on display at the CBU Art Gallery will be featured on a panel discussion during Kina'masultinej exhibition on February 6th. It's been shared on social media channels and Caper Radio. The beadwork display is still at the art gallery until February 21.
- In May, students from the first BSc Pathway cohort are graduating. There will also be a few graduating at the fall convocation.
- Tajikemik, the Mi'kmaw Health Authority, recently hired Lucinda Googoo from We'koqma'q as the Mi'kmaw Indigenous Nurse Education Specialist. Lucinda will be set up in the School of Nursing to support Mi'kmaw students in Nursing.

3.4 Students' Union

A. Graham reported the following:

- They successfully hired a Women's Centre Outreach Coordinator, a Community Outreach Coordinator, and a Food Bank Assistant.
- Their café has officially opened in the Verschuren Centre and is operating weekdays from 8am to 4pm. They are planning a grand opening event.
- In collaboration with their Food Bank, they gave out 350 hot beverage vouchers to students from December 10th to 17th. They also handed out snacks and earbuds to students on exam days.
- Their newly hired Games Room Coordinator hosted a pool and video game tournament after exams ended. This event was a huge success in terms of student attendance and participation, and they're looking forward to similar events in the coming months.
- The Student Union President hosted a trivia night over the holidays. This event was a success and they are looking forward to increasing their residence presence throughout the term.
- They partnered with Flavor to host a gift certificate promotion at the Mayflower Mall over the holiday break. They sold \$50 gift certificates and half of all proceeds were donated to their charity, Capers Helping Capers. They are currently at 80 percent of their \$20,000 fundraising goal.
- The Winter Week of Welcome included several events, including a Mario Kart Tournament, and Pool Tournament among others.
- They launched International and Indigenous Student Scholarships, an initiative awarding eight \$1,000 scholarships to students. Three awards were allocated to undergraduate international students, three to post-baccalaureate international students, and two to Indigenous students. They received 110 complete applications across these categories.

- The Drive Home Program continues to operate, providing drives to students throughout the week. They're also offering their Grocery Shuttle service on Sundays, taking students in residence to both Walmart and the Mayflower Mall.
- They partnered with Cape Smokey to host a ski trip for students.
- They are working on a Multicultural Creative Arts Week in March. They've been collaborating with Todd Hiscock, the Director of CBU's Boardmore Theatre, to plan this event. Each day of the week will be dedicated to a different form of art and will give students the opportunity to learn and showcase their work.
- They are working on Pride Week, Healthy Living Week, and Women's Week.
- Student Services Events Workshops - They will be hosting three Career Readiness Workshops through January and February with Tracey MacMullin from the Career Readiness Department. They're also working with the Student Services Department to plan an IRCC Information Session, and are coordinating with the Sydney Credit Union to host a Financial Literacy Series. She announced the upcoming launch of a student services Instagram page! This will give their Vice President Student Services the opportunity to better communicate with students.
- A Student Research Event is set to be held in the Pit Lounge and will give student researchers the opportunity to develop a poster showcasing their work. In connection with the CBU Research Office, the event will work to increase collaboration between departments and increase student interest in research work.
- CBUSU General Elections for the CBUSU's President and Vice President for the 2025-2026 school year are approaching. Nominations will open at the end of January and campaigning will be taking place at the beginning of February.

3.5 Board of Governors

No Report.

3.6 Executive Committee

Éric Thériault reported on the following:

- The Executive Committee met January 10th and they set the agendas for both the Special Senate meeting which was held on January 17th and the Regular Senate meeting for today.
- Each Committee Chair and the Student Union presented their report.
- The Committee discussed how to best examine various Quality Assurance recommendations.
- The Executive was also asked to scheduled a special presentation to Senate on the medical campus in the spring.
- The next meeting is scheduled for February 7.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Motion:

Moved by C. Arseneau, seconded by K. Butterworth, that Senate approve the minutes from the December 13th Senate meeting.

Motion Carried. (2 abstentions)

5. Business Arising from the Minutes – N/A

President Dingwall raised a **Point of Order** on the following items.

- He advised that he is trying to negotiate with the Premier and the federal Minister of Mortgage and Housing as it relates to Tartan Downs.
- He, along with Tanya Brann-Barrett, will travel to Halifax on Tuesday, where CBU is set to receive the largest research grant in history.

6. Report from Senate Committees:

6.1 Planning and Review

Geoff Carre advised that the Committee are currently reviewing the Academic Plan.

6.2 Teaching, Learning and Evaluation

No report.

6.3 Academic

Report available in the Senate meeting package.

6.4 By-Laws and Procedures

J. Tunnicliff advised that the Committee continues to work on Department Bylaws and Terms of Reference for the Senate sub-committees.

6.5 Quality Assurance

No Report.

6.6 Research

M. Bierenstiel advised that the Research Committee received a detailed application for the creation of a research institute, which is a formal research group led by Bettina Callary. The Research Committee discussed the application and provided constructive feedback with revised application being received in Dec 2024. He noted that the Committee voted unanimously to

recommend creation of this Institute in Community, Sport, & Health (Leaders in Social Change) and also reviewed the process for the approval.

Bettina Callary provided an overview of the institute, emphasizing its role in bridging the research-to-action gap that often leaves valuable findings unimplemented in the community. She explained that the institute will feature both a research arm and a practice arm, enabling evidence-based insights to be effectively translated into community change, particularly in the area of EDIA.

Motion:

Moved by M. Bierenstiel, seconded by A. Parnaby, that Senate approve the recommendation of the creation of the Institute in Community, Sport, & Health (Leaders in Social Change) at CBU.

Motion Carried.

In response to a request, Bettina Callary provided background information on the coastal lab, which serves as a precursor to the new Institute. She explained that the lab's research component will be integrated with the Institute. The coastal lab is a community-active sport training and learning facility, initially established as part of her 2019 Canada Research Chair application. Located on the second floor of the Dome building, the lab currently has six full-time faculty members, along with numerous affiliate members and student researchers.

Her overview highlighted that the lab's projects explore the intersections of social sciences, sport, community, and holistic health. Currently, about 15 to 20 undergraduate students from CBU are working in the lab, supported by graduate students from both CBU and other institutions who also mentor the undergraduates. Additionally, postdoctoral students and various research associates contribute to the lab's diverse research and training environment.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

É. Thériault
Secretary to Senate