

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

SENATE

The special meeting of Senate was held on November 14, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. NDT via Webex.

146. SENATORS PRESENT

Dr. N. Bose – Chair	Dr. G. George	Dr. D. Peters
Dr. J. Lokash – Deputy Chair	Mr. N Gillingham	Ms. H. Pretty
Mr. E. Ludlow – Chancellor	Dr. S. Giwa	Dr. J. Pridham
Dr. T. Allen	Dr. M. Haghiri	Dr. C. Purchase
Dr. J. Anderson	Dr. D. Hancock	Dr. P. Ride
Dr. K. Anderson	Mr. J. Harris	Dr. S. Rowe
Dr. F. Bambico	Dr. E. Haven	Mr. S. Sayeedi
Ms. H. Bello	Dr. K. Hodgkinson	Mr. S. Shah
Dr. E. Bezzina	Dr. N. Hurley	Dr. K. Shannahan
Dr. A. Bittner	Dr. K. Jacobsen	Dr. S. Shetranjiwalla
Dr. P. Brett	Dr. R. Joy	Ms. B. Simmons
Ms. M. Broders	Dr. D. Keeping	Dr. K. Simonsen
Dr. T. Brown	Dr. D. Kelly	Dr. J. Sinclair
Dr. S. Bugden	Dr. E. Kendall	Dr. M. Stordy
Dr. K. Bulmer	Dr. A. Loucks-Atkinson	Dr. AM. Sullivan
Dr. T. Chapman	Dr. LA McKivor	Mr. P. Sullivan
Mr. J. Chowdhury	Dr. S. Moore	Dr. I. Sutherland
Mr. C. Couturier	Dr. L. Moores	Ms. C. Walsh
Dr. D. Hardy-Cox	Dr. D. Mullings	Dr. A. Warren
Dr. A. Cunsolo	Dr. K. Myrick	Mr. R. Waye
Dr. P. Dold	Dr. S. Neilsen	Dr. J. Westcott
Dr. E. Durnford	Ms. T. Noseworthy	Dr. M. Woods

147. OBSERVERS

Dr. C. Andersen	Dr. A. Clarke	Dr. L. Pena-Castillo
Ms. M. Baikie	Ms. V. Collins	Ms. L. Pike
Dr. P. Banahene	Dr. A. Craig	Dr. S. Sullivan
Dr. C. Bazan	Ms. M. MacLean	Dr. S. Shetranjiwalla
Ms. P. Beh	Mr. K. Matthews	Dr. M. Wells
Ms. M. Brown	Ms. R. Millan	Dr. R. Whitaker
Ms. L. Browne	Mr. C. Pelley	Dr. H. Usefi

148. SENATORS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr. S. Abyaz	Dr. T. Hennessey	Dr. L. Moore
Dr. F. Bambico	Dr. P. Issahaku	Dr. P. Morrill
Dr. R. Burry	Mr. N. Keough	Dr. A. Pike
Dr. P. Button	Dr. C. Kozak	Ms. B. Smith
Dr. O. Dobre	Dr. K. Laing	Dr. K. Szego
Dr. E. Fraser	Dr. S. MacDonald	Dr. L. Twells
Dr. T. Fridgen	Dr. M. Marshall	Mr. S. Yadav

Dr. N. Bose, President and Vice-Chancellor, pro tempore and Chair of Senate welcomed all Senators and guests to this Special meeting of Senate.

149. **DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – A COMMITTEE FORMED IN RESPONSE TO APPENDIX K OF MUNFA COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

The Collegial Governance Committee members include: Michelle Baikie (Chair), Mr. Cyr Couturier, Mr. John Harris, Dr. Lee Ann McKivor, Dr. Lourdes Pena-Castillo (Vice-Chair), Ms. Vicky Quao, Ms. Eleanor Swanson, Dr. Ian Sutherland and Dr. Robin Whitaker.

Dr. N. Bose invited Dr. Whitaker, a member of the collegial governance committee, to speak.

Dr. Whitaker shared the objective and guiding principles of the collegial governance committee:

Objective:

To undertake a broad review of collegial governance at Memorial University, including but not limited to, Memorial's bicameral system, the MUNFA collective agreement and university policies and procedures directly related to university governance.

Guiding Principles:

The Committee agrees that the following principles shall serve as measures of sound governance:

- a. Transparency
- b. Openness
- c. Representativeness
- d. Equity
- e. Accountability
- f. Collegiality
- g. Allowance of diverse perspectives
- h. Democracy
- i. Respect for academic freedom rights.

Dr. Whitaker suggested this would be an opportunity to start discussions concerning important and urgent issues of governance - practicing collegial governance as Senators and in other aspects of involvement on campus.

Questions:

What is an effective kind of working relationship to develop between Senate and the Board and how do we do that?

What you think are key problems and any questions that you have for us about our work?

Dr. McKivor, University Registrar and interm Secretary of Senate, asked if anyone had any questions or statements they would like to make at this time?

From the Floor:

Comments from Senators:

- Did not want a repeat of the governance review discussions, which took place concerning the agreed Senate Governance Review Report. There could be improvements made to Memorial's model of governance.
- The idea of collegial governance and looking at how the University should operate. For instance, guiding principles – indigenization (the idea of diverse perspectives). For instance the model of governance within the academic council of the School of Sub-Arctic Studies, Labrador Campus.
- Teaching and leadership practices – the focus of decision-making – basically where are decisions made – is another area of collegial governance that need to emphasis. This committee could consider what Memorial's decision making actually is comprised of and try to get some analysis of where those decisions should be made or not being made (concentrate on a few areas, in order to get a fairly good sense of central effectiveness, and still have a broad based diversity and local action).
- A key component of academic unit decision-making is done within Faculty/Academic Councils but many academic units struggle to have faculty join these meetings (so where is accountability?). A question to this committee, what can we do about that? What is the point of having collegial decision making if 40% of an academic unit is just not going to be there at any given time?

Dr. Whitaker agreed that the collegial governance committee would look at the model within the Labrador Campus as part of the collegial governance committee's work. She added where and how decisions are made, and how are they are made in ways that uphold the values of the collegial governance committee are key questions. Finally, on Faculty Council and/or Academic Council's lack of presence (or engagement), this is a concern the committee wants to addressed, because collegiality really depends on all of us, it is a process, and a sensibility that colleagues should share. What is getting in the way of practicing collegiality (realizing that it is not simply faculty councils, but it is one arena but there are many others as well)?

From the Floor (cont'd):

Comments from Senators:

- There are two student seats on this committee but there are four student unions at Memorial. There are three undergraduate and one graduate students' unions. Therefore, an internal election was held between the four student union groups, in order to appoint those two student seats. The four student unions represent very different bodies of students, which are four distinct student populations there is not a lot of crossover. The four student union groups are very distinct. The three undergraduate student unions cannot be lumped into one undergraduate student overall.
- How can the collegial governance committee assist with modification considerations to the *Memorial Act*? (especially now since it is being revised by the provincial

government). It is not a guiding principle in the collegial governance terms of reference but it is something the committee should consider.

Dr. Whitaker advised that the collegial governance committee does have John Harris and Vicky Quao as their student representatives.

She advised that the collegial governance committee has discussed items that are not explicitly listed in the terms of reference from the letter of understanding, it does not stop the committee, from the tasks it has, it does include a broad study of governance. The terms of reference are the minimum items that the committee will ensure is done, the committee must deliver a public report to Senate and the Board of Regents, it does not mean the committee cannot look at other areas that are not named. Indeed the *Memorial Act* sets the parameters for governance at Memorial, in certain ways it is important to look at it.

Dr. Whitaker asked the Senators questions:

- (i) Are there things that you think would make Senate more collegial?
- (ii) There is no point in reinventing the wheel where work has already been done on ways for Senate to have a more effective relationship with the Board of Regents.
- (iii) Are questions about the everyday practice of governance on Senate, such as, things that you might think of as a big picture governance question can it make a real difference? Like how do you get things on to the agenda? Do you feel you understand how to be effective as a Senator? What would help make things better for your faculty members and student representatives who are there to represent constituencies? Are there ways to make that relationships more effective?
- (iv) Senate is still meeting remotely – does that make a difference? At one time Senate would meet in person – the forum not just the content can matter.

From the Floor (cont'd):

Comments from Senators:

- A new Senator commented that it is very difficult to engage in a pre-existing team, very effectively when the mediation or the interactions are purely on-line, appreciating that there are lots of issues around the idea of in-person meetings, especially if they are in-person only and hybrid can have a two tier effect and there are lots of challenges there but none the less, it is an important aspect of collegiality. Acknowledging the technical and all the other challenges, it would be a good way forward if we could at least look for ways in which hybrid meetings could be considered in the future. Even if that means working with the technology there currently is or looking for more effective technology.
- Consider how to actually build back into the system a more face-to-face sort of collegiality, getting together system.
- Discussion about some review of governance and collegial governance across universities would be useful. It would be useful to create an environmental scan of all of the collegial processes that we currently have within our university to ensure we understand what they all are.

- New insights – especially the new faculty - they just wanted to know about the collegial governance processes within the University. During the decision-making process when are faculty included when are they not included.
- Memorial is a multi-campus university and so that means that we have different campuses across different places. Consideration should include the pieces around equity for people who sometimes often feel isolated from the St. John's campus – while still attending to building relationships and developing networks and those kinds of things.
- Engagement – those joining online seem to be pretty engaged and the question is how do we engage the people who are not here, who do not bother going to Senate and who do not even come to faculty council meeting?
- A suggestion to have the collegial governance committee empowered to visit each campus to have a consultation (that could be a hybrid consultation) or at least some in-person component on each campus to bring things in – in a different way.
- Regularize some kind of available orientation or training for all members of the institution. For instance, a previous institution who had a once a semester, run by the University Secretariat, – the university 101 –introduction to how the system works. It was run regularly, the Fall during October and the Spring during March and happened every semester. New employees always had somewhere to access that information. Important step to collegial governance.
- What are the barriers to engagement? For instance, the learning curve being a part of Senate is steep compared to other large boards and associations. It is also hard to tell who has been part of Senate for a very long time or a short time. Senate is a large group, it is difficult to be able to have some of those orientations and to have an opportunity for introductions, to even know who would you check in with – who might be someone who would be able to provide advice or some internship to new Senators. Whether they are from a unit who has or has not been part of Senate before but it is a change for the representatives. An extended orientation would be very helpful (assist with understanding how to participate in Senate, how a member can bring issues forward and deal with items/concerns).
- How do we measure collegially? Can we define some clarity - especially about the guiding principles themselves which are not mutually exclusive and there are moments where there are also tensions and contentions. For instance, when we discuss transparency how do we balance between an individual right to have access to information in general terms as well as responsibility to protect individual privacy (namely, administration, MUNFA and students) appreciating this principle. Noting that clarity would be needed, especially when there is a conflict of interest, as the guiding principles unfolds and what happens when a member of the collegial governance committee is part of the decision-making and yet when they report back to the committee and the committee does not agree with the decision.
- A Senator shared that Memorial has a similar orientation to “University 101”. In Bright Space there is a shell called “New Faculty, Instructor, and Postdoctoral Fellow

Orientation 2023-2024". Senators can ask CITL for more information regarding access. <https://online.mun.ca/d2l/home/541689>

Dr. Whittaker noted that consultation is part of the mandate for the collegial governance committee, rather than sending out a questionnaire, the opportunity for consultation and the collegial governance committee would like input whenever people want to write or speak to the committee. Also, the collegial governance committee is looking at how they do things as much as where do we do them, it is something that needs to be considered while keeping in mind the real vital question of equity, which is one of the committee's guiding principles.

She stated that the collegial governance committee had actually already talked about it a bit and it was decided that, at this stage, it is actually a good thing to have some principles where what we want is to talk about. What we mean by those principles, but will probably never settle them finally, because the spirit of let's say democracy, is that we have to be continually struggling with what it means and how we best deliver it and the same with equity or any of the values that are listed. The values certainly sometimes might feel like they are in contention with one another, but they are the heart of the committee's work and if we stop being troubled by how we deliver these values; then that is when probably we are really in trouble. She mentioned that she was co-chair for the governance committee for the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and advised that the issue of training for governance come up repeatedly across the country, noting that Memorial is not unique, people want support in being able to learn how to do governance and how to be effective.

Dr. McKivior advised Senators that there was an onboarding session put together for new Senators this year to try to walk new Senators through some of the different processes relating to Senate and board, some of the different committees and structures. This is something that can be expanded now. Unfortunately, there was not a lot of feedback but it is something we can continue to work on. Also, she advised that the Senate Committee on Elections Committees and By-Laws (SCECB) suggested attending Faculty Councils to speak about Senate standing committees work and how that falls into the decision making process. The idea of doing something potentially once a semester and even some sort of a mentorship program put into place are all great ideas. If there is any other feedback please send them to senate@mun.ca.

Dr. Whitaker advised that the feedback given here today was incredibly useful and great to hear from everyone. She encouraged everyone to be in touch with the committee and if there was any follow up thoughts or areas that you believed should be part of the collegial governance committee's work or suggestions about how to go about doing it.

Dr. Sutherland, a member of the collegial governance committee, thanked Dr. Whitaker for taking the lead with this special meeting today and Senators for all their contributions and feedback. He advised Senators that as the collegial governance committee continues with their mandate, there will be more consultations, and he asked if everyone could all be champions in their spheres of influence to get people to engage in the consultation process. The consultation will feed into all the work of the collegial governance committee, being a champion would be great.

Following the discussions, Dr. Bose thanked everyone for participating and noted that it is useful to have the open forum on collegial governance.

150. **Other Business:**

There was no other business.

151. **Adjournment:**

The special meeting of Senate concluded at 3:50 pm.

CHAIR

SECRETARY