



Carleton University acknowledges and respects the Algonquin people, traditional custodian of the land on which the Carleton University campus is situated.

**Carleton University Senate
Meeting of October 20 2023 at 2:00 pm
Pigiarvik 608**

OPEN SESSION

Minutes

Present in Person: E. Abou Zeid, B. Albright-Peakall, S. Blanchard, A. Bordeleau, A. Bowker, S. Burges, B. Campbell, J.P. Corriveau, L. Dyke, K. Graham, M. Haines, S. Hawkins, D. Hornsby, D. Howe, M. Huckvale, L. Kostiuk, A. Lannon, A. MacDonald, J. Malloy, J. Mason, D. Mendeloff, A. North, P. Rankin, O. Shafiq, D. Siddiqi, E. Sloan (Clerk), P. Smith, D. Sprague, K. Taylor, J. Tomberlin (Chair), C. Viau, P. Wolff.

Present via Zoom: H. Babb, H. Becker, F. Brouard, W. Chung, A. Clarke, R. Goubran, T. Haats, B. MacLeod, L. Madokoro, L. Marshall, K. Moss, H. Nemiroff, B. O'Connor, B. O'Neill, A. Park, M. Rooney, S. Seneviratne, G. Wainer, J. Wallace

Regrets: J. Armstrong, M. Baez, M. Barbeau, E. Cyr, M. DeRosa, R. Gorelick, N. Hagigi, K. Hellemans, F. Lepore, P. Mkandawire, L. Moffitt, J. Murray, M. Pearson, G. Pickton, C. Smelser, J. Taber, M. Taghavishavazi

Absent: D. Caratao, S. Everts, Y. Gandhi, S. Rajput, M. F. Riazuddin

Recording Secretary: K. McKinley

1. Welcome & Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm. The Chair welcomed Senators and noted that the meeting would begin with a Closed Session for graduation approvals. The Chair reminded Senators that Fall Convocation will be held on Saturday November 4, and that registration to participate in the faculty procession closes at end of day October 20.

It was **MOVED** (C. Viau, M. Haines) that Senate move into the Closed Session of the meeting.

The motion **PASSED**.

Non-Senators were asked to withdraw from the chamber for the duration of the Closed Session.

(See separate document for Closed Session Minutes.)

Continuation of Open Session minutes following end of Closed Session:

It was **MOVED** (S. Blanchard, K. Graham) that Senate approve the open agenda for the meeting of Senate on October 20, 2023, as presented.

The motion **PASSED**.

2. Minutes: September 22, 2023

The Chair noted one slight error on page 8 (Reports – SCCASP) in the title of the first item for approval.

With this correction, it was **MOVED** (M. Haines, D. Sprague) that Senate approve the minutes of the Senate meeting on September 22, 2023, as amended.

The motion **PASSED**.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair began his remarks by expressing sympathy for all those affected by the ongoing violence in Israel and Gaza. He asked for a moment of silence to acknowledge the continuing suffering of all affected by this conflict.

The Chair noted the following recent events on campus:

- Orange Shirt Day was recognized on campus with a number of events. An “Every Child Matters” flag was flown on September 29 and 30th.

- An inaugural Pride Week was held the week of October 10, with the launch of a newly redesigned Pride Crosswalk.
- The 5th annual Inclusion Week was held October 16 – 20, to raise awareness of inclusivity and celebrate all members of the Carleton community.

The Chair thanked organizers and volunteers who contributed to the success of these events.

The Chair noted the following recent Carleton achievements:

- Carleton’s Experiential Learning Hub was officially opened on October 11. Located on the 6th floor of Southam Hall, the Hub includes three studios to support experiential learning and to further educational advancements.
- Carleton University ranked within the top 5 of the Best Comprehensive University category in the most recent Macleans University rankings. Other Top 5 highlights include a #1 ranking in Social Sciences and Humanities Grants, #4 ranking in Scholarships and Bursaries, Student Awards and Faculty Awards, and #5 ranking in Medical/Science Grants.

Finally, the Chair reminded Senators of Carleton’s annual United Way Campaign, from October 25 to November 14. This is an important Carleton tradition and an opportunity for Carleton to help those within our community who are in need. Many events and activities are planned, including a Silent Pumpkin Auction between October 24 and 27. Senators were encouraged to visit the United Way Campaign webpage for more information.

5. Question Period

Four questions were submitted by Senators for this meeting:

Questions submitted by Root Gorelick

Question 1: Instructors can upload mid-term exams to the McIntyre Exam Centre (MEC) website, from which MEC prints and distributes exams to all PMC students. MEC provides the same service for final exams, with the bonus that MEC then prints and distributes final exams to ALL students, not just PMC students. Can that latter process of MEC dealing with all students be extended to mid-term exams?

Response from VP Students & Enrolment Suzanne Blanchard: This could be possible, but would require extra resources and funding to implement, and might necessitate extra charges to units for the printing and staffing.

Question 2: Why do we call this body “senate”? The etymological root of SENATE is the same as SENILE, referring to a group of old men. As a poignant example, only in 2009 did the U.S. Senate first allow female senators into its swimming pool because a few erstwhile male senators wanted to continue swimming without women present. Not all Carleton senators are old or male, so could we change the name to something less stodgy and more inclusive, such as COUNCIL or COLLEGIUM? Such change would require amending many documents, including the Carleton University Act, so would require approval by Carleton’s Board of Governors and approval by Ontario’s Legislature and Lieutenant-Governor. Nonetheless, I believe that increased inclusivity makes such an onerous change worthwhile.

Response from Interim President Jerry Tomberlin: The term may be outdated and may have questionable connotations, but changing it would require opening the Carleton University Act, which would not be advisable.

Questions from Jody Mason & Morgan Rooney:

Jody Mason: The current Self-Declaration for Academic Consideration form for students is a very important document that is unfortunately very difficult to locate. I’ve written to the Registrar’s Office about this issue. The document is not located on the Registrar’s Office website, although this site contains a section that would be appropriate for such a document (“Student Documents”). Instead, students searching for the form from a search engine find a direct link to the pdf, which leaves them wondering if they have the correct / current form. Given the importance of this document, can Senate recommend that the Registrar’s Office put the form on their website?

Morgan Rooney: Late in Fall 2022, on the recommendation of SCCASP, Senate approved the use of the Self-Declaration Form for students in lieu of medical documentation. The form that students are directed to complete is a PDF, where they enter their information, print or save the document, and then submit it in paper or electronic form to their instructor (for term work) or the Registrar’s Office (for official exams), as the situation requires. That is, except in cases where the student submits directly to the Registrar’s Office, the instructor is the only Carleton employee who has access to the record. Did the Registrar’s Office consider using something such as a Wordpress form (where all submissions could be centrally stored as well as automatically emailed to the relevant parties) to streamline the process and create a central repository for these documents? That is, would it not be helpful for Carleton to be able to track students who frequently avail themselves of the self-declaration form, both so we can identify students in need and support them, as well as those who might abuse the process? If this approach was originally considered and then abandoned, what was the rationale:

Response by Vice-President Students & Enrolment Suzanne Blanchard: Once the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or other Extenuating Circumstances is

approved, the form will be revised so that it is fillable and trackable, and more visible. In response to a follow-up question, the VPSE replied that there is no limit to the number of times the form can be filled out by a student, but the RO will be tracking and will follow-up with the student if multiple instances are noted.

6. Administration (Clerk)

a. Membership ratifications

The Clerk presented a motion to ratify two new Senators:

- Rebecca Renfroe – Faculty member from Sprott
- Robert Nelson – new graduate student

It was **MOVED** (E. Sloan, D. Siddiqi) that Senate ratify the new Senate appointments, as presented, for service beginning immediately.

The motion **PASSED**.

b. Report on Annual Senate Committee Chairs and Secretaries Meeting

The Clerk reported on the recent meeting on October 2 with the Chairs and Secretaries of the Senate standing committees. Corporate Archivist Shannon Hodge spoke to the group about the use of Teams channels for document sharing and records management. Other topics for discussion included student engagement and confidentiality concerns, particularly for appeals committees.

7. Reports:

a. SCCASP (D. Siddiqi)

Committee Chair Dan Siddiqi presented three items for approval and two items for information.

Items for Approval:

Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or Other Extenuating Circumstances

It was **MOVED** (D. Siddiqi, H. Nemiroff) that Senate approves the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or Other Extenuating Circumstances effective for the Winter 2024 session as presented.

Discussion:

Committee Chair Dan Siddiqi provided some historical context to the formation of this policy. He noted that in the mid-2010s, various departments and units across the university reported a number of issues and concerns with the medical note protocol used by students to obtain accommodations in the case of illness:

- Health & Counselling Services were becoming over-burdened with requests for medical notes.
- It was expected that the process for requesting medical notes would soon be restructured via legislation.
- Producing medical notes had become a cottage industry of sorts for some doctors. Mass production of these notes made it easy for students to produce forgeries.

The value of the medical note for the professor had become questionable, and the request for notes created both a burden on university resources, and a drain on students' finances.

As a result, SCCASP performed a benchmarking study to learn what protocols or models were being used by other universities, then drafted the Medical Accommodations Policy. When the pandemic began, the Registrar's Office rolled out the Self-Declaration Form, which was then approved by Senate in November of 2022. After several semesters of use, the Registrar's office determined that there was no significant change in the rate of abuse of process between the medical note and self-declaration protocols.

The Medical Accommodations Policy subsequently underwent further review and revision to address mental health issues of students. In completing the current draft, SCCASP is making the following recommendations:

- Forms will be submitted electronically. The Registrar's Office is responsible for administering the form and for alerting stakeholders, while preserving the privacy of the student(s).
- Submissions will be tracked in a way that protects the privacy of the student.
- There is no difference between referrals for interim coursework vs. final exams.

- There should be no limits on the number of times the self-determination form is used. Imposing limits would be contrary to the goal of identifying students' potential mental health issues.
- The forms should be accepted in good faith. Abuse of the policy would constitute an academic integrity violation which would be addressed through a different process.

During the discussion, the VP Students & Enrolment noted that the student will be able to access the fillable self-declaration form online. All submissions will go through the Registrar's Office and the instructor will receive the information as well. The RO will track the data and assess supports needed for the students. The data can also be used to track how mental health resources are being accessed and if more resources are needed. Students will be informed via the guidelines about data tracking and privacy.

A Senator asked for clarity regarding the types of accommodations allowed. In response it was noted that learning outcomes of the course must be preserved and that instructors may still accommodate students the way they normally would, with some restrictions. More guidelines may be found in section 4 of the undergraduate calendar.

Several Senators expressed concern with the potential for abuse of this system by students. The VP Students & Enrolment responded that data indicates that trends for abusing this system are low. Frequent use of the form could indicate mental health issues, which are important to identify and act upon. The RO also tracked the use of the form for midterms and did not see an increase in the number of requests via medical notes. In cases where a trend is evident, the RO will contact the student to investigate and offer support. Instructors may also submit a Care Report, and the Registrar's Office will follow up with the student.

Other Senators noted that the policy may help students in need but can result in an increase in workload for instructors, because it is easier for students to use. One Senator reported that in his Faculty junior faculty members with large classes are finding the increased workload challenging. In response it was noted that the increase in deferral requests could be due to an increase in mental health issues among students. In addition, there may be significant differences in numbers of requests per department or Faculty; enhanced data tracking could provide more clarity. The RO will continue to collect and monitor the data, to look for trends and to see if any adjustments are needed in the policy.

The motion **PASSED**.

R-UG-4.3 Deferred Final Examinations (changes as a result of new policy)

It was **MOVED** (D. Siddiqi, K. Graham) that Senate approves the revisions to Regulation: TBD-1887 R-UG-4.3 Deferred Final Examinations effective for the 2023/24 Undergraduate Calendar as presented.

The motion **PASSED**.

TBD-1888; R-UG-4.4 Deferred Term Work (changes as result of new policy)

It was **MOVED** (D. Siddiqi, A. North) that Senate approves the revisions to TBD-1888 R-UG-4.4 Deferred Term Work, effective for the 2023/24 Undergraduate Calendar as presented.

The motion **PASSED**.

Items for Information:

- Procedure for Academic Consideration Policy
- Academic Consideration Policy – Guidelines for Instructors

b. SAGC (E. Sloan)

Committee Chair Elinor Sloan presented a motion to ratify 9 new committee members:

- 1) Senate Executive Committee
 - Elie Abou Zeid (Graduate student)
- 2) Senate Committee on Curriculum, Admissions and Studies Policy (SCCASP)
 - Sarah Ferguson (Graduate Student)
- 3) Senate Quality Assurance and Planning Committee
 - Siva Sivathayalan (Faculty member – FED)
- 4) Senate Academic Integrity Appeals Committee

- Sana Mohsni (Faculty member - Sprott)
 - Pam Wolff (Faculty member - Science)
 - Ayshia Bailie (Graduate student)
- 5) Senate Graduate Student Appeal Committee
- Harsh Thakkar (Graduate student)
- 6) Senate Review Committee
- Rodney Nelson (Faculty member – Sprott)
 - Izuchukwu Maduekwe (Graduate student)

It was **MOVED** (E. Sloan, D. Hornsby) that Senate ratify the nominees for Senate committees, as presented, for service beginning immediately upon approval.
The motion **PASSED**.

8. Reports for Information:

- a. Senate Executive Minutes – September 11, 2023**
- b. Annual Report from the Senate Library Committee**

There was no discussion of these items.

9. Other Business

There was none.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned (M. Haines, D. Siddiqi) at 3:29 p.m.