Minutes of the Academic Senate of the University of Prince Edward Island
Friday, September 26, 2025, 3:00 – 5:00pm
Alumni Hall and via Zoom

Present: A. Hsiao, A. Trowbridge, A. Weenie, A. Braithwaite, B. Linkletter, D.Magbanua, E. Reid, G. Naterer, H. Sulman, I. Bhalesha, J. Trenton McClure, J. Ngobia, J. McIntyre, K, Mears, L. Paredes, M. von Eccher, M. Clapson, M. Sweeney-Nixon, M. A. McMahon, M. Buote, M. Turnbull, N. Clark, N. Etkin, P. Drake, P. Bernard, R. Deziel, R. Hoersting, S. Cassidy, S. Myers, S. Lloyd, T. Jackson, T. Mady, T. Walker, W. Rodgers, W. Montelpare, W. Whelan

Regrets: A. Bourque, C. Campeau, D. Griffon, J. Sentance, P. Foley, P. Smith, R.A. Dalton, S. Hamilton, S. Kresta, Y. Rashchupkina

Guests: T. Ferguson, Deloitte, M. James, Senior Advisor for Strategic Enrolment Management.

Secretariat: P. Robichaud, W. Anderson, Gloria Tsoi, R. Anwar

OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order, Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks from Chair and Vice-Chair

W. Rodgers called the meeting to order, welcome members at 3:03 pm and acknowledged the land.

President Rodgers reminded Senators that next Tuesday marks the 10th anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation commission report. The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day; a day that honours the children who never returned home and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. The purpose of the day to reveal the truth of what happened because of the colonization of Canada and the imposition of the residential school system. One of the University's important roles is to uplift truth and deliver a more peaceful and respectful society. Senators are invited to consult the University's webpage on events planned to mark the day on campus.

As the agenda of this session is quite packed, we will move swiftly but will provide due opportunity for full discussion. Some regular items of business have been truncated to provide sufficient time to discussion important topics, such as the Audit of the Action Plan, the Strategic Enrolment Management Plan, the Policies on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual violence and the University's Strategic Plan.

Vice Chair Mears Welcomed Senators to a new academic year and wished everyone a good semester.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: MOVED by M. Turnbull and SECONDED by N. Clark that the agenda of Senate of May 2, 2025, be approved. CARRIED.

3. **Information Session on Action Plan Audit**

The Chair notes the presence of representatives of Deloitte; the auditors retained by the Board of Governors to audit the implementation of the Action Plan. The Auditors' Plain Language Report, a Reasonable Assurance Report, and a Recommendations Report were included in the meeting materials and are considered read.

T. Furgeson from Deloitte is invited by the Chair of Senate to speak and present to Senate a Report on the Audit of the University's Action Plan.

Furgeson indicates that the University has done a lot to get to this point, while stressing that institutional change at this scale takes time. He noted the University's organizational strength, commitment, and community engagement as elements of success in implementing the Plan. Auditors do have some recommendations to enhance the Plan's impact and note that the University should be proud of what has been accomplished. It is stated that Year 0 and 1 were implemented as planned. The Auditors therefore provide a clean audit opinion. To carry out the Audit, 68 criteria were developed and have formed the basis of their opinion. Of those criteria, none were not met, a few were partially met, and five were untested as they relate to the policies on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Violence, which are tracking towards approval by the Board of Governors in October.

The ambitious nature of the plan was noted, with auditors being uncertain that the University can fully deliver the plan over five years.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

   a. **September 26, 2025, Open Minutes**

MOTION: MOVED by N. Etkin and SECONDED by M. Sweeny-Nixon that Senate approve the minutes of the open session of Senate of May 2, 2025. CARRIED.

Some discrepancies in attendance at the May 2 meeting were noted, with Senators invited to write to the Secretary with any required revisions.

5. **Business Arising from Minutes of May 2, 2025**

None

6. **Senior Administration Reports**

   a. **President's Report**

President Rodgers stated that the University has entered the "bring-it-on" phase of development of several key initiatives, some being on this meeting's agenda, as she marks the one-year anniversary of her coming to UPEI. She notes that once these initiatives are formally approved, the process of renewal doesn't end, that the University intends to regularly review its work, such that as the University moves important projects over the line, we keep in mind that there will be opportunity to revisit them. As the University is moving forward, we are building resiliency, as we communicate better on how we are managing change. This is a time when we need to come together for the development of students, as we prepare them to meet the challenges of our times. Many have worked hard to get us here and deserve our thanks.

b. Vice-President Academic and Research Report

A written report from the Vice President Academic and Research was circulated with meeting materials and is considered read.

c. Vice-President People and Culture Report

As part of her listening tour, J. Nobia has completed 27 of 38 scheduled meetings and met 62 members of the University Community one-on-one. Meetings with students start in November and will continue in January. May comments received relate to cultural change. We are exploring in a shared way how we will change our institutional culture.

The University is now knee deep in the Year-2 of the Actin Plan with many important things to do. The *Harassment and Discrimination Policy* and the *Sexual Violence Policy* are key elements on our path forwards that must be brought to conclusion.

Many have expressed frustration with cumbersome processes that are getting in the way of good work. J. Nobia and T. Walker are reviewing core processes whose improvement would yield greater benefit. Nola Etkin has been appointed special advisor to help us in this process.

To address the harm caused and the resulting trauma in the University Community and help us move ahead together, we are hiring an expert in restorative practices.

New staff in the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office are hired to prepare to deliver on the new Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Violence policies.

7. <u>Strategic Enrolment Management</u>

Vice President Naderer presents a draft Strategic Enrolment Plan for 2025 to 2030 titled: *Roadmap to Student Success and Institutional Sustainability*. It is included in the meeting materials. The plan is meant to be a comprehensive effort to achieve our goals for enrolment, retention, and graduation.

The plan is predicated on:

- A student-centered roadmap that ensures enrolment growth is sustainable and that students have access to the advising, supports, and learning opportunities needed to experience an engaged learning journey, persist, and flourish in society when they graduate.

- Data-informed decision-making by using consistent dashboards, retention metrics, and enrolment projections, where SEM gives us the tools to better utilize evidence-based planning.
- Cross-campus collaboration and coordination across Faculties, Units, the Registrar's Office, Recruitment, Admissions, Institutional Research, ITSS, and Student Affairs.
- Each unit contributes to a shared accountability framework that keeps student success at the center of our daily work.
- Sustainability and growth that stabilizes international enrolments, expands graduate programs, improves domestic recruitment, and ensures revenue sustainability to support the University's mission.

The Plan is being developed through broad consultations, including this presentation to Senate, through workshops, subcommittee work, meetings of Dean's Council, etc., since 2024.

Thanks to members of the Steering Committee, to M. James as Chair of the Steering Committee, to Miles Turnbull as Chair of the Resource Planning Subcommittee and to Johnathn Hewitt as Chair of Student Success Subcommittee.

Plus speaks to projections in enrolment for coming years, given that we can deliver on the interventions outlined in the Plan.

M. Janes provides an update on the process to develop the SEM plan, current activities and opportunities for input and reminds members that SEM is about coordinating the strengths and capacities of the University to particular goals.

Questions:

Q1: Do the goals related to graduate studies also apply to the creation of second undergraduate programs, i.e.: undergraduates that require a graduate degree at admission? **A1**: Nothing is off the table.

Q2: What are the areas of recruitment? Are we looking at the American market? **A2**: Investment in markets where we have a strong presence. Yes, the American market is part of the plan.

Q3: Can there be an information session in each unit about what degrees? **A3**: Yes, this would be an opportunity to discuss clear pathways for student success.

Q4: Can there be more information for professors on the students they teach? **A4:** Some of that would come up in data governance, within the bounds of what can be shared in compliance with privacy requirements.

Q5: Are the numbers related to our capacity? Is some of the projected growth beyond our capacity? **A5:** We need resources to be able to deliver on the plan. Some areas have room to grow; others will need development to welcome it.

Q6: Some students drop out in the first year of their studies because of lack of preparation. Are we looking at remediation? **A6**: Yes, we are looking into that. There is a group looking at coordination of academic advising with an understanding of areas with greater attrition.

Q7: Where are we going to house these extra students? I'm curious as to what we have stopped doing to do all the things we are taking on. **A7**: We must do things in quality, and it may be that some choice will have to be made about what we must continue. The Steering Committee will look at how much there is to do. It is noted that the University currently has a lot of room in its current housing capacity. The enrolment of 6000 students sounds scary, but we were almost there in 2023. The UPEISU's study on student housing is noted as an important source of good recommendations regarding the improvement of housing at UPEI.

8. Question Period

a. Questions and answers received from Placemats
None received

b. Questions Received in Advance

Two questions were received in advance of the meeting from Senator Linkletter.

Q8: The calendar published this year organizes the table of contents differently than in the past. The current calendar does not have these sections and presents all 116 chapters sequentially. Was this reorganization of the table of contents intentional or an oversight? **A1:** This is a known issue that occurred when we cloned the calendar from a previous version. We are working to resolve that.

Q9: It seems we have transferred the review and approval of all transfer course equivalents for UCE to the main campus at UPEI. What is the reason for this policy or decision? **A2:** There have been some inconsistencies between UCE and UPEI in awarding credits. We are moving this into the hands of the associate Dean in Cairo.

c. Questions Received from the Floor

Q10: Is the University planning on posting the new position of Special Advisory on student engagement? **A10:** The position has been posted and applications received. We are evaluating candidates.

Q11: Why are new positions in the EDI office not unionized? **A11:** We are in the process of reviewing everything about those roles. We will keep that in mind. Those roles may deal with confidential content and could handle cases related to their own union, which could be problematic.

Q12: As it comes to data governance under the SEM Plan, there may be a role for the library as it has been looking to records management. **A12**: Noted.

Q13: Are we tracking where our graduates are? Are we sharing that information? A13:

We stay in touch with graduates to have information about where they are and what they do. We are working on better collection of data. The MPHEC has a lot of data about graduates that could be a place to start.

9. Reports from Standing Committee

a. Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

The Chair reports verbally that the Committee's only decision since the last meeting of the Senate is the approval of today's agenda.

b. Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee

Vice President Naterer brings to Senate three recommendations from the *Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee*, the first two regarding a change to English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements and the corresponding Calendar entries and the third being a change in the title of a course delivered at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC): VBS 8030.

<u>Changes to English Language Proficiency Requirements</u>

The Changes to ELP requirements are in response to changes in English Language Program delivery and the introduction of new tests.

MOTION: MOVED by G. Naterer and SECONDED by B. Montelpare, that the English Language Proficiency requirements for Graduate Studies and the concordant Calendar entries be modified as presented. CARRIED

MOTION: MOVED by G. Naterer and SECONDED by M. Turnbull, that the English Language Proficiency requirements for Undergraduate studies and the concordant Calendar entries be modified as presented. CARRIED

<u>Change in the title of a course at the AVC</u>

MOTION: MOVED BY G. Naterer and SECONDED by P. Bernard that the title of course VBS 8030 be modified to add the words "and professional skills." CARRIED

10. <u>Appointment of a Senator to the Board of Governors</u>

The University Secretary indicates that, as prescribed by the University Act and the Processes and Procedures of Senate, a Senator is to be elected by Senate to a three-year term on the Board of Governors, with immediate effect. The elected members will attend their first meeting on October 7, 2025. The election is done from the floor of Senate with the candidate receiving the most votes being elected.

After a call for nominations and election by Senators, Senator John McIntyre was elected.

11. <u>Report of the Board of Governors to Senate</u>

Senator Montelpare reports on the business of the Board that has transacted since the

Senate last met. The Board has held a special meeting to approve the purchase of a property on Belvedere Avenue and approve the renewal of the Debt Facility for the Faculty of Medicine. The Board also held a joint information session with the Senate on the University's Strategic Plan.

12. <u>University Strategic Plan</u>

President Rodgers indicates that the final version of the University Strategic Plan has been circulated with the meeting materials. The plan was developed through a rigorous and consultative process, that included a joint session of the Senate and the Board of Governors on August 25. The Plan now goes on to the Board on October 7 for approval.

Thanks to Charlotte McCardle who headed the process, to members of the Steering Committee and to the Marketing and Promotion Unit, who have formatted the plan.

The shift towards the pursuit of excellence was noted as a positive move.

13. <u>Policies on Harassment and Discrimination and Sexual Violence</u>

President Rodgers presents the final version of two policies, the Policy on Harassment and Discrimination and the Sexual Violence Policy. These policies were developed in response to the Independent Review with an aim to replace the Fair Treatment Policy, under which some members of the University Community were hurt. The intent is to provide a safer and more respectful environment for members of faculty, students, and staff. Although the Policies are to be enacted by the Board of Governors, in a spirit of transparency and accountability, they are brought before the Senate for information.

The Chair invited questions or comments. There were none.

14. <u>Shout Outs</u>

Shout outs were sent to:

- Andrew Zinck from the Department of Music who has received the Distinguished Teaching Award from the Association of Atlantic Universities.
- Julie Vanleeuwen produced the University's first research magazine.
- Colleagues of Nursing for receiving temporary accreditation for nursing programs.
- Those who organized a welcome week this year, with Johnathan Hewitt leading the charge. It was Bigger and better than ever!

15. <u>Motion to Move to a Closed Agenda</u>

MOTION: MOVED by M. Turnbull and SECONDED by T. Jackson that Senate move to a closed session. CARRIED

MOTION: MOVED by M. Clapton and SECONDED by P. Drake that the minutes of the closed session of May 2, 2025, be approved. CARRIED

MOTION: MOVED by N. Etkin and SECONDED by P. Drake that Senate approves the credentials for the candidates listed as having completed the requirements of their degree. CARRIED

MOTION: MOVED by S. Myers and SECONDED by M. Turnbull that Senate empower the President, relevant Deans and Registrar acting together in full agreement to approve any degrees, diplomas or certificates that may surface as unexpected cases. CARRIED

MOTION: MOVED by P. Bernad and SECONDED by A. Braithwaite that Senate returns to open session. CARRIED

16. Adjournment

MOTION: W. Whelan MOVED that the meeting be adjourned.

Pascal Robichaud,
University Secretary