

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SENATE

VOL.CXX

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Gilmour Hall 111

PRESENT: David Farrar (Chair), Ahmed Abdalla, Maxwell Altman, Nathan Andrews, Paul Andrews, James Benn, Kusum Bhatta, Blaise Bourdin, Dina Brooks, Kim Dej, Wael El-Dakhkhni, Paul Faure, Carlos Filipe, Faiza Hirji, Steve Hranilovic, Jeremiah Hurley, Suleiman Igdoura, Alfonso Iorio, Manish Kacker, Andy Knights, Lili Litwin, Graeme Luke, Maureen MacDonald, Sanamdeep Matharu, Michael McGillion, John Medcof, Rick Monture, Brenda O'Connor, Joëlle Papillon, Pau Pujolas, Kalai Saravanamuttu, Heather Sheardown, Chris Sinding, Stephanie Springgay, Pamela Swett, Susan Tighe, Mark Walton, Zimo Wang, Kerry Yang, Margaret Zanel, Eugenia Zuroski
Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Alysha Sless (*Assistant University Secretary*)

REGRETS: Hfsa Awan, Lorraine Carter, Narat Charupat, Saher Fazilat, Saara Greene, Khaled Hassanein, Paul O'Byrne, Stacey Ritz, Dennis Souder, Jeff Weitz

OBSERVERS: Monique Beech, Carolyn Brendon, Sandra Carroll, Rosa da Silva, Matheus Grasselli, Vivian Lewis, Jack Mah, Elisabeth Marquis, Melissa Pool, Jovan Popovic, Karen Richmond, Sean Van Koughnett, Rob Walters

OPEN SESSION

David Farrar welcomed members to the meeting and 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.

Last week, the Indigenous Studies Department announced the launch of its new Masters program in Indigenous Studies. This groundbreaking program builds on more than three decades of Indigenous teaching and research excellence at McMaster. It will provide exciting new opportunities to grow Indigenous scholarship, explore and celebrate Indigenous ways of knowing, and create deeper connections with Indigenous communities. This program is the result of the tireless commitment of the many Indigenous faculty, staff, students and community members over many years and is an important step toward advancing Truth and Reconciliation on our campus and in our communities. D. Farrar noted that the application deadline is March 1st to select students to begin this September and thanked everyone who has helped make this important milestone a reality.

D. Farrar advised that February is Black History Month. At the launch event last week, D. Farrar had the opportunity to reaffirm McMaster's deep commitment to equity and human rights and to combatting anti-Black racism, while recognizing the accomplishments of Black students, faculty and staff at McMaster. D. Farrar highlighted a recent accomplishment of our colleague, Juliet Daniel. This year, J. Daniel was selected by the Canadian government as one of seven Black Canadian innovators to be showcased on the Senate walls of the Canadian Parliament Buildings throughout February. J. Daniel is being recognized for her groundbreaking discovery of the "Keiso" gene, and for her tireless research and public education campaigns

to raise awareness of triple negative breast cancer – an aggressive cancer that disproportionately impacts Black women. This is a unique achievement, and D. Farrar congratulated J. Daniel on this important recognition of her work.

Last week D. Farrar was in Ottawa to meet with federal government officials including the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Honourable Marc Miller. The 50% reduction in the number of new international student study permits recently announced by the federal government is moving forward and is very concerning to all of us in the post-secondary sector. While the details of the cap are still being determined, we do know that current students and those who have applied for international student study permits before January 22, 2024, will not be impacted by this new measure. The government has also confirmed that the new policy does not impact graduate students. D. Farrar noted that it was clear the government will reduce student visas by 50%, and that they will leave it to the provinces to decide how those visas are distributed between institutions. McMaster is continuing to work closely with our sector associations and the government as this issue evolves. Our concern is the impact this decision will have on our revenues, which are already under strain because of the funding situation at the provincial level. The impact will be felt on research as revenue from international student tuition is used to support research expenses and overhead which are not covered by grants. This is a complicated situation, and we will continue to push back.

In preparation for the Federal Budget, the discussions last week in Ottawa focused on the U15's requests to increase funding. Specifically, 10% per year over five years increase in funding for Tri-Council, the creation of a \$200 million Critical Technologies Fund for research projects in areas identified by the Sensitive Technology Research Areas list and a 50% increase to the value of federally funded graduate scholarships, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships along with a doubling of the number of scholarships. Productive meetings have occurred with Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland and Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Francois-Phillippe Champagne.

At the provincial level, we continue to await the government's response to the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations to increase tuition fees and operating grants. The 10% tuition cut in 2019, followed by four years of a tuition freeze, have resulted in an overall reduction in funding to universities of 23% since 2018. McMaster is one of two Ontario universities to have a balanced budget thanks to McMaster's prudent fiscal management which included a careful and measured response during the pandemic and usage of an activity-based budget model that brings accountability, clarity and transparency. Our Provost and Vice-President Finance & Operations are working together in conjunction with the Budget Committee on developing a responsible finance plan.

S. Tighe explained that all supporting units are revisiting their budget requests and are being asked to prioritize the key items they want funding for. Faculty Deans are ensuring that generating efficiencies is a priority, and fiscal shocks continue to come through. Student recruitment, lead by Deputy Provost Matheus Grasselli, is active and engaged and the Registrar's Office and Faculties are receiving daily updates. S. Tighe noted that they are maximizing revenues and examining where we can be more efficient on costs. Town Halls on the University's finances will be held in April. S. Tighe added that a lot of activity is occurring to ensure we are resilient as we move forward.

A member raised a question around the allocation of visa students. S. Tighe explained that international graduate students are not part of the visa caps. Any international students currently studying high school in

Canada and applying to undergraduate studies at a university are not part of the cap. The cap is for students applying overseas to come to Canada for their undergraduate degree. Most universities have been careful and conscious of how they support international students. There have been challenges with international college students not receiving sufficient support, resulting in high failure rates. D. Farrar advised that students applying will be notified of McMaster's ability to offer them a visa with an acceptance. D. Farrar added that international undergraduate students enrich our learning environment.

D. Farrar advised that Jovan Popovic has been elected as the McMaster Students Union President for a second term which has not occurred in decades.

1. Approval of Agenda – Open Session

There was a request to remove the Open Session minutes from the agenda.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of February 14, 2024 and that item 3 be received by Consent.

The motion was **Carried**.

CONSENT

2. Minutes of the Meeting of January 17, 2024 – Open Session

This item was removed from the agenda.

3. Report from the Senate Executive Committee

1. Actions Taken on Behalf of Senate: Terms of Reference
 - a. Establishment of the Joseph & Amy Ip Chair in Bio-Innovation

Received by Consent.

REGULAR

4. Business Arising

There was no business arising.

5. Enquiries

There were no enquiries.

6. Communications

There were no communications.

7. Report from Graduate Council

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

S. Hranilovic advised that the report from the Task Force on Graduate Funding is not yet available as they are still integrating comments from stakeholders.

1. Curriculum Revisions

- a. **Change to Program Requirements – M.Sc. in eHealth**
- b. **Cancellation – Digital Reality Stream, Master of Engineering Design**

S. Hranilovic explained that at its meeting on November 14, Graduate Council approved the following changes:

- For the M.Sc. in eHealth a change to program requirements to remove the scholarly paper option and replace it with a capstone course. This was a result of the 2020 IQAP review.
- The cancellation of the Digital Reality Stream in the Master of Engineering Design as there is no demand.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the curriculum revisions, for inclusion in the 2024-2025 Graduate Calendar, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

2. **Faculty of Engineering**
3. **New Awards**

8. Report from Undergraduate Council

Kim Dej, *Chair of Undergraduate Council*, presented the report.

1. **New Concurrent Certificate Programs**
 - a. **Concurrent Certificate in Sustainability**
 - b. **Concurrent Certificate in Environmental Sustainability**
 - c. **Concurrent Certificate in Kinesiology**
 - d. **Skills for Life Concurrent Certificate**

K. Dej explained that at its meeting on January 30, the Undergraduate Council reviewed and approved four new Concurrent Certificate Programs. K. Dej provided members with an overview of the requirements for concurrent certificates.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the Concurrent Certificate Programs in Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Kinesiology, as well as the Skills for Life Concurrent Certificate for inclusion in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

2. Program Name Change

At the same meeting, the Undergraduate Council reviewed and approved the change in name of the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) Program to the Honours Health Sciences program, including the Level II Transfer Program and the Child Health Specialization.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the change in name of the *Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) Program* to the *Honours Health Sciences Program*, including the *Level 2 Transfer Program* and the *Child Health Specialization Program* for inclusion in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

- 3. Closure of the Honours Life Sciences – Sensory Motor Systems Specialization (B.Sc.)**
- 4. Minor Curriculum Revisions and Calendar Submissions for Inclusion in the 2024-2025 Undergraduate Calendar**

9. Report from the University Planning Committee

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

1. Closure of the Honours Life Sciences – Sensory Motor Systems Specialization (B.Sc.)

S. Tighe explained that at its meeting on January 17, 2024 the University Planning Committee approved the closure of the Honours Life Sciences – Sensory Motor Systems Specialization (B.Sc.). S. Tighe noted that there were consultations within the School of Interdisciplinary Science. The plan is that the program will have the last entry of students this fall and calendar notes will be made moving forward.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the closure of the Honours Life Sciences - Sensory Motor Systems Specialization (B.Sc.), as circulated.

A member asked why the item was presented for information through Undergraduate Council and was now being presented for approval through University Planning Committee. Andrea Thyret-Kidd, *University Secretary*, explained that the item involved a multi-step approval process including approval from both Undergraduate Council and the University Planning Committee. According to the Protocols for the Closure of Undergraduate Programs Policy, closures are presented to Senate for approval through the University Planning Committee.

The motion was **Carried**.

10. Report from the Committee on Appointments

Joëlle Papillon, *Chair of the Senate Committee on Appointments*, presented the report.

J. Papillon explained that at its meeting on January 22, 2024, the Committee on Appointments approved the following recommendations and now recommends them to Senate for approval:

1. Terms of Reference

a. Establishment of the Dr. David Weaver Distinguished Engineering Professor and the Dr. Simon Haykin Distinguished Engineering Professor

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the establishment of the Dr. David Weaver Distinguished Engineering Professor and the Dr. Simon Haykin Distinguished Engineering Professor, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

b. Revised Terms of Reference – Director, Minor in Innovation

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate approve the revised terms of reference for the Director, Minor in Innovation, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

11. Other Business

1. Report from the University Library

Vivian Lewis, *University Librarian*, presented the report.

V. Lewis presented members with an overview of the accomplishments and aspirations of the library noting that they operate in the past, present and the future at the same time. Members were provided with an overview of the different components of the university library system and several key initiatives. V. Lewis noted concerns around insufficient exhibition, education and meeting spaces.

In response to a question regarding how faculty or community members can participate, V. Lewis explained that there will be focus groups held by an architecture firm. There will also be a survey sent to the campus community.

Members noted the importance of having a formal archive for university records and commented on previous agreements with children's services.

In response to questions around McMaster's collection in relation to other universities and available grants, V. Lewis explained that McMaster is in the top three or four in terms of size and value of the collections. V. Lewis advised that there have been some grants that other universities have used to support the renovation of their libraries but there have not been any grants in some time.

This item was information.