

McMaster University

SENATE MINUTES

VOL. CXIV

Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 3:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers (111), Gilmour Hall

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**PRESENT:** Dr. David Farrar, Mr. Ahmed Abdalla, Ms Brenda O'Connor, Dr. Chris Sinding, Dr. Deborah Sloboda, Mr. Findley McSevney, Mr. Hasan Siddiqui, Dr. James Benn, Dr. Jeremiah Hurley, Mr. Jim McCaughey, Dr. Joëlle Papillon, Dr. Kalai Saravanamuttu, Dr. Khaled Hassanein, Dr. Kim Dej, Mx Kusum Bhatta, Ms Lili Litwin, Dr. Lorraine Carter, Dr. Manaf Zargoush, Dr. Mark Walton, Dr. Maureen MacDonald, Dr. Melinda Gough, Dr. Michael McGillion, Dr. Nathan Andrews, Dr. Pamela Swett, Dr. Pau Pujolas, Dr. Paul Andrews, Dr. Paul Faure, Dr. Renae Watchman, Dr. Rick Monture, Ms Saher Fazilat, Dr. Steve Hranilovic, Dr. Sue McCracken, Dr. Susan Tighe, Dr. Todd Hoare, Dr. Wael El-Dakhakhni, Ms Andrea Thyret-Kidd (University Secretary), Ms Michelle Zheng (Associate University Secretary), Ms Alysha Sless (Assistant University Secretary)

**OBSERVERS:** Ms Andrea Farquhar, Dr. Barrington Walker, Ms Carolyn Brendon, Dr. Elisabeth Marquis, Dr. Katherine Cuff, Ms Melissa Pool, Mr. Rob Walters, Dr. Sandra Carroll, Mr. Sean Van Koughnett, Dr. Susan Denburg

**REGRETS:** Dr. Alfonso Iorio, Dr. Brenda Vrkljan, Dr. Claudia Emerson, Dr. Dina Brooks, Dr. Heather Sheardown, Dr. Hendrik Poinar, Dr. Jeff Weitz, Dr. Karen Mossman, Dr. Paul O'Byrne, Dr. Matthew Miller, Dr. Narat Charupat

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**A. OPEN SESSION**

**OPENING REMARKS**

Dr. Farrar welcomed members to the meeting and advised that there will be an update about a matter that was raised at the May Senate meeting involving an individual who was issued a Persona Non Grata declaration. The information will be shared during Business Arising, as referenced in the meeting agenda. Dr. Farrar reminded Senators that there are a number of important matters that we have to get through today, including the budget and approval of the list of graduands, and asked all Senators to be mindful of time.

Dr. Farrar acknowledged that we meet today on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations and within the lands protected by the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement.

This month marks Indigenous History Month in Canada, a time to recognize and reflect on the rich history, resilience and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. It is an opportunity to honour the stories, achievements and resilience of Indigenous peoples. It is also an opportunity

to advance Truth and Reconciliation on our campus by educating ourselves about Indigenous history and cultures. The Daily News has posted a number of educational resources for those wishing to learn more about the impact of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Dr. Farrar encouraged everyone in the McMaster community to take some time this month, and year-round, to deepen their understanding of Indigenous cultures, and honour all that Indigenous peoples have achieved.

June is also Pride Month, which provides an opportunity to come together to celebrate the ways in which 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals enrich our campus and community. It is also a time to recognize that there is still much to do to ensure all members of our community, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, are treated equitably and with dignity. In honour of Pride Month, McMaster will be flying the Progress Pride Flag throughout June. McMaster's Office of Equity and Inclusion is also running a series of events and individuals can learn more about those on the Daily News.

Dr. Farrar advised that the 2023 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings were released last week. The ranking is a global performance metric that assesses universities against the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. And it is important to help us attract students and faculty to McMaster. McMaster moved up four positions, placing 33rd in the world overall, 12th in the world for advancing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 – eliminating poverty – and SDG 3 – advancing good health and well-being. This is an outstanding result that reflects our focus on community-engaged research and teaching excellence, and McMaster's commitment to contributing to our local and global communities in significant and impactful ways.

Each year McMaster recognizes faculty, staff and students from across campus through the President's Awards for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching and Learning, Excellence in Student Leadership, Outstanding Service, and Community-Engaged Research. Dr. Farrar noted that he is always inspired by the caliber of nominees, by their dedication to supporting the McMaster and our broader community, and to their commitment to advancing the University's teaching, research and service mission. This year, five students received the President's Award for Excellence in Student Leadership and 11 individuals or teams of employees received the President's Award for Outstanding Service. Dr. Farrar highlighted this year's recipients of the President's Awards for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching and Learning – the highest distinction a faculty member can receive for teaching excellence at McMaster. Individuals can learn more about all this year's recipients of President's Awards on the Daily News.

In response to questions from faculty, and to help instructors plan for the fall term, the Task Force on Generative AI in Teaching and Learning has released a set of provisional guidelines on the use of AI. The guidelines were developed as a starting point to help instructors and students AI to advance teaching and learning. They include information on how to cite the use of generative AI and examples of rubrics that have been adapted to assess students' use of AI. Dr. Farrar explained that guidance will continue to be updated over the summer as the Task Force responds to feedback, explores more topics and tracks the evolution of the technology.

Last week, McMaster scientist, Jon Stokes and his team made headlines around the world for a completely different use of AI technology. Dr. Stokes and his lab have successfully used AI to identify a discover a new antibiotic, which could be used to fight one of the world's most

dangerous drug-resistant pathogens. The researchers, which included a team from MIT, used an AI algorithm to screen more than 6,500 antibacterial molecules and found 240 potential compounds to test. From there researchers found 9 potential antibiotics, including aboucin. The screening process only took an hour and half, compared to the thousands of research hours this discovery would have taken using conventional methods. Dr. Farrar noted that this story was covered by news outlets around the world, including BBC, CNN, USA Today, The Guardian, CBC and CTV, among many others. This story has reached 600 million people around the world, with 153 million views on BBC. Dr. Farrar congratulated Dr. Stokes and his team on this truly ground-breaking research.

As Senators are aware, McMaster is in the middle of Convocation season. Convocation is an exciting time and it reminds us why we are here, and that supporting the success of our students is at the heart of everything we do. Dr. Farrar noted that he is looking forward to seeing the nearly 4000 students receiving their degrees next week, and to shaking their hands as they cross the stage. Dr. Farrar thanked the many faculty members who take the time to attend Convocation ceremonies. It is an important milestone for our graduates, and it's meaningful for students to see faculty there, at convocation, to support them.

The Honourable Todd Smith, Minister of Energy and the Honourable Jill Dunlop, the Minister of Colleges and Universities were recently on campus to officially announce the province government's \$6.8 million investment to help increase medical isotope production at the McMaster Nuclear Reactor. McMaster is one of the world's leading suppliers of two medical isotopes used to treat cancer. The isotopes produced at the reactor are used to treat approximately 70,000 cancer patients every year. This funding will help expand research and production at the reactor, enabling them to increase operations to 24 hours a day, five days per week, and to increase the diversity and amount of isotopes produced.

Dr. Farrar informed Senators that later in the meeting, they will be hearing about McMaster's consolidated budget. McMaster is one of only two universities in Ontario to have a balanced budget this year and Dr. Farrar thanked our Provost, Dr. Susan Tighe, the Deans and the Budget Committee for bringing our budget to balance. Queen's University and the University of Guelph have both indicated they will be running deficits next year as a result of the tuition and operating grant freezes. Northern Ontario universities and smaller southern universities are also struggling. The University of Toronto has announced that the tuition freeze will cost them \$194 million dollars next year. A balanced budget is a major accomplishment. The fact that so many post-secondary institutions are struggling is a signal that the post-secondary sector in Ontario is under significant pressure.

Dr. Farrar welcome a new Senator, Ms Lili Litwin, Vice-President, University Advancement.

Dr. Farrar recognized the retiring and resigning Senators:

- Faculty of Business: *Sue McCracken, Manaf Zargoush, Tyler Woo*
- Faculty of Engineering: *Todd Hoare, Moustafa Naiem Abdel-Mooty*
- Faculty of Humanities: *Melinda Gough, Nikolai Penner, Shaden Ahmed*
- Faculty of Social Sciences: *Hendrik Poinar, Findley McSevney*
- Faculty of Science: *Paul Higgs, Maikel Rheinstadter, Lia Bronsard, Hasan Siddiqui*

- Faculty of Health Sciences: *Matthew Miller, Gloria Van*
- Board Representative: *Deborah Sloboda*
- Alumni: *Jim McCaughey*
- Ex-Officio: *Karen Mossman will be on leave next year. Andy Knights will be the Acting Vice-President, Research*
- Observer: *Dr. Susan Denburg*

## 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 June 7, 2023 and that items 2 and 3 be approved or received by Consent.**

The motion was **carried**.

## CONSENT

### 2 MINUTES of the Meeting of May 17, 2023 – Open Session

Motion:

**that the minutes of the Open Session of the meeting held on May 17, 2023 be approved as circulated.**

**Approved** by Consent.

### 3 RESEARCH INTEGRITY POLICY REPORT

**Received** by Consent.

## REGULAR

### 4 BUSINESS ARISING

#### i. PNG Enquiry

Dr. Farrar explained that following comments from Senators at the May meeting, inquiries were made into the individual who received a PNG status. Mr. Sean Van Koughnett, *Associate Vice-President (Students & Learning) and Dean of Students*, provided members with an update recognizing that the information is subject to privacy considerations. Dr. Farrar advised that the amount of information that can be disclosed is limited and that there are other forums and mechanisms for these concerns to be raised.

Mr. Van Koughnett explained that the role of Security Services is to safeguard the University and to protect campus, people and property. The incident occurred between midnight and 1:00 a.m. and the individual was not a student at the time of the offense so there were no academic issues. Security responded to an alarm and there were two individuals in dark clothing, and one was wearing a ski mask. When approached, the individuals ran, and one was apprehended and refused to identify themselves. Mr. Van Koughnett advised that the views on the posters were not a factor in the response. The individual was informed of their right to appeal and yesterday an appeal was filed.

Dr. Farrar informed members that a committee consisting of Dr. Paul Andrews, Dr. Claudia Emerson, Dr. Alfonso Iorio, and Ms Heva Olfman, is reviewing the Persona Non Grata Declarations policy. They will report to Senate once their work is complete.

An individual in attendance read a letter on behalf of the individual who was declared PNG. The letter noted the individual is a teaching assistant and that they wanted to address the Senate themselves. The individual expressed that the PNG Declarations policy must be revised and provided an overview of the incident. The individual explained that the conduct does not warrant the punishment and that they did not cause any harm. They urged Senate to get their situation remedied and to repeal the policy. Dr. Farrar explained that Senate is not the place for that discussion and thanked the individual for the letter. There is a committee reviewing the policy and they can consider the letter. Dr. Farrar added that the Vice-President, Operations and Finance will look into the situation.

An individual in attendance from the Department of History shared a letter on behalf of themselves and two other faculty members. They requested clarification on how the policy was created and how postering falls into the category of threatening behaviours to health and safety or property. The individual expressed their concern that the incident will create a precedent and provided an overview of the situation. A withdrawal in good standing does not mean the individual is no longer an active member. The PNG individual is working as a TA for history and is active in graduate events. The individual expressed that they believe the application of PNG is an overreach, it was a minor offence, and noted their concern with the lack of transparency through the process. Dr. Farrar advised that they would share the letter with the Committee.

In response to questions about timelines, it was explained that the review committee is meeting on June 14<sup>th</sup> and will be meeting more frequently. Dr. Farrar advised that he will work with the VP Operations and Finance to move the PNG appeal forward. Ms Fazilat advised that the hearing was concluded early today.

ii. Jay Treaty Proposal

Ms Melissa Pool, *University Registrar* and Ms Shylo Elmayan, *Director, Indigenous Student Services*, provided an update on the item.

Ms Pool explained that in March questions were raised around domestic tuition for Indigenous students from the United States. Ms Pool advised that they have engaged in consultations with the Indigenous Education Council, Indigenous Student Services and a new policy statement was approved yesterday at the Student Fees Committee and McMaster now honours the Jay Treaty. Ms Pool thanked Ms Elmayan for her assistance. The policy statement will be in effect for September 1, 2023.

Ms Elmayan thanked the member of Senate who posed the original question.

## **5 ENQUIRIES**

There were no enquiries.

## **6 COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications.

## **7 REPORT FROM GRADUATE COUNCIL**

Dr. Steve Hranilovic, *Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies*, presented the report.

Dr. Hranilovic explained that the Task Force on Graduate Funding has been engaging with stakeholders across campus and published data on their website. McMaster is one of two universities who provide data publicly. They followed up with consultations on the website, round table sessions, and meetings with masters students, Ph.D. students, CUPE, MUFA and international students. Dr. Hranilovic noted that they held a town hall earlier today that was attended by 140 individuals and thanked all individuals who attended and participated in the sessions.

The work of the task force continues, and the mandate of the task force is to provide a report to the Provost and Senate by the end of the next academic term. Dr. Hranilovic explained that they have decided to take action now instead of waiting for the final recommendations and highlighted items for information in the report from Graduate Council. A revision was made to the policy that limited the number of hours student could work on campus. Full-time students were precluded from working more than 20 hours a week and Graduate Council voted to rescind the rule and provide a more flexible approach. Graduate Council also approved a motion to increase funding to \$17,500 plus tuition for all full-time Ph.D. students. This applies to incoming and existing students and will impact 7% of students. It targets students at the lowest end of the spectrum.

In response to a question about the task force, Dr. Hranilovic explained that it is not a one-time situation, and the mandate is to come up with a sustainable plan going forward.

i. Faculty of Business – Specialization in Strategic Management

At its meeting on May 16th Graduate Council approved a new specialization in Strategic Management, bringing the number of specializations from 7 to 8 areas.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate approve the revision, for inclusion in the 2023-2024 Graduate Calendar, as recommended by Graduate Council and set out in the attached.**

The motion was **carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

- ii. Faculty of Health Sciences
- iii. Faculty of Social Sciences
- iv. New Awards
- v. Graduate Calendar Administrative Section Updates

A member raised concerns around the changes to the Graduate Calendar Administrative Section. The wording was changed around student leaves and the member is concerned with the restriction of 12 months. The change will force students to withdraw in good standing and are not guaranteed readmission. The member asked if the changes were made in consultation with the Equity and Inclusion Office and if it is consistent with the AODA Act. Dr. Farrar advised that the item would be taken back to Graduate Council and brought back to Senate.

## 8 REPORT FROM UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

Dr. Kim Dej, *Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning*, presented the report.

i. Policy Revisions – Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

An electronic vote was held between May 12, 2023 and May 24, 2023, during which the Undergraduate Council approved, for recommendation to Senate, a set of proposed revisions to the Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.

Dr. Dej explained that the Policy has been discussed in different forms over the last year. The policy impacts students, faculty and academic advisors in the Associate Dean's offices. The policy has been improved but still requires more revision. Dr. Dej noted that they have received feedback from MUFA and issues with group work have not been addressed. Dr. Dej highlighted examples of challenges faced by academic advisors. The language in the policy has been

amended to better attend to student needs and support faculty. The revisions clarify the two different types of relief for missed work. The self report has a new requirement for students to follow up with their instructor within 24 hours. The cumulative value of missed work has been reduced to 35% which is in the best interest of the student. Dr. Dej thanked Ms Kelly Snow and Mr. Brad Coburn in the Secretariat's office for their assistance.

A member addressed concerns around MSAFs being applied retroactively and students abusing the system. Dr. Dej explained that the revisions address the issue of late requests and retroactive issues.

Members noted concerns with allowing extended absences, with approvals happening automatically without review, and the policy being used as a time management tool instead of for its intended use. Members added that the principle of accommodating students and managing stress is important. It is also important for students to be educated and learn. There needs to be a safe environment to get students ready for what they will see post graduation, and a fake environment is not serving the best interest of students. Members noted that we also have to protect the mental health of administrators and faculty.

A member expressed that they had five amendments for the policy and that the policy should not pass without the amendments. Due to the challenges for Senators to follow along with the additional changes verbally and to provide more time for reflection on the proposed changes, Dr. Farrar proposed Dr. Dej work with the member to consider the amendments. The member expressed that it is a prerogative for Senate to make friendly amendments. Ms Thyret-Kidd advised that Senators could bring forward amendments, however the member is proposing substantial revisions and doing so verbally which is challenging for members to follow and then vote on.

Members agreed to electronically vote on the additional changes. It was stressed that it is important for students to understand the rules at the start of term.

A member noted that the Joint Committee was not informed of the revised second draft and that the MUFA Executive members on Joint Committee must have the opportunity to approve all policy revisions that affect faculty workloads. Dr. Dej advised that MUFA had proposed changes that were incorporated in October. Dr. Dej explained that the policy goes to MUFA for information and that not all feedback should be incorporated, that is for Undergraduate Council to decide. The member disagreed.

The item was withdrawn.

*\*The amended policy was approved by e-vote on June 22, 2023.*



Dr. Susan Tighe, *Provost and Vice-President (Academic)*, present the report.

At its meeting on May 10, 2023, the University Planning Committee received a presentation on the following items for information:

i. 2023-2024 Consolidated Budget

Dr. Stephen Jones, *Budget Committee Chair*, presented the report with Dr. Tighe. Mr. Iain Clarkson, *Budget Director*, Ms Lou Mitton, *Controller*, and Ms Lilian Scime, *Interim CFO*, were in attendance to answer questions.

Dr. Tighe explained that McMaster is one of two institutions currently in the green category. The sector is under stress and McMaster continues to advance high quality student experience. The three major funds are the operating fund, funded activities, and ancillary fund. McMaster reports on an accrual basis. Dr. Tighe highlighted the Budget Committee membership and advised that the Chair is elected annually by and from the University Planning Committee faculty members. McMaster was able to manage COVID and respond quickly because of this budget model. However, a challenge with the model is that it can create silos.

Dr. Tighe provided an overview of the budget cycle timeline and explained that they allocate revenues that come into the institution. Dr. Tighe shared charts on budget revenues and expenses and noted that a lot of Faculties are drawing on appropriations to cover expenses this year.

Dr. Jones noted that the staff have been terrific, and it has been a learning curve for the faculty, staff and student members of the Committee. Dr. Jones explained that provincial grants have been flat and there has been no nominal growth since 2016, and tuition has been frozen since 2019. Dr. Jones highlighted the expenses and noted a reduction in Faculty capital transfers.

Key issues include provincial funding being frozen, domestic tuition cut then frozen, unfunded enrolment of domestic students beyond the corridor, and the decline of international undergraduate enrolment. Key matters going forward include international student enrolment not being sufficient for inflationary pressures, SMA performance-based funding, and key alternative revenue strategies.

ii. IQAP Cyclical Program Reviews

The University Planning Committee received the IQAP Cyclical Program reviews for information. This report was presented at the last Senate meeting on May 17, 2023 and the materials can be found under item 6ii of the May 17, 2023 Senate agenda.

**10 REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON BY-LAWS**

Dr. Paul Andrews, *Member of the Committee on By-Laws*, presented the report.

Dr. Andrews explained that Senate accepted the Notice of Motion for the amendments to the Senate By-Laws at its meeting on April 12, 2023.

i. Amendments to the Senate By-Laws

At its meeting on April 18, 2023, the Committee reviewed the Senate By-Laws. The Committee considered and approved additional revisions, that included updating consultants to the Budget Committee, correcting the number of faculty members on the Faculty Discipline Board, and updating titles. Dr. Andrews informed Senators that there is an amendment to the By-Laws materials and the revisions to the membership of Academic Integrity Committee are being removed due to questions being raised about the proposed revisions. The By-Laws Committee will review the membership and bring a recommendation back to Senate in the Fall.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that Senate, on the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws, approve the proposed amendments to the Senate By-Laws, as amended.**

The motion was **carried**.

**11 OTHER BUSINESS**

A member raised concerns around Bill 26 which opens new ways in which faculty can be removed. The member noted that it removes appeals that faculty have available and expressed that the item should be brought to Senate for approval. Dr. Farrar advised that the item is going to Joint Committee. Dr. Tighe added that Joint Committee discussed it yesterday and they are working on an interim memo.