



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)  
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

## Open Session

**Present:** Joy Johnson, Chair

Barlow, Leanne  
Bhalloo, Shafik  
Brooks-Wilson, Angela  
Chapman, Glenn  
Collard, Mark  
Denholm, Julia  
Dhesa, Priyanka  
Eftenaru, Cristina  
Egri, Carolyn  
Everton, Mike  
Fisher, Brian  
Fiume, Eugene  
Gray, Bonnie  
Hall, Peter  
Herrenbrueck, Lucas  
Jordan, Mark (for Gwen Bird)  
Karaivanov, Alexander  
Kerr, Jeannie  
Kessler, Anke  
Krogman, Naomi  
Laitsch, Dan  
Leznoff, Daniel  
Liu, Connie  
Lysova, Alexandra  
Magnusson, Kris  
Martell, Matt  
Masri, Kamal  
McKenzie, Janis  
Muntean, Reese  
Myers, Gord  
Neustaedter, Carman  
O'Brien, Mary  
O'Neil, Dugan  
Pantophlet, Ralph  
Parent, Michael  
Parmar, Abhishek  
Percival, Colin  
Pratt, Elspeth  
Rassier, Dilson  
Schiphorst, Thecla

Tom Nault, Senate Secretary  
Steven Noel, Recording Secretary

Singh Walia, Harkirat  
Snyder, Jeremy  
Sutherland, Jill  
Szymczyk, Barbara  
Thornton, Allen  
Traversa, Marissa  
Tucker, Rochelle  
Weldon, Laurel  
Williams, Vance

**Absent:**

Abu-Samhan, Mishael  
Bird, Gwen  
Brennand, Tracy  
Bullock, Cécile  
D'Silva, Tyler  
Faris, Reema  
Fung, Aaron  
Hodaly, Alexander  
Manzer, Mussaab  
Nahmiash, Amanda  
Nelson, Todd  
Rincon, Laura  
Sawan, Amani  
Schmidt, Michèle  
Shinkar, Igor  
Stockie, John  
Vrooman, Tamara  
Vuong, Quang  
Whitehurst, David  
Williams, JF  
Zuluaga, Natalia

**In Attendance:**

Birnie, Steve  
Hubinette, Maria  
Kwok, Brian  
Penney, Scott  
Price, David  
Stewart, Arlette  
Woodhall, Amanda

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of March 4, 2024**

The minutes of the open session on March 4, 2024 were approved as distributed.

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of April 8, 2024**

The minutes of the open session on April 8, 2024 were approved as distributed.

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

**5. Report of the Chair**

The Chair, on behalf of Senate, expressed appreciation to the following Senators, whose term of office expire on May 31, 2024: Leanne Barlow; Priyanka Dhesa; Tyler D'Silva; Reema Faris; Alexander Hodaly; Mussaab Manzer; Reese Muntean; Amanda Nahmiash; Todd Nelson; Michael Parent; Elspeth Pratt; Laura Rincon; Amani Sawan; Michèle Schmidt; Igor Shinkar; Harkirat Singh Walia; Quang Vuong; Natalia Zuluaga.

The Chair acknowledged that SFU continues to face challenges due to budgetary shortfalls, and in response, made the decision to eliminate 86 positions. The University also concluded a voluntary separation program last week. Thanks was expressed to members of the SFU community for their efforts to mitigate the impact of these losses, and it was noted that the university has done its best to minimize the impact on teaching, learning and research.

The Chair reported that several leadership searches continue to progress, including searches for the Dean of the Beedie School of Business and the Dean of the Medical School. Doctor Jeremy Schneider has been appointed Dean pro tem in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

On the federal budget, the Chair reported that the 2024 budget contained significant investments in research and graduate student support. SFU and post-secondary institutions across the country continue to meet with government and share the contributions that universities make to provincial and federal economies through research, innovation, skills, training and knowledge mobilization.

The Chair reported that in April, she attended, in her role as President, the annual Universities Canada membership meeting to hear from colleagues across the country. This meeting included presidents from 97 universities and top discussion items included budget challenges and the importance of freedom of expression on university campuses.

**i) Report of the Provost**

The Provost had nothing to report.

**6. Question Period**

i) Senator Singh Walia submitted the following question:

*Given the wide acceptance of the 4.0 (GPA) grade scale at Top Universities on the East Coast of Canada and the fact that it is the standard GPA grade scale in the United States, has SCUS considered transitioning to the 4.0 (GPA) grade scale from the 4.33 grade scale, especially for the Beedie School of Business? The adoption will make it easier for students at the Beedie School of Business when moving for better opportunities to the East Coast, like Toronto or New York in the United States, which are the financial hubs of North America, along with the added benefit of eliminating the need for GPA conversion by students and avoiding any discrepancies in doing so.*

Peter Hall, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic, responded to this question.

Senate was informed that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS) has not considered transitioning to a 4.0 GPA grade scale, but that it is something they could discuss at a future meeting. The 4.33 grading system has been in place since 1979 and changing it would be a large, expensive, and complex project, and would not be something contemplated for just a single faculty given the movement of students between faculties.

## **7. Report of Faculties regarding students who have met requirements for Degrees, Certificates, and Diplomas**

### **i) Candidates – Graduate Credentials (S.24-65)**

Moved by M. O'Brien, seconded by T. Schiphorst

"That Senate approve the awarding of the graduate credentials as recommended by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Further, that the Dean of Graduate Studies and the University Registrar be empowered to make any required amendments to the list of students who have met the requirements for their credential."

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

### **ii) Candidates – Undergraduate Credentials (S.24-66)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Singh Walia

"That Senate approve the awarding of undergraduate credentials as recommended by the Deans of the Faculties. Further, that the respective Dean and the University Registrar be empowered to make any required amendments to the list of students who have met the requirements for their credential."

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

## **8. Reports of Committees**

### **A) Student Discipline Matters**

#### **i) Annual Report 2022-2023 (S.24-67)**

Senate received Student Discipline Matters Annual Report 2022-2023 for information.

Arlette Stewart, Academic Integrity Coordinator, was in attendance to respond to questions.

A question was asked to explain the discrepancy by faculty in reporting academic misconduct. Senate was informed that it is difficult to identify specific causes, but it can be speculated that some departments and faculties provide better training in terms of how the processes and procedures around academic dishonesty should be followed.

A question was asked regarding how to address the overrepresentation of international students in academic incident reports. Senate was informed that academic dishonesty is not exclusively an international student problem, but that international students can face unique challenges around isolation, language, finances, and access to employment that make them more vulnerable to tutoring companies that will exploit that vulnerability for profit.

**B) Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR)**

**i) Senate Review Committee Interim Report #1 (S.24-68)**

Senate received Senate Review Committee Interim Report #1 for information.

**C) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)**

**i) Establishment of the School of Medicine at SFU (S.24-69)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Singh Walia

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the establishment of the School of Medicine as a Faculty at SFU.”

The following resource persons were in attendance to respond to questions:

- Dr. David Price, Acting Dean SFU SM
- Dr. Maria Hubinette, Acting Associate Dean, SFU SM
- Amanda Woodhall, Acting Executive Director of Operations, SFU SM
- Steve Birnie, Director of Curriculum, SFU SM
- Scott Penney, Director Planning and Analysis, SFU
- Brian Kwok, Director of Finance, SFU SM

In response to feedback at the previous meeting, Senator Magnusson, acting Associate Vice-President, Learning and Teaching, did a PowerPoint presentation, after which he took questions. Highlights of the presentation include:

- The tables presented in the business case were validated. There are no funding gaps or projected losses between what SFU asked for and what the Ministries agreed to fund.
- The Ministries affirmed their commitment to fund (through the first 3 years) the balance between the base (\$30.96 M/year) and the projected needs through quarterly budget reports and supplemental budget processes.
- Senate jurisdiction around budget for the purpose of approving a new program is to determine if funding resources are sufficient to enable a program to get started. When looking at what has been committed by government and the supplementary budget processes, \$130.6 million has been committed in operational funding by the government over the next three years, taking it up to the first year of student intake.

- Regarding the Commitment Letter from Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS):
  - The budget, worked on by the ministries and by SFU, has been confirmed by the government, meaning that the Treasury Board and the leadership of government have confirmed the business case set forward.
  - Regarding program size, Government has confirmed the medical school will start with an intake of 48 undergraduate students in fall 2026 and will grow to an intake of 120 by 2036.
  - The PSFS has committed to work with Treasury Board staff to incorporate increases into future fiscal plans as part of the annual budget process.
- Regarding an additional letter from PSFS:
  - PSFS and the Ministry of Health (MoH) are committed to delivering on their mandate commitments and the Health Human Resources Strategy by advancing a School of Medicine at SFU.
  - PSFS has worked closely with SFU to develop a business case for the interim space, and PSFS is working to finalize the Treasury Board submission for approval by the Minister of Finance. This approval is expected later this spring and will formalize access to funding for this project.
- Regarding a support letter from the MoH:
  - MoH works closely with PSFS to support medical education in B.C. and is directly responsible for administering funding and providing oversight of provincial policy direction for post-graduate medical education (PGME). Within current PGME programs, resourcing from the Ministry covers employment costs for medical residents and ensures that administrative and operational structures are in place within the University of British Columbia and health authorities to support them in their dual role as learners and service providers within our health system.
  - MoH is committed to working with SFU to extend the provincial PGME framework to include the new medical school.
- SFU's Finance commitments:
  - Equity: The SFU School of Medicine will be an integral part of SFU. It will utilize central resources and contribute to SFU operations.
  - Transparency: The budget for the operation of the School of Medicine will be open and transparent.
  - Security: SFU will not draw down resources from other faculties to maintain the School of Medicine.
    - In the event that the government reduces funding, or does not meet funding thresholds in future years, SFU will either reduce student intake, reduce operations, or both.
- In response to concerns over the lack of a detailed research plan:
  - Social accountability in medical education goes beyond classroom and clinical learning and extends into the responsibility of post-secondary institutions to support research creation that positively impacts health and health systems.
  - A strong research program will be essential for the long-term success and reputation of the SFUMS as it will attract world-leading researchers who will

enhance existing programs and build new research programs with associated research and philanthropic funding.

- The following research commitments were identified:
  - Planned Research Faculty at steady state: 39 (plus 25 designated as “Leadership”).
  - Research operations/support staff: 20 positions at steady state
  - Search/appointment of an Associate Dean, Research after the appointment of the Founding Dean.
    - First mandate: Develop a robust initial SFU SM Research Plan
  - Allocation of space in new building for a Research Hub (noted in BC as wet lab space, which will be changed to dynamic research hub in Class C proposal)
  - Establishment of a Centre for Excellence in Medical Education Development, Research and Innovation (CE-MEDRI).
  - Establishment of a Centre for Excellence in Family Medicine Scholarship: Education, Research and Primary Care (CE-FMS).
- Clarification of Indigenous commitments:
  - The SFU medical school will embed and equalize Indigenous knowledge systems in learning, research and practice, with the intent to honour SFU’s ARC Calls to Action and the What’s Next Strategic Plan and to address systemic racism and histories of Indigenous experiences with health care e.g., In Plain Sight (2020).
  - The first priority of the program is to meet or exceed accreditation standards for medical practice.
  - The medical program is not about teaching traditional/Indigenous health practices, but rather exploring how traditional practices may augment western medicine.

Addressing concerns raised at the previous meeting around a \$23M deficit in the KPMG business case, Senator Myers informed Senate of the following:

- The conclusion that there was a \$23M deficit at steady state in the KPMG business case was incorrect. This incorrect conclusion was based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the Medical School Business Case process.
- In its current state, SFU has as much of a commitment to fully fund the medical school as one can get from government.
- Though there are still risks associated with the establishment of a medical school, including the fact that the government does not guarantee full funding for even the year after next, the combination of government support along with the Provost’s commitment outlined in point four of the Risk Register to fully insulate the rest of the university from the costs of operating the School of Medicine, make a strong case for the establishment of a medical school at SFU.
- If the issue of funding is no longer a primary concern, the issue of support around a medical school would be whether the medical school described in the business case is up to SFU quality standards, particularly on research.

Given the need to fill Senate and Senate committee vacancies once a new faculty has been approved, a question was asked about if an effective date should be added to the establishment of the School of Medicine. Senate was informed that this item would also be going to the Board of Governors for approval around the funding and the establishment of the program and that an effective date would be included at that time.

Noting existing research in the Faculty of Health Sciences around public health, a concern was raised about the potential that SFU would now have two faculties engaging in similar areas of research with the potential for considerable overlap. Senate was informed that being aware of potential overlap between the Faculty Health Sciences and the medical school is an important concept. As the medical school develops and areas of research come into focus, the goal is to have a complementary research stream focused on the strengths of the institution. Over time, focus may shift into subspecialty types of research but initially the focus will be on primary healthcare.

A concern was raised over the lack of a detailed research plan in the business case, creating uncertainty with decisions involving the distribution of space and the hiring of faculty. Senate was informed that the medical does need a research plan, but that it is premature to do so at this stage of the process, adding that a Dean of Medicine and an Associate Dean, Research, need to be in place to help create that plan. There would be no objection to coming back to Senate and presenting on the research plan of the medical school, but part of being a socially accountable medical school is engaging in a broader conversation about how to build that program. Further, in the sequence of actions required by Senate, the creation of a research plan to guide hiring cannot come before the creation of the School of Medicine.

A question was asked to expend on what the complement of faculty members will look like. Senate was informed that a significant amount of time has been spent considering how many full-time permanent faculty, how many clinical faculty, and how many clinical faculty out in communities will be required to meet the school's mandate. Research has shown that training residents in the communities where they're going to serve makes them more likely to stay in that community. Such training has to be linked to full-time faculty and to researchers. It is estimated that by the time the school gets to 120 full-time students and 140 first-year and 140 second-year residents, the core faculty number will be approximately 70 to 80 full-time faculty, with a 1000 plus part-time clinical faculty out in the community. One of the goals of the medical school is to provide those clinical faculty members the opportunity to engage in scholarly activities and be supported in their research.

A follow-up question was asked as to how many of the 70 to 80 full-time faculty will be tenure-track faculty members. Senate was informed that 39 of these positions will be research oriented tenure-track positions, with an additional 25 members designated as holding some form of leadership position. It was noted that members filling associate dean type roles come from the ranks of tenure-track members, so there is an upward limit of 64 members.

A question was asked to clarify what the requirements are for hiring an initial 19 faculty members over the next year. Senate was informed that if the School of Medicine is approved, a founding Dean would need to be in place, followed by hiring an Associate Dean, Research, an

Associate Dean, Indigenous Health, and an Associate Dean, Academic. Each of these positions would then be tasked with developing the hiring plan and the program. Consideration would then turn to determining what type of curriculum is needed to teach first year medical students and how to construct a research program.

A number of concerns were raised and are summarized as follows:

- Senate should not be voting on expressed commitments but rather on a finalized proposal.
- The proposal reads more as a vocational program rather than as an academic medical program given that the neither the principles or the five key pillars make reference to academic excellence or professional competency.
- The proposal refers to challenging traditional power structures to promote equity, social justice and cultural humility, yet it is not made clear how it is to be achieved. Also, it is not made clear how the goal of being a socially accountable medical school will be achieved.
- Given the many challenges involved in hiring new faculty members, including union considerations, search committee guidelines, tenure and promotion considerations, and a highly competitive labour market, the time and effort required to hire a significant number of faculty in an abbreviated period of time would be considerable and potentially undoable.
- More consultation needs to occur with stakeholders within existing faculties to determine how the vision of a medical school might compliment or enhance research already being conducted.
- If the goal is producing more family doctors, the most efficient way to do so would be to expand on the already existing program in Fraser Health. Also, in terms of what is needed to improve primary care, there is no mention of integrating and using nurse practitioners in this model and nothing in the proposal about addressing international medical graduates.

A number of comments in support of the establishment of the School of Medicine were offered and are summarized as follows:

- The opportunity to join a new faculty at the ground level and assist in the development of a research plan and determining what its goals and output should be may help in the recruitment of new faculty members.
- A medical school offers SFU both an opportunity and an obligation as a public research university in British Columbia to use its innovation to help solve the significant public health challenges faced by the province.
- Though hiring faculty members may be challenging, hiring at the ground level presents an opportunity and can attract clusters of candidates lured by the uniqueness of establishing a new program.
- Given that SFU has been selected by the provincial government to establish a medical school in the shadow of growing healthcare crisis, consideration needs to be given to the potential consequences for SFU failing to act when called upon to do so.



Given certain gaps or delays in information coming to Senate due to either timeline restrictions or information embargoes, a question was asked regarding what documentation Senate will see as this process continues to progress. Senate was informed that the next motion to approve the Full Program Proposals for the Medical Doctor (MD) Program (S.24-70) is conditional on the requirement that the draft course proposals receive the approval of Senate at a later date. It was noted that given Senate's authority, it is able to request that it receive reports on the progress of the medical school and the development of the research and hiring plan.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED,  
with 5 opposed and 2 abstentions noted.

**ii) Full Program Proposal for the Medical Doctor (MD) Program (S.24-70)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by K. Magnusson

"That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the full program proposal for the Medical Doctor (MD) program within the School of Medicine with the requirement that the draft course proposals in Appendix 8.2 are required to receive full approval of Senate at a later date."

Resource persons: same as for the previous item.

Noting a number of gaps in information around admission requirements, it was suggested that such concerns be deferred given that detailed admission requirements will come to a future Senate meeting for approval.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED,  
with 2 abstentions noted.

**iii) Reconstitution and Renewal of the Institute for Black and African Diaspora Research and Engagement (IBADRE) (S.24-71)**

Senate received Reconstitution and Renewal of the Institute for Black and African Diaspora Research and Engagement (IBADRE) for information.

**D) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)**

**i) Program Changes (S.24-72)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management).

**ii) Course Changes (S.24-73)**

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 Engineering Science), and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Psychology).

**9. Other Business**

**10. Information**

**i) Date of the next regular meeting - Monday, June 10, 2024**

Open session adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Tom Nault  
Senate Secretary