Minutes of the Academic Senate of the University of Prince Edward Island
Friday, September 25, 2026, 3:00 – 5:00 pm
Alumni Hall and via Teams

Present: W. Rodgers (Chair), K. Mears (Vice-Chair), A. Amjad, A. Hsiao, A. Montesdeoca, A. Trowbridge, A. Carrothers, A. Weenie, A. Braithwaite, A. Patey, B. Linkletter, C Sallavo, C. Campeanu, C. Adeyanju, D. Griffon, Y. Jia, H. Mady, I. Bhalesha, J. Moran, J McClure**,** K. Martin, M. Von Eccer, M. Pascal, M. Sweeney-Nixon, J. Ngobia, M. MacLellan, M. Turnbull, N. Clark, N. Etkin, D. MacLellan, P. Burns, P. Bernard, P. Smith, P. Ehimiyen, R. Carragher, S. Cassidy, S. Myers, S. Lloyd, S. MacKinnon, S. Kochkina, T. Mady, T. Jackson, T. Walker, W. Whelan, P. Wood-Adams, Y. Almonte, K. Browne.

Regrets: J. McIntyre, M. Clapson, M. Arfken, D. Hardy-Cox, E. Reid, K. Gottschall-Pass, M. Fast, S. Kresta

Guests: T. Ferguson (Deloitte Auditors), K. Richard, Board members

Recorder: C. Campbell (Senate assistant)

Secretariat: P. Robichaud, University Secretary

OPEN SESSION

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

W. Rodgers called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm and welcomed senators to the first Senate meeting of the 2026 academic year. An acknowledgement was made that the meeting was held on the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Senators were also reminded of upcoming National Day for Truth and Reconciliation events and thanked those involved in organizing recent awareness activities.

The Chair welcomed new Senate members and guests in attendance, including Board of Governors members who attended in connection with the Action Plan Audit presentation.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: MOVED by T. Mady and SECONDED by A. Braithwaite that the agenda for September 25, 2026, be approved. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes of May 8, 2026

MOTION: MOVED by Y. Almonte and SECONDED by N. Etkin that the minutes of the open session of May 8, 2026, be approved subject to minor corrections to names and typographical errors. **CARRIED.**

4. Business Arising from the Minutes of May 8, 2026

An update was provided regarding Senate SharePoint access. Responsibility for managing access permissions has been transferred to the Secretariat, allowing Senate staff to address access issues directly and more efficiently. Senators were encouraged to contact Chantal Campbell or Pascal Robichaud for assistance, as needed.

5. Information Session on Action Plan Audit

T. Ferguson of Deloitte presented the Year Two Action Plan Audit, which examined the University's implementation of commitments for the period ending April 30, 2026. Deloitte issued a qualified audit opinion, concluding that not all commitments identified at the outset of Year Two had been fully implemented.

It reported that four audit criteria were assessed as not met and fifteen as partially met. He explained that the primary basis for the qualified opinion was the incomplete enactment of policies meant to replace the *Fair Treatment Policy*. Deloitte further noted that several partially met findings resulted from changes made by the Board of Governors to implementation plans during the year, including adjustments made in response to Deloitte's recommendations. Despite the qualification, Deloitte emphasized that substantial progress had been achieved and highlighted a number of strengths and positive developments across the implementation process.

Members discussed the meaning and implications of a qualified audit opinion, including how it should be interpreted in the context of the progress achieved to date. Discussion also addressed the wording of the audit qualification and the extent to which the language accurately reflected the University's efforts and accomplishments. Questions were raised regarding the status of the *Fair Treatment Policy* and related policies, particularly with respect to their approval and implementation timelines.

Further discussion focused on Deloitte's audit methodology, including the use of source documentation to assess compliance with commitments. Members also considered the weighing of individual audit criteria and recommendations, and how these factors contributed to the overall audit outcome.

The audit report was received for information and will also be presented to the Board of Governors on October 6, 2026.

6. Institutional KPIs

J. Ngobia and K. Richard presented proposed institutional Key Performance Indicator (KPI) frameworks designed to align with both the University's Strategic Plan and Action Plan. The framework is intended to shift institutional assessment beyond measuring the completion of activities and initiatives toward evaluating their overall impact, outcomes, and contribution to cultural and organizational change.

The proposed framework identifies ten institutional KPI categories:

1. Student Success and Experience
2. People-Centered Culture

3. Health, Safety, and Well-Being
4. Inclusion and Belonging
5. Governance and Leadership
6. Community Engagement
7. Indigenization and Reconciliation
8. Research Impact
9. Sustainability
10. Reputation

Discussion focused on the development and implementation of meaningful performance measures, including the selection and quality of metrics, the establishment of institutional baselines and benchmarking practices, and the importance of strong data governance processes to support reliable assessment and reporting. Members also emphasized the critical role of effective records and information management in ensuring data integrity and supporting evidence-based decision-making.

An update was provided on plans to expand the University's institutional data analysis and reporting capacity in order to enhance performance measurement, strengthen assessment capabilities, and support ongoing strategic planning and decision-making efforts.

7. Election of Senator member to the Board of Governors and election of Vice-Chair of Senate

P. Robichaud outlined the election process and responsibilities of Vice-Chair of Senate.

Nomination: Kim Mears

No further nominations were received.

Result: Kim Mears was acclaimed as Vice-Chair of Senate for a three-year term.

P. Robichaud outlined the responsibilities and eligibility requirements for the Senate-elected member of the Board of Governors.

Three calls for nominations were made.

Result: No nominations were received. The position remains vacant and will be brought forward again at the October meeting of Senate.

8. **<u>Senior Administration Reports</u>**

a. President's Report

The President welcomed Senate members back for the new academic year and expressed appreciation for recent faculty presentations showcasing academic work and research. The President reflected on the successful spring convocations, noting strong participation, inspiring valedictory addresses, and gratitude to all who contributed to the ceremonies. An update was provided on several campus projects underway, including renovations to the library aimed at creating a more welcoming and supportive space for

students, faculty, and staff. The project is being funded entirely through philanthropy and is progressing well. The President discussed the continuing impact of federal international student policy changes, noting ongoing declines in international student enrolment and related revenues across the Atlantic region and Canada. Efforts by the Atlantic Association of Universities (AAU), provincial governments, and Universities Canada to address the impact on Atlantic Canada were highlighted. The President emphasized the importance of student recruitment and retention and commended the Registrar's Office for its proactive outreach to admitted students, which contributed to strong first-year enrolment numbers.

The President reported on the success of the summer alumni reunion weekend, which welcomed graduates from UPEI, Saint Dunstan's University, and Prince of Wales College. The event highlighted the strong intergenerational connections alumni maintain with the University and underscored the lasting impact of the UPEI educational experience.

Updates were provided on Board of Governors engagement, including individual meetings with board members and continued efforts to build a diverse, skilled board based on a competency framework.

The President also reported on participation in visits to aerospace and aviation-sector companies in Summerside. Industry representatives expressed strong interest in collaboration with UPEI through professional development, work-integrated learning, co-operative education opportunities, and research partnerships. The President noted the significant presence of UPEI alumni in leadership roles within these organizations and reaffirmed the University's commitment to strengthening industry relationships while continuing to lead innovation in education and research.

The report concluded with appreciation for the contributions of Senate members and optimism for another productive year advancing UPEI's strategic priorities and future direction.

b. Vice-President Academic & Research Report

Interim Vice-President Academic and Research, introduced herself and shared her leadership experience at Concordia University and the University of Northern British Columbia. She expressed enthusiasm for joining UPEI and noted the strong commitment and hard work demonstrated by faculty, staff, and administrators across the institution since her arrival.

She highlighted ongoing enrollment challenges, emphasizing the importance of Strategic Enrollment Management in supporting student recruitment, retention, success, graduation, and long-term engagement with the university. Recent initiatives led by the AVPS office and the Registrar's Office include enhancements to Welcome Week programming, registration processes, student recruitment activities, and the establishment of Dalton Hall Level 2 as a centralized student navigation hub. Additional supports include new student

resource materials, guidance for assisting students in distress, and the development of a new virtual campus tour scheduled to launch in October.

An enrollment update indicated a 5.5% decline in overall enrollment, representing approximately 300 fewer students and a reduction of about 1,275 course registrations. The decline and its impact on tuition revenue remain a significant institutional concern and a key area of focus moving forward.

The Vice-President also provided highlights from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Survey results showed UPEI performing above the Atlantic Canadian average in the quality of interactions between students and administrative and student services staff, as well as in promoting engagement with students from diverse backgrounds. Areas identified for improvement included academic advising, opportunities for students to participate in faculty-led research projects, and the provision of feedback on drafts and work-in-progress assignments.

She reported on the successful Hessian Educational Leadership Retreat, which attracted approximately 40 participants and featured an external facilitator from the University of Calgary. The retreat was noted as a valuable professional development opportunity supported through donor funding.

A research and innovation update noted that UPEI is in the final stages of licensing the Oyster Flipper technology, a student-developed patented innovation from the Faculty of Sustainable Design Engineering, with an external partner. The project was highlighted as an example of the impact of student research and innovation when supported with appropriate opportunities and resources.

In closing, the Vice-President identified the need to address recurring operational issues and urgent matters that divert attention from strategic priorities. She noted plans to focus on improving processes, communication, and transparency to reduce these challenges and better support the university's long-term objectives.

c. Vice-President People & Culture Report

J. Ngobia reported that significant work has taken place over the summer on the Action Plan audit and Year 3 implementation. Progress continues on integrated planning and the development of key performance indicators (KPIs), recognizing that this remains an ambitious and evolving initiative.

The University has been actively engaged in collective bargaining activities and has successfully ratified three collective agreements with CUPE 501, CUPE 1870, and IBEW.

Negotiations are also underway for a first collective agreement with PSAC for Post-doctoral Research Associates, with bargaining dates scheduled to begin in October. Bargaining continues with the Faculty Association (FA1 and FA2). A conciliator was appointed on August 25, 2026, and additional meeting dates have been scheduled for October.

Senate was informed that University representatives appeared before the Standing Committee on Education and Economic Growth on September 24, 2026. Discussion focused on the implementation of the revised Harassment and Discrimination Policy and the University's historical use of non-disclosure agreements. Extensive consultation has been undertaken in the development of the new Harassment and Discrimination and Sexual Violence policies, with substantive agreement reached on policy content among partners. The Board previously endorsed the policies during the last academic year.

Implementation remains delayed pending express written consent required to replace the existing Fair Treatment Policy with the new Harassment and Discrimination Policy. The University maintains that policies intended to protect the entire community should not fall under the exclusive authority of any single bargaining unit and remains committed to resolving outstanding issues through meaningful discussion at the bargaining table. Existing reporting and complaint mechanisms currently remain in effect. The University confirmed that it has not entered into any new non-disclosure agreements related to harassment and discrimination matters since December 2021.

The implementation of the UPEI Action Plan and its recommendations remains a priority and continues to be advanced through both the Action Plan and the Strategic Plan. Ongoing efforts are focused on fostering a culture of trust, safety, inclusion, and accountability across the University community.

9. Question Period

a. Questions and Answers Received from the Placemats

The Chair notes that no placement questions were received.

b. Questions Received in Advance

The Chair notes that there was one question received in advance, materials were included in the package. Responses were provided regarding: Smart glasses in classrooms, which has been referred to APCC for consideration.

c. Questions from the Floor

Q: A question was asked regarding the Employee engagement survey after a report appeared to indicate that an RFP for a new survey instrument had been unsuccessful

A: The referenced RFP was not related to the employee engagement survey. Instead, it was intended to secure a researcher to support institutional assessment and integrated data work. The employee engagement survey itself is not changing vendors or survey instruments.

10. Reports from Standing Committees

a. Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

i) Annual Report of the 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.

ii) Elections Report

The Chair of Senate notes that the Elections report is included in the meeting materials and is considered received. The University Secretary reports that elections were conducted in keeping with the rules set by the Senate under its Processes and Procedures. Three calls for nominations were made, with several candidates coming forward and being acclaimed. Discussion was had on the upcoming review of committees and questions around filling committees when changes to Terms of Reference will be occurring. It was advised that some committees are critical and need vacancies to be filled in order to complete necessary work and cannot be left vacant while Processes and Procedures for Senate are reviewed.

iii) Review of Processes and Procedures of the Senate

P. Robichaud provided preliminary information regarding a comprehensive review of Senate Processes and Procedures, including committee structures, mandates, composition, and governance effectiveness. Senate received an overview of the proposed review of the Senate Rules, which are due for their regular three-year review. Following consideration by the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee (SSNC), a recommendation is being brought forward to undertake a comprehensive and holistic review rather than a limited update.

The proposed review would take a "tabula rasa" approach, reassessing the Senate's committee structure from the ground up to ensure it aligns with Senate's mandate and responsibilities. This would include evaluating the number, purpose, composition, and effectiveness of committees, as well as strengthening committee terms of reference. It was noted that current Senate committee terms of reference lack the level of detail and substance found in those of the Board of Governors.

Senate was advised that a detailed proposal outlining the review process, timelines, governance structure, and working group terms of reference will be brought forward for consideration at a future meeting.

iv) SSNC report of June 2026

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

b. Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee

i) First Curriculum Report

The following Motions 1-5 relate to the First Curriculum report of the Academic Planning and Curriculum committee (appended to this document).

MOTION 1: (M. Turnbull/ G. Yia) Faculty of Education: Recommendations 1 and 2 be approved as noted below. CARRIED.

1. To change course description for ED4320
2. To change course title for ED4330 be changed

MOTION 2: (N. Clark/N. Etkin) Registrar's Office: Recommendations 3 – 5 be approved as noted below. CARRIED

3. Change the calendar entry for Transcript Requests
4. New calendar entry for Academic Calendar Dates for 2027-2028
5. New calendar entry for Academic Calendar Dates for 2028-2029

MOTION 3: (N. Etkin/ C. Sallavo) Faculty of Science: Recommendations 6 and 7 be approved as noted below. CARRIED.

6. Change course title and description for ACC1010
7. New course BIO 4160 be approved

MOTION 4: (M. Sweeney-Nixon/ J. McClure) Faculty of Veterinary Medicine: Recommendations 8 – 11 be approved as noted below. CARRIED.

8. Creation of VCA8325
9. Creation of VCA8380
10. Creation of VCA8340
11. Change course title for VCA8330

MOTION 5: (B. Whelan/ Y. Almonte) Faculty of Veterinary Medicine: Recommendation 12 be approved as noted below. CARRIED.

12. New calendar entry for DVM Calendar dates 2027-2028

Senate considered a motion to approve in principle the proposal to rename the Bachelor of Education, (Français langue seconde) program to Bachelor of Education, Français. Approval was sought to allow the proposal to be submitted to the MPHEC for review and approval. Upon MPHEC approval, the change will be reflected in the University Calendar and related documents. It was clarified that the material had been circulated to Senate members in advance, but the motion had been inadvertently omitted from the agenda. During discussion, a question was raised regarding the possibility of adopting a fully French-language program title and translating the entire calendar entry into French; it was noted that no discussions on this matter had taken place.

MOTION: (M. Turnbull/ A. Amjad) to approve Approval in Principle to seek MPHEC approval to change the name of the Bachelor of Education (Français langue seconde) to Bachelor of Education (Français). CARRIED.

Notice of intent was provided regarding the discontinuation of the Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA). The program has been inactive for three years and no longer has sufficient demand. A formal motion will be presented at a future Senate meeting.

MOTION: (J. Moran/ H. Mady) to extend the session of the Senate by 15 minutes. CARRIED.

Update on the Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology was provided for information only. Sente was notified that we have received full approval from the MPHEC.

ii) Annual Report of the Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee

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

iii) Working Group updates

B. Whelan provided an update on the *Student Assessment Working Group* regarding work on policy language concerning feedback to students before discontinuation dates. Recommendations have been forwarded to APCC and may return to Senate.

c. Academic Units Report

P. Wood-Adams provided an update on the *Ad Hoc Committee on a Policy on Academic Units*, outlining the timeline for work planned during the academic year. The group is proposing to separate the work on the Regulation on Faculty Councils from the development of a policy governing the creation, merger and closing of academic units. The Regulation is nearing completion and will undergo further consultation before being presented to Senate as a Notice of Intent in November and brought forward for approval in December. The timeline is intended to allow faculties approximately six months to implement the regulation before the next academic year.

During discussion, it was confirmed that the proposed Regulation would not apply to the Library or Library Council. A suggestion was made to consider including collective agreement requirements among the regulations with which faculty councils must comply, recognizing that collective agreements may influence faculty council composition and representation.

Members sought clarification regarding the consultation process, and it was confirmed that a full discussion of the proposed regulation will take place at the November Senate meeting prior to a vote in December. The importance of faculty councils as a component of collegial governance was emphasized.

Questions were raised regarding provisions allowing faculty councils to establish faculty-level policies. It was clarified that Senate may delegate authority to faculties in certain areas, enabling faculty councils to develop policies that give effect to Senate policies within their respective faculties.

Additional clarification was requested regarding faculty council authority over the establishment, modification, and discontinuation of courses of study. It was explained that faculty councils would provide an additional review step and make recommendations that would proceed to APCC; they would not replace APCC's role in the approval process. A concern regarding wording suggesting decisions would merely be reported to APCC was acknowledged, and revisions to the draft language were recommended.

Members were encouraged to provide further feedback and suggestions as consultations continue. Senate expressed support for the proposed timeline, and the Ad Hoc Committee will return with updates according to the established schedule.

11. Report of the Board of Governors to Senate

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

12. Faculty of Medicine Business Update

P. Smith highlighted the strong and growing partnership with Memorial University, noting the successful White Coat Ceremony for the second cohort of medical students. The Dean of Memorial University attended the event, which was described as exceptionally well organized and attended by representatives from the Provincial Government and the Department of Health.

An update was provided on accreditation preparations for the future UPEI Faculty of Medicine program, expected to launch in 2029. Significant work is underway to complete the accreditation submission, which includes 313 requirements and is anticipated to exceed 1,000 pages in length. The submission is due on January 29, 2027.

P. Smith also reported on extensive consultation activities conducted over the summer in support of strategic planning and the development of a curricular needs assessment for the future medical program. Engagement activities included surveys, town halls, and focus groups held both on and off campus. The resulting needs assessment is a detailed document of approximately 200 pages, and a public summary of the consultation process is expected to be released in the near future.

In response to a question regarding the future relationship with Memorial University and licensing fees once UPEI establishes its own medical school, P. Smith explained that MUN currently provides the curriculum and degree program in exchange for a licensing fee. Under the future model, MUN is expected to continue delivering a portion of the first- and second-year curriculum, while UPEI will develop approximately 25% of the early curriculum and nearly all the third-and-fourth-year curriculum. As UPEI assumes responsibility for admissions, assessment, evaluation, governance, and other medical school operations, the fees paid to MUN are expected to decrease significantly.

13. Shoutouts

- A. Trowbridge gave shout out to Inge Dorsey, who joined us for the first few weeks of classes as our student support navigator in Dalton Hall and it made a huge difference.

- P. Smith gave shout out to Tammie Muise and Dr. Ron Siemens and the amazing team at the Clinical Learning and Simulation Center (CLSC). As noted, they achieved provisional accreditation for the CLSC.
- M. Turnbull gave shout out to everyone that was involved in the Welcome Week activities.
- A. Montesdeoca gave shout out from a student union perspective to VP Academic, Yoely Almonte. She has come up with many new initiatives for students, she is working hard, and we are lucky to have her in our team.
- S. Lloyd gave shout out to Faculty of Medicine in respect to student Sydney Powers interview on the CBC.

14. <u>Closed session</u>

Motion to Move to Closed Session

MOTION: (B. Whelan/B. Linkletter) that the Senate meeting move to a closed agenda. CARRIED.

MOTION: (P. Bernard/C. Sallavo) that the Senate meeting move to an open agenda. CARRIED.

Return to Open Session

15. Adjournment

There being no further business; the Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.