



## SENATE AGENDA COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday, October 3, 2025 from 12:01-12:56 pm via Zoom

### Attendees

#### Senators

D. Fontana, J. Gilbert, N. Pindell

#### Ex Officio

B. Britton, L. Burr, J. Fox (Vice-Chair), S. Gopalakrishnan, L. Moss, R. Ng, W. Norman

#### Regrets

K. Kanji, K. Lo

#### Senate Staff

C. Eaton (Clerk), B. Menard

#### Call to Order and Land

#### Acknowledgement

The meeting of the Senate Agenda Committee (the “Committee”) was called to order at 12:01 pm by J. Fox, Vice-Chair. She also provided an acknowledgement of the land.

#### Agenda

**Motion:** *That the Committee adopts the October 3, 2025 agenda.*

**Carried by general consent.**

#### Minutes

**Motion:** *That the Committee approves the September 5, 2025 minutes.*

**Carried by general consent.**

#### In Camera – Agenda of the October 15, 2025 Vancouver Senate

N/A

#### External Review Recommendations (Continued)

The Vice-Chair explained that the Committee continued discussions from the last meeting, focusing on the external review and its recommendations related to the Committee. She clarified that the question about when the full Senate would be informed was different from the immediate issue, and she wanted more time to consider the kinds of recommendations. She summarized that one of the main recommendations was to establish a more executive-like function for the Senate by combining the Nominating Committee and the Agenda Committee and encouraging the president to attend. She noted that a session with the president had provided limited guidance, with feedback emphasizing not to add more work or costs. She raised questions regarding whether the Nominating Committee and Agenda Committee should be combined and when committees would be ready to report back on the external review recommendations.



The Clerk acknowledged the summary and indicated that the only strong direction from the administration was a preference to move the Senate meeting time to the afternoon. He noted that, apart from that, the administration viewed the matter as one of academic governance rather than administrative control and would support any direction that did not incur new costs. He also noted that a previous Senate Executive Committee had performed similar functions recommended by the review but was disbanded due to problems, and that any future approach would need to address these past issues.

B. Britton explained that the Nominating Committee would draft and collate recommendations, discuss them internally, and then re-engage with individual committees before presenting matters to the Senate.

B. Britton outlined the governance considerations regarding a potential merger of the Nominating Committee and the Agenda Committee. He explained that the Nominating Committee held substantive responsibilities in Senate governance, including receiving committee reports, discussing committee creation and dissolution, and handling specific policy issues. He noted that the membership of the Nominating Committee was elected by the Senate, while the Agenda Committee was largely composed of committee chairs. He observed that merging the two committees could both dilute authority and decrease the strength of their voice in governance. B. Britton noted that the Nominating Committee held influence over appointments to committees. He also suggested that establishing a fixed standing meeting time could improve efficiency.

J. Gilbert expressed agreement with the points made. He asked the Clerk to clarify the request regarding Senate meeting times.

The Clerk responded that the president preferred meetings to be held in the afternoon rather than in the evening for Vancouver. He described previous surveys of Senators conducted over multiple decades and outlined the gradual shift of Senate meeting times from 8:00 pm to 6:00 pm, citing conflicts with class schedules and work obligations as reasons for adjustments. He added that moving the meetings to the afternoon would require coordination, as was done for the Okanagan campus, but noted that while possible, there were consequences and no time had been found where all participants were satisfied.

L. Moss moved the conversation back to Senate meeting times by explaining that the schedule affected her ability to serve on Senate in previous years due to family obligations. She described long campus days as a barrier for faculty members. She noted the importance of on-campus participation for Senate work.



S. Gopalakrishnan suggested that surveys of current Senate members reflected a self-selecting group and might not capture the perspectives of potential members who were deterred by time commitments.

The Vice-Chair responded, recognizing the difficulty in reaching potential members outside of the current Senate. She suggested consultations and noted interest in understanding the perspectives of student senators who also faced scheduling constraints.

D. Fontana questioned whether Senate could be prioritized more significantly within the University schedule or whether class schedules could be adjusted to accommodate Senate sessions.

The Clerk noted that the meeting had been moved to 6 pm to accommodate convocation and student senators' availability. He described adjustments made in the Okanagan to avoid scheduling conflicts with faculty senators and students and acknowledged occasional difficulties in scheduling. He noted that while moving the meeting day could be challenging, adjustments within the day were possible.

The Vice-Chair noted the time-sensitivity of the discussion and the need to take action. She raised the topic of whether two committees should merge.

The Clerk responded that the external review supported enhancing the Agenda Committee's role in providing Senate with priority and direction. He did not find a rationale for disbanding the Nominating Committee. He added that removing the Nominating Committee's influence would reduce enforcement tools but could still be effective.

The Vice-Chair moved the discussion back to Senate meeting times.

In response, the Clerk explained that previous surveys had shown a trimodal distribution with one third of respondents preferring the current schedule, one third preferring a change, and one third had no opinion.

D. Fontana asked if survey results could be affected by current schedules.

The Clerk noted that respondents were generally self-selected and available at 6 pm on Wednesdays.

The Vice-Chair noted that clarity on potential changes was required before the next triennium.



W. Norman expressed support for the external review's recommendation and highlighted equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations. She suggested proposing a test period of one or two triennia to evaluate changes.

The Clerk asked whether a motion could be made to adjust the Senate meeting time to 4 pm for the next two triennia.

W. Norman suggested 2 pm.

The Clerk noted that 2 pm might be too early, and acknowledged a suggestion for 4 pm.

#### **CHANGE START TIME OF SENATE**

**Motion:** *That the Senate Agenda Committee recommends to Senate for that, effective for the two triennia commencing in September 2026, the start time for all Vancouver Senate meetings be changed from the current scheduled time to 4:00 PM.*

Moved: W. Norman  
Seconded: L. Moss  
**Carried**

S. Gopalakrishnan suggested that, in addition to moving the meeting time, the Senate could consider a schedule with four in-person teaching days and one online day to support students and faculty members with long commutes.

The Clerk responded that the Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration implemented a similar schedule but noted space utilization challenges on campus.

S. Gopalakrishnan clarified that the proposal was not about increasing classroom density but about designating certain sessions online to provide flexibility for students with part-time jobs.

J. Gilbert expressed agreement with previous comments and supported moving the meeting to 4 pm. He noted that prior attempts had been made to adjust the time and emphasized that the change addressed equity and inclusion considerations raised in the report.

L. Burr expressed support for moving the meeting to 4 pm and suggested that Senate meetings should aim to conclude by 6 pm, with a possible extension to 6:30 pm.

B. Britton outlined questions related to the non-voting membership of committees, governance planning, and transparent communication with the Senate and the wider UBC community.



The Clerk confirmed that non-voting membership was determined by the Nominating Committee.

The Vice-Chair proposed that the discussion on prioritization and annual plans be moved to the next meeting.

The Registrar noted that the University was currently searching for an Associate Vice-President, Indigenous and asked if that role should be added rather than the Director of the First Nations House of Learning.

The Vice-Chair acknowledged this suggestion.

W. Norman proposed extending the next meeting by an additional half hour to allow for broader discussion.

The Vice-Chair confirmed that the meeting start time would remain the same, but the end time would be extended by 30 minutes.

**Next Meeting** Friday, November 7, 2025 from 12-1:30 pm

**Adjournment** The meeting adjourned at 12:56 pm.