



**SENATE**  
**Approved Minutes of the Meeting held on**  
**Monday, October 26, 2020 at 3:00pm**  
**Via Microsoft Teams**

The Senate met in regular session on Monday, October 26, 2020 via Microsoft Teams

**Present:** K. Hewitt (Chair), R. Agu, A. Aiken, D. Anderson, F. Annan, R. Barker, P. Bennett, N. Bird, J. Blustein, D. Bourne-Tyson, K. Brooks, T. Cyrus, B. Davis, R. Devlin, C. Diallo, P. Doyle-Bedwell, O. Dryden, H. El Naggar, K. ElSankary, N. Ezzedine, M. Farrimond, B. Foster, M. Fournier, L. Goldberg, D. Gray, D. Grujic, A. Habib, J. Hall, B. Hansson, F. Harvey, G. Horne, V. Howard, M. Irwin, S. Jeffrey, Z. Jones, J. S. Kim, S. Kirk, M. Leonard, L. MacDonald, B. Merritt, L. Meynell, A. Mohan, C. Moore, F. Naghibi, B. Nassar, J. Newhook, R. Orji, M. Pacurar, L. Perez, J. Phinney, L. Propper, T. Rajack-Talley, B. Rathgeber, A. Rau-Chaplin, C. Richardson, H. S. Ro, K. Rosen, D. Saini, B. Schick, E. Seelemann, M. Sharaput, A. Siegel, D. Silvio, A. Sophocleous, S. Sparks, L. Spiteri, S. Stackhouse, M. Stinson, S. Stone, F. Taheri, V. Turpin, P. Tyedmers, D. Tyerss, M. A. Ulku, J. Walsh, G. Warner, E. Welsh, D. Westwood, S. Wildeman, E. Wunker, I. Yakovenko

**Regrets:** G. Adolphe-Nazaire, V. Allen, M. Aston, A. Cooper, A. Doucette, T. Duck, Y. El Hiani, A. Kermanshahi-Pour, W. Lahey, S. Seth, I Waldron, D. White, S. Yurgel, S. Zahoor

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Amber Kerr, Bob Mann, Susan Brousseau, Judith Ng'ethe, Nakita Strowbridge, Ann Pyne, Joseph Behl (Student Minute Taker)

The Dalhousie University Senate acknowledges that this meeting is taking place in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was **approved** as presented.

**2. Consent Agenda:**

**2.1 Approval of Draft Minutes of September 28, 2020 Senate Meeting**

At the request of a senator, item 2.1 was removed from the consent agenda.

The approval of the draft minutes of the September 28, 2020 Senate meeting was postponed to the next meeting of Senate, to allow for inclusion of more detail regarding the Federal Contractors Program report on equity targets (item 6).

## **2.2 Senate Representative to the Provost & VP Academic Search Committee**

**THAT Senate approve the appointment of Gabrielle Horne as the Senate appointment to the Provost & VP Academic Search Committee.**

Approved by **CONSENT**.

### **3. Matters Arising from September 28, 2020 Senate Meeting:**

#### **3.1 Academic amnesty request for Indigenous students re: Salunierville action**

Senator Hewitt introduced this item, which was putting forward a motion to extend the academic amnesty motion that had been passed at the previous Senate meeting, with amendments. Senator Hewitt advised that the amendments to the original academic amnesty request had been considered by the Senate Planning and Governance Committee (SPGC) at its meeting of October 21, 2020 and recommended to Senate for approval. Senator Hewitt invited Senator Stinson, the originator of the motion, to expound further on the proposed amendments.

Senator Stinson advised that the first proposed change made to the academic amnesty motion would permit students to make more than one amnesty request per course. The second proposed amendment would do away with the requirement for 48 hours' notice to be given, which was in line with the Student Declaration of Absence form. The third change would provide for input by Faculty to help streamline the process for make-up assessments. The fourth amendment would extend the date of the academic amnesty to the date of the next meeting of SPGC on November 18, 2020. Senator Hewitt informed the meeting that there had been significant discussion at SPGC on a communications plan for communicating this information to the university community, should the motion be approved by Senate. Recommendations made included that students inform instructors as soon as they were able to do so and that Faculties release internal directions, in conjunction with the Associate Deans' Academic Council.

Senators also briefly discussed the proposed development of an Academic Amnesty Policy by the not yet constituted Academic Amnesty Ad Hoc committee. Senator Hewitt noted that efforts to source Senator nominations to the ad hoc committee had been unsuccessful and that the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) had proposed to investigate the option of DSU conducting a partial environmental scan to examine similar policies at other institutions and bring this to SPGC.

Moved by Senator Hewitt on behalf of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee:

**THAT all individuals involved in teaching delivery at Dalhousie allow each Indigenous student participating in solidarity, support, and advocacy efforts in Saulnierville, NS to do so without academic penalty at least once per course, with additional requests granted by individual instructors in consultation with the Faculty. Amnesty requests are also subject to the following:**

- **Students are to inform their professors in advance if they plan on missing an assessment or submitting an assessment late in order to attend the action(s).**
- **Make-up assessment(s) will be subject to approval at the Faculty level in consultation with individual instructors as appropriate.**
- **Due to the ongoing nature of the situation, amnesty will be granted to Indigenous students until the next meeting of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee (November 18, 2020), at which time these provisions will be reassessed.**

The motion **CARRIED**.

### **3.2 Senate Point of Order – Extension to Senate motions re: COVID-19 (June 8, 2020)**

Senator Hewitt introduced this point of order which raised the question of whether Senate had authority to delegate decisions about the internal regulation of the institution to other bodies, in the context of the decision made to delegate decisions to the academic continuity planning process at the June 8, 2020 Senate meeting. Senator Hewitt advised that this was a matter of constitutional authority and interpretation and is a matter for debate, rather than a point of order. Senator Hewitt referred to section 7 of the consolidation of statutes relating to Dalhousie University, advising that sub-section 1 on delegation not restricted by the following sub-sections and that there was no prohibition of delegation in the statutes. Senator Hewitt further advised that they had ruled that the point of order was not justified.

### **3.3 Reporting on Sexualized Violence Policy – Theresa Rajack-Talley, Vice-Provost, Equity & Inclusion**

Senator Hewitt referred senators to the written update submitted by the Vice-Provost Equity & Inclusion, which followed up on the motion approved at the Senate meeting of September 28, 2020. A response by Senator Wildeman would be considered at the next Senate meeting on November 23, 2020. Senator Wildeman was requested to share their response with Senator Rajack-Talley prior to the next Senate meeting, to enable a fruitful discussion to be held.

## **4. Steps to Make Diversity & Inclusion a Reality**

Senator Hewitt advised that 5-minute instructional and information sessions were being re-introduced to Senate and would consider implementation of diversity and inclusion.

Senator Rajack-Talley presented on this item and informed Senate about a session of the National Dialogues and Action for Inclusive Higher Education and Communities held in October, 2020 at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, with 3,000 participants and involvement of 54 Canadian universities. One goal of the dialogues was to provide a roadmap for action against anti-Black racism and for Black inclusion in higher education. Senator Rajack-Talley advised of an important language change, namely a shift to referring to “equity-deserving” groups instead of “equity-seeking” groups. They advised that the program was action-oriented, with a focus on culture change and removing structural barriers, as well as creating new structures. Dalhousie played a role in this dialogue, with Senator Rajack-Talley as a member of the advisory committee and a plenary opening speaker. There were also Dalhousie faculty on section panels. Senator Rajack-Talley advised that an Inter-Institutional Advisory Committee had been formed, which would work to create a National Charter, with Senator Rajack-Talley as a representative on the committee.

In response to a senator’s question, Senator Rajack-Talley noted that the term “equity deserving” had been gaining traction at the National Dialogues and various other national committees.

## **FOR RATIFICATION OR APPROVAL:**

### **5. Ratification of Dean’s decisions (subsequent to April 13, 2020 Senate meeting)**

Senator Hewitt referred senators to the list of waivers for decisions delegated to Deans.

Senator Howard provided an update on the ratification of Deans' decisions, advising that three waivers have been received since the last Senate meeting.

Moved by Senator Howard, seconded by Senator Harvey:

**THAT Senate ratify the list of waivers, as presented, resulting from the authority delegated to Deans as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Senators discussed the waiver of the requirement for the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) or other standardized tests for admission into the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program as well as reduction in the required English proficiency score. Senator Howard advised that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected potential applicants' access to testing facilities for the GMAT and for English language proficiency tests. However, the reduced requirements still met the minimum requirements of the Academic Registrar and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The motion **CARRIED**.

**6. Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC): Proposed Waiver of Medical Certificates for Alternate Final Examination Times Request**

Senator Hewitt advised that the waiver of medical certificates for alternate final exam times request was to ensure compliance with public health guidelines.

Senator Pacurar presented this motion, advising that the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee (SLTC) had considered this motion at its last meeting on October 7, 2020.

Moved by Senator Pacurar on behalf of the Senate Learning & Teaching Committee:

**THAT for the 2020-2021 academic year, the requirement for a medical certificate to support a student's request for an alternate final examination time due to illness be waived, so as to comply with Nova Scotia Public Health's guidelines that sick notes are not issued to account for student absences at this time.**

The motion **CARRIED**.

***IN CAMERA:***

**7. Senate Honorary Degrees Committee (SHDC): Honorary Degree Nominations**

Senators moved to an *in camera* session to discuss item 7.

A motion to approve the slate of honorary degree nominations was defeated.

The item would be brought forward to the next Senate meeting where the names of the nominees for honorary degrees would be voted on individually.

Senate returned to open session for the remaining items.

**8. Reports**

**8.1 Chair of Senate's Report**

Senator Hewitt informed the meeting that the Chair's report would be circulated due to lack of time.

Senators voted to extend the meeting by 10 minutes.

## **8.2 President's Report**

Senator Saini presented the President's Report, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic, the public health mitigation measures and the shift to an online learning environment had resulted in high levels of stress for students, faculty and staff. Senator Saini also reported on the ongoing collective bargaining process with the Dalhousie Faculty Association and assured the meeting that the concerns of the university community had been noted. Senator Saini advised that discussions were continuing apace that they believed an agreement would be reached. Senator Saini emphasized that the university was committed to avoiding a labour disruption.

Following the report, Senator Saini and Senator Harvey responded to questions regarding student and faculty mental health and stress concerns.

## **8.3 Questions for Reports**

### **9. Question Period – Faculty Discipline Process Annual Report**

This item was deferred.

## **10. Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.