



**UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**MINUTES**

Tuesday, December 10, 2024  
4:00 pm NT –WebEx

**PRESENT**

Dr. K. Abadie	Dr. T. Fridgen	Dr. D. Peters
Mr. M. Alam	Dr. G. George	Dr. A. Pike
Dr. L. Alisaraie	Dr. S. Giwa	Dr. S. Power
Dr. T. Allen	Dr. E. Haven	Dr. C. Purchase
Dr. J. Anderson	Dr. D. Hallett	Dr. P. Ride
Dr. K. Anderson	Dr. D. Hancock	Dr. S. Rowe
Dr. C. Arnold	Dr. J. Hawboldt	Dr. A. Sarkar
Dr. R. Bailey	Dr. T. Hennessey	Dr. S. Shetranjiwalla
Dr. F. Bambico	Dr. N. Hurley	Dr. K. Simonsen, Speaker of Senate
Dr. C. Bazan	Dr. K. Jacobsen	Dr. J. Sinclair
Ms. H. Bello	Ms. K. Johnson	Mr. S. Shah
Dr. E. Bezzina	Mx. J. Joy	Ms. B. Smith
Dr. N. Bose, Chair	Dr. D. Keeping	Dr. M. Stordy
Dr. P. Brett	Dr. E. Kendall	Dr. A.M. Sullivan
Dr. T. Brown	Mr. N. Keough	Mr. P. Sullivan
Dr. S. Bugden	Dr. K. Laing	Ms. C. Walsh
Dr. K. Bulmer	Dr. A. Loucks-Atkinson	Dr. A. Warren
Dr. R. Burry	Mr. E. Ludlow, Chancellor	Dr. J. Westcott
Dr. L. Cahill	Dr. L.A. McKivor, Secretary	Ms. A. White
Mr. C. Couturier	Ms. B. Meaney	Dr. B. White
Dr. G. Curtis	Dr. L. Moores	Dr. M. Woods
Dr. P. Dold	Dr. D. Mullings	Dr. H. Yacoubian
Dr. A. Dorward	Ms. T. Noseworthy	
Dr. E. Durnford	Dr. P. Osmond-Johnson	
Dr. E. Fraser	Ms. S. Papple	

**REGRETS**

Mr. D. Budden	Dr. L. Moore	Dr. K. Shannahan
Dr. O. Dobre	Dr. S. Neilsen	Dr. S. Wright
Dr. J. Lokash, Deputy Chair	Ms. K. Russell	

**ABSENT**

Mr. A. Al-Rashed	Dr. P. Issahaku	Dr. P. Morrill
Dr. T. Chapman	Dr. M. Marshall	Ms. H. Pretty
Dr. P. Button	Dr. D. McKeen	Mx. A. Zedel
Mr. S. Ganesan	Dr. S. Moore	

**OBSERVERS**

Ms. Catharyn Andersen  
Dr. Patricia Beh  
Ms. Margot Brown  
Dr. A. Clarke

Dr. A. Craig  
Dr. Virginia Fugarino  
Ms. Melissa MacLean  
Mr. Keith Matthews  
Ms. Kim Myrick

Ms. Lisa Russell  
Dr. Shannon Sullivan  
Ms. Martha Wells  
Ms. Meghan Whelan

**RECORDING**

Ms. M. Broders

Mr. B. Hammond

Ms. S. Sansome

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N. Bose delivered the land acknowledgement and called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

N. Bose welcomed Senators and Observers to the last meeting of the year. He welcomed the newly elected Speaker of Senate, Dr. Kathryn Simonsen. He thanked Dr. Simonsen for the excellent job she has done as the Deputy Speaker. Dr. Simonsen now been elected to serve as the inaugural Speaker of Senate.

N. Bose noted that under “Other Business” there will be an item from Dr. Michael Woods, Chair, University Planning and Budget Committee.

N. Bose called on Dr. Simonsen to begin the meeting.

**1.0 Approval of the Agenda**

**1.1 Meeting of December 10, 2024**

K. Simonsen asked if there were any other additions or proposed changes to the agenda.

**MOTION** M. Woods / D. Peters

RESOLVED that the agenda for the December 10, 2024 meeting of Senate be adopted as presented with the addition of the item from M. Woods under “Other Business”.

No discussion.

**CARRIED**

**2.0 Approval of the Minutes**

**2.1 Meeting of November 12, 2024**

K. Simonsen advised that Dr. McKivior, University Registrar and Interim Secretary of Senate, has informed her that there have been no amendments reported to the Senate office.

K. Simonsen asked if there were any corrections or amendments to the minutes. None were proposed.

**MOTION** C. Couturier / C. Walsh

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of November 12, 2024, be approved as circulated.

No discussion.

**CARRIED**

### **3.0 Consent Agenda**

#### **3.1 Report of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies**

Two reports were received from Jennifer Porter, Secretary to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, outlining calendar changes from Grenfell - English Course and from the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science. These changes are transmitted for information only and have been approved through the authority delegated to the Committee.

#### **3.2 Report of the Academic Council of the School of Graduate Studies**

A report was received from Dr. Amy Warren, Chair of the Academic Council of the School of Graduate Studies, outlining calendar changes from the Faculty of Education and the School of Music. The Council recommended the adoption of all proposed changes.

#### **3.3 Annual Reports and Work Plans of Senate Standing Committees**

Five (5) annual reports and work plans were received in writing from the Standing Committees of Senate. Reports were received from the

- i. Senate Committee on Undergraduate Scholarships, Bursaries, and Awards;
- ii. Senate Committee on Research;
- iii. Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial;
- iv. Senate Committee on Academic Unit Planning; and
- v. Grenfell Campus Special Admissions Committee.

The reports contained no recommendations and were received for information only.

**MOTION** G. George / E. Bezzina

RESOLVED that the recommendations within the Consent Agenda be approved as circulated.

A senator inquired about the consultation process for graduate academic policy changes.

A. Warren advised that the responsibility for consultation rests with the faculty. P. Osmond-Johnson, Dean of the Faculty of Education, added that as the changes were fully internal to the Faculty of Education, they did not engage in widespread consultation in this instance.

**CARRIED**

#### **4.0 New Business**

##### **4.1 Report of the Senate Committee on Elections, Committees and Bylaws**

K. Simonsen called on L.A. McKivior, as Chair of the Senate Committee on Elections, Committees and Bylaws, to present that Committee's report.

L.A. McKivior reminded Senate that Dr. Woods, Chair of the University Planning and Budget Committee, had put out a call for membership at the last Senate meeting. As a result of that call, two members of the academic staff have volunteered to serve on that committee. The Senate Committee on Elections, Committee and Bylaws recommends that the two members be appointed to the committee.

**MOTION** M. Woods / G. George

RESOLVED that the following academic staff members be appointed to the University Planning and Budget Committee:

- i. Dr. Russell Williams, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Political Science; and
- ii. Dr. John Hawboldt, School of Pharmacy.

No discussion.

**CARRIED**

##### **4.2 Speaker of Senate**

K. Simonsen called on L.A. McKivior, Secretary of Senate, to announce the election results for the Speaker of Senate.

L.A. McKivor presented the results of the election for the Speaker of Senate. Since the creation of the position, the Senate has only had an elected Deputy Speaker, Dr. K. Simonsen, who has been acting in the role of Speaker since September 2024. L.A. McKivor reported that at the end of the election period, K. Simonsen was confirmed to serve as the inaugural Speaker of Senate. L.A. McKivor thanked K. Simonsen for her work to date as Deputy Speaker and for her continued service to the Senate.

This election, however, leaves a vacancy in the position of Deputy Speaker. The Senate Office will be coordinating a call for nominations to the position of Deputy Speaker soon.

No discussion.

### **4.3 Presentation from Senate Committee on Admissions**

As a continuation of the initiative to have the Chairs of the Standing Committees give presentations about their Committees to Senate, K. Simonsen invited Dr. Shannon Sullivan, Senior Faculty Advisor in the Faculty of Science and longstanding member of the Committee, to present the Committee's report in absence of a chair.

S. Sullivan outlined the role of the committee:

1. Review special admission appeals
  - Undergraduate applicants to the St. John's campus who are new to post-secondary studies
    - Special circumstances
    - Flexible admission
    - Concurrent studies
    - Mature applicants
2. Review Calendar change proposals related to general admissions

The Committee is a small committee consisting of:

- University Registrar or delegate from the Academic Advising Centre
- Assistant Registrar (convenor)
- Senior Academic Advisor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Senior Academic Advisor, Faculty of Science
- Faculty members
- Director, Blundon Centre or delegate
- Director, Counselling and Wellness Centre or delegate
- An undergraduate student appointed by Memorial University Students' Union

S. Sullivan reviewed a chart giving the number of appeals considered by the Committee from 2015-2023. The number of appeals went down during the pandemic but the number has gone back up again. The Committee is averaging about twenty a year.

There is no limit on the number of faculty members that can serve on this Committee. More faculty members would provide a broader perspective during committee discussions. The committee is always looking for additional faculty members especially from units outside Science and Humanities and Social Sciences.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, K. Simonsen invited Senators to ask questions about the presentation.

A senator felt that the impact of the increase in tuition fees on enrolment doesn't seem to belong to anyone but wonders if such considerations fit under the remit of the committee.

S. Sullivan stated that it is not related to the mandate of the Committee, but that tuition fees are a significant consideration. It is also worth considering that Memorial's General Admission system is typically tailored to Newfoundland and Labrador high school students, which can limit enrolment for out-of-province students coming from high school curricula that do not align with local programs. There was an ad-hoc subcommittee that considered this a few years ago but their proposal was not ultimately adopted by the Senate. The impacts of both tuition fees and the General Admission system should be significant considerations for the incoming Provost. It is important that admissions requirements do not create unnecessary barriers for applicants, but also that they uphold the academic standards of the University.

- A senator responded, stating that in the Senator's view there was hope that the proposal would go back to the ad-hoc committee for revision. The intention did not seem to be to quash the proposal, but to have it revised.
- S. Sullivan responded that based on the diversity of responses, revision would have been challenging to make it palatable to all parties.

P. Brett asked if NAPE employees at Marine Institute are eligible for service on the committee. The Senate office will confirm and share the criteria for eligibility with P. Brett following the meeting.

K. Bulmer, Dean of the School of Music, thanked S. Sullivan for the presentation. For the information of Senate, she noted that Fine Arts and Music have an admission pilot project that waives some general admissions requirements for desirable students. She offered to update Senate while the pilot is ongoing, or once it concludes in three years.

As there were no further questions, K. Simonsen thanked S. Sullivan for the presentation.

## **5.0 Reports of Officers**

### **5.1 Remarks from the Chair**

K. Simonsen invited N. Bose to provide remarks to the Senate.

N. Bose advised Senate that J. Lokash is on annual leave and so would not be presenting any remarks.

N. Bose addressed Senate regarding a recent announcement in the Gazette, which communicated a number of newly-approved measures approved by the Board of Regents to mitigate some of the University's current financial challenges. In particular, he mentioned the challenge of federal immigration restrictions, changing provincial government support, and other factors which have contributed to the University's decision to implement strategies for change. These initiatives include limited hiring, a restriction on carryover funds, and a new budget model. It is hoped these actions enable the University to balance its budget over the next two years.

### **5.2 Questions for the Chair**

Senators were invited to ask questions of the Chair.

A senator raised concerns about the lack of advocacy originating from the University and from the President and Chair of Senate regarding the continued funding cuts and the recent drop in student enrolment. The senator stated the job of the President is to publicly advocate for the University, and at this moment, with mounting infrastructure problems and a massive list of deferred maintenance projects, it is more important than ever.

N. Bose advised that the University and the Office of the President are in regular communication with the Provincial Government and are constantly advocating for the needs of the University. In addition, the measures put in place by the Board are largely to compensate for the \$9 million decrease in tuition revenue due to IRCC limitations on study permits for international students.

Another stated they feel the University has been remiss in its public role. The senator felt administration should be more transparent about its dealings with Government. The senator also noted that the University should not blame financial instability solely on Government funding and immigration restrictions when, according to the Auditor General's report, Memorial's administrative spending per student is higher than other comparator institutions in Canada.

N. Bose advised that the University is constantly advocating to the Government and

highlighting the impacts of budget cuts on the University's operations. He also corrected the senator's statement about the Auditor General's report, noting that Memorial's administrative costs are in line with those of its comparator institutions.

A senator noted that over 70% of the University's budget comes from Government funding, making the Government at once a significant benefactor and, due to financial cuts, a hinderance. They wondered if the Senate could compose a letter or other communication to express its opinion to the Government.

N. Bose advised that all members of the University community have a role to play, which may include issuing messaging or communications. He also stressed the importance of having positive stories about the University in the news to ensure that the positive aspects of the University's operations are highlighted. Finally, he noted that the role of administrators is to respond to and work in the circumstances and environment that exist at any given time.

A senator expressed that there is an important difference between messaging and advocacy. They felt reducing the size of the University without a clear line of advocacy would likely result in the exacerbation of the current situation; that is, that the University would end up smaller and still facing prohibitive budget cuts. For these reasons, the University must advocate to the general public. The people of Newfoundland and Labrador must demand better funding for the province's only university. Regardless of the amount of financial assistance the University receives from Government, that money comes from taxes. The University needs the people's support in order to ensure it thrives.

N. Bose agreed with this statement and added that it is important messaging to the public is accurate, citing the "myth" raised by the previous Senator of Memorial having comparatively higher administrative costs.

A Senator added that in order to maintain themselves, academic units require a certain faculty complement to keep programs viable. When courses or program requirements can only be offered in a limited way, that has an effect on the reputation of the program, which may decrease interest. This can be a vicious cycle.

N. Bose noted that the building and phasing out of certain programs is a constant and ongoing discussion as the academic world evolves. It is important to ensure funding is used in the most beneficial ways possible.

A Senator stated the November Senate minutes noted the enrolment drop was largely attributed to the drop in international student enrolment. The senator wondered what has changed since that time which would create the sense of urgency which appears to be evident from the recent limited hiring announcement.



N. Bose noted that the Board of Regents has met (December 5<sup>th</sup>) since the last Senate meeting to consider solutions to the financial issues faced by the University. Our sense of urgency has not changed, we have now announced how we will address the problems we are facing.

K. Simonsen, hearing no further questions/comments, thanked Senators for their input and moved to the next agenda item.

## **6.0 Other Business**

### **6.1 Upcoming Survey from PBC**

K. Simonsen invited Dr. Michael Woods, Chair of the University Planning and Budget Committee, to give an update from that Committee.

M. Woods provided some information about PBC's calls for Special Topics for Senate meetings. There was significant interest in research as a topic for the March Special Meeting of Senate. The PBC and the Senate Committee on Research have developed a survey (The Practice of Doing Research: Faculty Feedback on Memorial University's Research Ecosystem) that they will be launching soon and that will be hosted on the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP) website. This will ensure that the conversation in March will be meaningful. The link will be available within the next week.

K. Simonsen invited Senators to ask questions about the update from PBC.

A senator was curious because there is a review of the Grenfell research office upcoming. The senator wondered if the initiatives are related, and are the outcomes of the survey intended to guide a discussion, or will a report be made available?

M. Woods responded that the survey is to gather feedback from those who are involved in research at the University. It is not just for a discussion in March. If the survey receives significant response, it may inform future policy decisions, etc.

As there were no further questions for M. Woods, K. Simonsen announced that Senate would move into a Closed Session for discussion of confidential materials, and asked all Observers to leave the meeting. L.A. McKivior confirmed that all non-Senators had left the meeting room and business resumed *in camera*.

## **7.0 Closed Session**

### **7.1 Report of the Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial**

### Recommendations for awarding of Honorary Degrees

The Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial presented two (2) candidates for the awarding of Honorary Degrees. Senators were given the opportunity to discuss the merits of each candidate prior to voting. Two (2) motions were made, seconded, and ultimately carried, resulting in both candidates being confirmed for receipt of Honorary Degrees.

### Recommendations for awarding of *Professores Emeriti*

The Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonial presented two (2) recommendations for appointment to the position of *Professor Emerita/us*. Senators were given the opportunity to discuss the merits of each candidate prior to voting. Two (2) motions were made, seconded, and ultimately carried, resulting in both candidates being confirmed for appointment to the position of *Professor Emerita/us*.

As there was no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and carried at 5:34 pm.