



MINUTES OF MEETING #543 (2006-07)

**SENATE**

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2006, 3:00 PM

DR. CHARLES A. SANKEY CHAMBER, MACKENZIE CHOWN COMPLEX

PRESENT: Professor Stan Sadava (Chair), Professor Don Brown (Vice-Chair), Dr. Terry Boak, Dean Ian Brindle, Dean Rosemary Hale, Dean James Heap, Mr. Brad Humble, Ms. Kim Meade, Dr. Michael Owen, Dean Marilyn Rose, Dean David Siegel, Dr. Harald Tomesch

Ms. Karen Bordonaro, Professors Michael Carter, Rick Cheel, Maureen Connolly, Tamara El-Hoss, Nancy Francis, Colleen Hood, Anton Jansen, Nota Klentrou, Anna Lathrop, Herbert MacKenzie, Dan Malleck, Cheryl McCormick, Carol Merriam, Bozidar Mitrovic, Rebecca Raby, Jon Radue, Miriam Richards, Raafat Roubi, Anamitra Shome, Susan Sydor, Mary Louise Vanderlee, Louis Volante, Barry Wright, Paul Zelisko

Ms. Anna Lise Domanski, Mr. Tom Goldspink, Ms. Michelle Green, Mr. Sohail Mall, Ms. Marla Nasello, Mr. Damien O'Brien, Ms. Lisa Piroli, Ms. Joy Rogers, Mr. Andrew Saunders

Mr. Mike Farrell, Secretary, Ms. Margaret Thompson, Recording Secretary

ALSO

PRESENT: Mr. Patrick Beard, Mr. Ron Dubien, Professor Barry Grant, Professor Barbara Sainty

REGRETS: Professor Irene Blayer, Dean John Corlett, Ms. Barb Davis, Professor Tony DiPetta, Professor Greg Finn, Ms. Alison Grevatt, Ms. Margaret Grove, Mr. David Howes, Professor Murray Kropf, Dean Martin Kusy, Dr. Jack Lightstone, Professor Pierre Lizée, Professor MeriJean Morrissey, Dr. Raymond Moriyama, Professor Murray Wickett

Professor Sadava welcomed members and guests to the 543<sup>rd</sup> meeting of Senate.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the 542<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Senate had been posted on-line with the meeting materials.

**MOVED** (O'Brien/Lathrop)

**THAT the minutes of the 542<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Senate held on October 18, 2006 be approved.**

**CARRIED**

**2. Business Arising from the Minutes - None**

**3. Communications - None**

**4. Report of the Chair**

Chair Sadava welcomed new student Senators, Ms. Alison Grevatt, Ms. Marla Nasello, and Ms. Lisa Piroli.

Senators were encouraged to submit nominations of candidates for Honorary Degrees. Nominations may be submitted on an ongoing basis throughout the year; however, to ensure that a nomination would be considered for the June 2007 Convocation, the form must be submitted to the University Secretariat by January 5, 2007. Nomination forms and guidelines are available on the University Secretariat website at <http://www.brocku.ca/secretariat/senate>.

At the invitation of Professor Sadava, Dean Hale, Co-Chair of the Brock University United Way Campaign, provided information on the campaign and encouraged members to support the University to meet or exceed its campaign goal.

Professor Sadava read his Report to Senate regarding the academic implications of a possible faculty strike. He urged both sides to come to a settlement. [*Secretary's Note: The Chair's Report has been appended to the minutes.*]

**5. Report of the President and Vice-Chancellor**

[The President's Report to Senate dated November 15, 2006 had been posted on-line with the meeting materials.]

Chair Sadava referred members to the President's Report, noting that Dr. Lightstone was away from the University. During a brief discussion, Dr. Boak responded to questions.

**6. Report of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost**

Dr. Boak related that during the recent Annual Conference of The Canadian Bureau for International Education, former Brock University President Alan Earp was honoured as a founding member. Dr. Boak noted that Dr. Earp is fairing extremely well, and he extends his best wishes to the Brock community.

**7. Report of the Academic Colleague - COU**

[The Academic Colleague's Report to Senate dated November 8, 2006 had been posted on-line with the meeting materials.]

Dean Rose referred Senators to her written Report. She emphasized that while the Executive

Heads had reduced full Council meetings from five to two times per year, the Academic Colleagues would continue to meet five times per year and would remain an effective component of the COU organization.

Dean Rose related that a working paper titled “Internationalizing the Curriculum: An Inventory of Key Issues, Model Programs, and Resources” had been tabled at the meeting and had been avidly discussed. Copies were available from Dean Rose and an electronic copy would be posted on the Senate website as an appendix to the COU Report.

## **8. Report of the Actions of the Board of Trustees**

There had been no meeting held since the previous meeting of Senate.

## **9. Unfinished Business from the Last Meeting – None**

## **10. Reports of Standing Committees**

### **10.1 Teaching and Learning Policy Committee**

[A Report from the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee dated November 6, 2006, together with Appendices 1 and 2, had been posted on-line with the meeting materials.]

Professor Lathrop presented the Committee’s Report for the information of Senate. She indicated that at the request of Chair Sadava, item 3 of the Report, Interruption of Academic Operations, would be discussed later in the meeting under Other Business.

Professor Connolly reported that a town hall meeting regarding WebCT would be held on December 1, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. Detailed information would be distributed in the near future.

## **11. Other Business**

Professor Sadava related that a question regarding the nature and content of field trips as a course credit had been referred to the Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee.

### **11.1 Interruption of Academic Operations**

Professor Lathrop noted that, as per the request to Senate Committees from the Chair of Senate, the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee had discussed the matter of a potential interruption of academic operations at its meeting on November 1, 2006. At the request of Professor Lathrop, Professor Carter provided an overview of the discussion held as outlined in the Report from the Committee. In response to a question, Professor Lathrop emphasized that should Senate direct the Committee to develop a comprehensive policy regarding interruption of academic operations due to labour disputes or other causes, this would be a long-term process and would be of benefit in the future, as opposed to the current situation.

A protracted discussion ensued during which members considered the implications of a potential interruption of academic operations and deliberated about the interpretation of academic regulation IX. Appeals Procedures, D. Force Majeure as contained in the Undergraduate Calendar.

The statement reads “Brock University accepts no responsibility for the continuance of any class, lecture, seminar, laboratory, tutorial or course of instruction which may not be completed as a result of an act of God, fire, riot, strikes, lockout or any cause beyond the control of Brock University.”

During the ensuing discussion, it was stressed that the University had a fiscal and ethical responsibility to its students in the event of a labour disruption.

**MOVED** (Richards/Merriam)

**That Brock University will ensure the eventual completion of every class, lecture, seminar, laboratory, tutorial or course of instruction which may be interrupted due to a cessation of normal operations.**

Members discussed the feasibility of Senate’s ability to implement the proposed motion as there were fiscal and operational implications involved and repercussions for students should the academic term need to be extended. Dr. Boak noted that if there was a work stoppage, a return to work protocol would be negotiated.

Following discussion, the mover and seconder agreed to the following amended motion:

**That Brock University accepts responsibility for the completion of courses of instruction which may be interrupted due to a cessation of normal operations.**

Senators further debated the rationale for and implications of the proposed motion.

**QUESTION on the motion as amended**

**DEFEATED**

In response to a question, Dr. Boak indicated that if there was a labour disruption, exams would not take place during this period.

At the request of Professor Lathrop, Senate Committee Chairs provided information on the discussions held at other Committee meetings. Professor Lathrop then reiterated the question as to whether it was Senate’s will that the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee commence the development of a policy regarding the interruption of academic operations.

**MOVED** (Connolly/Saunders)

**That the Senate Teaching and Learning Policy Committee take up as its mandate the development of a policy regarding the interruption of academic operations.**

During discussion, it was pointed out that while the development of a policy regarding academic interruption would be beneficial, it would be more appropriate for the Committee to consider the matter following the settlement of the current negotiations.

**MOVED** (Connolly/Klentrou)

**That the motion that the Senate Teaching and Learning Policy Committee take up as its mandate the development of a policy regarding the interruption of academic operations be TABLED.**

**CARRIED**

It was stressed that more detailed information regarding the implications of a potential disruption of academic operations should be communicated to students and that future developments be reported in a timely manner. The student Senators had together examined potential ramifications and asked that both sides keep the students in mind during its deliberations.

In response to a question, Chair Sadava indicated that in the event of a labour disruption, he would not be calling a meeting of Senate during that time.

## **12. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

## **APPENDIX CHAIR'S REPORT TO SENATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2006**

Last month, I reported on my concerns about the academic implications of a possible faculty strike. The information we had at the time was that two days of mediation would resolve the issues between the two parties. Unfortunately, mediation was not effective and we now face a probable strike. As the President observed at that time, these situations can well spiral out of control.

I have been a faculty member at this university for some thirty years, and we never have faced this kind of crisis. Indeed, since certification, BUFA and the administration have reached agreements in a spirit of collegiality, and I know of no banks that were broken. Apparently these days are now in the past, and we face a disturbing new reality.

As a member of faculty active and dedicated to the academic enterprise- teaching and research, both broadly defined of course- - and as chair of Senate with its legally mandated responsibility for this academic enterprise, I have placed this issue on the Agenda for this meeting. We must face the policy and practical implications, of a strike and the aftermath of the strike. I look forward to a productive discussion by all of us: faculty, undergraduate student representatives, graduate student representatives, and administrators together, at this time.

Please consider the following:

1. A failure to reach a collegial agreement may have deleterious effects on the spirit of collegiality that has marked our university for so many years. Placing full dependence on a mediator is admission of a failure of collegiality. Once this is lost, can it be regained?
2. We need to consider the effects on our students: they are going through a period of doubt and fear: what happens to the academic year? To examinations? To projects interrupted? To rental agreements, student loans and having to forgo a period of summer work?
3. We need to consider the effects on our evolution towards a "comprehensive university". Our graduate students, a cornerstone of our ambitions as a university: what happens to their research interrupted? To oral examinations postponed? To fellowships and grants? To relationships with faculty mentors? Consider the effects on research and scholarship, at this pivotal time in the evolution of the university.
4. Consider our ambitions to attract and retain the best students. Will they come to a university with such an unstable environment?
5. Consider the effects on our young faculty. Our President has stated and restated that we must nurture their careers now, and get it right or live with the consequences for decades. Is this a nurturing environment? There seems to be anxiety and uncertainty among many of the younger faculty, both financial and professional. Will many of our best and brightest look to other positions where the atmosphere is better?

Consider the effects on relationships among students, faculty and administration. We have had great hopes for a bright and exciting future together with our new President. We want to collaborate in solving problems and developing our university together. His success will be our success. However, this situation can very well poison the atmosphere, and detoxification will not be easy. Rumours abound about what may happen and what it may mean. Will students lose their courses or their tuition? Are we all pawns in a larger game beyond the university? As a social psychologist, I can tell you that conditions of threat and uncertainty breed rumours of all kinds.

Perhaps none of this will happen, and I certainly hope so. We have been assured and reassured that everything will be just fine. Unfortunately, a party has been scheduled for December 5, when the strike begins. At this time I think we need more than just reassurance that everything will be all right. Our concern on Senate is the teaching and research functions, the heart of this university. We are facing a possible crisis, Senate cannot resolve it, but neither ignore the possible consequences. To both sides: PLEASE face reality and settle it, now.