

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, April 6, 2009 at 5:30 pm in Room 3210 WMC

Open Session

Present: Stevenson, Michael, Chair

Arsenault-Antolick, Haida
Bains, Aman
Beale, Alison
Chapman, Glenn
Collinge, Joan
Cormack, Lesley
de Castell, Suzanne
Driver, Jon
Fairey, Elaine (representing L. Copeland)
Fizzell, Maureen
Francis, June
Gibson, Eli
Hannah, David
Harding, Kevin
Hiscocks, Graham
Janes, Craig
Joffres, Michel
Krane, Bill
Laba, Martin
Letourneau, Michael
Li, Ze-Nian
Liljedahl, Peter
MacDonald, Camille
Mathewes, Rolf (representing M. Plischke)
Noble, Cameron
Paling, Joseph
Parkhouse, Wade
Patel, Ravi
Pavsek, Christopher
Percival, Colin
Percival, Paul
Peters, Joseph
Pierce, John
Pinto, Mario
Seal, Brent
Shapiro, Daniel
Shermer, Thomas
Thompson, Steve
Tiffany, Evan
van der Wey, Dolores
Warner, D'Arcy
Woodbury, Robert

Watt, Alison, Director, University Secretariat
Grant, Bobbie, Recording Secretary

Absent:

Bart, Brad
Bocking, Natalie
Brennand, Tracy
Dow, Greg
Easton, Stephen
Fergusson, Andrew
Gençay, Ramo
Golnaraghi, Farid
Gordon, Robert
Lee, Benjamin
Leznoff, Daniel
Louie, Brandt
McArthur, James
O'Neil, John
Popadiuk, Natalee
Scott, Jamie
Tapia, Earl Von
Underhill, Owen
Vaid, Bhuvinder
Wakkary, Ron
Williams, Tony

In attendance:

Busumtwi-Sam, James
Corbett, Kitty
Thomas, David

1. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of March 2, 2009

The Minutes were approved as distributed.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair, on behalf of Senate, acknowledged the following new Senators and thanked them for undertaking this service to the University: Interim Deans of the new Faculties – John Pierce, Faculty of Environment, Ze-Nian Li, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Owen Underhill, Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology; new Faculty Senators – Alison Beale and Robert Woodbury, Faculty of Communication, Art & Technology; and new Student Senators – Graham Hiscocks, Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology, and Cameron Noble, Faculty of Environment.

5. Question Period

C. Pavsek submitted questions concerning instructional budgets for sessional instructors, limited term instructors and teaching assistants, and the expansion of programming in some areas versus the protection of existing programs, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, which are not slated for growth. Senate was advised that the overall funding for sessional instructors and teaching assistants would not be significantly different from last year's budget but reminded Senators that expenditures were typically higher than the budget so it was likely that expenditures would be at least as high if not higher than last year. With regard to program expansion, it was noted that funding would continue for programs which already have commitments to expand. However, the rate of growth has been scaled down in areas such as Health Sciences. Senate was assured that efforts are made to balance the support of existing programs with the development of new programs.

Discussion ensued with specific reference being made to actual decreases in FASS temporary instruction budget and L. Cormack briefly explained that since the Faculty does not have a continuing budget for temporary instruction (sessional and TA support), funding for temporary instruction has to come from salary recovery funds. More and more of this funding is being allocated to TAs rather than sessional instruction. Since a large proportion of courses in FASS are taught by sessionals, there is a worry about the Faculty being able to deliver its programs and courses.

At the last Senate meeting, it was noted that confirmation was received that increased support for graduate students would be proportional to the increase in FTE targets for graduate students. However, it was pointed out that funding for TAships in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences would decrease in next budget and this appeared to be inconsistent with the statements from the last meeting. In response to a request for clarification from E. Tiffany, Senate was advised that the overall TA budget had a slight decrease of approximately \$200,000 but it was hoped that this amount would be restored

by use of carry forward funds and with new funding that might become available to the University. It was pointed out that the sessional instructor budget had actually increased by approximately half a million dollars.

Referring to the President's recent remarks about curriculum reform, C. Pavsek requested clarification of the remarks and whether such changes would impact faculty course loads or methods of instruction. The President responded that by curriculum reform he meant decisions made by programs and Senate concerning the orientation of curriculum offerings and the credit attached to them, as well as pedagogical and other changes to the way in which courses are taught and accessed by students. It was his personal feeling that the current curriculum structure can not be maintained and that the number of courses that are taught in the conventional way by faculty notionally in order for a student to get a degree likely has to change. The Vice-President Academic is engaged in an academic planning exercise exploring questions of curriculum, and focus groups have identified strategic areas of attention such as student access to courses for degree completion, how opportunities for breadth and diversity can be balanced with a curriculum structure that is relatively simple to understand and plan, whether new methods of teaching, learning and communication should be incorporated, to what extent academic credit should be offered for experiential learning, and how changes in curriculum content and delivery can be achieved where faculty members also have research responsibilities and where resources are constrained. The President indicated that these are the same types of questions which he felt should be seriously considered as the next academic plan is developed.

An opinion was expressed that the quality of education at SFU was under threat mainly from growth and a suggestion was made that growth take a back seat to improving the quality of education at SFU. It was pointed out that there is a relationship between growth, funding, and quality, and in the past, growth was accompanied by an improvement in terms of funding and potentially in terms of quality realized as a result of an improved faculty-student ratio. However, funding formulas, independent of growth, happen at the discretion of the Government and have associated impacts on the educational experience.

6. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on International Studies

i) Paper S.09-47 – Correction to SCIA 2007 Annual Report (For Information)

J. Busumtwi-Sam, Chair of SCIA, was in attendance in order to respond to questions on papers S.09-47, S.09-48, and S.09-49.

Senate received information correcting an error with respect to the approval of an MOU with PCF Internacional, Madrid, Spain.

ii) Paper S.09-48 – Annual Report (For Information)

Reference was made to page 4, Item 2.8 concerning the Double Degree Program with Monash University. It was noted that several months ago, SCAR noted that this program had not been to Senate for approval and inquiry was made as to the status of the program. Senate was advised that the program had in fact been presented to SCUS as an information item. Since the contents of the program were already in existence, it was agreed that Senate approval was not required. The 2008 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on International Activities was accepted by Senate for information.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities

i) Paper S.09-49 – Certificate in African Studies

Moved by J. Pierce, seconded by L. Cormack

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Certificate in African Studies in the Department of History and Department of Political Science in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences”

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Paper S.09-50 – Centre for Global Workforce Strategy

Moved by J. Francis, seconded by R. Patel

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the creation of the Centre for Global Workforce Strategy as a Schedule A Centre reporting to the Dean, Faculty of Business Administration”

D. Thomas, Faculty of Business Administration, was available to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) Paper S.09-51 – Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies

Moved by L. Cormack, seconded by W. Parkhouse

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies in the Latin American Studies Program in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences”

Clarification was requested as to how students would be given priority enrolment when they don't actually register in the certificate program. Senate was advised that students do not enroll in graduate certificates. Students are informally identified as being interested in

achieving the certificate and then are given priority for enrolment in courses required for the certificate.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) Paper S.09-52 – Name of the new Environment Faculty – “Faculty of Environment”

Moved by J. Pierce, seconded by J. Driver

“that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the name of the new Environment Faculty as the “Faculty of Environment”

A concern was expressed that some areas of the new Faculty (Development Studies) were under-represented in the election and that the votes of 22 versus 14 reflected a considerable difference of opinion about the naming of the new Faculty. There was a strong feeling from the opposition group that the new name failed to signal to students that the Faculty was interdisciplinary and included a strong component of social science.

Senate was informed that there was considerable debate over the naming of the Faculty, and eventually simplicity was favoured by the majority. The voting process was fair and conducted according to the normal election rules. Assurances were given that measures would be taken on the Web and in advertising to ensure that the nature of the Faculty was clearly understood. It was also pointed out that there was nothing to prevent this issue from being revisited in the future.

Senate was informed that students of the new Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology have expressed concerns about the new degree name that they will receive following June 2009 Convocation and the impact that will have on employment opportunities. Opinion was expressed that branding was of essential importance to all students in all Faculties not only for recruitment but also for graduation. It was stressed that the names of the degrees will not change as the new Faculty structures are implemented. Parchments that students receive upon graduation are issued from the University on recommendation from a Faculty. For example, a degree in Communication would remain a Bachelor of Arts degree from Simon Fraser University. Employers wanting details of a program can request a transcript that would list the courses taken.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

C) Senate Graduate Studies Committee

i) Paper S.09-53 – Revisions to Graduate General Regulations 1.6.3, 1.6.4, 1.9.1 with associated revisions to 1.6.1, 1.6.7, 1.10.5, and 1.10.6

Motion 1

G.G.R. 1.6.3 Senior Supervisor

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by J. Pierce

“that all SFU faculty members be eligible to supervise graduate students whose degree culminates in a project, extended essay, field or comprehensive examination”

Senate was advised that the motion was intended to apply to students undertaking a Master’s degree.

A number of grammatical errors were noted in the rationale. Assurances were given by the Secretary of Senate that appropriate corrections would be made.

It was noted that having supervision done by a regular faculty member who has a research interest in the same area as the student’s topic area provided the student with a research and learning experience – an experience that might be lost with the suggested revision. It was pointed out that projects, extended essays and comprehensive examinations have a much smaller research component and departments have found that there are faculty who are not in the professorial ranks who are completely qualified to supervise students undertaking such work.

Suggestion was made that since the intent of the motion was to apply to students in a Master’s program, reference should be included in the motion itself. The following revised wording was accepted as a friendly amendment:

“that all SFU faculty members be eligible to supervise *candidates for a Master’s degree* whose degree culminates in a project, extended essay, field or comprehensive examination”

In response to an inquiry, Senate was advised that the intent of the motion was to include all continuing SFU faculty members at the Category A and Category B levels.

A suggestion was made that the project option be removed from the motion because students wanting a research experience might prefer to be assured of working with a tenured faculty member. It was pointed out that the inclusion of projects was an explicit request from departments with professional master programs and it would be up to the Graduate Program Committee to determine whether or not the individual recommended to be Senior Supervisor had sufficient research expertise.

Question was called, and a vote taken. MOTION 1 AS AMENDED CARRIED

Motion 2

G.G.R. 1.6.4 Supervisory Committee

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by M. Fizzell

“that a supervisory committee not be required for students whose degree programs culminate in an extended essay, field or comprehensive examination”

Concern was expressed about the loss of quality control. W. Parkhouse explained that students would primarily be undertaking a course based program with an extended essay, field or comprehensive examination, and that the supervisor, in concert with the Graduate Program Committee, would be able to provide the necessary guidance needed by the student and ensure quality control.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION 2 CARRIED

Motion 3

G.G.R. 1.9.1 Examining Committee for a Master's Degree Candidate

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by M. Letourneau

“that the nature of the examination and the composition of the examining committee of a student's extended essay, field or comprehensives shall be as designated by the appropriate faculty graduate studies committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies”

An opinion was expressed that this revision, under delegated authority, would provide too much of an opportunity for lower levels of authority to make decisions which essentially are the responsibility of Senate. Senate's attention was drawn to GGR 1.10.6 which was being eliminated in which similar wording already existed. It was noted that the process has been in place and was already being used for some Master's degrees. The issue in question was that the definition of professional degree has essentially become defunct and the definition needed to be expanded.

The following revised wording was accepted as a friendly amendment:

“that the nature of the examination and the composition of the examining committee of a student's extended essay, field or comprehensives shall be as designated by the appropriate faculty graduate studies committee and the *Senate Graduate Studies Committee*”

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION 3 AS AMENDED CARRIED

ii) Paper S.09-54 – Graduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Education (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved changes to required/core courses and program descriptions for the Educational Technology and Learning Design, Doctoral Program and the Secondary Mathematics Education program.

iii) Paper S.09-55 – Graduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Health Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved changes to the core courses in the MSc degree program; addition of two concentrations – Environmental and Occupational Health and Social Inequities and Health – in the MPH degree program; and changes to existing courses in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Since Senate papers, including details of curriculum revisions, were now posted on the Web prior to the Senate meeting, a suggestion to change the reference note on the memo to Senate directing Senators to the web link was accepted and would be followed in future.

iv) Paper S.09-56 – Graduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Science (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved changes to an existing course in the Department of Mathematics.

v) Paper S.09-57 – Proposal to disband the Assessment Committee for New Graduate Programs

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by M. Letourneau

“that Senate approve the disbanding of the Assessment Committee for New Graduate Programs (ACNGP) effective immediately”

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

D) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

i) Paper S.09-58 – Changes to Admission Requirements for the BA Program in Health Sciences

Moved by B. Krane, seconded by K. Harding

“that Senate approve the changes to the Math admission requirements for the BA program in Health Sciences, effective Spring 2010”

K. Corbett, Faculty of Health Sciences, was available to respond to questions.

A concern was expressed about the removal of Math 12 as an admission requirement for this program, and discussion took place with respect to the rationale for this change. In

particular, discussion centered on what was perceived to be a lowering of standards and the Faculty's ability to meet the enrolment targets set for Health Sciences. Experience had found that students in the BA program were not drawing on their high school Math, and following consultations with the faculty involved in the program, as well as high school counselors, the decision was made that Math 12 was not needed. Senate was also advised that the issue behind the change was not so much related to enrolment targets as it was one of balancing needs within the curriculum in terms of requirements for the students taking courses that do not require Math 12. Students taking the BA program were interested in Health Sciences from a Social Sciences point of view and this change was consistent with entrance requirements within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Paper S.09-59 – New Policy – Letters of Permission (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a new policy for Letters of Permission to replace the current policy effective September 2009.

iii) Paper S.09-60 – Undergraduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Applied Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved a decrease in maintenance GPA and minor revisions to existing courses in Engineering Science, and a change to the Ergonomics Concentration and minor changes to existing courses in Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology.

Concerns were expressed about the decrease in maintenance GPA as it was perceived to be a lowering of standards. It was pointed out that the maintenance level was similar to requirements at other Canadian institutions so it was not out of line.

iv) Paper S.09-61 – Undergraduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved revisions to program requirements and minor changes to existing courses in the following areas: Explorations Program, International Studies, and Archaeology.

v) Paper S.09-62 – Undergraduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Business Administration (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved changes to the following areas: maintenance CGPA, degree program requirements, non-Business student access to upper division Business

courses, name of the Accounting Concentration, and minor changes to existing courses. A broad based admissions pilot – 50 Exceptions for 50 Exceptional Students – was also approved under delegated authority.

vi) Paper S.09-63 – Undergraduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Education (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course deletions and minor revisions to existing courses.

vii) Paper S.09-64 – Undergraduate Curriculum Revisions – Faculty of Health Sciences (For Information)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved changes to requirements for the BSc program, new courses, WQB designations and minor revisions to existing courses.

E) Senate Nominating Committee

i) Paper S.09-65 – Elections

Senators were advised that no further nominations were received. Greg Dow was therefore elected by acclamation to the Senate Committee on University Priorities, and Brad Bart and Alison Gill were elected by acclamation to the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning. There were two candidates for the Faculty Senator (FCAT) position on the Senate Committee on University Priorities so online balloting following the Senate meeting would take place to determine who would serve. Since online balloting was allowed, participation response from Senate has been slightly lower than expected and Senators were encouraged to vote when they receive the email notification of the ballot. As a result of online balloting, Alison Beale was elected to the Senate Committee on University Priorities.

7. Other Business

i) Paper S.09-66 – Notice of Motion: Revisions to the Rules of Senate

Senate received a Notice of Motion with regard to revisions to the Rules of Senate. Motions covering the revisions will be brought forward to the May meeting of Senate for approval.

Reference was made to the recent faculty elections to Senate and a concern was expressed about the relatively small number of people who had voted. Opinion was expressed that it was better if more people participated in such a vote as by doing so they become more aware of Senate itself and perhaps more interested in Senate business. It was suggested that

statistics be kept on the number of people voting and the areas in which the votes were coming from since some important messages are caught by spam filters.

8. Information

The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of Senate is Monday, May 11, 2009.

Open Session adjourned at 6:50 pm and Senate moved directly into Closed Session.

Alison Watt
Director, University Secretariat