



# ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

## Senate Council

### Minutes of the Friday, February 28, 2020 Meeting

**Present:** Scott Kline (Chair), Cristina Vanin (Vice Chair), Carol Acton, John Arnou, Veronica Austen, Kieran Bonner, Steven Bednarski, Honor Brabazon, Sue Brubacher, Roberta Cauchi-Santoro, Tristanne Connolly, Andrew Deman, Carm De Santis, Maureen Drysdale, Mike Gourlay, Norm Klassen (by phone), Jolanta Komornicka, Kerry Lappin-Fortin, Shanelle Leo, Diana Lobb, Zack MacDonald, David Perrin, Lorna Rourke, BJ Rye, David Seljak, Toni Serafini, Mark Spielmacher

**Recording Secretary:** Katrina Kaczala

**Guests/Resources:** Christine Schwendinger

**Absent:** Chris Burris, Fred Desroches, Stephanie Gregoire\*, Jane Nicholas\*, Viola Poletes Montgomery, John Rempel, Andrew Stumpf\*, Anastasia Tataryn\*, Sylvia Terzian\*, Ryan Touhey, David Williams, Chad Wriglesworth\*, Nikolaj Zunic

*\*regrets*

**On Sabbatical/Leave:** Susan Brophy, Alysia Kolentsis, Bruno Tremblay, Denise Whitehead

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### *Open Session*

#### **1. Prayer/Refection**

C. Acton opened the meeting with a reflection.

#### **2. Chair's Remark's**

The Chair remarked that a Senate Council member was joining the meeting via conference phone and urged Senate Council members to speak louder and into their microphones throughout the meeting.

#### **3. Agenda Review, Declare Conflicts, Additions, Changes**

An oral report from M. Drysdale regarding an update from the Committee on Research and Scholarship was added to the regular agenda [item 11].

**Motion:** To approve the agenda with additions.

**Moved:** V. Austen, **Seconded:** M. Drysdale, **Carried.**

### Consent Agenda

4. **Approval of the Minutes of January 31, 2020**
5. **Governance Committee Report**

**Motion:** To approve and receive for information by consent items 4 and 5.

**Moved:** L. Rourke, **Seconded:** K. Lappin-Fortin, **Carried.**

### Regular Agenda

6. **Business Arising from the Minutes of January 31, 2020**

No business arising.

7. **Academic Committee Report**

It was noted that changes to the Italian Studies courses impacted the Human Sciences minor, resulting in the current plan change being presented.

**Motion:** To approve the Human Sciences Minor plan change, to be effective September 1, 2021.

**Moved:** C. Vanin, **Seconded:** K. Bonner, **Carried.**

8. **Ad Hoc Committee on Renewal, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Standards for Librarians**

It was noted that a first reading was presented of the revised policy for Standards for Renewal, Tenure, and Promotion at the January 2020 Senate Council meeting. The policy was presented for a second reading.

A friendly amendment was made to the policy.

**Motion:** That SJU Senate Council give the revised Standards for Renewal, Tenure, and Promotion policy a second reading for the SJU Academic Operations Manual.

**Moved:** C. Vanin, **Seconded:** L. Rourke, **Carried.**

9. **Interim Vice President Academic and Dean's Report**

C. Vanin provided Senate Council an overview of the VPAD report.

In regard to research supports, C. Vanin indicated that an effort to provide Senate Council with information concerning research supports available at St. Jerome's and the University of Waterloo is currently underway. A consultation process may be conducted and the results and information will be reported back to Senate Council.

The Faculty of Arts has begun strategic planning. V. Austen is representing the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo and will be consulting Senate Council in the near future.

#### 10. Interim President's Report

S. Kline provided an overview of the Interim President's report.

Number 5 of the Interim President's report was addressed in the form of an oral update. S. Kline indicated that conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion at St. Jerome's University have been taking place and that this topic will be brought to the next Senate Council meeting in March.

S. Kline stated that the university will be taking some symbolic actions that will be controversial in nature.

Senate Council members discussed St. Jerome's displaying the Pride Flag. C. De Santis asked to read a letter she had written regarding the topic of the Pride Flag being flown at the university.

**Motion:** To entertain the letter written by C. De Santis and to enter the letter into the minutes of the February 28, 2020 Senate Council meeting.

**Moved:** D. Lobb, **Seconded:** J. Komornicka, **Carried.**

#### Are we all welcomed

#### To fly or not fly the pride flag at SJU? – Carm De Santis

*J. Arnou left the meeting.*

S. Kline informed Senate Council that he was not able to comment on the status of the Presidential Search, but wanted to discuss Senate Council's role in the nomination process. Inconsistencies between the Senate Council terms of reference and the St. Jerome's University Bylaw in regard to the presidential nominating process were identified. The Bylaw states that the nominating process will be a closed process, where the terms of reference allow for the possibility of Senate Council to make recommendations.

Senate Council members held a discussion about Senate Council's role in the presidential search process. It was contemplated whether Senate Council would be given the opportunity to make recommendations to the Board about the preferred candidates. Senate Council members decided that a motion directed to the Board would be appropriate:

**Motion:** Given the terms of reference of Senate Council (3.t.), Senate Council asks the Board of Governors for information on whether the entirety of the presidential search process is intended to be closed or not? Will Senate Council be permitted to consider and make recommendations on the candidate nominated by the nominating committee, as allowed by the terms of reference?

**Moved:** T. Connolly, **seconded:** D. Lobb, **Carried. Three (3) Abstentions.**

**11. Committee on Research and Scholarship Update**

M. Drysdale provided Senate Council with an update from the Committee on Research and Scholarship. Senate Council members were reminded that the deadline for research grant applications and requests for additional PD funds is Monday, March 2nd.

**12. Updates from Academic Departments**

- Final Reading Series event: Indigenous writer Alicia Elliot, Wednesday, March 4th at 3:30 p.m.
- Library Grand Opening and Lab Grand Opening Event: Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>
- Headley Essay Contest opening next week, and a call for volunteers for the committee will be made

**13. New Business**

There was no new business.

**Motion:** To adjourn the Open Session and move into Confidential Session.

*Christine Schwendinger left the meeting.*

kk/  
February 28, 2020

*Approved by SJU Senate Council*  
*April 24, 2020*

Are we all welcomed  
To fly or not fly the pride flag at SJU?

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to bring to your attention an important question that needs to be addressed by SJU. The question is: When will SJU fly the pride flag? This question is closely tied to values that our university has decided to promote: justice, inclusivity, compassion, and community. I believe that flying the pride flag at SJU would be an important affirmation of these Catholic values. Queer and transgender people within and beyond the university would know they are in fact welcome here.

I have decided to write this letter after having had several conversations over several years with people in positions of leadership and administration at SJU. The consistent response is that the administration does not want to get into the “politics” of it or make the issue political. In my view refusing to take a political stance is, in itself, a political stance.

I have been teaching at SJU in SMF for fifteen years. I identify as a professional educator, academic researcher, and relational/sex therapist. I am also a queer, immigrant/settler, cisgender woman. I am neither a theologian nor an historian. However, I know that there is a long history of colonial abuses and other forms of oppression perpetrated by the Catholic church. The Church is recently beginning to take responsibility for the past. There is now a history of acceptance, inclusivity and support for those who have been marginalized.

Flying a pride flag is about accepting and potentially *understanding* the lives of *queer and trans* people (members of gender, sexual, and relationship minority groups). It is about acknowledging our past experiences while actively participating in creating spaces, opportunities, and invitations for our present and future involvements and contributions. The flag represents the truth that, despite the cruelty, hatred, and injustices experienced by queer and transgendered people, dignity, hope, humanity, love and belonging have prevailed.

I have heard arguments that I, and other queer and trans people, need to rely on ourselves to affirm our own value: I/we should not have to display it, nor seek an audience or external validation for this personal knowing of self-worth. Most days this is how I live my life, not constantly displaying the rainbow, or shouting “I am here and queer”. However, for groups of people who have been targeted by religious institutions, including the Catholic church, who have been medicalized, persecuted by governments, colonized and erased, this process of knowing how to develop self-worth is different. Many of us have learned not to show our full selves. Flying the flag is a way to invite us all to be more present. We are welcomed to be part of the process, to engage in a practice of reconciliation that acknowledges Two-spirited people, and to promote justice and well being. Symbols like the pride flag are an invitation to bring forward our full selves because we are in a place where there is support to do so. The flag is an antidote to the exclusion that we often experience.

I am not a martyr nor do I wish to become one. In my position of power and privilege as a scholar and clinician in my social world, I can, need, and must step up and speak out for those who do not have the same privilege and voice. SJU misleads students, faculty, and staff who seek to join our community when it claims to be committed to justice, dignity, and inclusivity and yet there are no signs to indicate a welcoming environment.

When I see rainbow flags and stickers, it tells me that that place knows my people's history, welcomes me as a citizen and sees my worth. It is both an invitation and an affirmation. The rainbow symbolizes and states that I am welcome there, and if I choose to join the community I will be treated with respect and dignity. It provides a signal that this is a safer place, because there is knowledge and awareness that not every space is safe for 2SLGBTQ+ people. At this time in our history, the flag pays tribute to our past with goodwill of a different future, a future that is inclusive of sexual, gender, and relationship diversity.

Many people, including students, staff, and faculty have asked that SJU fly the pride flag. I have been told to be more patient as the administration "considers" making changes and grapples with the implications of flying the flag. The leaders of our institutions are situated as powerful social change agents that are positioned to promote equity, human rights, and social justice for all. They are entrusted by all stakeholders to continue to steer our communities toward critical engagement, greater social harmony, and an environment where all people are truly welcomed and valued.

I invite you to contact Scott and let your voice be heard. Hopefully we do not need to wait much longer to see the pride flag flying at the front of our building as a reflection of our stated values.

Respectfully,

Carm De Santis