

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY

FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, September 26th, 4pm

CONS 004 (The Band room)

Members Present: Robert Campbell (chair), Geoff Cruttwell (secretary), Andrea Beverley, Amanda Cockshutt, James Devine, Nauman Farooqi, Chris Forstall, Andrew Grant, Christina Ionescu, Patricia Kelly-Spurles, Mario Levesque, Sandy MacIver, Kim Meade, Lorelea Michaelis, Elizabeth Millar, Jeff Ollerhead, Chris Parker, Bruce Robertson, Janine Rogers, Peter Sianchuk, Vicki St. Pierre, Erin Steuter, Elizabeth Wells, Deborah Wills, Andrew Wilson

Guests: Neil MacEachern, Robert Inglis

Observers: Noah Fry (student senator), Rachel Howlett (MASU VPA)

(1) Appointment of Temporary Secretary

Motion (V. St. Pierre/B. Robertson): that Geoff Cruttwell be elected Secretary *pro tem* for this meeting.

Carried.

(2) Approval of the agenda

Motion (E. Wells/P. Kelly-Spurles): that the Agenda as circulated be approved.

Carried.

(3) Approval of the minutes

Motion (P. Kelly-Spurles/E. Wells): that the Minutes as circulated be approved. E. Millar noted one small correction (she was present at the last meeting).

Carried.

(4) October Graduation List

Motion (E. Wells/C. Parker): that faculty council recommend to senate the approval of the names circulated on the October graduation list.

Carried.

(5) Correspondence courses while on probation

E. Wells spoke to the matter. Calendar Regulations (10.3.6, 10.9.12, 10.9.15) have prevented students on Probation from taking Correspondence courses at Mount Allison. Both the Admission and Readmissions Committee and the Academic Matters Committee have discussed ways to keep students on probation engaged in their studies and making progress towards their degrees, and to that end are proposing allowing students on probation to take correspondence courses at Mount Allison.

P. Kelly-Spurles asked if there was a limit to the number of correspondence courses students can take; E. Wells replied that it is already a regulation (10.3.6.a) that one can only take 6 credits of correspondence courses at a time. J. Devine asked what the original rationale for the regulation was; C. Parker replied that it was essentially paternalistic, and they would like to now have students come to their own choices on this matter. C. Parker also noted that this will help students get back in good standing by taking correspondence courses while away or during the summer.

(6) Update on space use and repairs in academic buildings and on building projects

R. Campbell began by explaining the rationale for this item: several groups had asked for discussions about space use and repairs of buildings at Mount Allison, and so Faculty Council executive thought it best to invite N. MacEachern (as head of Facilities Management (FM)) and R. Inglis (as VP of Finance and Administration) to first make opening remarks then take any questions.

N. MacEachern began by noting that he has been here for only a year, and has spent some of his early time getting to know what stakeholders require from facilities. His observations have been that FM has committed and dedicated employees, but there have been some recent issues: work-orders falling through the cracks, processes for handling longer-term projects not in place, a lack of communication with stakeholders, limited long-term planning, and some safety issues. Since noting these, he has worked to improve the work order process (so that, for example, work orders will no longer be dropped), with outstanding issues going to engineering; the head of each department and FM will walk through each building, noting immediate repairs and priorities for later; Hart and Flemington will be looked at in particular over this academic year; a 3-5 year plan will be developed for longer-term projects; and he is looking to get more input on furniture purchases. Past perception has been that FM did things without input, and he would like to change that. R. Inglis also noted that they are trying to get away from a straightforward quantitative approach to classroom usage.

E. Millar asked what the time trigger was for outstanding work orders; N. MacEachern replied that any issue that is not an obvious fix will now go to engineering as opposed to being dropped arbitrarily. If there any issues that have taken longer than a couple of months, send him a note.

B. Robertson asked with respect to academic buildings, who pays (for example, if a blind needs replacing)? R. Inglis responded that if FM is redoing a room, they pay for it; if is a room upgrade, the department does.

P. Sianchuk asked who strategically looks after classrooms? R. Inglis replied that it should be combination of his and the Provost's offices. P. Sianchuk then also asked how do we take action with dangerous classrooms? R. Inglis replied that any dangers should go to the top of the list regarding repairs. M. Levesque noted that in his experience, it is often the classroom setup itself which causes problems: for example, the wires to connect a laptop often cause tripping hazards. He also believes the classrooms in general need significant improvement, especially compared to other universities, not only for safety, but for accessibility in their interiors. He believes a fundraising campaign for this could work very well. R. Inglis agreed the classrooms need updating, and this would be part of a 3-5 year plan, as would any fundraising. P. Sianchuk noted the importance of fixing these issues, as classrooms are where student engagement happens.

R. Campbell asked that N. MacEachern and R. Inglis come up with a broad game plan for the next 3-5 years and bring it back to faculty council for further discussion later in the academic year.

L. Michaelis queried how flexible the setup in a particular classroom was? N. MacEachern noted that other users of a room may require different arrangements, and so they can't always approve certain changes to classrooms. But going forward it would be helpful to have classrooms as flexible as possible.

E. Steuter noted that she didn't think there were too many classrooms on campus; her perception was that many of the classrooms were underutilized because of their problems; other members agreed with this. R. Inglis agreed that fixing many of the problematic classrooms could help with usage.

(7) Academic Plan

J. Ollerhead began by noting that this version of the academic plan has gone through several revisions: this version has removed some of the earlier structural ideas (reshaping of departments/faculties), while adding an academic hiring plan addressing the next few years.

L. Michaelis asked what metrics were being used to assess program viability, if not enrollment numbers? J. Ollerhead replied that different departments can use different metrics or lines of reasoning based on their particular situation: there should be no one single model that works for everyone. He also noted that departments should talk to recruiters if they want to know how viable their proposed program could be with current and future students.

J. Devine noted some concerns he had with the language around interdisciplinary programs: the language in the document didn't reflect his department's "multidisciplinary" programs. J. Ollerhead noted that interdisciplinary (as opposed to multidisciplinary) programs help students see the connections between different areas explicitly; some of the language in this document was driven by student concerns. L. Michaelis noted a similar concern to J. Devine: there seems to be a broader issue of "what interdisciplinary means", as there is a disconnect between the language in the document and what is actually being done. A. Wilson agreed, and noted that going forward, if we are going to pursue interdisciplinarity as a goal, we need to have a good understanding of what it means. M. Levesque also

agreed, noting that if the community came to a definition of interdisciplinary, there would be greater buy-in on this issue from the community. R. Campbell noted that it may be helpful to have a working group to operationalize "interdisciplinarity".

D. Wills noted that she thought some of the "goals" for hiring didn't seem to fit with hiring itself; J. Ollerhead noted that programs could attempt to address only some of the goals as they saw fit.

B. Robertson noted a macro concern in regards to the multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary issue: a planning document should not only say what we are doing, but what we want to do in the future.

E. Millar asked how can we improve diversity? Should we set certain diversity hiring goals? J. Ollerhead noted that the responsibility for this lies with everyone, in particular with the hiring committees and departments themselves: ultimately, they are the ones sending the job ads out to various groups and making the recommendations on whom to hire.

J. Ollerhead noted that the next steps for this plan will be a meeting of the Planning committee on Oct. 16th to decide how to implement some of the feedback; however, he would like to get the plan done by December so as to move on to actually implementing the ideas in the plan.

(8) Explorance

J. Ollerhead noted that this issue was brought before senate and at a special information session; he asked the community to think about what changes this will bring and what the software does: for example, it can be used both in-class and outside of class.

L. Michaelis asked about Senate policy on course evaluations; J. Ollerhead noted that he has asked the chair of the Teaching and Learning committee to consider the issue and see whether Senate policy needs to be revised.

M. Levesque noted that the existing system has a choice (of in-class or outside class evaluations) and asked whether that would continue. J. Ollerhead noted that since this was the subject of a grievance, he couldn't say more at the current time, but there is no technical issue with turning off the system for a particular class.

(9) Report from the chair

R. Campbell noted that this is the year of Indigenous action, and there are many upcoming events in support of this. He also noted that this year had perhaps the highest number of (self-declared) Indigenous students (53).

He also described recent talks with the provincial government: the government is still insisting on relatively small increases to the grant (1, 1, 1, 2 % increases) and a regulated (2 %) increase in tuition. Instead of an agreement with all universities, the government may end up making agreements with each of the four universities separately, which could be problematic.

(10) Other business

R. Campbell noted that as requested at the last meeting, faculty council held two open houses on the future of the anthropology department and program on May 24th and Sept. 12th.

(11) Adjournment occurred at 5:33.