SENATE RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Friday 17 December 2021 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom

Attendance

Senators: Guy Faulkner (Chair), James Stewart (Vice-Chair), Robert Boushel, Nancy Ford, Merje Kuus, Anubhav Singh

Ex Officio: Greg Martyn

Guests: Antje Ellerman, Sandra Schinnerl

Regrets: Benjamin Fischer, Dee Goyal, Robert Kozak, James Olson, Susan Porter

Senate Staff: Michael Jud

Call to Order

The meeting of the Senate Research and Scholarship Committee (the “Committee”) was called to order at 10:03 p.m. on December 17, 2021 by G. Faulkner, Chair.

Agenda

By general consent, the Committee adopted the December 17, 2021 meeting agenda as presented.

G. Faulkner expressed concerns as to whether the Committee should be considering agenda item 5, the item consisting of a request for Senate approval for a Centre for Migration Studies within the Faculty of Arts. It was noted that the request falls outside existing Senate policy on the recognition of centres and institutes, making it somewhat unclear what process the Committee should follow and what criteria it should apply in considering the request.

Discussion followed in which Committee members noted several additional areas of concern, including the following:

- Given the relatively recent genesis of the Committee, it is unclear how requests of this nature have historically been handled, or how the Committee came to have authority in this area.
- The rationale for the request is unclear. What is the purpose of seeking Senate approval for this particular centre? What are the implications or benefits of receiving this approval?
- In the absence of a Senate policy governing single-faculty centres and institutes, the Faculties themselves have developed their own policies. It may be advisable to consider a refresh of Senate policy in this area with a view towards greater clarity.

Meeting Minutes of 22 October

Minutes of the meeting of October 22, 2021 were not yet available; they will be presented for approval at the Committee’s January meeting.
Business Arising

G. Faulkner discussed the recent report on the Peter Wall Institute which was presented to the Senate on November 17, 2021. The report’s first recommendation concerned the development of a governance manual for the institute to be developed by December 31. Committee members were asked to share their views on how best to follow up on this particular recommendation. Following discussion it was agreed that the Chair would contact the appropriate members of university administration to gain more insight into the university’s response to the recommendation. Concurrently, the Committee would inform itself of the procedural requirements for bringing this issue back to full Senate at a suitable time.

G. Faulkner also discussed one of the report’s other recommendations concerning an independent audit of the Peter Wall Institute. This recommendation raises a number of procedural questions which have not yet been answered. Following discussion the Chair undertook to follow up with Chris Eaton and provide an update at the earliest opportunity.

Centre for Migration Studies

G. Faulkner initiated the discussion by inviting members of the Committee to state their views on whether there exists a need for the Centre for Migration Studies to seek Senate approval. It is unclear from the supporting documentation why Senate approval has been deemed necessary for the Centre.

- J. Stewart suggested that there are two distinct issues: 1) is there a formal need for Senate approval in this case, and 2) is the Committee the appropriate body to be considering such requests? M. Kuus stated that she concurred with this comment.
- G. Faulkner stated that it was unclear whether the Centre’s request was compliant with applicable policy, or whether it had been submitted by the appropriate person within the Faculty of Arts.
- J. Stewart suggested that it would be prudent to hear more information from the Centre’s representatives who were waiting to be admitted to the meeting. At the same time, the Committee should work separately to gather the information it needs to make an appropriate decision on the request. This suggestion received general assent from other Committee members.

The meeting was then joined by two guests: Professor Antje Ellerman, Director, Centre for Migration Studies, and Sandra Schinnerl, Manager, Program & Initiatives, Centre for Migration Studies.

- G. Faulkner summarized for the guests the salient points of the foregoing discussion and apologized that the Committee would be unable to make a final decision on the request until a subsequent meeting. He invited the guests to further develop their proposal to elaborate on why Senate approval is necessary for the Centre.
- A. Ellerman responded that the Centre is facing a number of very specific challenges. The Centre is currently blocked from engaging in a number of activities such as establishing a visiting scholars program due to its lack of Senate approval. The Office of the Dean of Arts has indicated that the Centre must obtain Senate approval before proceeding with these activities.
• G. Faulkner then indicated that the request for Senate approval should come from the Dean of Arts via a communication which sets out clearly what limitations the Centre currently faces and what purpose Senate approval will serve.
• J. Stewart added that the Committee was unaware of its role in enabling activities of the nature described by recommending Senate approval. The Committee needs to do more work in the background to confirm that its process is formally correct.
• A. Ellerman undertook to contact the Dean’s Office and secure the additional documentation requested, with the intention of allowing this item to return to the Committee’s agenda in January.

Next Meeting  The Committee’s next meeting will be held on January 14, 2022, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Adjournment  The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.