

MINUTES OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, December 6, 2005

Members Present:			
Ex-Officio:	Faculty:	Students:	
K. Alnwick	H. Alighanbari	D. Lee	C. Alstrom
E. Aspevig	J. P. Boudreau	N. Lister	A. Chaleff-Freudenthaler
S. Boctor	S. Cody	A. Lohi	M. Kamali
C. Cassidy	T. Dewan	D. Mahoney	P. Lewkowicz
M. Dewson	J. Dianda	D. Mason	N. Loreto
D. Doz	M. Dionne	J. Morgan	S. Persaud
L. Grayson	S. Edwards	G. Mothersill	N. Yiu
K. Jones	D. Elder	C. O'Brien	L. Yung
A. Kahan	E. Evans	S. Rosen	
S. Levy	M. Greig	P. Schneiderman	
C. Matthews	R. Hudyma	D. Shipley	
Z. Murphy	A. Johnson	K. Tucker Scott	
J. Sandys			
P. Stenton			
S. Williams			
Regrets:		Alumni:	
L. Bichler	A. Ganuelas		
M. Booth	J. Gryn		
L. Brown	G. Hunt		
F. Duerden	D. McKessock		
C. Evans	R. Ravindran		
C. Farrell	V. Tighe		
	M. Yeates		
Absent:			
G. Brown	J. Lassaline		
M. Brzoska	L. Merali		
E. Hunking	T. Spencer		
D. Johnston			

1. President's Update – The President reported the following:

- The first small group had met to discuss procedures for master planning.
- The proposed changes to the Ryerson Act were approved at the last Board of Governor's meeting. The Act belongs to the province, which now needs to approve the changes.
- The search committee for the Vice President, Research and Innovation has met a few times and it is hoped that there will be a position profile and an ad in the New Year.
- The budget allocations were received and they are as expected. Accountability issues need to be addressed before the money is released and the government still expects results this year.
- The opening event of the Vari Engineering building was a great success.
- There were meetings with George Smitherman, our local MPP, Bill Graham, our local MP, and Alan Nymark, Deputy Minister, HRDC, and the relationships are good.
- A President's Commission on Student Engagement and Experience is being established and Sue Williams has agreed to chair the initiative. This will engage students in a way that allows their voice to be heard in the budget process.
- The issue of space is probably the largest issue at the university. Consideration is being given to renting or buying space at a reasonable cost, and renovation of space. There is no easy or cheap solution to the problem but a solution will need to be found.

1.2 - Ryerson Research Chairs and Ryerson Research Awards. Judith Sandys introduced the awards. Ryerson Research Chairs are selected based upon their exceptional accomplishments in scholarly, research and creative activity (SRC); sound and ambitious plans for future SRC development; and excellent leadership qualities appropriate to the discipline. Chair appointments are for two years, and include funding and other support. The recipients of the Ryerson Research Chairs were present and acknowledged: Daolun Chen, Faculty of Engineering (Mechanical and Industrial Engineering); Leo Michelis, Faculty of Arts (Economics) and Fengfeng (Jeff) Xi Faculty of Engineering (Aerospace Engineering). Heather Beanlands, Ida Berger, Catherine Middleton, Marcello Papini, Murray Pomerance and Yvonne Yuan all received Ryerson Research Awards.

1.3 - P. Stenton outlined the two student surveys distributed with the agenda. These surveys are done as part of a three year cycle. The sample size was quite good. NSSE results will be reported in the New Year. In response to a comment, P. Stenton agreed that the number of hours worked by Ryerson students is high, but they are high at other universities as well. It was noted that the Macleans ratings were not as relevant to Ryerson students as they once were, and P. Stenton agreed to report back to Council on the trend at all universities.

2. Report of the Secretary of Academic Council

The Secretary reported that the first day of exams at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre had gone quite well, and everyone was thanked for their cooperation.

3. Good of the University C. Matthews chaired. She thanked N. Loreto for acting as Vice Chair at the last meeting.

3.1 - Nora Farrell, Ombudsperson, outlined the highlights of her report, which was distributed with the agenda. The terms of reference of her office require her to report to Academic Council annually. She presented statistics showing that her office handles complaints similar to those at other universities. The University's response to her report is included in the document. Her recommendation, based on her concerns about civility on campus, is that the availability of sessions on basic and advanced conflict resolution be increased. In its response, the University committed to establishing a group to address this. An outline of previous recommendations and responses, including the establishment of an Academic Integrity Office and addressing concerns about group work through the Learning and Teaching Office and Student Services, was presented. The Ombudsperson is gratified that the vast majority of issues she raises with people are resolved in a civil manner. She thanked the community for this. She also thanked her committee. She announced that there was a study done by the Whitehall Group which indicated that fairness has a profound effect on people's health. The reference to the report will be made available.

The large increase in the instances of student incivility was questioned and N. Farrell commented that this is probably a societal trend. It was asked if her office is the proper place for faculty to go if students are uncivil to them. N. Farrell replied that she can only accept complaints from students, but she does consult with faculty to assist them with many issues. Complaints about students are more appropriately referred to Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services or to the department chair. C. Matthews thanked the Ombudsperson for her work on behalf of the university.

N. Loreto announced that there had been a referendum on whether tuition should go up or down. 4763 students voted and 96.9766% voted for lower tuition fees.

D. Mason asked if the Registrar could report on when timetables would be available. K. Alnwick replied that preliminary timetables would be out early next week and finalized at the end of the week. Final schedules will be available on December 16. He agreed that the current timing is highly problematic and that the process needs to be refined for next year. D. Mason read a motion on this issue which had been passed by the Department reps of the RFA. K. Alnwick commented that the late submissions from academic departments, the new scheduling system and challenges in implementation have caused the delay. Timetabling staff will be working between Christmas and New Years on timetabling. There is a shared desire to see a change, and it is expected that there will be a new process in place.

J. Dianda asked if the way in which the Academic Standards Committee report was presented last meeting would be the new procedure for this report. The President responded that it was not until after the meeting that he learned that he had deviated from custom. He assumed that people had read the material and would raise questions if needed.

T. Dewan asked if the timetabling process itself could be the problem, and if there was another way to do the scheduling.

D. Elder asked for a further update on the Student Centre. The President responded that the groups were asked to identify two possible mediators and they have done so. One has been approached and has agreed to mediate.

P. Lewkowicz asked about improving the cleanliness of the campus. President Levy stated that this remains a priority and assured Council that he shared the concern.

E. Aspevig stated that timetabling staff has been putting in an extraordinary amount of effort, and he wanted their work to be acknowledged.

N. Loreto mentioned that December 6 is the 16th anniversary of the killing of 14 women at Ecole Polytechnique and that a ceremony had been held.

4. Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes of the November 8, 2005 meeting.

N. Loreto moved, A Chaleff-Freudenthaler seconded

Motion approved.

5. Business Arising

5.1 Student Promotion Meetings – E. Aspevig reported, as promised at the May 9, 2005 meeting, on the issue of eliminating student promotion meetings in order to create more time for grading at the end of the term. He reviewed the report as written. It was decided that there is a need for some departments/schools to review academic standings before they are finalized. Therefore administrative reviews with a 24 hour turn around will replace promotion meetings. It was explained that promotion meetings were historically held with all faculty present to discuss problematic standings. The meetings were cumbersome, and there was concern that some personal issues might inadvertently be discussed.

6. Correspondence

President Levy reported that there had been a response from the Premier to the letter from Academic Council, which will be distributed with the next agenda.

7. Reports of Actions and recommendations of Departmental and Divisional Councils

There were no questions on these items.

8. Reports of Committees

8.1 Report of the Learning and Teaching Committee - J. Britnell presented the report from the floor.

Motion: That Academic Council approve the amendment of Policy 145 – Course Management Policy as outlined in the report.

M. Dewson moved, C. Matthews seconded.

D. Mason stated that if students miss assignments for verifiable reasons, they may have missed other things as well. This may cause conflicts for students and may put students who are ill in a more difficult position. M. Dewson stated that the recommendation to allow students to make up missed work is not about students who are too ill to do their semester's work, but rather for students who miss a particular test. D. Mason clarified that he is most concerned with assignments.

J. Morgan asked what is meant about missing an assignment. If something is handed in late, does a new assignment need to be established? He also noted that section 2.2f should read "valid and verifiable" to be the same as section 2.2e.

JP Boudreau asked who determines what is valid and verifiable. It was responded that the instructor makes this determination. M. Dewson asked for clarification from D. Schulman on the assignment of an INC. The statement is in keeping with the GPA policy.

R. Hudyma asked if it was against policy to place the weight of a 10% assignment on a final which was already 70%. D. Schulman replied that it is.

N.M. Lister asked if it is permissible to weight a final at 100% at a student's request, and it was replied that this is not allowed.

D. Schulman explained that the reason for the proposed amendment is that students often ask for accommodation and a faculty member makes the determination that they will place the weight on the final. This should be only by mutual agreement.

It was suggested as a friendly amendment from A. Lohi that the reference to "assignments" be removed. The friendly amendment was not accepted.

D. Mason moved an amendment to the motion to remove the word "assignment" from section 2.2e, seconded by A. Lohi. J. Britnell stated that the passing of the amendment to the motion puts it in conflict with existing policy and the motion was withdrawn. She further noted that the policy is scheduled to be reviewed in Winter 2006.

Motion: To table the Motion on the amendment of Policy 145, Course Management Policy.

D. Mason moved, K. Tucker-Scott seconded.

Motion to table approved.

8.2 Report of the Composition and By Laws Committee

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the amendment of its By Laws with respect to creation of the Graduate Research Ethics Board, effective immediately.

Hekmat Alighberi moved, K. Tucker-Scott seconded.

J. Sandys presented a background for why there is a need for an additional Research Ethics Board. The proposal at the October Academic Council meeting for the establishment of a standing subcommittee had been returned to committee on a point-of-order as incompatible

with Robert's Rules. The Research Ethics Board (REB) then proposed the establishment of the Graduate Research Ethics Board (GREB). There would be a core of members common to both committees. As a result of the discussion of the need for a GREB, a variety of complaints about the REB were voiced that had not been raised before. A questionnaire was sent to 35 faculty who had submitted protocols to the REB and there were no overwhelming concerns expressed. Some complained of the on-line system, but it is known that this needs to be improved. There were some concerns about turns-around time. Overall it was felt that the REB was functioning quite well. There will be a forum in January to explain the function of the REB and faculty are invited to attend the REB meetings and provide the committee with information on what their research involves.

The Chair asked the Secretary to read Robert's Rules on the proposal of a substitute motion to address the same issue as a main motion, if it is felt the substitute is a better way to deal with the issue. Section 10 ("The Main Motion"), subsection on "Treatment of Main Motion, number 5 was read. The part of section 49 (Committees) pertaining to the establishment of "A special (select, or ad hoc) committee was also read.

M. Dionne stated that her concerns about the motion had been misrepresented, and that her primary concern is the welfare of Ryerson. By Law changes require a 2/3 majority to approve. This indicates that changes in By Laws are a serious matter, as it is difficult to change them. She stated that with new faculty being hired the need for reviews will continue to grow. There will be a new VP, Research who will be in charge of this process. There needs to be a review of the operation of the REB. She noted that the proposal is to establish an additional committee, with an overlap of membership with the REB. There has not been ample opportunity to see if the new methods put in place by the REB will improve the workload situation and there is no clear process for overseeing the committee. She is concerned that the proposed division of the work is inappropriate. Other universities divide by type of research, not by whether it is done by a graduate student or a faculty member. She believes that it is a dangerous precedent for Academic Council to establish a committee of this kind. She will make a motion to establish an *ad hoc* committee as a pilot project. She urges members to vote the motion down.

N.M. Lister asked why it is not possible to simply amend the By Laws to allow for a standing sub-committee. The President responded that this could be done, but it is not the motion on the floor.

K. Tucker-Scott stated that it was not clear to her why the motion was a mistake. If the motion goes forward, it is not clear why the committee could not be reviewed.

D. Mason asked about the terms of reference of the proposed committee. He asked why review of undergraduate protocols is included in the REB and not the GREB, if undergraduates need faster turn-around. Also, faculty who have not completed a PhD need to have their research reviewed by both their graduate institution and Ryerson. This has put an unfair constraint on these faculty, and the REB does not seem to facilitate their review. It would seem that there should be one REB that has subcommittees based on the type of review. J. Sandys clarified that undergraduate research is handled basically by the instructor with a report to the REB. Also, they are not splitting the Board, but are adding

more people. There are expedited processes for research that need review of two institutional Boards.

J.P. Boudreau stated that the Psychology Department has a particular interest in this issue, and thanked N. Walton, A. Karabanow and J. Sandys for their work. He spoke against the motion and for the alternate motion to be made. He believes that we are in uncharted waters.

S. Williams spoke in favour of the motion. The proposed structure is an amendment of the By Law, which is not permanent. It allows the REB to function within the structure of Academic Council, and the proposal has been carefully considered. There is a separate process for review of graduate curriculum from undergraduate curriculum. There is a parallel in her mind between these two efforts.

N.M. Lister commended the REB for the ability to deal with the growth. The motion raised some concerns for her about the consistency of structure as required by the Tri Council policy. There is a potential risk to consistency in having two Boards. She asked if it would be possible that a student's protocol would be approved but a Faculty member's rejected. The correlation of faculty and student proposals will be an effort.

N. Walton, Chair of the REB spoke from the floor. The Tri Council policy states that the work of the REB can be divided in any way as long as there is a mechanism and a reporting structure. The proposal is the result of the committee's research. She clarified that the Research Ethics Coordinator and the chair review all protocols and if there is related student and faculty research, the review can be transferred to the REB. Reviews can also be expedited. No matter what, the workload is increasing. The overlap of the Boards is proposed to assist new members, helping them to gain expertise.

J. Morgan wished to know how members are appointed. N. Walton stated that there is a call put out for members. When the call was put out for faculty members of the GREB, there were not many responses. There were, however, many qualified student applicants. J. Morgan stated that there was no mention of discipline based Boards. He believes that the subcommittee approach would be preferable to the proposed GREB as there would be a chain of command. He would prefer investigating the establishment of standing subcommittees in general, as he had originally objected to creation of a standing subcommittee particularly for this purpose.

N. Loreto asked about the selection of students for the committee. It was explained that students were interviewed.

S. Cody stated that the establishment of discipline based Boards was not considered. She wished to point out that the REB facilitates research, and does not reject proposals. It is not focused on reducing workload, but rather in having more efficient turn-around time. The REB does not meddle in people's research.

J. Sandys stated that when a protocol contains no more than minimal risk, there can be an expedited review. If there is a protocol with more than minimal risk, the entire Board would be required to do the review. That is why the Board cannot be large. Sooner or

later, multiple Boards will need to be established. Nothing that is done now will be in place in five years, and further change will be needed. If the motion is defeated or tabled, the REB cannot do its work. She argued that the alternate motion which is to be proposed cannot be passed as it is against Robert's Rules.

J.P. Boudreau stated that there is agreement that the REB has an increase in workload and asked if it is possible for reviews to be further expedited by having only one reviewer for minimal risk protocols. It was responded that the number of reviewers has already been reduced to two from three. The REB does its best to assist faculty who need reviews turned around quickly. The notion of reducing to one reviewer is being discussed, but two people often have different perspectives and there is value in having two reviewers. No decision has been made on this.

N.M. Lister asked if there an automatic mechanism for the review of Academic Council standing committees. D. Schulman responded that there is no mechanism for this. S. Williams stated that there is a requirement for an annual report to Council where the committee could be reviewed.

D. Mason stated that if a GREB were created now there may be a need to create another Board in a few years. He asked what the percentage of the reviews are minimal risk. It was responded that 97% of the reviews are minimal risk. 3% are more than minimal risk. The vast majority is done in 3-4 weeks by 2 people. These are vetted through the Chair and the Research Ethics Coordinator. D. Mason commented that, based on this, he believes that there is no problem and that the REB should simply be expanded. J. Sandys stated that even protocols that are minimal risk can be quite time consuming. Last year there were 95, this year there are already 130.

J. Morgan agreed with D. Mason. If there are 3% of 130 proposals that require full review, then that is 3-4 per year. He suggests that the Board be expanded for a year, thus training more members. N. Walton responded that to expand the numbers would bring the committee to more than 25, and a quorum would be hard to achieve. To have a full review would require the whole REB. This matter has been discussed for some time and expanding the REB would not be in the best interest of the faculty.

S. Edwards asked that everyone consider that the work just needs to be done, and that no proposal will be perfect and she urges members to vote for the motion.

M. Dionne stated that her proposal is a compromise. There are other efficiencies that can be made. There are five members added, and an increase of 18 to 23 is not that much. She believes that passing the motion would be a rash decision. Other REBs have 5 or 6 members. If there is only minimal risk, it can be reviewed by the Chair alone. Perhaps more resources need to be provided to members.

Motion defeated (2/3 majority required.)

M. Dionne presented the motion previously distributed to Council regarding the establishment of an ad hoc Graduate Research Ethics Board.

The section of Robert's Rules on the establishment of an ad hoc committee was repeated.

A special (select or *ad hoc*) committee is a committee appointed, as the need arises, to carry out a specified task, at the completion of which – that is, on presentation of its final report to the assembly – it automatically ceases to exist. A special committee should not be appointed to perform a task that falls within the assigned function of an existing standing committee.

Based on that reading, the Chair ruled that since the REB reviews graduate protocols, the motion is out of order.

Motion to challenge the Chair.

M. Dionne moved, N. Loreto seconded.

M. Dionne stated that the ruling is wrong, as the next motion is to change the terms of reference of the REB to not include graduate protocols. There was discussion of whether the motion to challenge the chair could be removed and represented after the next motion from the Composition and By Laws Committee. .

D. Elder called the question.

Motion defeated.

Thus the ruling of the Chair stands and the motion to establish an *ad hoc* committee is out of order.

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the amendment of its By Laws with respect to revision of the composition and Terms of Reference of the Research Ethics Board, effective immediately
Motion removed from the table.

MOTION: That Academic Council amend its By Laws with respect to the composition of the Animal Care Committee.

J. Sandys moved, A. Chaleff-Freudenthaler seconded.

It was clarified that there would only be a designate for the Research Ethics Coordinator if he was unable to attend.

Motion approved.

8.3 Report of the Nominating Committee

M. Dionne noted that, as the motion to create the GREB had been defeated, the Nominating report is amended so as to not include the members of the GREB.

M. Dionne moved, D. Mason seconded.

Motion approved.

9. New Business

9.1 Presentation of Ryerson's Accessibility Plan – J. Sandys presented and questions were invited.

N. Loreto asked if there were students on the committee, and it was responded that there were. She asked why RyeAccess is not mentioned in the report and if there is a membership list for that committee. It was said that the composition of the committee is very broad, including many areas of the University and that the next committee established to review the report will include a member of RyeAccess.

S. Cody referred to the student satisfaction survey previously presented which does not speak specifically to the experience to students with disability. She asked about universal design and its feasibility and commented that it is not defined in the document. J. Sandys replied that universal design should always be done to the maximum extent possible and that it is a good general principle. The report reflects the results of consultation with students.

In response to a comment from N. Loreto, it was explained that the committee is not an oversight committee to which people bring complaints. It is an advisory committee as required by legislation. N. Loreto asked that student selection for the committee be done in the academic year so that students are on campus.

J. Sandys explained that there had been broad consultation in the first year and in the second year departments were asked to report on their progress.

J. Morgan asked about priority VII which indicates that departments/units are responsible for the first \$500 of accommodation expenditures. He is concerned that accommodations might be turned down if there is no money for them in a department budget.

9.2 Motion from the floor – distributed to Council

WHEREAS: Faculty, students and Academic Council have made repeated pleas, requests, and demands for timely course schedules and timetables; and

WHEREAS: Current timetabling practices at Ryerson make it impossible for students and sessional instructors to arrange (other) work so as to be able to afford to attend/teach-at Ryerson; and

WHEREAS: The staff involved in producing the timetables find it so arduous that some of them are rumoured to have booked stress leave; and

WHEREAS: The continuation of the unacceptable scheduling implies that administrators are unable or unwilling to remedy the situation; and

WHEREAS: A complete lack of respect of student, and full and part time faculty, as evidenced by the ongoing nature of the scheduling problem has been the status quo as long as anyone can remember; and

WHEREAS: The foregoing necessarily lead one to conclude that there are structural, systemic, or other extraordinary causes for this situation;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Academic Council strike an ad hoc committee composed of the Registrar, the Provost or Vice-Provost, four faculty, and one student, to examine the assumptions, issues, and problems that lead to the current unfortunate timetabling situation, and report back to the February Academic Council meeting with recommendations to resolve the problem.

D. Mason moved, P. Lewkowicz seconded.

K. Alnwick responded to the motion by first noting that there is no Academic Council meeting in February, and saying that he agrees that the timing of timetable distribution needs to be changed. He would prefer to make a report to Council based on consultation with Deans, chairs and his staff. All feedback from faculty and students on timetables is welcomed, and he would meet with anyone who wished to meet with him. It was agreed that the report would be due at the March meeting.

D. Mason responded that he was not criticizing the Registrar, but that previous reports did not bring about change. He recognizes that people are working hard but it is not solving the problem. He does not believe that the impact of late timetables is fully understood, as faculty are embarrassed to deal with professional organizations about scheduling of events, part-time faculty cannot book other jobs, and students cannot plan.

Motion approved.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane R. Schulman, Ph.D.
Secretary of Academic Council