

McMaster University

SENATE MINUTES

VOL. XCII

Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

Zoom

PRESENT: Dr. David Farrar, Dr. Carlos Filipe, Dr. Christina Baade, Dr. Dina Brooks, Dr. Doug Welch, Dr. Graham Scott, Dr. Jeff Weitz, Dr. Jeremiah Hurley, Dr. Judy Fudge, Dr. Juliet Daniel, Dr. Karen Mossman, Dr. Katherine Cuff, Dr. Kathryn Mattison, Dr. Kim Dej, Dr. Kim Jones, Dr. Leonard Waverman, Dr. Lia Bronsard, Dr. Maikel Rheinstadter, Dr. Martin Horn, Dr. Matthew Miller, Dr. Maureen MacDonald, Dr. Megan Brickley, Dr. Melinda Gough, Dr. Pamela Swett, Dr. Patrick Bennett, Dr. Peter Graefe, Dr. Sherman Cheung, Dr. Susan Tighe, Dr. Todd Hoare, Ms Alyaa Abdelhalim, Ms Beth Manganelli Staite, Mr. Gary Collins, Ms Haleigh Wallace, Ms Leah Allan, Ms Mary Williams, Ms Moira Taylor, Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Ms Nicole Anozie, Mr. Roger Couldrey, Mr. Ryan Whitcher, Ms Andrea Thyret-Kidd (University Secretary), Ms Michelle Zheng (Associate University Secretary), Ms Alysha Sless (Governance Coordinator)

REGRETS: Dr. Ishwar Puri, Dr. Paul O’Byrne, Dr. Peter Miu, Mr. Jim McCaughey, Dr. Nicola Nicolici

OBSERVERS: Dr. Arig al Shaibah, Ms Esme Davies, Ms Linda Coslovi, Dr. Jean Wilson, Ms Maanvi Dhillon, Ms Melissa Pool, Dr. Elkafi Hassini, Dr. Peter Mascher, Dr. Sandra Carroll, Mr. Sean Van Koughnett, Ms Vivian Lewis

A. OPEN SESSION

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Farrar welcomed members to the meeting.

Dr. Farrar explained that as Senators know, Dr. Tighe is leading a cross-campus “Return to McMaster” group, to work through the scenarios and planning for the Fall. The oversight committee and the various working groups have been working diligently over the last two months and are focused on making decisions that are agile, evidence-based, and place the health, safety, and wellbeing of our community first. Dr. Farrar noted that at this point it is impossible to know exactly how the pandemic will evolve, so we are not yet in a position to make any definitive announcements about the Fall. The focus has been on finding ways to bring students back to campus for safe and meaningful experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. As long as public health restrictions allow, we would plan to increase the number of on-campus classes, focusing especially on the hands-on, community-engaged, and problem-based learning for which McMaster is known. Dr. Farrar explained that they have also been planning for the

residences to be open and are working through issues related to eligibility and capacity. They are also continuing to focus on the needs of our international students, including monitoring visa processing times and other Canadian entry requirements. What is possible will depend on public health restrictions, gathering limits, and vaccine roll-out over the coming weeks. Dr. Farrar advised that they are also thinking about staff and working through scenarios for a gradual return to campus, while maintaining the flexibility offered by remote working wherever possible. There are still a lot of unknowns, but updates will continue to be provided as more details on the Fall term become available.

Dr. Tighe added that they had hoped to have some more definitive statements at this time however, given the lockdown and information regarding vaccination capacity, they are waiting a bit. Dr. Tighe noted that they are continuing to work towards planning for opening in the Fall. Various monitoring systems and tools are in place to do so effectively.

A member asked a question about students returning to campus and the requirement of a vaccine. Dr. Tighe advised that they have been investigating what can be imposed as there are some legal implications. They can impose people to be vaccinated to live in certain residences. Part of the challenge is the availability of vaccines for the age group. Most students are first years who are 17 and 18 and vaccines might not be available for them. Dr. Tighe noted that at this point they cannot make anything mandatory because of access. This fall is much more complex, and they are working hard to be agile and flexible.

The provincial budget was announced on March 25 and no changes have been made to the postsecondary operating funding or to the tuition framework. Investments have been made to support the Virtual Learning Strategy for the postsecondary sector, as well as digital credentials and the micro-credential strategy, and a continued commitment for mental health supports was noted. Capital grants for the Facilities Renewal Program (FRP) were also announced. These will be spread over three years to help colleges and universities address the need for facility maintenance, renovation and modernization. The province also announced financial support for Ryerson University in planning for a new institute of medical education in Brampton. This news has not been well-received by the rest of the sector. In terms of research support, Ontario has committed to participating in the next round of federal research infrastructure funding and is investing more than \$500M over the next 10 years into the Ontario Research Fund to support research. The province is also investing in IP expertise and policy development, with the goal of increasing IP capacity across the research and innovation ecosystem and improving commercialization outcomes for “made-in-Ontario” research and IP.

Dr. Farrar explained that there were also no announcements in the Budget related to financial oversight or accountability. The sector has been watching closely to see how the provincial government responds to the financial collapse of Laurentian. As recent news reports make clear, things are going from bad to worse and to date the government has not intervened to provide any support. The most recent developments include job losses for faculty and staff, program closures, and the cancellation of agreements with federated colleges. Dr. Farrar reminded Senators that there are very few similarities between Laurentian and McMaster in terms of financial controls and processes so Senators can be reassured that McMaster is not in danger of experiencing a similar situation. Laurentian has suffered from declining enrolment and demographics over a

number of years, largely because of its location, and has also been carrying substantial debt that the institution is unable to service.

Dr. Farrar explained that work is progressing well with Canada's Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats, led by Dr. Gerry Wright and involving researchers from across campus. The University entered into an important partnership with the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) as part of this, and the two institutions are working together on infectious disease research, vaccine and drug development, and evidence-based information to guide decision makers and new policies. Our Public Affairs team is working hard to garner support from government, donors, and friends of the University and to expand the partnerships and impact of this critically important work. Dr. Farrar noted he was pleased to be able to announce the creation of the Future of Canada Project earlier this week. Funded by Red Wilson, our Chancellor Emeritus, this initiative is intended to enable novel and diverse research exploring the possibilities for Canada in the next decade.

1 APPROVAL OF AGENDA – OPEN SESSION

Dr. Farrar confirmed that no requests had been received to move items from the Consent to the Regular agenda of the Open Session.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of April 14, 2021 and that item 2 be approved by Consent.

The motion was **carried**.

CONSENT

2 MINUTES of the Meeting of March 10, 2021 – Open Session

Motion:

that the minutes of the Open Session portion of the meeting held on March 10, 2021 be approved as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

REGULAR

3 BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising.

4 ENQUIRIES

There were no enquiries.

5 COMMUNICATIONS**a. Magna Charta Universitatum 2020**

Dr. Farrar provided members with an update on the Magna Charta Universitatum. Dr. Farrar explained that McMaster University signed the Magna Charta in 2013. The Magna Charta sets out fundamental principles to guide universities and 904 universities from 88 countries have signed the Magna Charta. Dr. Farrar explained that the terms were updated to reflect a more diversified set of universities.

6 REPORT FROM GRADUATE COUNCIL

This report was for information.

7 REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Katherine Cuff, Chair, Committee on Appointments, presented the report.

Dr. Cuff explained that on March 22, 2021, the Committee on Appointments approved the following recommendation:

1. Establishment of the W.H. Kwok Chair in Orthopedic Spinal Surgery Research

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve the establishment of the W.H. Kwok Chair in Orthopedic Spinal Surgery Research.

The motion was **carried**.

8 REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS

Dr. Judy Fudge, Member of the Committee on By-Laws, presented the report.

Senate accepted Notice of Motion for the amendments to the University Planning Committee Terms of Reference at its meeting on March 10, 2021.

At its meeting on March 18, 2021, the By-Laws Committee reviewed and recommended that Senate approve the amendments to the University Planning Committee Terms of Reference.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that Senate approve, on the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws, the proposed amendments to the University Planning Committee Terms of Reference, as circulated.

A member noted that the old by-laws state that UPC will review and approve reports and it has been changed to review and receive. The member questioned if the reports will no longer be approved and asked why the change was made. Dr. Fudge explained that UPC did not approve the reports in the past and only commented and reviewed the reports. Dr. Tighe explained that the plans from the academy work through the processes in their Faculties and the Provost approves the plans. When UPC receives the reports, they have already been approved by the appropriate bodies.

Dr. Fudge noted that the other changes are for consistency in language and changes to titles.

The motion was **carried**.

9 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.