

**SENATE MINUTES OF MEETING**

Tuesday, June 1, 2021

Via Zoom Video Conference

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

<b>EX-OFFICIO:</b>	<b>FACULTY:</b>		<b>STUDENTS:</b>
L. Barnoff	R. Adams	S. Sabatinos	L. Armstrong
D. Cramb	S. Benvie	J. Saber	G. Carter
G. Craney	T. Burke	I. Sakinofsky	N. Chen
T. Duever	D. Checkland	J. Schmidt	M. Hickie
C. Falzon	M. Dionne	D. Scofield	K. Park
C. Hack	S. Farshadfar	N. Thomlinson	D. Salman
G. Hepburn	A. Ferworn	C. Thompson	J. Sekhon
R. Iannacito-Provenzano	N. George	M. Vahabi	S. Slonim
M. Lachemi	E. Ignagni	A. Valeo	J. Spagnuolo
S. Liss	L. Jacklin	I. Young	
K. MacKay	L. Kolasa	H. Zarrin	
J. McMillen	L. Lavallée		<b>EX-OFFICIO</b>
D. O'Neil Green	A. McWilliams		M. Fast
C. Searcy	R. Noble		T. Kuar
C. Shepstone	D. Oguamanam		
P. Sugiman	R. Ott		
D. Young	R. Ravindran		
S. Zolfaghari	H. Rollwagen		

**SENATE ASSOCIATES:****ALUMNI:**

J. Dallaire	N. Di Cuia
R. Kucheran	S. Rattan
S. McFadden	
N. Ponce de Leon Elphick	
K. Train	

**REGRETS:****ABSENT:**

A. M. Brinsmead	C. Bannis
D. Brown	G. Bramesfeld
I. Mishkel	L. Escandon
T. Schneider	F. L. Kakar
D. Taras (C. Holmes, Interim)	S. Maitman-Markowski
	Y. Mistry
	P. Moore
	H. Ramzan

## **Committee of the Whole Discussion – Mental Health and Wellbeing**

L. Lavallée, Senate Vice Chair, chaired the Committee-of-the-Whole Discussion.

The presenters were: Katey Park, Psychology, PhD. Candidate; and Annabel Sibalis, Psychology, PhD. Candidate, Yeates School of Graduate Studies (YSGS) followed by Allan MacDonald, Executive Director, Student Wellbeing;

Nancy Walton, Associate Dean, Students, YSGS, introduced Katey Park and Annabel Sibalis. N. Walton stated that K. Park and A. Sibalis approached the YSGS Dean and collaborated to have them expand their research to look across all programs at graduate students' mental health and wellbeing. This work is very important for YSGS and for our graduate programs across all Faculties with a goal of enhancing YSGS's current resources and supports for students and also thinking about what kinds of relevant initiatives and programs we need to put in place.

### **K. Park:**

Today, we will be speaking on student mental health and the focus of our research is specifically on graduate students. We will present some data we collected on the mental health and wellbeing of Ryerson's graduate students.

We thought it would be helpful by explaining how this project came to being and why we thought it was an important endeavor to pursue. Our research actually began in 2019 within the Psychology department. At that time, we administered some surveys within our own home department of Psychology. The purpose of that research was to identify where students were struggling and also where they were flourishing. The goal behind that project was to tailor our departmental resources in a way that best served students. That project went very well and we walked away with real tangible recommendations on how to help our department, and many of those have already been implemented. Due to the success of that project, we were connected with the YSGS Associate Dean, Student Affairs. We began having conversations at that time about how can we take the survey outside of the Psychology Department and measure it across programs at Ryerson University. In the midst of those discussions, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the value of mental health became more apparent than ever. We were then connected with the YSGS Vice Provost and Dean, Dr. Cory Searcy, and Associate Deans and we received support to administer the survey across Ryerson campus. We did a lot of collaborations and consultations with the Associate Deans at that time in order to develop a survey that best captured the graduate student experience across all Faculties.

Data collection occurred in November to December 2020, about nine months into the pandemic, and data analysis is now complete and we're now in the dissemination phase. There will be a full report of our findings on the YSGS website in Fall 2021, but today we wanted to present some key findings that emerged from our research.

We have done some extensive literature reviews on graduate student mental health and sources of stress, and we recently published some work in the International Journal of Doctoral Studies. We thought it would be helpful to give some background information on what's different about this subset of students and this population. We know, based on the research, that graduate students report higher stress compared to population norms and they experience higher stress compared to undergraduate students. Graduate students are also at heightened risk for developing mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression and this is compared to similarly educated working professionals. An individual with a PhD in the working field would be at less risk for experiencing mental health disorders compared to a PhD student in graduate studies.

There has been some research done on what factors contribute to higher stress or higher risk for developing mental health disorders for the graduate student population. It's been proposed that some of the risk factors include financial insecurity. Graduate students typically have lower incomes and high workloads. They are often balancing many different roles such as teaching, taking courses themselves, research and service. They are also embedded in a competitive atmosphere which could be a very stressful situation to be in. There also could be supervisory relationship problems and it has also been proposed that uncertain career trajectories play a role. So where someone with a PhD who is in the working field might also have higher workloads, they do have job security which graduate students do not have. A recent study found that 72% of Canadian graduate students reported worsening mental health during the pandemic. Some reasons cited for this trend include worries about completing their degrees on time (we know that research has been interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic); increased financial pressures; concerns over job prospects after the pandemic; concerns about what the economy might look like at the time of graduation; and perceived lack of mental health support from the institutions that they attend.

There are few contextual factors that we would like to mention upfront today. The first is that this study is not a pre-post design, so we are not comparing pre-COVID levels of mental health to mid-COVID levels of mental health. Instead, this research is cross-sectional and it provides a snapshot of a certain moment in time, which, in this case, is primarily December 2020. It is also important to mention that in order to contextualize our findings about, for example, the percentage of students who report feelings of depression, we will be making several comparisons to other studies that are out there, and this can be difficult because we do not have a perfect comparison point. In the majority of published studies that examine student mental health, undergraduate students and graduate students are grouped together and this can muddy the water a bit, because, as we know, graduate students have very different needs and responsibilities compared to undergraduate students. We do reference some comparison studies that have taken place during the pandemic but most of the literature that is out there is from the earliest few months of the pandemic because it takes time for research to be conducted, written up into an article and then published. Any articles that would examine more comparable data from December 2020, would not have been published yet. So even though we are about six months out from December, it's a pretty short time line in the world of evaluation studies, so it's feasible to think that certain facets of mental health, like depression or anxiety may be worse after many months of the pandemic compared to very early on. Finally, we've made every effort to find comparison studies or statistics that use Canadian samples but we're a small country compared to most, so Canadian samples in the literature are quite rare.

We have an overview of the findings that we will be presenting today. First, we will present some general demographic data that we collected at the beginning of the survey, then an overview of three different facets of wellbeing: mental health, financial strain and the student-supervisor relationship, and finally, we will review some student recommendations on ways in which the university can best support graduate students and some considerations moving forward.

We'll start with some demographic information. A total of 515 graduate students, at least, partially completed our survey out of a potential 2,900. This yielded a response rate of 18%. The mean age was 28 with lots of variability in there and the sample was predominantly women. It is important to note that the respondents who completed the survey are disproportionately higher women compared to what is actually the sample at Ryerson University. So, when we look at the Ryerson graduate school community, about 54% are women. The sample was ethnically diverse and it was predominantly Master's students and students who are enrolled fulltime, and those percentages are proportionate with the programs that are offered at Ryerson University, so those are the percentages that we would have expected. I also would like to briefly mention that we did collect other demographic information, such as: living arrangements, sources of income (how they pay

their bills), whether they identify as living with a disability, or a visible minority. All of those demographic characteristics will be outlined in the full report.

We will now focus on mental health (anxiety, depression and burnout).

**1) Anxiety** is unusually high levels of persistent and excessive worry and it could be very difficult to control those worries. If we look at the general population in Canada, before the pandemic, about 2.5% of the general population reported symptoms that are compatible with generalized anxiety disorder. Once the pandemic hit, about 13% of the general Canadian population reported moderate to severe anxiety. Before the pandemic hit, there was a lot less symptoms related to anxiety that have been reported and anxiety symptoms have increased since March 2020. We do also know that graduate students are at increased risks for experiencing anxiety. Before the pandemic hit, previous research found that between 14% and 23% of American graduate students reported moderate to severe anxiety, and during the pandemic, 39% of graduate students in an American sample reported symptoms of anxiety. Again, the take-home message is to show that even before the pandemic hit, graduate students were at increased risk of experiencing anxiety and it has just been exacerbated since the pandemic hit. Ryerson graduate students who completed our survey – 54% reported moderate to severe anxiety, so just over half reported these levels of anxiety.

**2) Depression** is persistent and chronic sadness or feelings of emptiness. It can manifest itself in different ways such as looking like hopelessness, being tired or having a lack of energy, or it can also involve irritability or angry outbursts. Before the pandemic, about 5% of the general population in Canada reported moderate to severe depression. During the pandemic, 15% of the general Canadian population reported moderate to severe depression. Similar to anxiety, there has been an increase in depression since the pandemic hit in general populations. Also, similar to anxiety, we know that graduate students were at increased risk for depression even before the pandemic hit. One study reported that 13% of American graduate students reported depression prior to the pandemic and a smaller Canadian sample of only Psychology graduate students found that 33% reported symptoms of depression. It is worth noting that in programs such as Psychology or related health fields, there is an increased risk for mental health disorders which is also possibly why that number is higher. During the pandemic, 32% of graduate students in an American sample reported depression. Graduate students were at increased risk before the pandemic hit and it was just exacerbated by the pandemic. In our sample of Ryerson graduate students who completed our survey, we found that 43% reported moderate to severe depression.

**3) Burnout** is a syndrome that occurs when workplace stress has not been adequately managed. Burnout can manifest itself in three ways: exhaustion (feeling depleted); cynicism (not feeling like the work that you do is important); and professional inefficacy (feeling that you don't have the skills to manage the job that you have or perhaps crossing everything off your to-do list and at the end of the day still not feeling very accomplished). There have been a lot of news articles highlighting how certain professions are at increased risk for burnout, and higher education would be one of them. Typically, when we categorize someone from experiencing burnout, they would need to meet the cut-off score or the exhaustion sub-scale plus one of the other two sub-scales. So, if we use that cut-off criteria with Ryerson graduate students who completed our survey, 61% reported experiencing burnout.

**4) Financial Strain** is stress or pressure around one's financial situation. We gave a 5-item scale about financial strain and a sample item includes: Are you often not able to do the things you need to do because of the shortages of money? Possible scores range from 5 to 25 and with our sample, we had a mean score of 12. What we wanted to do was to find out how many graduate students or what percentage of graduate students would be in that really financially strained category. We looked at the percentage of individuals who scored between 20-25 on the scale, because that

would indicate that they are experiencing a lot of worry and stress with respect to their financial situation and we also found that 18% of our graduate students were highly strained.

#### **A. Sibalis:**

The majority of graduate students at Ryerson have a direct academic supervisor who oversees their work and progress and this is a very important and influential relationship. From our past work in this area, we learned that when the supervisor relationship is good that can be a huge positive influence for wellbeing, productivity and so many other areas, but on the other side of that coin, if a supervisor relationship is going poorly, it can negatively affect almost everything about the graduate experience, so this relationship is one that we really wanted to examine. In the study, we found that nearly 18% of students ranked the relationship with their supervisor in their top 3 most stressful aspects of graduate school and nearly 5% ranked it as their number one stressor. However, we found that in general, the vast majority of students were quite satisfied with their supervisor relationship. Over 40% indicated that they were highly satisfied with their supervisor which was encouraging to see.

Some considerations to keep in mind when interpreting the data that we have presented so far. It is important to remember that the survey was voluntary. All graduate students at Ryerson were invited to participate, but those who did participate did so because they wanted to. So, there can be elements of a selection bias at play here in that the students whose views are included in these findings are those who specifically wanted to participate. We also had a relatively small sample size, and even though there are over 500 responses, this represents just under 1 in 5 Ryerson graduate students, and there is not much we can do about that but it does mean that we need to interpret these findings with a little bit of caution. We also note that there is an over-representation of women in our sample and we know that women report, on average, higher rates of anxiety and depressive disorders, so that could be one reason why our rates of anxiety and depression seem quite high.

Finally, our last data category, which is Participant Recommendations. For this question we provided students with a list of several options and asked them: Here are suggestions of ways in which Ryerson University can better support graduate student mental health, to what degree do you support the following recommendations? Here are the items that receive the highest rankings. The #1 item that students endorsed was a tuition decrease or tuition waiver. Similarly, #2 was additional bursaries for students in financial need, and #3 was psychological services geared towards graduate students.

The good news is that certain strategies already implemented by Ryerson have begun to address some of these concerns. For instance, in the Fall 2020, Ryerson was able to offer a tuition voucher to certain graduate students that were impacted by the pandemic. There were also several emergency bursaries available to students who needed it most that totalled several million dollars, (ex: The Ryerson Relief Fund). In addition, in April 2020, Ryerson adopted a new counselling partnership with Keep Me Safe, which is an external provider of virtual counselling and crisis management services. As well, within the past couple years, Ryerson has hired a graduate counsellor.

Based on our findings today, it is clear that some students are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing so we've proposed some take-home considerations from this presentation today. The first one relates to further enhancing the current psychological services that Ryerson offers in order to more effectively target graduate students. For example, many of the services that Ryerson offers are group-based programs, which groups graduate and undergraduate students together and it's understandable that it might not be efficacious or appropriate so that could be one area for development. It might also be helpful for graduate students to reflect on the sources of stress as

well as the sources of support within their own program. Graduate students are the experts in their own program and they know best what is needed and what would be helpful for them. Also, broader policy revisions that can be considered for the university as a whole, tapping into that student voice is something that is incredibly powerful and such a helpful resource as we consider changes that may be helpful to make. Finally, mental health and wellbeing is often thought of as something that we need to fix once a problem arises. We would like to propose taking a step back and thinking about prevention. How can we as a Ryerson community take a preventative approach to wellbeing and bolster students to stave off challenges rather than needing to take an intervention approach once crisis has already arisen.

### **Alan MacDonald:**

What I want to focus on today is to discuss how we can support each other and view student mental health and wellbeing through a holistic and united lens. Here are some examples: one would be within student wellbeing, we are doing our best to approach the support within the medical centre, counselling centre, health centre and Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) in an inter-professional way but also using a step-care approach link to the community, i.e. using a step-care approach where the student, patient, or client receives the right care, at the right place, with the right person. Students who are acutely in need of help would perhaps be referred to a physician, a psychiatrist; and then as student, patient or client recovers or gets better and resumes a healthier lifestyle, they can be stepped down to different services or stepped up depending on their needs. We are really trying our best to link to the downtown east Toronto community to further that step-care approach to provide either supports that may not be available to the university or it augments the supports that are already available here. Also, we're looking along the same lines of social determinants of health and of social and economic factors that impact one's health. Our colleagues in the recreation department have really embraced an active wellbeing approach to the learning strategy. Financial aid has been distributed to deserving groups; there are mentorship and leadership programs for them; opportunities and specific support. In addition to graduate level, there are specific supports available to students of deserving groups.

### **Holistic and United Approach**

This relates to where I worked in a large multidisciplinary clinic in downtown Toronto, where we helped injured workers return to work. Those were folks who were injured on the job who had short, medium or long-term disabilities which wouldn't allow them to return to their original job. As a physiotherapist, we did the best that we could to help that client to return to work but often we ran into barriers with the employer to help that person return to work. We then introduced a return-to-work coordinator and that person would actually go onto the work site and help that injured worker and the employer implement the accommodation plan as best they could and that injured worker could then get back to becoming a productive member of that team and that workplace, and get back to life in general. Where this applies to our situation here at Ryerson is, with the equivalent situation here where the facilitator in the Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) area, a faculty member and that student with the disability, there could be some assistance that could be helpful to the student and help that faculty member implement a combination in the classroom. There could be some additional assistance for the overall program to develop some different approaches to universal design for learning or pursuits for disabilities. What we are doing in the AAS department is that we've developed a new role called the Learning and Inclusion Education Developer with the idea of how do we support each other and how do we use our holistic approach in order to support each other, students and faculty members to create that learning environment and help that student succeed. In theory, this will have a positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of all involved in this particular situation.

Some potential thoughts for how policy-driven change could be a way of collectively fostering student mental health and wellbeing. Certainly, in my role, when we were working through different

policy decisions or strategy decisions of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association or Ontario Physiotherapy Association, we would think about different ways that if the policy were a person how would that policy or strategy show up. This is just some food for thought for folks to consider - that could policy actually be a change agent, or could the policy actually contribute to a shift on focusing only on the student's mental health – shifting it to the student, not the health, and the design pedagogy in curriculum and other structural factors that create the conditions for students to actually be successful. Could the policy actually foster innovations that allow for success while maintaining an academically rigorous learning environment for all Ryerson students and faculty, and how could policy embrace the social determinants of health, the social and economic factors that contribute to one's health in order to contribute to a healthy, equitable atmosphere at campus today and tomorrow?

Finally, this is taken directly from an article published in 2014 where groups took a look at the different ways different schools are attempting to address students' mental health through a policy lens. I thought this is a helpful way to perhaps categorize the overall strategic approach to policy-making and what quadrant a school may choose to approach student wellbeing. Really, at the end of the day, organizing it in a sense that is student mental health focused on the individual; or are we taking a more universal or systemic approach? In the other domain, is the school taking a consolidated approach in grouping all the mental health related policies into one policy so we have a mental health policy or do we ensure that student mental health and wellbeing is considered in every single policy or policy review – they call that mainstream?

### **Comments/Questions:**

- Q: What percentage of students surveyed around mental health and access to counselling service were Continuing Education students?
- A: The information on this will be in the final report.
- C: Certainly, there are graduate students that take courses through Continuing Education but I would have to defer to Katey and Annabel about who participated. I would expect that it would be quite low.
- C: We have no idea if it's a low or high number as we don't collect that statistics. Chang School presents zero graduate courses as far as I know. However, it is an important data point. Is there a way for us to actually do that? In my role as MDM/GPD a lot of my students do take Chang School courses as some of these courses are integral to them getting through their graduate courses in some cases. If you haven't, maybe you could have a stab at giving us a rough number of what that is because more and more Chang School students are integrated.
- Q: There was a comment about resources. Many people have identified a problem with our graduate cohorts and their mental challenges but we only have one counsellor in YSGS and we're doing group counselling which is maybe efficacious. Would it be possible to hire some more? Is it something that is being planned, or are we waiting for the pandemic to end and everything goes back to the regular mental health issues that we have?
- A: It's absolutely something that I think would be helpful.
- A: We will work with the counselling office to see what the demand has been during this time and what that uptake is like. The key is to make sure that the support is available when required and that those who require counselling are receiving it.
- A: There is individual counselling as well. We use a centralized model where all students come into our centre, they go through a system, and then if it is determined that ongoing counselling will be helpful and if the student accepts the ongoing counselling then they are provided with a counsellor. We do our best to match students from specific Faculties to their counsellor from that Faculty, however, one counsellor couldn't possibly meet all the

demands in Graduate Studies. We have 18 full-time counsellors and graduate students have access to our entire system.

Q: Will virtual counselling be offered once we eventually return to the university? I think there's a need for a lot of the students. It's much easier, less time-consuming for them and it's a natural stress-reliever.

A: Yes, there has been literature which talk about the benefits of the virtual counselling; specifically, people in rural environments can now see a counsellor in the same way if they're located in Ottawa or Toronto. I don't know the specifics about the Counselling Centre's plans.

A: Across all our services at the institution, we will be pursuing a hybrid service delivery model and that will absolutely include some combination of in-person and virtual counselling within the Counselling Centre.

Q: If a student reports to the Centre for Counselling, what kind of timelines are we looking at here?

A: The way we've set up the system here, is that we have a same-day counsel system set up, so we have availability for that first appointment set up so that most students can receive that first appointment within 24-48 hours. Some therapy happens in that first appointment – combination of triage and therapy, and then all of those counsellors move to a brief counsellor model as well. Previous to that, the student would have an initial appointment then go on a waitlist for ongoing counselling at the Counselling Centre. We have modified the service to include both that first appointment, a brief counselling session and then a possible wait for ongoing counselling. Close to half of students receive that first appointment within a day or two, and then it's about an average of a 7-day wait for those who don't receive that first appointment within the first day or two. A lot of that is to do with student availability and matching up schedule, and that's on top of an urgent system where if the student is in urgent need, we prioritize spots for those students as well. This year, the wait for ongoing counselling certainly can be many weeks but that's the wait time for mental health and wellbeing services, it can be an 8-10 week wait. I'm continuing to work with our team and teams across to work to get that time down.

We are always trying to do better and there's the Keep-me-safe, the 24/7, 365-days-a-year service is available from Morneau Shepell, where we brought that on during the pandemic and we are continuing with that service where students can not only receive care from our Counselling Centre, but also, outside of work hours from anywhere in the world and also at any time can receive virtual counselling through that partnership as well. We are trying to look into other partnerships as well.

Q: A lot of our questions today have been focused on access to counsellors and making sure we reduce waiting times. When I think of a holistic approach, I also want to think of alleviating the pressure and prevention. Where does the academic side of the house play its role in finding those pressure points that we can relieve, based upon what you've seen in the studies from the graduate studies perspective and the Counselling Centre?

A: When it comes to a policy-making body, doing one's best to use a mental health lens as policies are being reviewed and constructed and aiming for a universal design and universality when possible, and a focus on the social and economic factors that contribute to one's health, could be contributing factors to go in more upstream to be aligned with the university's approach.

A: Some tangible examples of what the Psychology Department has done: Incoming Masters first-year students were experiencing a lot of stress in their first semester and that was partly because they had a high course load. One of the courses was moved from the Fall



semester to the Spring/Summer semester as a way to lighten the load. We also identified that students in our program didn't feel comfortable using psychological services offered at Ryerson University and that's partially because many people in our program do their practical placements there, so that was a conflict of interest. A tangible step that emerged from that was a connection made with the Ontario Psychological Association where people could assess psychologists that was not in any way affiliated with Ryerson University and the costs were covered.

What's really important to highlight is that there are many people here who are experts in their program on what changes could be made. Also, on our recommendations that emerged from the participants, the fourth one that came up was vacation. Some students have said that they wanted to take a 2-week vacation and their request was denied by their supervisors. Some sort of policy changes like that could go a long way in helping graduate students across campus.

We know what can create the pressure cooker are the demands and the expectations provided by programs and the school at large. The number one stressor is always these dissertation and research that is involved for that, part of that is part and parcel of being in graduate school, but clearly, if that's one of the major contributors to a large percentage of students who are struggling, then I think we need to consider alleviating some of that.

**Senate Meeting:**

1. Call to Order/Establishment of Quorum

2. Land Acknowledgement

"Toronto is in the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory'. The Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and peoples, Europeans and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect."

President Lachemi acknowledged the painful memories invoked by the devastating news that the remains of 215 Indigenous children were discovered in Kamloops, British Columbia and hold that knowledge respectfully. On behalf the university, I send my sympathy and express my sorrow and support for members of our Indigenous community. As we grieve for these children and their families, these tragedies remind us that we need to continue to do more and learn more. I would like to invite our Indigenous Elder J. Dallaire to share with Senate a prayer and moment of silence.

**Elder J. Dallaire** – This kind of news is devastating to the Indigenous community, but it also invokes a lot of other feelings in non-Indigenous communities. Some people feel guilty about the ancestral, historical lens. If you have been mistreated in any way, shape or form as a young one, this can be something that can trigger you, so please take care of yourself. Just know that this information even though it happened to you and your community, is triggering for everyone.

**Prayer:** First, let us give thanks to this day that has been generously offered to us. This opportunity to continue to move in good way to keep our hearts and our minds open to a new way of seeing and a new way of being. I would like to address the tragedy that was uncovered in Kamloops, BC, and the 215 little bodies that were found inside there. Every parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, sister, brother can relate to this. We can do things to help and assist with that – focusing our thoughts with prayers. I'm going to offer two verses of the lullaby song which we sing to little ones to help them when they are sick. I would like you to think about, as difficult as it may be, that mass grave, but I want you to see those little spirits being lifted up and being freed from that ground. They have finally been found and they are going home.

3. Approval of the Agenda

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the agenda for the June 1, 2021 meeting.*

A. McWilliams moved; G. Hepburn seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

4. Announcements - None

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the minutes of the May 4, 2021 meeting.*

T. Duever moved; R. Ravindran seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes - None
7. Correspondence - None
8. **Reports**
- 8.1 **Report of the President**
- 8.1.1 President's Update

**The President Reported:**

**1. Thank you to Senators:**

This is our last Senate meeting of the academic year, and I would like to start by thanking all of you for your support and engagement this past year. You have my sincere appreciation for your dedication and efforts.

This year presented us with many challenges with the destabilizing impact of the pandemic. But, it has also shown us just how resilient our entire community is. Together, we have made significant progress and I know that we will continue to work together to shape a better and stronger new normal for all of us in the next year and beyond.

For a number of you, today marks the end of your term as Senators. (A list of the names of those Senators was presented). On behalf of the university, thank you very much for your service, support and, of course, your dedication.

In particular, I want also to acknowledge that today is Saeed Zolfaghari's last meeting as Interim Provost. Saeed took over the role of Interim Provost last summer during a time when we were all dealing with the challenging first few months of the pandemic. As Interim Provost, he showed incredible leadership, integrity and compassion in responding to the challenges of the pandemic and continuing the work of the university. On behalf of the university, thank you, Saeed, for your service. I would like to present you with this certificate of recognition.

The next person that I also want to recognize today is Lynn Lavallee whose term as Vice-Chair of Senate comes to an end. Thank you, Lynn, for your dedication, commitment, leadership and sound advice. On behalf of the university, I'd like to present you with a certificate of recognition for your service. Thank you, Lynn.

And finally, I want to recognize Lisa Barnoff, as today is also her last Senate meeting as Dean. Thank you, Lisa, for your commitment to the University and leadership of the Faculty of Community Services for the past five years. I would also like to present you with a certificate of recognition.

**2. General update on Fall plans:**

We are very actively engaged in planning scenarios for the Fall and many teams across the university are working on plans.

While details continue to evolve, we've seen increase numbers of vaccination rates. COVID cases are decreasing in Ontario but we are also observing what's happening with new variants. At this time, we are very optimistic that we will be able to safely open our campus to some degree in the Fall. This includes the possibility of limited in-person activities such as small classes and labs, access to services and study space, because we have been hearing from students, many of them who would like to access the library, Student Learning Centre and other facilities. We will be further opening our student residences and exploring how to provide safe, in-person extra-curricular activities for our community.

As has been our commitment from day one of the pandemic, ensuring the continued health and safety of our community remains our top priority. If social distancing requirements remain in place in Toronto, it will limit in-person teaching activities and class sizes, and impact how people are able to access our campus. We know that over 80% of our students rely on local and regional transit for their commute, and also the same issue for our faculty and staff. We are not an isolated island, but we look at what's happening in our city and of course, we work very closely with public health agencies while we make those decisions.

On June 9, we will provide our community with an update on what the Fall semester will look like. This is 90 days before the start of our Fall term and this will give faculty time to do preparatory work for their courses and also give our students time to make arrangements for the term.

We engage with many people within our community, but we also have a lot of engagement with the Government of Ontario regarding our plans. As you have seen, many governments in Canada, including three provinces, they have already directed institutions to be fully open in the Fall. We like to take some measures to ensure that we are independent in terms of making those decisions.

### **3. Presidential Task Forces:**

I want to share an update on the three presidential task forces that were launched this past year.

**Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism:** is progressing very well. There is significant work being done to put into action the recommendations of our Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report.

**Presidential Task Force on Egerton Ryerson's Legacy - the Standing Strong Task Force:** is also making significant progress. At the end of May, they completed community consultations. They have from over 6,000 people from our community, and stakeholders, including students, faculty staff and alumni. They received more than 31,000 partial survey responses from community members and are on track to provide a report and recommended principles in the Fall. We will keep you posted on those developments.

**External Panel on Campus Safety and Security:** is preparing to launch a community survey very shortly. I encourage you to keep an eye out for this survey and to participate.

### **4. Convocation Ceremonies:**

I want to remind you that our Spring Convocation Ceremonies will be held virtually on June 22 to June 24. As you know, it is a special time for our students and their families and there is always a great atmosphere of celebration, even if it's virtual. If you can, I encourage you to join and celebrate with our graduates.

## **8.2 Communications Report (included in the agenda package)**

### **8.3 Report of the Secretary**

I would like to welcome to Senate Tarman Kuar, who is the new president of the Ryerson Student Union. This is her first meeting this evening.

#### **8.3.1 Standing Committees of Senate: AGPC and SPC membership**

The AGPC and SPC membership are included in this agenda. A reminder that the student senators will be added in September.

### 8.3.2 RGSU seat on Senate for the 2021-2022 academic year

An update on the Ryerson Graduate Students' Union (RGSU) seat for the 2021-2022 academic Year:- The call for nominations for student senators was completed in March, and as per Senate bylaws, we cannot just add a Senate seat for the RGSU president; therefore, we have opted to provide the RGSU president, Charlotte Ferworn, a non-voting senator seat for the 2021-2022 academic year and an at-large voting student senator seat will be allocated to that position for 2022-2023. The RGSU president is supportive and appreciative of this approach and we welcome Charlotte to the table in the Fall with the existing two graduate student voting senators.

## 8.4 Committee Reports

### 8.4.1 Report #W2021-5 of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC): K. MacKay

#### 8.4.1.1. Periodic Program Review for Electrical Engineering – Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Periodic Program Review for Electrical Engineering – Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science.*

K. MacKay moved; T. Duever seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

#### 8.4.1.2. Co-op work term revision for Chemical Engineering – Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the co-op work term revision for Chemical Engineering – Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science.*

K. MacKay moved; R. Ravindran seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

#### 8.4.1.3. Periodic Program Review for Business Management – Ted Rogers School of Management

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Periodic Program Review for Business Management – Ted Rogers School of Management.*

K. MacKay moved; D. Scofield seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

#### 8.4.1.4. Honours degree designation for the Bachelor of Commerce - Business Management (all majors) - Ted Rogers School of Management

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Honours degree designation for the Bachelor of Commerce – Business Management (all majors) – Ted Rogers School of Management.*

K. MacKay moved; D. Scofield seconded.

**Motions Approved.**

8.4.1.5. Honours degree designation for the Bachelor of Commerce - Accounting and Finance (both majors) – Ted Rogers School of Management

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Honours degree designation for the Bachelor of Commerce – Accounting and Finance (both majors) – Ted Rogers School of Management.*

K. MacKay moved; N. Di Cua seconded.

**Comments/Questions:**

- Q: Are there any of these left? As all of our degrees are four years long and, by definition, are basically honours degree no matter what, the only real Quality Council issue is that they be four years long, can we just have a motion on the floor that makes them all honours degree so we just don't have to go through this laborious, unnecessary acknowledgement of something this university has had since its beginning.
- A: We can think of this as a proposal to work through for what is left, however, it does require a motion as we're changing a degree designation, which has to be approved at Senate. We can look at omnibus motions if there are any programs left, but we would still have to ensure that they meet the standards.
- C: Anything else that causes work for no apparent gain, perhaps they can all come forward as an omnibus and we can either pass it or turn it all down as one thing rather than each individual one making grandiose claim about the degree being four years long.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.6. Curriculum modifications for Marketing Management – Ted Rogers School of Management

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the curriculum modifications for Marketing Management – Ted Rogers School of Management.*

K. MacKay moved; T. Duever seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.7. Curriculum modifications for Economics and Management Science – Ted Rogers School of Management

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the curriculum modifications for Economics and Management Science – Ted Rogers School of Management.*

K. MacKay moved; I. Young seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.8. Certificate review for Food Security – Chang School

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the certificate review for Food Security – Chang School.*

K. MacKay moved; A. McWilliams seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.9. Certificate review for Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences – Chang School

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the certificate review for Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences – Chang School.*

K. MacKay moved; A. Ferworn seconded.

**Motions Approved.**

8.4.1.10. Certificate modifications to Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences – Chang School

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the certificate modifications to Aboriginal Knowledges and Experiences – Chang School.*

K. MacKay moved; A. Ferworn seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.11. New certificate in Fashion Innovation – Chang School

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the new certificate in Fashion Innovation – Chang School.*

K. MacKay moved; R. Ott seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.12. New certificate in Indigenous Child and Youth Engagement – Chang School

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the new certificate in Indigenous Child and Youth Engagement – Chang School.*

K. MacKay moved; L. Lavallée seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.1.13. For Information: G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education Certificate Revisions

- i. Certificate in Lighting Design: Change in Certificate Requirements; Course Deletions (CDID 510 and CDID 554)
- ii. Certificate in Health Services Management: Course Deletions (Electives)
- iii. Certificate in Health Studies: Course Deletion (Elective)
- iv. Certificate in Publishing: Course Description Change (CDPB 100; CDPB 202)
- v. Certificate in Social Sciences and Humanities Foundations: Course Deletion (Elective)
- vi. Certificate in Ethics: Course Deletions (Electives)
- vii. Certificate in Public Administration and Leadership: Course Additions (Electives)
- viii. Certificate in Urban Agriculture: Course Addition (Elective)
- ix. CINT 965: Change to Prerequisite

8.4.2 **Report #W2021-5 of the Academic Governance and Policy Committee (AGPC): S. Zolfaghari**

8.4.2.1. Interim Provost's Update

As this is the last meeting for this academic year, I would like to take a moment and thank all of you for joining us today. Thank you also for your efforts over the past year, and for your support during my appointment as Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic. Thank you very much Mohamed and Senate for the certificate of recognition. I appreciate that I was given an opportunity to serve our university in another role. I also thank all of you for your commitment and dedication to our students as we continue to navigate the pandemic and upcoming Fall term.

### **1. Fall 2021 Planning**

In regard to Fall 2021 - Working within the Toronto Public Health guidelines and the province's legislative framework, we wish to approach the semester as an opportunity to transition from primarily virtual program delivery to more on-campus activity, where possible. Though the pandemic environment is constantly changing and the months ahead remain somewhat uncertain, we are optimistic that, as case counts continue to trend downward and vaccination rates increase, restrictions will begin to lift and sectors across the province will begin to operate normally soon. We still need to be prepared for a number of outcomes.

Currently, Deans along with Chairs/Directors and other academic leaders, are working on two plans for the Fall semester, with the hope of a full return in January. The first plan is the continuation of remote learning this Fall, with activities remaining primarily virtual and the second plan will consider the possibility of more activities on campus should restrictions begin to lift.

As always, our path forward will prioritize the safety of our community, and the plan we ultimately choose to implement will be dependent on what is recommended by the provincial government and Toronto Public Health. We will stay in close contact with academic leaders as things evolve, and we will share updates more broadly as information becomes available and as plans are confirmed.

### **2. Search for Dean, Faculty of Community Services**

I am pleased to advise that the search for a new Dean, Faculty of Community Services, has been completed successfully. The appointment will be announced in Ryerson Today over the coming weeks and I want to thank the members of the Decanal Search Committee for their support in making this important decision. This means that Lisa Barnoff is completing her term as dean of FCS this June, leaving behind an incredible legacy in this position. Lisa was appointed dean of FCS in 2016 and, throughout her tenure, led thoughtfully, built diverse teams and undertook significant innovation.

Lisa sponsored many important initiatives, like the launch of [FCS Student Connect](#), a microsite dedicated to supporting new FCS students with their transition to university life, and led the creation of substantial new admissions and program pathways, like the PhD in Urban Health program. Also, over the course of the pandemic, Lisa demonstrated her commitment to the faculty through her support of [18 new studies](#) on the effects of COVID-19 in our communities. As an advocate for equity and inclusion, both in her scholarship and her university service, Lisa was instrumental in the launch of FCS' [Indigenous Resurgence](#), as well as the establishment of the FCS Equity and Inclusion Project Fund.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Lisa for her unwavering leadership. Her calm and respectful approach, as well as her focus on creating a collaborative and welcoming environment



where students, faculty and staff can thrive, has been instrumental in championing Ryerson's values of mutual respect and shared success.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their leadership over the past year, and again for your support during my interim appointment. It has been my pleasure to serve as Interim Provost, to help you navigate the pandemic, and to begin laying the foundation for the incoming Provost Jennifer Simpson, who will be joining us as Provost in July.

#### 8.4.2.2. Revised Policy 46: Undergraduate Course Grading, Academic Program Standing and Eligibility to Graduate (C. Hack)

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the revised Policy 46: Undergraduate Course Grading, Academic Program Standing and Eligibility to Graduate.*

C. Hack moved; A. McWilliams seconded.

The review process started in 2019 and took longer given the realities of COVID.

#### **Highlights:**

INC – If the student has two or more INCs outstanding as of the last day to add courses in the subsequent term, they will not be permitted to continue until the INCs are resolved.

Timespan- we introduced a new appeal process for timespan extension requests in recognition that there is no appeal process right now beyond the dean.

We have had many meetings, sub-committees created to deal with specific aspects of the policy and we did invite community feedback in a survey in May. We did receive some responses and all of them were reviewed and some resulted in subsequent modifications to the policy and we are satisfied at this point that the changes are to the benefit of the students and the streamlining of the application of academic policy.

#### **Comments/Questions:**

- Q: I may have misunderstood what happened at the last Academic Governance and Policy Committee (AGPC) meeting, but I understood that Charmaine said that Point #6 was going to be withdrawn and there would be a much smaller change to the INC.
- A: We did debrief after the AGPC meeting and there were subsequent conversations on a couple of points around the INCs and we left with the understanding that what we were changing is no longer in here and that was around the ability for students to have the 3 months to complete the INC. We had reduced that significantly and removed that reference and put the 3 months with the understanding that, in the Fall, we would reconvene a subcommittee to look specifically at the INC because they have generated the most conversation. After extensive discussion in light of the concern that when students carry INC's plus a slate of new enrolments, their success is challenged, and this was the motivation for this. This was reviewed by one of the sub-committees and it included a student on that committee as well.
- C: I will raise a procedural point and make a substantive point in response to that. First of all, there was no vote taken at AGPC and my understanding, and I know of other people who were there, was that this would not be included and this was what was being withdrawn. So there was a misunderstanding in communication and procedurally then, AGPC should ensure that we always take a vote and we should be clear what we are voting on. Substantively, I spoke against this part of the motion – everything else is fine, they did a terrific job but I spoke against this and I know a couple of other people did. I think this is draconian. Some students

can manage two INCs. I understand that there's a problem here; and many students can't manage two INCs and a number of things have to be done about this.

- A: I think there was clearly confusion. We have already committed to reviewing INCs in the Fall. With a friendly amendment we could remove #6 and defer discussion around INC's.
- C: If the review in the Fall would take place, we could put it through by the start of the second term, then not much matters because this will not actually be acted on. It will only be at the end of that next term that it will become a major issue for students. I don't have a friendly amendment to put forward to change it, but let's take that seriously because I think the intension here is good but I don't think we should be doing something that extreme. I will not make an amendment; I will vote against it to show that it's not unanimous but if it passes then what matters is that whatever the Fall consultations come up with, be in place for the subsequent terms.
- C: RSU is also stating that section 5.5.2.8, "students with more than one INC assigned..." that the student will not be permitted to enroll in subsequent terms until all INCs are resolved. And there's another part "will not be permitted to enroll...", we believe that this only bolded text in the entire policy shows that folks are very passionate about this. We believe that universities like York, and Guelph provides with four months and Guelph provides students with the right to extend the INC. Considering this, we suggest that to create the deadline for three months but to provide a mechanism for students to receive an extension with proper document.
- A: The timeline is already three months for students to complete the INC and we do have a process for students to request an extension.
- C: We just want the bolded text to be removed as it's unfair to students (Section 5.5.2.8).
- A: You must be looking at the draft that was sent for feedback/consultation. We are looking at the final version which is in the Senate Agenda.
- C: I would like to echo previous commentary. I would be willing to sponsor an amendment that removes all reference to the INC grade. In fact, I have been directed to do so by my constituents. We don't know how this became a draconian measure to help students. We don't find in Computer Science to be reasonable to judge the decision of a professor who gives the Incomplete Grade without actually understanding the reasoning for them. At the moment, I am not voting for this as long as there is the component of the INC.
- C: I don't actually share as much of the concern that has been expressed by my colleagues, but I understand where it's coming from. I would support that the INC piece be included because this is not meant to be the be all and end all for students. There is a similar approach that if you're on Probation and you don't get your Probationary Contract in time, you will not be able to register, so I don't see this as a new piece. We do have to remember that INCs are not the only way to help students move forward when they're experiencing difficulties. Grades can be changed whether they're an INC or not; it's about finding the most appropriate way to support students. This has a timeline to it that makes sure that students who are in cases are talking to their departments and we should trust those departments to find the appropriate solution that allow students to continue when it's the most appropriate for it. While I respect the decision of my colleagues, I will be voting for the motion.
- C: Our executive considered this and I have great concern with this particular Point #6 and when we question the rationale, the cure seems to be more harmful than the complaint and it's actually counter-productive.. I'll be voting against this as well.
- C: I will also be voting against this for similar reasons as previously mentioned. The section that the RSU is referring to is section 5.5.2.6 and I'm wondering if that motion can be applied there instead. I also wanted to ask about possible exceptions made for students who do have some sort of supportive arrangements with their program, to remain enrolled in courses, such as high-demand courses which are only offered once a year and which can sometimes be problematic for our students and continuing education students to deal with that kind of situation.
- A: I think what I'm hearing is that the team has acknowledged that we need more discussion

around the INCs although there was extensive discussion and feedback with the committee. This is an important issue and we are happy to take this INC matter aside and resubmit in the Fall. In the interim, I think we need to consider a friendly amendment to remove section 5.5.2.6. Regarding the previous question, we do have an extenuating circumstances clause around INCs and needing more time, so that piece is covered. What's not covered is if section 5.5.2.6 remains in the policy. We do not have a policy that contains an appeal process stipulated that would enable a student to appeal to remain in those courses. That could be a friendly amendment as well and I think what we are looking for here is which makes more sense at this point. I'd like to find a way forward and with a commitment to look at the INCs in the Fall.

- C: I will make an unfriendly amendment and move that it be amended by removing section 5.5.2.6 because different opinions have been expressed by people who want it so I don't think it is fair to have it as a friendly amendment. I think we should vote on it. Firstly, I want to ask before we put this on the floor, is it the case that if we remove that one section, we basically are reverting to the status quo until the Fall when you'll do something different.
- A: Yes.
- C: So as long as there are not other problems in there, if you're committing to review this in the Fall, then I will move that this be amended by removing section 5.5.2.6.
- C: If the purpose is to support students, this does not seem to lend support to students. I'm in support of the amendment to remove the section entirely, for it to be looked at, but I would also like us to consider how we could be more supportive to students.
- C: I was at the AGPC meeting as well and I am confused about this inclusion. That's not to say that I don't find value in pushing the students, but I do find this potentially punitive for the students. I agree with the fact that this particular part should be removed.

President Lachemi called for a vote on the amendment.

N. Thomlinson moved the following amendment, seconded by D. Checkland -

**Motion:** *"That Senate remove from the policy, section 5.5.2.6 which states, 'Students with 2 (two) or more outstanding INCs from the previous term as of the last date to add classes for the term will not be permitted to continue in the current term.'"*

C. Hack has assured us that, if we remove this, it does not affect the rest of the policy, which is the point of getting the rest of it approved and if revisited in the Fall, they can do something with INCs.

**Amended Motion Approved.**

**Original Motion:** *That Senate approve the revised Policy 46: Undergraduate Course Grading, Academic Program Standing and Eligibility to Graduate **as amended.***

- C: I just wanted to point out that I think we have a number of questions around how this affects our student members and if we had more student union representation on some of these committees we could have asked and answered those questions. I would like to point out our student union only received a week to provide feedback, which is not enough time for our whole executive and our students rights coordinator and a diverse input from our membership. I think that goes towards the feedback we've gotten tonight, that need for consultation and particularly student union representation on committees.
- A: I would add that we had three students on the committee and they were very engaged and very engaged in the sub-committee that discussed the INCs, but we do look forward to more feedback if we can have more participation in the Fall.

**Original Motion Approved as amended.**

8.4.2.3. YSGS Bylaw changes for Psychology PhD/MA (C. Searcy)

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the YSGS Bylaw changes for Psychology PhD/MA.*

C. Searcy moved; R. Ravindran seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.2.4. YSGS Bylaw changes for Physics PhD/MSc (C. Searcy)

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the YSGS Bylaw changes for Physics PhD/MSc.*

C. Searcy moved; D. Cramb seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

**8.4.3 Report #W2021-3 of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies Council (YSGS):  
C. Searcy**

8.4.3.1. Major Curriculum Modification – Child and Youth Care MA (C. Searcy)

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Major Curriculum Modification – Child and Youth Care MA.*

C. Searcy moved; N. George seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

8.4.3.2. Major Curriculum Modification – Data Science and Analytics MSc (C. Searcy)

**Motion:** *That Senate approve the Major Curriculum Modification – Data Science and Analytics MSc.*

C. Searcy moved; T. Duever seconded.

**Motion Approved.**

9. Old Business - None

10. New Business as Circulated - None

11. Members' Business

11.1 **Hortative Motion:** *Whereas the application of the federal Company's Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA, 2014) to the recent financial "insolvency" of Laurentian University has resulted in drastic cuts to programs and staff (academic and non-academic) which seem not to have taken into account academic matters central to Laurentian's institutional goals and long-standing commitments;*

*And whereas the Company's Creditors Act's statement of purpose,*

*focused as it principally is on “the protection of capital”, and protection of shareholder’s interests, is inappropriate as the basis for addressing a financial crisis of a university;*

*And whereas it is unclear whether this Act of Parliament was ever intended to be applied to the university/post-secondary educational sector;*

*And whereas it is imperative that further uses of this Act in the university/post-secondary sector be prevented;*

*Therefore, be it resolved that the Senate of Ryerson University hereby asks, indeed implores, Ryerson University’s senior administration and Board of Governors to take action, in concert with other universities or alone, and consistently with prudential concern for the well-being of Ryerson University, to attempt to persuade Parliament to remove universities from the purview of the Company’s Creditors Arrangement Act.*

D. Checkland moved; R. Ravindran seconded.

D. Checkland – The universities are set up by the province, the province regulates what they can charge for fees and the province is their major funder. What this act has done with the precedent set by the Ford government letting it go this way, is that it allows any government that wants to, to not take responsibility for dealing with things like this, and then very draconian things will happen. Whereas, as the major funder and creator of these institutions, they should take responsibility for it in a different way. What we ask here is that the President and Board do whatever they can with the provisos in there to try to persuade the Federal government to amend that act, to not allow this easy way for governments to avoid their responsibility.

**Comments:**

- C. Bringing the universities under a company law administrator, treating it almost like a company, because universities are funded by the taxpayer, I think it is unthinkable and immoral.
- C. M. Lachemi – When this motion was introduced at the last Senate meeting, I committed that we would definitely talk with the management in coordination with the Board to make sure that we start discussions with the Federal government. I know that people may be confused. Universities are under the umbrella of the Province, however, this Act here is actually a Federal Act. That’s why D. Checkland is proposing to reach out to the Federal government to exclude universities from this Act. Just to clarify this to all Senators, I promised D. Checkland that we will do our best. The Chair of the Board will write a letter that we will sign to the appropriate Federal minister and a number of Federal MPs just to make sure that they understand the implication of this. For your information, the Prime Minister will be doing a virtual program at Ryerson this week. Maybe we will have a chance to highlight this – I think it is perfect timing. I promise to raise this with Federal politicians.

**Motion Approved.**

**Notice of Motion by N. Thomlinson:**

The following Notice of Motion will be presented at the October, 2021 Senate meeting.

WHEREAS: The University has many programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that have been proposed by Departments/Schools and have been approved through the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) specified by Senate Policy #112: *Development of New Graduate and Undergraduate Programs*; a process that involves examination and approval by at least six (6) internal entities of the University and by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance; and WHEREAS: Programs are required, by Senate Policy #126: *Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs*, to complete Periodic Program Reviews which are also part of Ryerson's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and therefore involve examination and approval by most of same entities (except the Board of Governors) that approved the programs in the first place; and WHEREAS: Programs depend, for their successful delivery, on highly qualified faculty who are appointed to the academic unit responsible for the program and whose education and experience are aligned with the curricular requirements of the program; and WHEREAS: The External Reviewers involved in the Period Program Review Process very often highlight the need for additional faculty to properly deliver the approved programs, a situation at least partially explained by:

- a) a Student/Faculty ratio that is the highest in the Province of Ontario, and is one-third higher than the provincial average; and
- b) the fact that many programs have an unacceptably high percentage of program courses delivered by non-tenure-stream instructors; and

WHEREAS: Approximately thirteen percent (13%) of the existing faculty complement (University-wide) is eligible to participate in the retirement incentives created by the Interim Arbitration Award dated 14 April, 2021;

and WHEREAS: The existing process of faculty hires [which allocates positions to Faculties and mostly allows Deans to do whatever they like with the positions] does not ensure any direct linkage between the curricula of existing, approved, programs and the qualifications of faculty being hired, with the result that hiring criteria may have far more to do with the priorities of the Dean than with the needs of the programs and/or the priorities of the Departments/Schools responsible for the programs;

and WHEREAS: The combination of factors outlined above puts in serious jeopardy the ability of Departments/Schools to ensure the academic excellence of the programs for which they are responsible;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Provost and Vice-Provost Faculty Affairs develop, for review and discussion by Senate, a 3-5 year hiring strategy that includes specific plans to:

- a) propose and explain a relationship between positions offered to Departments/Schools in a particular year and retirements in the previous year;
- b) ensure that the hiring made possible by retirements reduces the percentage of courses taught by non-tenure-stream instructors;
- c) ensure that the hiring made possible by retirements is driven by the needs and priorities of Departments/Schools and the programs for which they are responsible

N. Thomlinson – I have been troubled for quite a long time by the fact that we have a number of rigorous processes to deal with the proposal of academic programs and to deal with changes of amendments and updates to those programs, but this is why this is an issue that is probably a concern of Senate. We have all of these programs that are approved by every council of the university, but what we do not have is any kind of a process that formally and transparently links faculty hires to the delivery of those programs. Now we are looking at a situation where we have 13% of our faculty complement who are eligible to take one or other of the retirement packages that are being offered.

There is more than that who are probably eligible for the second package because some of them are able to take it before they are 60 and there will be some people who will become eligible each year as they become 65. This is a massive turnover of faculty.

When then Provost Michael Bennaroch explained the previous retirement incentive, he pointed out that it would allow the university to hire something like 1.7 faculty for every retiree. He had high hopes at the time and he said this publicly that this would help to address both the student-faculty ratio and the increasing number of course sections that are being delivered by non-tenure stream instructors. These things combine to mean that there should be a whole lot of hires at Ryerson in the next few years, and I think we should take some steps to ensure that it results in maximum benefits. I don't believe that we can simply allow this kind of changeover of faculty to occur without a plan that involves the collegium in that plan. Programs have needs and many of the programs have many needs that are independent of the retirements but when you add the retirements to the mix, the emerging picture is not a very pretty one. Just to use my own department as an example, more than half of our courses are currently delivered by non-tenured instructors and that's before there aren't any retirements. We have eight faculties who are eligible to participate in one of the retirement plans contained in the interim arbitration order and our department is responsible for three programs (1 MA, 2 BAs) and we participate very heavily in several other interdisciplinary programs, and I don't think we are by any means unique in this regard. If we do not take concrete actions to ensure that hires, both replacements and additions, are linked to program needs, the cost in terms of our program excellence in this university is going to be enormous.

If this motion passes in October when it comes up for discussion, it doesn't bind anybody to anything. It doesn't even give Senate the power to approve or adopt a plan, but what it does is propose that there would be a plan and that the plan would be examined by the body – that would be us – and it's ultimately responsible for the delivery of programs that have been approved. It's my hope that this will resolve in a smooth transition to an enlarged faculty complement that is firmly rooted in the programs that the departments and school are responsible to deliver.

### **Comments/Questions:**

- C: M. Lachemi – I think you mentioned that 13% of faculty complement. I'm not sure that is correct. I think it is important to have discussion on this. As the bridge between the Board and Senate, your motion also relates to some of the role of the Board and I'm concerned because when we do all the new programming or revision, we always take part of the approval process to the Board as HR and financial allocations are part of the responsibility of the Board. This is not the role of Senate.
- C: N. Thomlinson – The motion only asks for the Provost and the Vice Provost Faculty Affairs to develop a plan, so I would hope that they would consider that. If something has to go to the Board, I am not avoiding that. What I'm trying to get away from is the idea that faculty positions get allocated at Ryerson by deans and there is no real linkage, at least none of them that's visible or transparent, that links to the programs. Faculty positions are awarded to the Faculties and they let the deans worry about what they do about it, including with retirements. You can't lose 8 people out of a possible 24-person department and still deliver three programs at high quality. You cannot do that, I think we need to have a plan. I think the Provost and Vice Provost Faculty Affairs can work on that without the Board if it's possible.
- C: M. Lachemi – My problem is to bring this problem to Senate for allocation of resources. That's my issue here.
- C: Is there an opportunity to add EDI components to address the faculty complements. That would speak to the academic quality as we will be speaking from our communities.
- A: I would be inclined to do that, but when this comes up for the vote, anybody can add to it if they wish, but even without that, if it passes, the Provost and the Vice Provost Faculty Affairs would deal with it.

12. Consent Agenda:

12.1 OVPRI Annual Report to Senate

[https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/senate-meetings/agenda/2021/OVPRI\\_annual\\_report\\_June1\\_2021.pdf](https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/senate-meetings/agenda/2021/OVPRI_annual_report_June1_2021.pdf)

12.2 Senate Learning and Teaching Committee Report

[https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/senate-meetings/agenda/2021/SLTC\\_annual\\_report\\_June1\\_2021.pdf](https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/senate-meetings/agenda/2021/SLTC_annual_report_June1_2021.pdf)

M. Lachemi – Thank you all. This is the last meeting of the academic year. I would like to thank you for your contribution. I would like to wish you all the best for the Summer. Just a reminder, if there is any urgent Senate matter, the Senate Priorities Committee (SPC) will act on behalf of Senate. Please stay safe.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.