

Minutes of the Academic Senate of the University of Prince Edward Island

Friday, March 27, 2026, 3:00 – 5:00pm

Alumni Hall and via Zoom

Present: W. Rodgers (Chair), K. Mears (Vice-Chair), M. Arfken, R. Avoine-Dalton, P. Bernard, A. Braithwaite, S. Brown, C. Campeanu, S. Cassidy, M. Clapson, N. Clark, R. Deziel, G. Geraghty, D. Griffon, D. Hardy Cox, R. Hoersting, A. Hsiao, T. Jackson, G. Jia, S. Kochkina, S. Kresta, B. Linkletter, H. Mady, T. Mady, D. Magbanua, J.T. McClure, J. McIntyre, M. McMahon, W. Montelpare, S. Myers, J. Ngobia, M. Pascal, E. Reid, J. Sentance, P. Smith, H. Sulman, M. Sweeney-Nixon, A. Trowbridge, M. Turnbull, A. Weenie, W. Whelan

Regrets: I. Bhalesha, C. Chike, P. Drake, N. Etkin, P. Foley, L. Paredes, Y. Rashchupkina, M. von Eccher, T. Walker

Recorder: R. Anwar

Guests: None

Secretariat: P. Robichaud, R. Anwar

OPEN SESSION

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

The Chair of Senate calls the meeting to order at 3:02pm and welcomes Senators. She points out for Senators that some items of business are shown on the agenda as Notices of Intent. As part of ongoing efforts to improve the support of Senate, it has been mentioned that the intent going forward is to have important matters come to Senate twice for consideration. Items that are deemed by SSNC to be sufficiently important to warrant two iterations at the Senate will be presented in a first meeting with a Notice of Intent, with the recommendation for their approval coming at a subsequent meeting. She noted that two items are presented as Notice of Intent on today's agenda; the establishment of an Interim Faculty Council at the Faculty of Medicine and the deletion of two academic programs. No information in support of the Notices of Intent to delete the academic programs was provided, as the process for providing such notices is still being defined. In the future, the intent is to have supporting documentation for Notices of Intent.

The Chair explains her decision not to proceed with an electronic consultation for the conferment of Honorary Degrees following the last meeting of Senate. As the

bios of prospective honorees were not available at that meeting, the Senate decided to resolve the conferment via an electronic consultation to resolve the matter in a timely manner. However, the Chair indicated that it seems improper to proceed that way as the matter requires group discussion to come to a clear decision. As there is time to resolve this matter and have honorees attend Spring Convocation, the matter is brought back to Senate for consideration today. She reminds members that the bios of prospective honorees that will be shared in printed form today are confidential and that the documents must not leave the room.

The Vice Chair of Senate reminds members that senatorial annual elections are imminent, that Senators should keep an eye on their email for a call for nominations and speak to their colleagues to invite them to serve at Senate.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: MOVED by T. Mady and SECONDED by B. Montelpare that the agenda for March 27, 2026, be approved. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2026

MOTION: MOVED by J. McIntyre and SECONDED by M. Sweeney-Nixon that the minutes of the open session of February 27, 2026, be approved.

It is noted that the reference to the “modification of the discontinuation date” should rather be described as “discussion of consideration of relevant dates, including discontinuation.”

4. Business Arising from the Minutes of February 27, 2026

A comment regarding the timeliness of approval of research initiatives is noted and a clarification is offered by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate studies and Associate Vice President Research. She is confident that Research Services are approving projects in a timely manner. The matter will be brought to the *Research Advisory Committee’s* agenda for discussion. Senators are invited to bring any concerns to members of the Committee’s attention and researchers to raise any concerns directly with Research Services.

5. Senior Administration Reports

a. President’s Report

President Rodgers wishes all members of the University Community a happy Spring. She congratulates engineering students on their performance at a national competition, winning several medals. She notes the Celebrating Colleagues recognition event.

The launch of the new BA program at IKERAS is a major milestone for the University, as the University continues its work on its response to the Call for

Action for Reconciliation and reminds colleagues that it is everyone's responsibility to deliver on the University's commitment.

She noted the success of the three-minute theses competitions.

As the University works on the evolution of its culture, she asks everyone to keep in mind the goals of the Action Plan. In implementing the Action Plan, we want to keep our purpose in mind and continue to review our processes and build our capacity while diminishing single points of failure.

She reports having met with Security Services to seek input on making the University safe and notes the broad range of services rendered to the University Community.

Work is ongoing on the implementation of the University's Strategic Plan, with additional focus on its endorsement and the streamlining of processes.

Speaking of the University's budgetary challenges, she notes that all University across the country are similarly challenged, with some being in a worse condition than UPEI. There is understanding in Canada that the current funding model of PSE is unsustainable. As per the University's budget for 2026 – 2027, it is expected that the Province will submit its budget in roughly three weeks. The University is doing all it can to enhance recruitment via Strategic Enrolment Management initiatives, while we expect the impact of the decision by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to continue till 2028.

Noting the current state of the world, the University Community is aware that we live in a violent time and that we see the effect on some of us who are connected to areas of the world under conflict. She reasserts the role of the University in sending our best out into the world; that the more we do so, the better the world will be.

b. Vice-President Academic and Research Report

Interim Vice President Academic and Research Hardy Cox shares updates on activities. In teaching, the University has seen progress in connecting learning with the Community. She notes an event taking place on April 28, with great uptake by many engaged presenters. As per research, new funding of over a million dollars has been secured and the three-minute thesis competition exemplifies the strength of our graduate studies scholarship.

She notes that the University is in the ninth week of the term; a time when stress peaks for students and the institution is most tested. This is a busy time for faculty dealing with arrangements and adaptations. So far, the University has delivered over 5000 exams for students with accommodations. It is also a time when some year-end things are starting to happen, such as the granting of COOP awards. Through those awards, the external community has acclaimed

our students for their contributions. The University is also on the doorstep of the Panther Pitch, with our highest pool of prizes available due to the generosity of donors.

Looking at the University's enrolment trends, we see an increase in the number of admitted students (14% domestic and 5% international), while confirmations are down 3% overall and 14% among international applicants. There is strong interest in the University, but it hasn't yet converted into enrolment. On a positive note, admissions of graduate students are strongly up. The University continues to monitor its enrollment funnel to see how we can better work together. Any suggestions from Senators on how to improve conversions from admission to enrolment are welcome.

She reflects on several listening sessions with student groups, which have been quite insightful.

c. Vice-President People and Culture Report

Vice President Ngobia speaks to modifications to the Action Plan, which have been approved by the Province and are on their way to the Board of Governors for final approval.

The University continues to publish Impact Stories, with the seventh one now being out to the University Community. They help communicate to all how we are continuing to implement the Action Plan and how it is impacting the Community. The second part of a story on UPEI governance is also out.

The Harassment and Discrimination and the Sexual Violence policies are now complete and supported by all related groups. There is a delay in their coming into force as we wait for the consent of the UPEI Faculty Association.

Part of the goals of the Action Plan is the establishment of a culture listening. To that end, we held an Administrative Services Fair, that was well received by the community. It helped members of the University Community better know the various services that the University offers. This will be repeated in the coming years.

She spotlights the People and Culture and Employee Wellbeing Team, which has been focused over the last few months on improving employee wellbeing. Several workshops and sessions have been delivered, including some for employees on promotion and benefits. A guide to help employee navigate supports has also been published. A new Director of EDI has been hired and will start soon.

On the state of collective bargaining, she indicates that the University has received notices to bargain from all union groups. Management intends to proceed with transparency in these negotiations, with regular communications

and with sharing of information in a timely manner. Bargaining has been successfully concluded with one group. Their settlement is on the agenda of next week's meeting of the Board of Governors for ratification. The group noted the respectful way the negotiations were conducted.

6. Question Period

a. Questions and Answers Received from the Placemats

The Chair notes that placemat questions brought forth at the January meeting of Senate and responses to them are included in the meeting materials.

b. Questions received in Advance

A question was received in advance of the meeting. The question and response are included in the meeting materials.

The question relates to decisions of Senate being recently overturned by the Board of Governors. The Chair of Senate and the University Secretary indicate that they are not aware of any decision of Senate being overturned by the Board. Members clarify that some academic decisions may have been overturned by the Board's appeals committee and express a desire for Senate to be informed of such decisions. There is discussion on how to ensure better liaison between the Senate and the Board of Governors and ensuring that Senate is made aware of appeals that may influence academic policy. The Chair commits to looking at the rules regarding appeals and will come back to Senate to clarify the matter.

c. Questions from the floor

Q: Will the training session on appeals on April 17 be recorded? Some may not be able to attend but may wish to view the recording of it. **A:** We will consult with the trainer and confirm.

Q: Restrictions on international student recruitment are causing undue hardship in Atlantic Canada. Is the University bringing that to the attention of the Government of Canada? **A:** Our provincial governments and the Atlantic Association of Universities are working on it and bringing this issue to the attention of our federal representatives.

Q: As per the drop-off in recruitment, what kind of follow-up are we doing with applicants? Do we survey those who choose not to come? **A:** The team has been very innovative, being out in the schools, while student leaders are also out and about. We offer campus tours that are quite popular. It's too early yet to canvass students who have not enrolled. We have a new strategy coming. We can pull together a bulleted summary describing what we are doing.

7. Reports from Standing Committees

a. Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

The Chair of Senate notes that the Committee's report is included in the meeting materials and is considered received.

i) Establishment of a Faculty Council at the Faculty of Medicine

The Chair of Senate points to a briefing note and draft Statutes of an Interim Faculty Council at the Faculty of Medicine in the meeting materials and asks the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine to speak to the matter.

The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine speaks to the need for the Faculty to establish a Faculty Council as it prepares to apply for the accreditation of a self-standing medical program at UPEI. He points out that UPEI's intent was always to have its own medical education program, but, for purposes of expediency, the delivery of the medical program from Memorial University on campus at UPEI was chosen as a temporary measure. Proceeding on the University's original intent, a letter of intent has been sent to the Committee on the Accreditation of Medical Schools (CACMS), which starts the clock on the process of accreditation. To meet accreditation standards, the Faculty of Medicine needs to be empowered to enact Faculty-level academic policies, for which a duly established Faculty Council is required. As the Senate has not yet approved a Regulation on Faculty Councils, the intent is to establish an Interim Faculty Council. A notice of intent is provided to Senate, with a formal recommendation coming to the April meeting.

Q: The proposed model is very well done! The content and roles and responsibilities were well captured. As this seems like a good model, why call it an interim council? **A:** We are still in development, and the model will adapt as we add faculty and enroll our own students. This is how medical schools normally proceed. As our complement grows, the structure will evolve into its final form.

Q: Is there overlap with the mandate of the Academic Policy and Curriculum Committee? Some of the powers granted to the Faculty Council seem to proceed directly to Senate without going through APCC. **A:** The process through APCC is implied. We will respect the regular processes of Senate.

Q: Would the medical librarian be eligible to be on the council? **A:** Yes, nothing forbids it.

Q: Is it because there are only three faculty that we say that all faculty are members? **A:** At this point in time, it would be all faculty. We can revisit as needed

as our complement grows. It isn't unusual in Canadian universities to have such rules where the faculty complement is small.

NOTICE OF INTENT: Notice is provided to Senate that the Faculty of Medicine intends to submit for approval at the April 24 meeting of Senate, Statutes of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine.

ii) Annual Workplan of Senate for 2026 – 2027

The Chair of Senate points to the proposal submitted by SSNC that is included in the meeting materials.

The University Secretary indicates that this is the first time the Senate has considered the approval of an annual workplan. He stresses that the workplan is not a hard-and-fast commitment to dates, but rather a tool for Senate, Senate committees and academic leaders to plan their work. If the Senate approves the plan, the intent is to make this a yearly occurrence.

MOTION: MOVED by B. Montelpare and SECONDED by J. Sentance, that the annual workplan of Senate for 2026 –2027 be approved. CARRIED

Q: Some dates are quite specific. Are we doing this every year? **A:** Some of the dates are prescribed under the Processes and Procedures of Senate and are reflected in the Workplan. Yes, we intend to do this every year. The specific dates will be adjusted each year.

Q: Should we have a plan that evolve over time? **A:** The plan will change each year to adjust to projected initiatives and dates. The workplan can evolve during the year as topics emerge.

Q: Items 16 and 17 in the table of items at meetings of Senate are off. The annual report of the GSA should be in March. **A:** Noted, we will adjust.

b. Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee

i) Seventh Curriculum Report

The Chair of Senate points out for members that routine recommendations from APCC are grouped in omnibus motions so that they can be dealt with quickly, with more substantial items having their own motions and separate documentation. This is meant to ensure efficient discussions and focus our attention on the most important matters. Of course, none of this prevents members from debating recommendations that are part of omnibus motions.

Vice President Hardy Cox speaks to the recommendations from APCC. The report from APCC contains 103 recommendations to be resolved through motions grouped by Faculty.

For the Faculty of Arts, recommendations 1 to 46 and 48

MOTION 1: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by S. Myers that the creation of new courses, course deletions and modifications to course descriptions and prerequisites and calendar entries, as listed in items 1 to 46 and 48, be approved. CARRIED

For the McDougall Faculty of Business, recommendations 49 and 50

MOTION 2: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by T. Mady that the deletion and the changes of prerequisites as listed in items 49 and 50, be approved. CARRIED

For the Faculty of Science, recommendations 51 to 60 and 62 to 65

MOTION 3: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by M. Sweeney-Nixon that the creation of courses, course deletions and modifications to course descriptions, titles, numbers, prerequisites, cross-listing and calendar entries as listed in items 51 to 60 and 62 to 65, be approved. CARRIED

C: English1010 was the only place where librarians were certain to connect with students. Please keep in mind the need to connect with the library. **A:** English 1010 still exists and is delivered to many students. The instructors will be liaising with the library. The course will still be required at various levels at the University.

For the Faculty of Science, recommendations 61, 66, 70 and 93.

MOTION 4: MOVED D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by B. Montelpare that the changes to the requirements for a Major in Kinesiology as listed in item 61, the changes to the requirements for the Major in Environmental Studies as listed in item 66, the changes to the requirements for the Major in Radiography as listed in item 70, the changes to the requirements for the Major and Minor in Applied Climate Change & Adaptation as listed in item 93, be approved.

For the Faculty of Science, recommendations 69 and 94

MOTION 5: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by E. Reid that the changes to the admission requirements for the Major in Radiography as listed in item 69, and the changes to the admission requirements for the Major in Applied Climate Change & Adaptation as listed in item 94, be approved. CARRIED

For the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Items 95 to 103 in the report.

MOTION 6: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by D. Griffon that changes to course descriptions as listed in items 95 to 103, be approved. CARRIED

ii) Bachelor of Science in Analytics

MOTION: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by P. Drake that the major modifications to the Bachelor of Science in Analytics be approved in principle. CARRIED.

iii) **NOTICES OF INTENT**

The Chair of Senate reminds members that two proposals for the deletion of programs are received by the Senate as a Notice of Intent, with the final decision to be taken at the next meeting of Senate.

Dean Myers speaks to the notices, indicating that the programs are being retired as there are no students enrolled in the minor in Acadian Studies and few in the Major in Spanish. No student will be affected by the deletion of these programs.

- Deletion of the Minor in Acadian Studies
- Deletion of the Major in Spanish

Q: Have we consulted with the Acadian Community? **A:** We no longer have anyone on staff that would have that kind of relationship. The lack of uptake is an indication that there is no longer a desire to have such a program.

c. Graduate Studies Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee, the Deans of Graduate Studies, presents the Committee's annual report, which was provided to members ahead of the meeting.

MOTION: MOVED by D. Hardy Cox and SECONDED by M. Sweeney-Nixon that the Annual report of the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee be approved. CARRIED.

8. Shout outs

- To those handling Research Grants (Stephanie Palmer) as the grants appear in research accounts much faster.
- To the organizers and participants in the Administrative Services Fair for a great initiative well done.
- To the organizers (Megan Gee and Jenifer Printz) of the online information session on promotion and benefits.

- To Research Services for getting SSHRC applications across the line. To all those involved.
- To participants in the recent pitch competition at UNB, where the Panthers did well.
- To the non-academic side of the University, because for the first time we are asking the right difficult questions and are embracing change.

9. Closed Session

MOTION: MOVED by N. and SECONDED by S. Kresta that Senate proceed to a closed session.

MOTION: MOVED by P. Drake and SECONDEC by B. Montelpare that Senate proceed to an open session.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:56pm.