



Senate Council

Minutes of the Friday, February 9, 2024 Meeting

Present: Peter Meehan (Chair), Carol Ann MacGregor (Vice Chair), Michelle Atkin, Steven Bednarski, Kieran Bonner, Honor Brabazon, Serena Catania, Roberta Cauchi-Santoro, Tristanne Connolly, Andrew Deman, Maureen Drysdale, Jesse Hutchison, Alysia Kolentsis, Carlie Leroux, Diana Lobb, Clayton McCourt, Andrew Moore, Saphron Moule, Carl Rodrigue, BJ Rye, Toni Serafini, Andrew Stumpf, Sylvia Terzian, Bruno Tremblay, Cristina Vanin, Denise Whitehead, David Williams

Recording Secretary: Christine Schwendinger

Absent: Chris Burris, Fred Desroches, Stephanie Gregoire*, Norm Klassen, Scott Kline*, Jane Nicholas, John Rempel, David Seljak*, Siobhan Sutherland, Ryan Touhey, Chad Wriglesworth*, Saman Zaidi, Nikolaj Zunic
*regrets

On Sabbatical/Leave: Carol Acton, Veronica Austen, Susan Brophy, Carm De Santis, Mark Spielmacher, Anastasia Tataryn

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

Open Session

1. Territorial Acknowledgement and Prayer/Reflection

H. Brabazon opened the meeting with a territorial acknowledgement, followed by a reflection on the killing of Dr. S. Tayeh, President of the Islamic University of Gaza, in the context of T. Docherty's idea of education as a battle and the challenges faced by educators worldwide.

2. Chair's Remarks

At the last meeting, Senate Council dealt with some differences of opinion about some changes at the University. The Chair fully appreciates that people have different perspectives, but wanted to remind members, particularly in this online meeting format, to think carefully before commenting and to be respectful of others when speaking. One's opinion or idea might have implications for others. The Chair referred members to the Virtual Meeting Etiquette sheet attached to each agenda package.

Owing to recent news regarding the financing of higher education in the province, the Board of Governors has decided to postpone discussion of the 2024-2025 budget until more information is received from the province and the University of Waterloo. The process will be the same with the Board Finance and Audit Committee reviewing the proposed budget and it being presented to Senate Council, but at this time it is prudent to delay the process. The Chair will update Senate Council when more information is available.

3. Agenda Review, Declare Conflicts, Additions, Changes

No additions or changes to the agenda were declared. C.A. MacGregor declared a conflict of interest on item #14.

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved: K. Bonner, **Seconded:** T. Serafini, **Carried.**

Consent Agenda

4. Minutes of the November 24, 2023 Senate Council Meeting

5. Academic Committee

- a. Pausing Admission to Master of Catholic Thought Program

6. Sustainability Committee Update
7. Vice President Academic and Dean Report
 - a. Appointments

Motion: To approve by consent item 4 and to receive for information items 5-7 above.

Moved: A. Deman, **Seconded:** T. Serafini, **Carried.**

Regular Agenda

8. Business Arising from the Minutes of the November 24, 2023 Meeting

There was no business arising from the minutes.

9. Governance Committee Report

- a. *Academic Operations Manual (AOM) Policy:* One AOM policy from the Committee on Research and Scholarship (CRS) was brought forward for a second reading and approval. Revisions are being made to Appendix A (guidelines) of the *Faculty Research Grant* policy. Two minor editorial changes were made.

Motion 1: To give the revisions to Appendix A of the *Faculty Research Grant* policy a second reading and to approve Appendix A of the *Faculty Research Grant* policy for the SJU Academic Operations Manual.

Moved: T. Connolly, **Seconded:** S. Bednarski, **Carried.** (22 Votes: 20 Yes, 2 No, 0 Abstain)

The CRS received two applications to the 2024-2025 Faculty Research Grant competition but held off on discussions until this decision was made. It will now move on these applications.

- b. *Governance Committee's Duty to Meet with Auditor:* The Governance Committee raised the tabled motion from the April 28, 2023 Senate Council meeting regarding changing its duty to meet annually with the Executive Director, Finance and Administration instead of the University's auditor to review the audited financial statements. As communicated to Senate Council previously, it was reiterated that auditors are governed by the Canadian Auditing Standards and under Standard 260, they collectively determine who they are going to report to. We as the institution do not have the right to tell them. The auditors read SJU's Bylaw and Senate Council's Terms of Reference, and the last two auditors decided to report only to the Board (senior administration needs to leave the meeting because the auditors have a duty to report any concern with their performance to the Board, and if a real concern to the police). The Board's position is that meeting with the auditors was not a duty they assigned to Senate Council because it is included under the Governance Committee's duties. However, the Board could ask the auditors to meet with the Governance Committee if they felt its opinion would be helpful, but even then the auditors would have to agree. Since the auditing standards do not prevent the auditor from meeting with the Governance Committee, comments were heard by Senate Council members about the need to keep this option for future auditors to present.

A member put a motion on the floor to revise the wording of the proposed Terms of Reference change.

Motion: To change the language to "meet with the University auditors **unless the auditors solicited explicitly refuse to do so. In the case of such an explicit refusal, the Executive Director, Finance and Administration will...**" **Moved:** A. Stumpf, **Seconded:** H. Brabazon. TABLED

Recognizing that auditors abide by standards that we have no say in, Senate Council asked the President to speak again with the Board, advocating for the importance of bicameralism and noting faculty's continued desire to keep this option of auditors presenting the audited

financial statements to the Senate Council Governance Committee. The Governance Committee will work offline on a new motion to address Senate Council's concerns.

Motion 2: To give the change to the Senate Council Terms of Reference a first reading.

Moved: T. Connolly, **Seconded:** C.A. MacGregor, **Carried.** TABLED

10. Academic Committee Report

- a. *History Course Change:* Changes to HIST 313: *History of the Family in North America* were brought forward for approval.

Motion 1: To approve the HIST 313 course change, to be effective September 1, 2025.

Moved: C.A. MacGregor, **Seconded:** A. Stumpf, **Carried.** (24 Votes: 23 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain)

- b. *Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies (SMF) Course Changes:* All 40 SMF courses were brought forward for approval. The subject codes are being changed to the new Sexualities, Relationships, and Families (SRF) code. The department also took the opportunity to make other changes to help contextualize what students will learn.

Motion 2: To approve the 40 SMF course changes, to be effective September 1, 2025.

Moved: C.A. MacGregor, **Seconded:** T. Serafini, **Carried.** (24 Votes: 22 Yes, 0 No, 2 Abstain)

11. Vice President Academic and Dean Report

The Vice President Academic and Dean (VPAD) referred members to her written report and also to Academic Committee's report under the consent agenda regarding pausing admission to the Master of Catholic Thought program. She added two additional items:

The chair of the Board of Governors sent an email this week initiating the president's end of term evaluation. Members were encouraged to engage in this important process. Any questions or discussion should be directed to the Board chair.

SJU has posted for a tenure-track position in Psychology, made possible by a phased retirement. Members were asked to refer the ad to relevant contacts. The search committee membership will be announced once formed.

12. President Report

The President highlighted the items in his written report, made note about one of the items, and added one additional item:

The President has been providing updates on the creation of the new Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC) under the Indigenization and Decolonization agenda item. Since the IAC is now formed, he will be reporting on its work under his regular report and moving forward Senate Council can decide whether to keep Indigenization and Decolonization as a standing agenda item.

At the end of February, the President and VPAD will be meeting with representatives from the Diocese of Hamilton to explore potential avenues for continuing education and the possible role SJU can play in advancing Catholic leadership programming opportunities.

13. Strategic Plan Update

The President provided an update on the SJU 2022-2027 Strategic Plan where he highlighted the four priorities guiding our work:

- *Strengthen Appreciation and Understanding of our Catholic Mission and Identity:* Lectures in Catholic Experience, IAC, Catholic Higher Education Reading Group, Campus Ministry events and outreach, stakeholder engagement, etc.

- *Foster an Outstanding Culture of Research and Learning that Inspires Commitment to the Common Good:* Academic Plan initiatives, experiential and service-learning, UWaterloo and Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo meetings, etc.
- *Build an Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive and Just Community:* Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Committee, student mental health and wellness, Indigenous initiatives, communications, etc.
- *Pursue a Sustainable Future:* Internal/external partnerships, sustainability initiatives, student recruitment/engagement, alum engagement, philanthropy, etc.

C.A. MacGregor left the meeting.

14. Board Appointment/Reappointment of Vice President Academic and Dean Policy

Back in 2020, the Board of Governors made changes to the two roles of VPAD and Vice President (VP) of the University and created two policies. The *VP of the University* policy notes that the VPAD normally serves in this role. The Board is considering consolidating the two policies into one and some language amended to provide more concise information, including clarifying the appointing and direct report structures. This new policy was brought forward to Senate Council for feedback. The suggestion was heard for the VPAD Evaluation Committee composition to include faculty as voting members, as has been traditionally done for collegial governance (the current policy gives opportunity for consultation only). The President will take this feedback to the Board.

15. Indigenization and Decolonization

There were no further updates beyond what the President reported under his report.

16. Updates from Academic Departments

The next Reading Series event is on March 1, 2024, 4:30 PM, with local poet C. Banks reading. Members were asked to consider coming and encouraging their students to come.

The SMF Research Symposium will be held on April 10, 2024. The call for proposals will be forwarded to faculty. If any students are doing research on sexualities, relationships, or families and would like conference presentation experience, please encourage them to submit a proposal.

17. New Business

There was no new business.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Moved: M. Atkin, **Seconded:** T. Serafini, **Carried.**

February 9, 2024

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