

Minutes of a meeting of a Special Meeting of Senate held on the above date at 9:00 a.m. in the Senate Chamber, Room E3-262 Engineering and Information Technology Complex and Remotely via BlueJeans (Audio Conference)

Members Present

Dr. D. Barnard, Chair
 Dr. C. Adams
 Prof. A. Alessi-Severini
 Prof. C. Anderson
 Prof. J. Anderson
 Dean S. Baum
 Dean J. Beddoes
 Ms. L. Best
 Prof. R. Biscontri
 Dr. J. Blatz
 Prof. P. Blunden
 Prof. T. Bone
 Prof. N. Boorberg
 Prof. O. Botar
 Very Rev. R. Bozyk
 Ms. T. Brennan
 Dean D. Brown
 Ms. K. Casalla
 Prof. T. Chen
 Prof. N. Cicek
 Prof. G. Clark
 Prof. S. Clark
 Mr. M. Colley
 Prof. R. Currie
 Prof. M. Czubryt
 Prof. S. Dhingra
 Ms. C. Dika
 Prof. M. Domaratzki
 Prof. J. Frank
 Prof. M. Gabbert
 Prof. D. Gardner
 Mr. T. Gibbes
 Dean N. Halden
 Prof. E. Haque
 Prof. J. Hare
 Prof. G. Hicks
 Prof. J. Honeyford
 Prof. D. Ireland
 Prof. T. Ivanco
 Dean G. Jacoby
 Dr. D. Jayas
 Ms. H. Jenkins
 Dean E. Jurkowski

Mr. J. Kearsey
 Dean A. Kelekis-Cholakis
 Prof. W. Kinsner
 Prof. R. Koop
 Ms. N. Lam
 Prof. L. Landrum
 Ms. M.-L. Lê
 Prof. K. MacKendrick
 Prof. S. McClement
 Ms. K. Macaliniao
 Prof. K. Main
 Dean D. Mandzuk
 Prof. B. Mark
 Prof. C. Miller
 Ms. J. Minarik
 Dr. T. Mondor
 Ms. N. Nagra
 Prof. K. Nixon
 Ms. L. O'Hara
 Prof. D. Oliver
 Prof. S. Olson
 Prof. S. Passmore
 Prof. J. Peeler
 Ms. S. Penner
 Ms. J. Peters
 Mr. D. Pinkerton
 Mr. E. Podaima
 Ms. M. Pozdirca
 Prof. S. Prentice
 Mr. J. Price
 Prof. A. Raouf
 Prof. M. Rastegar
 Dr. J. Ristock
 Ms. G. Romund
 Dean. M. Scanlon
 Prof. C. Schmidt
 Ms. L. Schnarr
 Prof. A. Schultz
 Prof. A. Schwann
 Mr. M. Shaw
 Acting Dean L. Simard
 Prof. M. Smith
 Mr. G. Sobie
 Prof. J. Sorensen

Prof. R. Souleymanov
 Mr. E. Tahmasebian
 Prof. M. Tamtik
 Dean J. Taylor
 Mr. E. Teklemariam
 Ms. E. Thomas
 Prof. G. Thompson
 Prof. G. Tranmer
 Prof. C. Trott
 Dean R. Urbanowski
 Prof. J. van Lierop
 Prof. D. Walker
 Dean M. Yellow Bird
 Ms. L. Zapshala-Kelln
 Mr. J. Leclerc,
 University Secretary
 Dr. S. Coyston,
 Recording Secretary

Assessors Present

Mr. J. Adams
 Ms. S. Bonner-Proulx
 Prof. R. Lastra
 Mr. N. Marnoch
 Mr. C. Neumann
 Prof. G. Smith
 Dr. D. Stewart
 Ms. S. Tombindo
 Dr. M. Torchia
 Ms. B. Usick
 Prof. D. Watt

Regrets

Rectrice S. Bouffard
 Prof. F. Burczynski
 Dr. C. Cook
 Dr. J. Doering
 Dr. G. Glavin
 Dr. D. Hiebert-Murphy
 Chancellor A. Mahon
 Mr. J. Moon
 Dean B. Postl
 Dean L. Raman-Wilms

Prof. T. Reeve
 Ms. L. Schnarr

Absent

Prof. B. Albeni
 Mr. J. Asaminew
 Mr. K. Bhamra
 Dean J. Black-Branch
 Ms. R. Calotes
 Ms. S. Cameron
 Ms. S. Deibert
 Dean N. Dyck
 Ms. K. Flattery
 Mr. M. Garrett
 Mr. B. Hill
 Ms. L. Johnson
 Mr. G. Kasbia
 Mr. J. McNicholl
 Prof. J. Paliwal
 Prof. B. Rice
 Mr. J. Sanderson

Also Present

Mr. R. Daudet
 Mr. G. Flemming
 Ms. S. Foster
 Mr. G. Prairie
 Ms. S. Phillips
 Ms. S. Utsunomiya
 Ms. S. Vanderveen
 Ms. M. Watson
 Ms. M. Yoshida

President Barnard observed that the University was in the early stages of a crisis that would be greater than what most at the institution had seen during their careers. Some would remember SARS from 2003 and H1N1 from 2009. The current COVID-19 pandemic was significantly different. President Barnard said, at this point, the University would remain open but with minimized contact and would hold harmless, to the extent possible, in terms of salaries, for example. He noted that there would be decisions made that would have to be changed as circumstances change, as had been the case in recent days at many other places that had tried to stake out positions.

President Barnard said the context ahead was not clear, so the University wanted to take what was an important step now. While the campuses remained open, classes had been canceled on March 16 and 17 as instructors considered alternative methods of instruction. No in-person classes would occur as of March 18, and consideration would be given to changing the Voluntary Withdrawal deadline and schedule of final examinations. Staff were continuing to work hard to keep essential elements of the University operating and, individually, there was a heightened awareness among all members of the community about the importance of social distancing and hygiene. President Barnard said the situation required cooperation, patience with each other, and an awareness of the different circumstances that different members of the University community will find themselves. Individuals needed to be responsible for themselves and, as members of the University community, for others, including especially students and colleagues.

President Barnard said the University of Manitoba and other institutions in the province and across the continent were finding ways to work. Information Services and Technology (IST) was enabling remote work, which would support a number of responses. Other responses were possible and some institutions. The University of Alberta, had closed and the province of Quebec had closed institutions for two weeks. There were different responses that might also arise for the University of Manitoba.

President Barnard, in the context that he had described, formally declared this to be a University emergency, which would put the institution in a position to consider some responses that could be different than they would be in the normal course of business.

Mr. Leclerc said the proposal for Approval Authority included with the agenda would have Senate delegate its decision-making authority to the Senate Executive Committee, for the period of an emergency and to deal with matters related to the emergency and its aftermath. It would be possible to organize and conduct meetings of that Committee by teleconference, to limit the number of people assembling for a meeting, and to make decisions in a timely manner. Mr. Leclerc said that, in an emergency, there were many operational decisions that could be made that would not require Senate approval, but for those decisions that did, Senate Executive would deal with these things on Senate's behalf. The recommendation made in the proposal included examples of some things that might be dealt with in this way.

Professor Blunden MOVED, seconded by Professor Biscontri, THAT, in the event of an emergency, as declared by the President, Senate authorizes the Senate Executive Committee to act for Senate in determining academic matters which require urgent resolution. Should the nature of the emergency warrant it, the

authority to make decisions may be delegated by Senate Executive to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) These matters include, but are not limited to:

- a) Revisions to the academic schedule and the delay of the exam period and changes to other dates and deadlines;**
- b) The temporary modification or suspension of academic policies, such as the Final Examinations and Final Grades Policy, the Responsibility of Academic Staff to Students Policy, in response to the emergency;**
- c) Changes to assessment requirements;**
- d) Completion of course requirements;**
- e) Changes of requirements of continuing awards;**
- f) Approving academic accommodations for students affected by the emergency.**

Decisions made under this delegated authority should be confined to dealing with specific issues related to the emergency for the period of the emergency and for the period immediately after the emergency. Care must be taken to avoid making decisions that may have ongoing implications for the delivery of academic programs. Normal approval channels shall be restored by the President as soon as it is permissible and safe to do so. The Senate Executive Committee shall report any actions taken to Senate both by email and at the subsequent meeting of Senate following an emergency situation.

Professor Prentice expressed her appreciation for all those who were managing the crisis in what were uncertain times.

Professor Prentice sought clarification, on behalf of colleagues in the Faculty of Arts, as to whether the delegation of responsibility would include the possibility of authorizing professors to exercise their best judgement, to finish their courses as they saw fit. This response would be more nuanced than what some faculty were hearing, which was to move all courses online.

Dr. Ristock referred Senators to item III (1) on the addendum to the Senate agenda, which included her decision to suspend sections of the procedures on *Responsibilities of Academic Staff with Regard to Students* (ROASS). She had taken this decision because a more nuanced response was required, to ensure students would be successful. While it might be possible for some courses to be offered online and be live online, it was anticipated that a majority of the courses would not be offered in this way. Instructors were asked to use their judgement to determine whether course assignments and syllabi would need to be changed, in order to complete the term in a remote context, rather than in-person, using a variety of possible platforms.

Professor Rastegar suggested that changes in the responsibilities of academics should be communicated to Faculties, Colleges, and Schools. Dr. Ristock said this would be the next step.

Several Senators raised questions and concerns on behalf of academic colleagues in their units. Professor Miller raised a concern on behalf of Lecturers, who had a higher teaching load, about the significant time required to move several courses to alternative modes of instruction during the two days that classes had been cancelled.

Dr. Ristock said classes had been paused for two days, to allow instructors to make the transition to an alternative mode, in the best way that they could, but the transition would not necessarily be completed within this timeframe. There would be opportunities to make changes over the current week and into the next. Dr. Ristock observed that the current situation would require creativity and flexibility and that approaches would differ by program and by Faculty.

Professor Gabbert said several colleagues in the Faculty of Arts had raised questions about how much flexibility instructors would be given, in relation to decisions about alternative modes of delivery and the completeness of their courses. He remarked that there never had been a requirement that faculty be experts in the use of technology for teaching. While many had some experience with this and others were working to get themselves in a better position to use it now, there were some faculty who had never and could not now be expected to use technology in their teaching. There were also faculty who were of the opinion that they had completed most of what they had intended to cover over the term or had other strategies for completing their courses that did not require the platforms which the Provost had referred to. Professor Gabbert expressed his hope that there would be a confirmation at Senate, that, in every case, it would be the best professional judgment of faculty members that would prevail and that in a crisis such as the current one, where all faculty were genuinely concerned about their students, that there could not be an expectation that individuals must acquire the technical skills and knowledge necessary to deliver their courses by distance.

Dr. Ristock confirmed that instructors were not being directed to become experts in teaching technologies. Various supports would be available to instructors through the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (The Centre), to assist instructors who did not have experience with delivering courses in alternate formats or using platforms such as UM Learn, where instructors might post lectures and other teaching materials. Dr. Ristock confirmed that there also was no directive to deliver all courses online, which was a very narrow concept. She recognized it would be necessary for instructors to be flexible and to use their judgement. Dr. Ristock noted that, where professional programs required a minimum number of contact hours, Deans would work with Heads to provide more nuanced instructions, to ensure students would be able to graduate with the necessary requirements.

Professor Gabbert suggested that it would not be reasonable to require that the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) be completed, as required by the policy on *Teaching Evaluation*, given there was no effective way to administer the SEEQ by distance and the expectation that the number of responses that might be received would be insufficient. He raised the possibility that Senate would take a decision or give clear advice on this question, given that many instructors had not had an opportunity to complete the SEEQ for their courses this term.

Dr. Ristock referred Senators to item III (1) on the addendum to the agenda, which communicated her decision to suspend section 2.12 of the *Responsibilities of Academic Staff with regard to Students* procedure, which pertained to the paper copy of the SEEQ. The Academic Advisory Sub-committee of the Pandemic Planning Committee might consider a proposal to suspend the requirement for teaching evaluations, for consideration by Senate Executive during the emergency period, but this was yet to be determined.

Professor Chen said, based on questions received from colleagues, that instructors were also wanting more information on the limits on changing courses, including a clear directive on whether instructors, including for individual sections of multi-sectioned courses, could decide to end their courses now. Professor Chen raised a concern that some faculty, who felt they had covered all of the material for their course, would end classes at this point in the term, although there were four weeks remaining. Referring to the Department of History, in particular, she said that, in many courses, 40 to 60 percent of the evaluations remained to be done. Professor Chen said it would be unfair to evaluate students in a course based on what had been covered to date, in a final examination that might be scheduled a month later. Also, in this scenario, it would be necessary to evaluate the skills students had entered the course with, rather than those that were to be developed during the course. Professor Chen said instructors would need to consider the University's responsibility to students, including to provide students in their courses with the skills and knowledge that would prepare them for the next level of courses that they would take next year.

Professor Chen sympathized with colleagues not familiar with UM Learn or teaching technologies for delivering courses online or in some other alternate format. She observed that some faculty who were familiar with different technologies would be willing to offer their support, including to assist with recording lectures, for example.

Professor Chen expressed her hope that the University would give serious consideration to compensation and recognition for instructors, for the additional work and time involved in moving their courses to alternative delivery formats, given the extra demands that were placed on them to carry out work that was not covered in their contract and for which they were not paid and given that they would need to allocate research time to this exercise.

Dr. Ristock emphasized that the University was not cancelling classes or stopping instruction. Rather, it was looking at how to continue the term and was asking instructors to consider alternative modes of course delivery that would, in fairness to students, retain the quality of the courses and programs.

Professor Botar asked if there could be accommodations for particular courses, with certain assessments that absolutely could not be completed remotely, to meet in person while practicing social distancing. He gave the example of a ceramics studio course offered in the School of Art. Students in the course had completed 40 percent of the assessments but yet to glaze and fire all of their work before final critiques at the end of term.

Dr. Ristock said decisions on individual courses could not be made at this meeting. She indicated that there were courses, including some studio courses and clinical courses in health sciences programs, for example, that would raise unique questions and concerns that would need to be dealt with at the unit level, in consultation with the Dean or Director. Solutions would require flexibility and creativity but would also need to ensure the safety of students and others, to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

Dr. Ristock reminded Senators that the current situation was one that was changing rapidly, and any decisions discussed today might well be changed tomorrow. Dr. Barnard concurred adding that the current context, with regard to decisions taken by the University of Manitoba, other universities, and governments, was evolving. The

University would try to take steps that were appropriate now, recognizing that the current context was only the start of the pandemic and no one could predict how some things might change.

Speaking on behalf of her colleagues, Professor Schmidt said instructors in the Faculty of Education had also enquired about the possibility of a distance-learning stipend to offset the additional work required of faculty who already had significant teaching loads. The possibility of relaxing a requirement that graduate students defend their thesis in person, to allow students to participate remotely, was also raised, given the large number of graduate students in the Faculty, including some who were not based in Winnipeg.

Dr. Ristock said the requirement that graduate students defend their thesis in person had been suspended the previous Friday.

Professor Schmidt remarked that, with the move to deliver courses using alternative modes of delivery, it would be important to recognize and address that some students could not connect to the internet from their homes. She also raised a concern that Teaching Assistants might have access to more personal information about their students than they would have had in an in-person classroom setting. She asked whether potential privacy concerns had been considered.

Professor Schultz said that, in the College of Nursing, there were some courses that, at this point in the term, involved teaching and evaluation of how teamwork was carried out in a healthcare setting in the classes, including group presentations. It would be difficult to reconfigure these courses in order to meet in person and practice social distancing. Also, within the College, arguments had been made by some to allow students to complete their practicum courses, as they could contribute to the healthcare system in the current situation. Professor Schultz suggested that consideration would need to be given to the sorts of protections that might be required for these students, who were not registered nurses, if they were to become ill with COVID-19.

Mr. Podaima asked what the process would be, if Senate were to approve the recommendation to authorize Senate Executive to act on its behalf, in the event of an emergency, if the pandemic was to worsen, and decisions needed to be made beyond offering classes using alternate delivery modes.

Mr. Leclerc replied that an Academic Advisory Sub-committee of the Pandemic Planning Committee, was considering the various implications of moving classes to alternate modes of delivery and the decisions that would need to be made as a result. It would bring recommendations, including from Faculties and Schools, to Senate Executive, to respond as issues were identified.

Responding to a question about the possibility of perhaps continuing some laboratory courses or research in person, if there was a way to practice social distancing, President Barnard said it was clear from the discussion that there were nuanced differences between faculties and schools. The University was committed to doing its best to support students, the research enterprise, and faculty, in terms of their career development. President Barnard anticipated that there would be creative responses to some situations that would be possible, provided that they were consistent with the principles of safety.

Dean Baum remarked that it had been wonderful to see how people at the University were working together and trying their best to respond to the need to move courses to alternate modes of delivery. She observed that it was important to be mindful that many students travelled to the University's campus by bus, which did not allow for optimal social distancing. The University would not be helping the broader community to reduce the spread of the virus if it would continue to require some students to travel to its campuses to attend in person classes. Some students were also concerned for others around them, including vulnerable family members. Dean Baum anticipated that, over the next few weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 would rise in the province and provincial guidelines might become stricter, rather than less strict. This was something to consider while planning to complete the delivery of science and engineering courses with laboratories and continue to carry out research. The current situation was an extraordinary occasion that would call upon individuals to act in extraordinary ways, and Dean Baum anticipated people would rise to it.

Professor MacKendrick observed that, as faculty members at various institutions had moved their courses online in recent days, the number of social media posts showing instructors whose lectures or use of technology had gone awry had also increased. Encouraging faculty to record their lectures and post them online exposed people to social media in a way that some may not have considered before. Professor MacKendrick expressed his hope that there would be safeguards for faculty who might be affected from any negative entailments.

Professor Sorenson said his colleagues were seeking clarity on whether any final examinations might be held in person, for example, if there were certain thresholds based on the numbers of students or if the size of the examination room.

Dr. Ristock replied that faculty would be asked to consider whether there were final examinations that could be completed online and Mr. Marnoch, Registrar, was considering a revised final examination schedule that would make use of smaller rooms but would require more invigilators. She said while final examinations would not be cancelled, it was not clear at this point whether it would be possible to maintain the current schedule.

Professor Miller said, based on stories from media outlets in the United States, where some postsecondary institutions had closed, students were losing jobs on campuses or were required to move out of dormitories leaving them without means to pay their rent or places to live, that it would be important to consider these things here.

Professor Walker remarked that, in some internal communications, as well as information available in the media, the messaging was that all instructors would be required to move their courses online. The present discussion had clarified that there was no such requirement. Professor Walker suggested it would be useful if this information could be communicated directly to faculty members, including to do their best to continue to offer their courses until the end of term.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

III ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

1. **Correspondence from Provost and Vice-President (Academic)** Page 2
RE: Adjustments to Academic Policies

Dr. Ristock referred Senators to a proposal to suspend section 2.6 of the *Voluntary Withdrawal* policy for the 2020 Winter Term and to authorize the Provost to amend the Voluntary Withdrawal date for the same term, as outlined in item III (1), in the addendum to the agenda. She said the proposal followed from the University's decision to cancel in person classes, and the realization that the current March 18th deadline for voluntary withdrawals was not workable.

Dr. Ristock MOVED, seconded by Professor Gabbert, THAT Senate approve the suspension of section 2.6 of the *Voluntary Withdrawal* policy for the winter 2020 term, and authorize the Provost to amend the Voluntary Withdrawal date for this term.

CARRIED

Referring to her memo to Senators (dated March 15, 2020) included with the addendum to the agenda, Dr. Ristock said she had made the decision to suspend a number of sections of the *Responsibilities of Academic Staff with regard to Students* procedure, effective immediately. The decision had been made in order to facilitate Faculties, Colleges, and Schools to address the issues identified in the previous discussion, including to assess methods of evaluation as courses were moved to alternate delivery formats.

Dr. Torchia said The Centre had created a webpage, "Contingencies for Teaching," with information on various teaching resources to support faculty. The webpage could be accessed through the University's webpage with COVID-19 updates. He noted that student presentations could be completed in a virtual classroom setting, which could be set up in Cisco Webex. Staff from The Centre were survey computer laboratories on campus to determine if it would be possible for students who did not own computers to use these facilities, with proper social distancing.

Referring to a question raised in the previous discussion, Dr. Torchia said that Teaching Assistants would not have access to more information about students if courses were moved to the UM Learn platform, as permission levels for Teaching Assistants limited their access to students' information.

In response to questions, Dr. Torchia said he was very confident that UM Learn, which was a cloud-based solution hosted by Amazon Web Services, would be able to accommodate the additional capacity as more courses were moved to this platform. With respect to Cisco Webex, there was capacity for 4,000 online classes.

Dean Jacoby encouraged Faculties and Schools, where it was feasible, to loan laptop computers to students who did not own a computer.

Ms. Lê said Library staff were asking about the University's decision to keep the Libraries open when the City of Winnipeg's public libraries had been closed and

given that libraries were spaces where transmission of the virus was possible and social distancing could not be enforced. It also required some staff members to continue to use buses or other forms of transport to come to work on the University's campuses.

Ms. O'Hara said there was a plan to close smaller libraries, as some staff were not coming in and the number was expected to increase when secondary schools closed, which would require parents to stay home. Consideration was also being given to closing public access to Neil John Maclean Health Sciences Library, while still allowing staff and students to access the Library. The plan was to keep the Elizabeth Dafoe Library open, to the extent possible, given the administrative offices and computer laboratories located within that library. Ms. O'Hara said the Libraries had taken measures to minimize the risk of virus transmission, including to: ensure staff knew how to handle materials, make hand sanitizer available, limit the number of people in group study rooms to two people, shut down every second computer in computer laboratories. The Library had also sent home staff who were vulnerable or who travelled to campus by bus. It was also keeping in touch with other university libraries across North America.

President Barnard expressed his appreciation for the number of things that had been raised. He emphasized that the current situation was a difficult one that was unlike anything that had been seen before as an institution and probably in people's individual experiences. The University would continue to support students, faculty, staff, and all members of the University community and their families. The University had taken some good steps, but directions might need to change as circumstances related to the pandemic changed.

II ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

These minutes, pages 1 to 9, together with the agenda, pages 1 to 3, and an addendum to the agenda, pages 1 to 3, comprise the minutes of the Special Meeting of Senate held on March 16, 2020.