



# VANCOUVER SENATE

## MINUTES OF 20 NOVEMBER 2024

### Attendance

**Present:** B.-A. Bacon (Chair), R. Ng (Secretary), M. Adshade, J. Al Rahmani, F. Andrew, G. Averill, E. Baniassad, S. Bates, S. Bredin, B. Britton, L. Burr, J. Cool, C. Crowston, D. Dahl, C. Dai, A. d'Entremont, K. Doering, P. Englezos, A. Esteves, A. Fisher, D. Fontana, N. Ford, B. Forster, S. Forwell, J. Fox, B. Goold, S. Gopalakrishnan, S. W. Graham, S. Grayston, J. Hare, P. Harrison, K. Hassib, M. Hirst, M. Hunt, E. Jenkins, X. Jiang, R. Kozak, S. Lavallee, K. Lo, J. Lorien, S. McGillivray, L. Moss, C. Overall, S. Pelech, J. Phelps, N. Pindell, A. Pratap-Singh, M. Prost, D. Qi, L. Raman-Wilms, C. Rawn, M. Reid, Ka. Rogers, T. Shaikh, S. Sherif, S. Singh, R. Topping, G. Tsiakos, G. Turcotte, A. Uzama, H. von Bergmann, J. Xue, S. Yi-Kieran

**Regrets:** B. Bhandar, A. Dulay, C. Eaton, G. Faulkner, J. Gilbert, C. Godwin, J. Greenman, G. Guo, A. Ivanov, K. Kanji, D. Kelleher, R. Kim, D. Kitts, F. Lalji, M. MacLachlan, C. W. Marshall, G. Markman, C. Menzies, W. Norman, J. Olson, S. Parker, I. Price, J. Rogers, Ky. Rogers, S. Rout, R. Spencer, W. Zhu, E. Zusman

**Clerk:** J. Iverson (Acting)

### Call to Order

The Chair of Senate, Dr Benoit-Antoine Bacon, called the third meeting of the Senate for the 2024/2025 academic year to order at 6:01 pm.

### Senate Membership

#### NEW MEMBERS:

The Registrar, Dr Rella Ng, announced the following new member of Senate:

Maddie Reid, Student Member, Faculty of Education, until 30 September 2025 and thereafter until a successor is elected.

### Minutes of Previous Meetings



Shannon Bredin  
Elisa Baniassad

*That the minutes of the meeting of 16 October  
2024 be approved as corrected.*

*Corrections: Typographical errors*

Approved

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

The President noted that at the last Senate meeting there was a presentation on the launch of the University's strategic plan refresh. During the discussion, some Senators expressed desire for a Senate-specific consultation. This is now scheduled for December 3. The President thanked the strategic refresh team for organizing this and thanked Senators in advance for their participation.

### **Remarks from the Chair**

The President noted that November marks one year since he joined UBC. He stated that it has been an amazing privilege to discover such an incredible institution. He emphasized UBC's potential for further growth and impact in Canada. He thanked Senators for welcoming him and being patient with him as he settled into his new role, and for making UBC such an incredible place to learn, teach, and serve.

The President outlined several political developments in the past few weeks in BC. He noted the very close provincial election resulting in an NDP win. This will mean continuity and stability for UBC's relationship with the provincial government, and also reminds us of the dynamic and evolving nature of our political landscape. He noted the recent US presidential election with the return of the Republican party to power and emphasized how this is a good example of the polarization of the political landscape everywhere. He acknowledged that it is challenging to live in a polarized world, but that as educators and researchers it is important to continue to foster dialogue, understanding, and solution.

The President reminded Senators that the UBC Workplace Experiences Survey is open until November 22. This is an important opportunity to share thoughts on what makes UBC a great place to work, and how it can be improved through feedback. The survey is sent from [survey@talentmap.com](mailto:survey@talentmap.com). Senators were encouraged to take the time to complete this survey.

The President gave an update on the ongoing strategic plan refresh process. Consultations are fully underway and have been in-person, in virtual workshops, pop-up forums, and through an online survey. Close to 50 events and 1700 contributions from about 1,000 people have contributed to the process so far. The analysis on theme from these comments will begin soon.



Consultation continues until December 10. The online survey is also open until December 10. At the January Senate meeting, an initial analysis of the themes that have emerged and next steps will be presented.

Fall graduation is taking place from November 27 to November 29. There are ten ceremonies in total. The President emphasized it is a great way to celebrate with our students, their families, and friends. He stated it is always a happy moment for Senate to approve graduates for convocation.

The President acknowledged that December will be a busy time for everyone due to final exams. He thanked students, Faculty, and staff for the dedication and care that they bring to learning and to teaching.

Senator Doering described an article that was posted on the Walrus recently regarding the Allard School of Law. Following the article, the Dean allegedly emailed Faculty to discourage them from speaking about the article and suggested punitive action might be taken against those who did. This follows an email sent to students last year discouraging any discussion, either public or private, with the very public exit of a scholar whose Indigeneity had come into question.

Senator Doering clarified he was not asking the President to comment on private personnel matters and the contents of the article, nor on the merits of the actions taken by the Dean subsequent to the article. He emphasized the chilling effect this has had on the academic community within the Faculty of Law. Changing a culture of silence begins with leadership. He asked the President to publicly affirm or reaffirm the right to academic freedom and free inquiry among Faculty and students; in particular, the ability of scholars to an unrestricted consideration of any viewpoint guided by academic integrity, as well as the ability to engage with ideas that might prove unpopular or contentious in environments of tolerance, including perspectives that are critical of the university administration. He asked if the President would be willing to open discourse to the pursuit of teaching and learning in the community.

The President responded that he does not know the details of this situation and thanked Senator Doering for providing all the appreciate caveats. He noted that he cannot comment on any of this but happily reaffirmed the importance of academic freedom at UBC.

Senator Phelps addressed the close provincial election and the continuity of the NDP government. She asked the President if he is anticipating that this will mean continuity of previous commitments, such as the funding for the St. John's College redevelopment site.



The President responded that prior to the election, the University was assured that whatever the outcome, the \$300 million for the 1500 residence beds at St. John's College would remain. It is an important part of the province's strategy to address the housing crisis.

With regards to other sources of funding or other initiatives, it is hard to say. From his perspective, the most important thing is the continued support of the province for public sector GWI, the general wage increase, which has been going on 20 years in BC. The President does not see this changing, nor does he expect changes in support of post-secondary. The NDP has shown continuous support over time and there is no reason to believe they would change course. However, things can become unpredictable when budget pressures become greater. It is important for UBC to continue to forge good relationships to advocate with the province to make sure we continue to have the support needed to fulfill our mission as a University.

Senator Yi-Kieran asked in regards to the American election, if the President anticipates the outcome of it affecting UBC's relationship with American institutions or impacting how UBC recruits international students from the United States?

The President responded that it is probably too early to say, but that in 2016 when the elections favored Mr. Trump for the first time, there was a surge of international students coming into Canada.

### Candidates for Degrees

The President noted that there are 912 candidates, which is a smaller number than usual because some degrees were granted in August as part of the Workday Student transition.

Susan Forwell  
Michael Hunt

*That the candidates for degrees and diplomas, as recommended by the Faculties, be granted the degree or diploma for which they were recommended, effective November 2024, and that a committee comprised of the Registrar, the Dean of the relevant Faculty, and the Chair of the Senate be empowered to make any necessary adjustments.*

Approved



The Chair of the Senate Academic Policy Committee, Dr Kin Lo, presented.

**REVISIONS TO JOINT SENATE AND BOARD POLICY GA6 NAMING POLICY**

Kin Lo  
Drédyn Fontana

*That Senate approve the amendments to Joint  
Senate Board Policy GA6 Naming Policy.*

Senator Lo stated that this is a joint policy with the Board and has already been approved by the Board. The proposal is to revise the procedure section of the policy relating to naming of places only, specifically to have the final approval by the President instead of the Board. The changes are in two places on pages 70-71. He noted that Matthew Murray is also here to speak to the modification to the policy if necessary.

Senator Hirst asked what the purpose of this change was and if there is a rationale behind it? He noted that there is a current policy in place where it is nominated by the President and approved by the Board.

Mr. Murray responded that the proposed amendments to this policy are part of a much larger project that began over a year ago to identify all of the requirements in Board policies to make submissions to the Board, both for approval and for information. This is in order to address the high volume of material that is submitted to the Board and to allow the Board to focus its limited resources on the most important issues for UBC.

The policy establishes a robust approval process for the naming of places, beginning with the recommendation of the Dean, or the Vice-President who's responsible for the place being named. Their recommendation must be supported by both the responsible executive of the naming policy and the Vice-President, Development and Alumni Engagement. If all three support the naming, the recommendation is then sent to the naming committee for consideration. Currently, the policy requires that the naming committee make a recommendation to the President, who in turn must make a recommendation to the Board. Given all of these steps that are currently required, and the many individuals involved in the decision-making process, the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the responsible Board committee and the responsible executive for the naming policy have all recommended the change to allow the President to approve the naming of places.

Senator Gilbert asked what happens to the names on buildings that get torn down? He noted that many buildings are named after famous predecessors.

The President responded that from experience, he has seen names be repurposed elsewhere with the consent of the family.



Mr. Murray stated that the current version of the naming policy was substantially amended two years ago to address the change and removal of names, and to establish a requirement that when the University agrees to an honorific naming, it is required that the naming only be for the useful life of the place or space in question. It is made clear to the donors and honorees that that is how the naming will work. The University can repurpose the name with the advice of the donor.

Approved

**MASTER OF ARCHIVAL STUDIES – REVISIONS TO ACADEMIC REGULATIONS; MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES – REVISIONS TO ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

Kin Lo  
Laura Moss

*That Senate approve the revisions to the academic regulations for the Faculty of Arts, School of Information, Master of Archival Studies, effective for the 20245 Winter Session and thereafter, and*

*That Senate approve the revisions to the academic regulations for the Faculty of Arts, School of Information, Master of Library and Information Studies, effective for the 2024 Winter Session and thereafter.*

Senator Lo stated that these two proposals are to delete regulations that are no longer relevant.

Approved

**FACULTY OF LAND AND FOOD SYSTEMS – REVISIONS TO CLASS STANDING AND ACADEMIC STANDING, ADDITIONAL PERIOD HONOURS AND ADVANCEMENT**

Kin Lo  
Susan Forwell

*That Senate approve the revisions to the academic regulations for the Faculty of Land and Food Systems effective for the 2024 Winter Session and thereafter.*

Senator Lo stated that this change is partially in response to changes in Workday Student to align the academic standings with what the system is set up for, along with other related updates.

Senator Harrison asked that since this proposal is effective for the current Winter Session, is Senate being asked to approve something that is already programmed into Workday?



Senator Lo confirmed this but emphasized that this is not entirely backdating because it involves sessional evaluations that take place later on. While students have started the process of earning their academic standing, the evaluation process is yet to be conducted.

Senator Harrison asked for reassurance for students that this is a relaxation of rules and not adding new rules during the term.

Senator Lo responded that based on his understanding, the changes are not substantive in the sense of being stricter or more lucid. They are just a reformulation of the requirements.

Christine Klaray from LFS noted that the rules are actually looser than they were previously. She guaranteed that no student will be disadvantaged or negatively impacted. If anything, the students are benefitting from these shifts in the rules.

Senator Britton stated that as an instructor, it would be better to have this information in the syllabus before the drop date. After the drop date, the syllabus cannot be changed except with consent from the class. He stated he does not like this particular piece in terms of the timing and process, and hopes that it will not impact students. He hopes that appeals are navigated carefully in light of this mid-term change.

Senator Lo noted he appreciates the comparison to the syllabus, assessments, and so on. However, he stated that there are many Senate regulations that are changed while students are in a program (for example, changes may be made during a student's second year of a four-year long program). He emphasized that the comparison is not quite one-to-one in that sense.

Senator Graham noted that in the rationale, it raises Workday as an explanation for why this change is occurring. While we have to work within the Workday system, to what degree do changes like this happen where the technical change might direct the academic job? Is that the case here and in general?

Senator Lo responded that these particular changes are not directed by the system, it is the nomenclature assigned to the class settings. For example, in the first part of the changes, class standing 1-4 are references to the year level, which is how it is referenced in Workday. It just how students are identified in the system in terms of their progression.

Senator Singh noted that similar terminology change proposals have gone through the Curriculum Committee instead, especially from Faculty of Science. This proposal is more relevant to curriculum as it pertains to changing year level to a new nomenclature class standing.



He stated he is unsure if academic policy is the right kind of vehicle for this and suggested it should go to the Curriculum Committee.

Senator Lo responded that he does not know if this is true for the curriculum aspect of this. He emphasized that the Academic Policy Committee took this on based on the direction of Senate staff.

Senator Rawn thanked Senator Singh for his comments and stated she was also surprised to see this proposal coming from the Academic Policy Committee instead of being brought to the Curriculum Committee. She noted that the Curriculum Committee would likely have come to the same conclusion of presenting it here and that she does not see any concerns.

Senator Hassib referred to the section on 'Honours and Awards at Graduation' on pages 99-100. With this new distinction, if a student in LFS graduates between 80-90%, they graduate with an honours distinction; 90% plus is graduation with distinction. For example, if a student were doing an honours degree, and they graduated with an average of 85%, would they graduate with an honours distinction on their degree? This may be confusing for students using the word 'honours' to describe both the intensive study in the program and the percentage they graduate with.

The President responded that it is standard to have an honours program and an honours distinction.

Senator Lo stated that these labels were agreed upon by a committee composed of Associate Deans. This is applied in other Faculties as well.

Dr Rella Ng responded that graduation distinctions were brought to Senate several years ago for approving this nomenclature. This was done to align nomenclature across different Faculties to make things consistent.

Senator Yi-Kieran referred to the section on page 95 that states that students must complete 24 credits in the Winter Session to qualify for the Scholars Standing or Dean's List distinctions. He stated he understands that these minimum credit requirements are very important for ensuring a standard, and that most Faculties operate similarly, but expressed a concern that this presents an unnecessary barrier to students who cannot take the required course load, such as students with accessibility concerns, learning disabilities, and temporary health issues. He asked how we can balance strong academic standards with much needed accessibility in trying to get these distinctions for students.



Senator Yi-Kieran also asked about the removal of the sentence that “Winter Session students will receive the notation ‘Dean’s Honour List’ on their records.” While he understands this is due to the challenges of Workday, he asked how students will still be acknowledged for being on the Dean’s List or similar distinctions?

Christine Klaray responded that in terms of the minimum credit thresholds, for any students who are on a reduced course load through the Centre for Accessibility, or any other students who are on reduced course loads for other unviable reasons, there are exemptions and exceptions to all of these continuation rules on a case-by-case basis. She echoed Dr. Ng’s comments about the adjustments being made to match new consistent nomenclature that is being used across all Faculties through the new Workday system.

Senator Lo stated that on page 95, the reference to the Dean’s List is added. It is deleted in one place, but added in another.

Senator Yi-Kieran asked if it would still be on student transcription records?

Dr. Rella Ng responded that any graduation distinctions will still show up on the parchment. Dean standings do not show up on parchments, but they show up on the transcript.

Approved

**BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE – REVISIONS TO ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC STANDING AND PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS**

Kin Lo  
Jenny Phelps

*That Senate approve the revisions to the academic regulations for the Faculty of Applied Science effective for the 2024 Winter Session and thereafter.*

Senator Lo stated this proposal is similar to the previous one from LFS, as it focuses on academic standings.

Approved

**Admissions Committee**

The Chair of the Senate Admissions Committee, Dr Joanne Fox, presented.



## VANTAGE ONE ARTS PROGRAM – RESUMPTION OF ADMISSIONS

Joanne Fox  
John Gilbert

*That Senate remove the suspension of admission to the Vantage One Arts Program, effective for entry to the 2025 Winter Session and thereafter.*

Approved

## Awards Committee

The Chair of the Senate Awards Committee, Dr Lawrence Burr, presented.

## NEW AWARDS AND CHANGES TO EXISTING AWARDS

Lawrence Burr  
Ben Britton

*That the Senate approve the new and revised awards as listed, that they be forwarded to the Board of Governors for approval and that letters of thanks be sent to the donors.*

Senator Burr stated that the Awards Committee has reviewed and recommended to Senate an enclosed list of ten awards, including two new endowed awards, four new annual awards, and four existing awards with changes in terms or funding source.

Approved

## Curriculum Committee

The Chair of the Senate Curriculum Committee, Dr Catherine Rawn, presented.

## CURRICULUM PROPOSALS

Catherine Rawn  
Robert Kozak

*That the Senate approves the new courses and revised program brought forward by the Faculties of Arts and Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (Forestry).*

Senator Rawn stated that there are six undergraduate courses included. Three come from the Department of History, one from Economics, one from Latin American Studies, and one from Romance Studies. They cover a variety of topics around medieval Europe, medieval gender,



global development, Francophone Indigenous literatures, as well as Afro-Latin American. The revised program is a revision from a minor in Russian and Slavic Languages and Literatures to Slavic and Eastern European Studies, along with modernization of the program. The two new courses from Forestry via the Faculty of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies are on economics of forest management, as well as land extraction and the corporation.

Approved

### Nominating Committee

The President noted that Senator Harrison has stepped down as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and thanked him for his service. He welcomed Senator Britton as the new Chair.

The Chair of the Senate Nominating Committee, Dr Ben Britton, presented. He thanked Senator Harrison for his leadership of the committee and noted that he continues as a member on the committee who contributes greatly to their work. He also thanked convocation Senators for the business they do on behalf of the Senate and the University.

### COMMITTEE ADJUSTMENTS

Ben Britton  
Paul Harrison

*That Laura Moss be appointed to the Senate Committee on Appeals on Academic Standing until 31 August 2026 and thereafter until replaced, to fill a vacancy.*

Approved

Senator Britton noted that the Nominating Committee has a number of other vacancies to fill. He thanked Senators in advance who are willing to serve on these. The student caucus has put some recommendations that will be moving forward.

### GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS WORKING GROUP

Senator Britton stated that the Nominating Committee would like to issue the call for a Faculty member from Senate to serve on a working group on Global Engagement & Partnerships. This is a committee that the Provost has brought together. Details are in the docket on page 145. He emphasized that this is an important opportunity for the Senate to engage in this policy.

Senator Britton noted that Senators who are interested should email him and copy the clerk, Mr. Chris Eaton. Email recommendations are due by November 25. To aid in the deliberations of the



committee, please include any background that you may have in global engagement and partnerships, and why you are interested in serving.

Senator Hassib thanked the Provost's Office for organizing this. He noted there is a lack of detail in what exactly the Committee's timeline or mandate will be. There is no framework for people to understand what they are applying to. The Terms of Reference do not state a specific meeting time. It can be difficult to put names forward in the absence of knowing the required time commitment.

The Provost, Dr Gage Averill, responded that the meeting times will be determined by the members of the committee. The Secretariat will determine future meeting times based on the ability of the group to meet, considering student and Faculty time limitations. This Committee is specifically asked provide guidelines to Senate. Senate has the authority to accept or deny university-to-university partnerships.

## Report from the Registrar

The Registrar, Dr Rella Ng, presented.

### 2024 STUDENT ELECTION RESULTS

The Registrar advised Senate that Pursuant to Section 16 of the *University Act*, the results of the recent Senate by-election elected Maddie Reid as a student representative of the Faculty of Education on the Vancouver Campus on the Vancouver Senate until 30 September 2025 and thereafter until a successor is elected.

## Other Business

Senator Harrison gave notice for the following motion:

*Whereas the University exists to provide a welcoming forum for the exploration of ideas by its members, and*

*Whereas if the University were to make statements on political issues that do not directly impinge on its fundamental mandate, the rights of individual members could be inappropriately limited, and*

*Whereas a number of leading universities have considered and adopted a formal policy of institutional neutrality,*

*Be it resolved that the Vancouver Senate direct the Nominating Committee to create an ad hoc committee to examine the implications of institutional neutrality and to report to*



*Senate by April 2025 with a recommendation on the advisability of UBC adopting a policy of institutional neutrality.*

**IN CAMERA – Tributes Committee**

**CANDIDATES FOR HONORARY DEGREES**

**Adjournment**

Seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 pm.