

Item: Senate Minutes, April 2001
Call Number: Senate fonds, UA-5

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
APPROVED MINUTES
OF
SENATE MEETING

SENATE met in regular session on Monday, April 30, 2001, at 4:00 p.m., in University Hall, MacDonald Building.

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

Ben-Abdallah, Binkley, Bleasdale, Blunden, Bradfield, Breckenridge, Brett, Caley, Cochrane, Coffin, Coté, Devlin, Downe-Wamboldt, Emodi, Fraser, Guppy, Hart, Harvey, Ipson, Jalilvand, Johnston, Kay-Raining Bird, Kimmins, Lohmann, MacAulay, B. MacDonald, MacInnis, Maes, McGrath, McIntyre, Mobbs, Neves, Poel, Rowe, Rutherford, Sastri, Savoy, Scully, Tindall, Traves, Ugursal, Wainwright.

Regrets: Cox, Cunningham, El-Hawary, Kemp, N. MacDonald, Phillips, Starnes, Watters, Whyte.

2001:45.

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Stuttard requested addition of a new item 2, Chair's Announcements. Subsequent items were renumbered and the agenda was adopted as amended.

2001:46.

Chair's Announcements

Mr. Stuttard welcomed a new senator, Ian Mobbs, from the Faculty of Medicine. He said farewell, with many thanks, to the student senators who had served during the past year: Ms. MacAulay, Mr. Coté, Mr. MacDonald, and Mr. Roberts. Mr. McGrath would be continuing after his re-election as a Senator by the DSU. Later in the meeting the Chair congratulated Mr. Wainwright on becoming President of the Dalhousie Faculty Association, and noted that Mr. Wainwright was continuing his term as an elected senator.

2001:47.

Approval of Degrees for the Nova Scotia Agricultural College

The Principal of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Mr. Coffin, moved:

**That the awarding of the degree of Bachelor of Science to the 93 candidates
and the degree of Bachelor of Technology to the 5 candidates listed in**

correspondence to the Chair of Senate be approved.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

On behalf of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Acting Dean Rutherford moved:

That the 8 candidates from the NSAC, identified in correspondence to the Senate Office, be awarded M.Sc. degrees.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

Mr. Rutherford moved:

That the Provost and Registrar of Nova Scotia's Agricultural College and the Acting Dean of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Chair of Senate, be authorized to amend the graduation list to correct any errors or omissions discovered before the Convocations at NSAC, and that each amendment and its explanation be reported to the Senate subsequently.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

2001:48.

Question Period

Mr. Bradfield asked on what authority the Registrar sent letters requesting that faculty submit grades within seven days of a final examination. Mr. Scully undertook to find the answer.

Mr. Wainwright asked senior administrators to indicate whether they had been contacted by the Department of Education concerning a proposed Advanced Studies program. The association of Knowledge House Inc. with this proposal would take Senate back to many of the questions which had been asked previously about the University's interaction with Knowledge House Inc. He wondered what was the nature of Dalhousie's connection with KHI.

Mr. Traves observed that Mr. Scully was scheduled to address these questions in his presentation listed on the current agenda. Mr. Wainwright apologized for his oversight.

2001:49.

Draft Revisions to SCAA Terms of Reference

On behalf of SCAA, Mr. Stuttard moved:

That the proposed revisions to the terms of reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Administration be adopted.

The proposed revisions had been circulated to all members with the agenda. Mr. Stuttard reminded the meeting that the present motion was to amend the Senate Constitution and would require the support of two-thirds of members voting. He also noted that adoption would require

a corresponding change to the description of the membership of the Honorary Degrees Committee.

Mr. Scully observed that the existing SCAA had 38 members; however, the Committee had consistent difficulty in securing its quorum of 40% of the members. Under the proposed revisions all Faculties would be fully informed of SCAA business.

Ms. Guppy wondered whether one of the student members should be a graduate student. Mr. Scully responded that over the past few years very few issues dealing with graduate students had come before SCAA. Ms. MacAulay reminded members that the DSU represented all students at Dalhousie, and that graduate students frequently served on Senate Committees. Mr. Rutherford noted that graduate students consulted with the Faculty of Graduate Studies on any issues that might be of interest to them.

In response to Mr. Brett's question concerning the representation of the interests of the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Law on this Committee, Mr. Scully assured senators that all Deans were aware of the proposed changes and supported them unanimously. The bulk of the work considered by SCAA related to the direct-entry Faculties.

Mr. Bradfield received verification that, as in the past, SCAA would forward recommendations to Senate for approval. He suggested a friendly amendment that the agenda for each meeting of the Committee be sent to all senators, and the agenda and accompanying materials be circulated to the individuals identified in the motion. Mr. Scully had no difficulty with that proposed amendment. The Chair noted that the University's Public Notice Digest e-mail could be used to publish the agenda of SCAA and possibly other standing committees if warranted.

The amended motion:

That the following amendments to SCAA's terms of reference be adopted:

Function 3(h) - Ombudsperson's reports - be deleted;

Procedure 2 be changed to read: "consult with such members of the University community as it may think helpful to its task; in particular, the agenda for each meeting shall be circulated in a timely fashion before the meeting to all senators; in addition accompanying materials shall be sent to all Deans and the DSUVP Student Advocacy who have the right to make submissions, in writing or in person, to the Committee on any item of Committee business.";

Composition items 1 through 4 be changed to read:

"1(a) seven faculty members elected by the Senate; at least two of these shall be elected Faculty senators. Nominees shall in the first instance have expertise or interest (preferably the former) in academic policies and regulations, and secondly be broadly representative of the Faculties (in

particular, Engineering, FASS, Health Professions, Management and Science shall each have one member; also, one member shall be from Architecture or Computer Science, and one member shall be from either Dentistry, Law, or Medicine); 1(b) two student members elected by the Dalhousie Student Union, at least one of these shall be a student Senator; and 1(c) four *ex-officio* members: the Registrar, the Secretary of Senate, the Vice-President Student Services, and the Vice-President Academic and Provost.

2. The elected non-senator members (see 1a) shall normally serve for staggered three-year terms; the Faculty senators shall normally serve until their terms as members of Senate expire.

3. The Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President Academic and Provost.

4. Quorum for Committee meetings shall be seven members, including at least four of the seven elected faculty members.”

was **CARRIED**.

2001:50.

Advanced Studies Program

Mr. Scully circulated a handout concerning the N.S. Department of Education's proposed Advanced Studies Program. He believed it was common knowledge that Dalhousie had been approached by the Department of Education concerning this initiative late in 2000.

The new proposed program would be offered through the Nova Scotia school system, focusing on grades 11 and 12 and would be web-based, drawing in particular on the new internet technologies. It would be available in all high schools. The curriculum emphasized collaborative, problem-based learning and was built around 8 multi-disciplinary modules, with 4 modules in each year. Each module integrated the five disciplines of Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, English and Business Management. The latter would be a new component of the formal curriculum intended for large numbers of students. This was a radical rethinking of the high school curriculum. For those who opted to take the ASP it would occupy 80% of class time in grades 11 and 12; the other 20% would be regular high school activities.

Students would be expected to meet the existing learning outcomes of the Nova Scotia public schools program, and those set out in the Nova Scotia Atlantic Provinces Foundation Examinations, and the learning outcomes of first-year university courses all in the last two years of high school. The program was targeted to talented grade 11 and 12 students, up to approximately 15% of the high school students. The purposes were to take advantage of the technology within the schools and to promote connections across schools, a particular benefit for schools in rural or remote areas. Pilot projects connecting schools via the internet had already been undertaken. The proposed curriculum would replace the existing International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement diploma courses, and other advanced courses which had

been offered locally.

In September the Department of Education would mount pilot projects. At the earliest, students would graduate from those pilots and apply for university admission in June 2003, though their numbers would not be significant until 2004 and 2005.

The President and Mr. Scully had been notified that the Department was looking at this initiative and that it was using Knowledge House as its publisher. Late in fall 2000 the Department expressed its interest in having Dalhousie as a partner in this project. Mr. Traves and Mr. Scully had been concerned about the range of the program, with its focus on science and technology. They had been told that this was where the capacity currently existed for introducing the program and that the focus was a response to student academic preferences. Mr. Traves and Mr. Scully had also considered the proposal extraordinarily ambitious. The Department had initially suggested that 20% of the students would be able to take the program, and the vast majority of those would complete it successfully. The target population was now 15%, and Mr. Scully believed that remained too optimistic.

Mr. Traves and Mr. Scully had also been concerned about the assessment of student performance. Late in 2000 a group of three Dalhousie Science faculty (Drs. Brown, Kwak, and Freedman) and Vice-President Scully had met with the Department of Education to explore this issue. The preliminary proposal they had produced was that Dalhousie would set and grade disciplinary examinations for the three science subjects. Students achieving C+ would be granted advanced standing, and those achieving B+ would be offered advanced standing and transfer credits. Analysis of the current practice of awarding advanced standing to students with International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement diplomas was difficult, but it appeared that only 50% of those students who were awarded Dalhousie credits took advantage of them. The remainder chose to retake the first-year classes at university.

Dalhousie and the Department of Education would develop a proposal for a partnership to establish a Dalhousie Examination Board, and all expenses would be born by the Department of Education. The proposal followed some respectable models in other countries. In the United Kingdom the public examinations at two points in high school students' careers were managed by examining boards under universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, London and a group of northern English universities. The United States had a College Board, and the Advanced Placement program had grown from an initiative by Harvard, Princeton and Yale and three private schools in the Northeast USA looking for challenging curricula which would bridge high school and university.

Students would be evaluated for university admission in the same way that they were today. They would submit the results of their studies in specific disciplines, and write the existing Atlantic Provinces Foundation examinations and what might be called the "Dalhousie Advanced Studies Examinations" each year. Performance in the Dalhousie examinations would be attached to the high school transcript.

Mr. Scully saw this as a unique opportunity for Dalhousie. Dalhousie would be positioned as an education leader within the province and would help to counter the perception that it was primarily a graduate and professional school and a research institution. Dalhousie would

become closely identified with the high schools as the centre for testing and curriculum. This proposal would also help to meet the challenges of enrolment management for all of the direct entry Faculties. Mr. Scully reminded members that Dalhousie's students came primarily from Nova Scotia. He noted the declining trend in enrolment from students in the metro area and the rest of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Scully reported that representatives of the Department of Education, including Mr. Robert LeBlanc, had met with the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty of Science on March 1, 2001. Later in March the Council of FASS Chairs had received a similar presentation; and the Dean and the Chairs in Engineering had also met with Robert LeBlanc to discuss the possibilities for extending the proposal to include their Faculty. The approval process within Dalhousie would initially involve decisions by departments representing the five disciplines directly involved as to whether they wished to be part of setting up the examining framework for the program. The Faculties across the institution would then need to consider whether they wished to recognize the Advanced Studies exam results for transfer credit, advanced standing or whatever approach the departments might recommend. Mr. Scully proposed that this would then go through SCAA and to the Senate by the fall of 2001 at the earliest, and then to the Board of Governors.

Mr. Scully explained that his presentation was only for information. He had briefed the Chair of Senate earlier, when the Department of Education had requested that discussions be confidential. The Department was aware that he was briefing Senate on this matter today, and from now on the process was to be completely open.

Mr. McGrath noted that the timeline suggested Senate approval of the proposal in fall 2001 and asked whether the pilot version of the ASP could proceed in September without approval by Dalhousie Senate. Mr. Scully thought students and parents would want to know the answer to that question, but it would be up to the Department of Education to decide whether it wished to proceed without Dalhousie's approval.

Mr. Scully verified for Ms. McIntyre that the proposal called for Dalhousie to provide and mark examinations in all five disciplines. Mr. Scully was not aware of any approach having been made to any other institution. The Department of Education wanted to have a partnership with only one institution.

Mr. Devlin wondered how much the program would cost, who would pay, and to what extent Dalhousie would or would not benefit financially. Mr. Scully knew of no way to estimate and predict the implications for the Faculties. Intangibles included the relationship with the high schools. If the program was launched and developed as the Department envisioned, there would be consequences for Dalhousie's undergraduate enrolment in five to seven years time, but those consequences would be shared by all universities within Nova Scotia. The question was whether we would be able to recoup our current enrolment losses through the advantage that a Dalhousie examining board might give us. Calculations were very difficult, particularly since this would be a long-term process, and other significant changes would also have an impact on enrolments.

In response to questions from Ms. Bleasdale, Mr. Scully explained that the U.S. Advanced Placement system described earlier entitled students to advanced standing and transfer credits upon enrolment in participating universities. The universities involved in examining boards in

the United Kingdom did not offer transfer credits. Ms. Bleasdale was concerned that SAPBC needed to be included in the approval process immediately, and indeed should have been consulted earlier given its mandate as set out in its terms of reference at Functions 3 and 6. Mr. Scully agreed that the SAPBC was the proper Senate committee to examine the proposal.

Mr. Scully confirmed for Ms. Kay-Raining Bird that the College Board in the United States and the University Boards in the United Kingdom, referred to in his presentation, were really not models for this proposal. Ms. Kay-Raining Bird found it difficult to understand the Department of Education's contention that 15% of grade 11 and 12 high school students could successfully compress three years of study into two. She asked whether the radical restructuring around web-based learning was part of the models he had described. Mr. Scully indicated that it was not. In response to Ms. Kay Raining Bird's question concerning the motivation for adoption of this particular model, Mr. Scully suggested that Mr. LeBlanc could provide more information in this area. However, Mr. Scully believed that the province was looking at the needs of students coming out of high school; at the opportunities offered by its investment in technology in the classrooms; and also at the question of accessibility for small school populations in many areas which were presently disadvantaged.

Ms. Kay-Raining Bird noted the role that Dalhousie might want to play in developing a quality high school curriculum and the methodology for delivering it if this proposal were to go forward. Ms. Kay-Raining Bird also hoped that the proposal, if adopted, would have an impact on student recruitment, but her discussions with high school students suggested that a major factor in their choice of a Metro university other than Dalhousie was the large size of this University's undergraduate core classes. This suggested that an increase in full-time faculty to allow smaller classes might address recruitment issues more directly. Mr. Scully agreed that we needed to counter the perception that all our classes were large classes and that we were the only institution in the city which offered large classes. Mr. Kimmins observed that in Science the only classes which were larger than at competing institutions had been in Psychology and Biology, and in the coming year class sizes in those two areas would drop by half.

Mr. Tindall noted that in his visual presentation Mr. Scully had not included Knowledge House, though he had mentioned its involvement. Mr. Tindall asked senators to consider that this was a Knowledge House program. A Knowledge House press release of December 22, 2000, written in the present tense, had implied that its Advanced Studies Program, an innovative curriculum for grades 11 and 12, already existed. However, Mr. Tindall saw no evidence that it did. Further, he was concerned that one month earlier, in late November 2000, Knowledge House was still excited about the opportunities for the Global Baccalaureate, at a time when the Senate thought the Global Baccalaureate had become defunct. What expertise did Knowledge House have in this area, and what programs of this nature had it ever produced?

Mr. Scully could not answer the questions directly, but he reiterated that the proposed partnership would be between Dalhousie and the Department of Education. The Department of Education was free to choose its supplier and publisher. Dalhousie's responsibility would be to ensure that we had control over the admission of students, and the proposed model offered that assurance.

Mr. Sastri was concerned that at a meeting of the Mathematics Department Dr. Brown had

indicated that he was sworn to absolute secrecy concerning all details of the proposal. Mr. Scully responded that those involved in the preliminary work had been asked to maintain confidentiality. They were now free to reveal any of their discussions. Mr. Scully had also met with the Chair of Mathematics to answer questions. Mr. Sastri wondered whether the secrecy had been driven by the need to protect a market initiative of one of the partners in the proposal. Mr. Scully noted that the Department of Education had requested the confidentiality because they were still assessing the feasibility of such a program. The Cabinet had now approved funding for the program. Mr. Scully understood that this was not the way we did things in a University.

Ms. Savoy thought this was a good proposal, and was flattered that the Department of Education was pursuing Dalhousie after it had discontinued our School of Education. The program would be an excellent recruiting tool, a good opportunity for public relations, a valuable method of opening up communications with high schools, and an important means of advertising Dalhousie's commitment to undergraduate teaching. Her experience in recruiting suggested this would change the perception of Dalhousie. Ms. Savoy considered it important to approve the proposal before September 1, 2001. If Dalhousie did not do this, some other institution would. We could develop the program which we considered best.

Mr. Wainwright wondered about the criteria used by the Department of Education in directing the modules towards the sciences and away from the humanities and social sciences. At present 42% of undergraduate students in Canada were enrolled in the humanities and social sciences programs, and 54% of teachers were in these areas. Was the Department of Education not aware of this? He also wondered whether Dalhousie would become involved in further development of the learning modules. Mr. Scully explained that Dalhousie had not been involved in development of the modules but might be in the future. Mr. Wainwright then asked whether students who took the Advanced Studies program would be able to get transfer credits only at Dalhousie. Mr. Scully thought this would be a matter for the other institutions to decide. He assumed they would follow our lead. Mr. Scully's sense was that the Department of Education had come to Dalhousie to secure validation for the performance of students in the program. That validation would then be portable to other institutions and across the country.

Mr. Wainwright wondered how a publicly-funded Department of Education could single out one institution and try to direct students towards that institution. He also wondered about the pressure which would be placed on other institutions to accept the KHI modules and curriculum. They were based on assumptions about web-based education, and on what appeared to be a lack of distinction between disciplines and between the way disciplines were taught across different institutions.

Mr. McGrath asked whether the students, Dalhousie, or the Department of Education would pay for and finance the program? Mr. Scully responded that the Department of Education would fund the program. The students would only pay the fee to take the Advanced Studies examination. Dalhousie would not explicitly be contributing to this program from its operating budget. All of the direct costs of the administration of an examining board would be picked up by the Department of Education. That would include preparation and marking of examinations.

Mr. Brett thought this would exacerbate the perception of Dalhousie as a University not involved

in the humanities. He wondered about the mechanics of the marking. He also found the connection with Knowledge House worrisome, in light of a seminar which he had attended at Knowledge House. They had a sense of business practice, but not of education, particularly in the area of graphic presentations.

Mr. Fraser commended those who had pursued this innovative proposal. He understood that Dalhousie might not be endorsing the proposed curricula and would not be able to control much of this proposal. However, he believed that, should we become partners, the public perception would be that Dalhousie had endorsed the program. Our reputation would be affected by the quality of the total program, not just our part of it. At this point he had considerable concern about the general impact of the program and the impact of the program on Dalhousie's reputation. His concerns related to curriculum, in particular to the emphasis on the sciences. Mr. Fraser was also concerned that in taking three years of learning experience and reducing it to two, and giving about 15 hours of exams, we would be creating enormous pressure for students. Such pressure tended to skew learning to that which was necessary for exams. Learning to learn on the internet could be a valuable skill, but the opportunity might also be lost for students to learn interpersonal skills by directly working together. A variety of important skills could not be learned on the internet. Would this program take us down an unfortunate path?

Mr. Stuttard noted that these were the types of questions he believed SAPBC would be addressing. The Senate Committee on Instructional Development also had a sub-committee exploring these kinds of questions, though he doubted they would be able to offer feedback before September. This body and its successor would have to decide whether it wished to proceed in the absence of information on these issues.

Mr. Caley thought the proposal an excellent method of increasing our visibility and recruiting at the high school level. That was one of the reasons the Faculty of Engineering had been eager to meet with Mr. LeBlanc.

On the issue of quality of education, Ms. Bleasdale was becoming even more concerned that when the proposal was stripped down to its basics it amounted to Dalhousie agreeing, through the Department of Education, to contract out the delivery of part of its first year program. On the issue of recruitment and enrolment, she was also concerned that Dalhousie would be certifying that students had completed part or all of our first year, yet as Mr. Scully had indicated, a large number of those students might not enter our second year. That meant we were guaranteed to lose students in the first year, and had no guarantee we would gain those students in the second year. Unfortunately, the time line set out by Mr. Scully, if followed, would not allow Dalhousie to give an informed yes or no to this proposal.

Ms. Downe-Wamboldt echoed some of Mr. Fraser's concerns about the public's perception that Dalhousie was giving its approval to the curriculum and to the approaches which might be used to teach this narrow range of courses. We would be in the position of evaluating something over which we had little or no control. Ms. Downe-Wamboldt was also worried that while the approach might increase accessibility for students in rural or remote areas, that advantage might be at the expense of students in metropolitan areas who already had access to advanced courses offered through direct interaction with their fellow students.

Mr. Emodi thought we had very little to risk and a lot to gain. One reason for supporting the proposal was that there was very little difference between it and our current practice. We already gave credit to classes offered by other institutions, and we already assessed the content, method of delivery, and grades for work completed at those institutions. The only difference was that in this case it was not a university offering those classes but the Department of Education. We would be offering examinations to determine whether students met our standards.

Mr. Ugursal argued that if there was a risk, it was that we might not move quickly enough and we might lose this opportunity. We would then have to accept credits from the university that had decided to become part of this proposal. Mr. Ugursal was concerned that we not debate this issue over a long period of time in numerous committees. Since this was only the beginning of the Department of Education's scheme to radically alter the delivery of the high school curriculum in Nova Scotia, the range of disciplines was narrower than some would wish. He added that in his view the Department of Education was moving cautiously by introducing only a selected number of courses in this scheme, and this was a good beginning.

Mr. Traves had frequently heard members of university communities complain about the quality of the in-coming students, but had been struck by the failure of universities to do anything to address the problem. This proposal was an opportunity to contribute significantly to the improvement of the public school curriculum in general. It would also enable talented students to interact with other talented students in a higher quality curriculum. Dalhousie's association with that would give us some competitive advantage in the recruitment of the best students. Mr. Traves was concerned that the program was not broad enough and agreed we should work with the Department of Education to expand the offerings over time. But we also had to ask whether our definitions of what was acceptable were too narrow.

On the issue of University autonomy, Mr. Traves and Mr. Scully had been very clear that Dalhousie's role would be to set examinations to our own standards, and to pass or fail students according to those standards. As long as we could ensure that we maintained our own standards, we could be comfortable with quality control. Our role would be to evaluate outcomes. In the process, we would be able to establish expectations for students coming out of the public school system. Concerning time lines and process, Mr. Traves agreed that we needed to follow our established procedures for evaluating programs. There was an issue of timeliness, and we needed to move as quickly as possible, while ensuring that we were satisfied with the proposal.

Finally, Mr. Traves was concerned about our competitive position within the province and beyond. The provincial government was determined to introduce this type of program, and we could be associated with it or not. Someone was going to do it. We already awarded credits for the International Baccalaureate, so in that sense the proposal was simply following established practice, though on a much larger scale. Students would take the certification provided by Dalhousie, and enrol here to receive credit, or they could choose to go to another institution. Mr. Traves believed that if we managed the program carefully, we could position Dalhousie as the institution where quality and standards were set.

Mr. Stuttard invited members to continue discussing this matter by email.

2001:51.**President's Report**

Mr. Traves reported that as a result of adjustments to ERBA an additional \$465,000 was available for the 2001/2002 budget. Mr. Traves would be recommending to the Board that most of that additional money be allocated to reduce the Faculties' base budget cuts from 2.5% to 2.15%.

Mr. Traves also drew members' attention to the email circulated today by Vice-Presidents Mason and McKee announcing an extension to the Howe Hall residence. Beginning shortly, another wing would be added which would include 201 well-equipped single residence rooms. All floors would be wheel-chair accessible and additional special rooms would meet the needs of students with disabilities. The Board had approved a fixed-price contract with a regional firm to design and construct this addition for \$7.49 mil. This would help Dalhousie attract students from outside the city.

Mr. Traves noted that work would also be undertaken this year on the Faculty of Architecture building. The extension commenced approximately ten years ago would be completed, thanks to a private fund-raising campaign by the Faculty of Architecture. This project would assist in recruitment and further fund-raising for the Faculty.

In conclusion, Mr. Traves wished to congratulate the faculty members who were successful in the recent NSERC competition. Approval had been given to 244 grants totalling \$47.2 mil. In addition, 40 projects, with a total value of \$2 mil, were approved for equipment. More than 244 individuals were to be congratulated because some projects involved teams.

2001:52.**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.