

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN SENATE
SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2011
MARQUIS HALL**

Present: Vera Pezer (chair), J. Alexander, H. Allyn, L. Ashley, E. Barber, A. Baxter-Jones, M. Beazely, Keith Hamilton (for R. Bhargava), E. Bourassa, K. Breker, M. Buhr, N. Burns, L. Butler, J. Buzowetsky, J. Cameron-Turley, K. Chad, B. Cram, M. Derdall, B. Dubois, D. Dutchak, L. Ebel, M. Emde, L. Ewing, B. Fairbairn, H. Fellehner, S. Finley, S. Fisher, P. Flaten, S. Fortugno, D. Freeman, D. Froese, P. Gatin, J. Germida, R. Grauer, S. Haines, M. Hande, D. Hannah, G. Hansen, D. Berg (for E. Hartman), D. Hasell, D. Hickie, J. Huyghebaert, J. Jacobs, J. Jensen, B. Johnson, R. Krismer, Rick Forbes (for M. Kuzyk), L. Lacoursiere, P. MacKinnon, A. March, L. Martz, Rebecca Major (for O. Butt), G. McCaffrey, R. Mowat, B. Nylander, N. Poon, F. Puckett, P. Rempel, C. Reynolds, L. Schmidt, D. Senecal, D. Spitzig, G. Stevens, G. Stewart, P. Stoicheff, P. Stroh, M. Stumborg, A. Taman, D. Taras, D. Taylor, F. Wagner, Kim Newlove (for A. Whittles), and S. Calver (secretary)

Regrets: A. Akanni, W. Albritton, B. Bilson, G. Blackmore, D. Boyko, J. Crawford, S. Fedoruk, R. Florizone, K. Gerwing, W. Gulka, D. Hill, R. Isinger, T. Isnana, L. King, P. McKercher, T. Molloy, A. Nagy, R. Nystuen, O. Panchuk, K. Salmers, B. Sanderson, R. Schriml, K. Smith, T. Turner, D. Uglem, G. Uswak, V. Williamson.

Also present: A. Aitken, C. Card, J. Doell, J. Jones, G. Linassi, R. Major, L. Stamler, M. Soroka, C. Stoicheff, and A. Ward.

1. Opening remarks

Chancellor Pezer welcomed members of Senate to the annual spring meeting, and invited members to introduce themselves, indicating what jurisdiction they represent.

Chancellor Pezer then paid tribute to Judith Laurel Krause, who passed away on December 21, 2010. Laurel Krause served two consecutive terms as elected senate for district 3 from 2004-2010 and a two-year term on the initial president's round table on outreach and engagement from 2008-2010. In 2010, she received the Alumni Service Award, in recognition of her service to her profession, the community, and the university. A vibrant and dedicated member of Senate, she attended 42 convocation ceremonies as a member of the platform party.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

3. Minutes of the meeting of October 16, 2010

FELLEHNER/DUBOIS: That the minutes of the meeting of October 16, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

4. Business from the minutes4.1 Responses from Dean Dillon re funding for graduate studies in fine arts

This item was received for information.

5. President's report

The president expressed his gratitude to Senate members for attending and spoke of the importance of Senate as part of the university's tricameral governance system. He then commended members to his written report and provided additional comments on areas of progress and achievement, highlighting the accomplishments of SSHRC Gold medalist Jim Miller, 3M National Teaching Fellowship recipient Fred Phillips, CERC chair Howard Wheater, CIS Coach of the year Lisa Thomaidis, and Edna Warrington, recipient this year of the president's service award.

Strategically, the university is well positioned with the identification of its signature areas of research, as those areas where university researchers are poised to become global leaders. Physically, the university is in the midst of an extraordinary period of capital expansion, signified by the imminent opening of the Academic Health Sciences Complex, InterVac, new student residences, and the completion of the renovations to the Place Riel Student Centre. The pressing issue of deferred capital maintenance is being addressed through the development of a strategy to direct operating budget resources towards maintaining the university's buildings. Funding received through the federal Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) has assisted by enabling the repair and resurfacing of the roofs of a number of buildings.

The president then invited questions and comments from Senate members on his report or any matter referred to in his comments. The following topics were broached:

- The breakdown of provincial and federal funding received by the university for the establishment of a centre of excellence in nuclear studies and installation of a cyclotron and PET-CT;
- The recent tsunami in Japan and resulting nuclear power plant hazards in relation to the university's nuclear initiative;
- The open letter from six faculty members calling for legislative changes to the Act related to the Board of Governors member composition and the president's response;
- The Board of Governors' policy on conflict of interest for members relative to the initiative to establish a centre of excellence for nuclear studies and the service of the Board chair on the university and Cameco boards;
- The president's goals for the university in the coming year prior to his resignation;

- The support and synergies evident in the business community established under the auspices of the president.

6. Report on undergraduate student activities

USSU President Chris Stoicheff presented the report, highlighting the collaborative approach between the university and USSU to expand access to childcare and student housing. He commended Leejay Schmidt, student Senator, who was selected as the most outstanding student member on the University Student Council, and spoke of the concern regarding the low voter turnout in student elections. The newly renovated student space in the Place Riel Student Centre will provide a new international student and study abroad centre, new Student Council chambers, and expanded student health and counseling services. The Gordon Oakes – Red Bear Student Centre is strongly supported by the USSU and the Indigenous Students' Council (ISC); this past year, the USSU signed an agreement with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner to promote treaty education on campus. Other initiatives relate to further exploring the concept for a Centre for Social Justice, supporting the Pride Centre and Women's Centre, and the creation of the Saskatchewan Students' Coalition with SIAST, the First Nations University of Canada and the University of Regina Student Unions to enhance lobbying efforts with all levels of government.

Questions of Mr. Stoicheff included the request for an elaboration of cross-province initiatives in support of students, particularly for students in Medicine and Nursing; the possibility of requesting that the province direct resource royalties to fund education; student concerns related to reduced languages and linguistics program offerings; and mental health wellness initiatives undertaken by the USSU.

7. Report on graduate student activities

Rebecca Major, Aboriginal Liaison for the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) presented the report on behalf of GSA President Omeasoo Butt. Over the past year, the GSA engaged in the development of Vision 2015, a vision statement that addressed childcare issues, fair dealing for graduate students through the creation of an ombudsperson role, the expansion of graduate student bursaries, student outreach, and competitive wages for GSA staff members. Work on the statement will continue in the coming year. Other goals include increased retention of aboriginal graduate students and encouraging student participation in Aboriginal Achievement Week. This year, voter turnout for the GSA elections increased and was viewed as a positive sign of student engagement.

8. Report on Council activities

Claire Card, Council chair presented the report, highlighting the receipt of the signature areas by Council, progress towards the 20 commitments of the *Second Integrated Plan*, and the adoption of the *Learning Charter* as significant milestones of the past year. Other exciting initiatives include the establishment of the *Global Institute for Water Security* and the receipt of funds to establish a nuclear institute. At this time, she indicated the governance and academic programs associated with the proposed nuclear centre are not clear and emphasized the importance of Council's engagement in the establishment of the centre.

A member requested an elaboration of those aspects that would trigger the termination of a program. Discussion then returned to the provincial funding for the nuclear centre and the direction of the centre in light of the province's economic interests. Vice-president Karen Chad outlined the history of the prior consultation with Council's centres subcommittee regarding the concept of the centre; the academic activities associated with the centre are intended to focus on four areas: nuclear engineering, material sciences, nuclear medicine, and the environmental and social context of nuclear development. Additional comments called into question the independence of the Board of Governors chair relative to the establishment of the proposed centre. Discussion concluded at the request of Chancellor Pezer due to the predominance of this topic at the meeting.

9. Items for Approval

9.1 Decisions from University Council

9.1.1 Revisions to the College of Medicine admission requirements

Dean Butler confirmed that Nursing students are also required to undergo a criminal record check.

REMPEL/BUZOWETSKY: That Senate confirm the revision to the College of Medicine admission requirements to require a criminal records check for accepted students, effective September 2011.

CARRIED

9.1.2 Change to admission requirements to the Master of Nursing, Nurse Practitioner Option

The secretary presented the item, indicating the need for program revisions arising from changing provincial registration requirements and the need to align the program with other Canadian Nurse Practitioner programs.

PUCKETT/BUZOWETSKY: That Senate confirm the following changes to admission requirements for the Master of Nursing, Nurse Practitioner Option as described in the agenda materials outlined on pages 59 – 63.

CARRIED

9.2 Nominations committee

9.2.1 Committee membership for 2011/2012

Bev Dubois presented the report as committee chair. The results of the election for members at large will not be known until June 30th. If need be, alternates will be found for those members nominated to committees that are not elected.

DUBOIS/STROH: That Senate approve the appointments to senate committees for 2010/2011 as outlined on the attached report, page 67.

CARRIED

9.2.2 New procedures for the search and review of senior administrators

Senator Dubois reported the revised procedures make explicit the existing practice of the senate nominations committee to appoint a member of Senate to the search and review committees for those colleges or schools where there is no closely associated professional organization. If there is more than one closely related association, the senate nominations committee selects which association is represented and asks the association to appoint a member.

9.3 Executive committee

9.3.1 Appointments to nominations committee for 2011/2012

BEAZELY/HICKIE: That Deborah Agema, Shirley Haines and Ann March be appointed to the senate nominations committee for 2011/12.

CARRIED

The following items were provided for information.

9.3.2 Update on changes to the *University Act 1995*

Chancellor Pezer reported an amendment to the *University Act* has been requested to permit the member of Senate appointed to the Board of Governors to be eligible for reappointment for a third term as is now available for Order-in-Council appointments to the Board. Other suggested revisions relate to the election of student members, to correct what is perceived to be an unintentional oversight requiring students to be members of Convocation and thus graduates of the university in order to be eligible to vote in Senate elections. Also requested is clarification that the USSU and GSA student bodies conduct the election of student members to Senate, rather than the university secretary as is presently stated. At present there is no schedule associated with the province's consideration of the requested changes.

9.3.3 Appointment to presidential search committee

The report was presented by the secretary, who invited members to consider submitting their name for consideration to serve on the presidential search committee. The appointment of the member selected to serve will be made by the executive committee, due to the fact that a number of members of the nominations committee wish to be considered for service on the search committee.

9.4 Honorary degrees committee report

Chancellor Pezer asked that members keep the report confidential until individuals are notified and a date set to make the award.

Senate approved a confidential motion to award honorary degrees to six individuals.

9.5 Membership committee report

9.5.1 Application for membership on Senate from the Assemblée
Communautaire Fransaskoise (ACF)

ALEXANDER/BREKER: That Senate approve the membership of the Assemblée
Communautaire Fransaskoise on the University Senate effective July 1, 2011.

CARRIED

10. Items for information

The following items were provided for information:

10.1 Update on enrolment

David Hannah, associate vice-president, Student and Enrolment Services Division commented briefly on the highlights of the written report, indicating that two enrolment snapshots are now taken each year, in February and in October. Significantly, graduate students now comprise 13.82% of the total student population; undergraduate student enrolment has experienced a moderate recovery, after a number of years of decline, with an increase of 1.87%. Undergraduate and graduate teaching activity measured in credit unit activity has also increased. Areas of concern relate to the decline in the total number of out-of-province students admitted and attending and the lower rate of retention reported for aboriginal students.

There were questions regarding the availability of a printed scholarships guide, which is available on limited basis to high school guidance counselors and libraries. Other questions related to the rationale for the decline in out-of-province admissions and the lower retention rate in Arts and Science, comparable to other colleges. Dr. Hannah spoke of the work being done with colleges to employ new strategies to recruit and retain out-of-province students and of the importance of accessibility to high-quality academic advising, particularly in Arts and Science.

10.2 Update on senate election

Chancellor Pezer reported that electronic voting in the Senate election for members at large would be conducted from May 16 – June 30, 2011. Six nominations have been received for five vacancies. Candidates are: Joanna Alexander, Joy Crawford, Eileen Hartman, Jordan Miller, Peter Stroh, and Joyce Wells.

10.3 University sustainability commitment

Alec Aitken and Julia Jones, commitment co-leaders, made a brief presentation on the university's sustainability commitment. The mission of the working group for

the commitment is to “*engage the university and its extended community in all aspects of sustainability and collectively develop a University of Saskatchewan sustainability plan.*” The commitment is viewed as overarching, touching upon all aspects of university life. Of central importance is the development of a Campus Sustainability Plan as a comprehensive plan with recommendations in the five areas of campus life related to education, research, operations, governance, and community engagement. A draft of the sustainability plan will subsequently be submitted to Senate for feedback and consultation.

11. Presentation and discussion groups

11.1 Distributed Learning

Angela Ward, acting vice-provost Teaching and Learning and Bob Cram, Director of the Centre for Continuing and Distance Education jointly presented the discussion topic. Dr. Ward began by outlining her role in relation to teaching and learning and that of Dr. Cram in employing technology to advance off campus and distributed learning. The university’s foundational document on outreach and engagement provides the underlying principles for learning in partnership with communities. Dr. Cram defined off-campus and distributed learning as any time a class can be completed in such a way that student does not need to come to the Saskatoon campus to complete the class. Increasing numbers of students take on-line classes as it provides flexibility in their schedules. The university is committed towards improving and expanding its off-campus offerings and working with the province’s regional colleges as key partners in program delivery.

The Project Charter for Planning for Off-Campus and Distributed Learning (OCDL) intends to examine best practices in the field, with the goal of improving and expanding off-campus learning, including developing financial models and incentives to increase collaboration across the university. The draft vision statement for the charter expresses the goal of the university being “*...Canada’s leading medical-doctoral university in the delivery of off-campus and distributed learning.*”

Next steps for the charter involve completion of the preliminary report and direct consultation with the regional colleges. Consultation to date has included interviews with deans and directors of schools, focus group discussions with the regional advisory councils, student and literature surveys, and a presentation to the Senate round table on outreach and engagement. The target deadline for completion of the charter is June 30, 2012.

Dean Butler also spoke of the importance of OCDL learning as part of the College of Nursing’s distributed education plan. Complex issues relate to extending the reach of the campus across the province and developing a virtual learning community. One approach is through learning communities; another novel approach makes a faculty member available in virtual space through a robot. This approach has been used for medical diagnosis and treatment in remote

communities and has been successfully employed for the education of nursing students.

Members of Senate then broke into discussion groups, and provided summary reports as follows:

Question 1: When you think about the constituency you represent (e.g. regional, professional, college), how important do you think OCDL will be for your constituency in five to ten years?

- There is a cost-saving potential through OCDL learning.
- This approach provides a choice for those individuals whose learning style may be more practical and visual.
- It seems that on-line courses may fit more readily in modules, and this may provide a better fit for some individuals.
- This type of learning has the potential to uphold the spirit of rural life in the province.

Question 2: What do you think are the key challenges or barriers the University needs to address in order to expand and improve OCDL?

- Greater support may be required to transition those students who are accustomed to a traditional classroom setting.
- Academic integrity and policing of cheating may pose a greater challenge with online learning.
- A challenge is the loss of face-to-face contact and discussion and a hands-on experience. One approach may be to consider a blended model, with instructors and students travelling from one community to another for a portion of the course, for example, to spend a period of time in a lab setting.
- Having an option for online tutoring and mentoring of students is important.
- The availability of technological support within rural and northern communities could be a barrier.
- Instructors should be trained in the nuances of online delivery; projecting to a videoconferencing monitor requires a different manner than speaking to a live audience in a classroom.
- Professional residency requirements should be considered relative to course offerings.
- The university must have a strong pedagogical and technological base for OCDL learning to stay competitive.

Question 3. Do you have any specific advice on what further consultation the University should pursue with respect to the OCDL project?

- The question of whether online learning benefits retention could be studied to see if there is a lower drop-out rate for OCDL students.
- Online learning could be used a remedial action for those students struggling to adjust to a university setting.

- Social interaction through online chat rooms to problem solve should be provided as this builds a sense of community amongst students.
- Having faculty members attend at off-site locations would facilitate establishing a personal connection.
- Specialized faculty members trained in distance education should be sought.
- The university should partner beyond the regional colleges, for instance, with aboriginal communities, seminaries, corporate entities, other universities, and the K-12 educational system, and develop courses and delivery methods that permit broader engagement.

Question 4: Is there anything else you want to tell us?

- Strategic planning regarding the future direction of OCDL should take place within all colleges and schools.
- First-hand consultation should occur with aboriginal communities to determine their needs.
- Consultation should occur with internet providers on bandwidth issues.
- Possibilities exist for:
 - Student support, tutoring, and counseling through SKYPE;
 - Specialized courses for continuing professional education and education targeted towards mature learners whose goal is not a degree, but a sampling of courses for interest.

12. Other business

12.1 Correspondence from Nancy Hopkins, chair, search committee for the president

This item was received for information.

12.2 New U of S Ph.D. robe

Jason Doell, Assistant Registrar, modeled the new Ph.D. gown for members. The new gown has been initiated in honour of the 100th anniversary of the university's first convocation ceremony and has been received very positively. He also noted the university's degree parchment has been redesigned to be larger, more striking, and incorporate additional security features to prevent fraudulent copying.

13. Question Period

Chancellor Pezer invited closing questions. Questions followed related to the concept of multi-gap classrooms which house several grades; the quality of research conducted at the Canadian Light Source; and the budget model for the Centre for Continuing and Distance Education. In light of the prior discussion on online learning, a Senator suggested that consideration be given to the idea of allowing members to attend Senate meetings as online participants.

14. Adjournment and next meeting of Senate

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m. Next meeting is Saturday, October 15, 2011.