



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

Senate Council

Minutes of the Friday, September 24, 2021 Meeting

Present: Peter Meehan (Chair), Carol Ann MacGregor (Vice Chair), Carol Acton, Veronica Austen, Steven Bednarski, Kieran Bonner, Honor Brabazon, Susan Brophy, Sue Brubacher, Chris Burris, Roberta Cauchi-Santoro, Tristanne Connolly, Andrew Deman, Maureen Drysdale, Mike Gourlay, Dan Hutter, Scott Kline, Alysia Kolentsis, Carlie Leroux-Demir, Viola Poletes Montgomery, John Rempel, Lorna Rourke, BJ Rye, Toni Serafini, Mark Spielmacher, Andrew Stumpf, Anastasia Tataryn, Sylvia Terzian, Bruno Tremblay, Angela Underhill, Jessica Vorsteveld, Denise Whitehead, Chad Wriglesworth

Recording Secretary: Christine Schwendinger

Absent: Fred Desroches, Norm Klassen*, Jane Nicholas*, David Perrin*, Carter Watkinson, David Williams, Nikolaj Zunic

*regrets

On Sabbatical/Leave: Carm De Santis, Stephanie Gregoire, David Seljak, Ryan Touhey, Cristina Vanin

Note: This meeting was held using the online video conferencing platform, Zoom.

Open Session

1. Prayer/Reflection

C.A. MacGregor opened the meeting with a prayer, "God is not what you think," from *Meister Eckhart's Book of Secrets: Meditations on Letting Go and Finding True Freedom* by J.M. Sweeney and M.S. Burrows.

2. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed Dr. Carol Ann MacGregor to the community. MacGregor was wished the best as she begins her term as Vice President Academic and Dean (VPAD) at St. Jerome's University (SJU).

Sue Brubacher, Registrar, will be invited to speak on registrarial matters under the President's report from time to time and will do so at this meeting.

University of Waterloo (UWaterloo) Senate held its first meeting this academic year on September 20, 2021, chaired by UWaterloo's new president Dr. Vivek Goel. Goel talked about UWaterloo's strategic plan, COVID-19 recovery, and non-STEM disciplines (Arts in particular and the role it will play post-pandemic).

The Chair publicly released a few reflections today regarding the upcoming National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, September 30, 2021, and ideas we as a community should consider moving forward.

3. Agenda Review, Declare Conflicts, Additions, Changes

No conflicts, additions, or changes to the agenda were declared.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved: L. Rourke, **Seconded:** K. Bonner, **Carried.**

Consent Agenda

4. Approval of the Minutes of May 28, 2021

5. Governance Committee Report

- a. 2021-2022 Committee Membership List

6. Committee on Research and Scholarship Report

7. Experiential Learning Advisory Committee Report

8. Vice President Academic and Dean's Report

- a. Appointments

Motion: To approve by consent item 4 and to receive for information items 5-8 above.

Moved: D. Hutter, **Seconded:** A. Deman, **Carried.**

Regular Agenda

9. Business Arising from the Minutes of the May 28, 2021 Meeting

- Page 2, item 7, *Governance Committee Report*: T. Connolly, chair, updated members that the revised Senate Council Terms of Reference will be going forward to the October 7, 2021, Board of Governors meeting for review and, ultimately, approval.

10. Academic Committee Report

Last year, in light of the pandemic, SJU had to adopt a different procedure for course evaluations (previously done on paper) and used the UWaterloo Faculty of Arts' online evaluation instrument. Academic Committee recommended discussion on continuing with this procedure in the 2021-2022 academic year (Fall 2021/Winter 2022/Spring 2022) with the results, once again, going to the instructor only and the instructor deciding how to share that data. Deciding for the full academic year, instead of term by term, would allow for better planning and for effective discussion on the design of SJU's new course evaluation metric. UWaterloo Arts confirmed that it will continue with the status quo in the fall term, but decisions for the winter or spring terms are pending the launch of UWaterloo's new evaluation system. Senate Council had some discussion on the matter. Members have not yet seen the new UWaterloo metric. UWaterloo's rollout of the new metric is based on when on campus courses have fully returned to in-person teaching and that timeline is not known (winter or spring term or full year from now).

Motion: That SJU course evaluations in the 2021-2022 academic year be held using UWaterloo Arts online evaluations through the eEvaluate system.

That the data collected will be provided to the instructor who will not be compelled to share the data.

That upon request, an instructor will be provided with a letter for their records explaining the exceptional circumstances of 2021-2022 course evaluations at SJU.

Moved: C. MacGregor, **Seconded:** A. Deman, **Carried.** (27 Votes: 23 Yes, 0 No, 4 Abstain)

11. Vice President Academic and Dean's Report

The VPAD referred members to the items in her written report. The good work by Student Affairs and others around Orientation Week was acknowledged.

At its meeting on September 20, 2021, UWaterloo Senate passed a motion to formally adopt a Fall Reading Week, which has been in pilot phase for a number of years. The proposal had included a series of recommendations and faculty are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the particular

guidance around the new decision (e.g., considerations for deadlines/exams, speaking with students about taking breaks). [Secretary's note: See <https://uwaterloo.ca/associate-vice-president-academic/shareable-resources>]

The VPAD thanked everyone for the warm welcome. She looks forward to engaging more.

12. President's Report

The President thanked those who attended the Return to Campus Town Hall on September 2, 2021. He expects more town halls to be scheduled as new information and new questions arise. The next SJU Assembly will focus on COVID-19 recovery.

UWaterloo is planning to return to "normal" pre-pandemic activity as of January 2022, depending on what may happen between now and then. This is positive news.

The Campus Response Team (CRT) has been meeting weekly throughout the pandemic. The work has not been easy and CRT members were thanked for their hard work.

The President invited S. Brubacher, Registrar, to provide an update. Brubacher reported that SJU enrolled 65 first-year students this fall term into the Faculty of Arts, which is 35% lower than our target of 100; this is very unusual for SJU (we normally enroll 130). We also welcomed 15 transfer students. Those numbers may still fluctuate as more students defer. The low numbers are a result of the pandemic and from a liaison officer being cut from the budget last year. UWaterloo still hired liaison officers and had active recruiting. UWaterloo Arts reached 107% of their target (including direct-entry program numbers). SJU assists with Arts' overall target; this year was unusual, but if we continually did not hit target, we would need to have a conversation on why. The coming recruitment cycle looks hopeful. The reinstatement of SJU's Registrar's Office helps send a clear message to our various audiences that SJU registers students. Serena Catania, SJU's new Manager, Outreach and Recruitment, has a passion for recruiting students into liberal arts. A liaison officer has been hired who will work closely with UWaterloo, providing SJU once again with access to prospective students across the province. School visits will hopefully open up soon to in person, allowing us to get in front of students. SJU, along with UWaterloo, will conduct in-person campus tours as of October (all must be vaccinated and have completed the required screening). The Fall Open House will likely be a virtual event, but other open houses and tour days are being planned for in person. The Registrar is confident that our numbers will change for next year and observed that it is wonderful to be back on campus and see/hear students.

The President thanked those who attended the Orientation and Investiture Ceremony, held virtually on September 12, 2021, and particularly those involved with making this important event possible for our community. The President received positive comments from incoming students and their families.

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee and the President's Advisory Group on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) have reconvened their work, both having the goal of completion by the end of term. MacGregor, VPAD, has taken over co-chairing the EDI Advisory Group.

The Feast of St. Jerome will be held virtually on October 2, 2021. The President thanked those participating and those helping in any way to put on the event. The keynote speaker, Hon. Graydon Nicholas, will be talking about Truth and Reconciliation in light of the revelations at Residential Schools and the roles he feels Catholic universities need to play. The other speaker will be Mr. Steve Lubczuck, who will be awarded the Chancellor John Sweeney Award at the event.

13. Indigenization, Decolonization, and the Curriculum

A. Deman gave a presentation on Indigenization and decolonization at SJU, the goal being to involve Senate Council in ongoing discussions as a collective, deliberative body on this critical movement and to build on existing momentum. The topic broadly falls under Senate Council's purview in its Terms of Reference (e.g., University strategic visioning and plans, curriculum). SJU does have a responsibility to reflect on our role and responsibility even more so than other universities because of our affiliation to the Catholic church. There is a lot that we can do for the benefit of both our institution and the Indigenous peoples of this country (e.g., build partnerships with Indigenous groups and organizations, create a welcoming space for Indigenous students to help with the cultural barrier, offer Indigenous food, hire an Indigeneity Coordinator, offer residencies). It was recommended that this topic become a standing agenda item at Senate Council; the VPAD will also add this as a standing agenda item at Academic Committee.

It was noted that Indigeneity has been part of the overarching discussion at the President's Advisory Group on EDI and we should wait to hear from this Group; SJU will have to respond to addressing and putting into action any recommendations from their report for long-term institutional change. There is a sense of urgency for action. Along the way, discussions should continue at this body regarding Indigenization in the classroom, research, or our everyday work.

The President noted that from his experience, a lot of groundwork must be laid to ensure Indigenization programming or scholarship is successful. He thanked Deman for his presentation and Senate Council thanked Deman for sparking the discussion. It is imperative that SJU, and all Catholic institutions, reflect on historic and future relationships to Indigenous peoples. We want to move forward, not just atone for the past.

14. Updates from Academic Departments

There were no updates from academic departments.

15. New Business

There was no new business.

The Chair noted that Saphron Moule, Director, Finance and Accounting, has been invited to stay in the meeting to present in the confidential session. No objections were raised.

Motion: To adjourn the open session of the meeting and move into confidential session.

Moved: C. Acton, **Seconded:** T. Serafini, **Carried.**

September 24, 2021

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