

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE 427th MEETING OF SENATE

The 427th meeting of Senate, a special meeting, took place on Tuesday 29 August 2000, at 9:00 a.m., in the Conference Room, McGreer Hall.

Present: Mrs. J. Hodder, in the Chair; Dr. J. Crooks, Dr. A. Drumheller, Mrs. W. Durrant, Dr. N. Ferguson, Ms. K. Hammond, Ms. S. Hodge, Dr. N. Jones, Dr. J. Rittenhouse, Dr. C. Rose, Prof. F. Siddiqui, Mr. J. Stewart, Dr. V. Stroehrer, Dr. R. Van Hulst, Dr. H. White. Ms. R. Cavanagh attended on behalf of the Part-time Students Association.

Mrs. Hodder thanked Senators for making themselves available for a second special meeting in the summer months. She introduced the three new student Senators present: Shannon Hodge (SRC Vice-President Academic), Kelly Hammond (Social Sciences), and Julian Stewart (Humanities).

Mrs. Hodder reported that, following the special meeting in July, the changes proposed by Senate had been made to the performance contract; the final version had been approved by the Executive Committee, translated, and submitted to the Minister in mid-August. It is likely that the Minister will visit Bishop's to sign the document in September.

Referring to recent articles in the press, Mrs. Hodder said that the proposed changes to the funding rules for universities are likely to be beneficial to Bishop's; however some other institutions are contesting the new formula. Consultations are continuing until mid-September, and it is hoped that we will receive confirmation of the new rules during the fall. We are relieved to know, however, that our decision of last year to plan a deficit budget rather than make additional cuts, seems to have been a good one.

Mrs. Hodder noted that as of today's date the enrollments for the fall semester are within the range we had hoped for.

1/427 STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN

Dr. Rittenhouse outlined the context of the proposal for a Strategic Research Plan. The federal government has provided a certain number of Canada Research Chairs, of two types: Tier 1 is designated for international-calibre researchers with significant grant and publication records, and Tier 2 for rising scholars with high potential. Bishop's has been allocated one Tier 1 Chair, which brings \$200,000 per annum, and the right to apply to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation for an additional one-time only grant of \$125,000 to be used for infrastructure in support of the Chair. The allocation is based on the institution's level of funded research over the past three years.

To take advantage of this programme, the University is required to submit a Strategic Research

Plan by 1 September, through Québec, to an adjudication committee in Ottawa. In December, the University may nominate a candidate for the Chair. Decisions will be made in the spring by the adjudication committee, with reference to the terms of our Strategic Plan; if our candidate is not accepted we may make a second nomination.

The document now before Senate was developed in a very short time frame at the end of the summer. It will be reviewed and revised on an annual basis. The first section describes the institution for the benefit of the adjudicating bodies, and specific objectives are set out.

Prof. Siddiqui proposed that, on page 6, the Cormier Centre be added to the list of research centres on campus; he noted that the Centre maintains research links with other universities and its Board includes a Nobel laureate.

Dr. Van Hulst suggested that the text should be more explicit about the process for evaluation of research activity: who will do this, and how? He wondered how this Plan will create a climate for research different from that which now exists.

Dr. Rittenhouse said that success in meeting these objectives depends on an active and functioning Research Office at Bishop's, though the end responsibility will lie with the Vice-Principal. Mrs. Hodder added that a benchmarking exercise with a similar institution will help us to see where we can improve.

Dr. Van Hulst indicated that a major impediment to research activity here is the heavy teaching load carried by faculty, as well as inadequate infrastructure, and access to graduate students.

Dr. Rose wondered if the reference to "brain drain" on page 2 of the document was useful in the present context. He also urged that the unfunded research being carried on at Bishop's not be neglected in the Strategic Plan. He expressed his hope that in future the process of selecting potential candidates for this kind of opportunity would be a more inclusive and transparent one.

Dr. Rittenhouse acknowledged the difficult timing of the present proposal, and undertook that any future action in this would conform to proper university procedures.

It was moved by Prof. Siddiqui, seconded by Dr. Van Hulst, that Senate approve the Strategic Research Plan, with the modifications suggested by Senators.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.