

*Attendance: See appendix A.*

1. Opening remarks

The chair welcomed members of Council and thanked them for their attendance. She noted that the presentation for Item 10 on the agenda, the *University of Saskatchewan Learning Charter*, will be videotaped so that it can be made available as a podcast, and that microphones have been set up in the theatre so that questions and comments from members of Council can be recorded for the podcast.

The chair then invited Professor Emeritus Bob Besant, Department of Mechanical Engineering, to present a memorial tribute for his late colleague Professor Owen Mann, who taught in Mechanical Engineering from 1949-1990. Professor Mann retired from the college in 1990 and passed away November 12, 2009.

Following a moment of silence, the business of Council resumed.

2. Adoption of the agenda

RHODES/GRAY: That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2009

GRAY/SURTEES: That the minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2009, be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Business arising from the minutes

No business was identified as arising from the minutes.

5. Report of the president

The president's verbal report began with an update on the status of the recent proposal submitted by the government of Saskatchewan in cooperation with the University of Saskatchewan and at the invitation of the government of Canada, to build a research reactor for the production of medical isotopes. The president noted that the federal minister has received the proposal, is considering it and that the university expects to hear more about the outcome of the review in the new year. President MacKinnon also read from a press release issued earlier in the day in which the government of Saskatchewan announced its decision against building a large-scale nuclear power plant in the province, but endorsed the idea of a medical isotope-producing research reactor at the university and committed to

maintaining the competitiveness of uranium mining and exploration and to supporting advances in nuclear research.

The president also reported that the Board of Governors met earlier in the week, and on the evening of December 15 joined Council chairs for a reception in the Kenderdine Gallery and to hear presentations on learning technologies, including a tour and demonstrations in the WestGrid Collaboration and Visualization Facility. Members of the board expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to interact with members of Council, and indicated that this event provided them with a better understanding of the work the university is doing in the area of learning technologies. The event reinforced for board members that one of the main reasons behind the board's work is to provide support for the teaching and learning mission of the university. The evening was gratifying for the depth of the board's engaged interest, and for the high quality of presentations and demonstrations by many members of the university community.

## 6. Report of the provost

Dr. Fairbairn commended members of Council to his written report, and highlighted a number of items, including the report on the recent Bachelor of Education Program leaders' forum, which gathered academic leaders together to discuss a major program revision being planned for the Bachelor of Education curriculum. He also drew Council members' attention to two recent appointments, of Professor Baljit Singh as special advisor to the provost on experiential learning, and of Dr. Douglas Freeman as the new dean of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.

The provost also announced an upcoming series of events under the umbrella of Technology Week, including a visit and lecture by Mike Wesch of Kansas State University on January 11. This is expected to be one of a series of events on topics of significance to teaching and learning which will take place throughout 2010. Council members are invited to watch for further announcements in January.

## 7. Student societies reports

### 7.1 Report from the USSU

Warren Kirkland presented his report as president of the USSU. In addition to his written report, he offered lighthearted apologies to any Australian students on campus for his accent in the video presented last month. He also indicated there is good news on recent developments concerning the provision of child care spaces near campus with the possibility of another 60 spaces in Brunskill School; this is contingent on funding which is being sought from the provincial government.

### 7.2 Report from the GSA

Nicholas Fraser presented the report as president of the graduate students' association. The GSA is very pleased to be moving into the new graduate commons space on December 18. Mr. Fraser expressed thanks to the university and its units for their assistance with this project, and invited colleges and units to work with them to use the space to its fullest advantage.

He also noted a correction for his report: the Graduate Student Bursaries given out for term 1 are in the amount of \$750 each, rather than \$7,500. The deadline for application for the next round of bursaries is February 14.

Mr. Fraser also asked Council members to take note of the interdisciplinary conference on Intellectual Property in the Academy that will be held in May; the conference is sponsored by the GSA with the support of College of Graduate Studies and Research and the College of Law.

## 8. Academic programs committee

Professor Len Proctor presented the report as chair of the academic programs committee.

### 8.1 Request for decision: revisions to Agriculture and Bioresources programs

Professor Proctor introduced this item with a brief overview of the rationale for the proposed honours level of concentration in the B.Sc. (Agbus.)

PROCTOR/SCHWIER: That Council approve the proposal from the College of Agriculture and Bioresources for an honours level of concentration in the Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness [B.Sc. (Agbus.)].

CARRIED

### 8.2 Items for information

The following items were received for information:

- Agriculture and Bioresources
  - change of program name to Food and Bioproduct Sciences
  - addition of new minor in Food and Bioproduct Sciences
  - addition of cross-college minor in Nutrition
  - deletion of minors in Food Science and in Applied Microbiology
- Academic schedule for 2010-11. It was noted that there have been a few minor changes to the schedule since its review by the committee, with respect to some dates for the Colleges of Law and of Nursing. The chair will ensure that a revised version is circulated to Council at its January 21 meeting.

## 9. Nominations committee

Professor Fran Walley presented this item as chair of the nominations committee.

### 9.1 Request for decision: nominations to committees

The chair called three times for additional nominations from the floor for any of these three positions. There being no further nominations, the matter was put to a vote.

WALLEY/SCHWIER: That Council approve the nomination of Mary Buhr, dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, as the general academic assembly member who holds a senior administrative position on the search committee for dean of Law;

AND that Council approve the nomination of Valerie Korinek, Department of History, as general academic assembly member on the distinguished chairs advisory committee;

AND that Council approve the nomination of Carol Rodgers, College of Kinesiology, as chair of the research, scholarly and artistic work committee for January to June, 2010.

CARRIED

10. Teaching and learning committee

Richard Long presented this item as chair of the teaching and learning committee.

10.1 Request for input: University of Saskatchewan learning charter

Professor Long began his comments by explaining that at the suggestion of his committee, his presentation will be videotaped for podcasting. The presentation is available on the committee's web page at

[http://www.usask.ca/university\\_secretary/council/committees/teaching\\_learning/Learning\\_Charter.php](http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/committees/teaching_learning/Learning_Charter.php).

Several members of Council congratulated the committee on the document and for the changes that have been made in response to earlier suggestions. Comments on the presentation of the document included a critique of the graphic accompanying the charter and an endorsement of the title "learning charter." Several further suggestions to the charter's contents were made:

- that the language of the various obligations under the charter (pertaining to student, instructor, and institution) be standardized and harmonized. Currently, for example, students are called upon to "act ethically" and instructors to "act professionally." Why the difference?
- that the committee consider what values might be implicit in some of the statements (e.g., what do we mean by 'success' or by 'a dignified manner') and what limits there might be to some of the obligations expressed in the charter (e.g. 'offer high quality programs'?).
- that the section on acting ethically be broadened to include not just academic integrity but other kinds of ethical behaviour we expect of our students
- that the instructor commitments include an obligation to build an effective learning environment, and acknowledge that instructors share with the institution an obligation to cultivate the support their students need.
- that the section on promoting research enhanced learning recognizes that students may be engaged directly in research activities themselves and are creators and disseminators of new knowledge.
- that the committee give some thought to the fact that "students" and "instructors" are different kinds of categories than "the university," since the university could not exist without both students and instructors.
- that the document goes too quickly from the introduction into 12 specific learning goals, without first giving a glimpse of the whole. Perhaps there could be a paragraph under "Core Learning Goals" that is more integrative, more humanistic, and holds out some goals for education, including welcoming all ways of learning and knowing including aboriginal.
- articulating assumptions or principles would be helpful, e.g. that education is a process of personal development for individuals that often happens in a

community and typically involves learners engaging with mentors, or as learning as a partnership.

- there may need to be more acknowledgement that just as there are different styles of learning, there are different styles of delivery and teaching.
- the charter seems to be very classroom-based; there should be more acknowledgement of learning (such as on-line and experiential learning) that takes place outside the classroom.
- the university's commitment to fostering learning partnerships should ensure that community-based learning is offered in a safe environment and not subjecting the students to undue risks.
- Under university commitment #2, the commitment to ensure qualified and effective instructors contains two separate ideas: one connected with the selection and review process and one with ongoing professional development. The idea that teaching performance should be an important factor in the search and review process should be decoupled from the notion that the university is also responsible for providing opportunities for instructors to develop and enhance their teaching skills.

11. Other business

There was no other business identified.

12. Question period

The provost asked members of Council to reflect back on the year 2009 and to ask, if the University of Saskatchewan were a person, what would our new year's resolution be?

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. Next meeting is at 2:30 p.m., Thursday, January 21, 2010.