



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, December 2, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

Open Session

Present: Joy Johnson, Chair

Al-Rawi, Ahmed
Altman, Rachel
Ashoughian, Gohar
Baker, Micah
Bhalloo, Shafik
Carcano, Luana
Chapman, Glenn
Denholm, Julia
Do, Henry
Eftenaru, Cristina
Egri, Carolyn
Everton, Mike
Fatima, Fatima
Fiume, Eugene
Frank, Richard
Gunawan, Derrick
Hall, Peter
Hashemi, Tara
Khangura, Harinder
Karaivanov, Alexander
Kessler, Anke
Kim, Lisa
Kingsbury, Paul
Krogman, Naomi
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Lysova, Alexandra
Martell, Matt
Masri, Kamal
McKenzie, Janis
Myers, Gord
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Brien, Mary
O'Neil, Dugan
Percival, Colin
Rassier, Dilson
Snyder, Jeremy
Stockie, John

Sutherland, Jill
Szymczyk, Barbara
Thornton, Allen
Tong, Pok Man
Tucker, Rochelle
Vrooman, Tamara
Weldon, Laurel
Whitehurst, David
Williams, Vance
Zickfeld, Kirsten

Absent:

Abu-Samhan, Mishael
Ali, Sikandra
Bagga, Rishu
Brennand, Tracy
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Bullock, Cécile
Collard, Mark
Elhayek, Abdulkarim
Fisher, Brian
Fung, Aaron
Gray, Bonnie
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Kerr, Jeannie
Liu, Landy
Pantophlet, Ralph
Ricker, Amy
Schiphorst, Thecla
Schmidt, Michèle
Traversa, Marissa
Williams, JF

In Attendance:

Behbahani, Laya
Gupta, Sudheer
Jiwani, Suman
Walsby, Charles

Tom Nault, Senate Secretary
Steven Noel, Recording Secretary

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of October 7, 2024

The minutes of the open session on October 7, 2024 were approved as distributed.

3. The Minutes of the Open Session of November 4, 2024 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on January 6, 2025**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the Chair

The Chair thanked those who attended the recent faculty and staff town hall. Another tight budget cycle is anticipated, with changes in government policies, particularly those affecting international student enrollment and visa regulations, continuing to cause uncertainty. This is a challenging time countrywide, with Universities and Colleges across Canada navigating uncertainty and making difficult decisions. SFU is working with the provincial and federal governments to raise awareness of the impact of policy changes on the university and the university sector, and how that translates to the economy. Meetings have been held with Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, with Burnaby Member of Parliament Terry Beech, and with others in the post-secondary sector in British Columbia to advocate changes in terms of dealing with international students. It was noted that Anne Kang has returned as the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills and was recently at SFU touring the Burnaby campus.

The Chair thanked everyone who attended the Royal Society of Canada Celebration of Excellence & Engagement, hosted by SFU from November 7 to 9, 2024.

The Chair reported that SFU recently launched the Global Institute for Agritech (GIA), a multi-faculty research institute that aims to advance agritech research and facilitate collaboration with partners around the world. Consisting of 13 SFU researchers from across seven faculties and advisory council members from government, industry and the post-secondary sector, the GIA will tackle global agricultural challenges arising from climate change and find solutions to food security issues.

The Chair reported that an SFU delegation recently returned from Tanzania, to continue in the development of partnerships with post-secondary institutions in the region, including the Aga Khan University, University of Dar Es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture and Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology. The delegation included VPRI Dugan O'Neil, FENV Dean Naomi Krogman and faculty members from five faculties. The delegation then travelled to Arusha to visit the Arusha Climate and Environment Research Centre (ACER) to plan research and educational activities at the ACER site.

The Chair reported that she, in her role as President, along with the Provost, are heading to India next week to participate in the annual Times Higher Education Innovation & Impact Summit.

i) Report of the Provost

The Provost reported that as the end of the fiscal year approaches, SFU is poised to finish the year with a consolidated balanced budget. In order to do that, the University had to tap into its reserves given the challenges presented by international student enrollment. It was added that international enrollment numbers are low, even in comparison to the target numbers which were already conservative in their projection, which has financial implications going forward.

The Provost also reported that the University is preparing the budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year. As already noted, changes in Federal policy are negatively impacting SFU's ability to attract international students, and as of this date, a shortfall of between 400 and 500 international students is anticipated when compared to target numbers. This shortfall can be directly linked to a projected deficit of \$20 M.

6. Question Period

No questions were submitted.

7. Reports of Committees**A) Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR)****i) GP19 – Employment Equity Policy Review (S.24-159)**

Senate received GP19 – Employment Equity Policy Review for information.

Suman Jiwani, Director - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Faculty Initiatives, and Laya Behbahani, Director - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Staff Initiatives, were in attendance to respond to questions.

A question was asked regarding if SFUFA or another representative faculty group should be given a voice in decisions about equity initiatives. Senate was informed that the policy requires the establishment of an Employment Equity Advisory Committee, which will include representation from SFUFA and all employee groups. Also, as part of the consultation process, written feedback was sought from employee groups.

Citing section 6.4 which states that *workforce representation shall be measured by comparing the SFU workforce to the availability of qualified designated group members in the appropriate labor force*, a concern was raised by the lack of a consistent population as a basis for comparison when determining which groups are underrepresented. Senate was informed that in terms of workforce representation, the establishment of the Employment Equity Advisory Committee would allow for consistent data collection using standards comparable to those of Statistics Canada and therefore comparable to their labour market statistics.

Citing section 6.2.1, a comment was made that SFU could do better to identify and remove any discriminatory barriers to employment, training, development, and promotion of all of our members rather than just the groups listed. Senate was informed that for compliancy purposes this policy has been aligned both in language and approach with Statistics Canada, the Accessible Canada Act, the Accessible British Columbia Act, the Canada Employment Equity Act, the British Columbia Human Rights Code, and the British Columbia Pay Transparency Act.

A comment was made that this policy should align or balance excellence of qualifications and abilities at the hiring process with equity considerations.

Expressing frustration around accessibility at SFU, a comment was made that there's a disconnect between the discussion around policy initiatives and what is actually being implemented and how it fits with initiatives already in place to address equity, diversity, and inclusion. Senate was informed that the role of Accessibility Secretariat was instituted in September 2023 to establish a reporting mechanism as required by the Accessible British Columbia Act. Further, SFU's inaugural Accessibility Plan was recently posted on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion webpage, outlining priorities for year 1, year 3, and year 5. In addition to the establishment of an Accessibility Secretariat, an Accessibility Committee has been formed with student, faculty and staff representation to provide advice, oversight and incorporate feedback. Given that much of the work staggered over five years, reporting will go out to the broader community highlighting priority items and if those priorities were met.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Proposal for a Faculty of Graduate Studies and Terms of Reference for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Assembly (S.24-160)

Motion 1:

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by T. Schiphorst

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the establishment of a Faculty of Graduate Studies, effective February 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

Motion 2:

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by J. Stockie

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Terms of Reference for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Assembly, effective February 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) External Review Report and Action Plan for the Department of Chemistry (S.24-161)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by K. Masri

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Department of Chemistry that resulted from its external review.”

Charles Walsby, Chair - Department of Chemistry, was in attendance to respond to questions.

A concern was raised with the language in the report calling for changes to course content, methods of instruction, and methods of assessment around indigenization. Also, a concern was raised with the targeted hiring and retention of women faculty members. With regards to the

indigenization of curriculum, Senate was informed that the goal is not indigenize every course, but there are courses where chemistry is a natural partner for this and identifying that as part of the external review allows expertise and resources to be utilized by instructors who wish to do so. Regarding the hiring of women instructors, by any metric the Department of Chemistry has had low numbers of female faculty members – currently 4 out of 27 research faculty.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) External Review Report and Action Plan for the Department of Linguistics (S.24-162)
Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by J. McKenzie

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Department of Linguistics that resulted from its external review.”

Citing a recommendation for establishing minimum funding levels for MA students regardless of track, a question was asked regarding if it is common to guarantee funding for course-based projects. Senate was informed that the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences offers a diversity of programs, and while not common, many departments do have course-based MA programs considered as being academic or research oriented in nature.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science (S.24-163)

Senate received External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science for information.

v) Full Program Proposal for the Graduate Certificate in Global Management (S.24-164)
Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by L. Kim

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for the Graduate Certificate in Global Management within Beedie School of Business, effective Fall 2025.”

Sudheer Gupta, Associate Dean - Graduate Programs, Beedie School of Business, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

vi) Program Termination of the Bachelor of Arts, Environmental Specialty Major and Honours (S.24-165)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Do

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the dissolution of the Environmental Specialty Major and the Environmental Specialty Honours programs in the Department of Geography within the Faculty of Environment effective Fall 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

vii) Program Termination of the Master of Science in Ecological Restoration (S.24-166)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by N. Krogman

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the dissolution of the Master of Science in Ecological Restoration within the Faculty of Environment effective Summer 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

viii) Revocation of Program Changes to the Management of Technology MBA Program (S.24-167)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by C. Liu

“That Senate approve the revocation of the program changes to the Management of Technology MBA program (S.24-116) within the Beedie School of Business, effective immediately.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ix) Termination of the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction (S.24-168)

Senate received Termination of the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction for information.

C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) Program Changes (S.24-169)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Beedie School of Business.

ii) Course Changes (S.24-170)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course change in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Engineering Science, School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering, School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Semester in Dialogue, Dean of Arts Office, French, Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies, Indigenous Studies, Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology, School of Criminology, School for International Studies), the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts), the Faculty of Environment (School of Environmental Science).

Concern was expressed by a number of Senators over Semester in Dialogue courses being withdrawn given that this program has been a signature program of SFU. Senate was informed that the Semester in Dialogue is a resource intensive program and the discontinuance is based on resource allocation. It was added, however, that SCUS should give further consideration to finding a home for this program and the allocation of resources.

iii) Removal of WQB Designations (S.24-171)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved removal of WQB designations.

D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

i) Graduate Minimum Funding Update (S.24-172)

Senate received Graduate Minimum Funding Update for information.

E) Senate Library Committee (SLC) Annual Report 2023/2024 (S.24-173)

Senate received the Senate Library Committee (SLC) Annual Report 2023/2024 for information.

F) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)

i) Senate Committee Elections (S.24-174)

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

i) Academic Plan (2025-2030): Update and Draft Priorities Matrix (S.24-175)

Senate received Academic Plan (2025-2030): Update and Draft Priorities Matrix for information.

9. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting - Monday, January 6, 2025

Open session adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Tom Nault
Senate Secretary