Senate Governance Review

Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee

May 9, 2023

Introduction

Further to the progress report tabled at the regular meeting of Senate held on April 11, 2023 (Appendix A), the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Governance Review provides the following final report of its work and findings. The committee's terms of reference articulate the goal of the process:

To undertake a broad, transparent review of the structure and foundational elements of the Senate and to make recommendations, and through Senate to consider enacting these recommendations to modernize Senate, its committees, and functions moving forward.

From the outset the process has been guided by these **principles:**

- Academic Excellence;
- Collegial Governance;
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism;
- Indigenization; and
- Organizational Efficiency.

Methodology

In Spring and Fall 2022, the steering group initiated calls for members of the committee (Appendix B); surveyed the chairs of standing committees; established terms of reference; and began to gather and evaluate data.

This report has been informed by a variety of sources, including interviews with key stakeholders, jurisdictional scans of other Senate reviews, and a continually evolving literature review of scholarship in the field of University Governance and publications from, among other organizations, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP).

Unforeseen circumstances, such as the loss of several committee members and a two-week faculty strike that paused the work of all Senate committees, affected the level of engagement and timelines for this project.

What We Heard

At the outset of this work, the committee learned that the reform and modernization of operational structures and supports of Senates are current topics in many Canadian

universities. Common priorities across jurisdictions include (a) changing academic (and non-academic) governance models, in pursuit of greater equity, diversity and inclusion in both membership and perspectives; (b) implementing structures that allow a greater emphasis on and oversight of strategic matters; and (c) securing additional resources, so that (i) any materials necessary for governance decisions be provided efficiently and (ii) such decisions be communicated effectively across the institution. This committee has concluded that the same priorities exist here at Memorial University, and they are thus the foundation of the themes and recommendations outlined in this report.

Thematic Areas and Recommendations

1: Solidifying, Renewing, and Strengthening the Governance of Senate

Senate serves as the academic pillar of governance for Memorial University. An optimized Senate will depend on the strength of the processes and structures that guide its work, so Senate should seek to fill any existing gaps in process or subject matter and to enhance its own efficiency, in keeping with best practices in university governance in a bicameral system. Senate may need to consider the financial implications of its decisions; to revisit its role in University policies and academic regulations; and to prioritize strategic subject areas that align with the University's mission.

Recommendations:

1.1 Initiate a joint meeting of Senate and the Board of Regents on a topic of mutual interest.

- **Rationale**: Better connecting Senate and Board will facilitate the governance of the University. Both the literature review, found in Appendix C, and stakeholder feedback received thus far, summarized in Appendix D, provide significant support for this recommendation. A joint meeting is an initial step in strengthening relationships between the governing bodies and encouraging collaborative decision-making.
- **Action:** On behalf of Senate, the University Governance Secretariat will communicate this item to the Board of Regents.

- **Timeline**: After Senate endorses the recommendation, formal correspondence will be drafted and then tabled for discussion at the July meeting of the Board of Regents.

1.2 Adopt Robert's Rules of Order

- **Rationale:** The existing Rules of Order identified within the Memorial Senate Bylaws are relatively sparse, and while Robert's Rules of Order are seemingly understood to be the "fallback" rules should existing rules not suffice, in practice this has led to inconsistencies as noted in stakeholder feedback (Appendix D). More in-depth rules of order, relative to the current Memorial rules, are commonplace across Canada. Given the collective feedback and jurisdictional scanning to date, the committee is recommending the formal adoption of Robert's Rules to provide clarity and consistency to the proceedings of Senate and Senate committees.
- **Action:** Amend Section 4 of the Senate Bylaws to reflect Memorial's adoption of Robert's Rules of Order for all instances not otherwise prescribed in the Bylaws.
    - University Governance Secretariat to prepare guiding materials (See UBC Example) to be posted and circulated in advance of the September Meeting.
- **Timeline**: Proposed revised By-laws will be presented to Senate at the September 2023 regular meeting.

1.3 Increase the transparency of Senate and Senate Committees by sharing more materials publicly.

- **Rationale:** The literature review (Appendix C) and stakeholder feedback (Appendix D) revealed a lack of understanding of the role and function of Senate and its respective committees, both within and outside the University community. Greater transparency and awareness of Senate business will increase understanding of Senate and its functions, which will likely increase engagement in university governance. It is encouraged that Senate continue to have conversations surrounding ways in which it can continue to prioritize transparency.

- **Action:** All non-confidential items (including agenda, minutes, formal correspondence, and meeting materials) of Senate and Senate Committees will be posted publicly on a revised Senate website.
- **Timeline**: A revised Senate website will be launched by Marketing and Communications and the University Governance Secretariat in September/October, with materials to be added thereafter.

1.4 Create the role of "Speaker" to ensure the decorum and procedural order of Senate.

Rationale: The *Memorial University Act* prescribes that the position of Chair of Senate be held by the President. Currently, per Senate Bylaws, "It is the duty of the Chair to ensure the decorum of Senate and order in its procedure. The Chair may rule on all matters of order and procedure". This is a significant duty that may at times take away impartial opportunities for the Chair to weigh in and for the Secretary of Senate to provide governance expertise and guidance to the Senate.

- **Action**: Draft a position description of Speaker to ensure decorum and order during Senate meetings, to be brought before Senate for consideration.
- **Timeline**: A report to Senate led by the Senate committee on Elections, Committees, and Bylaws, with (as advised) a draft position description, proposed amendments to Senate Bylaws, and a proposed process for filling the position of Speaker, will be prepared for the November meeting of Senate.

1.5 Expand definition of eligibility for Senate to include contract academic staff.

- **Rationale:** The landscape of the complement of teaching staff at Memorial has evolved. The committee heard strong agreement that many members of the academic staff were excluded from the current definition of who is eligible to serve fully on Senate and its respective committees, and who can have input into nominating or electing that representation. Broadening this definition is consistent with approaches taken at other institutions and will likely increase engagement in university governance.

- **Action:** Revise Section II of the Senate Bylaws: MEMBERSHIP OF SENATE and ELECTIONS TO SENATE, to expand the pool of eligible electors and eligibility to be elected to include full- and part-time contract academic staff from the following categories, who meet specified conditions:
    - Regular-Term appointments
    - Teaching-Term Appointments on 8- or 12-month contracts
    - Per-Course Instructors who have taught for at least three semesters

- **Timeline:** Proposed amended Bylaws regarding eligible electors and eligibility to be elected will be presented to Senate for voting in September.

2: Ensuring Senate Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization

The strategic plan, *Transforming Our Horizons*, identified aspirations for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Indigenization. In all its activities and processes, Senate must consider these goals and the principles of EDI-AR and Indigenization, to foster a culture that is safe, welcoming, and respectful to everyone. Senate must also develop intentional structures, such as directed policies, guidelines, and procedures, to support meaningful change in this area. This transformational process may serve as a roadmap for addressing future special initiatives.

Recommendation:

2.1: Establish an Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, Anti-Racism and Indigenization ad hoc committee of Senate to consider the best approach to incorporating diverse perspectives into standing committee(s) of Senate.

- **Rationale:** The responsibility for reviewing the University's progress in relation to equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism and Indigenization, and advising on measures required to uphold Memorial's commitments to these important areas, must be embedded in the fabric of Senate. Based on an environmental scan of other Canadian institutions (below), the committee is recommending that Memorial establish an ad hoc committee of diverse voices, with appropriate experience in the aforementioned areas, to advise on the formation of the recommended committee. The ad hoc committee would identify and propose to Senate the committee structures, functions, processes, parameters, authority, membership, and terms of relationship. This group will also consider the ways in

which this new standing committee would intersect with the existing Senate governance structure and other standing committees.

  - Acadia University: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDI)
  - University of Alberta: Indigenous Initiatives & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
  - Brandon University: Indigenous Education Senate Sub-Committee (IESSC)
  - Carleton University: Senate Education Equity Committee
  - Dalhousie University: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
  - McGill University: Equity, diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) – Joint Board-Senate Committee
  - St. Thomas University: Senate Committee on Reconciliation
  - Vancouver Island University: Indigenous Commitments Committee

- **Action:** Strike an ad hoc committee of diverse voices, with appropriate experience in Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, Anti-Racism and Indigenization, to advise on the formation of a new standing committee of senate.

- **Timeline**: The proposed investigative ad hoc committee structure and participants of diverse voices with appropriate experience in Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, Anti-Racism and Indigenization will be presented to Senate at an appropriate time.

3: Supporting Senate Effectively

Successfully implementing the findings and recommendations of this review will contribute to governance excellence for Memorial University. To achieve this goal, the work of Senate and its committees must be supported by sufficient and professional resources and people with expertise in university governance. The bicameral governance structure is built upon the concept of collegial governance and requires effective connectivity between the Senate and Board, while the Administration often serves as the operational conduit for Senate decisions. More efficient and robust governance will result from (a) an enhanced understanding and professionalization of sound governance practices and the roles of each party (i.e., Senate, Board of Regents,

and Administration) and (b) an adequately resourced and well-informed support system that furnishes Senate with relevant materials, training, and tools.

Additionally, the specific academic oversight responsibilities of the Senate require an enhanced degree of process rigor, research, and preparation, so that Senators can digest information, deliberate on concepts, and decide upon courses of action. This requirement can, at times, place a significant and disproportionate burden upon certain individuals or committees within Senate. For Senate fully to achieve its mandate, identified, resourced, and balanced supports must be embedded into this governance body.

Recommendations:

3.1: Implement new reporting templates so that all standing committees will inform Senate of their activities in a timely and consistent manner.

- **Rationale** Standing committees are required to report regularly to Senate on their activities. A review of current reporting practices, however, revealed that these reports are inconsistently prepared and that many do not serve the intended purpose of enhanced transparency and accountability. Additionally, the committee noted that administrative and governance support to standing committees is not well coordinated, which results in a significant variance in reporting methods and, often, a lack of communication with Senate and with other committees on the work of standing committees. Senate committees must communicate and coordinate more effectively with other standing committees and with Senate.

- **Action:** Create and implement new reporting templates for standing committees, which identify committee decisions, matters referred to other committees, and matters for Senate to consider.

- **Timeline**: The University Governance Secretariat will work with committee chairs to implement a streamlined reporting template(s) for use during the 2023/24 session.

3.2: Develop an on-boarding program, provide educational materials, and create professional development opportunities, to support prospective and current Senators in the discharge of their duties.

- **Rationale**: The committee repeatedly discussed how Senate and its Committees would benefit from additional support, including an in-depth orientation for new Senators, educational materials, and professional development opportunities. The committee's review of other institutions revealed that these tasks are typically the purview of the Governance Secretariat, being the support body to Senates across the country.

- **Action**: The University Governance Secretariat to proceed with developing materials and programming to support prospective and current Senators

- **Timeline**: To be commenced effective immediately and implemented throughout the next 12 months.

3.3: Standardize and streamline agendas, meeting minutes and presentations for new programs

- **Rationale:** Effective governance is enabled through the consistent application of well-defined processes and clear procedures. The committee repeatedly noted during this review that current formats are cumbersome and unclear and that modernizing and standardizing Senate materials would enable Senators to engage more effectively in governance.

- **Action:** The University Governance Secretariat, in conjunction with administrative supports provided by other departments, will standardize and streamline all documentation in regular use by Senate and its committees

- **Timeline:** To be implemented through the University Governance Secretariat based upon available resources.

3.3: Senate to formalize its support of the University Governance Secretariat in its mandate to provide effective, balanced support to the governing bodies.

- **Rationale**: Historically, support to Senate was provided both through the Office of the Registrar, on a part-time basis, and through various other administrative units, which provided administrative support to assorted Senate committees. This has resulted in uneven support across committees, meaning that the scope of a committee's activities has sometimes been defined by the resources available rather than by the committee's mandate. In Fall 2023 the University Governance Secretariat was formally established by merging the Office of the Secretary of Senate with the Office of the Board of Regents to create a dedicated unit to provide equitable, professional governance support to both pillars of Memorial's bicameral governance system. This merged structure, though new to Memorial, is comparable to governance support structures in many Canadian universities.

- **Action**: Senate will (a) endorse the mandate of the University Governance Secretariat – the central body providing oversight, governance expertise, and administrative support to Senate and its committees; and (b) advocate for additional resources, so that the University Governance Secretariat may more effectively support Senate and its standing committees.

- **Timeline**: Effective immediately

3.4: Propose a two-stage revision process for Senate's committee structure.

- **Rationale**: In order to have governing structures that function effectively, engage stakeholders thoughtfully, and foster a culture that exemplifies organizational values, Senate committees should regularly review their membership, terms of reference, workflow processes, and workload, per the literature review (Appendix C). These committee structures are due for a comprehensive review by the Senate as it must consider all options to become more effective and engaging to help lead Memorial forward. This review process is intricately connected with the previous EDI-AR & Indigenization recommendation. The Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Governance Review, through reviewing the feedback (Appendix D) it has

received and deliberating on best practice, has recognized the need to incorporate the principles of EDI-AR and Indigenization into the very structures of Senate.

- **Action**: Senate to undertake a two-stage review of all Senate Committees, their work and structures. This work, which could be done, as needed (e.g. every 5 years) in the future, as outlined as follows:

    - Stage 1: Data Collection: This stage would include mapping each committee's workflow processes and timelines and collecting their workload data (e.g., items dealt with)
        - to help identify challenges and opportunities, and
        - to create/revise a Committee Handbook and Briefing Book that would support committee membership.

    - Stage 2: Collaborative Analysis: Senate Committee chairs would collaboratively analyze committee data to achieve the following goals:
        - align committee work overall with University Strategic Plan(s);
        - align each committee's work with its own terms of reference, the terms of other committees, and the work of Senate as a whole;
        - review and revise (and, in some instances, create or delete) committee terms of reference
            - to ensure consistency
            - to create/maintain alignment with EDI-AR and Indigenization principles, and
            - to reduce/eliminate overlap; and
        - determine whether each committee needs to continue, be amalgamated into another, serve an alternative purpose, or become a subcommittee to increase the effectiveness of the committee structure;
        - subject any new or revised structure to a 'testing' phase to ensure efficacy, rather than instituting all changes in a single 'big bang'.

- **Timeline**: One year
    - Stage 1: completed in 6 months
    - Stage 2: completed in the 6 months after Stage 1

Conclusion

The tabling of this report concludes the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Governance Review. Work on advancing the proposed recommendations will begin immediately in accordance with the proposed timelines and actions as outlined in this report. Those items requiring substantial changes to Senate By-laws or structures will be further developed and tabled for Senate consideration and decision on an individual basis.

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Terms of reference:

1. To make recommendations that will:

I. be unbiased, inclusive, and exemplify the values of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador;
II. ensure Senate is operating efficiently and effectively;
III. clearly define the policies, procedures, and processes of Senate;
IV. enhance participation in Senate, its committees, and its elections, from all areas of Memorial's diverse community;
V. improve connectivity and cohesion among both Senate and its committees, and the Board of Regents, and senior leadership; and
VI. identify the supports needed for Senate to function optimally.

2. The committee is tasked with completing the following:

I. a jurisdictional and literature review pertaining to the optimal functionality, structure, and governance of University Senates;
II. assess the role of Senate, and examine the degree to which Senate is successfully fulfilling this role;
III. conduct a review of the existing governing Senate documents, including bylaws and regulations, the terms of reference of all committees, submission templates, etc.; and
IV. perform a gap analysis to determine what is needed to enable Senate to succeed/perform proficiently.

Timeline / Reporting

The committee is to provide a report of its findings to Senate no later than the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

In the interim, the committee will provide status updates to Senate, Board of Regents, and Senior Leadership as pertinent information is available.

Appendix B: Committee Membership

Membership List:

1. Michelle Snow, Executive Director Board of Regents and Interim Secretary of Senate (Ad-hoc Committee Chair)
2. Dr. Edward Kendall, Professor- Faculty of Medicine (Senator and Ad-hoc Committee Co-Chair)
3. Andrea Stack, (Regent)
4. Dr. Ashlee Cunsolo - Founding and Interim Dean, School of Arctic and Sub-Arctic Studies, Labrador Campus (Senator)
5. Dr. Blair Winsor - Associate Professor-Faculty of Business
6. Colette Rogers - Manager of Accreditation- Faculty of Business
7. Cyr Couturier – Instructor - Marine Institute (Senator)
8. Dr. Glyn George - Associate Professor- Faculty of Engineering (Senator)
9. Jennifer Porter - Deputy Registrar
10. Jonathan Dredge, Special Projects Lead, University Governance Secretariat
11. Dr. Lee Ann McKivor- University Registrar (Senator)
12. Dr. Leslie Redmond - Assistant Professor/ Associate Dean Undergraduate Programs - Faculty of Education – *Left the Committee in December 2022*
13. Martha Wells- Per-Course Instructor, Department of English, and Lecturers' Union of Memorial University
14. Richard Meaney - Director, Technical Services
15. Rosemary Hopkins, Administrative Coordinator, Office of the Secretary of Senate / University Governance Secretariat
16. Dr. Sandra MacDonald – Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs, School of Nursing (Senator)

Appendix C: Literature Review and Jurisdictional Scan

Jurisdictional scan on University Senate review processes and initiatives

An important component of the ongoing Senate Governance Review for Memorial University will be an examination of university Senate review processes at other institutions along with a review of key literature regarding Senate governance. Guidance from the Ad-hoc Senate Governance Review Committee (*'Committee'*) will be vital in contributing to, and directing, the research process.

Based upon initial research, there are several key emerging themes that the Committee will need to consider in their review process. These themes are identified below, examples and references have been provided. Appendixes A and B include sources consulted to date.

Key themes on Senate Governance Review:

1. **Absence of clarity and definition of how financial considerations weigh into Senate decisions.**

With Senate decision-making and its nexus with Board decision-making, there appears to be a general lack of understanding as to how finance and budgeting considerations should, or do, weigh into decisions made at Senate. Additionally, since there is commonly a division of powers of between the governing bodies, Senate and Board, a lack of interaction between the two bodies can create issues and result in decisions being made in siloes. As several sources indicate, many of the challenges that arise would decrease in severity if there was a clear understanding of the nuance between the division of powers, and guidance provided in how each body should consider the responsibilities of the other in their decisions.

Examples:

The **University of Waterloo** underwent a Senate Governance Review in early 2022, and one of the key themes that informed recommendations was the need to implement templates and processes that give Senate members a more fulsome picture of the decisions they are being posited with: *"The need for a variety of improvements to Senate agendas and materials, including implementing templates for reports to Senate to ensure context and critical details are included to inform Senate decision-making."* Another theme related to the need for increased communication and connection between Senate and the Board of Governors. In fact, the recommendations of the process' final report fall into four themes, one being "Relations with the Board".

The **University of Western Ontario** went through a governance review that was largely focused on Senate in 2015/2016. One of the four key themes that emerged from that review was Senate-Board relations. Of note, the Board underwent its own governance review process around the same time as the aforementioned process.

From a literature perspective, a connected study of focus would be by **Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan (2004).** This study found that one of three themes identified by senate secretaries, when asked about issues related to the role and work of university senates, was the challenge of academic decision-making during times of fiscal restraint. With the division of powers between Senate and Board, and the decision-making power on financial matters resting with the Board, this creates further confusion and trouble. The authors also found that most Senate members felt that while most academic and financial decisions are made in isolation, they should not be, and there are major issues with the de facto approach. This paper's overall findings recommended that the Senate's role in academic decision-making and the Board's role in financial and administrative matters needed to be "reintegrated". An earlier work by the same authors (Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan, 2001) also found that most Senate members believe that the Senate should play a stronger role in things like fundraising and development. **Usher (2022)** agrees with this sentiment, noting that the Senate should have a greater focus on strategic, big-picture issues. **Jones et al. (2001)** discuss how Senate bodies are often tasked with approving decisions that were made in other areas of the university. This is in addition to the locus of control of academic matters which may have greater financial impacts being delegated to other bodies in the university, including the Board. According to the authors, this shift has to do with limited capacity of Senate members, lack of foresight of Senate in fundraising and development and institutional planning, and the limited knowledge around financial priorities meaning a lack of ability to provide advice in this regard.

Extending upon the analysis**, Pennock, Jones, Meclerc, and Li (2012)** conducted a survey modeled on the earlier survey conducted by **Jones et al. (2004).** Their findings indicate that most Senates are designed to provide advice on budgets, but have no decision-making power in that realm. Since this is often noted as a miniscule role, many Senate members reported that they delegate this role to a standing committee (e.g. on planning or finance), so any such budgetary advice is developed by a small group of Senate members. Like **Jones et al. (2004),** respondents of the survey conducted by **Pennock et al. (2012)** also indicated that debate on topics at Senate was limited as it felt like the decisions were already made before coming to them, such as by the Board or by a small subset of the Senate at the committee level. This leads to a general feeling of ineffectiveness and lack of impact at Senate (p. 21). Additionally, the authors indicate that budget cuts can intensify tension between the Senate and the Board and university administration and that there could be causation between these matters. According to the authors, less financial resources increases the power of the administration over budgetary measures, and academic programming is rarely a part of this discussion, making the role of the Senate either unclear or nonexistent.

Usher (2015) calls for greater understanding and respect for the responsibilities of the Board, and their obligations for matters within their purview. He indicates that lack of understanding of the division of responsibilities leads faculty to feel like they have the right to know details about Board matters, when they actually do not, given the Board's status as the governing body responsible for the university as a corporation. This relates to findings under theme 4, and speaks to the general observation of tensions between Senate and Board on several types of decisions, including those with financial considerations and implications.

2. Balancing collective good with the individuality of Senate members

The balance that Senate members should try to strike between their individual goals and interests with the collective good of the university is often cited as an ongoing challenge.

Examples:

Hultin (2015) notes that because faculty members of Senate have an extensive number of other responsibilities (e.g. teaching, research), the university administration can

become a defacto majority on Senate despite what the membership and the bylaws require. Quite simply, if Senate members are not present at Senate meetings, they cannot vote. If members are at the meeting but concerned about other things and not entirely engaged in the present discussion and decisions, that participation can still be considered ineffective and can lead to greater issues. According to Hulton, administrators block out time in their calendars to attend Senate meetings and it is in their job description to attend. However, faculty members balance their Senate participation with teaching schedules, grant proposals, their own administrative duties, marking assignments, and advising students. This can culminate in their attendance at Senate being less reliable overall.

The study of focus by **Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan (2004)** found that one of three themes identified by senate secretaries, when asked about the most important issues related to the role and work of university senates, was the problem of vested interests and territoriality by Senate members. The survey study also found that the majority of Senate members do not believe that the Senate is an effective decision-making body, with one of the cited reasons being the lack of clarity for Senate members as to whether their role is one of representing the interests of a specific constituency, or one that represents the best interests of the university as a whole. While this issue could likely be solved by conversations or review of bylaws and other governing documents, confusion among members means they are not serving to their utmost effectiveness and potential. The authors of this paper also note that the disconnect between Senate membership and areas of focus is prominent. If the Senate is tasked with being the governing body responsible for academic policy, then its composition seems impractical given that nearly half of most Senate bodies are filled with administrators, rather than faculty or students. This presents as a gap that creates further issues.

Pennock et al. (2012) discuss how engaging Senate members remains a key challenge in Senate governance, for three reasons: workload pressures on young faculty, apathy towards administrative work, and a failure to communicate the importance of collegial self-governance to members of the academy. **Pennock (2015)** indicates that lack of structure may be a contributing factor to the difficulty of striking this balance faced by Senate members. They discuss how if we want to see discussions at Senate that are in-depth, transparent, conceptual, play the challenge function to the administration, and see the bigger picture, which many survey respondents cited as characteristics of an effective Senate, then structures and processes must be set up that both encourage and facilitate these discussions and debates. These don’t really exist currently, at most universities in Canada.

Putting it simply, **Usher (2016)** categorizes the lack of engagement from faculty at Senate as a collective action problem. He also notes that over time, engagement has decreased due to academics prioritizing their own work and research over things like Senate membership. **Usher (2017)** also notes that the perspective of members of the university community can be entirely dependent on what context they were hired under (e.g. a time of growth or during a recession). This difference in perspective can make the work of the Senate difficult, if one group of faculty and staff feels a greater obligation to put their time towards Senate, such as younger or newer faculty or staff. This can lead to overworking of the younger generation, as well as limited perspective at Senate. **Usher (2017)** acknowledges this issue having a gender component. It also has linkages to theme 5, where these issues become institutionalized as faculty are undermanaged, enjoy freedom and want to hold onto it, and have voting rights in various spaces including other governance bodies and unions. These factors contribute to the likelihood that the status quo is upheld.

3. The need for Senate modernization

This is a general theme, however many authors describe Senate bodies as large, institutionalized spaces that are difficult to entice and implement change. University institutions aim to remain modern and attractive to students and faculty, and to ensure they are operating as effectively and appropriately as possible in order to secure funding and donations. Modernization of Senate bodies contributes to this exercise. While the scan did not identify many recent sources, things like Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, anti-racism, and Indigenization of the academy would fall into this category. Key questions arise such as: How can Senate bodies ensure they are incorporating appropriate lenses and considerations into their decisions? Should Senate seats be allocated in a way that allows representation from key equity or other priority groups? Also within this theme falls the lack of monitoring that exists in most Senate bodies and their processes. It is cited that most Senates do not have opportunities to evaluate progress on key priorities of the university, either for existing members or new members, or externally. A process that allows for evaluation and potential change on an ongoing basis, rather than through a distinct Senate review process, could allow for modernization to take place more organically and on an ongoing basis.

Examples:

The **University of Guelph's Senate Governance Review Final Report** identified key themes from the process: Indigenization and EDI were two of the four themes. The term "modernization" was also often used in the report, with 75 recommendations being presented with a "roadmap for modernization".

The study of focus by **Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan (2004)** found that one of three themes identified by senate secretariat when asked about the most important issues related to the role and work of university senates in the context of university governance was the ways in which Senate bodies face challenges during times of change.

Pennock et al. (2012) discuss how standing committees of Senates are often changed more than other aspects of Senate governance, indicating they are less institutionalized (p. 8). This highlights that standing committees at Senate may be an optimal vessel to promote innovation, modernity, and change.

4. Establishing a more strategic approach to Senate membership

With some linkages to the previous theme, some of the sources indicate that a potential solution to several key challenges faced by Senate bodies is to shift the recruitment and election processes of Senates. Any changes within this space would have to abide by Senate bylaws. Rather than Senates consisting of whoever comes forward and is elected, there is opportunity to increase effectiveness if there is more strategy applied to recruitment, onboarding, and training of Senate members to create a more robust and judicious body.

Examples:

Queen's University established a process focused on Senate composition specifically: The Senate Governance and Nominating Committee's Report on Senate Composition. Of note, this process followed three principles. The first principle: Senate's composition should be balanced based on full-time student enrolment in a transparent fashion, with regular and automatic rebalancing taking place at defined intervals. The key aspects of this principle are transparency and automatic rebalancing that takes place regularly.

The **University of Waterloo's** Senate Governance Review process in early 2022 identified both: "the need for orientation and a better understanding broadly of Senators' roles and responsibilities, and the benefits of implementing a portal as a resource for

Senators and the whole community about Senate business, and, as a resource to hold reference materials, offer a way to raise questions, and provide a way to transparently execute some Senate business asynchronously." Both of these key themes were identified in response to challenges faced in Senate governance, and relate to the challenge of confusion and misunderstanding among Senate members on their role and obligations. If implemented well, this can have an effect on Senate member recruitment as well.

The **University of Western Ontario** went through a governance review that was mostly focused on Senate in 2015/2016. One of the four key themes of the recommendations was representation on Senate. These speak to areas of focus of the committee as well as key challenges identified through the process related to how representative and how effective Senate was.

Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan (2004) explore the role of orientation in making more effective Senators at universities. They note that new members are not really familiar with the parameters of their responsibility, or the structures and processes of governance and decision-making at their university. This has several linkages to the first theme around the financial aspect and division at Senate / Board. Lack of orientation prevents knowledge transfer, and lack of knowledge leads to a less confident and less effective Senate. In addition to lack of orientation, the authors also bring forward the lack of performance review structures as a key issue preventing improvement at Senate.

The findings outlined in **Pennock (2015)** indicate that the way different members approach Senate varies broadly, which creates challenges and confusion. Depending on whether they are faculty or administration, Senate members do not always see eye to eye on what the Senate's role is in the university. This could be cited as a result of lack of onboarding / briefing materials being provided, however it should not be implied that orientation can solve this challenge in full.

To increase interest in Senate and increase legitimacy and buy-in from faculty members, **Usher (2022)** recommends shifting the focus of Senate to more big picture, strategic, and high stake items such as evaluating new information and ideas, making broad judgements on strategic alternatives for the university, and focus on the big-picture issues that the university is facing. He notes that this would include adding capacity to Senate secretariats who would be able to provide research and data to

Senate bodies. This additional power and influence may also allow Senates to take on a greater role in the financial impacts of their decisions. This contribution by Usher has linkages to both themes 1 and 6.

5. The nexus between Senate, faculty associations, and other groups

This theme was identified as a result of several competing perspectives being identified through the scan. The balanced relationship between the Senate body and other bodies or associations that represent faculty, including unions, is often discussed. Generally, most agree that there is a causal relationship between Senates and faculty associations and the effect that one has on the other may not always be positive.

Examples:

Jones, Shanahan, and Goyan (2004) discuss how faculty unions may have decreased the power of the Senate itself, while increasing the power of the faculty. The authors indicate that the presence of a union may serve as a competing body that overshadows, or perhaps may restrict, the work of faculty at Senate.

Similarly, **Hultin (2015)** notes faculty unions as an added complexity that may prevent collegial governance at universities. This is noted in the context of union nuances and discussions that happen in the context of union negotiations having an impediment on healthy and robust discussions at Senate, given that many of the same players are involved.

Pennock et al. (2012) discuss how the creation of labour unions had an impact on the power and influence of Senates. Many key aspects of academic policy such as appointments, tenure, and promotion policy, and collective agreements, have financial implications meaning they are often under the Board rather than the Senate purview, despite being related to academic policy under Senate. **Pennock (2015)** discusses how clarity is needed around how faculty associations report into Senate, as some universities feature regular reporting mechanisms but others do not. This causes confusion around authority and academic governance generally.

Usher (2016) notes that collective action among faculty can take place outside of faculty unions, which indicates that the power of faculty bodies aside from Senate can depend entirely on both the issue that is being advocated, the context and history of the university, and both existing and past relationships with the university community.

The **Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) (2017)** note that Senates are an opportunity to bridge gaps between the university administration and faculty. They are also a forum for faculty to hold the administration to account and ask questions. If run correctly, Senates can also be a forum to unite faculty and students and increase transparency in university governance. This piece also notes that lessons can be learned and applied to Senate from standing up faculty associations, which found that associations are stronger and more effective when faculty members can see their membership in a body as an instrument that will benefit them in their own careers, including from a legal standpoint. The author notes the importance of faculty members taking advantage of their freedom of association with things like the Senate, but also make decisions in the interest of academia as a whole. This balance is difficult to strike.

6. Capacity challenges of both Senate secretariats and Senate members

For the surveys that supported two papers analyzed in this scan, the limited capacity of senate secretariat's is demonstrated as many did not respond to survey requests. It uncovers a key issue - secretariats have become so reactive that there is limited capacity and time to do proactive planning of a strategic nature. This means that opportunities for increasing efficiency and effectiveness are likely being missed, such as participating in research on governance and Senate effectiveness. Additionally, related to theme 2, Senate members, especially faculty members and students, have to balance a lot. With limited incentive to be an active member of the Senate who contributes meaningfully, Senate duties have become a “side of desk” matter due to the limited capacity of each individual member on top of their jobs. Perhaps the solution is for Senate duties to become better respected as a key role and responsibility of faculty and other membership.

Examples:

Pennock et al. (2012) conducted a survey modeled on the earlier survey conducted by **Jones et al. (2004).** The response rate for their survey was 23% among Senate secretaries and 49% among Senate members (Pennock et al., 2012, pp. 5, 12). This fact in itself displays the lack of capacity for both Senate secretariats and members to participate in performance review practices or research studies, on top of their Senate-related duties. **Pennock (2015)** discusses how the time contribution of Senate members varies depending on whether they are administration or faculty. More often than not,

faculty members contribute less time to Senate duties. In the long run, this creates an unbalanced perspective in Senate decisions. This has strong ties to theme 2.

Usher (2022) ties the capacity of secretariats to support Senate members as a key solution to increasing Senate effectiveness. If Senators do not have the capacity to do research and analysis on key matters, who does? The clear answer would be increasing the capacity of the Senate secretariat in order to support Senate members.

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Outside of the aforementioned themes, the Senate review processes at the **University of Guelph** and **Queen's University** both hold lessons for Memorial's process. The background documents and reports that detail these processes both utilize storytelling to convey information in a way that is accessible and digestible. For example, at **Queen's University,** the **Senate Orientation Activities Review Board - Governance Review Working Group** focused on reviewing a Senate Committee rather than the Senate broadly. However, this process stemmed from an overall review of the orientation programme at the university. This detail and other historical sequencing pertinent to the context were included in an "evolution" section of the final report. Incorporating this portion into the process and deliverables at Memorial will allow newer members of the university community and/or Senate, who may not have all of the historical context, to be better set up for success in participating in and supporting the implementation of outcomes of the Senate Governance Review.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Table of resources

Note: In the "comment" column, text that is *italicized* is commentary while the normal text is direct excerpts from the source.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
Universities		
Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador	Memorial University Act	*An overview of Senate-related language in the legislation:* **Composition of senate** 54. The senate of the university shall be composed of (a) the chancellor of the university; (b) by virtue of the position, members who shall be (i) the president of the university, who shall be the chairperson of the senate, (ii) the vice-president (academic) of the university, who shall be the deputy chairperson of the senate, (iii) the Deputy Minister of Education or a representative of the deputy minister, (iv) the vice-president (health sciences and professional schools) of the university, (v) the principal of the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College , (vi) the deans of the faculties of the university, (vii) the Dean of Graduate Studies, (viii) the university librarian, (ix) the university registrar, and (x) other persons holding office within the university or in the colleges or institutions affiliated with the university

Institution	Resource	Comment
		chosen in the number and manner that may be approved by the board; (c) members from the academic staff of the faculties and professional schools of the university, exclusive of a person who is a member by virtue of paragraph (b), elected in a number and manner that may be approved by the board, but the number elected under this paragraph shall be not less than twice the number of members named or chosen under paragraph (b); (d) 13 members from the students in attendance at the university, including at lest one student from the Marine Institute, one graduate student and one student from Grenfell College, with all members to be chosen in a manner approved by the board. **Term of office** 55. (1) Members of the senate chosen under subparagraph 54(b)(x) or paragraph 54(d) shall be chosen annually and shall hold office for a period of 1 year and where a vacancy occurs in respect of such a member, that vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as applied to the member in respect of whom the vacancy occurred, and the person filling the vacancy shall serve for the balance of the year for which the member he or she replaced was chosen. (2) Members of the senate elected under paragraph 54(c) shall be elected for a 3 year period and where a vacancy occurs in respect of a member that vacancy shall be filled by the senate and the person filling the vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term of office of the member being replaced. (3) Where a member of the senate resigns, becomes incapable of acting, becomes a member of the teaching or administrative staff or of the governing body of a college or institution affiliated with the university, not being the body

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		he or she was chosen or elected to represent, or otherwise stops holding the qualifications required under section 54 for his or her choice or election, his or her seat shall become vacant and a declaration of the existence of the vacancy entered upon the minutes of the senate shall be conclusive evidence of that vacancy. (4) Members of the senate are eligible to be chosen again or to be re-elected. **Duties and powers of senate** 56. The senate shall have general charge of all matters of an academic character and it shall have power (a) to provide for the regulation and conduct of its meetings and proceedings, including the fixing of the quorum necessary for the transaction of business; (b) to determine the degrees, including honorary degrees, diplomas and certificates of proficiency to be granted by the university and the persons to whom they shall be granted; (c) to determine the conditions of matriculation and entrance, the standing to be allowed students entering the university and all related matters; (d) to receive, consider and determine proposals or recommendations of a faculty council or other body as to courses of study and all related matters; (e) to consider and determine, of its own motion and without recommendation, as to all courses of study and all matters relating to courses of study, but before making a regulation providing for a new course of study or a change in an existing course of study the senate shall refer to the appropriate faculty council and to the appropriate faculty of the affiliated colleges or institutions the proposed regulation for consideration and report on them;

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		(f) to regulate instruction and to determine the methods and limits of instruction; (g) to determine the conditions on which candidates shall be received for examination, to appoint examiners and to determine the conduct of all examinations; (h) to provide for courses of study at a place in the province and to encourage and develop extension and correspondence courses; (i) to prepare the calendar of the university for publication; (j) to recommend to the board the establishment of, or the abolition of, or changes in faculties, departments, chairs, lectureships, exhibitions, bursaries, scholarships, fellowships and prizes; (k) to recommend to the board the affiliation with the university of a college or institution established in the province for the promotion of arts or science, or for instruction in education, law, medicine, nursing, engineering, agriculture, fisheries and the dissolution of that affiliation or an existing affiliation; (l) to recommend to the board agreements with an incorporated society or association in the province for the establishment and maintenance of a joint system of instruction; (m) to recommend to the board agreements with an incorporated society or association in the province which has power to prescribe examinations for admission to or registration upon the roll of, the society or association for the purpose of conducting the examinations, reporting the results of the examinations and providing for courses in connection with examinations; (n) to consider all matters that are brought before it and to take action within the powers conferred upon the senate by this Act;

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		(o) to make recommendations to the board that may be considered appropriate for promoting the interests of the university and for carrying out the objects and provisions of this Act; (p) to appoint committees that it considers necessary and to confer upon the committees power and authority to act for the senate in and in relation to matters which the senate considers expedient and to appoint other committees that the senate considers expedient to act in an advisory capacity; (q) to exercise disciplinary jurisdiction with respect to students in attendance at the university, by way of appeal from a decision of the faculty council; (r) to make rules and regulations for the management and conduct of the library; and (s) to make or alter a rule or regulation touching a matter regarding the university and consistent with this Act or with a law in force in the province. **Certified copy of regulations sent to board** 57. A certified copy of every regulation of the senate providing for the matters mentioned in paragraphs 56(h) and (s) shall within 10 days after its passing be transmitted to the board; and that regulation shall not have effect until it is approved by the board, and the board may withdraw its approval at any time and from the date of the withdrawal the regulation to which it relates shall stop having effect. **Restriction on power of senate** 58. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to give to the senate power to take an action that imposes financial obligation or liability on the university, or fix or remit fees or charges payable to the university.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
University of Guelph	Working Group on Senate Governance Review	The current review will be conducted by the Working Group on Senate Governance Review, a working group constituted by the Senate Priorities & Planning Committee in accordance with Senate Bylaws. The working group has been tasked with undertaking a broad survey of the structure and foundational documents of the Senate (as it is presently legislatively constituted), and determining whether Senate's bylaws, committees and practices are best positioned to support its responsibility for the educational policy of the University. *This process began with an "issues matrix" for the Working Group, which includes both areas of focus for the group (e.g. bylaw review, deliberative nature of discussions) and operational considerations (e.g. nominations from the floor, dial in options for Senate meetings).*
	Final Report: Working Group on Senate Governance Review - November 2021 (Brightspace)	*Timing: launched in 2019, implementation began in Fall 2021.* *Of note, the Working Group membership was very high level.* Periodic comprehensive reviews are widely recognized as a governance best practice and, given that almost a decade had passed since the last comprehensive review, in 2019 the Senate Priorities & Planning Committee (SPPC) decided to commission another review.1 The Working Group on Senate Governance Review was struck by SPPC with a mandate to undertake a broad survey of the structure and foundational documents of the Senate (as it is presently legislatively constituted), and determine whether Senate's bylaws, committees, and practices are best positioned to support its responsibility for the educational policy of the University.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		ADDITIONAL OBLIGATION ON CHAIRS - Comprising the chairs of key Senate committees and student Senators, the Working Group met 12 times between January 2020 and June 2021 and consulted with over 200 stakeholders. *75 recommendations came out of the review, with a roadmap for Senate "modernization".* *Included themes and key recommendations section. The themes are:* ● *Indigenization* ● *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* ● *Optimizing Governance Processes* ● *Undergraduate Academic Governance* *Additionally, the 75 recommendations are divided into three broad policy areas:* ● *Bylaws, terms of reference, and procedures;* ● *Membership; and* ● *Committees* *What is noteworthy about this report is how technical some of the recommendations are. It is interesting because the scope seems very high level / general, and the Working Group arrived at 75 recommendations which seem minor but when put together, they all contribute to overall governance practices.* *On formatting, each recommendation is presented by identifying the question and consideration (e.g. the problem) first, then the recommendation is presented, and then a rationale is provided. This reads well and is a good*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		policy practice. Additionally, the final report includes names, titles, biographies of all Working Group members. The University Secretariat provided research support to the Working Group.
Queen's University		
	Senate Governance and Nominating Committee's Report on Senate Composition (Brightspace)	*Note: this process was not a whole-of-Senate governance review, but one Committee's review of Senate composition.* During its most recent review of Senate composition, the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee was guided by the following three key principles: ● That Senate's composition should be balanced based on full-time student enrolment in a transparent fashion, with regular and automatic rebalancing taking place at defined intervals; ● That a weighted model should be used to ensure that the perspectives offered by all Faculties/Schools, regardless of size, are adequately reflected at Senate; and ● That the application of a new model for Senate composition should not increase the overall size of Senate, now or in the future, regardless of enrolment.
	Senate Orientation Activities Review Board - Governance Review Working	*Not focused on the Senate itself, but on SOARB. The evolution section of this report notes that the focus on SOARB came from a review of the orientation process itself, which recommended a review of the mandate of SOARB as a body.* *The Senate Governance Review process is also an opportunity to identify specific reviews / reforms needed*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
	Group's Final Report (Brightspace)	*that will create more distinct and focused processes (e.g. for a specific Senate Standing Committee).* *Like Guelph, they summarized key themes that came out of work of the group and its consultation, in addition to providing recommendations. Of note, one of the recommendations is for the body to focus only on governance and not operational matters.* *A notable thing about this process at Queen's and its Final Report is the storytelling strength of it. The Guelph process also briefly did this. It allows for the reader / members of the (university) community to better understand the history and evolution of what came before what has recently been done or is currently happening in terms of review and reform processes. I wonder if we could do this at MUNL, would the information / history exist?*
	SOARB Governance Review Working Group Work Plan (Brightspace)	*A work plan is a good idea, this one has a "notes" column next to the listing of the action item.*
University of Waterloo	Senate Governance Review	*The final report released in June 2022 includes background information at the beginning such as pertinent bylaws that relate to Senate business and governance.* *Included surveying of past and current Senate members by a consultant, who also conducted one on one interviews* *Senate Executive Committee also dedicated several meetings to discussing and reviewing Senate operations*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Members noted that there are two critical areas in need of development: orientation – there is a need to develop an orientation framework and implement it to inform new and ongoing Senators and the community about a variety of key governance-related matters; and, communication – there is a need to develop and implement a plan for ongoing and two-way communications. From these discussions, a number of key themes emerged, including: • The need to consider ways to increase delegations to committees and councils to make more time at Senate meetings for increased engagement on critical topics and strategic matters • The desirability of enabling and facilitating Senate to focus on areas of strategic and broad importance • The need for a variety of improvements to Senate agendas and materials, including implementing templates for reports to Senate to ensure context and critical details are included to inform Senate decision-making • The desirability of finding ways for Senate to have a line of sight into, and receive reports about key academic matters that do not arise currently via reports from its committees and councils • The benefits of establishing an annual Senate Work Plan • The need for orientation and a better understanding broadly of Senators' roles and responsibilities • The benefits of implementing a portal as a resource for Senators and the whole community about

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Senate business, and, as a resource to hold reference materials, offer a way to raise questions, and provide a way to transparently execute some Senate business asynchronously • The need for improved communications generally • The benefits of a review of Senate's Committees' and Councils' mandates and memberships • The desirability of finding ways to connect with the University's Board of Governors The final report includes 38 recommendations in several categories: 1) Meetings, agendas, and materials 2) Method 3) Committees and Councils 4) Relations with the Board *The final report also included several appendixes, such as the external consultant's report.*
University of Western Ontario	Report of the Senate ad hoc Committee on Renewal	*This process took place in 2015 / 2016. It focused on governance broadly but the Senate was a prominent body in the analysis.* *This report cites the Pennock et al. (2012) study also included in this scan.* The ad hoc Committee on Renewal was created in response to similar concerns about our Senate's effectiveness as a governance body and the perceived lack of university community participation in decision-making processes at Western. Senate charged this

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Committee with the task of recommending ways to establish more robust and transparent decision-making processes based on a review of Senate structures and processes. The Board of Governors created its own review task force to examine its effectiveness. The Committee reviewed the constitutional documents in August 2015. We also met with Chairs (current and former) of Senate standing committees in March 2016 following a review of our document summaries. A website on the Secretariat homepage was established in September 2015 to serve as a collection point for communications with the Committee. By the beginning of the Fall 2015 academic term, calls for submissions were made through a variety of channels. The interim report on emerging themes regarding the current state of collegial governance and the Senate. Major themes that were identified included: Transparency, Consultation and Communication, Representation, Engagement, and Culture and Leadership. During the Winter term, the Committee considered the suggestions and recommendations it had received, and also formulated some of its own. Our literature review of university governance informed these discussions. The following recommendations focus on outcomes that would address as comprehensively and coherently as possible the themes we identified in the Interim Report. We considered ways of a) improving the community's understanding of Senate, b) communicating Senate decisions and explaining clearly the processes through which these decisions are reached, c) improving community engagement, d) enhancing the effectiveness of Senators, e) improving information flow and the conduct of Senate meetings, f) enhancing the representativeness of Senate, and g) improving specific Senate committees' terms of reference.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Note: each recommendation is under a theme, and each also includes a rationale for it. This is helpful background / justification. Key themes of recommendations: 1) Transparency, Communication, and Accountability 2) Representation on Senate 3) Committee Structures and Processes 4) Senate-Board Relations
Academic sources		
University Affairs	Hultin, Philip. (2015, March 3). Opinion: Towards a truly collegial way to run a university. *University Affairs.* https://www.universityaffairs.ca/opinion/in-my-opinion/towards-a-truly-collegial-way-to-run-	I have been a senator at my university for close to 15 years. The fact that the administration controls the senate agenda gives them a high degree of control over what information senators receive and when they receive it. It has been evident on many occasions that proposals are "done deals" before they ever reach the floor of senate. No matter what senators may say, no matter whether criticisms are offered constructively or otherwise, it is rare for any measure that comes before senate with the backing of senior administration to be modified, let alone blocked, when it comes to a vote. And this also reflects a fact of life in the modern university. Administrative appointees on senate have the time blocked out in their calendars to attend senate meetings. It is part of their job to be there to vote for administrative proposals. But faculty have teaching schedules that coincide with senate meetings, growing stacks of bureaucratic forms to fill out, grant proposals to write, papers and tests to mark, students to advise … as a result, their attendance at senate is less reliable. In our senate, the administration has a de facto majority on its side at almost every meeting.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
	a-university/.	I would also prefer not to have the kind of governance that seems to require a faculty union. Could we not have university governance that is actually collegial, university presidents who are truly "first among equals" rather than top-down managers, where debate in senate can improve proposals without turning into angry arguments, and where consultation is taken seriously as a part of the decision-making process, not simply added on at the end as window dressing? Would that not be a better way to run a university in the 21st century?
The Canadian Journal of Higher Education	Jones, Glen A.; Theresa Shanahan, Paul Goyan. (2004). The Academic Senate and University Governance in Canada. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education:* Volume XXXIV, No. 2, 2004 pages 35-68. Download link.	• *Discusses how faculty unions may have decreased senate powers and increased the power of the faculty itself.* • *It notes that maybe Senate plays a more symbolic function than anything, providing status to members, and may function as a "structural garbage can" where issues can be dumped and no decision will be taken for a long time.* • *At some Senates, the chair of the Senate is elected. But mostly, it is the President who chairs.* • *Some Senate meetings are open to the public.* • *Orientation is a common theme - some universities will just do a handbook and others will do sessions / workshops for new Senate members.* Finally, we asked senate secretaries to describe what were, in their opinion, the most important issues and problems related to the role and work of university senates in the context of university governance. While recognizing that the opinions of senate secretaries may not necessarily represent the interests of the broader university community, these individuals have a unique vantage point for observing the work of these decision-making bodies.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Three major themes emerged from the responses to this question: ● the challenge of academic decision-making in the context of fiscal restraint; ● the problem of vested interests and territoriality; and ● the challenge of change. *Paraphrasing: Academic and financial decisions cannot be made in isolation, and they often are thus creating major issues.* The majority of members do not believe the Senate is an effective decision making body. Many senate members clearly believe that the balance of influence over academic decision making is shifting in favor of university admin and the governing board. *The reasons for this, paraphrased:* - *Most universities provide little orientation materials or programs for new members.* - *New members may not be familiar with parameters of their responsibility, or the process and structure of university governance and decision making.* - *Is their role one of representing the interests of a specific constituency, or are they making decisions that they view as being in the best interests of university as a whole?* - *Few senates appear to devote any time or energy towards assessing their work or performance.* - *New members are seldom provided with orientation while experienced members are seldom provided with a formal opportunity to comment on how work of senate might be strengthened or improved*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		There is a disconnect between Senate membership and area of focus - if the Senate is viewed as a governing body with oversight responsibility for academic policy, then the composition of the senate seems unusual given the fact that more than a quarter of members are senior administrators. Does the balance of membership continue to make sense? *This paper's findings suggest the "reintegration of the senate's role in academic decision-making with the board's role in financial and administrative matters".*
Tertiary Education and Management	Jones, Shanahan, T., & Goyan, P. (2001). University governance in Canadian higher education. *Tertiary Education and Management,* 7(2), 135–148. https://doi.org/10.1080/13583883.2001.9967047.	*Faculty unionization is a common theme in this source.* Most Senate members believe the Senate should play a stronger role in the university budget process, fundraising and development, etc. but they do not currently have a role. Many indicated that the senate is often asked to approve decisions made elsewhere in the university, and the locus of control of some important areas of academic decision-making was shifting from the Senate to other locations such as administration or board. *This source discusses orientation programs, the role of provincial government influence and how institutionalized this influence is. It notes that most boards and senates review the performance of universities in their dedicated policy areas, but neither review their own performance.* The locus of control over certain types of academic decisions may be shifting: - Limited role in providing the governing board with advice on financial priorities - Some senates do not play a major role in research policy, fundraising and development priorities, or long term institutional planning.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		- Do Senates have the capacity to fulfill their explicitly assigned roles within university governance?
Consortium of Higher Education Researchers	Pennock, L., G. A. Jones, J.M. Meclerc, S. X. Li. (2012). Academic Senates and University Governance in Canada: Changes in Structure and Perceptions of Senate Members. *Consortium of Higher Education Researchers.* https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/senate/minutes/2013/r1303oac_app1a_survey.pdf.	This paper was obtained from the University of Western Ontario's website, which notes that it was discussed as part of an agenda for a 2013 Senate meeting. The paper is based on survey data from 2011/2012. Compared with results from a similar study conducted in 2000, in which many of the challenges to university governance were perceived as external (notably related to economic factors), respondents cited a growing number of "internal" pressures, including tensions between the role of academic senates in overseeing the academic mission of the University and the work of labour unions representing faculty members' employment interests, the importance of senate orientation programming, the need for better oversight and assessment of academic quality, the relative roles of board, senate and the administration, and continuing concerns about the limited role of the senate in strategic planning, financial, research and fund-raising issues and activities. The creation of labour unions undoubtedly had an impact on the power and influence of academic senates, especially since many key aspects of academic policy, such as appointment, tenure, and promotion policies, became component parts of collective agreements (and thus under the purview of governing boards which have authority to approve collective agreements) rather than the purview of the senate. *Notable on response rate for the survey:* *23% response rate for Senate secretariaries (page 5)* *48% response rate for Senate members (page 12)*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		This paper includes some discussion on standing committees - these are reformed more often than other aspects. Some universities create new committees based on institutional priorities - perhaps EDI and Indigenization could be topics (page 8). The survey showed that most senates are designated to provide "advice" only on budgets, with no decision making power. However, many reported that because this role is so miniscule, it is often delegated to a standing committee (e.g. on planning or finance) within the Senate, so the development of this advice is made by a small handful of senate members. Keeping the demarcation line between board and senate is an ongoing challenge (page 11). Engaging senate members is a key challenge. Three general reasons: workload pressures on young faculty, general sense of apathy towards administrative work, and a failure by the academy to communicate the importance of collegial self governance to its members. *Table on page 15 of survey results of Senate members is quite interesting / telling.* *Interesting:* An overwhelming majority of respondents (97%) regard their role on the senate as advancing the best interests of the university as a whole, whereas about two-thirds agree that their role is to make decisions in the best interest of the broader society. A little over half of the respondents (53%, as opposed to 49% in the 2000 survey) agreed that it is clear with most issues what course of action is in the best interest of the university (pages 16-17). Comments from respondents suggest a complex range of factors that may reduce the effectiveness of a senate, and that even small process issues can have a major impact on the work of the senate. For example, a number of

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		respondents explained that there was little debate at senate meetings because most decisions are already made elsewhere (in committees or by the administration or board) (page 21). Budget cuts may have intensified this tension between the senate and the board/administration. For example, one faculty member noted that —[T]he crisis of financing PSE ...is severe and strengthens the administrations hand over budgetary measures where academic programming is rarely a major part of decision making. This makes the role of Senate much more difficult.‖ Faculty, academic administrators, and students characterized the administration as —top heavy‖, suggesting that the administration avoids —'tough' questions‖ and hides information, and that decisions are —driven by senior administrators (page 22). *One survey respondent noted that faculty meetings before Senate meetings to review agenda and discuss what they will bring to meetings is effective (page 23).*
Higher Education	Pennock, & u.a. (2015). Assessing the role and structure of academic senates in Canadian universities, 2000 - 2012. *Higher*	While the changing nature and role of academic governance are positioned as a key theme within the higher education literature, there has been surprisingly little empirical research on the role and work of academic senates or on changes in academic governance arrangements over time. *Note: this piece focuses on comparing the 1999/2000 survey with the 2010/2011 survey, which are the focus of Jones et al. (2004) and Pennock et al. (2012) respectively.* *Some Senate bodies receive regular reports from faculty councils and associations* - These findings suggest that the formal relationship between the academic senate and

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
	Education, 70(3), 503–518. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9852-8.	faculty councils is somewhat ambiguous at many Canadian universities, and that there may be a need to clarify reporting and authority relationships between these two levels of academic governance. Over half of the respondents (55 %) reported spending between 3 and less than 7 h per month on senate-related work (e.g., preparing for and attending meetings) during the months that the senate is in session. On average, members reported working 6.5 h per month, which is the same as in the 2000 survey. The amount of time faculty members, who make up nearly 50 % of all senate members, reported spending on senate-related work is below average, less than the amount of time reported by students and by senior university administrators. Academic administrators, university support staff, and senators external to the university also reported preparation time below the average. *There are differing perspectives on the role of the Senate depending on the role of the member - faculty versus administration versus student:* The majority of senior university administrators view the senate as an effective decision-making body. Their responses suggest a more positive view of the senate and a quite different set of concerns than those of faculty and students. Faculty members are less likely to view the senate as effective and are more likely to support expanding the role and influence of the senate. *Please consult pp. 512-513 for more detail on the differences.* *The authors note the role of changing relations between governments and universities in influencing how a university governs itself.* The role of the senate and an understanding of the characteristics of an effective senate also need to be clarified. If discussions and debates— especially those that are ‘‘in-depth,’’ ‘‘transparent,’’ ‘‘conceptual,’’ asking the

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		‘‘hard questions’’ of administrators, and seeing ‘‘the bigger picture’’ (quotes from respondents)— are prerequisites for an effective senate and are what the senate is meant for, then it is important to set up structures and processes that can encourage and facilitate these discussions and debates.
Other		
Higher Education Strategy Associates	Usher, Alex. (2022, March 10). *Improving Senates.* Higher Education Strategy Associates. https://higheredstrategy.com/improving-senates/.	• The most important thing that has to happen is that the business of Senates needs to be significantly altered. Banish more of the minutiae to sub-committees, and keep the Senate focused on strategic big-picture issues. • Have it become not so much a body for passing policies as a body for planning in its largest sense – scanning the horizon, evaluating new information and new ideas and making broad judgements on strategic alternatives. • This alone will go a long way to making the body more interesting, and in turn worthwhile as a time investment for more academics. And from the perspective of senior administration, more engagement in serious issues raises the prospect that a engaged senior body of academics might be able to provide better advice on a more rapid and consistent basis than what exists anywhere else. • It also probably means creating or beefing up the Senate secretariat in order to make sure that Senators are getting the high-quality data it needs to do the scanning and analysis and – maybe most importantly – so that it can see the financial impacts of various decisions and/or orientations.

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
		Usher discusses the need for a Senate that is ruthless with agendas and more connected with the Board.
	Usher, Alex. (2015, August 28). *Boards, Senates, and Myths of University Exceptionalism.* Higher Education Strategy Associates. https://higheredstrategy.com/boards-senates-and-myths-of-university-exceptionalism/.	*This piece argues for greater understanding and respect for the responsibilities and obligations of the Board and matters within their purview, noting that faculty sometimes feel like they have a right to know details about Board matters when they really do not, given the Board's status as the governing body of an organization (corporation).*
	Usher, Alex. (2016, April 28). *Two Theories About University Governanc*	Lack of engagement from faculty in university governance is a collective action problem. Engagement has decreased over time as academics have prioritized more their own work and research. *The piece notes that unions might not be the answer to these problems, as seen at UBC in 2016 where faculty*

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
	e. Higher Education Strategy Associates. https://higheredstrategy.com/two-theories-about-university-governance/.	*collective action increased but the union body took a back seat to this.*
	Usher, Alex. (2017, March 1). *Under-managed universities*. Higher Education Strategy Associates. https://higheredstrategy.com/under-managed-universities/.	*There are major gaps at universities among the obligation or understanding of their job that faculty and administration have, depending on what context they were hired in. This makes it difficult for governance bodies like the Senate, and leads to overworking of younger / newer faculty and staff.* *This piece notes that academics are undermanaged, which leads to lack of accountability and an unbalanced workload for all. There is a gender component to this issue, too. It is difficult to change these institutionalized challenges because faculty enjoy their freedom and have voting rights in various spaces, including governance bodies and unions.*
Canadian Association of	CAUT. (2017 March). *Governance on the*	*Paraphrasing:* Senate bodies are opportunities to bridge gaps between administration and faculty, and serve as a forum for faculty to hold administration to account / ask questions of them. If done correctly, they are also an

Institution	**Resource**	**Comment**
University Teachers	*rocks.* Canadian Association of University Teachers. https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2017/03/governance-rocks.	opportunity to show a united front to students and post meetings minutes / practice governance transparency. *Clarity in the role of the Senate will help get them back on track.* Faculty associations are stronger and more effective when faculty members see their association as an instrument that will support and help them in their academic careers, including from a legal standpoint if need be. This extends to senate involvement too. I feel it is as important to see senates as bodies that work best when faculty members take advantage of their freedom of association and make decisions in the interests of academia on terms defined by academics.

Appendix D: Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Over the period of December 2022 – April 2023, the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Governance Review interviewed 17 key stakeholders from across the University to assist and inform the review process.

The following summary of comments is broken down into a range of topics relevant to the Senate Governance Review:

Process Clarity

- It is unclear as to what some senators are looking for in the response to items that come through Senate. Further clarity on Senate and its processes may make for more clear debate amongst Senate.
- Well defined and understood structures and processes (with good communication), along with consistent and effective access to how decisions are made is critical to Senate.
- There is a lack of transparency for many Senate procedures.
- At times Senate seems to get into the small details of a particular topic and then not at all for very similar items.
- More templates are needed for Senate decisions so that members can compare items and also for submitters to be more efficient in delivering items.
- The Senate is vital to the future of the University – its processes should be representative of this role and be clear, transparent, accessible, and showcase Memorial positively.
- The rationale for Senate decisions are not always clear, and the process by which items get placed on the consent agenda can be problematic as well and lead to mistrust.
- It isn't always clear as to who can attend Senate, who can speak, and when can they speak, more clarity around these items may help the flow of Senate.

Role of Senate Committees & Sub-Committees

- Broader discussion is needed at Senate committees and sub-committees, Senators need to be engaged further.

- It is difficult for the Senate, given its size, to initiate new ideas and projects on its own. Many projects and initiatives should be delegated down to committees who will bring it back to Senate.
- The length of submissions to Senate suggests a lack of trust in the work of the committees. For example, submissions can often include lengthy email threads where the Senator is required to search for relevant details.
- Greater transparency around the process of electing Senators to committees and more promotion of elections throughout the institution will help inform the community of what opportunities exist and how to get involved.
- Senate would benefit from a better paper trail and record keeping, and clear definition of authority for committees would help as well.
- Senate should delegate to its committees as much as possible but also put accountability measures in place for these committees.

Meeting Efficiency

- Senate would benefit from having someone independent acting as a Speaker (some inflexibility in who the Chair is because of the MUN Act was recognized).
- The volume of calendar changes is inefficient – Senate needs to see it but, because of the way that items come to Senate, you can only do so much to make items look similar. What would benefit the process would be to have a proper platform on which calendar changes are recommended and implemented.
- The speed at which items navigate Senate can be glacial at times, while other items seem to pass through without much deliberation. Finding a balance for how items are considered would help the Senate operate more efficiently.
- Having In-person opportunities return to Senate could see a positive impact on meeting performance.
- The Senate Agenda should have designated timelines for its items and make sure it sticks to them.
- Senate can be an intimidating place to speak up at times and this can lead to a lack of engagement and participation in important items.

Improved Senate Materials

- Processes, documentation, recording of decisions and making historical progression of decisions available. Knowing the process and the history of Senate so we don't repeat errors.
- Introducing new programs: create 5 key questions that all new programs need to answer (EDI-AR, Indigenization, Funding, etc.), and get people introducing new programs to speak to them clearly (following a template). Simplifying new

program approvals and presentation content will really help with speed and ease, but can also track the evolutions of these key areas over time for the institution.

- To make the most of Senate materials they should be considered from the viewpoint of students as they are most likely to lack the experience with Senate that others may have. If they are the target audience you will likely have effective materials.
- There is a lack of requirements for including/addressing Indigenization/EDI-AR in proposals/materials.
- Having up-to-date processes can be helpful in ensuring Senate materials are also as current as possible.

Senate Composition

- The composition of Senate creates major barriers to how things are addressed/not addressed at times.
- Senate is critical to the effective governance of the University and is ultimately responsible for its academic mission. If the University is to attract and retain individuals to participate on Senate, there needs to be a very clear value proposition for Senators
- There is a culture of union participation in Senate – MUNFA, MUNSU etc. Senators should be independent and not be expected to represent interests of other entities. However, the groups that these unions represent are important voices and should be represented at Senate for their academically related/categorized roles.
- Senate composition is not fully reflective of the diversity within the University community, ideally there would be efforts to address this through a review of Senate.

Dedicated Mechanisms for EDI – AR and Indigenization

- There should be a Senate Standing Subcommittee on EDI-AR and Indigenization.
    - Anything on this topic should go to this committee, then the committee puts the motion forward and supports it on the floor of Senate.
- When something is left vacant for a certain amount of time, are there mechanisms to creatively make it possible for an equity-deserving group to fill the vacancy.
- To weave the principles of EDI-AR and Indigenization into Senate there needs to be greater accessibility and dedicated components.
- All Senators should be encouraged to include their pronoun and a short 100 word Bio through an election process.

- Senate should look to build partnerships and relationships with equity deserving groups and the community writ-large. This can both help Senate understand this perspective and be informed by community when it makes its decisions.
- It can't be assumed that everyone has the same understanding of Senate is within the Canadian University context, this assumption may lead to over or under corrections when considering equity measures.

Increasing Interest and Participation

- It is important to ask Senators about their areas of interests and their skills.
- Senators want to both see and feel the value of their contributions and so efforts to recognize this should be made.
- We could lean more on grad studies (Committees) – going through to look at those sections for individual units. This is something that SCUGS could do too. Scanning and providing feedback.
- Senate membership is very large for sustained critical engagement: is there a way to reduce membership on Senate and provide more supports for those who are on it?
- Senate is the place to make substantive impact and change at the University, there is massive potential in being a part of Senate and understanding this could be a key in driving further interest.
- Senate has a poor perception currently and there should be a concentrated effort made to engage the University Community to help them better understand Senate. If the role of the Senator is recognized to be substantial than you will be more likely to get more interest and participation.
- Giving time back to Senators, in some form or another, could be a valuable engagement tool as the time of Senators is so valuable.

Training, Education, and Orientation

- Senate is missing a good orientation for new senators (especially for student senators); takes time to find your feet - Formalizing something would be beneficial.
- Create new resources for all Senators in training and for new senators as on-boarding processes, that supports them in this work, include unconscious bias training for all Senators in this process.
- Education and continuous professional development initiatives to train Senators would be very helpful in ensuring elected Senators understand their duties and responsibilities, as well as the by-laws and procedures.
- The utilization of Deans and Faculty Councils for information sharing would be a great information/training tool for Senate.

- The motivations and personal agendas of individuals on Senate may be a result of a lack of training and understanding of their role.
- Training and knowledge building in the areas of EDI and Indigenization should be a critical component of a Senator's experience.

Connectivity with the Board

- The response from the Board has been perceived at times as dismissive, re-setting the boundaries and clarity of purposes of each could be of value.
- The Senate / Board of Regents relationship is very important. Both should explore closer ties, for example a Senator on the Board of Regents and vice versa could be effective.
- Senators need to understand the relationship with the Board of Regents and the bicameral system of governance. The responsibilities of the Board and the responsibilities of Senate need to be understood by Senators, Board Members and the university community.
- Increased mutual understanding between Senate and Board of Regents would be helpful. Understanding of how decisions of Senate affect the Board will help this understanding, for example new programs should consider financial impact at the Senate level.
- The Board and Senate should have a shared vision that connects them and serves as a reminder that one must work well with the other to help Memorial succeed.

Supporting Committees

- The committee structure is too complex and there are too many committees. Move more work to subcommittees to build progressive decision making and accountability.
- Better Agendas and document flow would be helpful, as well, simple changes such as adding committee members to the agenda would help with transparency and simplify management.
- Committees need more defined support to consistently help achieve their mandate.
- Senate and its committees can have such high volumes of work and responsibilities, there should be more allocated support to get this work completed in a timely fashion.
- If we want Senate to be a strategic entity that operates in a timely and effective manner we need to find more supports and resources to build it up to that level.
- The connection between Senate and its committees can feel uneven at times. "Is it sustainable to have a committee such as SCuGS have so much volume?"

Other Supports

- Recommendation to bring in an archivist.
- Internal audits and requirements are essential for the Senate membership.
- Documented academic processes would be helpful. Currently the University Calendar provided the academic rules but other senate policies do not seem to be centrally accessible.