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## Brock University

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SENATE

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MINUTES OF THE  
**526<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF SENATE**

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2005

AT 3:00 P.M.

IN THE SENATE CHAMBER, MACKENZIE CHOWN COMPLEX

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**Present:** Professor Stan Sadava (Chair), Professor Sharon Abbey (Vice-Chair), Ms. Barb Anderson (Registrar), Dr. David Atkinson (President), Dean Ian Brindle (Faculty of Mathematics and Science), Dean John Corlett (Faculty of Applied Health Sciences), Ms. Margaret Grove (University Librarian), Dean Rosemary Hale (Faculty of Humanities), Dr. Michael Manley-Casimir (Acting Vice-President, Academic and Provost), Dr. Michael Owen (Associate Vice-President, Research), Dean David Siegel (Faculty of Social Sciences), Dr. Sybil Wilson (Acting Dean, Faculty of Education)

Professors Jeffrey Atkinson, Irene Blayer, Cheri Bradish, Michael Carter, Maureen Connolly, Carman Cullen, Robert Dimand, Jane Dywan, Joe Engemann, Eugene Kaciak, Miriam Richards, Barbara Sainty, Barnett Singer, John Sorenson, Ed Sternin, Susan Sydor, Glenn Tattersall, Bob Welch

Mr. Nick Brown, Mr. Victor Genova, Mr. David Howes, Ms. Marla Nasello, Ms. Jessica Paquin, Mr. Michael Sidenberg, Mr. Sean Woodhead

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

**Also**

**Present:** Mr. Pat Beard, Director, Institutional Planning and Analysis  
Professor Don Cyr, Associate Dean, Faculty of Business  
Ms. Kristen Depalma, Brock Press  
Professor Corrado Federici, Associate Dean, Faculty of Humanities  
Mr. Brad Humble, BUSAC  
Ms. Courtney Kaminski, Brock Press  
Ms. Katie Murray, BUSAC  
Mr. Damien O'Brien, student  
Ms. Gail Pepper, Director, Office of Graduate Studies

Mr. Steven Pillar, Vice-President, Finance and Administration

**Regrets:** Ms. Michelle Green, Professor John Hay, Dean Martin Kusy, Ms. Kim Meade, Dr. Raymond Moriyama, Professor Linda Ritchie, Dean Marilyn Rose, Mr. Chris Schutz, Professor John Sivell, Ms. Wendy Staff, Professor Rick Welland, Professor Allister Young

**Absent:** Professor Donald Brown, Dr. Roger Humann, Professor Martin Mathew, Professor Danny Rosenberg, Professor Evangelia Tsiani, Professor Terry Wade

Professor Sadava welcomed members to the 526<sup>th</sup> meeting of Senate. Today's meeting marked the first endeavour toward "paperless" Senate meetings, and the agenda and related materials had been posted on-line.

### 1. Approval of Minutes

**MOVED** (Sternin/Dimand)

**THAT the minutes of the 525<sup>th</sup> meeting of Senate held on February 9, 2005 be approved.**

**CARRIED**

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

### 3. Communications

Professor Sadava noted that he had received a communication from the Chair of the Committee on the Presidency, Mr. Dave Edwards. He referred Senators to the overhead screen which displayed the letter inviting Senate to provide input into the development of a profile for the new President.

In response to a question, Dean Hale noted that that the Committee on the Presidency recognized that there may be some overlapping information due to the numerous consultations to be held; however, the Committee believed that the expanded number of consultations would ensure that all constituencies were provided an opportunity to participate and to present their positions to the Committee for consideration. As this was the first year that the Brock community would not have an opportunity to meet the candidate prior to the President's appointment, this opportunity was especially relevant.

Following discussion, it was suggested, and members concurred, that time be allocated at the end of today's meeting to provide Senators an opportunity to collectively share their thoughts on the development of a Presidential profile.

### 4. Report of the Chair

Professor Sadava reported that with respect to the Senate election of faculty representatives, a number of vacancies remained. He urged Senators to encourage their colleagues to stand for election.

### 5. Report of the President and Vice-Chancellor (Agd. 526-1)

Dr. Atkinson noted that his Report consisted of the recently circulated *President's Newsletter* dated

March 18, 2005.

The President reported on potential financial implications and challenges that would face the University should the government introduce legislation to eliminate mandatory retirement. In addition, he indicated that a broad-based task force was currently being struck to assist in the development of a comprehensive harassment and discrimination policy to replace the University's dated policies.

With respect to the *President's Newsletter*, Professor Sternin pointed out that should the revised Brock logo be adopted as a trademark, it would not be acceptable for use at many national conferences as it was not bilingual. Dr. Atkinson thanked Professor Sternin for raising this issue as it had not been presented during the numerous consultations held, and it would certainly need to be resolved. During a brief discussion, the President responded to questions.

#### **6. Report of the Academic Colleague - COU (Agd. 526-2)**

The Report from Dean Rose dated March 15, 2005 had been posted with the Agenda materials. Unfortunately, Dean Rose was not available to attend today's meeting to speak to the Report.

#### **7. Report of the Actions of the Board of Trustees (Agd. 526-3)**

A Brief of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on February 24, 2005 had been posted for the information of Senate.

#### **8. Unfinished Business from the Last Meeting - None**

#### **9. Reports of Standing Committees**

Professor Sadava requested, and Senate concurred, that the Report of the Governance Committee be presented prior to the other reports.

##### **a) Governance Committee (Agd. 526-8)**

The Report contained the following items for the information of Senate:

- Following the 525<sup>th</sup> meeting of Senate, the Governance Committee had referred the creation of a task force to study student examination schedules to the Senate Teaching and Research Policy Committee.
- The Committee endorsed the proposal of the Board of Trustees that the Chair/Vice-Chair of Senate be nominated as one of the faculty positions on the Board of Trustees.
- The Committee endorsed that a report from Senate be included as a regular item on the Board of Trustees' agenda and that a joint meeting be held at the end of the academic year with the Executive Committee of the Board.
- A Task Force had been established to respond to issues raised by the President of BUFA regarding the Senate election and his assertion of an inconsistency within the Faculty Handbook and the Brock University Act.

The Chair noted that a motion was required to move *in camera* to discuss nominations for Honorary Degrees.

**MOVED** (Genova/Dimand)

**THAT Senate move *in camera*.**

**CARRIED**

Senate moved *in camera* at 3:30 p.m. Non-Senators retired from the meeting.

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Senate resumed **open session** at 3:40 p.m. and non-Senators rejoined the meeting.

[During the *in camera* session, a confidential summary of nominations for Honorary Degrees approved by the Governance Committee was circulated. The full nomination packages had been available in the Secretariat office for Senators to review. Following a brief discussion, an omnibus **motion was CARRIED** approving each nominee for an Honorary Degree to be conferred at a future convocation.]

**b) Teaching and Research Policy Committee (Agd. 526-4)**

Professor Dywan presented the Committee's report. For the information of Senate, she noted that the Committee supported the Library's initiatives and funding requirements with respect to the Acquisitions Budget, the Scholars Portal sustainability costs, and a learning commons as central to both teaching and research at Brock. She also reported that the Committee had formed three task force groups to review the issues of core and context, small group learning and course evaluations. Professor Dywan invited Senators to share their thoughts on any of these issues with the specific facilitator of each task group, as indicated in the Report.

Professor Dywan then referred Senators to the following motions.

**MOVED** (Dywan/Woodhead)

**THAT Senate approve the proposed amendments to FHB III: 8.1 - 8.3 (Research Ethics) as proposed in the attachment to Agd. 526-4.**

Professor Dywan provided a brief overview of the rationale for the proposed amendments as contained in the Report.

**CARRIED**

**MOVED** (Dywan/Sorenson)

**THAT Senate approve that the University return to a 12-week (60 days) term to commence on the Thursday following Labour Day.**

Professor Dywan reviewed the rationale for the proposed motion as outlined in the Report.

During a lengthy discussion, the merits and challenges to return to a 12-week academic term in the Fall and Winter from the present 13-week term were considered. The rationale for the motion previously approved by Senate to return to a 13-week term (Senate 472, May 10, 2000) was

questioned. Dr. Atkinson indicated that at that time, there had been a general sense among faculty that the 12-week semester restrained teaching time and faculty/student contact.

Mr. Genova presented the Chair of Senate with a petition in support of a return to a 12-week term (from 65 days to 60 days) which contained approximately 1,675 signatures from students, faculty members, teaching assistants and other Brock community members.

A protracted discussion ensued regarding the proposed recommendation and included the following comments/suggestions/questions:

- A 13-week term was extremely difficult from the students' point of view as it impacted negatively on opportunities for employment, travel time home during the holiday season, the overall student experience.
- A 13-week term had negative impact on faculty, staff and academic/research productivity.
- There were many comprehensive universities which operate on a 12-week term
- Average number of days in term for other universities was 61.8 compared to 65 at Brock.
- There is a need to explore possibility of reducing the length of the week-long student orientation
- Need to examine potential to commence term on a Monday opposed to a Thursday; starting late in the week is particularly difficult for courses with labs/seminars; also, need to examine potential to commence term at an earlier date.
- There is a need to focus on the academic rationale for the proposed change as Senate speaks to academic issues.
- There is concern that the reduction in length of term would negatively impact on the total learning experience for students and teaching time for faculty
- There is a need to fully understand the rationale from the previous motion approved by Senate to return to a 13-week term, for example, were accreditation issues the primary reason for the change?
- There is a need to focus on teaching days as opposed to number of weeks
- A return to a 12-week term could have serious implications for the Pre-service Education program and on co-op placements if the Pre-service Education was held to the same schedule as other programs.
- Need to focus on the examinations schedules; student numbers are increasing and a 12-week term would still not eliminate students writing exams late in the months of December and April; need to look at how we evaluate student learning in conjunction with length of term.
- Need to look at potential to change other imbedded practices at the University before shortening the term.

During discussion, Professor Dywan clarified that the Committee had received input from several Deans and the Registrar, and had investigated potential implications for the accredited programs. She further noted that during deliberations, the Committee had supported a more flexible length of term rather than a fixed amount of days. Professor Dywan said that the Committee believed that they had thoroughly examined the involved issues; however, in light of today's discussions, she indicated that the Committee would be willing to further investigate the issues raised and report back to Senate in more detail.

On behalf of the students and the entire institution, Mr. Woodhead requested that Senate seriously consider the opportunity to revert back to a 12-week term.

Dr. Atkinson stressed the importance of Brock's uniqueness and that the University should strive to distinguish itself as a leader. Whether the University decided on a 12-week term, 13-week term, or even a 16-week term, it was vital that there be exhaustive conversation and that all avenues be examined prior to making such an important decision.

Professor Sadava questioned how Senate wished to proceed.

**MOVED** (Brindle/Siegel)

**THAT the motion be referred to the Senate Teaching and Research Policy Committee for reconsideration in light of the discussion held.**

**CARRIED**  
(3 opposed)

Noting that the time allotted for the meeting had expired, the Chair asked if Senators wished to vote to extend the meeting time; Senators declined.

Professor Sadava requested that Senators contact him with respect to the development of the profile for the new President as Senate did not have the time to discuss their thoughts at today's meeting. The Chair indicated that the remaining agenda items would be presented at the next Senate meeting.

*c) Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee (Agd. 526-5) - DEFERRED*

*d) Undergraduate Program Committee (Agd. 526-6) - DEFERRED*

*e) Graduate Studies Committee (Agd. 526-7) - DEFERRED*

#### **10. Other Business**

*a) Report of the Senate Academic Integrity Task Force (Agd. 526-9) - DEFERRED*

*b) Report of the Senate Technology Task Force (Agd. 526-10) - DEFERRED*

**11. Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.