

## SENATE MINUTES

The regular meeting of Senate was held on March 12, 2002, at 4:00 p.m. in Room E5004, Education Building.

### 73. PRESENT

The President, Dr. E. Simpson, Dr. C. Loomis, Professor A. Fowler, Interim Dean J. Black, Dean W. Blake, Dean I. Bowmer, Acting Dean A. Collins, Dean L. Walker, Mr. G. Collins, Mr. R. Ellis, Dr. S. Birnie-Lefcovitch, Dr. T. Gordon, Dr. C. Higgs, Interim Dean C. Jablonski, Dean R. Lucas, Mr. L. O'Reilly, Ms. D. Whalen, Dr. R. Adamec, Dr. J. Ashton, Dr. G. Bassler, Dr. M. Brosnan, Dr. G. Clark, Dr. C. Couturier, Professor M. Coyne, Mr. E. Durnford, Dr. J. Evans, Dr. D. Goldstein, Dr. R. Gosine, Professor M. Hackett, Dr. G. Herzberg, Mr. M. Kara, Dr. D. Kimberley, Professor K. Knowles, Professor V. Kuester, Ms. K. Lippold, Dr. D. McKay, Dr. J. McLean, Dr. M. Mulligan, Dr. D. Neville, Dr. H. Pike, Ms. D. Rehner, Dr. D. Rideout, Dr. G. Sabin, Dr. W. Schipper, Dr. C. Sharpe, Dr. D. Thompson, Dr. D. Treslan, Mr. J. Tucker, Dr. J. Usher, Professor D. Walsh, Dr. B. Watson, Dr. M. Wernerheim, Ms. L. Moss, Ms. B. Kitchen, Mr. S. Sullivan, Mr. J. Clements, Mr. J. Clements, Ms. G. Bell, Ms. J. Morgan, Ms. C. Powell.

### 74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Dr. C. Orchard, Mr. C. Dennis, Dr. M. Murray, Dr. V. Richardson, Ms. J. Mahoney.

### 75. MINUTES

The Minutes of the regular meeting held on February 12, 2002, were taken as read and confirmed.

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SENATE

It was agreed by separate motion where necessary, the report of the Executive Committee be approved as follows:

### 76. Report of the Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial

A memorandum dated March 6, 2002 was received from the Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial comprising the Report of the Committee following its review of the Public Orator and Deputy Public Orator in accordance with Section 5. of the Procedures for Public Orator, Deputy Public Orator and University Orators.

The Committee recommends, in light of the overwhelmingly positive comments received in support of the Public Orator and Deputy Public Orator that Professor Shane O'Dea be re-appointed as Public Orator for a period of five years, commencing April 1, 2002, and that Dr. Annette Staveley be re-appointed as Deputy Public Orator for a period of four years, commencing April 1, 2002. Both appointments are renewable at the pleasure of Senate following successful review as indicated in the above-noted Procedures.

It was moved by Mr. Collins, seconded by Dr. Ashton and carried that Professor Shane O'Dea be re-appointed as Public Orator for a period of five years, commencing April 1, 2002, and that Dr. Annette Staveley be re-appointed as Deputy Public Orator for a period of four years, commencing April 1, 2002.

## 77. Report of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

### 77.1 School of Nursing

Page 353, 2001–2002 University Calendar, following the heading Programme of Studies: Bachelor of Nursing (Post-RN), subheading Other Credit Hours (18), delete the current Note 2 and replace with the following:

"2) The Undergraduate Studies Committee, School of Nursing may recommend that transfer credit (to a maximum of six credit hours) be awarded for certain post basic nursing courses/programmes (approved by a provincial nursing association) or for current Canadian Nurses Association certification."

### 77.2 Recommendation #3. Proposed Changes to Memorial University's Grading System

Ms. Sheila Singleton, Associate Registrar (Student Systems) was in attendance by invitation for this item of business.

### Background Information

At a meeting held on May 8, 2001, Senate considered the Report on Grading Practices submitted by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies. Approval of Recommendations #1 and #2. in that Report resulted in changes to Memorial's grading practices effective September, 2001, so that the following four-point grading system is now in place and grades are no longer reported in multiples of five:

Numeric Grades	Letters	Points
80-100	A	4
65-79	B	3
55-64	C	2
50-54	D	1
0-49	F	0

In the four-point system implemented in September 2001, an average of 3.5 points or better on the courses required for the degree will be the minimum for First Class standing, an average of 2.75 points for Second Class standing, and an average of 2.0 points for Third Class standing. In order to continue at the University, a student must obtain either a semester average of 50% or a cumulative average of 55%.

Several other recommendations relating to grading practices were also approved at that same meeting.

However, Recommendation #3 in the Report proposing a further change to the grading scheme using a four point system, as employed by the University of Toronto, except as modified, was tabled and the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies was asked to undertake further consultation with the Academic Councils of the Faculties and Schools in order to ensure that the implications of adopting the grading scheme proposed were understood by the University community before a decision to adopt that scheme was made. The proposed grading scheme as outlined in

Recommendation #3 is as follows:

Numeric Grades	Letters	Points
90-100	A+	4.0

85-90	A	4.0
80-84	A-	3.7
77-79	B+	3.3
73-76	B	3.0
70-72	B	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
63-66	C	2.0
60-62	C-	1.7
57-59	D+	1.3
53-56	D	1.0
50-52	D	0.7
0-49	F	0.0

A memorandum dated February 21, 2002 has since been received from the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies advising that further consultation with the Academic Councils of the Faculties and Schools has now been undertaken. While responses were not received from all Academic Councils (i.e. the Schools of Social Work, Nursing\* and Pharmacy and the Faculty of Medicine), those that were received were varied. The Faculties of Business Administration and Engineering and Applied Science, the Marine Institute and some Departments within the Faculty of Arts indicated that they would continue to award the same numeric grade, while the School of Music indicated that it would continue to award the same letter grade. The Faculty of Science and Sir Wilfred Grenfell College did not support the adoption of the proposed grading scheme, while the Faculty of Education and the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation supported its adoption but did not specifically comment on its effect on their grading practices.

The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, having considered the responses from Academic Councils, voted to endorse the grading scheme proposed in Recommendation #3 and via its memorandum dated February 21, 2002 submitted this recommendation to Senate.

At a meeting held on February 28, 2002, the Executive Committee of Senate considered this memorandum, together with the correspondence from the academic councils. The Committee also considered a document dated February 26, 2002 prepared by the Office of the Registrar, entitled Potential Implications of Approval of Recommendation #3.

Having taken into consideration responses from academic councils, the information provided by the Registrar, and the fact that it is too early to assess the impact of the changes already made to the grading scheme in Fall 2001, the Executive Committee recommended to Senate in a memorandum dated February 28, 2002 that the motion to approve Recommendation #3 remain tabled until the 2003/2004 academic year, at which time the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies be asked for a comprehensive review and analysis of the situation.

It was moved by Professor Walsh, seconded by Dr. Sharpe and carried that the motion to approve Recommendation 3 which was tabled at the Senate meeting on May 8, 2001 be lifted from the table.

Following a suggestion from the Executive Committee, the Chairman invited Ms. Singleton to identify for the information of Senators the salient points outlined in the document entitled Potential Implications of Approval of

Recommendation #3 including several potentially negative and serious implications of approval of the recommendation.

Dr. Simpson advised that he had discussed the analysis provided in this document with Deans and Directors who expressed concern regarding the potential implications of the adoption of Recommendation #3 as outlined in the best and worst case scenarios described in the document. He noted that the worst case scenario is frightening and would deem many students who are eligible to receive a Memorial degree under the current system as ineligible. While the worst case scenario is not one which would be likely to occur, the reality is that the adoption of Recommendation #3 would, for students, be inferior to the current situation, in that fewer students would be eligible for graduation, and as a consequence may find their future life prospects threatened.

In response to a question regarding the origins of the proposal to change the grading system, Dr. Sharpe advised that approximately ten years ago, a committee chaired by Dr. E. Moore, a former faculty member with the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, recommended that Memorial move to this system, the basic reasons

being that Memorial was out of step with many Canadian universities with regard to the range for C and B grades and with the calculation of grade point averages to two decimal points. Dr. Sharpe noted that, in his opinion, the worst case scenario as outlined in the document is erroneous and misleading, and unlikely to occur, and that careful implementation would ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

Dr. Simpson noted that in the ten years that this matter has been under discussion, not only has Memorial made progress by moving to a four-point grading scheme, but the whole shape of grading schemes in Canada has changed in such a way that it is difficult to say that any one scheme is the exemplar. A recent review of Canadian universities shows that four are using the Toronto model, three including McGill and Queen's, are using the Memorial scheme, the rest use many different schemes and many do not use numerical marks at all.

In response to a question regarding whether Memorial students are now finding it easier to be admitted to other universities given the diversity of grading schemes, Mr. Collins advised that the four-point grading scheme adopted effective September 1, 2001 appears to have alleviated past concerns. Dr. Jablonski noted that his experience confirms that this is so.

A number of Senators commented that there seemed to be a lack of sound reasons for moving to the University of Toronto system. Furthermore it was noted that the survey sent to Academic Councils by Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies in May, 2001 did not ask whether or not councils were content with the revised grading scheme adopted by Memorial on September 1, 2001. Senators suggested that Councils should have been given the opportunity to respond to such a question.

Dean Lucas stated that, in his opinion a compelling case for the motion to be placed back on the table had been made during this meeting. In particular the change to a four-point grading system in September, 2001 had solved the problems which had been causing concern ten years ago. He cautioned that care should be taken not to move too fast and too far, because by doing so problems of some magnitude may be created.

Dean Lucas then moved that the motion to approve Recommendation #3. be tabled.

Following discussion on a point of order raised by Dr. Sharpe, and confirmed by the Secretary that a motion to table is valid only if the matter is to be discussed again in the same meeting, it was moved by Dean Lucas, seconded by Dr. Higgs and carried by a substantial majority that the motion to approve Recommendation 3 be postponed indefinitely.

\* A response from the School of Nursing dated February 18, 2002 received after the memorandum dated February 15, 2002 from Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, was included in the package of material sent to Senators.

### 73. Special Meeting of Senate

A memorandum dated February 23, 2001 was received from the Vice-President (Academic) advising that a special meeting of Senate will be convened prior to the regular meeting scheduled for April 9, 2002. The topic for the meeting will be "The Impact of Internationalization Upon Memorial".

### 74. Report of the ad hoc Committee on Rooms E5004/5005

A memorandum dated February 20, 2002 was received from the Secretary of Senate together with a report from the Department of Facilities Management providing details of the proposed improvements to Rooms E5004/5005, and illustrating the preferred layout for Senate meetings together with possible alternate layouts for classroom use.

The President noted that the proposed improvements are being undertaken in order to make the room more functional both as a meeting room for Senate and other committees, and also for classroom use. He invited comments from

Senators on the mock-up of the proposed lay-out which had been set up in Room E5005.

The President thanked the members of the ad hoc committee for their work on this project.

#### 74. Remarks from the Chair – Questions/Comments from Senators

The President reported to Senate as follows: Dr. Alice Collins has been appointed as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education while Dr. Burnaby completes a project relating to recruitment of and services for international students.

On a recent visit to Ireland the President noted that he had the opportunity to meet with a number of our Irish counterparts. He visited the Waterford Institute of Technology, University College, Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Marine Institute and the Ireland Newfoundland Partnership Board. He noted the particularly warm feelings that the people in Ireland have for this province. Many positive comments were made regarding students, faculty and staff members who have visited and collaborated with their counterparts in Ireland. He commented that there is a wealth of opportunity in that country and that there is a need to identify opportunities and to consolidate working relationships. The President advised that he intends to share his views and impressions with the various academic units in order to identify these opportunities. He noted that the credit for the high esteem in which this University is held, is due in great part to faculty and staff, and to our students on work terms, etc.

\* On March 8, 2002, Gerry Byrne, Minister of State for Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, announced that Memorial University will receive \$3.3 million to help support the indirect costs associated with federally sponsored research.

The Faculty of Medicine's TETRA (Telehealth and Educational Technology Resource Agency) will use \$490,864 from ACOA to purchase and implement new technology that will allow it to double its capacity and allow for a wider scale of services.

The Faculty of Arts will create a Digital Research Centre for Qualitative Fieldwork with support from ACOA in the amount of \$184,531, with an additional \$103,766 in funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

The President commented that he found it particularly welcome that Minister Byrne has a vision and a commitment to seeing research



and development in all its facets, not just in science and applied science, grow and flourish in Newfoundland and Labrador. He noted that we now have a very good alignment in what is articulated in the Strategic Framework. The President advised that he has charged Dr. Simpson and Dr. Loomis to give consideration to how the \$3.3 million for the indirect cost of research will be used.

The money which will be available in the next fiscal year is a one-time allocation, although the Minister did give some hope that it may become a repeat programme.

#### 76. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.