



OKANAGAN SENATE

MINUTES OF 18 NOVEMBER 2020

DRAFT

Attendance

Present: K. Ross, Cormack, A. Mukherjee-Reed, H. Berringer, S. Bates, P. Barker, P. Simpson, J. Olson, G. Binsted, B. Traister, B. Frank, R. Sugden, G. DiLabio, R. Campbell, J. Cioe, T. Ebl, J. Eikenaar, M. Evans, G. Garrard, Y. Lucet, S. O’Leary, P. Lasserre, P. Arthur, J. Picault, K. Ragoonaden, M. Legault, S. McNeil, S. Willis-Stewart L. Markley, J. Holzman, M. Libben,. Le Normand, M. Reeves, , T. Forneris, J. Jakobi, R. Herzberg, J. Lee, K. Morgan, R. Petillion, M. Pilin, B. Heerema, V. Tamandong, R. Metcalfe, J. Naqvi, , G. Singh, S. Cannon, Marcolin, A. Alnaar

Regrets: S. Ono, S. Point, S. Bates, R. Johnson, R. Lalonde, K. DesRoches D. Jarrouj.

Guest: R. Sadiq

Clerk: C. Eaton

Call to Order

The Vice-Chair of Senate, Dr Lesley Cormack called the third regular meeting of the Okanagan Senate to order at 3:36 pm.

Membership

The Registrar, Dr Kathleen Ross, welcomed Senator Abdulrahman Alnaar, convocation senator to 31 August 2023.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Barb Marcolin	}	<i>That the Minutes of the Meetings of 29 October 2020 be adopted as corrected.</i>
Kristen Morgan		

Approved

Remarks from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Principal, Dr Lesley Cormack said that as we approached the end of term she was aware that stress was increasing for students, faculty and staff. She said that this was something we would continue to look at to see what more we could do to help. She expressed her hope that people can rest before the start of Term 2, which was looking like it would be under strong Public Health Orders to ensure the continued safety of our campus. Dr Cormack said that we needed to continue our course until there is a vaccine, and this may not be available until the spring, summer, or even fall. Going forward in that reality we had to keep our students, staff and faculty safe, especially as 250 more students plan to return to residence for Term 2.

Dr Cormack noted that the Okanagan campus was continuing to advance its Truth and Reconciliation Commission commitments, anti-racism initiatives and Climate Emergency initiatives and that she would be happy to answer any questions in the interests of time.

PROVOST'S REMARKS

The Vice-President Academic & Provost, Dr Ananya Mukherjee-Reed said that at the previous meeting she was asked about the Tuum Est Initiative Fund was still available and if it could be used for anti-racism initiatives, she confirmed that it was and could be, and that she and the Vice-President, Student would work on a more detailed announcement.

Secondly, the Provost said that a document was being prepared for the Vancouver Senate around principles for Summer campus planning. She said that the Okanagan was continuing its discussions and while we knew of some courses we would like to offer in person, conversations had to continue with the faculties and she hoped to have a document for the December Senate meeting.

Senator Ebl thanked the University Administration for its pro-active support for off-campus working arrangements and the clear messaging to faculty and staff. While she would love to be back on campus, she appreciated how the new stricter mandates didn't negatively affect us as we were already being cautious.

Dr Cormack said that we would have to consider how to approach Summer to avoid having to flip flop as circumstances change.

Senator Metcalfe said that there have been conversations within the School of Social Work on support for student initiatives for anti-racism efforts. She asked what would be needed to seek UBC support.

The Provost said that a template was being prepared but she would be open to emails for anything time sensitive.

Senator Metcalfe said that she was to be a representative for all students in the Faculty of Health and Social Development but didn't have communication available with programs other than her



own. She asked for advice on appropriate channels or insights on how to engage with the broader student body.

The Provost said that she had found great success with own halls, and maybe one organized specifically for students may be an option once classes and the exam period pass.

Candidates for Degrees

Kristen Morgan	}	<i>That the candidates for degrees as recommended by the faculties and the College of Graduate Studies, be granted the degrees for which they were recommended, effective November 2020, and that a committee comprised of the Registrar, the relevant dean(s), and the Chair of Senate be empowered to make any necessary adjustments.</i>
Venedict Tamondong	}	

Approved

Academic Policy Committee

The Chair of the Senate Academic Policy Committee, Dr Jan Cioe, presented.

TERM 2 START

Jan Cioe	}	<i>That Senate approve in principal the change in start for Term 2 of the 2020 Winter Session to 11 January 2021.</i>
Kristen Morgan	}	

Dr Cioe said that he would deviate from a standard process so the Senate could discuss the matter in principle before moving forward with a specific motion. He expressed he appreciation personally and on behalf of his Committee to the various deans and to the Faculty Council of Creative and Critical Studies for bringing this matter forward to the Academic Policy Committee. He advised that the Committee had discussed the proposal and was unanimous in wanting a change to term 2. Dr Cioe noted that just as the Principal had mentioned in her remarks, the Academic Policy Committee recognized that there was a tremendous amount of stress this term, and that stress is in part exacerbated by the expected that of Term 2 early in January and the relatively late end of the examination period on 22 December.



To address this situation while preserving the minimum number of teaching days – 60 per term – the Academic Policy Committee looked at a variety of options. In consultation with the Deputy Registrar, one way to gain some days would be to shorten the examination term and move from three to four examination slots per day (such as was already done at Vancouver). One aspect of the proposal not recommended one way or the other was if Sundays should be used for examinations to allow for more room for either teaching days or exam days. He noted that Proposal 1 used Sundays while Proposal 2 did not.

Senator Eikenaar asked that if we went to four examination slots, this would mean standard exams would be 2.5 hours rather than 3.

The Clerk confirmed that the standard exam slot would become 2.5 hours if 3-hour exams were still needed for pedagogical or accreditation reasons they likely would be scheduled for the last slot of each day.

Dean DiLabio said that this was an admirable initiative but wanted to make clear that this proposal wasn't necessarily supported by all the deans. In his own faculty, there were concerns with greater examination hardships and a compressed schedule causing even more stress or just moving stress to later in the term, while early in the term stress was relatively low. He also expressed a concern for faculty and staff having to adjust their courses over the Winter break, and for any negative impact on salaries for hourly staff.

Senator Holzman said that as far as accreditation went for Engineering, some three hour exams may be needed but as far as they could tell, these modifications would work for his program and he encouraged other professional degrees to ensure it could work for them.

Robin Metcalfe: Oh, I'm actually thinking you'd probably want to take some other questions first mining finance simple I'm just actually one rewind a Sunday is protected. I'm sure there's going to be there. And I'd love to know if you can save that till later.

Senator Cioe agreed with the earlier comments of Dean DiLabio and said that there were no ideal solutions to this problem as solutions could create other problems. With respect to the use of Sundays, he noted that students could seek accommodations if needed on religious grounds. He agreed that this compression of the exam term may cause more exam hardships or near-hardships, and advised that the Academic Policy Committee was exploring this topic more broadly. With respect to teaching assistant contracts, he understood the number of hours would be the same they would just be moved back a week. He did note that deans could make exceptions to the start date if required for sound academic reasons, including accreditation requirements.

Senator Markley said that he had spoken with his students and colleagues in Engineering and while they seemed to support an extended break, they were very concerned about a more compressed exam schedule, especially given that Engineering students typically took six courses per term and tended to have a front-loaded examination schedule with two exams per day or an



exam every day. He said he supported the proposal but would do so more strongly if we did not have a compressed examination period and instead had a later end date.

Dean Binsted said that the end date was set for the 29th so that students did not have to pay an additional month's rent nor move on their last exam day. He noted that the current schedule only gave some students a 13-day break between the last possible exam and the start of term, and did not give faculty much time to prepare for the next term. He confirmed that the later term start could be made to work for the three schools in his faculty of Health and Social Development.

Senator McNeil said that we would be buying a week at the start of term for the price of two days at the end as most students don't have examination schedules with their exams on the last day. He noted that if we kept to current assessment practices the compressed schedule would likely lead to more hardships, but noted that we were in a position to be flexible with our final assessments and perhaps faculties could consider other, more flexible, ways of assessing students rather than final examinations. He noted that he too had asked students and colleagues and they were strongly in support for a later start as well, noting that this was the most exhausting term we had ever had. He concluded by noting that there were issues with any changes, but making a change was the least bad option.

Senator Le Normand noted the issues with online assessment of students via remote invigilation, and suggested finding alternate ways of assessing students, especially where it may be easier in the humanities and social sciences. She also suggested suspending the rule against tests in the last weeks of term to alleviate some pressure to have final exams, or having exams go into May as fewer students took courses in the Summer Session.

The Clerk explained that UBC had exams on Saturday but not Sunday presently as a historical artifact from when it had courses on Saturdays but not Sundays. He noted that moving forward, Vancouver would be using Sundays for exams. He noted that there were greater transit challenges with Sunday examinations and this may result in not using the first examination sitting that day, but that those issues weren't present with online examinations.

Senator Legault said that she suspected there may be fewer exams this year, which should reduce pressure on the examination period. She said that people are and should continue to make efforts to err on the side of kindness and generosity and try to shape things differently for next term.

Dean Traister said that all of the concerns head so far seemed manageable. He said that the power of this gesture is to tell our students as we go into the end of a difficult term that we hear them and see what they were going through in terms of stress and anxiety; this decision would help the go forward into examinations and next term.

Senator O'Leary said that from his experience, accredited programs – at least in Engineering – should be able to cope with this change.



Senator Ebl spoke against the suggestion of using 30 April or continuing examinations into May out of consideration for those with rental accommodations. She also didn't agree with the Clerk's comment on Sundays not being an issue this year with transit as some faculty, staff, and students did still need to travel to campus even in the Pandemic. She said that she strongly supported the proposal overall.

The Provost informed Senate on behalf of the President that he strongly supported the proposal.

Senator Reeves said that she was strongly in support of the proposal and asked if we could go below 60 teaching days per term in consideration of asynchronous learning actually taking more time and effort than traditional instruction.

Senator Morgan said that this was a stressful term as evidenced by increased use of anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medication, alcohol and substance abuse, and insomnia. She recognized that this proposal may just move stress to later in the term, but said that this was our best choice.

Dean Olson said that he was quite concerned by the increases in stress and anxiety caused by both increased workloads but also by the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. He described this as a tradeoff and said he suspected faculty and students would appreciate having more time to prepare for Term 2, but that the shortened examination period would be a hardship for Engineering students who could have six, seven, or even eight courses per term; every day they had between exams was precious. Overall, he said he was in favour of the proposal but said we needed to be very careful about how the examination period was constructed.

With respect to Senator Reeves' suggestion, the Clerk advised that 60 days was the absolute minimum for three primary reasons: First of all, accreditation for programs. Secondly, transferability or acceptability of our courses for other institutions that look at contact hours, and thirdly student loan eligibility rules.

A number of Senators debating how to decide amongst the two proposed options, as well as consideration of a third option of retaining 14 examination days and using Sundays for exams.

Senator Eikenaar expressed his support for Proposal 2 as it would give the same number of examination days as Proposal 1 but guaranteed two days (Sundays) with exams.

Senator Holzman suggested encouraging instructors not to use final exams as a way of reducing the number needed.

Senator Markley also spoke in favour of Proposal 2, saying that the longer exam period and days without examinations were more important than maintaining the 62 teaching days.



Dean Binsted said he favoured proposals 2 or 3, but noted that earlier this term we thought there would be fewer examinations this December but due to late requests the number was as usual.

Senator Ebl also spoke for proposal 2, and said we should have a separate conversation about using Sundays for examinations.

Senator Naqvi said that having the longer examination period would be preferable.

Senator Morgan said that students had been discussing the proposals and would prefer not to have Sunday examinations.

Senator Gerrard asked if having examinations finish on the 29th would pose a problem for submission of grades by teaching assistants.

The Clerk advised that grade submission was the responsibility of the instructor and not his or her teaching assistants. Arraignments would need to be made for submission by the deadline, which was five days after the last day of the examination period.

The Registrar confirmed for Dean DiLabio that should the start of Term 2 courses change, the add/drop and fee dates would change with it.

Senator Le Normand repeated her suggestion that the Academic Policy Committee consider suspending the prohibition on in-class examination in the last two-weeks of term.

Senator Cioe said they'd take it under consideration.

Senator Evans expressed a discomfort with maintaining Sunday as a no-examination day given the secular university.

Approved

PROPOSED OPTION FOR TERM 2

Rhys Herzberg Gordon Binsted	}	<i>That Proposal 2 as specified in the report of the Academic Policy Committee be selected as the means to change the start of Term 2.</i>
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Approved

2020 WINTER ACADEMIC YEAR

Jan Cioe
Gordon Binsted

}

That Senate suspend Sections 4 and 8 of Policy O-125 for the 2020 Winter Session; and Except where a Dean of a Faculty determines that the current start date of 4 January 2021 for a course must be used to comply with accreditation or other sound academic requirements (including arrangements with third parties), the proposed dates below in Proposal 2 be set as the term dates for term 2 of the 2020 Winter Session:

Term 2

Start: Monday, January 11

Midterm Break: February 15-19

Finish: Tuesday, 13 April

Teaching Days: 60

Exams Start: Friday, 16 April

Exams Finish: Thursday, 29 April

Approved

Learning & Research Committee

The Vice-Chair of the Senate Learning & Research Committee, Dr Sally Willis-Stewart, presented.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF INSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dr Willis-Stewart said that her Committee had undertaken recent discussions on the new six-question questionnaire. Implementation was expected for May 2021, and this would give more time to work on communication and refinement.

Nominating Committee

The Chair of the Senate Nominating Committee, Dr Jannik Einenaar, presented.



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Jannik Eikenaar } *That Abdulrahman Alnaar be appointed to the Appeals of Standing & Discipline Committee until 31 August 2023 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy;*
Jan Cioe

That Karen Ragoonaden and Abdulrahman Alnaar be elected to the Council of Senates;

That Patricia Lasserre be appointed to Council of Senates Representative Committee 1 until 31 August 2023 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy;

That Jennifer Jakobi be appointed to Council of Senates Representative Committee 2 until 31 August 2023 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy;

That Peter Arthur be appointed to Council of Senates Representative Committee 3 until 31 August 2023 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy; and

That Gordon Binsted be appointed to Council of Senates Representative Committee 5 until 31 August 2023 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy.

Approved

NB: Senator Alnaar abstained

Extend the Time to Adjourn

By general consent, the time to adjourn was extended by 30 minutes.

Other business

Amend Agenda

Bryce Traister } *That the following motion to added to the Agenda for Senate for immediate consideration:*



Kristen Morgan

That Senate direct the Faculties to normally grant formal withdrawal (W) standing upon request of a student for any course taken in the 2020 Winter Session provided that such a request is made on or before the last day of classes for the term for those courses of term length, or on or before the last day of classes for the session for those courses of session length.

Approved

2020 Winter Formal Withdrawal Deadlines

Bryce Traister
Tamara Ebl

}

That Senate direct the Faculties to normally grant formal withdrawal (W) standing upon request of a student for any course taken in the 2020 Winter Session provided that such a request is made on or before the last day of classes for the term for those courses of term length, or on or before the last day of classes for the session for those courses of session length.

Dean Simpson asked if the motion would apply to graduate students.

Dean Traister said that as written it would apply to all students, undergraduate and graduate.

Dr Lasserre asked if it would also apply to the upcoming Summer Session.

Dean Traister said that it was only to apply for the current (Winter) Session.

Dr Cioe noted that if approved, students would need to go through their faculties rather than be able to withdrawn themselves online.

The Clerk, Mr Christopher Eaton, confirmed that the Student Information System (SIS) would not be reprogrammed to allow for self-withdrawals; this was both for technical limitations but also so advisors could properly warn students of the consequences of withdrawing.



Dean DiLabio suggested that we should be more pro-active when it came to the Summer session,

Approved

Amend Agenda

Jan Cioe	}	<i>That the following motion to added to the Agenda for Senate for immediate consideration: That Rule 37 of the Okanagan Senate Operating Procedures be suspended for the 2020-23 triennium with regard to the Appeals of Standing and Discipline Committee.</i>
Barb Marcolin		

Approved

Suspension of Rule 37

Jan Cioe	}	<i>That Rule 37 of the Okanagan Senate Operating Procedures be suspended for the 2020-23 triennium with regard to the Appeals of Standing and Discipline Committee.</i>
Kristen Morgan		

Senator Cioe said that the Agenda Committee was proposing this rule suspension so as to ensure that an experienced and continuing member of the Committee could serve as its chair, noting that there was a backlog of matters to be heard and none of the new members of the Committee had expressed a willingness to serve.

Approved

NB: Senator Legault Abstained.

IN CAMERA – Learning & Research Committees

Dr Peter Arthur assumed the chair.

By general consent, the time to adjourn was extended by a further 20 minutes.

CANDIDATES FOR HONORARY DEGREES

Adjournment

Seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.