

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SENATE**

**VOL. CXVI**

Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 3:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Gilmour Hall 111

**PRESENT:** David Farrar (Chair), Ahmed Abdalla, Maxwell Altman, Paul Andrews, Hfsa Awan, James Benn, Kusum Bhatta, Blaise Bourdin, Dina Brooks, Lorraine Carter, Kim Dej, Wael El-Dakhkhni, Paul Faure, Saher Fazilat, Carlos Filipe, Saara Greene, Khaled Hassanein, Faiza Hirji, Steve Hranilovic, Jeremiah Hurley, Suleiman Igdoura, Alfonso Iorio, Manish Kacker, Andy Knights, Siying Lu, Graeme Luke, Sanamdeep Matharu, John Medcof, Michael McGillion, Mehdi Narimani, Brenda O'Connor, Heva Olfman, Joëlle Papillon, Pau Pujolas, Kalai Saravanamuttu, Chris Sinding, Dennis Souder, Pamela Swett, Susan Tighe, Brenda Vrkljan, Zimo Wang, Renae Watchman, Jeff Weitz, Kerry Yang, Margaret Zanel, Eugenia Zuroski  
Andrea Thyret-Kidd (*University Secretary*), Christine Richard (*Associate University Secretary*), Alysha Sless (*Assistant University Secretary*)

**REGRETS:** Claudia Emerson, Lili Litwin, Maureen MacDonald, Rick Monture, Heather Sheardown, Stephanie Springgay

**OBSERVERS:** Catherine Anderson, Carolyn Brendon, Sandra Carroll, Rosa da Silva, Andrea Farquhar, Bonny Ibhawoh, Vivian Lewis, Jack Mah, Melissa Pool, Jovan Popovic, Karen Richmond, Sarah Robinson, Sean Van Koughnett, Barington Walker, Rob Walters

**GUESTS:** Erin Aspenlieder, *Associate Director, Program and Educational Development*

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**OPEN SESSION**

David Farrar, *President & Vice-Chancellor*, 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.

D. Farrar expressed that this is a very difficult time for many in our community and for our world. We are struggling to come to terms with the escalating violence and atrocities in Israel and Gaza and have watched the human suffering and loss of life with horror. Many members of our community have contacted D. Farrar to share their shock, sadness, devastation, anger, helplessness, fear, and uncertainty. At times like this, it is more important than ever that we are able to come together as a community, and engage with one another in a respectful, thoughtful, and compassionate way. There are many different voices trying to be heard, and strong opinions being expressed. Our goal as an academic institution is to provide a supportive environment where differing views can be expressed with respect. The campus environment should be a place where diverse perspectives can be shared, challenged, and discussed, even on the most contentious and difficult issues. We hope that everyone will carefully consider the impact that their words and actions have on those affected by the current conflict. The University is aware of and monitoring this evolving situation to ensure our campus remains safe for everyone in our community and is making a variety of supports available to any

member of our community who needs assistance. We will continue to make resources available and to prioritize the safety and well-being of our campus community.

September 30 was National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a time to reflect on the ongoing legacy of Canada's residential school system, to honour the survivors, and remember the children who never came home. D. Farrar attended an event that included scenes from *The Mush Hole* performed by our Chancellor, Santee Smith, and members of the Kaha:wi Dance Theatre, which tells of the experiences and abuses suffered by residential school survivors in a deeply personal and visceral way. D. Farrar noted that he has seen *The Mush Hole* performed a few times now, and it never loses its power. It is very difficult to watch, but it is important that we see and hear those stories and educate ourselves about the truth of residential schools. It is also important to remember that Truth and Reconciliation does not just happen on September 30, it is something we need to strive for year-round. There are opportunities on campus to continue engaging in this work. This fall, the Indigenous Studies Department launched a new book club that will feature the book *Truth Telling: Seven Conversations About Indigenous Life in Canada*, by award-winning Indigenous author, Michelle Good. Discussions will take place throughout the fall term, and its goal is to encourage open dialogue, promote discussions and provide an opportunity for learning and growth among all participants.

Last spring, McMaster announced the formation of the Generative AI Task Force to explore its potential for enhancing teaching and learning at McMaster, as well as the challenges associated with its use. The taskforce has now published its final report, which includes a number of recommendations for faculty, staff and students. Susan Tighe, *Provost & Vice-President (Academic)*, will talk more about the work of the Task Force and its recommendations later in this meeting. D. Farrar thanked those on the taskforce, which was co-led by our *Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning*, Kim Dej and *Deputy Provost* Matheus Grasselli, with coordinator Erin Aspenlieder from the MacPherson Institute. More than 35 faculty, staff and students made up the task force. D. Farrar added that AI is a game-changer in how we learn, teach and research, and it will continue to evolve and noted his appreciation for the work of the task force in providing guidance on this critically important issue.

D. Farrar informed members that Don Abelson has joined McMaster as the inaugural Academic Director of the Wilson College of Leadership and Civic Engagement. D. Abelson comes to McMaster from the Brian Mulroney Institute of Government at St. Xavier University. Before that, he was director of the Centre for American Studies and chair of the Political Science department at Western University. He joins McMaster as a professor in the Department of Political Science. D. Farrar added that he is pleased to welcome Don to McMaster, and looks forward to his leadership as Wilson College continues to take shape.

D. Farrar explained that a few weeks ago, we achieved another milestone with the launch of the College's External Advisory Council, which met for the first time on campus to talk about the development and future of Wilson College. It was an excellent day of discussions, and a great opportunity to get to know the members of the Council, which is made up of distinguished Canadians from the public, private and non-profit sectors, with diverse experiences and backgrounds.

On Saturday, September 30, a large, unsanctioned street party took place in a neighbourhood surrounding McMaster. This illegal street party was promoted by an anonymous website on social media. In the days and weeks leading up to the party, McMaster launched the "Be a Good Neighbour" campaign, as well as an extensive web and social media campaign that also included delivering flyers to houses in the

neighbourhoods surrounding the university to discourage students from attending illegal street parties. We also worked closely with the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Police to keep our community safe. Hamilton Police Service declared the gathering a nuisance party under the City of Hamilton's Nuisance Party by-law and the party broke up not long after. The next day, the MSU Maroons and our AVP (Students & Learning), Sean Van Koughnett, went into the neighbourhood to talk to residents and help clean up. D. Farrar thanked Campus Security and our partners in the Hamilton Police Service and the City for their cooperation and for ensuring the illegal street party was well-managed. D. Farrar thanked the MSU Maroons for their help with the clean-up, and the team in Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs who worked so hard to raise awareness about the risks associated with attending illegal street parties. It was great to see that most of our students took the safety messaging seriously.

Last week was Entrepreneurship week at McMaster. It was organized by Student Affairs, The Forge and The Clinic@Mac. It provided opportunities for faculty, staff and students to explore and learn more about entrepreneurship and commercialization of research. Participants heard from alumni, students and faculty who have created their own start-ups and spin-off companies. They also learned more about the resources available to our student and faculty entrepreneurs in McMaster's expanding innovation ecosystem. One of the resources is a new, online course called "Fundamentals of IP at McMaster," which was developed by the McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO), and is free to all McMaster students, faculty and staff.

D. Farrar congratulated three exceptional Engineering students whose project was named the runner up in the prestigious 2023 Canadian James Dyson Awards. Manny Lemos, Aaron Li and Amos Yu are the creators of Cyclops Ride Assist, a cycling safety device that incorporates advanced car safety technology. They were inspired to develop the device after all three had close calls on their bikes, which they use to commute to campus.

D. Farrar advised that we continue to work with our provincial and federal government partners on issues of importance to McMaster and the post-secondary sector. We are still waiting for the province's Blue-Ribbon Panel on the fiscal sustainability of Ontario's post-secondary sector to release its report and continue to advocate that the provincial government increase its financial contribution to post-secondary institutions. We also are seeking the ability to increase our tuition rates, which have been frozen for the past five years, resulting in tuition rates that are now 23% lower than in 2018. D. Farrar advised that he looks forward to meeting with several government officials on November 14th during McMaster's Advocacy Day at Queen's Park. D. Farrar noted that they have been working hard at the federal level to advocate on the University's priority for more funding, and he looks forward to meeting with several government officials on November 6th and 7th during McMaster's Advocacy Days on Parliament Hill.

D. Farrar explained that they have also been working with our university colleagues on the India-Canada situation. The tensions between the Canadian and Indian government have continued to rise, creating stress for some, including our international students. In addition, the federal government has been considering a cap on international students in relation to the housing challenges. McMaster has been working with Universities Canada, U15 and the Council of Universities to highlight the importance of international students and to advocate for government assistance options to increase housing options for all students.

In response to a question regarding McMaster's involvement in illegal street parties, D. Farrar explained that the parties occur in neighbourhoods around campus and there is the perception that McMaster students are involved. This is not accurate as many students bus in from other areas and high school students also

participate. D. Farrar confirmed that it is a police matter and that we coordinate our activities and inform the police of what we are doing. McMaster has a responsibility to support our neighbourhood where we can.

In response to a question regarding Palestine, Israel and University statements supporting employees, D. Farrar noted that there will not be a debate on various messages and the question will be taken away and communications will be reviewed.

A member asked whether there have been concerns raised by students regarding safety and whether there is a policy or response. S. Van Koughnett advised that individuals have come forward with concerns and have been directed to appropriate supports. Communications have been sent so all students are aware of the different supports available.

**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 October 18, 2023 and that item 2 be approved by Consent.**

The motion was **Carried**.

**CONSENT**

**2. Minutes of the Meetings of June 7 and September 13, 2023 – Open Session**

Motion:

**that the minutes of the Open Session of the meetings held on June 7 and September 13, 2023 be approved as circulated.**

**Approved** by Consent.

**REGULAR**

**3. Business Arising**

There was no business arising.

**4. Enquiries**

There were no enquiries.

**5. Communications**

## 1. Report from the Provost

S. Tighe presented the report and advised that a report will be presented at every second meeting.

S. Tighe shared the following highlights with members:

- The welcome airport program was well received and provided free safe shared rides to campus.
- The iCent app is a dedicated platform for students and provides local transit, banking and other supports.
- The Campus Safety app is the best way for the University to contact individuals. A campaign was held which resulted in 3,100+ downloads. Members were encouraged to add the app.
- Classroom information was removed from public locations.
- Members were encouraged to take the professor hippo training.
- Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost*, is leading the faculty leadership and development area and is examining the types of training that is offered. The idea is that professional development is directly tied to academic excellence.
- Members were encouraged to review the McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO) annual report.
- The Task Force on Generative AI report is available on the Provost website.
- McMaster is in a positive financial position and is one of three institutions that are not in a deficit.
- Members were encouraged to examine the completed strategic reviews posted on the Provost website.

In response to a question regarding how many Faculties are in deficit, S. Tighe explained that it is not an accurate representation of the situation. Projections are done for revenues and expense and the allocations are based on enrolment, grants, etc. Since targets were not achieved for international students, some Faculty budgets are being adjusted. In those situations, they are looking at strategies to be able to meet their plans. This includes putting some activities on hold, including hiring which allows for a gapping period, and/or using appropriations to cover costs. S. Tighe met with all Faculty Deans and Directors of Finance to look at five-year projections. The University Fund can also help to buffer some things.

This item was for information.

## 2. Report from the Ombuds Office

Carolyn Brendon, *Ombuds*, presented the report.

C. Brendon explained that the Ombuds Office is funded jointly by the McMaster Students Union (MSU) and the University and functions independently of the administrative hierarchy by reporting to the President of the University and the President of the MSU. Individuals can consult with the Ombuds Office on a confidential basis and the University does not have

access to the records. C. Brendon noted that the Ombuds analyzes problems through the lens of Administrative Fairness Standards. The types of fairness include procedural, relational and substantive. The role of the Office is to assist visitors to better understand their problems and possible ways to address them. Faculty and staff may also consult the Office about student-related policies or issues.

In response to a question about the number of incidents, C. Brendon explained that the number of incidents stay roughly the same year over year and that between 350 and 400 incidents is considered normal for the Office. Andrea Thyret-Kidd, *University Secretary*, noted that the report is being presented at Senate, MSU and GSA and that it is the first time the report has been seen for a period of time.

S. Tighe explained that in response to the report, a small working group is being established to review the recommendations. Members discussed academic freedom and grading.

A question was asked regarding confidentiality and C. Brendon explained that intervening is not common and only impacts 15-20% of the cases. When asked to intervene, permission is obtained from the individual to share their identity. If it is a situation involving numerous students, the case could be brought forward on an anonymous basis.

In response to a question regarding a student representative being a member of the working group to update the Student Code, S. Tighe responded positively.

Members were advised to reach out to the Ombuds Office with any further questions.

This item was for information.

## **6. Report from Graduate Council**

1. Research Plagiarism Checking
2. New Awards

These items were for information. Steve Hranilovic, *Vice-Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies*, provided an update on the task force on graduate funding. S. Hranilovic explained that they are working on draft recommendations and thanked the members of the task force.

## **7. Report from Undergraduate Council**

K. Dej presented the report.

1. New Certificate of Attendance Program Proposals from the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences

At its meeting on September 26, 2023, Undergraduate Council approved, for recommendation to the Senate, 19 Certificate of Attendance programs from the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences. These programs were approved by the University Student Fees

Committee on September 19, 2023, and were approved by the University Planning Committee earlier today. These are a collection of non-academic credentials which are available on and off campus.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that the Senate approve the 19 Certificate of Attendance programs, as circulated.**

The motion was **Carried**.

2. Revision to Existing Diploma Program

At the same meeting, Undergraduate Council approved, for recommendation to the Senate, revisions to the Business Administration (Generalist) Diploma. This revision was approved by the University Planning Committee earlier today.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that the Senate approve the revisions to the Business Administration (Generalist) diploma program, as circulated.**

The motion was **Carried**.

3. Closure of Diploma Program

At the same meeting, Undergraduate Council also approved, for recommendation to the Senate, the closure of the Business Administration Diploma with Finance Concentration. The closure of this diploma program was approved by the University Planning Committee earlier today. K. Dej thanked Lorraine Carter.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**That the Senate approve the closure of the Business Administration Diploma with the Finance Concentration, as circulated.**

The motion was **Carried**.

The remainder of items were for information.

4. Terms of Award

5. Establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Relief for Students Absences

**8. Report from the Committee on Academic Integrity**

Alfonso Iorio, *Chair, Committee on Academic Integrity*, presented the report.

1. Report on Generative Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity

A. Iorio explained that at its meeting on October 5, 2023, the Committee on Academic Integrity received the Report on Generative Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity and invited Erin Aspenlieder, *Associate Director, Program and Educational Development Group*, to present the report.

E. Aspenlieder explained that the task force worked over the summer months and considered what is generative AI and the importance of validating generative outputs. E. Aspenlieder provided an overview on what generative AI can and cannot do, noting that there are implicit biases and the plagiarism detectors are not reliable. The task force's mandate was to develop guidelines and recommend revisions to the Academic Integrity Policy. The task force was composed of 35 members including faculty, staff and students. E. Aspenlieder shared resources and supports for educators.

In response to a question concerning opportunity and risk, E. Aspenlieder explained that members of the task force were split with some excited and others concerned. E. Aspenlieder added that it is important to learn how to use AI and the associated risks.

A member suggested putting language in the course outline to note the potential risks of using the technology and the responsibility of the student to ensure their work is free of bias. E. Aspenlieder advised that there is a task force working on syllabus language.

Members raised concerns around how generative AI is detected, assistance for instructors to identify the use of generative AI, and students using grammar AI tools. E. Aspenlieder explained that Turn It In has developed an AI detector which most institutions declined to use, including McMaster. Once they are confident with the privacy and security of the program, there will be broad communication and training for faculty on the use of the AI detector. It can be used as a flag to have further conversations with students.

This item was for information.

2. Recommendations for the Policy on Academic Integrity

At the same meeting, the Committee on Academic Integrity reviewed and approved revisions to the Policy on Academic Integrity. Revisions include language "by a non-human agent", adding two new academic dishonesty offences, and revising the explanation of Generative Artificial Intelligence. A. Iorio noted that they are proposing that the Policy be effective at the start of the next term as the technology is evolving quickly.

It was duly moved and seconded,

**that the Senate approve the revisions to the Policy on Academic Integrity, effective January 1, 2024, as circulated.**

A member noted that there were some minor typos that they can discuss offline.



The motion was **Carried**; 2 abstentions.

## 9. Presentation to the Senate

### 1. Inclusive Excellence and the University

Barrington Walker, *Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion*, shared a presentation with the Senate.

B. Walker explained that the EDI Strategy is “Towards Inclusive Excellence”. Members were provided with the seven principles of inclusive excellence; inclusive leadership; consultative action planning; access and opportunity; career progress and equity; inclusive excellence in research, teaching, community engagement; governance; evidence based; and commitment to raising awareness across the sector. B. Walker added that collaboration and partnerships are key to success and that there is a well-established track record of pursuing excellence at the University and room for varying perspectives.

A member noted their concern with the acronym DIE when speaking about oppressed individuals and how it is problematic. B. Walker explained that the most important aspect is the substantive discussion, and that the acronym was not noticed. B. Walker shared his thoughts on the language of anti racism and how he does not worry substantially about EDI as an acronym but understands the criticisms.

Members asked for a timeline for receiving a preview of the action plan. B. Walker explained that he intends to learn the McMaster context more thoroughly, will rely on EDI strategic leads in the departments, and has enlisted support of the Educational Advisory Board. The intention is to bring forward a plan in 18 months to 2 years and a progress report could be presented before that time.

This item was for information.

## 10. Other Business

There was no other business.