

MINUTES
Faculty of Arts Council
Tuesday, November 26, 2019
4:30 – 6:00 pm
BAC 234

1. Call to Order

S. Maitzen, Chair, called the meeting to order, noting that quorum had been met.

2. Approval of Agenda, as amended

Moved: Richard Cunningham

Seconded: Rachel Brickner

Motion carried, unanimously

3. Approval of Minutes of September 24, 2019, as circulated

Moved: Anne Quéma

Seconded: Richard Cunningham

Motion carried, unanimously

The Chair noted the presence of a guest—Dr. Joseph Hayes, Chair of the Senate Honours Committee—and confirmed that there were no objections to the presence of this non-member at the meeting.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

None

5. New Business

a) Curriculum Committee Report (previously circulated)

The Chair thanked the members of the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee—Anne Quéma, Can Mutlu, and Inna Viriasova—for their hard work in vetting both original and revised forms. He noted that according to Council by-laws, curriculum changes classified under sections a. and b. are to be “received for information only” (Acadia University Faculty of Arts By-Laws I.VII.C.v.). He further noted that the report from the Curriculum Committee includes no changes other than those classified as a. and b. Thus, he ruled that the report would be received for information only, noting that according to Robert’s Rules of Order no motion was in order.

The Chair called on A. Quéma, Chair of Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee, to speak to the report.

A. Quéma noted that the report groups changes classified under sections a. and b. together by unit for ease of reading. She explained that section a. is for changes to courses and that section b. is for changes to programs.

It was noted that the title of HIST 1613, *The Ideas that Moved the Modern World*, had been inadvertently omitted from the report.

A. *Quéma will fix this.*

A. *Quéma explained the next steps in the curriculum process:*

Proposals for changes to undergraduate curriculum, as presented at this Council meeting, must be submitted by units to the Senate Curriculum Committee by November 29th. Proposals for changes to graduate curriculum should be sent to Research and Graduate Studies. The Senate Curriculum Committee requires submission of a summary of changes as well as of the appropriate individual forms. Units should feel free to use the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee's report as they prepare their summaries and must indicate that proposals were brought to this Council. A SharePoint site has been set up to receive all necessary documents.

A. *Quéma made suggestions regarding process based on the experiences from this year:*

Article I.VII of the Faculty of Arts By-Laws should be revised for clarity. Section C. is overwritten and contains a typo. The article should make clear that consultation between the units affected by a proposed change must occur prior to submitting that change to the Curriculum Committee. The By-Laws Committee should consider whether the article could be clearer and ensure that it accurately reflects the current requirements of the Senate Curriculum Committee.

Curriculum forms have been generated in order to provide necessary information to various campus bodies, including the Senate Curriculum Committee and the Registrar's Office. These must be completed meticulously. Suggestions about possible changes to the forms can be made. The current forms are discipline based. They could be changed so that interdisciplinary courses are no longer designated "other."

The Chair suggested that these suggestions be passed on to the By-Laws committee, who may then propose changes, ideally for consideration at the January meeting.

Questions were entertained regarding the Curriculum Committee report:

How is the determination made about how to categorize curriculum changes?
Interpretation of how to categorize appears to fall to the Curriculum Committee, though the By-Laws recognize a role for whole Council should questions arise. When changes are categorized as a. or b. there is no opportunity for deliberation, even when changes may impact other units.

The Chair noted that according to the By-Laws changes are categorized as c. when units do not agree on the changes. A. Quéma said that the Curriculum Committee does not decide on its own how to classify but follows the principles outlined in the By-Laws. Other matters are part of a larger debate which could be pursued next term.

It was observed that the Philosophy section of the report contained two asterisks.

A. Quéma identified these as vestigial and will remove them.

Who has the authority to bring changes in the Co-op program to the Curriculum Committee?

The Dean explained that she received documents from the Co-op office under a procedure developed by the Dean of Science. She discussed this with Arts Heads and Coordinators. The Co-op forms were submitted to the Curriculum Committee, but well after the October 29 deadline. The Co-op office should get credit for attempting to consult.

The Co-op changes present a potential problem and an irregularity because the units who will be affected may not have been consulted. This change should be considered under section c.

A. Quéma said this matter may have to be sent to the Senate Curriculum Committee (Policy) because Co-op is pan-university program.

- b) Brief report from Senate Honours Committee on results of survey re. external reader process for Honours theses

J. Hayes, Chair of the Senate Honours Committee, presented the findings of a recent survey on faculty experiences with and opinions about the external reader process for Honours theses. (Attached)

The Committee's recommendations are as follows:

- Replace the external reader with a mandatory internal reader for any department/unit offering an Honours program
- Offer supports/resources for internal processes
- Develop a checklist/rubric for internal readers

The Committee is seeking feedback before it brings these recommendations to Senate. Comments can be directed to the Chair (jhayes@acadiau.ca) or to one of the Faculty of Arts representatives, Anne Quéma (anne.quema@acadiau.ca) and Cynthia Alexander (cynthia.alexandra@acadiau.ca).

6. Report from Dean of Arts

L. Robinson reports that it is a pleasure to be Dean of Arts. Arts Faculty members are the movers and shakers on campus and we make her proud.

The Dean gave a PowerPoint presentation (appended below) and highlighted the following:

- Legal Studies major—Erin Crandall is developing this
- Critical Health Studies major (combined BA/BSc)—is getting support of the Provost
- Early discussions are occurring about:
 - Revising Certificate in French Studies [note: Certificate of French Proficiency?]

- Exchange with St. Pierre et Miquelon
- Food Studies major
- Indigenous stream BA/BEEd

Many wonderful events have occurred.

- Budget—submitted Nov. 20 and will likely be sent back without all requests fulfilled
- ESST Program Review, 9-10 January
- History/Classics and Social and Political Thought Reviews coming up
- Campus SSHRC Leader (in Ottawa 4-6 Dec)—L. Robinson has been appointed to this position
- BAC Renovations—Chartwells will fund a renovation of the area above the café which will include new furniture, lights, baffling, shelving, with an emphasis on local sourcing and a launch in February
- Politics Statement on Student Conduct—Politics faculty developed this for inclusion on all syllabi in the unit, and it has been shared across campus, where it has been well received. The VPA and the Registrar will bring it to the Senate committee on Admission & Academic Standing (Policy).

The Dean responded to questions and comments:

Bridges could be established among interdisciplinary programs on campus (e.g. WGST and Critical Health Studies).

Yes. Discussions of Food Studies major involved mentions of ESST and WGST. It is essential that interdisciplinary programs be adequately resourced and supported.

The area over the café is a dangerously isolated space with only one egress. Will the renovation address this?

There has been no discussion of safety concerns. A request could be made for Safety and Security to step up surveillance of the area.

A problem about an erroneous cancelation of a meeting of those involved in the planning the Critical Health studies major was raised.

A miscommunication occurred. In the future a single faculty member will be made responsible since it is challenging to schedule meetings of such a large group.

7. Report from FAC representative to the BOG

The Chair recognized G. Whitehall, who reported that the Board:

- Continues to be focused on the strategic plan. Concerns have been raised about length, vague language, lack of focus on research, lack of an active voice.
- Received a presentation by the Executive Director of the Maple League; the focus is not simply on recruitment but on building connections among the universities involved.
- Continues to focus on enrolment and especially retention.
- G. Whitehall has been appointed to the Academic Resource Committee; this previously dormant committee may be a way for academic issues to come to the attention of the Board.

- The next Executive meeting will take place December 6.
- The next general meeting will take place on February 7.

G. Whitehall responded to comments and questions:

Did you mention the connection between the drop in the number of faculty and the drop in retention of students?

Not explicitly. The Executive Director of the Maple League said that “Retention should not be a goal; it should be a result,” and this appealed to the Board.

Collaboration with members of the Maple League should be welcomed, but there are concerns since curriculum decisions must pass through Senate, and there has been worrisome talk about trying to “work around” these processes.

8. Reports from FPAS, FPS, and ASU representatives

The Chair recognized John Colton, representative for the Faculty of Professional Studies, who noted that his Faculty has been focused on curriculum development, including a new collaboration among Community Development, Glooscap First Nation, and Acadia’s Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs on a course in Indigenous Methodology and Knowledge. (Full report attached)

The Chair recognized Greg Lee, representative from the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science, who noted that his Faculty had a lively discussion about the external reader process for Honours theses and that they had developed, during a retreat led by the Dean of Science, a vision statement and a list of seven values. (Full report attached)

No representative from the ASU attended the meeting.

9. Senate-encouraged discussion of health and role of Faculty Council

The Chair called on Senator G. Whitehall to speak to his request that this item be added to the agenda.

G. Whitehall explained that Senate had discussed low attendance at the fall and spring meetings of the Faculty Council, noting that there is a perception that these meetings offer little opportunity for deliberation or discussion and accomplish no business that is not duplicated by Senate. Senators were encouraged to ask colleagues in their Faculties why they do not attend these meetings. The President heard that his report was part of the problem.

A discussion about the all-Faculty Council meetings ensued during which the following points were raised:

- The President may be okay with it if Faculty Council were disbanded.
- A fixed quorum number increases the likelihood of an inquorate meeting given the decline in the number of permanent faculty over the years.

- Some important things can happen only in meetings of that body, where faculty members are in the majority; AUFA can address some but not all issues of concern to faculty across campus.
- The President appears to support the existence of Faculty Council.
- This President follows the precedent established by the former President by giving lengthy reports about financial concerns rather than offering a more informative account of how the administration supports the work of the academic sector.
- Faculty Council has accomplished some good things when faculty have used their ability to put things on the agenda, e.g. seeking/receiving information about processes for handling student reports of sexual assault.
- Unminuted, inquorate meetings at which previously submitted written reports are read aloud are wasteful and disrespectful, especially when the same presentation reoccurs shortly thereafter at Senate.
- The faculty-majority Faculty Council should be approving the list of students eligible to graduate rather than leaving that task to the administration-heavy Senate.
- Faculty Council meetings should not exist merely to enable austerity lectures to faculty prior to contract negotiations.
- Faculty members should be more actively involved in Faculty Council.

10. Adjournment

Moved: Andrew Biro

Seconded: Rachel Brickner

Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 5:59

Respectfully submitted

Jessica Slights

Secretary to Faculty of Arts Council