

Senate Minutes

**November 15, 2024
CE339**

The Chair, F. Odartey-Wellington, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

1. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum and Land Acknowledgement

The Chair began with the acknowledgement that Cape Breton University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

Present:

Catherine Arseneau, Sahand Ashtab, Tammy Bernasky, Matthias Bierenstiel, Melissa Bishop, Tanya Brann-Barrett, Geoff Carre, Martin Chandler, David Dingwall, Ayse Ersoy, Kylie Ewing, Virginia Gunn, Ali Heydari, Chad Hillier, Carrie Karsgaard, Kanchan Kumari, Harkanwal Kaur, Janet Kuhnke, Kimberley Lamarche, Tracy Lillington, Terry MacDonald, Gordon MacInnis, Emily MacLeod, Bishakha Mazumdar, Sophia Mordi, Kathleen Nash, Rod Nicholls, Felix Odartey-Wellington, Olabode Peters Olaniran, Marcia Ostashewski, Joe Parish, Rebecca Seymore, Nancy Spina, Éric Thériault, Jamie Tunnicliff

Regrets:

Karen Butterworth, Sean Campbell, Linda Cavanaugh, Pooja Chahal, Paula Condon, Michael Henick, Abiola Emmanuel Ilori, Kanchan Kumari, Doug Lionais, Ellyn Lyle, Stephanie MacQuarrie, John Mayich, John Nadeau, Andy Parnaby, Michelle Prendergast, Karen Rowe, Nancy Samson, Ann Sylliboy, Laurianne Sylvester, Bilynda Whiting

2. Consent Agenda:

2.1 Approval of the October 18, 2024 Confidential Minutes

The confidential minutes from the October 18th Senate meeting were accepted.

3. Reports and Items for Information

3.1 **President**

President Dingwall reported the following:

- The Fall 2024 graduating class proudly welcomed nearly 400 new members to the CBU Alumni Family. During the convocation ceremony, Cape Breton University bestowed a Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*, on Ms. Barbara Stetter, a distinguished music educator and accomplished musical director.
- As CBU's 50th anniversary celebrations conclude, the university reflects on decades of growth and achievements, highlighted by the Creative Arts Award. Plans for next year include hosting a Creative Arts conference.
- In recent months he has represented CBU on several international visits aimed at enhancing CBU's global partnerships.
 - He traveled to Egypt in September where he attended the Canadian International College's annual convocation and had the privilege of meeting with Canada's new Ambassador to Egypt and Egypt's Minister of Higher Education.
 - In October, he visited India to meet with representatives from various universities. These institutions expressed interest in Canada and sought clarification on recent IRCC policy changes, noting their ongoing interest despite confusion about the rationale behind these decisions.
- Staffing for the Medical Campus is nearly complete. Dr. Jennifer Hall has been appointed as Senior Associate Dean of the Cape Breton Medical Campus for a 15-month term, and Dr. Arlene Kelly-Wiggins has been appointed as Assistant Dean of Pre-Clerkship at the Cape Breton Medical Campus for a five-year term.
- Tartan Downs remains a top priority, with ongoing efforts to engage the federal government and collaborate with local representatives.
- As a result of the significant policy changes within the IRCC, a number of costs saving issues need to be addressed. He added that enrolment strategies are under active review, including the determination of term positions, the development of new programs, and an assessment of the viability of existing programs where necessary. He noted that if the issue doesn't get worked out there may have to be a hiring freeze. He cautioned that if these issues are not resolved, a hiring freeze may become necessary.
- They are actively enhancing both domestic and international recruitment strategies to attract more students, with success expected to come through steady, incremental progress. Despite challenges posed by rising costs, campus development projects are moving forward. Efforts to address water and sewer issues at the Marconi campus are well underway and being closely managed. Additionally, the \$50 million campaign is making significant progress, with an encouraging announcement anticipated in the coming weeks.

In response to questions following the President's Report, the magnitude of the cuts as well as the hiring freeze were discussed.

3.2 Vice President Academic and Provost

No Report

3.3 Vice President Finance

It was moved by R. Nicholls, seconded by K. Lamarche, that Becky Chisholm, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management & Student Experience, be approved to provide a report to Senate regarding updates on Enrolment Management.

Motion Carried.

Becky Chisholm provided an update on Enrolment Management and highlighted the following:

- IRCC Policy changes:
 - Increase in financial support for study permits
 - The LOA Verification Process established
 - Introduction to the Recognized Institutions Framework
 - Changes to Work Permit Rules for students
 - Cap on student study permits for 2024
- Province mandated:
 - A 9% tuition increase for new international students
 - Reducing the national cap for study permits by 10% for 2025 and 2026
 - The Cap this year will also include Master's and PhD Programs
 - Minimum of 12% of the provincial allocation has to be allocated for Masters and PhD levels
 - Study Permit extensions included in the CAP require a PAL
 - Spousal Work Permits have been revised and are limited to the 16-month Master's Programs
 - The Student Direct Stream has been discontinued
- Changes to the Post Graduate Work Permits (PGWP)
 - University bachelor's, master's, and PhD programs eligible for Post Graduate Work Permit (all fields of study).
 - All other university programs tied to labour market need.
 - All PGWP applicants will require language test. University grads require a Canadian Language Benchmark score of 7.
 - Three of our programs are not eligible for Post Graduate work permits.

- New Student SEM Targets 2024-27
- 2024-25 New Student Enrolment
- PGWP Eligible Programs

- Summary & Next Steps

Gordon MacInnis, Vice President Finance, reported on the following:

- CBU enrolment by term
- CBU Fall/Winter Student Composition
- Enrolment Dependency 2023-24
- 2024 25 Budget process
- CBU Financial Planning Framework
- CBU Enrolment – 2024/25 Forward
- SEM Alignment 2024/25
- Post Bacclaureate Scenarios
- CBU 2025-26 Budget process
 - Process to commence in January 2025
 - Updated SEM targets will be key to revenue projection
 - Focused upon managed decline

After the presentation, the following was discussed:

- Plans to target other international markets
- Revenue through new program development
- How to improve the loss of the Undergraduate programs
- Domestic Enrolment
- Regional Labour Market
- programs are not eligible for Post Graduate work permits

3.4 Unama'ki College

No Report

3.5 Students' Union

O. Olaniran presented the Students' Union Report which was included in the Senate Meeting Package. He highlighted the following:

- The Students' Union had training for new and existing societies at the beginning of the month.
- After researching the Child-Minding Initiative, a meeting was held with John Mayich, Donald Johnston, Amy Campbell, and Bilynda Whiting to discuss potential service locations and regulatory requirements. A campus demand survey is nearly complete and will be distributed soon.
- He traveled to Ottawa for the Canadian Federation of Students Lobby Week from the 6th of October to the 11th to advocate for students to the government.
- He had meetings with Nova Scotia Senator and Leader of the Progressive Senate Group Jane Cordy, and also met with MP Larry McGuire.

- Met with Kathy Donovan from CBRM Transit on the ongoing issues and concerns to understand how the transit system works and what provisions can be made to assist students with the long wait times and the bus's being at full capacity.
- The Students' Union Food Bank recorded 304 appointments in October, serving an average of 26 students daily. It distributed 15 perishable food packages twice during the month and sent packages to Unama'ki College. Additionally, the Food Bank supported parents by providing donated items like sweaters and toys for children.
- In the second week of October the Women's Center held Consent Week in collaboration with Sonya Spencer. During the week, they had a support group in collaboration with the Pride and Ally Centre and a self-defence course with Jimmy Hall.
- The Ekkian Indigenous Center has been very active. They hosted a Pottery Painting workshop that had an attendance of 12 participants. It was very successful and feedback was positive with some participants expressing interest in future workshops. In collaboration with the Women's Centre, they also offered tarot card readings.
- In regards to the recent changes in Immigration laws, they intend to organize an event in collaboration with Student Affairs to educate International Students on the recent changes and how it affects them.
- The International Student Scholarship has been recently launched to support international students in undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs. For the Fall and Winter semesters, three undergraduate and three post-baccalaureate students will each receive \$1,000. The initiative has been expanded to include Indigenous students, with \$1,000 scholarships available for two students in both the Fall and Winter semesters. Applications close on November 22 and can be submitted via the form available on the CBUSU website at cbusu.ca.
- They received the go-ahead to open the Caper Café in the Verschuren Centre and are currently working on getting new equipment and hiring staff so they can launch it before the semester is over. Creating more employment opportunities on campus. He thanked Alex and Dawn, for their contributions.

In response to a question, O. Olaniran clarified that, due to an appeal regarding the most recent election, a new election is scheduled to take place on the 25th and 26th of November.

3.6 Board of Governors

No Report

3.7 Executive Committee

Éric Thériault reported on the following:

The Senate Executive Committee convened on November 1st to address key matters and finalize the agenda for the upcoming Senate meeting. They discussed differentiating mandate letters from transitional documents, with a recommendation to store these on the Senate MS Teams page once it becomes operational. Committees were reminded to vote on their Terms of Reference (TOR) and submit them to the By-laws and Procedures Committee for review.

The committee also discussed a proposal from the Registrar to introduce a fall conferral date, which will be further deliberated at the next meeting. The November Senate meeting agenda was planned, and committee reports were reviewed. This included a suggestion to present the SEM group's accessibility report through the TLEC. Additionally, it was proposed to share enrollment numbers during the November Senate meeting.

The next Senate Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for November 29th.

4. Approval of the Minutes

➤ Senate – October 18, 2024

It was moved by C. Arseneau, seconded by M. Chandler, that Senate approve the minutes from the October 18th Senate meeting.

Motion Carried. (4 abstentions)

5. Business Arising from the Minutes – N/A

6. Report from Senate Committees:

6.1 Planning and Review

G. Carre explained that the Committee is currently preparing pre-budget recommendations, which are expected to be ready for the next Senate meeting. They are also conducting a review of the Academic Plan.

6.2 Teaching, Learning and Evaluation

T. MacDonald reported that the Committee met on November 7th, during which several items were resolved and will be brought forward to the Executive. A call for nominations for the Instructional Leadership Award, with a deadline of January 15, 2025, was also announced. Members are encouraged to promote this opportunity among their colleagues.

6.3 Academic

J. Parish introduced the following minor course changes from SS&T for information purposes only:

- a. ENVS 4101 - course name change (approved by SS&T), new cross-listing (approved by SS&T), and prerequisites change (approved by the Department of Math, Physics and Geology)
- b. PYSC 3213 - course name change and minor course description change (both approved by SS&T)
- c. ENGI 2103 - prerequisites change (approved by the Engineering Department)

J. Parish advised that the Committee completed its review and revisions of its Terms of Reference and they have been forwarded them to the By-laws & Procedures Committee for review.

6.4 By-Laws and Procedures

J. Tunncliff reported that the Committee is actively reviewing the By-laws from various Schools and Departments. Given the substantial volume of By-laws, the work will be phased over the next four years, beginning with the oldest.

Additionally, it was suggested and agreed that enhanced procedures for incorporating indigenization into the By-laws should be considered.

6.5 Quality Assurance

S. Ashtab advised that the Committee are reviewing their Terms of Reference.

6.6 Research

M. Ostashewski reported the following:

The Committee has revised its Terms of Reference (TOR) to include updates to the Research Awards Policies, reflect the composition of the Committee, and acknowledge the presence of five schools. The Committee is actively adjudicating the Research Awards and plans to review related By-laws. In addition, it is working on rising research initiatives and other mandates. Early in the new year, the Committee will revise and update policies governing these awards.

Collaborating with ORGS, the Committee is also developing a strategic research plan. As part of this process, a survey approved by the Research Committee will be circulated to gather feedback. This effort aims to collect valuable insights through outreach and information-sharing, with more details to follow.

Lastly, an update to the RISE Policy is expected to be presented at the next Senate meeting.

M. Bierenstiel, Vice Chair, reported that the Committee has been actively revising the RISE Policy. As part of this process, they voted on several items, including raising the cap on individual grants. Factors such as inflation, increases in minimum wage and the budget were key considerations in these decisions.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

É. Thériault
Secretary to Senate