



VANCOUVER SENATE

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF 8 APRIL 2020

DRAFT

Present: S. Ono (Chair), K. Ross (Secretary) A. Szeri, S. Parker, S. Bates, J. Olson, G. Averill, R. Helsley, M. MacDougall, B. Frank, J. Innes, S. Porter, R. Yada, C Dauvergne, M. Coughtrie, M. Aronson, M. Isaacson, V. Bungay, C. Marshall, M. Kuus, A. Fisher, K. Lo, D. MacDonald, H. Von Bergmann, R. Boushel, P. Marshall, V. Griess, I. Frigaard, T. Rogers, S. Grayston, S. Matsui, A. Sheppard, C. Krebs, M. Koehoord, A. Collier, P Loewen, M. Thachuk G. Tsiakos, P. Choi, S Forwell, P. Harrison, Ivanov, C. Jaeger, P. Keown, A. Kindler, W. McKee, A. Murphy, S. Singh L. Stothers, S. Thorne, R. Topping, C. Godwin, T. Ahmed, L. Burr, A. Dulay, B. Fisher, S. Haffey, H. Leong, W. McNulty, J. Shepherd, M. Stewart, R. Tees, A. Gonzalez, C. Gilby, C. Koenig, D. Agosti-Moro, C. Moonias, A. Mehrizi, N. Pang, N. Rygnestad-Stahl, T. Yan, D. Liu, J. Burnham, C. Evans, C. Hakin, M. Holmes

Regrets: L. Gordon, D. Kelleher, M. Isaacson, G. Faulkner, C. Nislow, J. Gilbert, S. Ngo

Call to Order

The Chair of Senate, Dr Santa J. Ono, called the special meeting of the Senate to order at 5:08 pm. He noted that this was the first time this Senate had met remotely, and that this was a trying time for our university, our communities, and our world. He thanked everyone present for their efforts during this extraordinary and rapidly evolving situation, and their commitment to UBC, to each other and to their families.

Reports from the Provost

The Vice-President Academic and Provost outlined the University's response to date to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular its effects on the University's enrolment.

Associate Provost Simon Bates spoke to teaching and learning changes necessitated due to various Public Health Orders and in concession to extraordinary circumstances.

The Registrar, Dr Kate Ross, spoke to student financial assistance and registration for summer and Winter Sessions. She noted that for the Winter Session, she expected registration would be delayed.



Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies spoke to the unique difficulties faced by graduate student, including issues with continuous registration and ceasing or slowing research.

University Librarian, Dr Susan Parker, spoke to the library's online resources.

Chief Information Officer Jennifer Burns spoke to IT infrastructure needed to support both online learning and faculty and staff working remotely.

Vice-Provost, International Murali Chandrashekar spoke to the challenges faced by international students at UBC and those UBC students who were or are abroad.

Vice-President Research and International Gail Murphy spoke to research curtailments at UBC and across the country due to social distancing requirements.

The President said that it was obvious that we are not clear on the timeline of this disease locally nationally and globally. That will have a huge impact on UBC and the world. This is a universal set of challenges. He warned that there could be a significant financial impact on UBC, with low estimates around \$50 million and high in the several hundreds of millions. He suggested that there may be impact on domestic and will be an impact of international enrolment. One outstanding question is 2nd and 3rd waves of diseases.

Dr Ono noted that the U15 presidents were speaking with the Tricouncils on research funding. We are also having direct conversations with the government. He noted that in the United States, as part of their \$3 trillion financial plan there was significant support for post-secondary education and Canada would need similar support. UBC has been working at every governmental level and are in weekly conversations with both the ministries of Advanced Education and Health provincially, but that. our competitiveness as a sector requires federal support.

Senator Holmes thanked everyone who updated the senate, and everyone at UBC who has been working on responses and students who have to work through things. He asked how we were involving community stakeholders in decisions given that this was a time where people were losing agency. Secondly, he asked how the senate would be involved in decision making.

President said that we don't have free agency as various levels of government were making decisions that affect us and dictate our decisions. Moving forward we will ramp up our involvement of key stakeholders, the senate, faculty and students. We will have to rely on virtual mechanisms to do so.

The Provost said that in terms of community interaction we are relying strongly on institutional links that we have.

Registrar said that to date we have been reactive and we now have more room to be proactive.



The Clerk to Senate, Mr Christopher Eaton, advised that he had advised the administration to make what decisions it needed to make in states of exigency, but that he expected the University's governance and consultative structures to be involved decisions going forward.

Senator Singh said that he felt for the students and he had questions regarding learning experience. He asked about textbook availability for summer courses. He found out that textbooks may not be available for instance for his own courses. Senator Singh talked about lab components of courses and lost.

The President said the lab issue was universal as were supply chain issues.

Dr Bates said that for laboratory work we can bring people together in thematic discussions

Dr Ono said that we are in a better situation compared to many. As an Institution we will have to be conservative; we may have unusual costs such as online transitions. We have insufficient data for a solid budget for next year. We need to support our students and also our faculty.

Senator C. Marshall said that in the material were three pages of letters of Student Evaluations of Teaching (SEOT). He said that he feels strongly that SEOT should not have been done this term and the data collected should not be used to measure teaching effectiveness for either promotion or tenure or the success of online transitions. Secondly, he spoke to the challenges of international graduate students, either in housing or laid off, or with childcare challenges; noting that they were not eligible for a lot of government or university support. The senator said he felt strongly that the university needs decisive action to support these students. At a minimum we need to offer matching rent relief. We needed to make emergency bursary funding more open and make it open for more than a month.

The President said that he had heard from graduate students and they had discussions with the provost and graduate studies. The current state of affairs may not be permanent and we are actively discussing what else we can do. In some nations they can provide much more decisive levels of support due to government contributions, we hope to have the same but we know that their needs are now.

Dean Porter said that it was a challenging time for so many people and we are trying to come up with what we can do more.

Dr Ross said that if they had some income we are helping people navigate the federal CERF program. Secondly, we are working on a recommendation for rent relief equivalent to the province for those students who cannot access it. We are also looking and allowing students to pay tuition over a whole term and paying what they can when they can.



Senator Forwell asked if we could form a thinktank on how to address in the mid to long-term future on practicum-based requirements. Simulations and other virtual resources only go so far. Many programs simply will not work if only taught theoretically.

Dr Bates said that a working group along these lines was being planned.

The Provost spoke to teaching evaluations. He noted that there were several important constituencies, first and foremost the students. He said that he felt they deserved a chance to have their voices heard. Further, he noted that there were faculty who want their evaluations used. The only way we could consider all approaches was to continue with them but allow faculty to opt out to that data being used.

Senator Hakim said that people have been doing amazing work. He asked what our enrolment projections are for the upcoming year and what can we do to mitigate that. He asked if we would make offers to students who normally wouldn't be competitive.

The Provost referenced his earlier statistics. We are a little down but it is still early. Transfer applications are much higher.

Dr Ross said that we have a very deep pool. What this means is that we would just make more offers than we normally would to get closer to targets. We have already started that with transfer students.

Senator Moonias asked how award policy would be amended given the 75% minimum average requirement.

Dr Ross said that we are looking at this in a working group; we also have a transitional bursary for anyone who loses an award where they get the money for 4 months when they try to regain their scholarships.

By general consent, the time to adjourn was extended by 30 minutes.

Senator Benbow thanked faculty and UBC for working to address. He specifically thanked the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for moving to address grad student issues. He asked what could be done for university funding as this normally expired after 4 years.

Dr Porter said that they were looking at this.

Senator T. Yan asked about professional programs and consistency in concessions.

Dr Bates said that each were unique but we could work to have overarching principles expressed.

Senator Alemzedeh said that she was happy to hear that UBC was extended deadlines but expressed a concern for research assistants.. She asked what other resources were available especially for international students.



Vice-President Murphy said that it was different in the tricouncils. NCERC has been the most open. We are working with them all to see what is possible and to extend scholarships where they are able.

Senator Kindler asked about the transition to online courses. There is opportunity given to us in this crisis in us being able to recognize the tremendously good work being done by faculty with IT and learning support. We are looking at new teaching and learning possibilities. She said that we should perhaps not look to going back to the status quo ante when we can, and think about if we want to make ongoing beneficial changes.

Senator Gonzalez asked if we could look at allowing deferring acceptance for a year, given that, for example, travel restrictions may not be lifted by September.

Dr Ross said that we already had a process in place to request a 1-year deferral and that plans for January needed to be discussed still.

Senator Gilby asked how we are communicating what is being done to the broader community. She asked if we could put a consolidation on our home page of what UBC's full response has been.

Senator Hakim said that as a student he empathized with faculty around evaluations and we didn't view them as useful for teaching evaluations, but he wanted to know what the impact would be on Faculty Renewal and hiring.

The President said that we have delayed submission of the budget because we have too many unanswered questions.

Senator Holmes asked Senator Bates about the different programs used for exams, for instance, Proctorio. He asked how we balance trust in our students with academic integrity.

Dr Bates said we had already been using Proctorio for a year and so it went through a privacy assessment; ways it can be used do not need to be how it is used. Individual faculty members can decide what assessments fit their course content and how to enact it. Many instructors are giving students choices; UBC is not pushing any particular tools.

Correspondence

The President, noting that the content of the correspondence had largely been discussed at the meeting, asked for relevant Senate committees and the Provost's office to review them for further action and replies if needed.

Adjournment

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm.