

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

November 7, 2023, 4:00pm
Windsor Grand Room & Microsoft Teams (hybrid format)

Present: N. Anthonisen, C. Brett (Secretary), P. Brown, J. Devine, S. Dewolfe, B. Evans, A. Fancy, S. Fanning, A. Francis, D. Fleming, C. Forstall, L. Garnett, D. Hamilton, O. Hart, M. Hashemi, K. Hele, R. Inglis, C. Ionescu, L. Landon, Y. Ma, C. MacDougall, R. MacKinnon (Chair), R. Majithia, C. Major, I. McCardle, V. Meli, L. Michaelis, R. Minocha-McKenney, T. Reiffenstein, R. Rubin, S. Runge, S. Scott, V. St. Pierre (Vice-Chair), E. Steuter, J. Tomes, N. Vogan, B. Walter, A. Wilson

Guests: L. Decker Hawthorne, G. Sandala

Regrets: B. Clayton, A. Comfort, M. Hamilton, L. Keliher, N. Vogan

01.11.07 Territorial Acknowledgement

R. MacKinnon read the official territorial acknowledgment written by Elders and the Indigenous Advisory Circle as follows:

We would like to acknowledge that we are located within the territory of Mi'kma'ki, the unceded, ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq. Our relationship and our privilege to live on this territory was agreed upon in the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1752. Because of this treaty relationship it is to be acknowledged that we are all Treaty people and have a responsibility to respect this territory.

02.11.07 Approval of agenda

Motion (L. Landon / C. Forstall): that Senate adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion carried

- 03.11.07 Consent Agenda (V. Meli/ V. St. Pierre)
- a. Approval of the minutes (October 10, 2023)
 - b. Employment Equity Report
 - c. Discover Mount Allison

Approved without discussion

04.11.07 Business arising from the minutes

J. Devine thanked J. Tomes for providing the data on academic offences. He remarked that the number of plagiarism cases seemed lower than he would have predicted from his own experiences. R. MacKinnon suggested that the patterns in the data could be explained by increased use of online assessments due to COVID-19.

05.11.07 Chair's remarks

R. MacKinnon informed Senate that he attended the meeting of the Board of Regents on October 20 and that he continues to attend campus activities, highlighting the Business of the Arts Workshop held on October 20. He thanked Dr. Emily Falvey for giving him a tour of the Owens Art Gallery and congratulated her on receiving a doctorate from Université du Québec à Montréal.

The president informed Senate that the Honorary Degrees Committee has formed a sub-committee to review processes for selecting candidates for honorary degrees. The sub-committee consists of two faculty members, two Regents, and the President. He noted that new nominees will be vetted by an outside human resources firm.

In response to a question by R. Majithia, R. MacKinnon informed Senate that the composition of the sub-committee was decided on by the Honorary Degrees Committee.

J. Devine asked for further details on the outside vetting process. R. MacKinnon answered that the firm will look for potential items of concern in the social media presence of the candidates but will not carry out criminal record checks or any investigations that would breach confidentiality. Noting that cases of rescinding honorary degrees often involve questions about candidates' credentials, L. Michaelis asked whether the vetting would include verifying credentials. R. MacKinnon noted that this process would likely need the consent of candidates and asking for that consent would breach confidentiality.

L. Michaelis and T. Reiffenstein cautioned that information obtained from social media should be checked for credibility. J. Devine also asked whether the checks would include information about the actions of businesses or organizations with which candidates are associated. R. MacKinnon answered that he would ask the Honorary Degrees Committee to take the issues raised under advisement when reviewing the outcome of the vetting process.

06.11.07 Report from University Planning Committee

The committee's report was circulated prior to the meeting. V. St. Pierre entertained questions on the report.

E. Steuter asked which of the recommended positions have been approved. V. St. Pierre answered that positions in Commerce (Finance), Psychology (two positions), Library (replacement), English (three-year term), and Mathematics have been approved. Positions in Health and Sociology are yet to be approved.

T. Reiffenstein asked for more details on the positions listed in report in Modern Languages and Literatures. V. St. Pierre replied that those positions include a three-year term in French, an instructor position in Japanese, and a tenure-track in Film Studies.

07.11.07 Report from the Academic Matters (Curriculum) Committee

Motion (V. St. Pierre/C. Major): that Senate approve the changes to courses, academic regulations, and academic programs as outlined in the Academic Matters Committee Report for Senate, November 7, 2023.

Motion carried

R. MacKinnon asked how long it takes for a new program or course to go from idea to entry in the Academic Calendar. V. St. Pierre responded that the Academic Matters (Curriculum) Committee usually deals with proposals within a few months. How long departments spend developing programs varies.

A. Fancy asked if the university has proposals currently under review by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. V. St. Pierre replied that she is not aware of any.

08.11.07 Other Business

L. Michaelis asked to discuss the method of voting during hybrid meetings of Senate. She noted that senators voting in person can see each other's votes, whereas this is not the case for those voting online. She wondered if there is a way to make voting more symmetric and the tabulation of results more transparent. V. St. Pierre and L. Landon suggested that this would be possible by having everyone vote online, including those attending in person. R. MacKinnon suggested that it might be possible to make online votes more like in-person votes by, for example, asking people to turn on their cameras for votes. R. MacKinnon said that he would ask the Senate Agenda Committee to consider this issue.

09.11.07 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm, as moved by V. St. Pierre.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Brett
Secretary