Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Senate Executive Committee held on the above date at 1:30 p.m., remotely via BlueJeans

Those present:

Dr. D. Barnard, Chair
Prof. J. Anderson
Prof. R. Biscontri
Prof. P. Blunden
Prof. T. Chen
Prof. M. Gabbert
Dean E. Jurkowski
Prof. C. Miller
Ms. T. Nagra
Dr. J. Ristock
Prof. A. Schultz
Dean J. Taylor
Ms. L. Zapshala-Kelln
Mr. J. Leclerc, University Secretary
Dr. S. Coyston,
Associate University Secretary

Assessors present:

Ms. K. Smith
Ms. N. Lam
Dr. T. Mondor
Prof. M. Shaw
Mr. R. Talukder
Prof. D. Watt

Regrets:

none

Absent:

none

Also present:

Mr. N. Marnoch, Registrar
Ms. M. Watson, Executive Assistant to the University Secretary

President Barnard reminded the committee that the University had, at the request of the provincial government, submitted a proposal to reduce staffing costings during the summer months. The University had not yet had a response from the government.

President Barnard expressed his appreciation for the excellent work by many people at the University during the COVID-19 pandemic, including those who had contributed to the University’s response to the government, those who had developed the items on the current agenda, and those working from their homes and on campus who were generating good work for the collective good of the University. He thanked Dr. Mondor for his leadership, members of the Pandemic Planning Committee who had been dealing with the many details involved in dealing with the University’s response to the pandemic, and members of the Senate Executive Committee, who had been responsive to a series of Special Meetings in recent weeks.

I

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF APRIL 29, 2020 – not available

The Chair indicated that the minutes of the meeting of April 29, 2020 would be available with the agenda for the next meeting.
Professor Shaw asked, on behalf of Senators who had contacted him, whether agendas for the Special Meetings of Senate Executive to deal with academic matters arising during the emergency period, which were normally treated as confidential, could be shared with Senators prior to the meetings and whether the minutes could be provided afterwards. Doing so would give Senators an opportunity to share any input they might have through various members of the Senate Executive Committee.

Mr. Leclerc said he would discuss the suggestion with the Chair following the meeting, but anticipated there would be no issues with sharing the agendas and minutes of the Special Meetings with Senators.

II BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES - none

III RECOMMENDATION FROM THE ACADEMIC ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE PANDEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. Proposed Adjustment to the Academic Schedule for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 Terms

The Chair recalled that on March 16, 2020, Senate had delegated its approval authority to the Senate Executive Committee for academic matters arising during the emergency period. The Pandemic Planning Committee had established an Academic Advisory Sub-Committee chaired by Deputy Provost Mondor.

Dr. Mondor said given difficulties with forecasting when restrictions related to the pandemic would end, academic units had been asked to prepare for the possibility of remote teaching in the Fall Term. A final decision with respect to whether the Fall Term would be delivered remotely had not been made.

Dr. Mondor said a proposal from the Academic Advisory Sub-committee, to revise the Academic Schedule for the 2020 Fall Term and the 2021 Winter Term, had the support of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic). It had been shared with, and was supported by, the Deans and Directors. The proposal involved two changes; to extend the 2020 Fall Term to January 15, 2021, which would delay the start of the 2021 Winter Term by one week, to January 18, 2021.

Dr. Mondor said the revisions would facilitate units to offer the maximum number of courses possible in the Fall Term, by establishing a two-week period in early January, prior to the start of the Winter Term, for critical in-person activities associated with Fall Term courses to take place. The majority of Fall Term courses would end prior to the Winter Holiday. The Fall Term extension period would not be open to every course, but would be limited to courses with certain activities that could not take place by remote learning; for example, training in laboratory safety or the use of certain laboratory equipment. Otherwise, most laboratory activities would take place online or through some other remote format. The two-week period for the Fall Term extension would also allow for the return of international and out-of-province students following the Winter Holiday, to residences and the campus, with time for self-isolation, if necessary.

Dr. Mondor the revised Academic Schedule retained a minimum of 35 and, in most cases, 36 hours of instruction in the Winter Term, retained the Winter Term
Break in February, did not shorten the final examination period, and would still end at the end of April 2021.

Dean Jurkowski MOVED, seconded by Dr. Ristock, THAT the Senate Executive Committee approve, on behalf of Senate, a revised Academic Schedule for the 2020 Fall Term and the 2021 Winter Term.

In response to a question, Dr. Mondor said proposed revisions to the standard Academic Schedule, including to delay the start of the 2021 Winter Term to January 18, 2021, would apply to programs across the University. Adjustments for particular programs, including the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, would be considered on a case-by-case basis, which was consistent with practice under normal circumstances.

Dean Jurkowski observed that the two-week extension to the 2020 Fall Term would also allow instructors of spanned courses to transition to an in-person course delivery format in the 2021 Winter Term, if there were changes to public health restrictions to allow for this by that point in time.

Professor Shaw said some Senators who were aware of the proposal had asked if it could be included on the May 13th Senate agenda, for approval, given that it was, perhaps, less urgent but also more significant than some other proposals that Senate Executive had recently taken decisions on, on behalf of Senate.

Mr. Leclerc observed that Senate had agreed to delegate decisions on academic matters arising during the emergency period. In terms of process, he suggested that it would be best to deal with the current item of business in the same way. Dr. Mondor said it would be preferable for Senate Executive to take a decision on changes to the Academic Schedule so the changes, which would give more flexibility for planning Fall Term courses, could be communicated to academic units as soon as possible.

Professor Oliver asked if the Academic Advisory Sub-committee had considered the possibility that, for some courses where it would be possible to maintain appropriate physical distancing, all of the laboratory activities might be scheduled during the two-week extension to the Fall Term, in January.

Dr. Mondor said the idea had been considered by the Sub-committee, which had been concerned about the potential for some students to be overwhelmed if they were required to complete 30 hours of laboratory sessions in ten days, particularly if they would have more than one course structured in this way. There were details to work out regarding how activities scheduled during the extension to the Fall Term would be organized, and Deans and Directors who were interested had been asked to consider how best to use this period.

Professor Oliver asked whether thought had been given to delaying registration for the Fall Term, to give units additional time to determine how they might use the extension to the term to deliver laboratory content.

Dr. Mondor said, and Mr. Marnoch confirmed, there would be complications that would arise if Fall Term registration was delayed.
In response to questions, Dr. Mondor said it would be necessary for academic units to determine which courses would be offered, the format in which they would be delivered, and whether they would make use of the extension period, prior to the start of Fall Term registration, in order to provide this information to students in Aurora. This information would be particularly important for international and other students living outside of Winnipeg, who would expect a commitment from the University that courses delivered using a remote teaching format at the start of the term would proceed through to the end of the course in the same format.

In response to a question, Dr. Mondor said it would be feasible to extend the 2021 Winter Term to allow for in person learning activities, if a decision was taken to offer Winter Term courses by remote means. An extension to the Winter Term was not part of the current proposal, as the situation was one that continued to change. If necessary, a proposal to adjust the Winter Term could be brought forward at a later time.

Professor Chen asked whether Fall Term courses that would extend into January would be adjusted so there were fewer contact hours prior to the Winter Holiday break and, if so, would it be the responsibility of Deans and Directors to ensure there would not be an additional workload for either students or instructors.

Dr. Mondor replied that consideration was yet to be given to how Faculties, Colleges, and Schools would share the Fall Term extension period, and approaches to using the extension period might vary across academic units. He said Deans and Directors to need to work out the details for any particular courses in their units, with the instructors, and to share that information within their unit.

Ms. Smith asked if in-person activities, for some courses that would be scheduled into the Fall Term extension period, would include graded components and, if not, whether it would be possible to start Winter Term courses on January 5th rather than to delay all students.

Dr. Mondor said because students often register for courses in various Faculties, it would be difficult for some students to manage their courses and schedules if Winter Term courses were to start while some Fall Term courses continued in the first two weeks of January.

Professor Miller commented that students in many communities outside of Winnipeg had access only to satellite internet services, which did not have upload and download speeds necessary to complete many online or remote learning activities. She suggested it would be useful for academic units to consider whether some courses could also be offered to students in these communities by correspondence.

Dean Taylor asked what the University Prep Week, which would be scheduled from Monday, August 31 to Friday, September 4, 2020, would entail.

Dr. Mondor said, if the Fall Term were to be offered by remote learning, the University Prep Week would be used to offer students online learning modules to
prepare students to learn and to access services remotely. Ms. Schnarr, Vice-Provost (Students), was also exploring the idea of a university commons with online activities and modules, including some modules in which students could meet one another. Also, Deans and Directors might be asked to consider developing preparatory modules for particular courses where students might benefit from a review of background concepts in a discipline, recognizing that they had not finished the high school courses in the usual way.

The motion was CARRIED.

IV REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES OF SENATE, FACULTY AND SCHOOL COUNCILS

1. Report of the College Executive Council of the College of Nursing RE: Revised Admission Requirements (B.N.) and Academic Regulations (B.N., B.P.R.N.) due to COVID-19

- Revised Admission and Clinical Agency Requirements for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification

- Voluntary Withdrawal

Dr. Mondor said the College of Nursing was proposing to suspend a number of admission and clinical agency requirements, for the Bachelor of Nursing and Baccalaureate Program for Registered Nurses, that required students to obtain Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification, as many organizations were not offering classes for CPR certification, given public health restrictions related to the pandemic. The College had indicated that it would seek to reinstate the requirements for CPR certification when it was reasonable to do so.

Dr. Mondor said the College was also proposing to suspend its regulation on Voluntary Withdrawal, for the Bachelor of Nursing program, which restricts students to one voluntary withdrawal per Nursing course, for the 2020 Winter Term. Suspension of the regulation would give B.N. students the same opportunity available to students in other programs across the University, to voluntarily withdraw from courses by the May 10, 2020, deadline that was approved by Senate Executive at its meeting on April 8, 2020.

Professor Schultz MOVED, seconded by Professor Chen, that the Senate Executive Committee approve, on behalf of Senate, revised admission and clinical agency requirements for the Bachelor of Nursing and Baccalaureate Program for Registered Nurses, College of Nursing, including:

THAT the regulation requiring newly admitted students to the Bachelor of Nursing program to provide evidence of current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification at the health care provider level prior to starting the program be suspended indefinitely; and

THAT the regulation requiring all continuing students in the Bachelor of Nursing program to provide evidence of current CPR re-certification by June 1st of each year be suspended indefinitely; and
THAT the regulation requiring all students in the Baccalaureate Program for Registered Nurses to maintain current CPR certification be suspended indefinitely.

CARRIED

Professor Schultz MOVED, seconded by Dean Jurkowski, THAT the Senate Executive Committee approve, on behalf of Senate, that the regulation, for the Bachelor of Nursing program, allowing only one voluntary withdrawal per Nursing course in the College of Nursing be suspended for the Winter Term 2020.

CARRIED

V ADDITIONAL BUSINESS - none

VI ADJOURNMENT

President Barnard thanked members of the committee for their work and attention to the details when considering items brought forward from the Academic Advisory Sub-committee and academic units.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

These minutes, pages 1 to 6, together with the agenda, pages 1 to 6, comprise the minutes of the Special Meeting of Senate Executive Committee meeting held on May 6, 2020.