



MINUTES

A meeting of the Senate of the University of Victoria was held on February 6, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. in the Senate and Board Chambers, Room A180, University Centre.

Dr. Turpin welcomed Ms. Flitton to her first Senate meeting.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: (R. Burke/T. Ho)

That the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

2. MINUTES

Motion: (S. Blackstone/T. Haskett)

That the minutes of the open session of the meeting of the Senate held on January 9, 2009 be approved and that the approved minutes be circulated in the usual way.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a. Outcome of Election of Senators to the Committee for the Appointment of the President

Dr. Eastman reported that Dr. Devor and Ms. Ho had been elected at the last meeting as the Senate representatives on the Committee for the Appointment of the President.

4. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

a. President's report

Dr. Turpin provided an update on the federal budget. He reported that the federal government had announced a major investment in infrastructure, some of which would benefit post-secondary institutions. Dr. Turpin said the university was working with the Research Universities Council and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada to provide advice on allocation of funds for infrastructure.

In response to a question from Dr. Turner, Dr. Turpin said that universities were interpreting "infrastructure" broadly to include both research and teaching infrastructure.

With regard to the provincial budget, Dr. Turpin said the budget would be announced on February 17.

Dr. Turpin reported that he had recently participated in the BC Economic Summit. He said the theme of the importance of education and research was repeated throughout the summit.

With regard to events at the university, Dr. Turpin reported that:

- Dr. Alan Pence, School of Child and Youth Care, had recently co-hosted a symposium on strengthening Africa's contributions to child development research.
- Prof. Wolfgang Hoefer, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, received the 2009 McNaughton Gold Medal from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.
- the Board of Governors approved preliminary planning and a funding feasibility study for renovations to the McKinnon Building and the construction of a new athletics facility.
- Alumni Week was taking place this week, with daily events and celebrations.
- a Diversity Research Forum was scheduled to take place on February 12 and 13.
- the university had teamed up with the Canadian Cancer Society to launch a tobacco-free workplace initiative.
- two silver medals were awarded to the university for submissions to the Council for Advancement and Support of Education District VIII.
- the university won the United Way post-secondary challenge, an informal competition between local post-secondary institutions.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

6. PROPOSALS AND REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES

a. Senate Committee on Academic Standards

i. Implementation of the 20% "With Distinction" Policy

Dr. Baer reported that the Senate Committee on Academic Standards had finalized the implementation guidelines for the 20% "with distinction" policy. He thanked members of the committee who had worked on the project. Dr. Baer said the policy would be implemented for the June 2010 convocation.

Motion: (D. Baer/M. Webb)

That all references to "with distinction", except for the reference on

page 39, be deleted from the undergraduate academic calendar.

CARRIED

Motion: (D. Baer/M. Webb)

That the wording on p. 39 of the undergraduate academic calendar regarding “with distinction” be replaced with the wording in the attached document entitled “With Distinction: Wording for Academic Calendar”.

CARRIED

Motion: (D. Baer/M. Webb)

That the word “distinction” not be used in the names of honours or awards associated with the awarding of degrees, except to refer to the university-wide 20% “with distinction” calculation.

CARRIED

b. Senate Committee on Admission, Re-registration and Transfer

i. Faculty of Engineering Admission Requirements

Motion: (T. Haskett/T. Tiedje)

That the admission requirements for the Faculty of Engineering be amended as set out in the attached curriculum change form.

CARRIED

ii. Change of “Qualifying Students” Category to “Exploratory Studies”

Dr. Fulton commented on the difference in the calculation of units in the qualifying students category and exploratory studies. He also noted that there appeared to be a change in the registration priority given to students in exploratory studies. Ms. Joyce responded that exploratory studies students were being given the same registration priority as other students in the non-degree category.

Dr. Haskett observed that exploratory studies referred to a type of studies, as opposed to a type of student. He questioned whether this language implied that exploratory studies was a program.

Motion: (T. Haskett/T. Ho)

That the “Qualifying Students” category described in the academic calendar be replaced with the category of “Exploratory Studies” and its associated description.

CARRIED

iii. Proposed changes in Language Proficiency requirements in Calendar

Dr. Baer provided comments on behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, which had been consulted on the proposed changes recommended by the Senate Committee on Admission, Re-registration and Transfer. Dr. Baer reported that some committee members were concerned about the evidence informing the decision to change the requirements, as well as the unanticipated consequences of making the change. He said that other committee members were generally in support of the change and thought the three-year review period was a good idea.

Dr. Webb expressed concern about lowering admission standards. He commented that in his experience there were already a number of students struggling with language proficiency. He asked what mechanisms would be implemented to support students.

Mr. Qian objected to lowering language proficiency standards for international students. He did not think there was currently adequate assistance on campus for international students who have English as a second language.

Dr. Turner suggested the proposal created a dilemma. She recognized the concerns being expressed but also noted the pressure to align with other institutions in order to be competitive.

Dr. Anthony thought it was appropriate to look at language proficiency test scores skeptically because they were not reliably predictable. He said changing the scores would not address the fundamental problem of inadequate language support for students at the university.

Regarding the three-year review, Dr. Burke asked what outcome was intended and what measure would be used to assess this outcome. Ms. Wallace-Hulecki responded that the performance of students admitted under the new requirements could be assessed to determine their success at the university.

Dr. Carlin noted that some of the universities with lower language proficiency test scores have support systems in place that UVic does not. She thought the support systems should be in place before the standards were lowered.

Dr. Majerbi said she has experienced a number of students in the Faculty of Business struggling with language proficiency. Because of the nature of the programs in the faculty, she added that students do not have time to take extra courses to assist them with language proficiency.

Dr. Tiedje commented on the importance of proficiency in mathematics for students enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering. He expressed some concern that overly restrictive language proficiency requirements might disadvantage the faculty if they prohibited admission of students with strong math but poor language skills.

Prof. Gammon agreed with assessing what student support requirements might be required before changing language proficiency requirements.

Prof. Cassels asked Dr. Anglin and Dr. Keller to comment on some of the English language support mechanisms currently in place at the university. Dr. Anglin reported that the Writing Centre had undergone expansion over the past couple of years. He said a course in curriculum redesign for internationalization was being offered to instructors. Dr. Anglin reported that the Department of Economics had developed a program to support the high number of students in the department with English as a second language. Independent of the motion currently being considered by Senate, he added that an inventory of support systems was being taken with a view to continued development of English language support. With regards to the program in the Department of Economics, Dr. Keller said that 40-50% of students in the department had English as a second language. He said the department had invested substantially in the development of a mandatory course focusing on English proficiency.

Dr. Gagné asked if faculties or departments were permitted to set higher language proficiency standards than those required for admission to the university. Ms. Wallace-Hulecki said there were no restrictions on this.

Mr. Qian recognized the challenge to recruit students, both domestically and internationally. Instead of lowering admission standards, he thought there were better ways to attract qualified students to the university.

Dr. Webb said he was not in principle opposed to changing the language proficiency requirements; however, before doing so, he wanted to know what plans were in place to support students. Dr. Webb suggested it might also be a good idea to assess what the language proficiency requirements were at the faculty level and what effect a change in overall requirements would have on individual faculties.

Ms. Flitton asked if there was any urgency associated with the proposal. Ms. Wallace-Hulecki responded that marketing efforts had been bolstered to promote recruitment of international students. She said feedback had been received from a number of sources, including students and recruitment agencies, that the university was at a disadvantage because of its language proficiency requirements. Ms. Wallace-Hulecki said the impetus behind the proposal was to bring UVic's language proficiency requirements in line with other universities in Canada.

In response to questions from Dr. Majerbi and Mr. Wade, Dr. Turpin said that faculties could implement higher language proficiency requirements than those required for admission to the university. He said the university-level requirement was the minimum, unless an exception was granted by Senate.

Dr. Kennedy asked if exceptions could be granted so that admission could be offered to exceptional students who do not meet the language proficiency requirements. Ms. Wallace-Hulecki said they could. She noted, however, that this would not help with recruiting and promotional efforts. Ms. Joyce added that these exceptions would not address students who choose not to apply to the university because of its language proficiency requirements.

Ms. Joyce reviewed the university's language proficiency requirements and noted that, across all tests, the requirements were higher than at other universities in Canada.

Dr. Baer said the Senate Committee on Academic Standards had discussed whether alternative test scores or admission criteria could take precedence over standardized language proficiency test scores. He thought this might be considered in the future.

Mr. Metcalfe said that implementing a change now would require the university to rely on the support mechanisms currently in place. Because a change in language proficiency requirements could be implemented faster than the development of support mechanisms, he thought it would be better to focus on developing support mechanisms before changing the language proficiency requirements.

Motion: (T. Haskett/K. Sanford)

That the attached revisions to the language proficiency requirements in the undergraduate calendar be approved and made effective for those students admitted as of September 2009 or later; and that these adjustments be monitored for a three year period and be reviewed at the end of that time.

DEFEATED

The motion was defeated. Two members of Senate abstained from voting.

c. Senate Committee on Appeals

i. Revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference and Procedural Guidelines

Dr. Burke said the purpose of this item was to alert senators that the Senate Committee on Appeals was in the process of considering changes to its terms of reference and procedural guidelines.

ii. Amendments to the Academic Calendar

Dr. Burke said that because amendments to the committee's terms of reference and procedural guidelines would not be complete before the academic calendar was finalized, amendments to the academic calendar were being proposed. In response to a question from Dr. Baer, Dr. Burke explained that the calendar changes being proposed were an interim measure until the terms of reference and procedural guidelines were finalized.

Motion: (R. Burke/S. Blackstone)

That the Senate approve the amendments to the appeals sections of the University of Victoria's undergraduate and graduate academic calendars as set out in the attached document.

CARRIED

d. Senate Committee on Awards

i. New and revised undergraduate awards

Motion: (S. Lewis Hammond/M. Kennedy)

That Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors for its approval, the following new and revised awards submitted by the Senate Committee on Awards:

- *Jeromy Pollard Memorial Scholarship (new)*
- *Norah and Calvin Banks Chemistry Scholarship* (new)*
- *Norah and Calvin Banks Science Scholarship* (new)*

*Administered by the University of Victoria Foundation

CARRIED

e. Senate Committee on Curriculum

i. 2007/08 Annual Report

Dr. Fulton thanked members of the Senate Committee on Curriculum for their hard work. He encouraged members of Senate involved in program development to submit curriculum changes to the Senate Committee on Curriculum at the same time as programs are being considered by the Senate Committee on Planning so that programs can be approved and implemented as efficiently as possible.

Motion: (D. Clover/S. Blackstone)

That Senate receive, with thanks, the 2007/08 annual report of the Senate Committee on Curriculum.

CARRIED

ii. 2009/10 Major Curriculum Changes

Dr. Tuokko asked that the motions be clarified to specify that changes to both the undergraduate and graduate academic calendars were being considered.

Motion: (G. Fulton/D. Clover)

That Senate approve the major curriculum changes recommended by the Faculties and the Senate Committee on Curriculum for inclusion in the 2009/10 undergraduate and graduate academic calendars.

CARRIED

Motion: (G. Fulton/A. Preece)

That Senate authorize the Chair of the Senate Committee on Curriculum to make small changes and additions that would otherwise unnecessarily delay the submission of items for the undergraduate and graduate academic calendars.

CARRIED

f. Senate Committee on Planning

Dr. Mateer expressed thanks to Dr. Fulton and the Senate Committee on Curriculum for their willingness to work with the Senate Committee on Planning to consider program proposals as efficiently as possible.

i. Certificate in Financial Planning

Motion: (M. MacDonald/J. Cassels)

That Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors that it also approve, subject to funding, the establishment of a Certificate in Financial Planning to be offered by the Division of Continuing Studies, as described in the document entitled "A Proposal for a Certificate in Financial Planning" dated January 20, 2009.

CARRIED

ii. Minor in Human Dimensions of Climate Change

Motion: (P. Keller/D. Baer)

That the Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors that it also approve, subject to funding, the establishment of a program leading to the degree of a Minor in Human Dimensions of Climate Change to be offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences, in collaboration with other Faculties, as described in the document "Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Minor: Human Dimensions of Climate Change", dated January 18, 2009, and that this approval be withdrawn if the program should not be offered within five years of the granting of approval. A start date will be determined after consultation with the Registrar.

CARRIED

7. PROPOSALS AND REPORTS FROM FACULTIES

There were none.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Ten-Year Sessional Calendar

Motion: (D. Baer/S. Blackstone)

That Senate approve the 2008-2018 Ten-Year Sessional calendar.

CARRIED

b. 2009/2010 Academic Year Important Dates

Motion: (R. Burke/L. Gammon)

That Senate approve the 2009/2010 Academic Year Important Dates calendar for submission to the 2009/2010 academic calendar.

CARRIED

c. 2008/2009 Emeritus

Motion: (R. Anthony/R. Burke)

That Senate receive for information the 2008/2009 Emeritus list for submission to the 2009/2010 academic calendar.

CARRIED

d. 2009/2010 Senate Meeting Dates

Motion: (T. Haskett/S. Blackstone)

That Senate approve the 2009/2010 Senate Meeting Dates and Other Important Dates schedule.

CARRIED

e. Enrolment Projections for 2009 - 2010

Motion: (J. Cassels/H. Brunt)

That Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors that it also approve, a projected annualized working enrolment target of 16,800 FTE for the 2009-10 academic year, subject to revision in the event of new information regarding mandated growth, funding levels, and application rates.

CARRIED

f. Exceptions to Senate Approval Procedures for the Production of Transcripts without a Cumulative GPA

Prof. Cassels reported that, consistent with the motion passed by Senate permitting the implementation of short-term Banner related adjustments in academic policy and regulations, transcripts would be printed for a short period of time without listing a student's cumulative GPA.

There being no further business, the open meeting of Senate was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.