

University of Waterloo

SENATE

Minutes of the Monday, November 17, 2003 Meeting

Present: David Johnston (Chair), Lois Claxton (Secretary), Emma Bardon, Ranjana Bird, Kieran Bonner, Graham Brown, Stephen Brown, Jane Buyers, Jeannette Byrne, Avi Caplan, Amit Chakma, Adrian Chin, Hsiao d'Ailly, Antero Da Silva, Ray Digby, Chris Edey, Marlene Epp, Alan George, James Gollnick, Len Guelke, Paul Guild, Simon Guthrie, Mark Haslett, Rick Helmes-Hayes, Conrad Hewitt, Michael Higgins, Laurie Hoffman-Goetz, Dennis Huber, Igor Ivkovic, Ed Jernigan, Bob Kerton, Ken Lavigne, Robert Le Roy, Siyan Li, Wing-Ki Liu, Neil Malcolm, David Matthews, Geoff McBoyle, Liam McHugh-Russell, Ray McLenaghan, Kirsten Morris, Heather Murray, John North, Joseph Novak, Henry Paetkau, Alan Plumtree, Bill Power, Steve Prentice, Manoj Sachdev, Paul Schellenberg, Catherine Schryer, Adel Sedra, Thomas Seebohm, Mike Sharratt, James Skidmore, James Sloan, Ralph Smith, Lubomir Stanchev, Donna Strickland, Edward Vrscay, John Wainwright, Ross Willard, Ian Williams, Johnny Wong

Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Bruce Lumsden, Flora Ng (partial), Catharine Scott, Bob Truman, Bud Walker

Absent: Christopher Burris, John Crossley, Mieke Delfgaauw, George Dixon*, Yolanda Dorrington*, Christian Dufournaud, Brian Forrest, Bruce Greenberg*, Mariela Gutiérrez*, Bob Harding*, Jesse Helmer*, Keith Hipel*, Suzanne Hubbard*, George Labahn, Mike Lazaridis*, Bruce Mitchell*, Arokia Nathan, Alex Sloat, Giuseppe Tenti, Tony Vannelli, Paul Wesson

*regrets

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed newly elected graduate student Senator Lubomir Stanchev to the meeting and asked Senate's permission to re-order the agenda so that Item 7.c., the report from the University Appointments Review Committee, was considered at the beginning of the meeting. Senate was also advised that Item 6, the report of the Vice-President, University Research was struck from the agenda and the presentation on Strategic Initiatives would be combined with the Vice-President, Academic & Provost's report under Item 5. [Note: Notwithstanding agreement to amend the agenda, the minutes are written in step with the agenda.]

2. PRESENTATION -- STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In the interest of time, this item was deferred to the December meeting of Senate.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the October 20, 2003 minutes as distributed.

Plumtree and Le Roy.

A question of whether the University would consider constructing a temporary, raised gravel pathway along the north side of Columbia Street west of Westmount Road until the street reconstruction with bike lanes, sidewalks, etc. is built in 2005. Because of the grading, the natural place to build a temporary pathway would be on the city's right-of-way. The Vice-President, Administration & Finance agreed to take the matter under advisement and contact the city regarding this issue.

The motion carried.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising.

5. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Recognition and Commendation. The President encouraged Senators who know individuals listed in the report to offer a word of congratulations or send a note of recognition.

Environmental Scan:

- **Provincial Liberal Government.** [Overhead slides available in the Secretariat.] The COU Executive heads met with the new Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Honorable Mary Anne Chambers, on November 12. Preparatory to the meeting, the Heads reviewed the sobering results of a government perception audit/opinion survey on the university sector (undertaken by Bob Richardson who has been retained temporarily as the new government relations consultant): generally, the impression is that universities are well regarded but there is no sense of urgency within the sector.

In the meeting, the Minister confirmed that her government is committed to the two-year tuition freeze (possibly including deregulated fees), that she will use the next two years to review the entire financial framework of the sector and develop a new framework that considers accessibility and quality, and that she is committed to an undergraduate increase of a further ten percent in the system in the next five years (probably with additional funding based on the current model). Other topics touched on included unfunded BIUs, additional double cohort student funding, the 30 percent real decrease in per student funding over the past two decades due to the failure to meet inflationary pressures, graduate student funding and reinvestment, medical student funding, financial aid and OSAP reform, the implications of the end of mandatory retirement and concerns about professorial renewal.

The government's next step is to calculate how much money will be foregone by the tuition freeze and then how to distribute compensation to Ontario's 18 universities. Because of its diverse membership, COU may not be able to agree on the formula but has established a working group to create various models which can be put forward.

In response to a question about COU's lobbying effectiveness, the Chair believes that Ontario universities are served well by COU and AUCC though both groups face the challenges of representing institutions, all with different missions and problems. With respect to MTCU, the difficulty arises not in influencing/convincing the Minister but, because it is a junior- to middle-level Ministry, the Minister has no "clout" with the Minister of Finance or the Premier's Office. As to the effect of a tuition freeze on UW's fiscal circumstances, other factors will also come into play including: an additional \$1 million in energy costs (due to the deregulation of energy rates); inflationary costs (~\$10 to \$11 million next year) which are not incorporated in the government's operating grants; UW's faculty and staff compensation package. These circumstances give rise to questions of whether the institution should focus more on its development activities and the recruitment of more international students (tuition freeze will probably also apply to international students).

- **Upcoming Provincial Throne Speech.** The Throne Speech is scheduled for November 20. Senators were asked to watch for indications of funding for higher education and research.

6. REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC & PROVOST

- **Maclean's Rankings 2003.** The Vice-President, Academic presented a series of slides which tracked selected data and highlighted Waterloo's downward trend since 1996. Waterloo is losing in the national ranking (12th in the country in 1996, 34th by 2001 and 31st in 2002) and in the average entering grade of first-year students. UW was 11th in Canada this year, down from 6th last year (marks at Waterloo aren't going down in absolute terms but other institutions are "doing better"). The reasons for the slippage are complicated including: other institutions are being more aggressive in recruiting students, offering early admissions and offering scholarships; per student funding is better at other universities; Waterloo appears more "timid"/measured in its approach to opportunities (e.g., SuperBuild and ATOP programs) while other institutions seem to have been more aggressive.

In the Vice-President's opinion, two main concerns need to be addressed: (1) the quality of incoming students and (2) research performance. These issues remain the same as those of the 2002 "Call to Action" plan which had a three-point thrust (recruiting high quality students, intensifying research performance, and diversifying income sources). While some measures have been put in place and others are in train, a bold action plan is necessary to move forward. The Vice-President asked Senate for answers to the following four questions:

- Are we prepared to raise our admission standards by: restricting admissions in all programs to students with a minimum 75 percent GPA; establishing faculty based targets to move minimum admissions requirements to 80 percent over the next two years?
- Should we re-examine and re-design curriculum in areas where we currently do not attract high quality students to make these programs attractive?
- Should we be reducing undergraduate enrollment in programs with low student demand and focus on graduate programs and service teaching?
- Should we change our traditional practices of relying on the complete applications package and embrace the practice of offering "early admissions" along with scholarships based on Grade 11 standings?

In a lengthy discussion, Senators heard:

on GPA / early offers of admission:

- If admission standards were raised, UW would look to move students from low to high demand programs or admit more out-of-province students, thereby maintaining both enrolment numbers and tuition income. It is possible that fewer tuition dollars may follow.
- The suggestion is to try to increase the quality of undergraduate students in certain programs rather than try to increase the numbers of undergraduate students.
- The 70 percent cut-off grade was implemented in 1995 but many programs require a much higher percentage. In 2002, the average entering mark of first-years students was 85.5 percent although 250 students were below 75 percent and there were broad variations among Faculties.
- Several speakers cautioned that Waterloo must remain available to people who can benefit from "a learning experience" and not be too driven by entrance grades (perhaps already a moot point) and to consider the broader social impacts of raising the admission "bar" ever higher; the political wisdom of higher standards given the Liberal government's commitment to accessibility.
- If Waterloo raises its admission standards thereby registering five to ten percent fewer first-year students, would this group of students have been likely to continue through to graduation? What does the retention data show? The Registrar and the Director of Institutional Analysis and Planning agreed to report back to Senate.
- The opinion that high school averages may be lower in the future with the introduction of the

- new (more rigorous) curriculum.
- Making early conditional admission offers to high quality students (potentially 40 or 50 percent of first-year students) would not expose Waterloo to much risk or compromise quality.

on funding / budget:

- Unfunded BIUs account for about ten percent of the institution's students.
- Recruiting is decentralized and varies among Faculties. With more resources and a unified approach, Waterloo could do better recruiting high quality students.
- Given Waterloo lacks huge endowments and lost excellent senior faculty to early retirement in 1996, UW is doing remarkably well. Other universities started aggressive fund-raising campaigns earlier than UW and introduced differential fees years ago -- all with a compounding effect.
- The budget flexibility recently introduced will create about 70 to 100 incremental new faculty positions in two or three years' time and has allowed 32 additional support staff positions this year.

on recruiting:

- Lack of scholarships is not the only factor determining choice of university: applicants pick based on the school's reputation, quality of teaching and research, how aggressive the school is in attracting them (i.e., the effort made to communicate with the student), and early offers of admission. If scholarships are a prime determinant, Waterloo should put operating money into them.
- The annual surveys of those admitted to UW but declined show that more personal communication during the application process, offers of early admission, and a lack of scholarships are among the top factors contributing to the decision not to accept Waterloo's offer.
- Because *Maclean's* survey is an important public relations tool, Waterloo will have to increase its ranking in *Maclean's* if it wants to ~~improve and~~ attract more high quality students. In response, Waterloo's objective is not to be ranked number one in *Maclean's* but to change those things within its control to attract high quality students; further that Waterloo continues to do well in a number of indicators and Arts graduates do better after graduation compared to any other institution.
- Waterloo should make a commitment to improve first-year teaching and reduce class size.
- From a graduate student Senator, the opinion that the University's reputation in graduate studies is weak and graduate students, particularly top international graduate students, often choose to attend American universities, give priority to tuition rates (free at certain institutions including Toronto) and compare the quality of research and whether the institution attracts top international professors.

on the future:

- Many of these issues are relevant to the framework of the Sixth Decade Report and the work of the Senate Long Range Planning Committee. How they are addressed will have profound implications for 10 and 20 years hence.

In closing, the Vice-President expressed his appreciation for this useful discussion. He noted that given Waterloo's collegial system we can maintain the status quo but with certain consequences. Alternatively Waterloo can question why Toronto, Queen's, Western and Guelph have chosen to do things differently and decide to learn from their best practices. Further discussion was deferred to the December meeting of Senate when Senate's guidance on these issues and an agreement in principle regarding admission standards will be sought through a motion shaped by the Senate Executive Committee.

7. **REPORT FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY RESEARCH**

Withdrawn from the agenda.

8. **REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS**

a. **Undergraduate Council.**

- **2004-2005 Academic Calendar Dates.** Senate heard a motion to approve the adoption of these dates, identified in the report as Attachment #1.

Lavigne and George.

It was noted that the fall 2004 term has 12 days set aside for examinations (the fall 2003 term had 14); there is no enthusiasm to schedule exams on Sundays. Acknowledgment that some scheduling challenges still exist.

The motion carried.

- **New Plans/Change in Plan Name/Plan Deletions/Changes to Regulations/Diploma and Certificate Plans.** Senate heard a motion to approve these as described in the agenda portfolio.

McBoyle and Lavigne. Carried.

Senate received the remaining items in the report for information.

b. **Graduate & Research Council.**

- **New Programs.**

Centre for Business, Entrepreneurship & Technology MBET@Distance. Senate heard a motion to approve the part-time Master of Business, Entrepreneurship & Technology delivered in a distance learning mode as described in the agenda portfolio.

Bird and George.

It was noted that the resources needed to support the program still remain to be sorted out.

The motion carried.

Faculty of Arts, Department of Psychology MASc in Developmental Communication Science (DCS). Senate heard a motion to approve the MASc in Developmental Communication Science as described in the agenda portfolio.

Bird and Kerton. Carried.

The remaining items in the report were received for information.

- c. **University Appointments Review Committee (UARC).** The Chair of the Committee presented the report to Senate and noted that this year saw a record number of proposals (due to the ATOP program and expansion in Engineering and Mathematics). There has been a general increase in proposed female appointees in the last three years (17.3 percent in 2000 - 2001, 25.4 percent in 2001 - 2002 and 26.7 percent in 2002 - 2003). Particularly encouraging is the Faculty of

Engineering which saw an increase from 0 percent in 2000 - 2001 to 23.5 percent in 2002 - 2003. The Faculties of Mathematics and Science are also moving forward on proposed female appointees.

The President expressed his gratitude to the Chair and members of UARC on behalf of Senate for the very important work they do.

9. REPORTS FROM THE FACULTIES

Senate received these reports for information.

10. UW NAMING PRINCIPLES & PROCEDURES

Senate heard a motion to approve the UW Naming Principles & Procedures governing the naming of UW Faculties, Departments, Schools, Chairs, Professorships, academic programs and facilities as presented in the agenda portfolio.

Guild and Chakma.

In discussion, Senate heard that these principles and procedures emerge from past practices, include program naming opportunities, and streamline the procedure for named gift opportunities up to \$1 million. For those opportunities of more than \$1 million, Senate will continue to be consulted. A couple of concerns were raised with the dollar-target matrix accompanying the guidelines, particularly the minimum endowment thresholds suggested for undergraduate and graduate student awards (i.e., the suggested thresholds are too high). While there is always a dilemma with any cutoff threshold, the Chair agreed to take the matter under advisement and asked the Secretary to follow up and report back to Senate.

The motion carried.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Undergraduate Program Reviews Report. The Associate Vice-President, Academic commended her predecessor for drafting much of the comprehensive report before Senate. Six different departments were reviewed and the report is frank and open regarding departmental strengths and weaknesses. While all the departments came through the review "with flying colours," there are a number of serious challenges within the departments including: an inadequate number of full-time professors, demanding teaching loads, lack of space, the need for more support and technical staff, the need for ongoing curricular enrichment, lack of tracking graduating students and their career trajectories, etc. It was acknowledged that the review process requires an incredible amount of work, but is regarded as a valuable exercise. The province has undertaken an audit of Waterloo's review process system and the review results and redrafted guidelines will be brought back to Senate. The Associate Vice-President, Academic noted that the inclusion of College teaching faculty in the review process is inconsistent and that, in future, College faculty CVs and faculty contributions to the department under review will be included.

b. Appointments.

Senate approved the following appointments:

- **Senate Undergraduate Council.** Wojciech [Wojtek] Karwala (Honours Co-op Kinesiology), Faculty of Applied Health Sciences undergraduate student representative, term to April 30, 2005.

- *Senate Long Range Planning and Honorary Degrees.* Lubomir Stanchev, graduate student representative, terms to April 30, 2004.

McHugh-Russell and McLenaghan. Carried.

12. CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

a. Approval of Confidential Minutes

The October 20, 2003 minutes were approved as distributed.

Chakma and Edey. Carried.

Senate adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

LC/rah
November 19, 2003

Lois Claxton
Secretary of the University