

McMaster University

SENATE MINUTES

VOL. XCI

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

Zoom

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**PRESENT:** Dr. David Farrar, Dr. Anna Danielova, Dr. Carlos Filipe, Dr. Christina Baade, Dr. Dina Brooks, Dr. Doug Welch, Dr. Graham Scott, Dr. Ishwar Puri, Dr. Jeff Weitz, Dr. Jeremiah Hurley, Dr. Judy Fudge, Dr. Juliet Daniel, Dr. Katherine Cuff, Dr. Kathryn Mattison, Dr. Kim Dej, Dr. Kim Jones, Dr. Leonard Waverman, Dr. Lia Bronsard, Dr. Lorraine Carter, Dr. Maikel Rheinstadter, Dr. Mark Walton, Dr. Martin Horn, Dr. Matthew Miller, Dr. Maureen MacDonald, Dr. Megan Brickley, Dr. Melinda Gough, Dr. Nicola Nicolici, Dr. Nikolai Penner, Dr. Pamela Baxter, Dr. Pamela Swett, Dr. Patrick Bennett, Dr. Peter Miu, Dr. Peter Graefe, Dr. Susan Tighe, Dr. Todd Hoare, Ms Alyaa Abdelhalim, Ms Beth Manganelli Staite, Ms Cassidy Bereskin, Mr. Dalue Tang, Mr. Gary Collins, Ms Haleigh Wallace, Ms Leah Allan, Ms Mary Williams, Ms Moira Taylor, Ms Nicole Anozie, Mr. Roger Couldrey, Mr. Jim McCaughey, Ms Andrea Thyret-Kidd (University Secretary), Ms Michelle Zheng (Associate University Secretary), Ms Alysha Sless (Governance Coordinator)

**REGRETS:** Dr. Paul O’Byrne, Mr. Muneeb Ahmed

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

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**A. OPEN SESSION**

**OPENING REMARKS**

Dr. Farrar welcomed members to the meeting and reminded Senators of the Zoom protocols.

Dr. Farrar explained that the new vision statement for McMaster was launched a couple of weeks ago. The next stage involves working with the senior team to finalize the strategic plan, which will focus our collective efforts around five key strategic priorities. Dr. Farrar noted that the strategic plan will be presented to Senate for information shortly.

One of the themes that consistently came up during the visioning process discussions was the desire to really make an impact with regard to climate change and sustainability. Students, faculty and staff want to find ways to address climate change through our research, scholarship and academic programming and also through the actions taken on our campus to reduce our carbon footprint, develop and promote clean technologies, reduce waste, and engage in energy

reduction initiatives. Dr. Farrar noted that while we have made good progress in many areas, including reducing the carbon holdings within our institutional investment pool, there is undoubtedly more we can do to advance our ongoing strategy. Dr. Farrar explained that over the last few months he has heard consistently from faculty, students and other members of the community about divestment, and in particular the symbolic importance associated with a decision to divest from fossil fuel holdings. This is an important issue and is necessary, alongside our ongoing carbon reduction initiatives, to confirm McMaster as a leader in this field. Dr. Farrar noted that he has asked the Board of Governors to work with us on a divestment strategy that will allow us to divest from fossil fuel holdings as soon as possible. The Board of Governors holds ultimate responsibility for the University's investment pool, so needs to guide this in a way that is consistent with the Board's fiscal responsibility.

Dr. Farrar explained that as Senators know, our Provost, Dr. Tighe, is leading a cross-campus "Return to McMaster" group, to work through the scenarios and planning for the Fall. The goal is to enable as much activity on campus as possible in September and the team is working with experts from across campus, as well as Public Health, to develop a detailed plan. Work is ongoing and an announcement will be made as soon as possible.

A member asked when the plan will be released. Dr. Tighe explained that a lot of activity is occurring in the Teaching and Learning and Employee work committees. They have received good news from Public Health and a big factor is the prevalence of vaccinations. They hope to have an indication of where we want to be and aim to release a plan in April. Dr. Tighe noted that it is a dynamic situation and they recognize they will need to have flexibility.

Dr. Farrar explained that as part of our consideration of student services and supports, we have just completed the McMaster Student Census and Experience Survey. Dr. Farrar advised that the survey closed at the end of last week so it is too early to share any outcomes, but Institutional Research and Analysis will be working through all the feedback and data provided in response. The goal was to gather as many perspectives as possible, from across our diverse student body, to better understand student experiences of current and needed services and supports.

Dr. Farrar explained to Senators that there have been some concerns and discussions related to the online proctoring tool, Respondus. A number of issues have arisen, and this led recently to a motion from the SRA asking for better communication and clarity and more information for students about the use of the tool. Dr. Farrar thanked the MSU for their leadership in this area and all those students who have raised concerns and made their voices heard around this important issue. The University is working hard to review the situation and make improvements and has recently released two infographics that clarify the use of Respondus. This includes the impact on academic integrity, privacy concerns, security issues, and the student experience. The FAQs are also being updated to be more student-friendly and address the concerns raised, and an ad hoc group, including student representation, is being assembled within Undergraduate Council to review Respondus use and think about exams and invigilation more generally. The University has a one-year contract with Respondus that ends in August 2021; we are currently reassessing our contract. Dr. Kim Dej, Acting AVP (Faculty) is working closely on this issue.

The University Secretariat did not receive any scrutineers for the Senate Election. Ms Thyret-Kidd explained that they require two individuals for March 18, 10:00-10:30 a.m. to confirm the election. The meeting will be a Zoom call. Dr. Filipe and Dr. Gough volunteered for the role.

## **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 March 10, 2021 and that item 2 be approved by Consent.**

The motion was **carried**.

## **CONSENT**

### **2 MINUTES of the Meeting of February 10, 2021 – Open Session**

Motion:

**that the minutes of the Open Session portion of the meeting held on February 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. COU Update**

This item was for information.

### **6 REPORT FROM UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL**

Dr. Kim Dej, Acting Vice-Provost, Faculty, presented the report from Undergraduate Council.

Dr. Dej explained that there were four items for approval.

1. Aid and Awards Revisions for the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar

Dr. Dej thanked Mr. Cameron Churchill.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve revisions to Student Financial Aid & Scholarships for inclusion in the 2021- 2022 Undergraduate Calendar, as set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

2. Revisions to Certificate and Diploma Programs

Dr. Dej thanked Dr. Tracy Prowse.

a. Human Resources Management Program

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve revisions to the Human Resources Management Program, as set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

3. Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

Dr. Dej explained that the revisions are to recognise that MSAF is a tool and to provide clarifications.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve the new Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work as set out in the attached, effective May 1, 2021.**

A member asked what changes were made to the policy. Dr. Dej explained that there were no changes made to the policy, they just provided more clarification. The McMaster Student Absent Form is a tool where an absence is noted. Students can access it on the website to indicate that they were absent. There is no requirement for proof or verification. The other way it is used is through the Faculty/Program Office if a student has an absence longer than three days or misses an assignment greater than 25%. That student should go to the Faculty Office to discuss how they will

complete the course and what supports they require. The academic advising office can use the same MSAF tool to note the absence, but the meeting has to occur. The member noted that students would be able to look at the online test and decide not to take it. Dr. Dej clarified that online testing is viewed the same as in person testing. If the student starts the test, they cannot submit an MSAF, they have to go through the academic advising office.

The motion was **carried**.

4. Addenda to Curriculum Revisions for Inclusion in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar

Dr. Dej thanked Dr. Sue McCracken.

a. Faculty of Business

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve revisions to DeGroote School of Business (Faculty of Business) Academic Regulations for inclusion in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar, as recommended by the Faculty of Business, and set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

b. Faculty of Science

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve major revisions to the Honours Mathematics and Computer Science program for inclusion in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar, as recommended by the Faculty of Science, and set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve major revisions to the Integrated Science program for inclusion in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar, as recommended by the Faculty of Science, and set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

c. General Academic Regulations

Dr. Dej explained that the revisions include putting the MSAF tool into the academic regulations and clarification on students access to courses.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve revisions to the General Academic Regulations for inclusion in the 2021-2022 Undergraduate Calendar as set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

**7 REPORT FROM GRADUATE COUNCIL**

This report was for information.

**8 REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS**

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

Dr. Cuff explained that there were two items for approval.

1. Terms of Reference

a. F.L. Johnson Chair in Women's Reproductive Health Research

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve the proposed revisions to the F.L. Johnson Chair in Women's Reproductive Health Research Terms of Reference, as circulated.**

The motion was **carried**.

b. Associate Dean Research Innovation External Relations

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve the proposed revisions to the Associate Dean Research Innovation External Relations Terms of Reference, as circulated.**

The motion was **carried**.

**9 REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Dr. Susan Tighe, Provost and Vice-President, Academic presented the report.

At its meeting of February 10, 2021, the University Planning Committee approved revisions to the by-laws. Revisions to the Senate by-laws is a three-step process and this is the first step (approval in principle) after which the revisions will be sent to the By-Laws Committee for their consideration. The last step brings the revisions back to Senate for final approval. Dr. Tighe explained that the changes include having faculty representation from all six Faculties.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve, in principle, the amendments to the University Planning Committee Terms of Reference and refer the amendments to the By-Laws Committee for review.**

A member asked if the extra staff member is non-teaching. Dr. Tighe explained that the staff member is a non-teaching representative and that did not change. Previously there were five faculty members representing the six Faculties. Ms Thyret-Kidd added that they are aligning the language and making it consistent with how staff members are referenced in the by-laws.

The motion was **carried**.

**10 REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY CEREMONIALS AND INSIGNIA**

Dr. Martin Horn, Chair, Committee on University Ceremonials and Insignia, presented the report.

On February 24, 2021, the Committee on University Ceremonials and Insignia approved the proposed parchment design for the Certificate of Professional Learning.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve the design of parchments for the Certificate of Professional Learning, as circulated.**

The motion was **carried**.

**11 OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.