

Item: Senate Minutes, March 2004  
Call Number: Senate fonds, UA-5

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**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY**

***APPROVED MINUTES***

**OF**

**SENATE MEETING**

SENATE met in regular session on Monday, March 8, 2004, at 4:00 p.m., in the University Hall, MacDonald Building.

Present with Mr. M. El-Hawary in the chair were the following: Barker, Barkow, Breckenridge, Butler, Caley, Carroll, Cochrane, Cook, Coughlan, Das Gupta, Dunphy, Earl, Elliott, Farrell, Fraser, Guy, Hamilton, Huebert, Jalilvand, Jost, Kwak, Lahey, Leonard, Livingston, MacDonald, Macrae, Maes, McGrath, McMullen, McNeil, Morgunov, Murphy, Neumann, Partridge, Phillips, Precious, Rajora, Rathwell, Richard, Russell, Schroeder, Scrimger, Scully, Sommerfeld (Recording Secretary), Stone, Stroink, Stuttard, Taylor, Traves, Wanzel, Wasko, Whyte, Zalezsak, Zuck.

Regrets: Beazley, Finley, Hicks, Parpart, Pronk, Taheri.

Absent: Barnes, Ben-Abdullah, Cercone, Corke, Finbow, Grantmyre, Horackova, Louden, McIntyre, Meagher-Stewart, Oppong, Pelzer, Satish.

Invitees in attendance: E. McKee, A. Power, T. Wright.

**2004:013**

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was ADOPTED as circulated.

**2004:014**

Draft Minutes of Previous Meeting

i) Approval

The minutes of the meeting of February 9, 2004 were ADOPTED as circulated.

ii) Matters Arising

Mr. Traves stated that further to a previous Senate discussion, he had received a report, dated March 1, 2004, on Study Space from Eric McKee, Vice-President Student Services. Mr. Traves had made copies of the report available at the meeting. He noted that the Report highlighted the new furniture purchases; the improvements to cleaning and garbage services; that study areas for different types of student learning had been designated, such as for quiet study and for group work; and the extension of Killam and Sexton operating hours. He added that because of the extension of the library hours, an additional Tiger Patrol Team had been formed. Mr. Traves stated that the monitoring of study space and conditions

would be on-going with periodic monitoring of utilization being planned.

#### **2004:015**

##### Chair's Remarks

Mr. El-Hawary reported that he had received a letter, dated February 18, 2004 from Mr. Whyte, Senator, Faculty of Medicine, regarding improving discussion at Senate meetings, noting that the item will be addressed at the Senate Steering Meeting on March 9, 2004.

Mr. El-Hawary reported that he had received notice that the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) had approved the Master of Applied Health Services Research, a joint programme of the University of New Brunswick (lead institution), Dalhousie University, and University of Prince Edward Island and Memorial University, with the condition that i) a status report be submitted to the Commission by year three of programme operation to determine how well the delivery model was working for students in the programme; and ii) a full review of the programme be conducted within five years of programme operation.

Mr. El-Hawary stated that MPHEC had also approved the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing and the Bachelor of Software Engineering. He added that proposals for the Bachelor of Arts in European Studies and the Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering had been forwarded to MPHEC in early March by Vice President Scully with Dr. Scully's positive commendations.

Mr. El-Hawary reminded members of the Senate Forum for March 22, 2004, being organized by Mr. Fraser, Vice-Chair of Senate. Mr. Fraser reminded members of a previous Senate forum held in early 2003 which successfully had enabled a more informal discussion of issues, specifically regarding Dalhousie's operations as a full-service university. The positive results of that forum suggested the usefulness of a change of format to Senate discussions from time to time to generate a broader base of input. The up-coming forum would be similarly designed, this time to address how to combine growth of the University with enhancing the quality of the University experience. He described the format to be one of small group discussions, with themes being derived from the recent Reports presented to Senate by the Vice-Presidents.

#### **2004:016**

##### Report on Student Finances

Mr. El-Hawary invited Mr. McKee, Vice-President Student Services to report to Senate on Student Finances, noting that hard copies of the Report were available.

Mr. McKee stated his appreciation of the opportunity to make this a presentation to Senate. He noted that the data sources for his presentations were the Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium Survey of 2003 graduates, the MPHEC Survey of 1999 Maritime University Graduates (all programs) in 2001, Statistics Canada data on Family Income and Participation in Post-secondary Education (October 2003), and recent data from the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, including data on how students in Medicine and Law finance their studies. Mr. McKee reported data on Dalhousie graduates as follows:

- **Debt load upon graduations:** Approximately two-thirds of Dalhousie graduates of 2003 carried a debt load with an average debt of approximately \$30,058, which was approximately \$5000

higher than that of 2000 graduates. In terms of Government Student Loans, a needs-based program, 58% of Nova Scotia graduates reporting debt load had loans (average: \$23,863) versus for example, 16% of Ontario graduates (average: \$32,429). Debt load among full-time graduates of undergraduate programmes depended to a large extent on the length of programme, for example, graduates from Health Professions programmes had higher debt loads

- **Capacity of Dalhousie graduates to repay debt:** Mr. McKee reported on 1999 graduates who were surveyed in 2001, noting that 90% were in the labour force at the time of the survey, and of the remaining 10%, two-thirds were in advanced studies. The average annual full-time earnings was reported as \$47,944. The average debt load for graduates of 1999 (\$23,739) that was outstanding in 2001 was \$17,677, with approximately 13% of earnings devoted to debt reduction.
- **Employment during the academic year:** Of full-time 2003 graduates from undergraduate programmes, 49% were employed, and of those, 20% were employed 20-29 hours per week. Mr. McKee noted that the reasons for working were varied, from need, to debt aversion, to lifestyle.
- **Dalhousie spending on student assistance:** Mr. McKee reported on the amounts spent by Dalhousie on student support for 2002/03, with a total amount of \$30,475,000. This amount represented approximately 45% of tuition revenue, as had been the case over the previous five years.
- **Fund-raising for financial aid:** Mr. McKee pointed out that over the previous five years, donors to scholarships and bursaries had contributed approximately \$10 million.
- **Participation in university study by parental income:** Mr. McKee presented the most recent data available on the matter, that is from 1997. He noted that participation in the lower income bracket (\$25,000-\$50,000) had risen steadily, while that for the higher income (>\$100,000) and middle income brackets (>\$50,000 - \$75,000) had risen through to 1994 but then had begun a decline. The reasons suggested for this decline were the increased number of community colleges for example, making options more available, and as well the strain that providing financial support for University education places on middle-income parents.
- **Emerging issues:** Mr. McKee summarized the on-going issues as the University's financial support program in terms of relative emphasis on merit and needs-based expenditures; for merit programs, the relative emphasis on recruiting objectives, and recognition of academic achievement; the future of the guaranteed entrance scholarship program; exclusion from most needs-based programs of students not receiving government student loans, and the possibility of preferred treatment for students from Nova Scotia.
- Mr. McKee noted that the federal government intended to review the government student loan programme which he saw as a welcome development, as much of the cost and resource concepts as well as the loan maxima and eligibility criteria were out-of-date.

Mr. Farrell inquired about the work-study model used in American universities as an option for students to provide services to the university in lieu of tuition. Mr. McKee responded that for the time being, that model was not being considered. Mr. Butler commented that, given the percentage of Dalhousie students

who were reported as working twenty or more hours per week, those students would likely be prevented from participating fully in extra-curricular University activities. Mr. McKee noted that it would appear anecdotally that in several instances, students who work during their universities years tended to work part-time while in high-school as well. In response to a question from Mr. Stuttard, Mr. McKee clarified that the data on employment during the academic year were from students who were completing their programmes, versus those who withdrew from university. Ms. Partridge suggested that the reasons why students were employed during the academic year should not be surmised, but rather should be specifically assessed before any conclusions were drawn from those data. Mr. Jalilvand suggested that from the data presented, seven years was the length of time which could be predicted for repayment of debt following graduation. In response to a comment regarding coop programmes, Mr. McKee responded that such programmes may help to limit the amount of debt carried by students. Mr. McGrath added that graduates with higher debts also tended to come from programmes with higher tuition levels. Mr. Wanzell suggested that from his perspective, co-op programmes for students who travel for placements tend to result in more rather than less cost due to the travel and living expenses incurred. He added that from his perspective, students work because of need rather than want or preference.

Ms. Macrae inquired as to what action might emerge from the report; that is, what principles and values will guide decisions of the University in regards to student assistance. Mr. McKee responded that within the coming months, a statement of principles and values would be developed to guide decision-making, and he considered the current report as interim. Mr. Wasko asked where Dalhousie ranked in terms of the amount spent on student financial support. Mr. McKee stated that McLean's had listed Dalhousie University as thirteenth in Canada, well ahead of other Maritime institutions.

Mr. El-Hawary thanked Mr. McKee for his presentation.

#### **2004:017**

##### Question Period

Mr. McGrath asked Mr. Traves to comment on government relations activities that had occurred recently. Mr. Traves responded that several meetings had taken place and would be continuing between Universities and government officials in relation to funding for universities. He added that the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents had met with the New Democratic Party (NDP) caucus in the previous weeks and planned to invite the NDP caucus to meet with a variety of groups and individuals, including the Dalhousie Student Union. He added that a meeting had been set for March 24, 2004 in Ottawa to meet with the Atlantic Liberal Party caucus in relation to a number of economic programmes that impact regionally.

#### **2004:018**

##### Senate Committee on the Environment

Mr. El-Hawary invited Ms. Wright, Chair of the Senate Committee on the Environment to address the meeting in relation to the proposal for the **Senate Committee on the Environment Annual Environmental Award**, which had been circulated with the agenda. Ms. Wright stated that further discussion had occurred at the Committee level, resulting in the Committee proposing that the award be called the **Senate Annual Environment Award** with the Senate Committee administering the award. Ms. Wright summarized the purpose and procedure for the award, as described in the circulated document. She noted that such an award would increase Dalhousie's visibility in terms of its leadership

in environmental sustainability

It was moved by Mr. Fraser, seconded by Mr. McGrath:

**that the Senate approve the Senate Annual Environment Award as proposed by the Senate Committee on the Environment, and for it to be implemented in the 2004-05 academic year.**

Mr. El-Hawary clarified that once the Committee had completed the selection process, the recommendation for the recipient of the award would be brought to Senate for approval. Mr. Whyte inquired if there were other such Senate awards. Mr. El-Hawary responded that such an award was a 'departure' so as to recognize excellence by a Senate Committee. Mr. Stuttard inquired as to what form the award would take, for example monetary or non-monetary. Ms. Wright responded that it would be a non-monetary award and would include public recognition as well perhaps a plaque or acknowledgment letter.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

#### **2004:019**

##### President's Report

Mr. Traves reported that the Budget Advisory Committee had been working on a budget proposal for 2004-05 and was close to finalizing choices available. He added that the missing link was knowledge of the amount of government funding that would be allotted, and referred to the most recent BAC report where several scenarios as related to degree of potential funding had been outlined. He stated that lobbying efforts to increase amounts of government funding were active and continuing. Mr. McGrath asked if the next BAC Report would not be forthcoming until a definite amount of funding was announced by government. Mr. Traves responded that once government had a reasonably clear idea of amounts to be budgeted, that information was generally indicated to the Universities so that budgeting conclusions could be drawn. He added that in the past, a budget for the University was finalized by the end of April, including any increase in tuition fees.

Ms. Stone asked for an update on negotiations with CUPE, the bargaining unit representing part-time faculty and teaching assistants, and a potential strike situations. Mr. Traves responded that CUPE had filed for conciliation, but a conciliator had not yet been appointed. He stated that negotiations with part-time faculty were close to conclusion, but issues for the teaching assistants group remained outstanding. Given time lines in place, he anticipated that any potential strike would not occur before the end of March.

Ms. Macrae commented that it was essential for students to be informed definitely of any increase in student fees for the coming year, before the end of April.

#### **2004:020**

##### In Camera: Voting on Honorary Degree Candidates

The assembly moved *in camera* to consider and vote on fourteen honorary degree candidates following which the assembly returned to open session.

**2004:021**

Other Business

Mr. Whyte made a comment related to the previous discussion regarding Senate Awards. He supported the idea of Senate Awards noting that they should be seen as prestigious and relatively rare. He suggested that Senate Steering Committee consider developing a plan for such an awards programme.

**2004:022**

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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Mohamed El-Hawary, Chair of Senate

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Denise Sommerfeld, Secretary of Senate