

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

SENATE

A special meeting of Senate was held on Tuesday, April 8, 2003 at 4:50 p.m. in Room E5004.

85. PRESENT

Dr. E. Simpson (Acting Chair), Professor A. Fowler, Dr. S. Birnie-Lefcovitch, Dean I. Bowmer, Dean A. Collins, Mr. G. Collins, Mr. R. Ellis, Dean D. Graham, Dr. T. Gordon, Dr. L. Hensman, Dean C. Jablonski, Dean R. Lucas, Mr. L. O'Reilly, Interim Dean M. Haddara, Dean L. Walker, Ms. D. Whalen, Dr. R. Adamec, Dr. J. Ashton, Professor P. Ayres, Dr. M. Brosnan, Mr. C. Dennis, Mr. E. Durnford, Dr. J. Evans, Dr. R. Gosine, Professor M. Hackett, Dr. J. Harris, Dr. D. Kimberley, Ms. K. Lippold, Dr. D. McKay, Dr. M. Mulligan, Dr. F. Murrin, Dr. D. Neville, Dr. H. Pike, Dr. J. Quaiocoe, Ms. D. Rehner, Dr. D. Rideout, Dr. F. Shahidi, Dr. C. Sharpe, Dr. M. Skipton, Dr. D. Thompson, Dr. D. Treslan, Professor D. Walsh, Dr. B. Watson, Dr. M. Wernerheim, Dr. S. Wolinetz, Mr. S. Sullivan, Ms. G. Bell, Ms. A. Goodman, Ms. C. Powell, Mr. G. Salam.

86. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from The President, Dr. S. Algoo-Baksh, Dr. D. Buell, Ms. L. Eddy, Dean G. Gorman, Ms. M. Ivany, Mr. A. Kennedy, Professor V. Kuester, Dr. M. Murray, Ms. K. O'Brien-MacDonald, Dr. K. St. John, Dr. J. Wright, Dr. J. Wyse.

The Acting Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the following members of the ad hoc Committee on Senate Reform:

Dr. Glyn George (Engineering)
Mr. Brian Kerr (MI)
Dr. Dennis Treslan (Education, Senator)
Dr. Steve Wolinetz (Political Science, Senator)
Ms. Maire O'Dea, Deputy Registrar

87. Senate Reform

Dr. Simpson introduced the topic for the special meeting by noting that the Planning and Budget Committee thought it would be useful if Senate could give the ad hoc committee on Senate Reform a sense of direction as it begins its task of considering Senate reform.

To facilitate discussion, Dr. Simpson asked Dr. Tom Gordon, to introduce the topic.

Dr. Gordon reminded Senators that at its regular meeting which had just concluded, Senate had struck an ad hoc Committee to explore the possibility that routine course approvals and regulation revisions be delegated, as appropriate, to committees reporting to Senate and/or be facilitated by electronic means. The starting point for this initiative occurred several months ago at a meeting of Deans and Directors where it was felt that Senate, as the senior academic body in the University, should devote more of its time to strategic matters and less to operational ones. Dr. Gordon remarked that Senate very often addresses strategic matters in specific application rather than principle. Some examples over the past year where Senate addressed strategic matters through specific application include:

- direct entry of students
- program differential fees
- internationalization of the University

Dr. Gordon concluded by remarking that Senate should divest itself of some operational matters in order to find more time to address strategic initiatives.

Dr. Simpson thanked Dr. Gordon for his introduction and reminded Senators that the fundamental question is where Senate places itself at the operational versus strategic continuum. The comments from today's discussion will guide the Committee and will help it shape a report that should be available for discussion in October.

A broad ranging discussion then ensued involving a large number of Senators. The following is a summary, illustrative but not exhaustive, of comments and suggestions made:

- the need to undertake this review in a careful and attentive manner ensuring that the Committee's report will be consistent with the composition, duties and powers of Senate and the duties and powers of the Board of Regents as defined by the Memorial University Act.
- the need to achieve the appropriate yet delicate balance between delegating authority versus achieving operational efficiencies by streamlining procedures and processes.
- the need for Senate to be forward looking and adaptable while recognizing the need to constrain the enquiry to what is doable.

Following the discussion, Dr. Simpson thanked Senators and commented that the points raised and directions suggested will be very useful to the ad hoc Committee on Senate Reform.

88. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.