



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, February 3, 2025 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

Open Session

Present: Michael Everton, Chair

Al-Rawi, Ahmed
Altman, Rachel
Ashoughian, Gohar
Baker, Micah
Bhalloo, Shafik
Brennand, Tracy
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Bullock, Cécile
Carcano, Luana
Chapman, Glenn
Denholm, Julia
Do, Henry
Eftenaru, Cristina
Everton, Mike
Fisher, Brian
Fiume, Eugene
Frank, Richard
Gray, Bonnie
Gunawan, Derrick
Hall, Peter
Hashemi, Tara
Johnson, Joy
Khangura, Harinder
Karaivanov, Alexander
Kingsbury, Paul
Krogman, Naomi
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Lysova, Alexandra
Martell, Matt
Masri, Kamal
McKenzie, Janis
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Brien, Mary
O'Neil, Dugan
Percival, Colin
Rassier, Dilson

Schiphorst, Thecla
Schmidt, Michèle
Snyder, Jeremy
Stockie, John
Sutherland, Jill
Szymczyk, Barbara
Thornton, Allen
Tucker, Rochelle
Vrooman, Tamara
Weldon, Laurel
Whitehurst, David
Williams, JF
Zickfeld, Kirsten

Absent:

Abu-Samhan, Mishael
Ali, Sikandra
Bagga, Rishu
Collard, Mark
Egri, Carolyn
Elhayek, Abdulkarim
Fatima, Fatima
Fung, Aaron
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Kessler, Anke
Kim, Lisa
Liu, Landy
Myers, Gord
Pantophlet, Ralph
Ricker, Amy
Tong, Pok Man
Traversa, Marissa
Williams, Vance

In Attendance:

Mason-Innes, Tracey
Nordgren, Kris

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 December 2, 2024

The minutes of the open session on December 2, 2024 were approved as distributed.

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

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that last week, SFU announced the hiring of Jon Harding as Vice-President, Finance and Administration (VPFA), effective March 17, 2025. Jon comes to SFU from his role as Secretary-Treasurer and CFO in School District 36 (Surrey), where he led a portfolio that included facilities, financial services, information technology and risk management. As the former VPFA at Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Director, Financial Services for the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, Jon brings post-secondary and government experience to his role at SFU and understands the current challenges facing our sector. Thanks was extended to members of the search committee, to Martin Porchurko for his 14 years of service to SFU, and to Karamjeet Heer, AVP Finance, who will step in as VPFA pro tem from February 8th to March 17th.

Noting the message sent earlier in the day by the Vice-President, Academic about SFU's 2025 allocation of Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs), the Chair reported that SFU has now received details from the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills regarding SFU's allocation of PALs for 2025. The undergraduate allocation is about 300-350 lower than anticipated, meaning the university will not meet its planned undergraduate enrolment targets for international students, while allotment of PALs for graduate students should be sufficient. It was added that the federal approach to immigration, followed by the interpretation of that direction by the Province, continues to create uncertainty and will have a negative impact on the budget this year and for years to come. A proactive approach in minimizing expenses and reviewing other streams of revenue generation means SFU will have a balanced budget in the current fiscal year.

The Chair reported that last week she, in her role as President, was in Victoria to meet with members of the provincial government to express concern and advocate for enhancements and changes to create a sustainable funding model for the post-secondary sector. While in Victoria, she had productive meetings with the Minister of Health, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, Minister of Agriculture and Food, and Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. She also met with the Deputy Minister of Infrastructure, and senior Ministerial staff from the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, and Ministry of Finance. During these meetings she advocated for SFU and emphasized the importance of the sustainability of the post-secondary sector.

The Chair reported that in recent weeks a number of decisions were made in consideration of managing the budget and protecting the academic mission of the university:

- On January 22nd, the Provost shared the decision to close two of SFU's community engagement offices in Surrey and Vancouver. As a result of these closures, 11 positions were eliminated. SFU has a long history of community engagement, however, ongoing budget challenges mean the university must look for ways to ensure financial stability while delivering on its mission.
- On January 15th, the strategy for SFU Athletics and Recreation was released. As part of the new strategy, the university confirmed that the football program will not be returning. It was announced in 2023 that the program was ending, and that decision has now been made final. While the original decision to close the football program was due to the team not having a place to play in the NCAA and not related to budget concerns, the situation has evolved since that time. In a resource-constrained environment, resources need to be maximized and the university must continue to make decisions that protect the university's academic mission.

The Chair reported that the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development announced close to \$23M in funding from NSERC's Lab to Market Grant Competition to establish the National Invention to Innovation (i2I) Network, expanding the award-winning Invention to Innovation program founded at SFU in 2015. SFU and 13 leading Canadian research universities and health research institutes, along with 57 partner organizations, will collaborate on the National i2I Network. With this funding, the i2I Network will offer opportunities such as a full-time commercialization post-doctoral program and Faculty Innovation Fellows program focusing on overcoming barriers in STEM and healthcare research commercialization.

i) Report of the Provost

Reinforcing what was mentioned earlier, the Provost reported that SFU received 300-350 fewer PAL allotments than anticipated. 976 undergraduate PALs were allocated, which is low from a budgetary perspective, while 1106 graduate PALs were allocated, which should be enough to cover the number of graduate students at SFU. Noting SFU's reliance on transfers from Fraser International College (FIC) for international student enrollment, it was added that FIC has received a third of the PALs they had requested and were expecting from the government. Evaluations are still being done on the financial consequences resulting from these allocations, but more information will be brought to Senate at future meetings.

Noting that PALs given to students who do not end up coming to SFU are non-transferrable, a question was asked about lobbying for a less punitive PAL allocation process. Senate was informed that the current situation has been challenging for all public institutions and that the President has recently travelled to Victoria to speak with the deputy minister to explain why the current PAL allocations are financially unfeasible. Senators are encouraged to reach out to the government to advocate for change, but it was noted that the federal government allocates PALs to the provinces and it has proven difficult to get them to change their minds on this subject.

Given the news around PAL allocation, a question was asked regarding if more budget cuts will be required in the near future. Senate was informed that based on previous lower projections, SFU has already distributed budget cuts across mostly non-academic portfolios and if those savings happen as expected, the university should have close to a balanced budget for 2025-2026. It was added, however, that the current PAL allocations are a new factor and analysis must be done to understand the full implications.

A question was asked around what is SFU's PAL conversion rate and what can be do to improve it. Senate was informed that the exact number for the conversion rate isn't known at this time, but that steps are being taken to increase conversion. This includes raising the deposit amount for international student from \$1000 to \$5000, speaking with potential students to better confirm their intent to come to SFU, and diversifying recruitment to be less reliant on FIC, who has been the main source for international student recruitment.

6. Question Period

i) Senator Tucker submitted the following question:

The parking situation on campus at particular times of the week has become outrageous. Faculty who arrive after 10am cannot find any parking anywhere close to their offices/classrooms despite having paid for monthly passes. People are parking in reserved and disability spots and there is next to no enforcement (no evidence of ticketing). Yesterday I witnessed significant aggression. Students in my Tuesday afternoon class that starts at 230 are continuously arriving late and complaining about parking. I sat on the parking committee for years and we had been making progress but it now seems like we have gone ten steps backwards. This is encouraging people to stay off campus. The parking office is only open for a few hours a day. Has the budget of the parking office been cut? What can be done to address this situation?

Tracey Mason-Innes, Executive Director - Campus Services, responded to this question.

Senate was informed that the Parking & Sustainable Mobility Office has been hearing more about incidents as those described in the question since the Fall 2024 term. There have not been budget cuts made to the Parking Office and since it is an ancillary service, its required to cover its own cost. Steps have been taken to double the number of parking enforcement staff, and it was noted that both ticketing and the impounding of vehicles is up significantly over las year. Steps are also being taken to improve response time and rectify delays in hiring due to the hiring freeze. In response to concerns over safety, it was added that Campus Security will be brought into this discussion.

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

i) **Candidates - Graduate Credentials (S.25-20)**

Moved by M. O'Brien, seconded by JF Williams

"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.25-21)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by M. Martell

“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) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Establishment of the i2I Research and Innovation Institute (S.25-22)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by M. O’Brien

“That Senate approve the establishment of the i2I Research and Innovation Institute for a five-year term”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) External Review of the Department of Gerontology (S.25-23)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Do

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Department of Gerontology that resulted from its External Review”

Noting that the average completion time for the Thesis MA option is over 10 terms, and for the MA non-thesis option its about 9 terms, a question was asked regarding if the department intends to take steps to address this. Senate was informed that based on the recommendations in the report, the department is looking at a number of curricular reforms with the goal of reducing completion times.

Given the small number of faculty in this department, a concern was raised with *Recommendation 7*, which calls for the development and implementation of an EDI strategic framework, and how that might burden faculty members. Senate was informed that faculty and graduate students in the department have been enthusiastic about this issue and have proposed it in their response to the external review by asking *for an EDI workshop addressing EDI assessment and setting EDI objectives for the unit.*

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) External Review of the School of Criminology (S.25-24)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by JF Williams

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the School of Criminology that resulted from its External Review.”

Noting the recommendation that the *university offer training in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for faculty, especially for those on search committees*, a question was asked regarding if the reviewers are suggesting that EDI training be mandatory for all faculty members, given that EDI training is already required for search committee members. Senate was informed that this recommendation was made based on the reporting by some faculty members that they were unaware that such training is available and it was not recommended with the intention of making the training mandatory.

Citing the recommendation for increased diversity with respect to immutable characteristics such as race and the use of restrictive hiring ads for Black and Indigenous scholars, a comment was made that many faculty members view discrimination on the basis of race when hiring as deeply unethical. Moreover, in this academic environment, diversity of perspective and experience should be the top priority in the hiring of faculty.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) Full Program Proposal for an Applied Mathematics Minor (S.25-25)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by JF Williams

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for an Applied Mathematics Minor in the Department of Mathematics within the Faculty of Science.”

Based on the motion in S.25-29 approving the definition of the term *concentration* and the term *stream*, a friendly amendment was suggested and accepted to replace the word concentration with stream in the calendar entry of the program proposal.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

v) Program Change for the Graduate Certificate in Financial Analysis (S.25-26)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Do

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program changes for the Graduate Certificate in Financial Analysis within Beedie School of Business, effective Fall 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

vi) Program Change for the MEng in Sustainable Energy Engineering (S.25-27)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by M. Martell

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program changes for the Master of Engineering in Sustainable Energy Engineering in the School of Sustainable Energy Engineering within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, effective Fall 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

vii) Revised Terms of Reference for the Legacy for Airway Health Chair in Health Communication (S.25-28)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by A. Lysova

“That Senate approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Legacy for Airway Health Chair in Health Communication.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

viii) Stream and Concentration Definitions (S.25-29)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by K. Masri

“That Senate approve the addition of the term concentration and stream, as defined below, to the undergraduate credential definitions in the Academic Calendar, effective Fall 2025.

A concentration provides a depth of study in a specific area within a major and/or stream. It usually consists of a minimum of 12 upper division units, is in most cases not a program requirement, and has fewer unit requirements than a stream.

A stream is a core requirement within some majors. It represents the chosen route through the major and usually consists of lower and upper division courses. A stream is a program requirement where students may select a general program or a stream.”

A question was asked regarding if an asterisk should be placed by the calendar language for certain programs that are not yet in compliance. Senate was informed that additional changes will be brought forward by SCUS next month, noting that they will be effective for the same calendar as these changes.

A question was asked regarding if both concentrations and streams are included on the transcript when a student graduates. Senate was informed that both concentrations and streams do appear on a student’s transcript, but do not appear on a student’s parchment.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ix) Suspension of Admission to the French Studies Extended Minor (S.25-30)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Do

“That Senate approve and the suspension of admission to the French Studies Extended Minor in the Department of French within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, effective Fall 2025.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

x) Termination of the Humanities Honours Program (S.25-31)

Senate received Termination of the Humanities Honours Program for information.

B) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)

i) New Course Proposals (S.25-32)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (French, Global Humanities, School of Public Policy), the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts, School of Communication), the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management), and the Faculty of Science (Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Office of the Dean).

ii) Course Changes (S.25-33)

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 Computing Science, School of Engineering Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Economics, English, History, Linguistics, Psychology, World Languages and Literatures), the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts, School of Communication), the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management), and the Faculty of Science (Mathematics).

C) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

i) Graduate Studies 2025-2030 Strategic Plan (S.25-34)

Senate received Graduate Studies 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for information.

Senator O'Brien, Dean of Graduate Studies, did a brief presentation, following which she took questions.

Citing a line under *Policy Review* stating that policies should *support inclusive excellence and ensure equitable outcomes*, a question was asked about how policy can ensure equitable outcomes. Senate was informed that a more suitable phrasing would be to say that policy can promote equitable outcomes rather than ensure.

ii) Annual Report 2024 (S.25-35)

Senate received the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) Annual Report 2024 for information.

iii) Program Changes (S.25-36)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Philosophy), and the Faculty of Education.

iv) New Course Proposals (S.25-37)

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), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (French, School for International Studies), and the Faculty of Science (Mathematics).

Given the potential overlap between *CMPT 776 Quantum Algorithms* and *MATH 776 Quantum Computation*, a comment was made that Computing Science and Mathematics should find a way to offer these courses as a single entity. Senate was informed that these courses will be offered on an alternating basis and in a way that allows students from the other program to take the course.

v) Course Changes (S.25-38)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (School for International Studies, School of Criminology).

D) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)**i) Senate Committee Elections (S.25-39)**

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

9. Other Business**i) Strategic Research Plan Progress Report for Year 2024 and Year 2025 Goals (S.25-19)**

Senate received Strategic Research Plan Progress Report for Year 2024 and Year 2025 Goals for information.

Senator O'Neil, Vice-President, Research, did a brief presentation, following which he took questions.

A question was asked regarding if program evaluation using scientific outcome data is being considered to determine the effectiveness of these research initiatives. Senate was informed that each of the projects in the implementation plan has a differing set of goals, so each will be looked at on an individual basis. As to doing a formal scientific program evaluation, that is something that can be considered in 2028 when evaluating the entirety of implementation plan.

A question was asked about protecting research and how the selection of faculties will be undertaken when it comes to gathering information. Senate was informed that the intention is to

select two faculties with different research considerations to manage and then determining which processes apply more broadly to the wider university.

A question was asked regarding if the challenges around the Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) program are purely administrative. Senate was informed that the challenges go beyond being solely administrative. Administration of the program is set to move from Graduate Studies to the VPRI portfolio, and consideration is being given to revising the program. Feedback from the faculty community is that the amount of support provided for an individual USRA is too low and the burden on faculty grants keeps going up year by year. Also, it has been found that some departments or schools are active participants in the program while others do not participate at all, even with the same opportunity to participate.

A question was asked to clarify what advocating for *designated postdoctoral spaces* refers to. Senate was informed that this refers to advocating for more communal spaces. One of the issues that postdoc students identified is the difficulty in trying to build a sense of community across disciplines given the lack of events and gathering spaces.

10. Information

i) Date of the next regular meeting - Monday, March 3, 2025

Open session adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Tom Nault
Senate Secretary