

Item: Senate Minutes, June 1996
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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
MINUTES
OF
SENATE MEETING

SENATE met in regular session on Monday, 24 June 1996 at 3:00 a.m. in the University Hall, Macdonald Building.

Present, with Mr. C. Stuttard in the chair, were the following:

Andrews, Archibald, Binkley, Birdsall, Bleasdale, Brett, Cameron, Camfield, Clarke, Cross, Dickson, Egan, Farmer, Hartzman, Hobson, Kimmins, Klein, Lovely, Lydon, MacDonald, MacInnis, MacKay, Marble, McIntyre, Pacey, Pereira, Ricketts, Rosson, Sherwin, Sutherland, Taylor, Traves.

Regrets: Conrod, Cummings, Kay Raining-Bird, Kiang, Maloney, Moore, Ruddick, Russell, Shafai, Starnes.

96:066

Adoption of the Agenda

To accommodate Mr. McKee, who had another appointment at 15:30 on the Lower Campus, members agreed that item 4 --Appointment of Ombudsperson and Assistant Ombudsperson -- be moved to item 3.

96:067

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Stuttard reported that Ms. MacDonald was present at the meeting. He also recommended two modifications: on page 5, last line, insert "be" after "would"; and on page 6, the first line of paragraph 3 should read "signed a contract for \$30M over three years." The Minutes of the 16 May 1996 were approved as amended.

96:068

Matters Arising

Ms. Binkley reported that at the request of Dean McIntyre a BSW student's name was removed from the list of graduands; the student's withdrawal from a class in January had been missed when the list was compiled.

Mr. Brett suggested that a discussion of the quorum be added to the agenda.

96:069

Appointment of Ombudsperson and Assistant Ombudsperson

Upon motion (Lydon/Traves)

the Senate recommends the appointment of Kelly Shea as Ombudsperson and Mary Hamblin as Assistant Ombudsperson for 1996/97.

The motion CARRIED.

96:070

Nominations for Senate Committees and Representatives

On behalf of the Committee on Committees, Mr. Greenfield nominated Ruth Bleasdale (Arts and Social Sciences) for a three year term as Secretary of Senate. Following the requisite calls for further nominations, Mr. Stuttard declared Ms. Bleasdale elected.

Mr. Greenfield then nominated Sherwin Nugent (Science) for the position of Senate Representative to the TUNS Senate, and nominated Shirley Wong (Health Professions) to the University Security and Parking Committee. Following the requisite calls for further nominations, Mr. Stuttard declared these nominees elected.

Mr. Greenfield further presented the following nominees for election:

to the Steering Committee,

Richard Apostle (Arts and Social Sciences) 1998;

to the Senate Academic and Priorities Committee,

Michael Bradfield (Science) 1998

Patrick Farmer (Health Professions) 1998

to the Senate Committee on Academic Administration,

Patricia Cleave (Health Professions) 1999

Charles Hope (Medicine) 1999

Stuart Grossert (Science) 1998

Sampelli Srinivas (Science) Jan.-June 1997

John Yogis (Law) 1999

Andrews Oppong (Management) 1999;

to the Senate Academic Appeals Committee,

Vaughan Black (Law) 1999
David Hoskin (Medicine) 1999;

to the Senate Computing and Information and Technology,

Jennifer Bankier (Law) 1998;

to the Senate Discipline Committee,

Tony Thompson (Science) 1998
John Rutherford (Medicine) Jan. 1997 - June 1998
Michael Deturbide (Law) 1999
Mary Brooks (Management) Jan. 1997-June 1998;

to the Senate Library Committee,

Les O'Brien (Law) 1999
Larry Amey (Management) 1997;

and to the Senate Committee on Instructional Development,

Gail Tomblin Murphy (Health Professions) 1999.

Following the requisite calls for further nominations, Mr. Stuttard declared the above named candidates elected.

Ms. Hobson asked whether the names listed on Mr. Boran's memo comprised the full membership of each committee, and why did some Faculties have more than one elected member on SCAA. Ms. Binkley replied that some committees still had vacancies to be filled. She added that each Faculty must have at least one elected representative on SCAA; however, there were more elected representatives on the committee than there were Faculties. Ms. Hobson also asked that existing vacancies be recorded on future memos from the Committee on Committees, along with the names of continuing and proposed new members of committees.

96:071

Faculty of Management Undergraduate Appeals Procedures

Mr. Rosson began by explaining that the proposal had first come to Senate in November. At that time Mr. Thomas, who was reviewing the academic appeals procedures of all Faculties, was sent the material for review. Following receipt of Mr. Thomas' comments, the Faculty of Management incorporated all his suggestions save one-- fitness/aptitude for the profession. Since there are diverse professions covered by the Faculty of Management, the Faculty did not want to incorporate a specific provision in this regard.

With respect to item 10 of the document, Ms. McIntyre asked if “any party” included faculty. She pointed out that faculty were not able to appeal to the Senate Academic Appeals Committee. After some discussion, it was agreed to modify item 10 in the following manner to reflect this:

A student who is a party to the appeal before the Faculty ... the Senate Academic Appeals Committee subject to the Terms of Reference of that committee.

Mr. Egan noted that students could only use the academic appeals process to appeal the grading procedure and not the grade itself, and that there was another procedure -- re-reading of the paper -- through the Registrar’s Office. It was pointed out that the wording in the preambles of both the terms of reference of the Senate Academic Appeals Committee (recently approved by Senate) and the terms of reference for the Faculty of Management Undergraduate Appeals Procedures were the same. Since these documents were consistent, it was felt that no further changes should be made.

96:072

Discussion Paper on Academic Priorities and University Restructuring

Mr. Stuttard reported that apart from his initial contribution, the e-mail discussion group set up for Senate had been totally silent. He hoped that there would be some debate on the paper at this meeting. Mr. Traves began the discussion by stating that although there was no apparent financial crisis in the next three years, given current commitments of government funding, nevertheless resources remain constrained and we must think about future directions for Dalhousie. Although the document was thoughtful, it simply argued for the status quo. Senate cannot and does not control the budget process, but if Senate does not give directions regarding academic priorities for funding, others such as the President and Vice-Presidents will. It would be naive and dangerous for Senate not to be involved.

Mr. Cameron stated that three years ago in response to a similar request, the Financial Planning Committee of Senate had proposed several principles to Senate and all but one (concerning salaries) were adopted. He believed that these recommendations should be revisited.

Although Mr. Pacey agreed with the President that the Senate should be involved in the budget priority process, he wanted priorities to continue to be set in Faculties. He said the document simply argues against vertical cuts and for job security. He felt that change should be evolutionary, with small dollar shifts between Faculties.

Mr. Taylor mentioned that BACIII had called for vertical cuts in his Faculty, in Management and in Henson College. Although no departments had been eliminated,

the effects of these cuts had been staggering and the consequences were still being felt. In this situation Senate had no real input into the process, but BAC had assumed its own priorities -- professional schools, science, and research -- and acted upon them.

The present document seemed to want everything: job security with no closures of departments or programs, but no increase in workload. In fact, teaching loads will increase, and have done so already. Finally, BAC III looked at the cost side only and not the revenue side. His Faculty had increased student numbers through greater retention and recruitment. The impetus for this came from the Faculty and was possibly not a role for Senate. He hoped that this discussion would look at both sides of the ledger.

Mr. Dickson stated that coping with funding cuts by attrition precludes long-term planning, so he could not support the document's proposals.

Mr. Kimmins stated that he would oppose adoption of the document because he believed that downsizing and attrition are not appropriate strategies for Dalhousie in the current environment. However, he did agree that planning must take place at the Faculty and department levels. He explained how his Faculty responded to the pre-BACIII scenarios of 15 or 25% cuts. They assumed that total enrolment in post-secondary education in Canada would remain fairly constant, but there would be a shift to non-university institutions. Some universities would suffer, but others could capture specific enrolment niches. His Faculty aimed its recruitment at new high-school leavers with grade averages of > 80% who wanted traditional university programs, and at students able to pay increased tuition fees, especially in preparation for professional programs. His calculation was that this approach would allow the Faculty of Science to absorb a 17% cut in funding. Senate's job, he believed, was to assess the appropriateness of each Faculty's choice in dealing with the current financial situation; thus, Senate could have questioned decisions to meet cuts by attrition as not being in the best interests of Dalhousie. Senate was the glue holding the University together. It could examine Faculties' business plans and decide what was good or bad for Dalhousie.

Mr. Andrews felt that Faculty planning is not supported by the central administration in its decision-making process. He argued that in the future we should use any operating budget surplus not for deficit removal but for program enhancement. He was not surprised at the contents of the document and would support its adoption.

Mr. Archibald asked where we were procedurally. The document was presented for discussion and comment; is it to be reconsidered by SAPBC in light of this discussion?

If so, he would like SAPBC to consider Mr. Cameron's comments; a redistribution mechanism for surplus monies; and the question of critical mass in programs and what happens when numbers drop below this critical mass. The document avoids the latter question, i.e., whether to bolster or eliminate a program under those circumstances.

Mr. Archibald, seconded by Mr. Klein, then moved:

that Senate accept the report with thanks and return it to SAPBC for further consideration in light of this discussion.

In discussion on this motion, Ms. Sutherland noted that Faculties were each given a budgetary framework, but wondered how this was determined. Attrition could cause serious harm to programs that need protection. She wanted an order of priority for programs to protect some and allow others to be eliminated. Mr. Traves thought the discussion was rather odd; the document includes *University Restructuring* in its title, yet it does not set out a process to evaluate programs and activities. There is no way to decide whether department X or Y is good or bad and which is better than the other, or where we are strong or weak. Therefore, we make decisions in the absence of knowledge. Senate doesn't decide the budget and can't decide on cuts. We use a simple funding formula or make across-the-board cuts. SAPBC needs to know which programs are strong and which weak, and Senate needs to focus on quality and build on strength. We are also being pushed by forces outside the University to identify our strengths in research and teaching and to be accountable. We need to have ways to address these questions.

Mr. Taylor wanted to address the question of attrition and add a correction. He argued that attrition need not be mindless and destructive if there is a mechanism to reallocate positions in a meaningful way. He noted that his Faculty had an elaborate process to sort out its priorities, and he supported the decentralized approach.

Mr. Birdsall recalled that before BAC, the budget process was one of across-the-board cuts, and President Clark had formed BAC in order to make differential cuts based on priorities. BAC met with Senate officers and they gave BAC no guidance in the process so BAC made cuts based on its own perceptions with no input from Senate. BAC must now set out another three year plan. The same question arises -- across-the-board or differential cuts? If the latter, who gets cut what? Someone has to decide this. Shouldn't Senate be part of this decision?

Mr. Klein felt that the new Senate might respond differently from its predecessor, and observed that the discussion paper had succeeded in stimulating discussion. He believed that departmental reviews do provide useful data, but comparison of different departments within Dalhousie would be very unhealthy. He also agreed that priority setting should take place at the Faculty level. He added that some review data have budget implications, e.g., enrolments and teaching workloads; students tell us their priorities through their enrolments. Also, we need to decide what we want to be doing, and possibly have strings attached to budgets. Finally, he thought that reliance on attrition to cope with decreased revenue was the least desirable aspect of the paper, and recommended seeking more support from government.

Ms. McIntyre suggested there was a conceptual problem -- What is the real mission of Dalhousie? We must revisit our mission statement and consider issues of quality of

students, comprehensiveness, areas of special emphasis, entrepreneurship and internationalization.

Mr. Clark felt that SAPBC should assess the quality of each Faculty and its components and he questioned the ability of Senate itself to make this assessment because of the special interest groups represented among the membership. He also argued that priorities reflected monetary needs and that the Faculties were best units to assess these needs.

Mr. Brett felt that the document reflected reality. Priority lists are counterproductive, and we do not need more mission statements or appraisals of units; these documents were already available.

Ms. Hobson, noting that she is a member of both SAPBC and BAC, argued that a decentralized system is the status-quo and leaves the ball in BAC's court. Budgetary decisions are made centrally, but information is needed regarding academic quality. We do not do everything well! We need to decide what we do well and what we want Dalhousie to be. Only she and the President see all appointments, tenure and promotions files; some units are very good and others are not. If Senate does not tell BAC its priorities, then BAC will make redistribution decisions based on their own perceptions.

Ms. Sherwin stated that there are many different sets of criteria that can be used to assess programmes -- affordability, revenue generation capabilities, provincial needs, centrality to the university. It would be useful if SAPBC could collect sets of criteria used for self-evaluations that could then be used to set priorities among programs.

Mr. Ricketts would like to see the role of programme reviews assessed. At a recent MPHEC meeting, he gave a brief description of our review process at Dalhousie. Many people at the meeting were impressed at the comprehensiveness of the review process from departments to Faculties; however, we are not making use of these reviews in strategic ways. He would like Senate APBC to consider how results of reviews could be used in a strategic way.

The question was then called and the motion CARRIED.

96:073

President's Report

In addition to his upbeat written report, President Traves brought yet more positive news to Senate. He announced that MPHEC had approved the Ph.D. in Sociology at their last meeting. He discussed the recent pension agreement now being implemented, and stated that there was a strong possibility that the University's "debt" would be retired by the end of the agreement if all went as expected over the next three years. He also announced that Premier Savage and Education Minister MacEachern had agreed to contribute \$6M towards the cost of a new Faculty of Arts and Social Science building .

Mr. Traves assured Senate that Dalhousie community members, particularly in the units to be housed in or using the building would be consulted at all levels throughout the planning and building phases.

Ms. Sutherland asked where the building would go. Mr. Traves replied that the Campus Plan indicated that the building would occupy the parking lot next to the Dalhousie Arts Centre. Mr. Traves also reiterated that there must be consultation at all stages as the building plans proceed, and that additional monies would be needed to match the monies to be supplied by the Province. Mr. Brett asked if \$12M indicated the size of the building to be built or would further funding be needed and when would it be ready for use. Mr. Traves replied that the University would build a facility within its means. The first priority would be classroom space and then office space for faculty. The process -- raising money, planning etc.-- would take some time, probably the next four years.

Mr. Kimmins, seconded by Mr. Klein, moved that:

Senate express their appreciation to the Province for the funds allocated to the Arts and Social Science building.

The motion CARRIED.

Mr. Marble asked about the status of the TUNS/Dal merger. Mr. Traves said that the government, TUNS, and Dalhousie representatives would be signing the agreement next Thursday. The delay was associated with negotiations concerning the Hospital lands adjacent to TUNS. These lands must be acquired by the Province from the current owners, the Hospital Board. Once the Province has acquired the lands, it will transfer them to the University either outright or on a long term lease, e.g., 99 years. The document which will be signed on Thursday next will make reference to these issues and a letter will be sent from the government to the universities to assure them of the future transfer of lands.

Mr. Andrews asked if the agreement differs substantially from the summary presented to both Senates. Mr. Traves assured him that it did not. Mr. Andrews asked if the Senate would in due time receive a copy of the agreement. After some hesitation, Mr. Traves replied that he did not see why not, but he would have to check with his colleagues at TUNS before supplying the document.

96:074

Question Period

After citing the latest cuts to the Department of Chemistry's journal budget, Mr. Pacey asked the President to protect library budgets. Mr. Traves replied that if we do not set priorities, the erosion of the library budget will continue. Mr. Birdsall stated that he had discussed this problem with the Faculty of Science. He said that the Senate Library Committee will be bringing forward a proposal to Senate in the Fall to address budget

cuts. Mr. Klein suggested that the neglect of the Library was shameful and that the surplus should be used on the Library as a common resource throughout the university. Mr. Kimmins argued that faculty's attitude to the library resources was old-fashioned. Mr. Pacey disputed this, noting that alternatives to printed materials were not widely available. Mr. Kimmins applauded Mr. Birdsall's innovative way of handling the library budget crisis and generating revenue. Mr. Kimmins stated that CONSUL had recommended that Dalhousie be designated as the regional depository library, but CONSUP had parochially rejected this idea. Mr. Andrews agreed with Mr. Kimmins on this point, but feared that the pilot project NOVANET Express might result in individual faculty bearing costs for materials required for teaching. He asked if there was some other way to defray costs of these services if they were related to teaching. Mr. Cameron pointed out that in discussions with NSCHE about a new funding formula university community resource support was mentioned. These resources might include libraries, computer facilities and possibly art galleries.

96:075

Other Business

- a. Senators noted the recent death of Mr. Evan Petley-Jones, husband of Mrs. Anne Petley-Jones, a member of the Board of governors, and agreed to send their condolences to Mrs. Petley-Jones.
- b. Mr. Stuttard thanked nine retiring members for their year of service on the new Senate, and presented the retiring Secretary of Senate, Ms. Binkley, with a small token of appreciation (and applause). All members were invited to remain for a short reception after adjournment.

96:076

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 17:30.

Minutes approved.

Secretary

Chair