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An external review of the University of British Columbia - Vancouver Senate

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AN EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE UBC - VANCOUVER SENATE

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A.   Introduction

British Columbia's *University Act* equips the University of British Columbia with a Board of Governors, two Senates – a Vancouver Senate and an Okanagan Senate – and a Council of Senates. The Vancouver Senate reflects on its governance practices on a regular basis through triennial reviews, during which the Senate's Nominating Committee seeks input from Senators, Senate committees and the university community broadly. In addition to advancing other recommendations, the reports of the last two triennial reviews recommended that an external review of the Senate be conducted.   In May of 2023, the university issued a request for proposals for a governance review to address opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Vancouver Senate (also referred to as the "Senate") in the bicameral governance of UBC.

1. **Governance Review - Terms of Reference**
    There are ten review requirements. While the review is organized around the order of priority of our recommendations, we believe all the requirements have been addressed:

    1. Opportunities to increase the effectiveness of Senate in the bicameral governance of UBC;
    2. Involvement of Senate in strategic planning at the university-level;
    3. Senate's rules, procedures and policies in relation to issues of accessibility, inclusivity, health and wellness, and procedural fairness, including the operation of appeals and quasi-judicial bodies;
    4. Means of communicating with members of the various estates that form the membership of Senate (i.e. faculty, students, members of the convocation, administrators and others), both to ensure awareness of Senate's work and decision and to encourage future direct participation on Senate;
    5. Means of overcoming barriers to the participation in Senate, including issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion;
    6. Mechanisms for implementation and timely review of Senate decisions and policies
    7. Senate's committee structure, including selection and training of Chairs and Vice-Chairs;
    8. Orientation and training for Senators;
    9. Scheduling of meetings of Senate and its committees; and
    10. Resourcing and staffing of the Office of Senate and Curriculum Services.

2. **Process**
    The review background and methodology are described in Appendix 2. Analysis and reflection on all the information we gathered and reviewed led to this report. In formulating our recommendations, our goal has been to fulfill our terms of reference and to advance recommendations that are specific to the Vancouver Senate, realistic and achievable. Our 10 broad recommendations are supported by more detailed sub-

recommendations, for the Senate and the university to review and decide which to implement.

3. **Overall observations – Strengths**

We observe that the Vancouver Senate is, in numerous respects, in a good place.

- Members serve for excellent reasons. Eighty-eight percent of respondents to the new Senator survey, asked why they chose to serve, said 'I wanted to contribute to UBC's academic mission by serving'.

- The Senate's membership is widely regarded as a strength – the breadth of its composition in terms of estates, disciplines and professions, and demographics; the depth of its members' commitment to UBC; and the fact that each member has a voice and a vote.

- Confidence was expressed that the Vancouver Senate is fulfilling its academic governance functions as set out in the University Act.

- Senate's committees have a general reputation for thorough and effective work.

- In contrast to their counterparts at many other universities, student senators play a major role in the Vancouver Senate and are successful advocates for issues of importance to them.

- The Senate Office is regarded as having members who are capable, skilled, and dedicated and a Director with deep institutional knowledge and governance expertise.

- Service on Senate is seen as a meaningful way of contributing to the university. When elected members were asked in the survey how likely they would be to recommend to a colleague or another student that they serve, almost 75% said likely or very likely.

- Finally, many of those who were interviewed or responded to the surveys we conducted, are ambitious for the Senate, looking to it to play key roles in UBC's mission – helping map out paths to excellence in teaching, learning and research; being a forum for thoughtful, principled, informed discussion of major academic issues; making sure that academic programs are up-to-date and of high quality and that students have a good experience and opportunities for experiential learning; incorporating the Strategic Plan into Senate's work and overseeing aspects of its implementation; understanding the issues facing the higher education sector and assisting UBC and its faculties to flourish and deliver on their purposes in new and exciting ways.

We share these aspirations and this vision of the role of the Senate in the bicameral governance of UBC. Our recommendations represent changes that will assist your Senate

and your university to achieve your vision. While there is a strong foundation, there is work to do. We see the deficiencies identified as eminently and readily fixable, providing opportunities to significantly improve the effectiveness of your Senate!

B.   Priority Recommendations for Increased Governance Effectiveness

As indicated below, we anticipate that the Senate will develop a multi-year governance plan. All recommendations are important and provided to address the requirements of the review. By including **three areas of priority recommendations**, we are signalling those areas for immediate focus.

1. **Clarify Roles and Responsibilities and Equip People to Fulfil Them**

   Senators: For any governing body to function effectively, the roles and responsibilities of all involved must be clear.   New members of the Vancouver Senate receive a copy of its Rules and Procedures, but not a description of their role and responsibilities. Asked how well they understood their responsibilities as a Senate member at one year or less of service, 27% of continuing and former Senators surveyed said "very poorly" or "poorly", 56% said "adequately" and 18% said "well" or "very well". All members of Senate should know from the outset what is expected of them.

   Senate Chair: Greater clarity regarding Senate leadership expectations is also needed. When we asked interviewees who is responsible for ensuring that Senate addresses matters of importance within its jurisdiction, many people – including experienced Senators – said it's not clear. In the bicameral model of university governance that predominates in Canada – and which characterizes UBC – the Board is responsible for independent oversight of the university's performance of its mission and of its financial and business affairs, while the Senate is responsible for academic governance. The Board appoints and oversees the President, who leads the university, is typically a member of the Board, and, in 84% of Canadian universities surveyed in 2011, chairs the Senate (Pennock et al. 2015). James Duff and Robert Berdahl opined in their 1966 report that "virtually the most important task of the president [is] to preside over the Senate" and "to be the Senate's effective spokes[person] to the Board" (Duff and Berdahl, 1966, 45). We believe that the President is responsible not only for chairing, but for leading the Senate in the academic governance of the university.

   We view presidential leadership as compatible with the Senate's status as an independent academic actor in the governance of the university. Senate's composition under the *University Act* is such that the ratio of *ex officio* members (i.e., members serving by virtue of their senior administrative positions) to elected faculty and student members is 1:3. Other members are elected by the Convocation or affiliated colleges. Each member has a

voice and a vote and there are mechanisms through which Senators and Senate Committees put items on the agenda, as do Faculties and other bodies.

Committee Chairs: There is no comprehensive description for the role of Committee Chairs. In a high-functioning governing body, Committee Chairs are responsible for a great deal. They situate the committee's work within Senate's priorities, lead their committees in the fulfillment of their terms of reference, and keep the governing body apprised of their committees' work. In presenting recommendations, they provide an overview of the deliberations and considerations involved, to enable the governing body to consider the matter at a strategic institutional level, rather than re-doing the committee's work.

Effective use of committees requires clear, outcome-focused terms of reference and Chairs who are effective in chairing meetings, communicate well, and understand the issues. The Chair need not be the committee member with the most experience or expertise in the subject at hand, but an ability to lead and a good grasp of the committee's mandate is important. The requirements, responsibilities and needed skills should be clear to those who seek the role of Committee Chair, as well as to those who elect that person.

Enhancing Capacity: In addition to clarifying roles and responsibilities, we suggest the Vancouver Senate continue to bolster the capacity of its members and leaders to fulfill them. Member orientation was strengthened this year and that should continue. Echoing recent triennial review reports, we recommend **annual** orientation of new members, training of Chairs and Vice-Chairs, and on-going governance capacity-building.

The capacity of Senate members to bring their collective knowledge, experience, and ideas to bear on issues facing UBC is likely to become even more important. Governors and leaders of universities will continue to be faced with difficult and complex questions in coming years. In addition to a commitment to work together, notwithstanding differences in views, Senators need to be well informed and capable of navigating tough issues. They should be aware of the major issues facing the university and the sector. They should understand the university's Strategic Plan, its leadership's thinking, and faculties' priorities. Senate and its committees should have the capacity for open, authentic, sensitive, informed discussion of complex, difficult and/or painful issues. This will entail ongoing efforts and changes in meeting arrangements.

Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 1, we recommend specifically that:

i.   UBC create short role descriptions for: Senate Chair, Vice-Chair, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs, and Senate members.
ii.   The Senate Chair role description make it clear that the President is responsible and accountable for leading the Senate in fulfilling its role and responsibilities.
iii.   Role descriptions for Senate Vice-Chair, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs clearly include the knowledge and experience required, and candidates be nominated and elected accordingly.

iv. Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be elected by Senate upon nomination by the Nominating Committee or subcommittee (see Sub-Recommendation 5ii below), to better ensure that candidates have the needed knowledge and experience and that they and their committees can fulfill their mandates and workplans on behalf of Senate.

v. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Senate and its Committees receive training.

vi. Senate members annually receive orientation.

vii. Senate engage in sessions to raise awareness among Senate members of issues and trends in national and global higher education and research, evolving institutional strategy, and Faculties' plans, priorities, and progress.

2. Improve Senate Agenda Planning

We heard that agenda-setting for the Vancouver Senate tends to be reactive and *ad hoc*. Currently, the locus of responsibility to ensure that appropriate items come to Senate is unclear. We were told that major items have come to Senate for decision at the 11th hour or without sufficient context and that the Senates' role in strategic planning has not been evident. Agendas should be established in the context of a Senate's responsibilities and the recurring, strategic, and emergent academic governance issues facing the university. Agendas should be constructed such that at the end of a Senate year, Senate is able to see that it has fulfilled its responsibilities and priorities. Agenda-setting should involve consultation between Senate leaders and academic administrators responsible for work falling under Senate's jurisdiction. It is part of the President's role as Senate Chair to ensure that Senate considers matters within its jurisdiction in a timely manner.

Above and beyond their content, Senate agendas should make effective use of members' time and attention. We heard that Senate tends to spend too much time "in the weeds" i.e., on matters that lack relevance or importance or rearguing committee discussions. This no doubt affects the willingness of faculty members, alumni, and students to serve. There is also a significant opportunity cost for Senate for failing to focus on bigger picture, strategic, and more important matters. The development of UBC's next strategic plan is one such matter in which the Senates should play a key supporting role.

Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 2, we recommend that the Senate committee structure be reconfigured to connect planning, governance, and agenda-setting for Senate (see 5 -Revise Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committee Structure), and that:

i. There be annual workplans for Senate and its committees.

ii. Agendas be designed to enable Senate and its committees to raise their sights and focus on matters of importance, leaving routine and operational matters to administration.

iii.   Major items for approval, endorsement, or recommendation be brought to Senate at least twice – at the outset for early generative input, and later for recommendation, endorsement, or approval.

iv.   For each item on the agenda, it be made clear what Senate is being asked to do (e.g., receive for information, provide input, advise, recommend, endorse, approve).

v.   Before the initiation of the next round of strategic planning the University engage in a discussion about the roles the Senates will play in the development, approval or endorsement, and oversight of the implementation of UBC's next Strategic Plan (including metrics related to their areas of responsibility).

3.   Improve Senate Meeting Arrangements

The Vancouver Senate currently meets at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays in a hybrid (on-line and in person) format. A few interviewees and survey respondents said that the timing works for them, but the great majority described the current meeting time as very problematic – not family friendly, difficult for people who live far from campus, a barrier to inclusion, ridiculous, and even 'cruel and unusual'.

Many members value the opportunity to participate remotely, particularly given the current meeting time, but the hybrid format is widely regarded as bad for the quality of discussion, decision-making and engagement. Continuing and former Senators surveyed identified discussion focus and quality as having significant potential for improvement. Although discussion at Senate meetings was described by interviewees as generally open and respectful, we also heard concerns about adversarial dynamics, domination by a few loud voices, and intolerance for different opinions.

It was suggested that the student newspaper's coverage of Senate on Twitter and other social media coverage has discouraged some members of Senate from speaking for fear of being misrepresented or shamed. Students' contributions were cited as a major strength of the Vancouver Senate, but some criticized students for voting as a bloc. We heard that Deans also tend to vote as a bloc. We appreciate the support provided by the UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS) for student Senators and recognize that the student Senate caucus is helpful in supporting the effective participation of students, but independent voting is crucial in a governing body.

Concerns were also expressed about the availability of Senate and committee agendas and materials with sufficient time to review, excessively lengthy dockets, agendas comprised mainly of minor items, and meetings that go on too long.

Improving meeting arrangements represents a significant opportunity to increase Senate effectiveness, overcome barriers to participation, and improve engagement. Meeting effectiveness is a collective responsibility. As noted by numerous interviewees and survey respondents, good chairing is crucial, but Senate members themselves also need to be

mindful of the role of Senate in the matter at hand, focused in their comments, constructive, and respectful of others' views and time. Although there are differing opinions on the current meeting time, the costs of evening meetings appear to us to outweigh the benefits.

Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 3, we recommend specifically that:

i. The Chair and the Vice-Chair of Senate adopt, and Senators assist the Chair by supporting, an active meeting management approach. This involves working together to: focus Senate's attention on the items of greatest importance, respect reasonable time targets, avoid domination of the conversation by few voices, and encourage and enable more Senators to participate fully.

ii. The Senate meeting time be moved to late afternoon. Meetings should be scheduled for no more than two hours and preferably ninety minutes.

iii. Adjustments be made to processes and practices (committee schedules if necessary) to ensure that Senate materials and agenda are posted and available to Senators and Senate committee members one full week in advance of a meeting.

iv. Agenda setting practices change so that agendas contain target times for meeting items and many items not requiring discussion appear on a consent agenda.

v. The hybrid meeting format be retained for all but two meetings per year. Establish hybrid meeting rules including keeping 'cameras on' and improve the meeting technology. Senators attending in person should sit at the front of the room and microphones be made available for questions. Senators should adopt a practice of identifying themselves when they speak for the benefit of those participating in the other medium. There should be at least one but preferably two in-person only meetings, at appropriate times in the year, with educational and social components.

C.   Recommendations Regarding Other Aspects of the Terms of Reference

4. Effectiveness of Senate in the Bicameral Governance of UBC

There is a clear desire among Senators that the Vancouver Senate aspire to be more, raise its sights, and play a greater role in advancing the university's mission. Addressing the recommendations in this report will improve the effectiveness of Senate in the bicameral governance of UBC. Stepping back, it will be evident that our underlying vision shifts the Vancouver Senate from the place it now occupies in governance -- somewhat disconnected from the university's key challenges, too far into the administrative weeds on many matters, and uncertain of its role in oversight – to a renewed sense of itself as a body that governs (establishes policy direction and oversees it) working with the other governing bodies (the Okanagan Senate and the Board) within UBC's governance system.

Sub-Recommendation: We recommend that:

i.   Upon receipt and acceptance of the Review Report, the Senate take steps to develop a multi-year governance plan. Steps in developing the plan include considering our recommendations, deciding which to implement and in what order, developing and carrying out the multi-year governance plan, and charging the newly formed Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee (see 5 Revise Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committees), to monitor progress against the governance plan at least annually, and report to Senate.

5. Revise Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committees

The Vancouver Senate has 13 standing committees (1 of which is in the process of merging with the Council of Senates Budget Committee). Approximately 200 members form the 13 committees.

To enable us to advise on Senate's committee structure and the functioning of committees, we included questions in our interviews and surveys about committees thereby securing a subjective view of the work of committees. We also reviewed 2 years of committee minutes (apart from the Appeals and Tributes Committees, which meet in camera and for which we did not receive minutes), and 3 years of Senate minutes to gather information about governance and meeting practices, meeting time, attendance, and fulfillment of terms of reference. Finally, we benchmarked the UBC Committee Structure against that of other U15 and BC universities (noting that there are aspects of UBC's legislation and Senate's jurisdiction that make direct comparison with out of province universities challenging).

Minute Review: Attendance

Minutes provided by the Senate Office were reviewed for the years 2021/22 and 2022/23. During this period, the committees held over 120 meetings lasting approximately 140 hours. Committee attendance ranged (for those committees for which minutes were shared) from a high of 82% to a low of 53% as set out below:

Table 1 – Committee Meetings, Hours, and Attendance

Committee Name	Number of Meetings	Meeting Hours	Attendance
Academic Building Needs	10	8.4	55%
Academic Policy	12	17.8	81%
Admissions (not including admissions appeals)	13	19.8	67%

Agenda	7	6.4	82%
Awards	12	12	64%
Curriculum	15	21.3	67%
Library	15	13.6	53%
Nominating	14	12.4	73%
Research and Scholarship	12	15	61%
Teaching and Learning	12	17	76%

Senate has not established attendance targets or thresholds for committees, but it seems appropriate that attendance should, at a minimum, consistently exceed 75%. Only 3 committees achieved an attendance rate of greater than 75% over the two years.

What we were told

Senate and committee members see committee work as a strength of Senate, however, we heard that members are reluctant to take on committee leadership roles, that Chair and Vice-Chair positions are often filled via acclamation, and that committee orientation is inconsistent and often insufficient[1].

Some committees are widely perceived to be effectively carrying out important mandates (e.g., Curriculum), others less so. Comments received included that: committees can get into the weeds, get bogged down in minutiae, and take on administrative rather than governance work; committees tend to operate in silos; reporting to Senate should be improved; committee terms of reference should be reviewed to raise their focus and ensure that their roles are clear (rather than subject to chairs' varying interpretations); numerous committees got off to a slow start in the new triennium; the Nominating Committee looks principally at Senators' preferences in composing committees, and should place more emphasis on their qualifications and ability to contribute to the committees' work.

Continuing and former Senators were asked in the survey to rank the effectiveness of the committees on which they served in discharging their terms of reference. Only Curriculum and Nominating were ranked by 50% of their members as being effective or very effective. A striking number of responses indicated that the committee members didn't know how effective their committees were with 50% or more of the Admissions,

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[1] Matters of role clarity and training and the roles of committees in relation to EDI and the Indigenous Strategic Plan are dealt with elsewhere in this report.

Awards, and Research and Scholarship Committee members not knowing how effective their committees were. The results are below:

Continuing and Former Senators serving on Committees –

Table 2 – Effective Discharge of Terms of Reference (committee(s) on which they served)[2]:

Committee Name	Not at all or Somewhat Effective	Fairly Effective	Effective or Very Effective	Don't Know
Academic Building Needs	33%	0%	25%	42%
Academic Policy	27%	7%	47%	20%
Admissions	8%	0%	42%	50%
Agenda	15%	8%	46%	31%
Appeals on Academic Standing	20%	0%	40%	40%
Awards	0%	0%	25%	75%
Curriculum	17%	0%	58%	25%
Library	10%	10%	40%	40%
Nominating	14%	0%	57%	29%
Research and Scholarship	8%	17%	25%	50%
Student Appeals on Discipline	18%	9%	27%	45%
Teaching and Learning	7%	14%	36%	43%

When the same group was asked to identify 5 areas in which there is the greatest potential for improvement of committees, they responded as follows:

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[2] Percentages for all tables are rounded to nearest whole number

Table 3 – Top five Areas for Greatest Improvement – All Committees

Total percentage of responses identifying the issue

Orientation of new committee members	Focus, Quality, and/or Level of Discussion and Decision-making at Committee Meetings	Terms of Reference	Committee Agendas, Materials, and Information	Member Engagement
61%	61%	42%	36%	28%
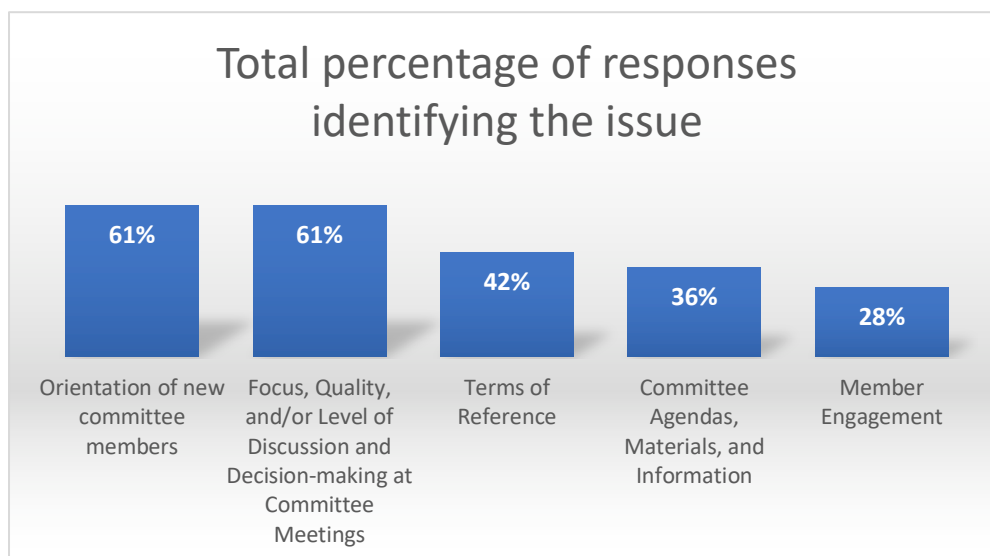
Observations

Committees are struck to assist a governing body with a subset of its assigned work. Committees offer the opportunity to expand the capacity of the governing body and to conduct more focused and careful examinations of assigned matters. Committees are accountable to the governing body that establishes them. At the same time, the governing body is entitled to (and should) rely on the work of the committees and their recommendations.

The BC *University Act* delegates to the Senates responsibility for the academic governance of the university and, through its delegation of powers, indicates the activities the Senates will engage in to support that governance. Academic policy-making represents a primary tool for effective academic governance. Like the Board of Governors, the Senates establish policy and then as governing bodies hold the university accountable to implement it.

Charged with examining the committee structure of the Vancouver Senate, the first question we considered is whether it meets the requirements of the *University Act* for standing committees. Section 37 of the *University Act* states that Senate has the power to establish committees and delegate its own powers to those committees (by 2/3 vote). Aspects of the University Act dealing with committees are set out below and are fulfilled, with the possible exception that there does not appear to be assignment of the responsibility to broadly consider relations with other BC post-secondary institutions.

Table 4 – University Act Compliance

University Act	Requirement	Fulfilled	Comment
s. 37(1) e	to establish a standing committee to advise the president when preparing the university budget		The standing committee to advise the president on the budget is a joint committee of the Okanagan and Vancouver Senates. Each campus has, however, set up its own Budget Sub-Committees under the Council of Senates Budget Committee. The Vancouver Senate Budget Sub-Committee is composed of nine members of the Vancouver Senate.
S. 37(1)q)	to establish a standing committee to consider and take action on behalf of the senate on all matters referred by the Board		The Agenda Committee terms of reference include this responsibility.
S. 37(1) r) S. 61	to establish a standing committee of final appeal for students in matters of discipline		The Vancouver Senate has two committees dealing with Academic Standing, Academic Discipline, and other Discipline.
S. 37(1) s)	to establish a standing committee on relations with other BC post-secondary institutions.		This is not a matter that is broadly considered by any committee. Aspects such as affiliation are considered by Admissions, and the Council of Senates.

Even where Senate delegates power to committees, Senate remains responsible for committee work and must hold committees to account for the powers they exercise on behalf of Senate. This means that Senate should at least annually understand the priorities of its committees and how those priorities have been advanced.

The second question we considered is: Does the existing committee structure both on paper and in practice support the work of the Vancouver Senate? Our answer: it partially supports the work of Senate but falls short in two areas.

1. **Overall Responsibility for Senate Governance --** The Agenda Committee currently has responsibility for considering matters relating to the implementation of the University Act and for advising on orientation and the Nominating Committee is responsible for reviewing the composition of Senate and the terms of reference of committees each triennium. Responsibility for governance matters is thus fragmented. No Senate committee has broad, explicit responsibility for Senate governance, including making recommendations to Senate with respect to the *Rules and Procedures*. The UBC Senates are ahead of their counterparts in the country in conducting triennial reviews. However, it is a practice that should be grounded and attached to Senate's greater purpose and role in academic governance within the bicameral governance system of UBC. It is important that Senate place a priority on its own governance by allocating authority and accountability for governance, and for the implementation of recommendations it adopts from this review.

2. **Work Planning and Agenda Setting --** There is insufficient emphasis on planning and priority-setting for the work of Senate and its committees and ongoing oversight of its completion. Significant opportunity exists to reinvigorate Senate through the establishment of more transparent agenda setting processes built around Senate's annual priorities, careful consideration of Senate agendas and agenda structure, and annual stock-taking and follow-up. This calls for reconfiguration of the existing Nominating and Agenda Committees, as recommended below.

We also see potential for improvement within specific committees as follows.

Academic Building Needs Committee: The overall purpose of this committee was to consider the alignment of the university's Vancouver campus development priorities and decisions with academic needs and priorities. It was charged with monitoring the implementation of the campus plan, reviewing all building priorities, and numerous other responsibilities. During the two years of minute review, the committee did not fulfil its functions and responsibilities. The 2020 to 2023 Triennial Review resulted in a recommendation that this committee be reconfigured such that its mandate is reflective of the UBCO Academic Building and Resource Committee with a composition mirroring the UBC Vancouver Budget Subcommittee. This recommendation was approved on May 17, 2023. We agree with this recommendation.

Academic Policy Committee: The overall mandate of this committee is to advise Senate on matters of important academic policy, assess the impact of Senate policy decisions, and consider proposals for organization or reorganization of academic units. This Committee generally fulfils its existing terms of reference, but there is real need for a more coherent policy framework as explained in section 6 (Develop and Implement a Robust Policy Framework), below. The Academic Policy Committee should play a role in that. In addition, we see an opportunity for this committee to consider and prioritize issues arising that require Senate policy discussions and the enactment of policy. There are also opportunities for a more coherent approach between UBCO and UBC Vancouver to university-wide policies. The Senate Office plays a role in supporting the Committee by administering the framework, drafting documents for review, etc.

Admissions Committee: The overall mandate of this committee is to consider and review admissions and transfer policy, review performance relating to the policy, to consider enrolments, to review and approve affiliation agreements relating to student mobility. The committee is also charged with quasi-judicial responsibility to consider difficult or complex admission and transfer applications as well as appeals. The committee is charged with recommending and reporting to Senate. The committee functions well as a committee and fulfils its mandate. As reflected in the last Triennial Review, there is a lack of clarity of its role in considering affiliations. It also has a role as a quasi-judicial body. See section C7 (Rethink and Reform Appeals Structures and Processes) for data, observations and recommendations on its work in appeals.

Awards Committee: The overall mandate of the Awards Committee is to recommend awards, fellowships, scholarships, to Senate, to advise on policy and regulations for awards, to advise enrolment services and Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) on matters of awards policy. Overall, this committee fulfills its terms of reference, however, we recommend that Senate revisit its terms of reference for relevance and currency and to ensure committee is engaging in governance and not administrative work. To maximize use of members' time, we suggest it hold fewer committee meetings of 90 minutes.

Curriculum Committee: The overall mandate for this committee is to consider proposals from faculties for new, changed, and deleted courses, programs of study degrees and other credentials, to keep under review continuing education and life-long learning activities, to monitor Senate's policy on the expansion of degrees and other credentials, to consider proposals for parchment changes, and to review advancement requirements for academic programs. Overall, this committee fulfills its primary functions relating to proposals for new, changed, and deleted courses, programs of study and degrees, and has engaged in work regarding degrees and credentials. It's focus on continuing and lifelong education is unclear.

We recommend that Senate revisit its terms of reference for relevance and currency and that the committee review and recommit to annual workplans that address all aspects of its terms of reference.

Library Committee: The *University Act* contemplates that the Senate will make rules for the management and conduct of the Library. In the two years of minutes reviewed, this committee did not discuss or make recommendations regarding the management or conduct of the Library. The committee's work in the two-year period involved receiving and providing comments on reports from the University Librarian. The reports were highly operational in nature. This committee had little to no role in reviewing or vetting the University Librarian's annual report to the Senate. This committee may be helpful to the University Librarian but does not appear to be effective in supporting the Senate to fulfil its role in overseeing the management and conduct of the Library.

Research and Scholarship: This committee is charged to consider and provide advice to Senate on institutional policies and procedures related to research, centres, institutes and other bodies with research-focused mandates, research aspects of university strategic planning, and the research environment. This committee may fulfill its primary functions in relation to its terms of reference, but, as with the Teaching and Learning Committee, we question whether the committee is as effective as it could and should be in monitoring the environment for research, scholarship and creative activity at UBC, contributing to strategy and policy, and helping advance the university's response to key opportunities and challenges. As with other committees, we suggest that Senate revisit this committee's terms of reference for relevance and currency and that the committee review and recommit to annual workplans that address all aspects of its terms of reference.

Teaching and Learning Committee: This committee's terms of reference include evaluating evidence pertaining to teaching and learning practices and providing recommendations for improvement, promoting discussion of matters of teaching and learning (including research), and making recommendations on matters of teaching and learning. During the two years reviewed, the committee received presentations on and discussed several teaching and learning matters, but we query whether the committee is effectively monitoring and promoting the evolution of the teaching and learning environment of the university. We saw little evidence of a committee involvement in the evaluation or assessment of evidence relating to teaching and learning practices, nor of the committee taking a leadership role in advancing Senate or university-wide discussions on matters of teaching and learning.

Observations and recommendations pertaining to the two appeals committees and to the Admissions Committee's appeals functions are in section C7 (Rethink and Reform Appeals Structures and Processes) below.

The committee minute review indicated that Senate does not require its committees to establish or report against an annual workplan or to annually review their terms of reference, although most report against their delegated responsibilities. Those committees that establish priorities do so via member poll and the priorities are disconnected from university or Senate priorities. Committees appear to inconsistently understand their roles vis à vis Senate and in advancing the work of Senate. Awareness of the work of other Senate committees tends to be lacking. While there is some

collaboration, committees generally work in silos. Committees evince little understanding of the role of administration or its accountability to Senate for the Senate work that administration does.

If the Senate were to complete the merger of Academic Building Needs Committee with Budget (which we support), dispense with a Library Committee, make the Nominating Committee a subcommittee of the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee (as suggested for reasons outlined below), and adopt the recommendations with respect to appeals below, the number of Senate committees would be reduced from 13 to 10. The result would be to streamline Senate structure and processes, effect savings in the time of Senators, and relieve some pressure on the Senate Office. It would also align the number of committees with those of the 14 major Canadian and BC university senates we looked at for comparative purposes, the median number of which is 9 and the average, 10.6. (See Appendix 5: Benchmarking, for details). We suggest too that as it is reconsidering the committees' terms of reference, Senate consider assigning responsibility for emergency decision-making so that it is prepared for inevitable crises.

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend specifically that:

i. The Agenda Committee mandate be amended to assign it responsibility for Senate planning, agenda-setting, and governance. Given the President's responsibilities for leading Senate and for strategic planning for UBC and their role as a link between the two Senates and the Board, we recommend that the new Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee be chaired by the President. Recognizing the President's many external responsibilities and commitments, we also recommend that the President appoint the Vice-Chair of the committee from among the members of Senate.

ii. Consideration be given to strengthening the link between the Nominating Committee and the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee, so the former is aware of the work that the Senate and each of its committees is expected to achieve and so that any experiential or knowledge requirements inform nomination processes. The Nominating Committee could become a subcommittee of the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee, chaired by an elected member of the latter who has previously successfully chaired a Senate committee. Whether or not this suggestion is adopted, the recruitment and nomination or selection of members should take place against identified criteria, including equity goals.

iii. The Library Committee be discontinued. Senate should continue to receive an annual report from the University Librarian and delegate oversight of rules for the management and conduct of the Library to the Academic Policy Committee.

iv. The Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee review the terms of reference for all other committees to ensure they are clear, outcome-focused and consist of governance rather than operational functions, and that committee changes be reflected in an amended Policy V-1.

More specifically:

a. The Academic Policy Committee's mandate be revised to include oversight of the development of an academic policy framework and annually recommending policy priorities for Senate, assigning them to administrators or Senate committees, and monitoring their development. This committee should be charged with working to examine the current method of university-wide academic policy development and working with its UBCO counterpart to develop a more unified approach complementary to the Board policy framework to achieve a coherent institutional policy framework.

b. Senate amend V-1 to require that committees annually: review their terms of reference and Senate direction regarding priorities: draft workplans for review by the Planning and Governance Committee and coordination with other committees, and; report annually to Senate against their workplans.

6. Develop and Implement a Robust Policy Framework

There are four policies that establish the regulatory or policy framework for UBC: These are GA2 (Board), V-1 (Vancouver Senate), O-1 (Okanagan Senate), and C-1 (Council of Senates). Policies are in the process of being codified as follows:

Table 5 – Policy Code Categories

Board Code	Board/Senates Joint Code	Vancouver Code	Okanagan Code	Joint Senates Code
"GA"	"GA"	"V"	"O"	"J"

Policy V-1 - *Format, Development & Administration of Senate Policies* became effective January 1, 2010, and applies only to Vancouver Senate (although a similar policy O-1 has been passed by the Okanagan Senate). This policy commenced a renewal of efforts to build a more coherent policy framework for the Vancouver Senate. It is a combination of a policy and a procedure (directing policy format and font, etc.). There is no guidance on or commitment to consultation. The Vancouver Agenda Committee is responsible for this policy instrument, i.e., for reviewing the policy. However, no committee is assigned responsibility for the overall Vancouver Senate policy framework. Unlike within GA2, there is no administrative owner or person responsible for overseeing the policy-development process. The Senate Office is assigned responsibility for maintaining the policy template, publishing policies, and devising and indexing and tagging system. Non-compliance with policy is to be brought to the committee assigned with responsibility for the policy. V-1 contemplates under s. 4) that: "[p]olicies may only be proposed to *Senate* by either a standing or an ad-hoc committee of *Senate* except for those proposed

by individual Senators, the President, or the Academic Vice-President as provided for in the *Rules and Procedures of Senate*. In the case of a policy proposed by an individual senator, the President, or the Academic Vice-President, *Senate* reserves the right to refer the proposal to a committee for review". On the Senate policy landing page, it states, "[t]he policies of Senate are found in three places here among these abstracts, in the Academic Calendar, and in the record of the minutes of Senate meetings. A project has been undertaken to codify policies according to a consistent template".

UBC regulates system-wide academic policies via a report that sets out the principles and procedures for system-wide academic policies[3]. This report indicates that "common policies are preferred" but acknowledges there may be adaptations for each campus. Council of Senates is the forum for resolution of policy differences, but the Council's role has been minimized. The report provides procedure relating to the development or amendment of academic policies providing for consultation across Senates, mechanisms for joint development, and for resolving differences in approach. The Senate Office is charged with maintaining a list of all policies including tracking those that are common and different. This list is not publicly accessible and was not made available to us.

Acknowledging that Vancouver Senate policy also exists in minutes and in the Academic Calendar, we reviewed the fifty-one "policies" listed on the Vancouver Senate policy page[4]. Note that we put the word "policies" into quotation marks because many of the documents are not policies *per se* but are rather excerpts from Senate minutes, reports, or guidelines. Just under half of the "policies" are in the form of a policy template, with twenty-five being web-page excerpts (in various formats), and two being reports.

We were able to find original approval dates for most policies. Approval dates range from March 1965 to April 2023. Five of the fifty policies showed last review dates and six are new enough that they are not yet due for review. Committees are generally responsible for reviewing policies within their purview. We are unable to determine review dates for most of the policies and understand that there are few mechanisms for triggering review. We heard that many policies are outdated. We note that those policies that have review time periods provide the committees with discretion on when to review them. The joint policies all appear to be codified, bearing original approval dates, review dates and committee assignments. We looked at policy assignments to committees. Of the fifty-one reviewed, twenty policy instruments are not assigned. For the remaining thirty that are assigned, Academic Policy Committee is responsible for fifteen with the remaining fifteen spread across other committees.

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[3] https://senate.ubc.ca/vancouver/policies/system-wide-development/
[4] https://senate.ubc.ca/vancouver/policies/

What we heard

The survey of current and continuing Senators told us that Senators include review of decisions and policies as one of the top ten areas in which they see the greatest potential for improvement (24% of respondents identified this area placing it at number 9 of 19 potential areas). When asked about the effectiveness of Senate in this area, the survey results were as follows:

Table 6 - Senate Effectiveness in Policy
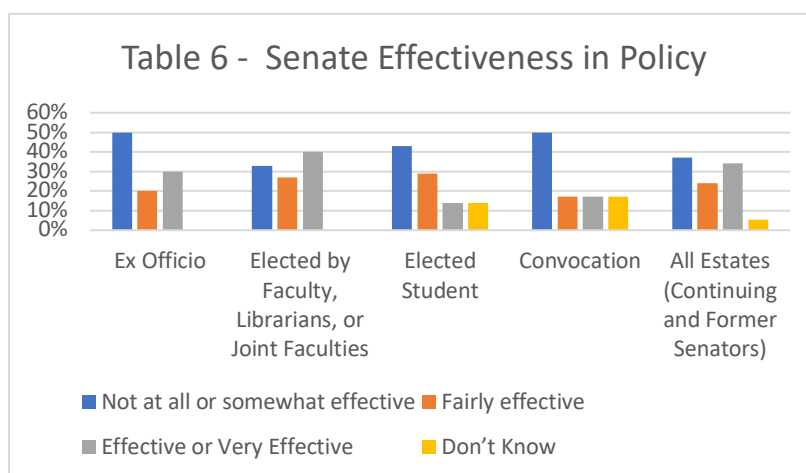
We heard that there has been significant progress in bringing structure to policy management over the years, but that Senate does not have an overview of policy activity, many policies are overdue for review, committees aren't provided with a list of the policies assigned to them or their review dates, and a process for prioritizing policy development or review is lacking. Students interviewed said that obtaining policy change requires sustained effort and advocacy. The larger concern expressed by interviewees is that the Senate does not monitor the implementation of policies. A significant number of those interviewed and surveyed indicated that Senate does not have broader academic governance policy discussions.

Observations

As a governing body, Senate's primary role is establishing the policies that govern the academic affairs of the university. It is part of Senate's role to ensure that once a decision is made, direction is given, or a policy approved, the policy is accessible and those responsible for implementing the decision, direction, or policy demonstrate that they are implementing it in accordance with Senate's wishes and are providing feedback to Senate on how the decision, direction, or policy is working as against its original purposes. In these ways, Senate takes accountability for its work. As we noted in our review of Dalhousie's Governance in 2022:

Policy instruments (policies, procedures, guidelines) sit within the hierarchy of governance documents below the Acts, by-laws and committee terms of reference and

serve to distribute responsibility deeper into the organization. All organizations require a policy framework with a policy classification scheme and clear lines of approval. Such a framework tells the community whose job it is to identify policy gaps, to prioritize policy development, and to approve which policies or amendments thereto. Policy instruments are also a tool of communication (telling those within the university community what the organization's position is on a matter), and guidance (clarifying roles and responsibilities). Those with responsibilities for policies are accountable for the exercise of the authority and for the fulfilment of the responsibilities delegated to them … While the Board and Senate should establish policy direction and oversee policies within their areas of jurisdiction, neither should be involved in policy drafting or implementation and resources should be allocated to support the university in further developing a coherent policy framework"[5].

While UBC has a framework for Board policies, there is no institutional policy framework, and most importantly for this review, the Vancouver Senate lacks a robust policy framework. We share the expressed concern that, after Senate passes a policy, there are few mechanisms for assessing or assuring itself of the appropriate implementation of the policy.

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

i.   Senate develops a more comprehensive policy framework. This framework should define the types and categories of policy instruments, set out responsibility for development, approval, maintenance and review of policies, guide policy development and review, standardize policy formats, and establish an official policy library and repository. This framework should provide for accountability for policy implementation. The framework should be overseen by the Academic Policy Committee.

ii. Since Senate is a governing or oversight body, responsibility for drafting policies for Senate review should lie with administration (i.e., the Senate policy officer working with the applicable administrative offices). As policy is the key tool for overseeing academic governance, ideally, there would be a dedicated and experienced policy officer within the Senate Office whose role is to support this committee, the policy framework, and the policy work of Senate.

iii. To increase accountability, not only should each policy be assigned to a committee and be reviewed every three to five years, but policy instruments should identify the administrative leader responsible for implementation and monitoring and eventual renewal of the policy. For **priority and select policies** identified by Senate (keeping in

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[5] https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university_secretariat/Board-of-Governors/Report%20-%20Independent%20External%20Review%20of%20Dalhousie.pdf at pp. 28-29).

mind administrative workload) responsible leaders should be required to report to the relevant Senate committee on the success of the implementation of the policy, challenges, and recommended amendments.

7. **Rethink and Reform Appeals Structures and Processes**

The three Senate committees that serve quasi-judicial functions are: 1) Committee for Appeals on Academic Standing; 2) Committee for Student Appeals on Discipline, and; 3) Admissions Committee.

The Appeals on **Academic Standing** Committee is charged with hearing and disposing of appeals from decisions of Faculties on academic standing. The committee is required to report to the Senate annually on its work, and "any other matters of general significance to the university which have arisen out of the Committee's work". "Quorum" (meaning a minimum panel size for hearings) is five. Under the "Procedures Prior to the Hearing" found in the *UBC Academic Calendar*, the Registrar has the authority to dismiss appeal applications not filed within the required ten-day period from the faculty's final decision. The Registrar's decision to dismiss for lack of timeliness (or not to extend a deadline) is appealable to the committee.

The Student Appeals of **Discipline** Committee is charged with hearing and determining final appeals by students in matters of discipline. "Quorum" (meaning a minimum panel size for hearings) is five. Under the "Rules governing all appeals involving allegations of misconduct occurring on or after August 1, 2019", found in the *UBC Academic Calendar*, the Registrar has discretion to dismiss discipline appeals not filed within the required forty-five-day period from receipt of the President's decision or to provide an extension of the time for filing.

In its role as a quasi-judicial body, the **Admissions** Committee hears written appeals of decisions on admission, re-admission, and transfer. "Quorum" (meaning a minimum panel size for hearings) for student appeals is three. This committee found that its timeliness improved when its required panel size dropped from five to three (see Nominating Committee Report to Senate re. Appeal Structures and Procedures dated May 17, 2023, p. 478).

Appeals Metrics

We heard that appeals are a significant source of work for the Senate office. The appeals committees published their annual reports separately between 2009 and 2014. For transparency, this practice should be readopted. To assess workload, additional metrics should be tracked, most importantly, time to resolution. While admittedly of limited value in assessing the complexity of matters and workload, we were able to find appeal numbers for the past three years. The number of appeals was as follows:

Table 7 - Admissions Appeals Heard
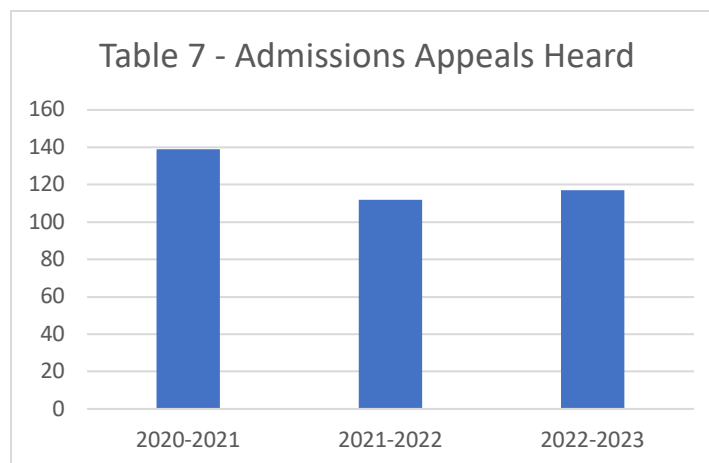
The Admissions Committee heard 117 admissions appeals in 2022/23. Only five appeals were allowed. When asked about the low success rate of appeals, the Committee Chair said that most appeals are unfounded because there is no error in process and applicants have simply not met the competitive cut off (Senate Minutes: May 17, 2023).

Table 8 - Academic Standing and Discipline Committees Appeals Heard
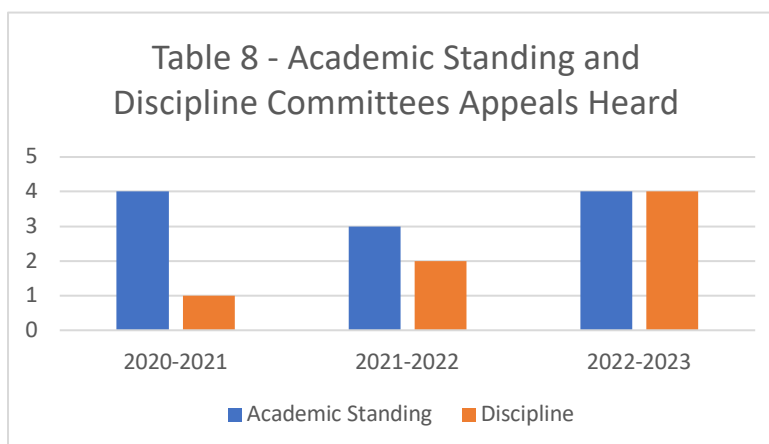
In respect of academic standing matters, Senator Forwell reported to Senate in May 2023 that the "number of appeals heard per year has decreased substantially, likely as a result of Faculties developing more suitable, respectful, and policy-driven types of procedures that are more likely to result in a resolution at the Faculty level". (Senate Minutes, May 5, 2023, p. 29). This is consistent with the available data as if we look back to the academic standing reports available (2009 to 2014), the academic standing numbers were much higher (10 in 2013-14, 9 in 2012-13, 8 in 2011-12, 14 in 2010-11, and 8 in 2009-10).

What we heard

In our survey, we asked about Senate effectiveness in appeals and received the following responses.

Table 9 – Senate Effectiveness in Appeals

Respondents	Not at all or Somewhat Effective	Fairly Effective	Effective or Very Effective	Don't Know
Continuing and Former Senators	29%	16%	39%	16%
Committee Members not serving on Senate (none served on appeals committees)	9%	9%	63%	18%

We also asked continuing and former Senators about the effectiveness of those committees on which they had served. The table below sets out the results:

Table 10 – Appeals Committees Effectiveness

Committee Name	Not at all or Somewhat Effective	Fairly Effective	Effective or Very Effective	Don't Know
Admissions	8%	0%	42%	50%
Appeals on Academic Standing	20%	0%	40%	40%
Student Appeals on Discipline	18%	9%	27%	45%

With respect to discipline appeals, we heard that they are increasing in complexity and sensitivity, and we observe that this is consistent with the experience of other universities in the wake of evolving and increasingly complex requirements for addressing matters of harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence on campuses. We also heard that because of the knowledge and expertise required on these files, the Senate Office has assumed increasing responsibility to support the committee work with advice and documents. We heard that students struggle as appellants in appeal processes, and this results in inadequate or incomplete documentation being filed thereby making the process harder to manage and longer. We heard that some feel that students need counsel to navigate some appeal processes and that this is seen as negative because the university should ensure that the processes are accessible to students. We heard that very few students retain counsel. We heard that the material in the UBC calendar relating to appeals is not presented in a manner accessible to students.

In interviews and in the commentary on the surveys, we received feedback that appeals are not timely. When we reviewed the scheduling of appeal hearings panels, we learned that a key challenge is finding a time for panels meetings/hearings. Students and

Convocation Senators are difficult to reach and to schedule. Students themselves indicated that committee meetings during the workday are challenging for them.

Many identify training as a primary issue. We were told by many that appeals committee members struggle with their roles. One interviewee observed that while there is benefit to diverse perspectives on appeals, this "cannot come at the cost of understanding the nature of the work". As with all governance training, the need for training is continuous as new members join and leave governing bodies. Some committee members feel unprepared and some who have participated question whether their colleagues understand what they are doing. Success may depend on having a Chair with specialized knowledge such as a legal background. We heard from some that appeals work is such a technical and challenging area that it requires specialized knowledge and expertise, and that the university should be looking to third parties to adjudicate these matters. The Student Senate Caucus ("SSC") is looking to the university to provide specific training in procedural fairness/standards of review, procedures, conflicts of interest, questioning, confidentiality, and approach to deliberation, as well as bias training, and sexual assault subject matter awareness training (*Senate 2026)*. The SSC has identified Appeals of Discipline and Academic Standing as an area for development in both of its recent reports on Senate (*Senate 2026* and *Senate 2023*). In the *Senate* 2026 report, the focus is on: 1) training; 2) development of guidelines, and 3) establishing a working group to support and connect the three appeals committees.

Observations

No legal opinion is provided as part of this review. However, it is important that we take notice of the fact that it is well-settled that universities owe procedural fairness to their students when making decisions affecting them and further, that the nature of that procedural fairness differs depending on the context:

> *University committees or appeal tribunals must act fairly when they review student grades. If they do not observe procedural fairness or the rules of natural justice, judicial review lies. These propositions are not disputed … The content of procedural fairness depends on the context. The context includes the nature of the decision, the relationship between the decision-maker and the person asserting a claim to procedural fairness, the nature of the issue before the decision-maker and the effect of the decision on the person's rights … In many academic appeals, procedural fairness will not demand an oral hearing[6].*

The legal context underlies the design of UBC's appeal processes. We see value in the university carefully re-assessing each of its appeal and quasi-judicial processes and coming to greater clarity on the nature of the procedural fairness required. While all decision-makers should strive for consistency, not all decisions require the same level of procedural fairness. Legal counsel must be involved in these assessments.

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[6] *Khan v. Ottawa (University of), 1997 CanLii 941 (ON CA)*

Training and Education: The work of the university's quasi-judicial bodies requires a special set of skills and knowledge. We have some sympathy with the assertions of those who suggest it should be performed by those with legal expertise. Many of the decisions made have the potential to have a major effect on a student's future and thus it is of paramount importance that the hearings panels are fully competent. Furthermore, universities are expected to do this work in compliance with the law and to understand and apply legal concepts. Appeals grounds demand an understanding of procedural fairness, but also of privacy and human rights law concepts – many of which are evolving. Appeal panel members must understand all applicable university policies. Mistakes by uninformed participants (such as asking the wrong question during a hearing) are not only unfair to participants but can give rise to issues of procedural fairness and legal liability.

In our view it is not possible to ensure that a revolving door of appeal panel participants maintains the requisite level of expertise. It is also a very difficult task to train individuals in all the required areas in short training sessions. We suggest that out of fairness to appellants, a focus on skills and expertise for panel members takes priority over having multi-stakeholder panels. We see that a diverse stakeholder perspective is better exercised within a newly mandated single Appeals Committee which would provide oversight of the appeals committees, focusing on tools for students to clarify the process, tracking appeal trends and metrics, and making recommendations for policy or process changes.

Hearings Panels: Although the two appeals committees are called committees, they really operate as hearings panels. This confusion likely arises from the wording of s. 37(1) v. of the *University Act* which empowers Senate to "establish a **standing committee** of final appeal for students in matters of academic discipline". It results in the use of confusing language for appeals panels such as "quorum". Other universities use the words "hearing panel" to distinguish the nature of the appeal bodies from standing committees. The hearings panels convened by the Appeals Committees are too large. Issues related to training and timeliness will be simplified with smaller hearing panels. Quasi-judicial means "essentially judicial in character" (*Merriam Webster*) or like a judge. We note that in most quasi-judicial settings across Canada, a single qualified person is deemed sufficient to make what are sometimes very difficult and complex decisions affecting legal rights. We agree with the recommendation to reduce panel sizes to three and suggest that less complex matters could be adjudicated by a single person.

Data Analysis: Improved data gathering will assist the Senate in engaging in an analysis of appeal metrics and trends. This is not simply for workload purposes or for analysis of committee effectiveness, but also for issues relating to equity and inclusion and student experience. The Appeals Committee should engage in trends analyses annually relating to appeals and report the same to Senate.

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

i. **Appeals Oversight:** In place of the Academic Standing and Discipline Committees, Senate creates a single Appeals Committee charged with overseeing the Academic

Standing and Discipline appeals processes and tracking, analyzing appeals data, and making policy-based recommendations to Senate.

ii. **Roster of Adjudicators:** The Appeals Committee establishes a role description and qualifications for committee adjudicators and appoints a standing sub-committee of qualified adjudicator members from within the university to form three-person or single-person panels in the discretion of the Appeals Committee chair in consultation with the Senate Office.

iii. **Training and Education:** All adjudicator members should:
   - demonstrate an understanding of applicable university policies relating to academic standing, academic misconduct and non-academic misconduct, appeals processes, privacy law principles, confidentiality, and procedural fairness;
   - have recent training in unconscious bias;
   - demonstrate skills in empathy, objectivity, and written and oral communication.

iv. The roster of adjudicators should include several qualified members who are: 1) willing to hear complaints involving matters of harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence, and 2) who have recent training in trauma-informed practices and approaches.

v. **Support for the Committee and Adjudicators:** The appeals function is currently supported by a Senate Governance Officer who has other responsibilities. The Senate Appeals Committee and the adjudicators require a dedicated and knowledgeable resource to support all aspects of the appeal work, as well as access to administrative resources to assist with scheduling and logistics.

vi. **Admissions Appeals**:   Senate should revisit the threshold of referrals to the Admissions Committee. Given the low rate of appeal success, over 95% of appeals are without merit. The committee should oversee a triage process either by a member of the Senate Office, but preferably an admissions administrator not involved in the initial decision(s). Subject to their accountability and reporting obligation to the committee, this individual would have authority to dismiss appeals where there is no error in process and advance only complex or novel (not covered by existing policy/regulations) admissions or transfer matters to the committee appeal level. Additionally, consideration should be given to reducing the appeal panel to one person, with the Admissions Committee Chair having the discretion to convene a panel of three for novel or complex matters.

vii. **Support for Students:** We agree that students require appeal process information available to them in a simple and straightforward form and encourage the development of tools under the supervision of the Appeals Committee. While the university should ensure that its processes are transparent, procedurally fair, and accessible to students, the standing and discipline processes are inherently processes

in which the university and the student are adverse in interest. We see a role for the AMS in providing students with support and advocacy tools. Given what is sometimes at stake for students in academic standing and conduct appeals, it will also sometimes be wise for students to engage counsel and we do not see the fact that they do this as a negative.

8. **Clarify Senate's Roles and Build its Capacity for Advancing the Indigenous Strategic Plan and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at UBC.**

The terms of reference for this review included advising on "means of overcoming barriers to the participation in Senate, including issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion". Some may believe that, as two white women, we lack experience and expertise needed to address this issue – we concur. However, where we can help is with governance structures and practices that enable progress toward and measure change.

Recognizing UBC's commitment to Indigenous engagement, we also sought information about Senate's role and activities in that realm. Like UBC's Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP) and the 2023 Strategic Equity and Anti-Racism Roadmap for Change, we regard the work of advancing the ISP and EDI as distinct but complementary and intersecting realms. Both are priorities for UBC. Indigenous Engagement was one of five areas identified in UBC's 2018 Strategic Plan as having transformational potential. The associated strategy was to "support the objectives and actions of the renewed Indigenous Strategic Plan" (ISP). The ISP was endorsed in principle by the Senate in April 2021. In May 2023, the Senate approved a recommendation that each standing committee consider how best to engage with the Indigenous Strategic Plan within the committee's area of responsibility, propose any appropriate revisions to its terms of reference, and report to the Nominating Committee in time for the latter to report to Senate by January 2024 on progress made in relation to the ISP.

The Director of the First Nations House of Learning is an *ex officio* voting member of the Curriculum Committee and the Teaching and Learning Committee but not of Senate itself.

UBC's 2018 Strategic Plan also includes numerous goals and strategies related to inclusive excellence. Early that year, the Senate established an *Ad-hoc Committee on Academic Diversity and Inclusivity* (SACADI), in response to a proposal from the Student Senate Caucus. Its terms of reference included:

- to examine and report back to the Senate on the academic environment and its impact on academic diversity and inclusivity; and

- to develop a framework for incorporating considerations of diversity and inclusivity into academic decision making.

The *ad hoc* committee met 24 times over approximately 2 years and recommended to the Senate in July 2020 that it endorse the frameworks within the university's Inclusion Action

Plan, as they apply to the operations of the Senate; that the Nominating Committee recommend to Senate the creation of a structure or committee to address academic diversity and inclusion, and continue the work of SACADI; and that the Senate work with the Board of Governors to consider establishing a statement on UBC's values of equity, diversity, and inclusion. These recommendations were approved by Senate but, as reported to the Senate in May 2021 and indicated in the May 2023 Triennial Review Report, the Nominating Committee did not reach consensus on the desirability of a new committee and therefore, has not yet made such a recommendation.

What we heard

Asked in our survey about Senate's effectiveness in promoting Indigenous engagement and priorities, continuing and former Senators responded as follows:

Table 11 – Effectiveness in Indigenous Engagement
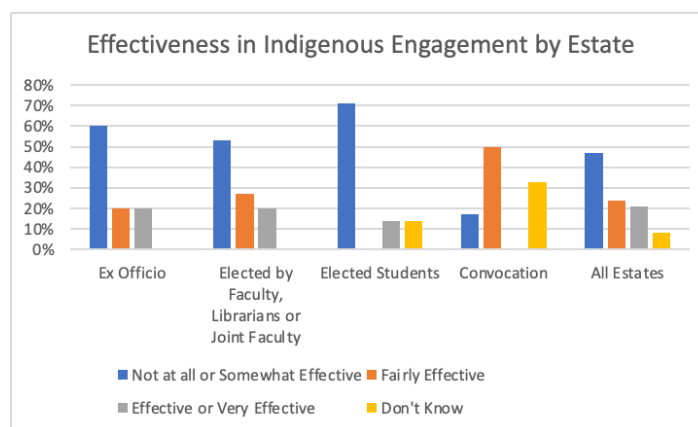
Amongst the comments we received was that Senate is not a place where Indigenous engagement takes place. The minute review shows that some committees have made genuine efforts to engage with the Indigenous Strategic Plan tools, but the majority are struggling to understand how to support its advancement, in part because the associated tools were not developed to assist governing bodies but are focused on academic or administrative units. The Nominating Committee report to Senate in December 2023 confirms that committees have not been able to work through this issue and that more time is required. Asked in the survey about the Senate's effectiveness in promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in the Senate and the university, continuing and former Senators responded as follows:

Table 12 - Effectiveness in EDI

Effectiveness in EDI by Estate
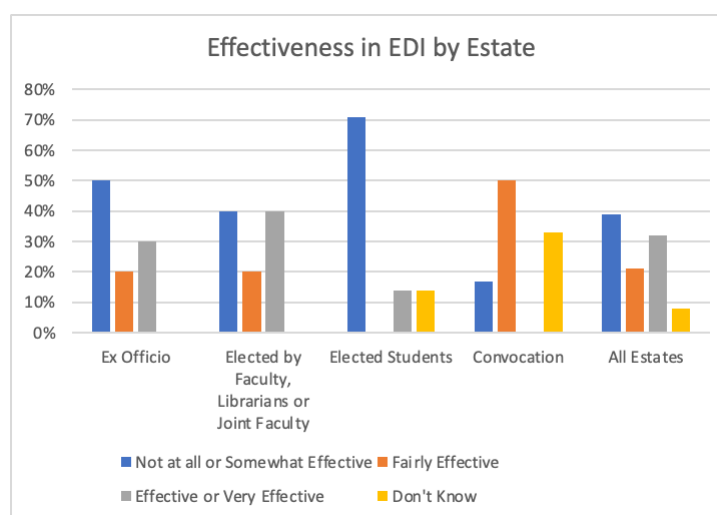
Among the comments received from interviewees and survey respondents were that:

- Whereas the student membership of Senate is diverse, other components are not yet.
- There has been a lack of sensitive, thoughtful discussion of matters related to EDI in Senate.
- The climate has improved but there is still a real need to raise awareness of Indigeneity and equity and anti-racism in Senate.
- Senate has shown little interest in advancing EDI. There should be a Senate committee devoted to this. (The student caucus has long advocated this but, as noted above, others disagree).
- The Senate does not track the demographic composition of its membership.

Observations

We agree with the prevailing view of survey respondents that Senate has not been particularly effective in advancing Indigenous engagement and EDI. A significant impediment to progress is lack of clarity about the roles of Senate and its committees. Opinions differ. Some Senators would like to see Senate play transformative roles whereas others doubt it should play any roles in these realms. This begs the fundamental question: Is it part of the Vancouver Senate's role to foster Indigenous engagement and equity, diversity, and inclusion in the academic activities of the Vancouver campus? In our view, the answer is yes. As a governing body that has endorsed in principle the university's current Strategic Plan and the Indigenous Strategic Plan, it is fitting for the Senate to play a role in furthering these goals. How should it do so? Not by dictating curriculum content or usurping matters of academic judgment, but by seeing that its own policies, processes, and practices foster those ends, by encouraging, recommending, and promulgating related initiatives, and by building its own diversity and capacity.

Does that require a committee dedicated to EDI? In our view, no. The Student Senate Caucus and many student Senators advocate the creation of such a committee, but we were also cautioned that structures can be counterproductive.   A review of the minutes of the Senate *Ad Hoc* Committee on Academic Diversity and Inclusion suggests that it struggled to operationalize its mandate and to develop and carry out a workplan. Perhaps a standing committee would be more effective; perhaps not. In our view, two things are necessary for the Senate to play an effective role in advancing Indigenous engagement and EDI:

- A clear conception of the roles of the Senate and its committees.
- Greater capacity at multiple levels (including Senate planning; member awareness, knowledge and experience; committee chair capability).

As noted above, Senate committees are currently considering how best to engage with the Indigenous Strategic Plan within their areas of responsibility and will propose revisions to their terms of reference, as appropriate. A similar process was initiated in 2019/20 by the *Ad Hoc* Senate Committee on Academic Diversity and Inclusion in relation to EDI but did not appear to come to fruition.

With respect to the culture of Senate, we heard that Senate culture is improving but that racist, sexist, or other discriminatory things are still sometimes said at Senate and not addressed – or addressed only through social media and/or shaming. One way to begin to change the culture of Senate is to change Senate's membership – to attract and welcome members from diverse backgrounds to its ranks and to encourage and appreciate their active participation. The importance of diverse membership has been recognized by Senate. In 2020, the Senate approved a recommendation arising from the triennial review completed that year "That the Registrar and the Council Elections Committee be requested to take whatever reasonable steps they feel appropriate to encourage as many candidates as possible - especially those from diverse backgrounds". In the surveys of Senate members conducted for this review, they were invited to self-identify in relation to UBC's equity categories. Of the 67 survey respondents, 33 did so. Broken down by survey, 33% of continuing and former Senators, 64% of committee members not also on Senate, and 76% of new Senators chose to provide demographic information.

The ISP recommends "develop[ment] and deliver[y of] Indigenous history and issues training for all faculty and staff to be successfully completed within the first year of employment at UBC". The StEAR Roadmap for Change called for introduction of anti-oppressive/anti-racism, human rights and equity content in new employee orientation. In the fall of 2020, the President reported to Senate that anti-racism training had been provided for the university's senior executive, Board, and academic and administrative leadership.

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

i. The terms of reference for the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee include planning and overseeing the activities of Senate and its committees to advance the Indigenous Strategic Plan and foster EDI.

ii. The Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee include the Director of the First Nations House of Learning and the AVP Equity and Inclusion in the development of the recommended multi-year governance plan.

iii. Once the updating of terms of reference to reflect committees' roles in the implementation of the ISP is complete, the Senate committee responsible for governance ask each standing committee to consider how it will help advance EDI within its area of responsibility and report back with a recommendation for any appropriate revisions to its terms of reference.

iv. The Senate Office work with the Equity and Inclusion Office to track the demographic evolution of its membership by year, drawing on self-identification information from UBC's Employment Equity and Inclusion Survey and other sources, and publish the results annually.

v. The Senate's commitment to and roles in fostering Indigenous engagement and EDI and the implications for Senate members be communicated in Senate orientation.

vi. Training for Senate and committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs include leading and chairing bodies and committees that are diverse, inclusive, and effective.

vii. Education sessions on Indigenous matters and equity and anti-racism be offered for Senators early in this triennium.

9. **Improving Communication and Engagement with Senate**

    The terms of reference for this review include advising on "means of communicating with members of the various estates that form the membership of Senate (i.e., faculty, students, members of the Convocation, administrators and others), both to ensure awareness of Senate's work and decision and to encourage future direct participation on Senate".

    What we heard

    When current and continuing Senators were asked how effective the Senate is in communicating with university estates and the university community, the survey results were as follows:

Table 13 - Senate Effectiveness - Communication
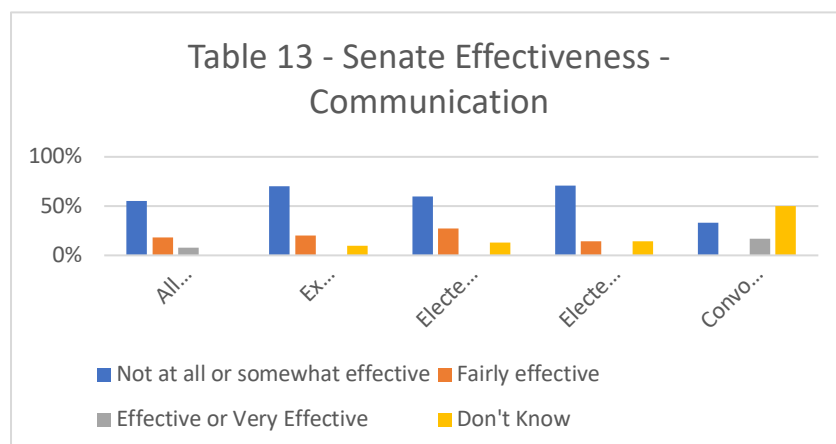
Senate's perceived effectiveness in this realm was perceived to be lower than in any of the five other areas of Senate responsibility cited in our terms of reference (Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan; Policy; Indigenous Engagement; Equity, diversity, and inclusion; Appeals) -- the percentage of respondents who characterized communication as 'Not at all effective' being highest at 29%. Comments such as the following were typical:

- Most of the university community does not know what the Senate is or what it does.
- The Senate fails to communicate well with other bodies. It doesn't really communicate much at all.
- I don't think the university cares or knows about the Senate's activities.
- Communication with the broader community is at a minimum.

Concern was also expressed by interviewees that there is little awareness of Senate and its work among faculty members, students, alumni, or the university community generally. A few faculty Senators said that they provide updates to their faculty councils on what happens at Senate on an *ad hoc* basis, but the level of awareness amongst faculty of Senate and how the university is governed was described as generally low.

Some survey respondents and interviewees advocated a more systematic, central approach to communication of Senate matters to the university community, but there were few specific suggestions, and it was acknowledged that effective communication within universities is difficult.

Observations

We concur that there is insufficient understanding of Senate's work. At present, communication about the Senate takes place primarily through the Senate Office's website, which provides access to agendas, minutes, and other materials, and through broadcast emails from that office to faculty, staff and/or students, distribution lists for members of each Faculty, online distribution of Senate packages, and other means. The Vancouver Senate's practices in this area are consistent with the practices of other academic governing bodies.

We observe that the website is not as current as it could be and see this as one of the consequences of the resourcing issue facing the Senate Office. We also note that Senate, other than identifying it as an issue in the triennial reviews, doesn't focus on communication, what it wants to communicate, to whom, and why. No one is assigned to support Senate with its communication activities. As such, its communication is somewhat random and *ad* hoc. The student newspaper is also a source of information about what's happening at Senate and some Senators also communicate about Senate matters on social media.

The perceived need for more systematic, coordinated communication appears to arise principally from concern about the low level of interest in serving on Senate amongst faculty in particular, and from the belief that low interest stems from a lack of awareness of Senate and can be addressed by better communication. We agree that communication is one component of the problem. Other reasons cited for low level of faculty interest in running for election were that: faculty members are extremely busy, it's a big time commitment, and many Senators don't receive recognition from their heads or deans for service on Senate, including chairing committees. That being the case, we have also included comments on engagement in this section.

We agree that lack of interest and willingness to serve on the Vancouver Senate is a major concern. To compose Senate's membership for the 2023-26 triennium, two calls for nominations were needed for Convocation Senators, three calls for joint faculty representatives, and four calls for faculty-specific positions. Two joint faculty representatives, one faculty-specific representative and two Convocation Senators were elected; the rest of the twenty-four elected faculty and twelve Convocation positions were acclaimed.

The active participation of faculty members is essential for the fulfillment of university Senates' roles. Elected faculty are the largest constituent group and, ideally, good university citizens, well-informed about the university's academic and research activities, open-minded and articulate, in touch with and respected by their colleagues, committed to the Senate's work, prepared to invest scarce time into it, and representative of the diversity of the university community. Insofar as few faculty members are willing to serve on the Vancouver Senate, we share the expressed concern. The recommendations in this report are intended to make Senate more effective – thereby making more effective use of Senators' time.

Sub-Recommendations: For now, we recommend that:

i. A review of the Vancouver Senate website be conducted by a communications professional at UBC with a view to making it not just a repository of information but a more effective communications tool. Small things like starting to post annual committee reports under committee pages, will help.

ii. Orientation for new faculty members and for new deans include information about university governance in Canada, UBC's governance including the important role of the Senates, and their roles in it.

iii. Faculty members' participation on Senate be recognized as the important professional service it is.

iv. Updates on Senate business be regular items on faculty council agendas.

10. **Reposition, Resource, and Improve Work Practices of the Office of Senate and Curriculum Services**

The Office of Senate and Curriculum Services at UBC sits within the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Services, and Registrar (who reports to the Provost UBCO and to the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Faculty Planning, a direct report of the Provost and Vice-President Academic). The senior position within the office is the Associate Registrar and Director, Senate and Curriculum Services who also serves as Clerk of Senate. The organization chart for the office as at January 2024 is below (number of individuals occupying the role is included in brackets).

Table 14 – Senate and Curriculum Services Organization Chart
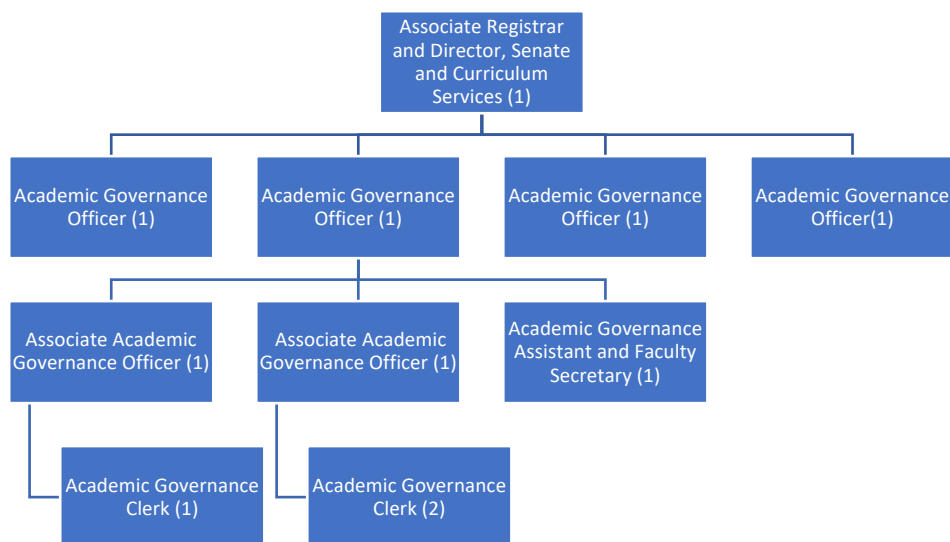
What we heard

Those surveyed and interviewed describe the staff of the Senate Office in positive terms, using words such as "very skilled", "very knowledgeable" with "expertise in governance". There is a widely held view that the office is short-staffed and under-resourced. This is perceived to contribute to delayed scheduling of committee meetings, lack of timeliness in appeals, late Senate meeting packages shared with insufficient time to review, and

poor or insufficient communication. The surveys and interviews show that Senators and Senate committee members are looking for more support, in the form of education and training, from the Senate Office.

Observations

The Senate Office is staffed with bright, committed, dedicated individuals with a good understanding of and commitment to effective governance. This review generated significant additional work for them. We appreciate their time and responsiveness to our many questions and requests. In our view, there is an opportunity for the office to make a more significant contribution to the effectiveness of the Vancouver Senate in bicameral governance. The office struggles to do this for several reasons.

Organization Structure: The Senate Office is a governance office, but it is located deep in the Provost's portfolio. In our view it is quite simply in the wrong place. Governance offices seek to be, and to be seen as, neutral – advancing effective governance. Having the governance support for both Senates several levels down in the organization structure of the university Vice-President with primary responsibility for execution and implementation of much of the work to be overseen by Senate, is functionally illogical and inconsistent with the office's purpose. The structure presents a barrier to the flow of communication between the Clerk of Senate and the Board Secretary as there is no organizational parity. It is further odd that the President, who is the Chair of Senate, has no direct ability to influence the work or resources of the office supporting the Senate, and anomalous that the office reports to the position of AVP and Registrar, the focus of which is on matters other than governance. While we recognize that the origins of this arrangement lie within the *University Act*, and that the registrar is (in fact or in name) the secretary of senate at many BC universities, we observe that the University of Victoria complies with the *Act* while implementing governance supports that are better integrated and more aligned with fostering an effective bicameral governance system.

Of the 15 other universities whose governance support structures we looked at for comparative purposes, only another BC university (Simon Fraser University) has separate administrative offices supporting the Board and Senate (See Appendix 5 - Benchmarking). Other BC universities, such as UNBC also maintain separate offices, but we did not include those in our group of comparator universities.

Resources: We found numerous requests for additional Senate office resources in our review of the documents. We agree that the Senate governance function is under resourced. Although the office organization chart shows ten positions and eleven staff are listed in the directory, we heard that, for prolonged periods over many years, at least one member of the office has been on secondment or leave. The sustained absence of one or more staff members over several years makes it difficult to assess the sufficiency of resources as the office has never managed to achieve steady state. Having said that, we observe that there is insufficient support for the Senate Clerk, and for the office. Most of the administrative staff in the office support curriculum and calendar services, which account at present for at least four members' time and almost constitute an office within

the office. We observe that other Academic Governance Officers' time and expertise is taken up with administrative matters better done by someone with less specialized skills and knowledge. The Director does not have dedicated administrative support. The office not only supports Senate but also takes minutes for the Faculty Councils.

We question whether it makes sense to give all those reporting to the Clerk of Senate the same job title – Academic Governance Officer. We understand that there is flexibility in doing so as the resources are more interchangeable. However, we note that there are areas of office responsibility that require specialized knowledge and expertise. For example, given the role that the Senate Office plays in supporting appeals, and given the complex nature of some appeals, having a person with legal training in that role makes sense. It also makes sense to have a person dedicated with responsibility for the Senate policy framework, and perhaps one with responsibility for training.

Work Focus: The Senates are the academic governing bodies for UBC. Supporting the Senates to be effective governance bodies requires governance focus. Processing curriculum changes and updating the calendar are, while a product of governance, operational in nature and a distraction from governance work. Of the 14 other universities we examined, only one unified university[7] secretariat seems to have responsibility for curriculum services and the calendar (See Appendix 5 - Benchmarking). Within the Senate offices at the two universities with separate Board and Senate offices, the Senate office has responsibility for curriculum services and the calendar.

Organization of Work: With leaves that are not backfilled and insufficient administrative support, the office appears to be operating in reactive mode, getting done what needs to get done in the moment, without the time to step back, plan, and work in a more methodical way. This contributes to stress and overwork. We think, however, that there are also opportunities to work in a more methodical and organized fashion. The office suffers from a lack of established procedures and processes. Most universities have fixed annual schedules for Senate and their standing committees. When we attempted to analyze attendance, we noted that Senate attendance records are inconsistently kept and contain errors (e.g., people missing or recorded as both present and absent). There is no consistent use of minute templates or resolution formats. There are opportunities to make information much more accessible to the community through the website. These steps could improve the communication and transparency of Senate's work.

Sub-Recommendations – While acknowledging that we have been told there is no budget for additional resources, it is important that we restate that additional resources investments are needed to support the effectiveness of the Senate. We recommend that:

i.   The governance functions of the Senate Office (all those other than the Academic Governance Clerks) be moved out from under the Registrar and into a newly created university secretariat, leaving behind the curriculum and calendar work. Under this

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[7] UNB. We note that at the University of Manitoba, the University Secretary chairs the Senate committee responsible for the calendar, but responsibility for the calendar lies with the Registrar.

new structure (and unless the university hires a University Secretary), the Associate Registrar and Director, Senate would become Senate Secretary (in line with the Board Secretary) and would report directly to the President as Chair of Senate.

ii. Use of the generic title of Academic Governance Officer be reconsidered, particularly for the officer supporting appeals work ("Senate Appeals Officer"). Consideration should be given to the assignment of a dedicated policy role ("Senate Policy Officer") responsible for creating a functional policy framework and supporting a more coherent approach to the policy work of Senate, and a Senate Training Officer, and perhaps a dedicated Programs and Curriculum Officer responsible for the curriculum framework.

iii. Two administrative positions be added to support those working currently as Academic Governance Officers. If a university secretary is hired, that person will be able to assist with many of the recommendations herein. If the recommendation to move the Senate Office to a joint secretariat is not accepted, we recommend an additional position be added between the Director and the Academic Governance Officers. This role as Associate Director would be one of managing workflow, implementation of the adopted recommendations arising from this review including leading an enhanced education and development program, and staffing, leaving the Director to oversee the unit and work at the strategic and policy level with Senate.

iv. A plan be developed and implemented for conducting the work of the office more methodically, starting with calendaring and work planning, implementing consistent document management practices, a consistent policy development process, the use of templates for minutes, and a standard approach with tools for attendance tracking.

D.   Summary and Next Steps

We commend the Vancouver Senate for its ongoing commitment to improving its academic governance practices. Learning about the Vancouver Senate and speaking with Senators, members of the Senate Office and others has been a real pleasure. We observe lots of strengths. The opportunities for improvement are mostly, eminently actionable. We hope that our findings and recommendations inspire renewal of and re-engagement in the Vancouver Senate, thereby strengthening academic governance at UBC. Our report contains ten major and many supporting recommendations. Without the addition of resources, much of this review may be unachievable. We don't expect that all our recommendations will be adopted. It is up to the Senate and the university to decide which recommendations to adopt and include in a multi-year plan for implementation. Though the concept of a triannual Senate is deeply embedded at UBC Vancouver, the impact of implemented changes will need to be monitored and reviewed at least annually. We wish the Vancouver Senate well in that process! UBC is a very important university – for BC, Canada, and beyond. It is vital that its academic governance be sound and strong.

Appendix 1: List of Recommendations and Sub-Recommendations

A. Priority Recommendations

    1. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities and Equip People to Fulfil Them

    Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 1, we recommend specifically that:

        i.   UBC create short role descriptions for: Senate Chair, Vice-Chair, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs, and Senate members.

        ii.   The Senate Chair role description make it clear that the President is responsible and accountable for leading the Senate in fulfilling its role and responsibilities.

        iii.   Role descriptions for Senate Vice-Chair, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs clearly include the knowledge and experience required, and candidates nominated and elected accordingly.

        iv.   Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs be elected by Senate upon nomination by the Nominating Committee or subcommittee (see Sub-Recommendation 5ii below), to better ensure that candidates have the needed knowledge and experience and that they and their committees can fulfill their mandates and workplans on behalf of Senate.

        v.   Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Senate and its Committees receive training.

        vi.   Senate members annually receive orientation.

        vii.   Senate engage in sessions to raise awareness among Senate members of issues and trends in national and global higher education and research, evolving institutional strategy, and Faculties' plans, priorities, and progress.

    2. Improve Senate Agenda Planning

    Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 2, we recommend that the Senate's committee structure be reconfigured to connect planning, governance, and agenda-setting for Senate (see 5 -Revise Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committee Structure), and that:

        i.   There be annual workplans for Senate and its committees.

        ii.   Agendas be designed to enable Senate and its committees to raise their sights and focus on matters of importance, leaving routine and operational matters to administration.

        iii.   Major items for approval, endorsement, or recommendation be brought to Senate at least twice – at the outset for early generative input, and later for recommendation, endorsement, or approval.

        iv.   For each item on the agenda, it be made clear what Senate is being asked to do (e.g., receive for information, provide input, advise, recommend, endorse, approve).

v. Before the initiation of the next round of strategic planning the University engage in a discussion about the roles the Senates will play in the development, approval or endorsement, and oversight of the implementation of UBC's next Strategic Plan (including metrics related to their areas of responsibility).

3. **Improve Senate Meeting Arrangements**

Sub-Recommendations: To address priority area 3, we recommend specifically that:

i. The Chair and the Vice-Chair of Senate adopt, and Senators assist the Chair by supporting, an active meeting management approach. This involves working together to: focus Senate's attention on the items of greatest importance, respect reasonable time targets, avoid domination of the conversation by few voices, and encourage and enable more Senators to participate fully.

ii. The Senate meeting time be moved to late afternoon. Meetings should be scheduled for no more than two hours and preferably ninety minutes.

iii. Adjustments be made to processes and practices (committee schedules if necessary) to ensure that Senate materials and agenda are posted and available to Senators and Senate committee members one full week in advance of a meeting.

iv. Agenda setting practices change so that agendas contain target times for meeting items and many items not requiring discussion appear on a consent agenda.

v. The hybrid meeting format be retained for all but two meetings per year. Establish hybrid meeting rules including keeping 'cameras on' and improve the meeting technology. Senators attending in person should sit at the front of the room and microphones be made available for questions. Senators should adopt a practice of identifying themselves when they speak for the benefit of those participating in the other medium. There should be at least one but preferably two in-person only meetings, at appropriate times in the year, with educational and social components. For hybrid meetings, the Vice-Chair or another position could be charged with managing on-line speakers.

B. **Recommendations regarding other aspects of the terms of reference**

4. **Effectiveness of Senate in the Bicameral Governance of UBC**

Sub-Recommendation: We recommend that:

i. Upon receipt and acceptance of the Review Report, the Senate take steps to develop a multi-year governance plan. Steps in developing the plan include considering our recommendations, deciding which to implement and in what order, developing and carrying out the multi-year governance plan, and charging the newly formed Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee (see 5 Revise

Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committees), to monitor progress against the governance plan at least annually, and report to Senate.

5. Revise Committee Structure and Make Better Use of Committees

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend specifically that:

i.   The Agenda Committee mandate be amended to assign it responsibility for Senate planning, agenda-setting, and governance. Given the President's responsibilities for leading Senate and for strategic planning for UBC and their role as a link between the two Senates and the Board, we recommend that the new Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee be chaired by the President. Recognizing the President's many external responsibilities and commitments, we also recommend that the President appoint the Vice-Chair of the committee from among the members of Senate.

ii.   Consideration be given to strengthening the link between the Nominating Committee and the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee, so the former is aware of the work that the Senate and each of its committees is expected to achieve and so that any experiential or knowledge requirements inform nomination processes. The Nominating Committee could become a subcommittee of the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee, chaired by an elected member of the latter who has previously successfully chaired a Senate committee. Whether or not this suggestion is adopted, the recruitment and nomination or selection of members should take place against identified criteria, including equity goals.

iii. The Library Committee be discontinued. Senate should continue to receive an annual report from the University Librarian and delegate oversight of rules for the management and conduct of the Library to the Academic Policy Committee.

iv.   The Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee review the terms of reference for all other committees to ensure they are clear, outcome-focused and consist of governance rather than operational functions, and that committee changes be reflected in an amended Policy V-1.

More specifically:

a.   The Academic Policy Committee's mandate be revised to include oversight of the development of an academic policy framework and annually recommending policy priorities for Senate, assigning them to administrators or Senate committees, and monitoring their development. This committee should be charged with working to examine the current method of university-wide academic policy development and working with its UBCO counterpart to develop a more unified approach complementary to the Board policy framework to achieve a coherent institutional policy framework.

b. Senate amend V-1 to require that committees annually: review their terms of reference and Senate direction regarding priorities: draft workplans for review by the Planning and Governance Committee and coordination with other committees, and; report annually to Senate against their workplans.

6. **Develop and Implement a Robust Policy Framework**

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

i. Senate develops a more comprehensive policy framework. This framework should define the types and categories of policy instruments, set out responsibility for development, approval, maintenance and review of policies, guide policy development and review, standardize policy formats, and establish an official policy library and repository. This framework should provide for accountability for policy implementation. The framework should be overseen by the Academic Policy Committee.

ii. Since Senate is a governing or oversight body, responsibility for drafting policies for Senate review should lie with administration (i.e., the Senate policy officer working with the applicable administrative offices). As policy is the key tool for overseeing academic governance, ideally, there would be a dedicated and experienced policy officer within the Senate Office whose role is to support this committee, the policy framework, and the policy work of Senate.

iii. To increase accountability, not only should each policy be assigned to a committee and be reviewed every three to five years, but policy instruments should identify the administrative leader responsible for implementation and monitoring and eventual renewal of the policy. For **priority and select policies** identified by Senate (keeping in mind administrative workload) responsible leaders should be required to report to the relevant Senate committee on the success of the implementation of the policy, challenges, and recommended amendments.

7. **Rethink and Reform Appeals Structures and Processes**

Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

i. **Appeals Oversight:** In place of the Academic Standing and Discipline Committees, Senate creates a single Appeals Committee charged with overseeing the Academic Standing and Discipline appeals processes and tracking, analyzing appeals data, and making policy-based recommendations to Senate.

ii. **Roster of Adjudicators:** The Appeals Committee establishes a role description and qualifications for committee adjudicators and appoints a standing sub-

committee of qualified adjudicator members from within the university to form three-person or single-person panels in the discretion of the Appeals Committee chair in consultation with the Senate Office.

iii. **Training and Education:** All adjudicator members should:
- demonstrate an understanding of applicable university policies relating to academic standing, academic misconduct and non-academic misconduct, appeals processes, privacy law principles, confidentiality, and procedural fairness;
- have recent training in unconscious bias;
- demonstrate skills in empathy, objectivity, and written and oral communication.

iv. The roster of adjudicators should include <u>several</u> qualified members who are: 1) willing to hear complaints involving matters of harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence, and 2) who have recent training in trauma-informed practices and approaches.

v. **Support for the Committee and Adjudicators:** The appeals function is currently supported by a Senate Governance Officer who has other responsibilities. The Senate Appeals Committee and the adjudicators require a dedicated and knowledgeable resource to support all aspects of the appeal work, as well as access to administrative resources to assist with scheduling and logistics.

vi. **Admissions Appeals:** Senate should revisit the threshold of referrals to the Admissions Committee. Given the low rate of appeal success, over 95% of appeals are without merit. The committee should oversee a triage process either by a member of the Senate Office, but preferably an admissions administrator not involved in the initial decision(s). Subject to their accountability and reporting obligation to the committee, this individual would have authority to dismiss appeals where there is no error in process and advance only complex or novel (not covered by existing policy/regulations) admissions or transfer matters to the committee appeal level. Additionally, consideration should be given to reducing the appeal panel to one person, with the Admissions Committee Chair having the discretion to convene a panel of three for novel or complex matters.

vii. **Support for Students:** We agree that students require appeal process information available to them in a simple and straightforward form and encourage the development of tools under the supervision of the Appeals Committee. While the university should ensure that its processes are transparent, procedurally fair, and accessible to students, the standing and discipline processes are inherently processes in which the university and the student are adverse in interest. We see a role for the AMS in providing students with support and advocacy tools. Given what is sometimes at stake for students in academic standing and conduct appeals, it will also sometimes be wise for students to engage counsel and we do not see the fact that they do this as a negative.

8. **Clarify Senate's Roles and Build its Capacity for Advancing the Indigenous Strategic Plan and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at UBC.**

   Sub-Recommendations: We recommend that:

   The terms of reference for the Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee include planning and overseeing the activities of Senate and its committees to advance the Indigenous Strategic Plan and foster EDI.

   i.   The Agenda, Planning and Governance Committee include the Director of the First Nations House of Learning and the AVP Equity and Inclusion in the development of the recommended multi-year governance plan.

   ii.   Once the updating of terms of reference to reflect committees' roles in the implementation of the ISP is complete, the Senate committee responsible for governance ask each standing committee to consider how it will help advance EDI within its area of responsibility and report back with a recommendation for any appropriate revisions to its terms of reference.

   iii.   The Senate Office work with the Equity and Inclusion Office to track the demographic evolution of its membership by year, drawing on self-identification information from UBC's Employment Equity and Inclusion Survey and other sources, and publish the results annually.

   iv.   The Senate's commitment to and roles in fostering Indigenous engagement and EDI and the implications for Senate members be communicated in Senate orientation.

   v.   Training for Senate and committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs include leading and chairing bodies and committees that are diverse, inclusive, and effective.

   vi.   Education sessions on Indigenous matters and equity and anti-racism be offered for Senators early in this triennium.

9. **Improving Communication and Engagement with Senate**

   Sub-Recommendations: For now, we recommend that:

   i.   A review of the Vancouver Senate website be conducted by a communications professional at UBC with a view to making it not just a repository of information but a more effective communications tool. Small things like starting to post annual committee reports under committee pages, will help.

   ii.   Orientation for new faculty members and for new deans include information about university governance in Canada, UBC's governance including the important role of the Senates, and their roles in it.

   iii.   Faculty members' participation on Senate be recognized as the important professional service it is.

   iv.   Updates on Senate business be regular items on faculty council agendas.

10. **Reposition, Resource, and Improve Work Practices of the Office of Senate and Curriculum Services**

   Sub-Recommendations – While acknowledging that we have been told there is no budget for additional resources, it is important that we restate that additional resources investments are needed to support the effectiveness of the Senate. We recommend that:

   i. The governance functions of the Senate Office (all those other than the Academic Governance Clerks) be moved out from under the Registrar and into a newly created university secretariat, leaving behind the curriculum and calendar work. Under this new structure (and unless the university hires a University Secretary), the Associate Registrar and Director, Senate would become Senate Secretary (in line with the Board Secretary) and would report directly to the President as Chair of Senate.

   ii. Use of the generic title of Academic Governance Officer be reconsidered, particularly for the officer supporting appeals work ("Senate Appeals Officer"). Consideration should be given to the assignment of a dedicated policy role ("Senate Policy Officer") responsible for creating a functional policy framework and supporting a more coherent approach to the policy work of Senate, and a Senate Training Officer, and perhaps a dedicated Programs and Curriculum Officer responsible for the curriculum framework.

   iii. Two administrative positions be added to support those working currently as Academic Governance Officers. If a university secretary is hired, that person will be able to assist with many of the recommendations herein. If the recommendation to move the Senate Office to a joint secretariat is not accepted, we recommend an additional position be added between the Director and the Academic Governance Officers. This role as Associate Director would be one of managing workflow, implementation of the adopted recommendations arising from this review including leading an enhanced education and development program, and staffing, leaving the Director to oversee the unit and work at the strategic and policy level with Senate.

   iv. A plan be developed and implemented for conducting the work of the office more methodically, starting with calendaring and work planning, implementing consistent document management practices, a consistent policy development process, the use of templates for minutes, and a standard approach/tools for attendance tracking.

Appendix 2: Methodology, References and Consultant Bios

A. Methodology

The 2017-2020 Triennial Review of the Senate recommended an external review and identified the following areas for attention:

- Internal organization of Senate

    o Committee structure

    o Committee leadership

    o Rules and procedures of Senate.

- Involvement and engagement of the various estates that form the Senate's membership in its work (i.e., faculty, students, administrators, members of the convocation and others).

- Senate memberships (including issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion).

- Operations of appeals and quasi-judicial tribunals.

- Senate resourcing and staffing.

- Scheduling of Senate and its committees.

- Involvement of Senate in strategic planning at the university level.

    o Senate's effectiveness in support of UBC strategic initiatives.

    o Senate's role with senior administration/executive and the Board.

- Enforcement/implementation of Senate decisions and rules.

A further Triennial Review was recently concluded in March of 2023. The results of these reviews gave rise to the following list of Senate external review requirements, which form the scope of work for this review:

- Opportunities to increase the effectiveness of Senate in the bicameral governance of UBC.

- Involvement of Senate in strategic planning at the university-level.

- Senate's rules, procedures and policies in relation to issues of accessibility, inclusivity, health and wellness, and procedural fairness, including the operation of appeals and quasi-judicial bodies.

- Means of communicating with members of the various estates that form the membership of Senate (i.e., faculty, students, members of the Convocation, administrators and others), both to ensure awareness of Senate's work and decision and to encourage future direct participation on Senate.

- Means of overcoming barriers to the participation in Senate, including issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

- Mechanisms for implementation and timely review of Senate decisions and policies.

- Senate's committee structure, including selection and training of Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

- Orientation and training for Senators.

- Scheduling of meetings of Senate and its committee.

- Resourcing and staffing of the Office of Senate and Curriculum Services.

1. **Overview of our approach to the governance review:**

The review consisted of four main stages:

1. Planning and Preparation;

2. Initial Information Gathering;

3. Further Exploration and Analysis of Issues Identified; and

4. Preparation and Presentation of Report and Recommendations

Stage 1: Planning and Preparation

Project Oversight and Guidance: We have found it invaluable in conducting a governance review to have the benefit of early information, insight, and advice from leaders of the body or bodies in question. In this case, we suggested that UBC form a small advisory group for the project, consisting of the President and Senate Chair, the Nominating Committee Chair, and the Registrar or Associate Registrar. Such a group was formed and met twice times during the process as described in each stage below.

Stage 1 of the review included:

1. Familiarizing ourselves with UBC's history, governance, strategic plan, and associated initiatives including anti-racism and inclusive excellence.

2. Conversations with the Senate Chair and the Nominating Committee Chair, the Registrar and Associate Registrar for the purpose of clarifying and confirming the scope of and approach to the governance review.

3. A virtual meeting with the advisory committee to:

   - provide feedback on:

     i. a draft list of interviewees and interview questions

     ii. draft survey questions for Senators (past, current and incoming).

   - confirm the documentation and data to be reviewed by consultants.

   - identify any other information to be gathered.

   - provide background information, advice, and guidance.

Stage 2: Initial Information Gathering

1. For the detailed documentary review and summary, we requested the following:

    - University Act

    - Rules and Procedures

    - Senate Committee Terms of Reference

    - Senate Handbook /Procedures

    - UBC Policy Framework documents (some)

    - Senate Policies

    - Internal Reports relating to Senate governance

    - Documents pertaining to EDI commitments made or work the Senate has done

    - Previous internal governance review

    - Senate attendance records (3 years)

    - Senate minutes (3 years)

    - Senate packages (3 years)

    - Senate committee minutes (2 years)

    - Triennial Review reports (current and previous)

    - Triennial Review submissions from estates, survey data and other input to the Reviews

    - Senate and Senate committee meeting schedules (3 years)

    - Documentation of any joint work between Senate and Board

    - Council of Senates Terms of Reference, procedures and policies

    - Okanagan Senate By-Laws, Terms of Reference/Handbook and procedures

    - Reports/documents pertaining to the relationship between the Senates

    - Third party research papers regarding UBC governance and Senate's role

    - Estates' papers - Faculty or Student Association reports /papers on Senate governance matters

    - Organization chart for Senate administrative support function /Registrar's Office
    - External review of Registrar's Office

    - Role descriptions for Senate governance professionals

    - Pre-existing surveys or benchmark data relating to Senate governance staffing

- Senate communications to all estates (memos, emails, other) 1 year of records

- Policies and Protocols, or procedures pertaining to Senate communications

- Handbook or guides for Senate governance staff

- Current orientation materials for new Senate members, committee members, Chairs, Vice-Chairs

- If compiled, a list and dates of University Act changes related to the Senate.

- Other relevant documents

2. Meeting with Nominating Committee.

3. Observation of recordings of Senate meetings.

4. Interviews and focus groups with key participants (32 interviews and 5 focus groups with current and former institutional and Senate leaders and members, governance and other professionals, and representatives of university estates).

5. Survey(s) of selected past and all current and incoming Senate members as well as Senate committee members not serving on Senate.

6. Review of information re. Senate Office structure and staffing.

7. Summarization, categorization, and analysis of data obtained.

8. Meeting with the advisory group to share findings to date and to identify any issues for further exploration and means and timelines for doing so (took place in Stage 3).

Stage 3: Further Exploration and Analysis

1. Steps included:

   - Additional document review; and

   - Compilation and review of selected benchmark data from peer institutions (e.g., re. committee structure, Senate membership and composition, Senate Office structure and resourcing).

2. Summarization, categorization, and analysis of additional data obtained.

Stage 4: Preparation and Presentation of Report and Recommendations

1. Development of recommendations to address the Requirements, with a view to strengthening the Senate's role and effectiveness within the governance of the university.

2. Presentation of a draft report for review for errors or significant omissions.

3. Finalization of the report.

4. Delivery of the final report to the advisory group for acceptance as to fulfilment of the terms of reference. Note: The report was delivered on February 26, 2024. An editorial suggestion was subsequently received and accepted and is reflected in the final version.

2. Out of Scope:

The following are outside the scope of this review:

- matters addressed by the University Act;

- structure and operation of the Council of Senates and the Okanagan Senate; and

- drafting of revisions to or new documents arising out of the Report recommendations.

B. References

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C. Consultants

Julia Eastman

Julia is an author and advisor on university governance and Adjunct Professor at the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria. She is lead author (with Glen Jones, Claude Trottier and Olivier Bégin-Caouette) of *University Governance in Canada: Navigating Complexity* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2022), based on a comparative case study of the governance of six major universities across the country.

From 2005 to 2018, Julia was University Secretary at the University of Victoria. Prior to that, she held various administrative positions at Dalhousie University from 1982 to 2003. In 2004, she was seconded to the position of Senior Director (Universities and Colleges) at the Nova Scotia Department of Education. Before joining Dalhousie, she worked at the Council of Maritime Premiers in Halifax and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen's University.

Julia has a BA in Political Economy from the University of Toronto, a MA in Political Studies from Queen's University, and a PhD in Higher Education from the University of Toronto. She co-authored a book on mergers in higher education with Daniel Lang (University of Toronto Press) and has written numerous articles on university governance and revenue generation.

Julia has been invited to make presentations on university governance and institutional autonomy to university presidents (at Universities Canada workshops in 2017, 2018 and 2022), associations (Canadian University Boards Association, 2023; Senior Womens' Academic Administrators of Canada, 2023; CUFA-BC 2024), Boards and/or Senates (University of Alberta, 2018; St. Thomas University, 2018; University of Northern British Columbia, 2017), business officers (CAUBO, 2023) and in many other settings. She has assisted several major universities to improve their governance processes and structures.

Cheryl Foy

Cheryl is the author of *An Introduction to University Governance (Irwin Law, 2021)*. She is the developer and lead instructor of Canada's first university-level micro-credential in university governance "Governance in Canadian Universities" offered through the University of Manitoba. Until January 2022, Cheryl served as General Counsel and University Secretary (responsible for governance, legal, human rights, compliance, and risk matters) for Ontario Tech University and provided limited governance consulting services to institutions within the university sector and in health care. As of February 2022, Cheryl began providing governance advising services on a full-time basis through her company, Strategic Governance Consulting Services Ltd., founded in late 2021.

In addition to the Dalhousie review described above, in the past year, Cheryl has been engaged by over 20 institutions from across the country to conduct Board, Senate, and secretariat staff training, to provide advice on effective Board and Senate governance in a variety of areas including committee structure, compliance frameworks, the intersection of governance and labour relations, and in matters of assessment and recruitment. She mentors governance professionals. Cheryl has advised the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) several times on broader policy matters including the development of leading Board practices and has been invited to conduct governance training for COU, the Canadian University Boards Association, and the Canadian Association of University Business Officers. Cheryl also works with Faculty Bargaining Services on matters related to governance and academic labour relations.

Cheryl has over twenty years of governance experience in the publicly traded, private, not-for-profit and university sectors. Having begun her career in public company governance, she brings

an understanding of the evolving governance best practices that are driven by the increasing sophistication of the investing public in ensuring accountability and transparency within the companies in which they are invested. She focuses on strategic governance, meaning that she works to fully understand the founding mandate and the strategic direction of each organization. She considers each university's governance effectiveness in the context of the individual organization's strategy, understanding that there is no 'one size fits all' model of governance.

Cheryl has also served on several national not-for-profit Boards having recently completed her terms as Chair of the Women General Counsel Canada not-for-profit Board, and as a member and Investment Committee Chair on the Board of the Canadian Universities Reciprocal Insurance Exchange.

Although Cheryl is not providing legal services for this engagement, it is relevant that she is a lawyer licensed to practice law in Ontario, having received her law degree from Queen's University in 1993. She was called to the Ontario bar in 1995 and practised law for more than twenty-five years. Cheryl worked at two universities (Ontario Tech and Carleton University), and within the university sector in governance roles for over ten years. Cheryl has served as a Sessional Lecturer at Queen's University, Faculty of Law, and Ontario Tech University, Faculty of Business, and Information Technology. Cheryl is regularly invited to speak on matters of governance, ethics, and the role of General Counsel.

Appendix 3: Survey and Interview Participation

        A. Surveys
        B. Interviews
        C. Participation by Respondents in Multiple Ways

A. Surveys

Three separate surveys were created and sent to the following groups:

1. Continuing and former Senators (those who served in the 2020 to 2023 triennium and those who continue to serve in the current triennium).
2. Committee members not also serving on Senate.
3. New Senators (those who are serving now and who did not serve in the 2020 to 2023 triennium).

The participation rates were as follows -- acceptable but lower than we would have liked except for new Senators.

Table A3.1
All Surveys – Participation Rates

Surveys	Total	Responses	Response Rate	Opened	Unopened	Refused
Current/Former Senators	125	39	31%	108	14	2
Committee Members	37	11	30%	34	2	1
New Senators	24	17	71%	24	0	0
Total	186	67	36%	166	16	3

All were given the option to provide demographic information using questions from UBC's Employment Equity Survey, currently deployed in Workday. Of the 67 survey respondents, 33 did so. Broken down by survey, 33% of continuing and former Senators, 64% of committee

members not also on Senate, and 76% of new Senators chose to provide demographic information.

The results were as follows:

Table A3.2
Demographics – All Respondents

Demographic Information (short description)	New Senators	Continuing and Former Senators	Committee Members (not on Senate)	Percentage of All Participants
Women	8	12	7	40%
Men	7	19	3	43%
Non-Binary	*	*	*	0%
Trans	*	*	*	0%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Two-spirited or Analogous	*	*	*	12%
Indigenous	*	*	*	0%
Racialized	*	*	*	21%
Impairment or Restriction	*	*	*	18%

*Demographics were tracked for each respondent group. However, response counts are not reproduced for these cells as some were low enough to risk identification of participants.

B. Interviews – Individuals and Groups

We spoke to a total of 51 individuals. Individuals were advised at the outset of interviews that a list containing the names of interviewees would be appended to the report and they participated on that basis.

Individual Interviews: Interviews were sought with approximately 35 individuals. A total of 32 individual interviews were completed. Several interviewees declined due to lack of availability or because they felt they had nothing to contribute. The interviews were scheduled for an hour. Most were completed within an hour, several were shorter and some required a second meeting to complete. We assessed the interviewees as knowledgeable, forthcoming, and genuinely interested in the effectiveness of the Vancouver Senate.

Group interviews: Group interviews were held with five groups: students, deans, Senate Office professional staff, vice provosts, and the Office of University Counsel. Note that because Senate Office professional staff were also interviewed individually, their group interview does not appear on the list below.

Table A3.3 - Interviewee Names and Groups

Ainsley Carry	Gina DeVeaux	Michael Jud
Amandeep Breen	Jan Cioe	Miranda Huron
Arig al Shaibah	Jan Hare	Nancy McKenzie
Benoit-Antoine Bacon	Jessica Iverson	Paul Harrison
Bradley Menard	Kamil Kanji	Rella Ng
Carol Jaeger	Karen Hakkarainen	Rickey Yada
Chris Eaton	Karen Smith	Sally Thorne
Claudia Krebs	Kate Ross	Susan Forwell
Deborah Buszard	Kevin Doering	Group - Deans (11)
Gage Averill	Lesley Cormack	Group - Students (4)
Gail Murphy	Martha Piper	Group - Vice Provosts (2)
George Tsiakos	Max Holmes	Group – Office of University Counsel (2)

C. Participation by Respondents in Multiple Ways

Members of the UBC community could participate in this Review in multiple ways.

Interviews: Our intention as consultants was to engage individuals with knowledge and experience of the Vancouver Senate from diverse vantage points and perspectives.

Surveys: Surveys were open to all the respondents in the three survey groups. Some respondents were also on the interview list.

Email address: It was open to any member of the UBC community to contact us at the email address: cfoy@universitygovernance.ca. In response to interview questions and at our invitation, some interview participants followed up by email with additional information. Although some indicated on the survey that they had or would contact us using this method, we received only one email from a survey respondent and that was to comment on the survey itself.

Accounting for respondents who participated in more than one format:

Our analysis was qualitative and intended to identify main themes. To take account of participation in our analysis, we asked survey recipients to identify whether they were participating in the review in another way. Sixty-two of the 67 respondents answered this question. Fifty-six percent of respondents on this question (35 respondents) only participated via survey, 19% (12 respondents) were also interviewed, 18% (11 respondents) participated in a focus group, and 3 % (2 respondents) sent an email. To assist our analysis and avoid unduly weighting duplicate responses, we reviewed the data of those who had participated only by survey, as well as those who had participated in more than one format.

Table A3.4 - Survey Respondents who also participated in Interviews
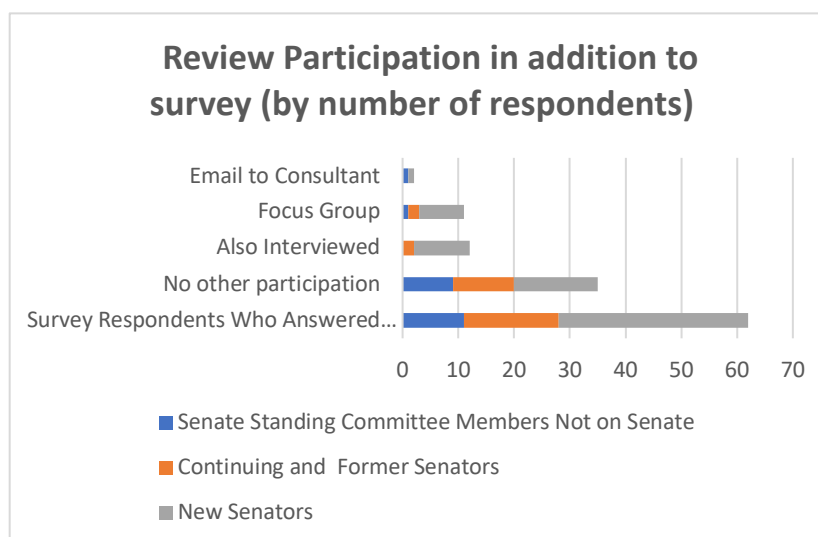
Appendix 4: Background - Policy and Implementation

We looked at policy assignments to committees. Twenty policy instruments are not assigned. For the remaining thirty that are assigned, Academic Policy Committee is responsible for fifteen with the remaining fifteen spread across some of the other committees:

Table A4.1 -Policy Assignments to Committee

Policy Assignments to Committee
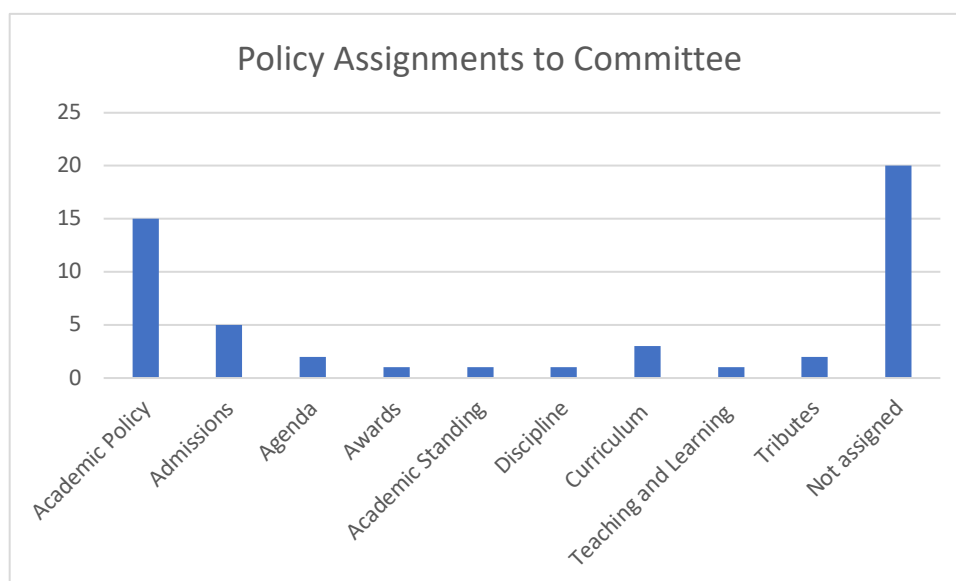
Appendix 5: Benchmarking

Senate Committee Structures

We are both cautious about benchmarking because of the vast differences in the legislative underpinnings of governance at universities. We are also cautious because we are of the view that Senate governance lags Board governance in focus on improvement. To that end then, what other universities do in Senate governance is not necessarily to be emulated if the university is seeking to adopt wise practices and move toward more effective governance. Having said the foregoing and while we discourage complacency based on the lack of progress of others, we are aware that there is comfort in knowing what other university Senates are doing and they remain a point of reference.

 We selected most of the U15 universities and (because they are subject to the same legislation as UBC) a couple of other BC universities against which to benchmark committee structures. Time did not permit a detailed analysis of the terms of reference of all the committees. We were looking to see the number of other standing committees or equivalent, whether there were committees dedicated to overseeing governance, Reconciliation and Indigenization, or equity diversity and inclusion. Key findings are that the median number of Senate committees is 10 and the average is 10.5. At 13 then, UBC has an above average number of Senate committees. Only 3 of the universities surveyed have committees dedicated to governance, and only 2 have committees responsible for Indigenization and Reconciliation and equity, diversity, and inclusion. Of the 3 equity-focused committees, McGill's is a joint Board-Senate committee. UofA's third body (its Senate) has an Indigenous Initiatives & EDI Committee.

Table A5.1 – Senate Committee Structures (U15 plus Benchmarking)

U15 plus Benchmarking Senate Committees

University Name	Number of Committees	Dedicated Governance Committee?	Dedicated to Indigenous Engagement?	Dedicated to matters of EDI?
University of Alberta*	9	N	N	N
University of Calgary	7	N	N	N
Dalhousie	7	Y	N	N
University of Manitoba	20	N	N	N
McGill	9	N	N	Y
McMaster	10	N	N	N
Université de Montréal	9	N	N	N
University of Ottawa	11	N	N	N
Queen's University	10	Y	N	Y
University of Saskatchewan	8	N	N	N
Simon Fraser University	21	N	N	N
University of Victoria	12	Y	N	N
University of Waterloo	7	N	N	N
Western University	9	N	N	N

*UofA Senate has an Indigenous Initiatives & EDI Committee

Table A5.2 – Table of Support Structures

BENCHMARKING - STRUCTURE OF SUPPORT OFFICES FOR BOARD AND SENATE	
UNIVERSITY	IS THE GOVERNANCE SUPPORT OFFICE COMBINED OR SEPARATE?
University of Alberta	Combined. At the University of Alberta, the University Governance unit, under the direction of the University Secretary, provides support for all areas of the Board and GFC [General Faculties Council], enabling both bodies (and their respective standing committees) to govern the institution in a timely and effective manner. https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/what-we-do/governance-system.html. https://www.ualberta.ca/chancellor-and-senate/senate/senate-staff.html
University of Calgary	Combined. The University Secretariat supports the Board of Governors and the General Faculties Council, acting as the gateway and facilitator for communication and interaction among the Board, General Faculties Council, senior management and other constituents, and managing the operations of the Board, General Faculties Council and their committees. The University Secretariat is also an ombuds, facilitator and neutral space within the governance system and advocates for effective oversight, decision making and accountability, promoting shared governance and providing expert governance advice to the University community. https://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/ https://www.ucalgary.ca/chancellorandsenate/contact

Dalhousie	Combined. The University Secretariat is the administrative office responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient operation of Dalhousie University's bicameral system of governance, comprised of the Board of Governors, the Senate and their respective committees. https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat.html
Univesity of Manitoba	Combined. The University Secretary is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the activities of the Board of Governors and of the Senate, and their various committees, to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the University's bicameral system of governance...Members of the staff of the Office of the University Secretary assist the University Secretary in carrying out his/her/their responsibilities. A staff listing for the Office of the University Secretary's Office may be found here. https://umanitoba.ca/governance/university-secretary
McGill	Combined. The Secretariat is the corporate head office for McGill University and the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning and the University's governance office responsible for the Board of Governors, Senate and their committees. https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/
McMaster	Combined. The University Secretariat is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the work of the Board of Governors, the Senate, and their standing and ad hoc committees, advising those bodies on governance, policy, and process. https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca
Université de Montréal	Combined. The General Secretariat includes the following four divisions: The Division of Bodies is responsible for the operation of the university bodies and a number of their committees. She ensures compliance with the University's governance processes and supervises the processes for appointing the rector and deans. https://secretariatgeneral.umontreal.ca/secretariat-general/mission-et-equipe/

University of New Brunswick	Combined. The University Secretariat is accountable for the support of the governance of the University through the effective and efficient operation of the Board of Governors, Fredericton and Saint John Senates, their committees and other University bodies. https://www.unb.ca/secretariat/about.html
University of Ottawa	Combined. The Secretary-General is the University's most senior advisor on governance issues, providing members of the University community with information, advice and interpretations related to the University's governance framework. Pursuant to the University of Ottawa Act, 1965, the Secretary-General of the University is also the Secretary of the University's Board of Governors and Senate and their respective committees. In this capacity, he or she coordinates and facilitates the activities of these bodies in order to ensure the effective functioning of the University's bicameral system of governance. The Secretary-General also oversees the activities of the University Secretariat as well as its legal services, archives and access to information and privacy offices. https://www.uottawa.ca/about-us/leadership-governance/vice-presidents/annick-bergeron
Queen's	Combined. The University Secretariat supports and assists the Board of Trustees, the Senate and the University Council to achieve their objectives. Legal Counsel provides legal advice and support to university partners. https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/
University of Saskatchewan	Combined. The Governance Office is a key link between the executive leadership and governance of the university, facilitating the activities of the Board of Governors, Senate, General Academic Assembly and University Council. https://governance.usask.ca/about/index.php#top
Simon Fraser University	Separate. Registrar is the Secretary of Senate per the University Act and Rules of Senate University Secretary This portfolio is responsible for the effective functioning of the University's Board of Governors, and advises on governance issues. https://www.sfu.ca/univsec/university-secretary.html

University of Victoria	Combined. The Office of the University Secretary serves as the corporate secretariat for the university's governing bodies: the Board of Governors and the Senate. The office is the repository for information on all matters relating to these bodies. https://www.uvic.ca/university secretary/home/office/index.php
University of Waterloo	Combined. The Secretariat's mission is to manage and support the University's bicameral governance system consistent with statutory requirements, the University of Waterloo Act, the By-laws and regulations of the Board of Governors and Senate, and good governance practices. We provide support services for the Board of Governors, the Senate and their Committees and ensure membership is duly constituted and bodies receive materials that support informed decision-making. https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/
Western	Combined. The University Secretariat's mission is to manage and support the University's bicameral governance system in accordance with legal requirements and obligations, the University of Western Ontario Act, the bylaws and regulations of Senate and Board, and accepted best governance practices. https://uwo.ca/univsec//about/index.html