

SENATE
Approved Minutes of the Special Meeting held on
Monday, November 6, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.
Via Microsoft Teams

The Senate met for a special session on Monday, November 6, 2023 via Microsoft Teams

Present

G. Adolphe-Nazaire, T. Akay, O. Akinkugbe, J. Andrews, A. Bernard, D. Black, E. Black, J. Blustein, K. Brooks, R. Chang, I. Courtand, K. Dilcher, P. Doyle-Bedwell, O. Dryden, C. D'Souza, L. DuBois, H. El Nagggar, R. Ezekiel, N. Ezzeddine, M. Farrimond, M. Fournier, G. Gagnon, M. Goudreault, R. Goyal, D. Grantham, S. Harding, G. Ilie, M. Keinast, A. Kermanshahi-pour, N. Kiepek, S. Kirk, M. Knakriah, W. Lahey, J. Li, C. Macdonald, R. Meagher, F. Naghibi, M. Pacurar, N. Patil, L. Phillmore, T. Richard, K. Rosen, R. Sampangi, D. Silvio, V. Simedoh, M. Smit, L. Spiteri, S. Stone, D. Tyers, M. Ulku, M. Vandenburg, G. Wang-Pruski, P. Wani, S. Wildeman, E. Yiridoe

Regrets

R. Affoo, A. Aiken, D. Anderson, S. Berge, D. Burnay, V. Chappe, S. Chitnis, B. Davis, S. Forbes, F. Harvey, Y. Kotlyarova, M. Leonard, L. Macdonald, S. McKibbon, C. McLarney, T. Perrot, T. Rajack-Talley, A. Rau-Chaplin, L. Sarson, S. Seth, M. Sharaput, D. Westwood, R. Zaiotti

Absent

O. Bankole, S. Bishop, C. Brown, A. Doucette, Y. El Hiani, G. Horne, D. Jakeman, C. Lake, Y. Liu, P. Marignani, V. Maselli, B. Merritt, H. Niu, E. Oguntonna, R. Orji, Y. Pan, A. Rudnick

Guests

John Hope (General Counsel & University Secretary), Sapna Natarajan (Student Minute Taker), Judith Ng'ethe (Associate Secretary of Senate), Nakita Strowbridge (Senate Coordinator)

The Dalhousie University Senate acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was **approved** as presented.

FOR APPROVAL

2. Academic Amnesty Request for Student Day of Action – November 8, 2023

Senator Spiteri informed the meeting of the request received from five members of Senate for a special meeting of Senate to be held to consider granting academic amnesty to students to enable them to attend the day of action scheduled by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, without academic penalty due to their absence.

Senator Spiteri invited Senator Knakriah, also the President of the Dalhousie Student Union and one of the five members of Senate to request the special meeting, to speak to the item.

Senator Knakriah informed the meeting of the CFS call to action which aimed to unite students nationwide in advocating for free and accessible education. Senator Knakriah highlighted the three main objectives being sought by students including free education for all, increasing student grants and promoting education adjustments to address systemic education issues. Senator Knakriah detailed that this motion aimed to enable Dalhousie University and King's College students to join the collective nationwide effort advocating for important educational changes. Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) and the University of King's College Students' Union (KSU) were member locals of the CFS.

Moved by Senator Knakriah, seconded by Senator Blustein:

THAT Senate approve that all individuals involved in synchronous teaching delivery at Dalhousie University on November 8, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., allow students who wish to participate in the Student Day of Action called by the Canadian Federation of Students to do so without academic penalty due to their absence, subject to the following:

- 1. Students are to inform their professors at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance (by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 7, 2023) if they plan on missing an assessment in order to attend the event.**
- 2. Make-up assessment(s) will be at the discretion of course instructors, subject to appropriate faculty regulations.**
- 3. For the inclusion of students travelling from and to the Truro or Yarmouth campuses, no specific time is provided.**

In response to a question from a Senator, it was clarified that there were no established set of principles for deciding when to grant academic amnesty. Requests were considered and granted on an ad hoc basis by Senate. In addition, an attempt to form a Senate working group to establish a policy and procedures for considering requests for academic amnesty had not been successful.

In response to a further query from a Senator, it was confirmed that if the motion was approved, students would not need to submit Student Declarations of Absence.

In response to a query regarding how the outcome of the motion, if approved, would be circulated to students and instructors, Senators were advised that an email to the Dalhousie university community would be sent out by the Communications teams, and that Deans and Associate Deans would also be advised separately.

The motion **CARRIED**.

Adjournment

Senator Spiteri thanked Senators for attending the meeting at short notice.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 pm.