



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on
Monday, February 2, 2026 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

Open Session

Present: Michael Everton, Chair

Accettola, Evan
Ali, Sikandra
Al-Rawi, Ahmed
Altman, Rachel
Bangsberg, David
Black, Sam
Carcano, Luana
Chapman, Glenn
Collard, Mark
Crage, Suzanna
Eftenaru, Cristina
Ferenc, Ava
Fisher, Brian
Fiume, Eugene
Frank, Richard
Gislason, Maya
Gough, Aidan
Gray, Bonnie
Gunawan, Darrick
Hall, Peter
Hashemi, Tara
Heide, Dai (for Laurel Weldon)
Herrenbrueck, Lucas
Hubinette, Maria
Kim, Lisa
Kingsbury, Paul
Laitsch, Dan
Leznoff, Daniel
Liu, Connie
Lysova, Alexandra
Markey, Sean
Martell, Matt
Masri, Kamal
McKenzie, Janis
Mongrain, Steeve (for Laurel Weldon)
Myers, Gord
Neustaedter, Carman
O'Brien, Mary
O'Neil, Dugan
Percival, Colin
Price, David
Rassier, Dilson
Schiphorst, Thecla

Shulepova, Sofia
Snyder, Jeremy
Stockie, John
Sutherland, Jill
Thornton, Allen
Toma, Mary
Washington, Marvin
Whitehurst, David
Williams, Vance
Zickfeld, Kirsten

Absent:

Ashoughian, Gohar
Bagga, Rishu
Baker, Micah
Bhalloo, Shafik
Brennand, Tracy
Brooks-Wilson, Angela
Choi, Jake
Denholm, Julia
Dhelia, Priyanka
Do, Henry
Gebre, Engida
Jahandideh, Roman
Johnson, Joy
Khangura, Harinder
Kwan, Isabelle
Liu, Landy
Murali, Surya
Pantophlet, Ralph
Schmidt, Michèle
Szymczyk, Barbara
Travers
Vrooman, Tamara
Weldon, Laurel

In Attendance:

Bhayani, Galib
Boleak, Mike
Gupta, Sudheer
Skura, Melinda
Vanstone, Meredith

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of January 5, 2026

The minutes of the open session on January 5, 2026 were approved as distributed.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

- i) Referring to the discussion on medical school admissions at the October 2025 Senate meeting, it was pointed out that it remains unclear if open-stream candidates would still have a chance to participate in the multiple mini-interview (MMI) process if more candidates than the maximum limit apply through the indigenous stream and are all deemed suitable for the MMI.

Senate was informed that a response was distributed to all Senators the Friday before the meeting.

- ii) From January, there was a question from Senator Percival about further expanding the title change of the Religious Studies Certificate to religious and belief studies given the increase in people identifying as something other than religious.

Senate was informed that such consideration was not given to expanding the scope of the certificate.

- iii) From January, Senator Percival asked a question about the rationale for introducing MATH 141 as an alternative to MACM 101, effectively separating mathematics and computing after these subjects were intentionally combined back in the 1990s.

Senate was informed that several decades ago, namely during the 1990s, the School of Computing Science replaced CMPT 205 with MACM 101, while the Math Department replaced MATH 243 with MACM 201. Since the introduction of these courses, the situation has evolved to the point that joint discrete mathematics courses do not optimally serve all students in both disciplines. A few years ago, Senate approved the creation of a new course, CMPT 210: Probability and Computing and the replacement of MACM 201 by CMPT 210 in the Computing Science Major. As a result, there's fewer Computing Science students that now take MACM 201, and so the change was motivated by better serving Computing Science students, a discipline where probabilistic algorithms form a basis for many of the computing methods. Over the last years, it has appeared that, in a similar way, MACM 101 does not serve Mathematics students as well as it did at the time of its creation. In particular, as part of the review of its departmental-level educational goals established during the most recent external review, the Department of Mathematics identified teaching mathematical reasoning to students as a priority. Many mathematics departments have a dedicated course whose aim is to do just that, and in the job market, formal reasoning is a key aspect that differentiate students with a mathematics degree from other programs. With the introduction of MATH 141, partly to address this, Mathematics invited Computing Science for comments on the new course, the proposal and the modification

to the mathematics major and honours, and there were no concerns. Thus, the overlap between Math 141 and other courses such as MACM 101 and MATH 242 is minimal.

4. **Report of the Chair**

The Chair reported that the province's public post-secondary review is continuing to roll out. President Johnson has met with Don Avison. He is being selective in who he chooses to interview, and he has now met with representatives from across the sector, including student groups and unions. The report and recommendations are currently scheduled to be delivered by March 15, 2026, and Senate will be provided updates as the process moves ahead.

The Chair reported that the federal government allocated British Columbia 32,596 study permit application spaces for 2026, a 57% cut from the 2025 allocation. This follows a 40% cut to British Columbia's undergraduate allocation in 2025 compared to 2024. This year, the provincial government allocated 80% of available permits to public post-secondary institutions—approximately a 30% increase from the number of permits allotted to public institutions in 2025. This is a welcome change and one that SFU has been advocating for with the provincial government. SFU received 1,500 undergraduate provincial attestation letters (PALs) for 2026. Last year, SFU received 900 PALs initially, and due to our high utilization, received another 400 by request during the summer. In addition, graduate programs are no longer subject to the PAL process, allowing for increased utilization of PALs for undergraduate students.

The Chair reported that last month, President Johnson shared that SFU would be participating in the Canada Impact+ Research Chairs program, which is aimed at recruiting international researchers to Canada. SFU is eligible to receive up to \$6M for researchers recruited under this program and launched a recruitment initiative in mid-December to attract nominees in strategic areas. Campus visits from top candidates are expected to begin in early February.

The Chair reported that the School of Medicine continues to advance as it prepares to welcome its first cohort of medical students this August. Following successful recruitment and outreach efforts, the School's application window closed on December 8, 2025 with more than 1,500 applications received. The next stage of applicant review has now begun. Construction is now underway on the School's interim space in Surrey, and early design and development work on the School's permanent space has started. Multiple streams of research planning are also underway. Contributing to this work, SFU recently signed an MOU with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) that commits the university to aligning with core principles of research involving Indigenous peoples, as well as working with the FNHA to identify opportunities for advancing the health and wellness needs of B.C. First Nations.

The Chair reported that in January, SFU's Community-Engaged Research Initiative (CERi) celebrated its 5-year anniversary. Since its inception in 2020, CERi has supported hundreds of students, scholars and community organizations through flexible research space, funding, graduate training and media production—all designed to mobilize academic knowledge into action. Thanks was extended to all who have been involved in this work and for advancing SFU's commitment to community-engaged research.

The Chair acknowledged that February is Black History Month (BHM). This year, the theme of BHM as announced by the federal government is *Honouring Black Brilliance Across Generations*. There are a number of activities occurring across the university in honour of BHM, including the opening of SFU's long-awaited Black Student Centre.

i) Report of the Provost

The Provost had nothing to report.

ii) Presentation by Senator O'Neil on SFU's International Rankings

Senator O'Neil did a brief presentation on SFU's international rankings, following which he took questions.

Mike Boleak, Director - Research Intelligence Office, was in attendance to respond to questions.

In regard to SFU slipping in the rankings, a question was asked if this could be related to an increasing number of schools being added into consideration by the ranking body. Senate was informed that an increase in the number of schools being considered by the ranking body does play a role in where SFU gets ranked. At the beginning of a 10-year period, both Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) had fewer than 1,000 schools ranked. Now, one of them has 1,500 schools ranked and the other more than 2,000 schools ranked.

In response to a number of comments advocating that an improvement to the student-to-faculty ratio would positively impact SFU's ranking, Senate was informed that hiring faculty members that are research productive would have a strong impact on the rankings.

A question was asked about the weighting given to employer surveys in the reputational component of the QS rankings. Senate was informed that reputation makes up 45% of the ranking, and of that 45%, 15% is based on employer surveys.

5. Question Period

No questions were submitted.

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

i) Candidates – Graduate Credentials (S.26-14)

Moved by M. O'Brien, seconded by J. Stockie

“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.26-15)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by S. Black

“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

7. Reports of Committees

A) Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR)

i) Revisions to GP 17 - Health and Safety Policy (S.26-16)

Senate received Revisions to GP 17 - Health and Safety Policy for information.

Galib Bhayani, Chief Safety and Risk Officer, and Melinda Skura, Senior Director – Environmental Health & Safety, were in attendance to respond to questions.

A concern was raised with the wording in section 4.2, in that it prohibits anyone who is impaired from entering any university space or location where university business is conducted, regardless of whether they are engaged in work-related activities. Since the intent of the policy seems to be to prohibit impairment while actively working, as clarified in Section 4.21, the wording may need to be narrowed to better reflect that intention. Senate was informed that consideration will be given to tightening the language in the section.

B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)

i) Program Changes for Management of Technology MBA (S.26-17)

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

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program changes for the Management of Technology MBA within the Beedie School of Business, effective Fall 2026.”

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

Given the rapidly evolving nature of artificial intelligence (AI), a question was asked if it's premature to offer a course on the management and governance of AI, especially in anticipation of the necessity to be constantly updating course content. Senate was informed AI is already widely used in business, and its rapid growth means students must learn not only how to use AI, but also how to use it responsibly, ethically, and with proper governance. It was added that as AI technology and regulatory frameworks evolve, the course will need to be updated regularly to keep pace.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Program Changes for MA in English (S.26-18)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by A. Lysova

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the program changes for the Master of Arts in English in the Department of English within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, effective Fall 2026”

Noting that ENGL 820 (Print Culture) is offered each fall, and new course ENGL 825 (Studies in the History, Theory and Practice of Research Creation) will be offered each spring, a question was asked about why they wouldn't be offered in the same term if they are part of different specializations. Senate was informed that these courses will be offered in different terms because the department can only run a limited number of graduate courses in each term and doesn't want to limit the range of courses it could offer.

A concern was raised with the creation of the MA Specialization in Research Creation being encouraged and sanctioned by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). It was suggested that this could imply that academic priorities are being driven by government influence rather than by independent academic considerations. Senate was informed that the inclusion of the SSHRC was likely due to it being the primary funding organization for English federally, and indicates that this is a recognized scholarly endeavor within the field of English, and particularly within Canada.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iii) Suspension of Admission to the Individualized Interdisciplinary Studies Pathway (S.26-19)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by J. McKenzie

“That Senate approve the suspension of admission to the Individualized Interdisciplinary Studies Pathway within the Faculty of Graduate Studies, effective Fall 2026.”

A question was asked about how many students were choosing this pathway. Senate was informed that there are currently about 29 students in Individualized Interdisciplinary Studies (INS), but it functions as a pathway rather than a formal graduate program. Since interdisciplinary work and co-supervision across units are already available outside the INS pathway, it has become somewhat redundant. The faculty will continue supporting interdisciplinary work, including co-supervision between different units, and is exploring the possibility of creating a provincially recognized interdisciplinary graduate program in the future.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

iv) Termination of the Development and Sustainability Graduate Certificate (S.26-20)

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by S. Black

“That Senate approve and recommend to Board of Governors the termination of the Development and Sustainability Graduate Certificate in the School of Resource and Environmental Management within the Faculty of Environment.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

v) External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Global Humanities (S.26-21)

Senate received External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Global Humanities for information.

vi) External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Political Science (S.26-22)

Senate received External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Political Science for information.

vii) External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Interactive Arts and Technology (S.26-23)

Senate received External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Interactive Arts and Technology for information.

C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)**i) SFU School of Medicine: Revised Admission Criteria (S.26-24)**

Moved by P. Kingsbury, seconded by J. Sutherland

“That Senate approve the revisions to the admissions policy for the Medical Doctor (MD) program within the School of Medicine, effective Fall 2026, for applicants submitting their application for Fall 2027 and later.”

Referencing a line in the document stating that *Applicants must also submit as a one-page narrative outlining their Indigenous lived experience*, a question was asked to explain the rationale for this requirement. Senate was informed that the language comes from the University’s Indigenous Welcoming Procedure and is intended to offer flexible ways for individuals to affirm their Indigenous citizenship or membership. Instead of requiring only government-issued ID or official community documentation, it allows multiple forms of proof, potentially including written statements, so people can provide whatever documentation they have available.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Program Changes (S.26-25)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Deans Office, Cognitive Science Program, School of Criminology, Economics, English, French, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Gerontology, Global Humanities, Indigenous Studies, School for International Studies, Labour Studies Program, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Urban Studies Program, World Languages and Literatures), the Faculty of Environment (Geography, School of Resource and Environmental Management), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences, Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Chemistry, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry).

iii) New Course Proposals (S.26-26)

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 (School of Criminology, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Linguistics, World Languages and Literatures), the Faculty of Environment (School of Environmental Science), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences).

iv) Course Changes (S.26-27)

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, School of Computing Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Economics, History, Linguistics, Political Science), the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Environment (Geography, School of Resource and Environmental Management), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences, Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology).

v) WQB Approvals and Removals (S.26-28)

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved and removed WQB designations in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (History, Political Science, PPE), the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Contemporary Arts), and the Faculty of Science (Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science).

D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)**i) Graduate General Regulation 1.3 Admissions (S.26-29)**

Moved by M. O'Brien, seconded by

"That Senate approve the revisions to Graduate General Regulation 1.3 Admissions, effective Fall 2026."

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Annual Report 2025 (S.26-30)

Senate received the Senate Graduate Studies Committee Annual Report 2025 for information.

iii) Program Changes (S.26-31)

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Environment (Geography), and the Faculty of Science (Earth Sciences).

iv) Course Changes (S.26-32)

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

E) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)

i) Senate Committee Elections (S.26-33)

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, March 2, 2026

Open session adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Tom Nault
Secretary of Senate