



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, April 3, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

Open Session

Present: Joy Johnson, Chair

Ahsan, Shariq
Andreoiu, Corina
Barlow, Leanne
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Chapman, Glenn
Chessel, Patrick
Coleman, Gordon
Denholm, Julia
Derksen, Jeff
Dhesa, Priyanka
Elle, Elizabeth
Everton, Mike
Fiume, Eugene
Gray, Bonnie
Hendrigan, Holly
Karaivanov, Alexander
Kingsbury, Paul (for Naomi Krogman)
Kumpulainen, Kristiina
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Magnusson, Kris
Martell, Matt
Masri, Lynn
McKenzie, Janis
McTavish, Rob
Muntean, Reese
Murphy, David
Myers, Gord
Nelson, Todd
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Neil, Dugan
Parent, Michael
Parkhouse, Wade
Parmar, Abhishek
Percival, Colin
Pratt, Elspeth
Rashmi, Samiya
Schiphorst, Thecla

Shinkar, Igor
Silverman, Michael
Spector, Stephen
Tingling, Peter (for Ujwal Kayande)
Van Veen, Melissa
Weldon, Laurel
Williams, JF
Williams, Vance

Absent:

Arseneault, Donovan
Bhalloo, Shafik
Bird, Gwen
Brennand, Tracy
Bubela, Tania
Collard, Mark
Daniel, Bryan
Faris, Reema
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Kayande, Ujwal
Krogman, Naomi
Lam, Allan
Masri, Kamal
Nagy, Judit
Nepomnaschy, Pablo
Pantophlet, Ralph
Schmidt, Michèle
Sidhu, Harneer
Stockie, John
Subbiah, Arun
Tran, Lisa
Vrooman, Tamara
Yao, Grace

In Attendance:

Eigenfeldt, Arne
Lee, Bertrand

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of February 6, 2023

The minutes of the open session on February 6, 2023 were approved as distributed.

3. The Minutes of the Open Session of March 6, 2023 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on May 15, 2023

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the Chair

The Chair recognized winners of the 2022 Awards for Excellence in Teaching: Nancy Forde, professor - Department of Physics; Brian Fraser, senior lecturer, School of Computing Science; Daniel Murdoch, senior lecturer, School of Criminology; Yuthika Girmé, professor – Department of Psychology; Leanne Roderick, lecturer – Department of Geography; Joanna Woo, lecturer – Department of Physics; Amanda Watson, senior lecturer - Department of Sociology and Anthropology; and Diane Finegood, professor – Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology.

The Chair reported that a statement was issued last week regarding the honorary degree of Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond stating that SFU has accepted the return of the Honorary Doctorate of Laws awarded to Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond in 2016. The Senate Committee on University Honours reviewed the requests to revoke her honorary degree and determined there were appropriate grounds to proceed, and following the procedures for revoking an honorary degree recently passed at Senate, Turpel-Lafond was informed by the university that revocation was under consideration. She was provided an opportunity to return the degree voluntarily or to make representations on the issue at hand, and at that time Turpel-Lafond declined to make any such representation and opted to return the degree.

The Chair reported that SFU has been approached by the Royal Society of Canada to host their annual symposium in 2024. The theme for the Royal Society Symposium will likely center on community centered climate innovation.

The Chair reported that as part of the steps for the launch and implementation of SFU's new strategic plan, the University hosted a townhall on March 23rd for faculty and staff to ask more questions about the plan. It was attended by members of the executive team and had 250 people attend the online event.

The Chair thanked Senate for its discussion and collaborative resolution at the March Senate meeting regarding changes to SFU's Research Ethics Board (REB). At that meeting, Senate endorsed the appointment of a special joint committee comprised of one member of the REB, and two members each from the Board of Governors and Senate. Jeremy Snyder has been named as the representative of the REB, Dan Laitsch and Stephen Spector have been elected as representatives of Senate, while Carol Herbert and Michael McDonald will represent the Board.

It is hoped that two meetings of the joint committee can be scheduled in the coming weeks to move towards a resolution.

The Chair reported that there has been discussion around reviving the Senate-Board of Governors retreat, with a potential date in either October or November. The topic for the retreat will be the SFU medical school.

i) Report of the Provost

The Provost reported that the Beedie School of Business and the Faculty of Environment have offered a Joint Major in Sustainable Business since 2014, but that changes that came through Senate were deemed sufficient enough for the University to go to the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) and seek confirmation that it would still be able to provide that degree. The DQAB confirmed that the degree has been approved under the new format.

The Provost reported that the provincial government has been talking about the distribution of tech seats for the last 18 months and an official announcement around this is expected in the near future.

In terms of the medical school, the Provost reported that work continues on the business case, focusing on the resources needed and gathering information from collaborating institutions and consulting teams to capture the requirements to do proper costing for the program. The University is also working with UBC to develop a complementary framework moving forward. Kris Magnusson, Dean of Education, has been partially seconded to support the medical program.

The Provost reported that progress continues in the search for the Dean of Graduate Studies, with three candidates being identified, and in the search for Dean of Education, with a shortlist being identified and interviews taking place in the next couple of weeks.

6. Question Period

i) Senator Leznoff submitted the following questions:

In the SCUS documentation that came to the last Senate meeting in March (S.23-38), a profound change to the FAL X99 and FAN X99 courses was embedded in the "Course Changes" list for Information. These two courses are university preparation-level courses that students generally must take in order to bring their numeracy or literacy skills to the level that they can take lower-division Q or W courses. Given the pre-university "Foundations" level of these courses, students have traditionally not been given University credit for them. According to the documentation, this was changed so that students now will indeed receive "integral credit" for these courses; the rationale was that it was unfair to make students take and pay for a course that didn't count towards their degree and was defended in the name of financial equity, which I completely agree with. However, the impact on standards for an SFU degree is substantial and across all Faculties; a student can now take both FAL and FAN and obtain 8 of 120 units towards their Degree. I thus have two questions:

1. *Did SCUS consider making these courses zero-units, thereby removing the financial equity issue but maintaining standards? And if not, why not consider such an option?*
2. *Given the importance of the question to academic standards, in the same way that Senate votes to approve changes to, for example, English language requirements for admission, I would ask if these changes to FAL and FAN could be brought to Senate for an informed discussion and vote, so that the University community will be well-aware of whatever change is approved and the implications thereof?*

Elizabeth Elle, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Learning & Teaching and SCUS Chair, responded to these questions.

Senate was informed that students did get credit for these courses, but it was additive, not integral, meaning it didn't count towards the 120 units for their degrees. When SFU launched the General Education Curriculum Review for WQB courses, extensive consultations were held with faculty and department undergraduate curriculum committees. Because FAN and FAL courses can lead into WQB courses, consultation was also held with the Faculty of Education and the Department of Mathematics, and it was in these meetings that faculty members who teach and coordinate these courses requested this change. It was noted that no change has been made to individual program requirements. Of the 120 units normally required to complete a degree, faculties and departments vary in how many of the units they specify a student must take by taking particular courses. FAL and FAN would only contribute to the unspecified credits. Education, concerned that students might take the courses only to inflate their GPA, have changed FAL to be a competency-based grading course with no impact on GPA. Mathematics is considering a similar approach and both faculties are maintaining the requirement that only students with particular grades in high school can take these courses, meaning that a student who did well in high school would not be able to take them and thereby boost their GPA.

In response to the first question, Senate was informed that consideration was not given to making these courses zero units because there's significant cost to deliver the courses as they are generally run in small sections, and neither Education or Mathematics wanted there to be no tuition associated with the courses. In response to the second question, Senate was informed that consideration was not given to bringing these changes to Senate for approval because SCUS has the delegated authority to approve new courses and to change existing courses, including changing things like unit value.

7. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Appeals Board (SAB)

i) Annual Report 2022 (S.23-45)

Senate received the Senate Appeals Board (SAB) Annual Report 2022 for information.

A question was asked about the rise in the number of denied appeals when compared to previous years. Senate was informed that the rise in denials can partially be explained by an increase in the overall number of appeals coming forward, but that another contributing factor may be due to

a change in the composition of the committee from previous years, with current members upholding a stricter standard for approval.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Program Name Change for the Certificate in Creative Technologies in Digital Journalism (S.23-46)

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by A. Parmar

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program name change from the Certificate in Creative Technologies in Digital Journalism to the Certificate in Digital Journalism within the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology, effective Fall 2023.”

Arne Eigenfeldt, Associate Professor – School for the Contemporary Arts, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Program Name Change for Theatre (Performance Stream) (S.23-47)

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by S. Spector

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program name change from Theatre (Performance Stream) to Theatre and Performance in the School for the Contemporary Arts within the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology, effective Fall 2023.”

Arne Eigenfeldt, Associate Professor – School for the Contemporary Arts, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) General Education Curriculum Committee Recommendations (S.23-48)

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by A. Parmar

“That Senate approve the recommendations of the General Education Curriculum Committee.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) Request for Renewal Extension for the Institute for Black and African Diaspora Research and Engagement (S.23-49)

Senate received Request for Renewal Extension for the Institute for Black and African Diaspora Research and Engagement for information.

C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) English Language and Culture (ELC) Conditional Admission Pathway (S.23-50)

Moved by W. Parkhouse, seconded by S. Spector

“That Senate approve the three-year pilot Undergraduate Conditional Admission Pathway Program for international application effective January 2024.”

Bertrand Lee, Director, English Language and Culture - Lifelong Learning, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Program Changes (S.23-51)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science, School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Economics, Global Asia Program, Labour Studies Program, Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology, World Languages and Literatures), the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Environment (Geography, School of Environmental Science), and the Faculty of Science (Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Chemistry, Statistics and Actuarial Science).

iii) New Course Proposals (S.23-52)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Dean of Arts Office, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, Global Asia Program, Labour Studies Program), the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Environment (Geography), and the Faculty of Science (Chemistry).

iv) Course Changes (S.23-53)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science, School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (School of Criminology, Sociology and Anthropology), the Beedie School Business, and the Faculty of Science (Chemistry, Dean of Science Office).

D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

i) Program Changes (S.23-54)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Applied Science (School of Sustainability Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Economics, Linguistics), the Beedie School of Business, and the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Publishing Program).

ii) Graduate New Course Proposals (S.23-55)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science, School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), the Beedie School of Business, and the Faculty of Science (Mathematics, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry).

iii) Graduate Course Changes (S.23-56)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Sustainability Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Publishing Program), and the Faculty of Environment (Archeology, School of Resource and Environmental Management).

iv) Graduate Course Reinstatement (S.23-57)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved a course reinstatement in the Beedie School of Business.

E) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)

i) Senate Committee Elections (S.23-58 Revised)

Senate received a summary of the nominations, positions elected by acclamation, positions requiring an online vote, and outstanding vacancies for Senate committees.

8. Other Business

9. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting – Monday, May 15, 2023

Open session adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Kris Nordgren
Senate Secretary pro tem