

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SENATE

VOL.CXXIV

Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Gilmour Hall Room 111

PRESENT: David Farrar (Chair), Ahmed Abdalla, Maxwell Altman, Paul Andrews, Kusum Bhatta, Mark Boda, Blaise Bourdin, Dina Brooks, Kim Dej, Wael El-Dakhkhni, Claudia Emerson, Paul Faure, Carlos Filipe, Saara Greene, Steve Hanna (*Acting Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies*), Khaled Hassanein, Faiza Hirji, Jeremiah Hurley, Suleiman Igdoura, Manish Kacker, Andy Knights, Sarrah Lal, Lili Litwin, Graeme Luke, Maureen MacDonald, Sanamdeep Matharu, Michael McGillion, John Medcof, Rick Monture, Brenda O'Conner, Joëlle Papillon, Pau Pujolas, Stacey Ritz, Kalai Saravanamuttu, Chris Sinding, Stephanie Springgay, Pamela Swett, Susan Tighe, Mark Walton, Zimo Wang, Eugenia Zuroski, Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Alysha Sless (*Assistant University Secretary*)

REGRETS: James Benn, Lorraine Carter, Saher Fazilat, Steve Hranilovic, Alfonso Iorio, Paul O'Byrne, Heather Sheardown, Dennis Souder, Renae Watchman, Jeff Weitz, Margaret Zanel

OBSERVERS: Catherine Anderson, Carolyn Brendon, Sandra Carroll, Rosa da Silva, Andrea Farquhar, Matheus Grasselli, Sarah Robinson, Rob Walters

OPEN SESSION

Opening Remarks

D. 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.

This month marks Indigenous History Month in Canada, a time to recognize and reflect on the rich history and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. It is also an opportunity to advance Truth and Reconciliation on our campus by educating ourselves about Indigenous history and cultures.

D. Farrar focused the opening remarks on the resolution of the encampment, along with some concerning incidents related to the protest.

D. Farrar thanked the many student leaders, faculty advisors and administrators – in particular, our Dean of Students, Sean Van Koughnett - who worked hard to come to an agreement to end the encampment. The agreement does not compromise academic freedom, freedom of expression or the rights of the university to manage its business in a responsible manner. Several elements in the agreement are positive steps forward as part of the university's ongoing commitment to transparency. These include making public the university's investments on an annual basis; establishing a new process that is open to anyone who wants to have decision makers hear their views on McMaster's investments and investing principles; our existing International Strategy Committee will develop a framework for including human rights considerations in international agreements; and support for scholars at risk, and for students from war zones.

While the encampment was originally established as a peaceful protest, D. Farrar noted that he remains concerned by some of the activities that took place including episodes of harassment, vandalism, intimidation and targeting of individuals. As mentioned at the May Senate meeting, it is important to reaffirm that Freedom of Expression is among the most cherished principles of our university. It is vital that our community members have the right to exchange ideas, engage in informed debate – even on the most potentially controversial issues – and take part in peaceful protest, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others. Unfortunately, during the encampment, members of our community were harassed and frightened by activities undertaken by supporters of the encampment. Jewish students, faculty and staff felt threatened and unable to walk through some areas of campus. There were also reports of Muslim students who were triggered by the acts of protest, with some having to leave campus.

This intimidation continued for prospective students and their parents attending the *May at Mac* open house. It also was directed at health sciences graduates and their families who were trying to celebrate convocation by taking photos on campus. Sit-ins inside various buildings forced people to navigate their way through fully masked protestors with megaphones, in order to exit. There were also incidents that targeted staff. In some instances, employees were trapped in their offices and concerned for their safety. Some of these staff members remain shaken and fearful about coming to work. Postcards were also delivered to senior administrators' offices with deeply concerning and inappropriate language, including physical threats, and references to administrators' family members. No one who works at the university should have to endure this kind of intimidation. Staff members must not be threatened. Personal attacks on administrators cannot be tolerated.

D. Farrar expressed that the fundamental question that we must ask ourselves is, what kind of university do we want? Do we want a campus where people have to hide in locked offices? Do we want a campus where Antisemitism, anti-Palestinian racism, or hatred and discrimination of any kind are allowed to frame our discourse or actions? We are a university of 50,000 people. None of us has the same lived experience. A university is strongest when all its members are able to express their views, to challenge conventional thinking, to search for evidence, to defend their positions, and to listen to each other. In other words, a university that is committed to freedom of expression, academic freedom and a genuine desire to include all members in our conversations. During times of war and conflict, people who are part of our community will experience tremendous pain and anguish. We must be alive to that pain and do what we can to support those affected. But we cannot allow those conflicts to create a threatening environment for members of our community. If we want a university where dissent and debate can thrive, and where everyone can come to campus without fear for their safety, or their ideas, or their identity, then we need to work together to make that our reality.

A member noted the importance of ensuring due process around allegations with consideration for legitimate freedom of expression. The member asked whether any of the incidents of harassment and intimidation have been taken forward as a formal complaint. D. Farrar advised at this point they are allegations. There are videos and reports but they have not been tested against policies. The member suggested revising the language to reflect that they are allegations. D. Farrar noted that they also have postcards which were received, and a number of staff were trapped in offices by a large group banging on the doors. That kind of harassment did occur but there is not a good video of who was in attendance.

Members praised S. Van Koughnett for his work and echoed the comments adding that the Discrimination and Harassment Policy should be followed and requested that the anecdotal incidents of intimidation go through the proper channels of investigation. S. Van Koughnett noted that there were many individuals involved and recognized Susan Tighe, the individuals in Communications and the Campus Safety team. S. Van Koughnett added that they will pursue incidents where there is evidence as they normally would.

Dr. Farrar recognized the retiring and resigning Senators:

- Faculty of Business: John Medcof, Si Liu
- Faculty of Engineering: Wael El-Dakhakhni, Medhi Narimani, Mark Fahmy
- Faculty of Humanities: Rick Monture, Stephanie Springgay, Heva Olfman
- Faculty of Social Sciences: Pau Pujolas, Chris Sinding, Nathan Andrews
- Faculty of Science: Paul Faure, Ahmed Abdalla
- Faculty of Health Sciences: Mark Walton
- Board Representative: Skylar Wang, Sarrah Lal
- Alumni: Keegan Johnson, Brenda O'Connor
- Ex-Officio: Maureen MacDonald will be on leave next year. Gianni Parise will be the Acting Dean of Science

D. Farrar thanked members for their contributions to the Senate and support for the governance process.

1. **Approval of Agenda – Open Session**

D. 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 the Senate approve the Open Session agenda for the meeting of June 5, 2024 and that items 2 and 3 be approved by Consent.

The motion was **Carried**.

CONSENT

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting of May 15, 2024 – Open Session**

Motion:

that the minutes of the Open Session of the meeting held on May 15, 2024 be approved as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

3. **Report from the Committee on Appointments**

1. **Terms of Reference**

- a. Revised Terms of Reference and Name Change - Director, Office of Undergraduate Research, Faculty of Science

Motion:

that the Senate approve the revised terms of reference for the Director, Office of Undergraduate Research and the name change to the Academic Director, Office of Undergraduate Research, as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

- b. Revised Terms of Reference and Name Change - ArcelorMittal Dofasco Chair in Experimental Cancer Therapeutics

Motion:

that the Senate approve the revised terms of reference for the ArcelorMittal Dofasco Chair in Experimental Cancer Therapeutics and the name change to the ArcelorMittal Dofasco Chair in Cancer Therapeutics Research, as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

- c. Name Change - Homewood Chair in Mental Health and Trauma

Motion:

that the Senate approve the name change of the Homewood Chair in Mental Health and Trauma to the Homewood Research Chair in Mental Health and Trauma, as circulated.

Approved by Consent.

REGULAR

4. Business Arising

There was no business arising.

5. Enquiries

There were no enquiries.

6. Communications

1. Institutional Quality Assurance Process Cyclical Program Reviews

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

It was explained that the report provides a description of the processes to meet our responsibility to the government on quality assurance and thanked the individuals who were involved in the process. K. Dej provided an overview of the process and noted that programs are notified 18 months in advance of the review.

A member raised concerns with the IQAP process. They noted that the IQAP review is designed with two external members and one internal member and expressed that the internal member should be involved in drafting the report. The member advised that based on their experience, there is disorganization with the process, it is not clear who does what, and the staff from MacPherson were not aware of their role. There was a suggestion to clarify who the report is sent to. K. Dej advised that follow up from that review has occurred with MacPherson staff. Two site visits occurred and an external member attended to provide feedback. It was explained that the external members are asked to write the report, but it is difficult for them to do so without knowledge of the process, so they are advised to reach out to the internal member with any questions. The internal member is asked to read the report and provide any feedback, however, the report is formally written by the external members.

This item was for information.

7. Report from Graduate Council

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

S. Hanna explained that at its meeting on May 14, 2024, Graduate Council approved the following items. S. Hanna provided an overview of the revisions.

1. Curriculum Revisions

- a. Faculty of Business
 - i. M.B.A. Stream – B.Tech students
 - ii. Master of Health Management Program
 - iii. Organizational Behaviour Human Resources and Management (OBHRM) Specialization

It was duly moved and seconded,

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

The motion was **Carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

2. Curriculum Revisions

3. Graduate Calendar Administrative Sections Revisions

4. New Awards

A member noted that they were surprised by the leave of absence change and asked why the 12-month maximum was needed. S. Hanna explained that the language needed to be clarified as the previous language was misleading. There has been a long-standing practice to limit a cumulative total leave to 12-months across the entire program. Individuals can petition for an extension, and if they have a disability a recommendation can be provided from Student Accessibility Services (SAS). The 12-month rule applies to everyone, and exceptions will be granted on a case-by-case basis which will be recorded.

Members expressed that the situation could create an obstacle for accessibility and inclusivity and that the option to request an accommodation around the rule needs to be transparent. S. Hanna explained that supervisors need to be heavily involved in counselling students who are struggling. The revision is to clarify the rule and how there can be exceptions. Graduate students seeking support from SAS has increased and there has been a lot of progress around issues of disability. A member added that the rule is useful and provides the opportunity to have conversations with students around whether a withdrawal in good standing or an extension is the best solution.

8. Report from Undergraduate Council

1. Terms of Award

This item was for information.

9. Report from the University Planning Committee

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

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

- 1. IQAP Cyclical Program Reviews**
- 2. Research Strategic Plan 2024-2025**

Andy Knights, *Acting Vice-President, Research*, presented the report.

A. Knights explained that the updated plan satisfies the requirements of Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program and guides researchers in showing alignment of work with priorities when applying for Tri-Council funding. The plan is aligned with McMaster's strategies, includes key operational priorities, and measures how the Office of the Vice-President Research are supporting the research community. The consultation process began 12 months ago and included Deans, Associate Deans, President/Vice-Presidents Team (PVP), Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) experts, faculty members, Directors of Centres and Institutes, and external stakeholders. The plan looks at ways to address complex global challenges.

A member noted that the image in the Indigenous section was stereotypical and that the other images in the report depict individuals doing work. The member suggested replacing the image

and the member expressed that advancing Indigenous knowledge needs to be obtained through constant dialogue.

Questions were raised around how the report was developed, the input provided and how it will be used. The report is used to provide the transactional component for CRC and Tri-Council funding to address how the research aligns with the strategic plan.

This item was for information.

3. 2024-2025 Consolidated Budget

S. Tighe and Nicole Wagner, *Budget Committee Chair*, presented the report. Lou Mitton, *Controller*, was in attendance to answer questions.

S. Tighe explained that several funds go into the consolidated fund and that the Budget Committee looks after the operating, ancillary and specifically funded budgets. The committee is chaired by a faculty member who is elected annually from the University Planning Committee slate. The operating fund is comprised of five components and the numbers have been consistent over time. S. Tighe noted that the current budget model helped the institution during COVID as they were able to respond to unexpected situations. There are higher expenses as compared to revenues and uncertainty related to international students. Appropriations are the amount that has been effectively saved over time and Faculties are starting to draw on them to cover expenses. A lot of activity is occurring on how we can be more efficient and only spend where it is critical.

N. Wagner explained that total revenues are down, and the expense side is relatively flat. While we can expect to see increases in salary and wages, there is a lot of effort on cost containment across all units. There is a deficit in the budget year and the consolidated fund has declined. Key issues in the budget include the Blue Ribbon Panel recommendations which are not all realized, a decline of international undergraduate enrolment, and new provincial accountability metrics. The budget does not anticipate any adjustments resulting from the repeal of Bill 124. Cost containment activities are occurring across McMaster with an emphasis on advancing McMasters strategic priorities and developing a research ecosystem. N. Wagner provided an overview of alternative revenue strategies and highlighted risks and mitigations.

A member expressed concern around overly conservative projections, and noted that years where losses were projected usually ended with a surplus. The member noted that it is concerning because it has a negative effect on decisions to hire faculty. S. Tighe explained that McMaster is one of three universities in Ontario that has a surplus. McMaster has always operated conservatively with the budget and this is a different budget than the past few years. It is balanced because of cost containment measures that have taken place. They are being conservative in holding on hiring as the retirement incentives for faculty do not hit the budget until the next fiscal year.

In response to questions asked around projections for tuition, research overhead growing but not funding, and the effect of Bill 124, S. Tighe explained that tuition projections are related to

international students, and they are working hard to achieve targets. It is a competitive landscape, and they can take more domestic students but will not receive grants for them. Regarding funding, Tri-Council return has been fairly flat and overall research has grown. Bill 124 is a liability risk, and they are working with employee groups.

A member noted the unit allocations for Humanities and Arts and Science have decreased since 2015. The member asked how these types of trends are monitored, what is the response, and is there an attempt to bring things back into balance. S. Tighe explained that looking at primary growth, the largest gains are in the Faculties which have taken more international students. We are one University and need six strong Faculties. The onus is on each Faculty to think about how they can contribute to grow revenue and reduce expenses.

This item was for information.

10. Report from the Committee on By-Laws

Stephanie Springgay, *Chair of the Committee on By-Laws*, presented the report.

S. Springgay explained that Senate accepted Notice of Motion for the amendments to the Faculty of Engineering By-Laws and the Committee on Academic Integrity Terms of Reference at its meeting on May 15, 2024.

1. Faculty of Engineering By-Laws

At its meeting on May 21, 2024, the Committee reviewed and recommended that Senate approve the revisions to the Faculty of Engineering By-Laws.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate, on the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws, approve the proposed revisions to the Faculty of Engineering By-Laws, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

2. Terms of Reference – Committee on Academic Integrity

At the same meeting, the Committee reviewed and recommended that Senate approve the revisions to the Committee on Academic Integrity Terms of Reference.

The Committee considered the suggestions raised at the Senate meeting and made additional revisions to the committee membership. The Committee changed the Chancellor to a non-voting member and removed the Vice-Provost (Teaching & Learning) as the Deputy Provost is also an ex-officio member on the Committee. The Vice-Provost (Teaching & Learning) can still be invited to the meetings as a guest when needed. This reduces the ex-officio membership to four voting members. The Committee felt the addition of a faculty member and student member was not necessary given the decrease in ex-officio members.

The ex-officio membership is now balanced with the faculty membership. There are four voting ex-officio members, four elected faculty members and two elected student members. The Committee composition is now the same as it was previously.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the Senate, on the recommendation of the Committee on By-Laws, approve the proposed revisions to the Committee on Academic Integrity Terms of Reference, as amended.

A member proposed and it was agreed to add 'voting members' for the number of members required for quorum.

The motion was **Carried**.

11. Other Business

1. Working Group to Review Recommendations from Ombuds Office

Susan Tighe, *Provost and Vice-President (Academic)*, provided an update.

S. Tighe explained that the Ombuds Report was completed in the fall and presented at the October 2023 Senate meeting. The Provost's Office took the recommendations and created four small working groups to discuss policy implications. The groups have completed their work and the next step is consultation with the Ombuds. Once consultation is finished, the reports will be posted on the Provost's website.