SENATE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE

FINAL REPORT TO SENATE

April 8, 2009
Executive Summary

The Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Governance was established by the Dalhousie University Senate in December 2007 with a mandate to review the terms of reference and work of all existing Standing Committees of Senate established under the Constitutional Provisions Governing the Operations of Senate. This report is an assessment of both the purpose and the effectiveness of these committees as the medium by which the faculty participate in university governance. The Ad Hoc Committee began its work in February 2008 and decided to proceed on the basis of conducting a series of interviews with members of the Standing Committees, a review of annual reports and minutes as well an open consultation with interested members of the university community posted on Notice Digest.

The overall conclusion is that there are uneven performances from the Standing Committees which weaken the ability of Senate to reach its academic objectives. We believe this may be explained by unclear or out of date terms of reference; inconsistent reporting of committee work and an unwillingness of faculty to participate on committees perceived as overly demanding of their time. In addition, we conclude that some committees are inappropriately composed, in that they are not always chaired by a member of Senate and sometimes under-represented by students and members of some faculties. We also note that there is a disconnection between committees of the Senate and those created by the senior administration, which has led to the belief that the work of Senate is becoming superseded and therefore redundant.

This report recommends a reduction of the number of Standing Committees in order to maintain and clarify the relevance of their role in academic governance. The key recommendations include:

1. **The number of Standing Committees be reduced to four.**

2. **The terms of reference of absorbed standing committees, in some cases, be assigned to an appropriate Sub-Committee.** Each Sub-Committee will report to one of the four Standing Committees to ensure the functions of an absorbed Committee are maintained within Senate. Working groups or task forces may also be established as needed, within each Standing Committee.

3. **All Standing Committees be identified as Senate committees to recognize their reporting relationship.**

4. **Three of the four Standing Committees (SSC is the exception) will report annually to Senate as per their terms of reference.**

5. **All Senate Standing Committees will be chaired by a Senate Officer and all Senate Standing Sub-Committees will be chaired by a Senator.**

6. **Maintain current levels and perhaps increase the representation of students on Standing Committees.**
7. The Senate, from time to time, may wish to review the terms of reference and the composition of the Senate Standing Committees and Sub-Committees.

We also recommend that the Senate take steps to enhance its visibility in the University community and encourage both the Senate and the senior administration to consider ways to reduce the perception of a social distance between the Senate and administration. We believe it is important for all faculty, who participate in the work of Senate, to expect this work will contribute in a material way to the overall success of their academic careers.
Introduction and Mandate of the Committee

This report addresses the subject of university governance and, in particular, the role and effectiveness of the Senate Standing Committees at Dalhousie University as they are currently constituted. Since the 1970s the extent of influence exercised by the professoriate toward the internal regulation of academic matters at Canadian universities is often seen to be somewhat ambiguous. This is usually attributed to the change in faculty engagement which has occurred at universities over the past thirty years, as well as the development of a body of professional academic administrators who manage financial and academic priorities.

At Dalhousie, the Senate has remained the senior authority for academic policies, but faculty participation in academic decision-making and in university governance, has been a matter of concern over the years. Former President Howard Clark, in his book, *Growth and Governance of Canadian Universities* (2003), argued that the labour relations climate at the University during the mid-nineties undermined the Dalhousie Senate and resulted in indifference towards its mandate from a majority of faculty members (p.153). Prior to that, the report by the *Ad Hoc Committee On Senate Reform* (April, 1994), also described the Senate as becoming ‘peripheral’ and ‘insignificant’ because of its diminishing role in determining academic and financial priorities:

> Senate has not been effective either in determining academic priorities or participating in academic and financial planning and development. Senate’s failure to determine academic priorities is due primarily to its marginal role in the annual budgetary process (p.1-2)

The role of Senate Standing Committees has been at the center of discussions about faculty participation in university governance. Indeed, both the *Ad Hoc Senate Committee on the University Constitution* (April, 1979) and the *Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Reform* (April, 1994) refer to the performance and overall effectiveness of Senate as being a reflection of its uncertain mandate and the often uninformed advice offered by faculty. The 1979 Report in particular, was an outcome of concern about the threat to the authority of Senate by the creation of the Dalhousie Faculty Association which some believed would become the medium by which faculty members would relate to academic decision-making. As a consequence, Senate from time to time, has reviewed its responsibilities in order to ensure that the tasks mandated and the level of participation in Senate committees would continue to keep pace with the academic priorities of the University.

An effective Senate involves faculty, students and administration actively and directly in the governance of the University, where Senators and Senate committees act in a non partisan way, not as representatives of their various constituencies, but in the overall interest of the University. If these main stakeholders aren’t fully participating in University governance through the Senate, those who are left to conduct the
day to day affairs of the University will become increasingly remote from those bodies which fundamentally make up the University: its faculty, students, and administration.

In the context of some concern about the relevance of the work being assigned to Standing Committees and because of a perceived growing reluctance of faculty members to agree to serve on them, the Senate Steering Committee established the Senate Ad Hoc Governance Committee with a mandate to review the terms of reference and the work of all existing Standing Committees of Senate. The purpose of the review was to provide advice to Senate about the overall efficacy of the Standing Committees and to determine whether their responsibilities with respect to academic governance could be performed more effectively through other arrangements.

The Ad Hoc Committee was established by Senate in December 2007 with the following Members:

Dr. Peter M. Butler, Vice-Chair of Senate and Committee Chair, Faculty of Arts and Social Science
Dr. Patricia McMullen, Faculty of Science (member until November 2008)
Dr. Richard Kroeker, Faculty of Architecture & Planning
Dr. David Precious, Faculty of Dentistry (Dean, Faculty of Dentistry to June 30, 2008)
Dr. Carol Camfield, Faculty of Medicine
Dr. Leslie MacLaren, Acting Co-President, Nova Scotia Agricultural College
Dr. Lorn Sheehan, Faculty of Management
Mr. Eric Snow, Student
Mr. Mark Coffin, Student
Ms. Susan Brousseau, Director, University Secretariat
Ms. Andrea Power, Administrative Support

Terms of Reference

1. To revisit individual Senate Standing Committee Terms of reference for approval by the Senate Steering Committee.

2. To identify the key elements in each Senate Standing Committee’s role as they relate to the responsibilities and efficacy of the overall academic governance of the Senate.

3. To recommend best practices for Senate Standing Committees to fulfill its responsibilities (i.e. meeting schedule, resources, records).

4. To identify orientation and continuing education needs for Senate Standing Committee members.

5. To recommend the appropriate size of each Senate Standing Committee and the sources for Committee membership.

6. To recommend appropriate recruitment and recognition strategies for each Senate Standing Committee.
Our Approach

Early in its deliberations, the Ad Hoc Governance Committee determined that it would concentrate its efforts on points 1 and 2 of the Terms of Reference. The Committee concluded that it would be premature to make recommendations with respect to points 3 - 6 until Senate indicates its approval of the direction of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee with respect to the recommended structure.

The Ad Hoc Governance Committee began its meetings on February 21, 2008, and discussed how to proceed with the study of current Standing Committees. (See Appendix A). At that time it was decided that the following approach be taken to complete the task assigned:

- The Chairs of each Standing Committee be contacted to comment on the terms of reference and their relevance for each Committee.
- The annual reports and meeting minutes from each committee be reviewed.
- Selective Committee Chairs be interviewed concerning their respective committees and other individuals be identified who should be consulted or interviewed.
- A call for comments on the Senate Committees be solicited from the university community in general.

After the Ad Hoc Governance Committee Chair contacted each of the Standing Committee Chairs, the following information was collected:

- The relevance of the current Committee terms of reference and, in particular, their functions\(^1\);
- The connection or any perceived disconnect, between the current work of each committee and its stated mandate and goal;
- The appropriateness of the current committee’s size and membership;
- The relevance of the committee’s work as it relates to overlap with and effectiveness of other Senate committees and the broader university community (e.g. the Board, President’s Advisory Committees on Sustainability); and
- The Committee’s relationship and connection with the Senate.

In addition to meeting selectively with Committee Chairs, the Ad hoc Governance Committee conducted interviews with several other members of the university faculty, as well as with some members of the Senior Administration and student leaders. The points for discussion during each of these interviews were essentially the same as those outlined above. The names of those interviewed are included in Appendix C.

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\(^1\) Appendix B contains the current functions for each Senate Standing Committee.
No requests for interviews were received in response to an announcement about the work of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee circulated on Notice Digest to members of the university community.

Observations and Conclusions

Having reviewed the Standing Committees’ responses to our questionnaire, reviewed their annual reports and meeting minutes, and the information collected from in-person interviews, the Ad Hoc Governance Committee has concluded that there are uneven performances from the committees which weaken the ability of Senate to meet its academic objectives. There are a variety of reasons for this, depending on the committee being considered, but principally it may be explained by:

- **Terms of reference which are unclear or out of date,**
- **Inconsistent annual reporting of committee work,** and
- **An unwillingness by faculty to participate in some committees because of perceptions of heavy workloads.**

The Senate’s role in helping to define academic priorities fundamentally depends upon the terms of reference for its Standing Committees being clear and current. We note that any deficiencies we have observed may reflect the fact that the last review of Senate took place in 1994 and scant attention was paid then to the responsibilities of the committees. While for the most part the terms continue to be relevant and not in need of change, there are some anomalies which should be considered by Senate. From our review of the committees, those which are generally working successfully according to their terms of reference, includes: Senate Nominating Committee; Senate Steering Committee; Senate Discipline Committee; Senate Academic Appeals Committee; and the Honorary Degrees Committee.

The principal concern about these particular committees is a reluctance of faculty members to agree to serve on them. Committee work can be demanding of faculty time which could otherwise be given to finding research grants, publications and teaching - activities which a majority of faculty has been told contribute much more to their career advancement at Dalhousie.

Committees which appear to have terms of reference that are unclear, out of date, or appear to have a disconnect with Senate are: Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee; Senate Committee on Academic Administration; Senate Computing and Information Technology Planning Committee; Senate Library Committee; Senate Physical Planning Committee; Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching; Ombudsperson Advisory Committee and the Senate Committee on the Environment.
The Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee (SAPBC) appears to be meeting its mandate with the exception of its budget component. The role of SAPBC as an advisory body that is ‘involved in the preparation of the annual budget so that it reflects the University’s academic priorities’ is invisible. This is largely because the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) has an undefined connection to SAPBC or to the operations of Senate. The representatives of the Senate on the BAC are themselves not members of SAPBC or even of Senate. Indeed, Senate seems to have evolved into a marginal role in the annual budgeting process. Moreover, the role of SAPBC in academic planning generally appears to be focused upon new program development and, indeed, the budget implications of that are a part of the meetings. However, this usually involves approvals from the Vice-President Academic on the costs of proposals for new programs. The role of SAPBC in reviewing existing programs, and especially their costs to the University, is less clear and, for example, does not currently involve eliminating courses no longer being taught or programs that have become too costly for the University to continue. In terms of representation, there is concern for an expanded student membership with the potential for two year terms, as well as the potential to ensure each Faculty is represented.

SAPBC has the opportunity to be a direct link to several subcommittees, where the work of these subcommittees is naturally associated with the work of the SAPBC. This natural link will ensure that the apparent diminished functions of particular committees will continue to be considered a part of Senate’s agenda.

The Senate Committee on Academic Administration (SCAA) conforms to its mandate and it meets regularly but seems not to be very clearly linked to Senate business. This Committee has been delegated responsibility for academic regulations by Senate and is not required to submit an annual report to Senate. In particular, the connection of the Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity with SCAA seems ambiguous given the existence of the Senate Discipline Committee with its own responsibility for irregularities and offences that are of an academic nature. There is indeed some question as to whether discipline is simply a matter of academic administration as the current arrangements would make it appear. We also have some concern that the representation on SCAA, both of the various faculties and of relevant academic administrators, is too narrow; perhaps even that extra representation is desirable, including an expanded student membership with the potential for two year terms. Moreover, it appears that both the Committee of Vice-Presidents and the Deans’ Council, which themselves deal with matters of academic regulation, are weakly connected to the activities of SCAA, although both of these academic administrative committees include individuals who serve on SCAA or/and who are members of Senate.

The Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching (SCOLT) terms of reference are, according to the Chair of the Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching are perhaps a little far reaching. SCOLT has concentrated its efforts in three areas: innovation in learning and teaching, recognition of teaching
excellence at Dalhousie, and advising the Director of the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT). Over the past number of years, SCOLT has experienced a high turn-over of membership and poor attendance at meetings. The duties that SCOLT fulfill as a Senate standing committee could be assumed by a sub-committee.

The Senate Computing and Information Technology Planning Committee (SCITPC), like the others identified above, is performing its responsibilities but according to a mandate which may now be outdated. In particular, its terms of reference imply an authority with respect to decisions on policy and budgeting for computing services. Our review has suggested that its work has currently become largely an advisory function, as decision-making authority resides in other committees and primarily in University Computing and Information Services. In sum, SCITPC has evolved into a committee which contributes to discussions about computing at Dalhousie and does not have any power over the planning process. The committee sees itself as having an advisory responsibility while leaving administrative decisions elsewhere. This aspect of its terms of reference continues to be a worthwhile reason to continue to have SCITPC; however, the committee has also described itself as having only a 'minimal' connection with Senate. We therefore conclude that the functions assigned to SCITPC may well need to be reconsidered and should perhaps be reassigned to create a stronger link to Senate.

The Senate Library Committee (SLC) has struggled with its existing terms of reference and has, throughout the years, attempted to align its current terms of reference with its current functions. The SLC has met with the Senate Steering Committee to discuss the realignment twice in the past couple of years. The current functions of the SLC are broad and are representative of a time when it was critical that the budget of the library be reviewed by an external body. In one of the responses it was noted that, “the Senate Library Committee is mainly a forum for communication.” The membership of the SLC is also considerably large and this has made it often difficult to find times when all members could attend. The University librarians use the SLC as a vehicle to inform units of developments and activities, but “if faculty representatives don’t go to meetings and take the information back, it doesn’t serve the intended purpose”. It was also noted in our interviews that the SLC has a strong natural overlap with the Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching (SCOLT). It is important that key library functions remain a part of Senate; but, they may need to be realigned with another Standing Committee.

The Senate Physical Planning Committee (SPPC) is not meeting its mandate and seems to lack focus. It has not consistently delivered annual reports to Senate. Its terms of reference require it to evaluate and give advice on the physical planning process, including uses made of existing facilities, construction of new buildings and proposals for alterations and renovations. It is, for example, supposed to act as a screening group for procurement proposals brought forward by the Facilities Management Group. It does not do this, and appears to simply be acting as subordinate to the Facilities Management Group.
Moreover, the committee meets infrequently and may not have adequate membership either from students or faculty members. In sum, the role of SPPC as it is currently constituted is ambiguous. It will still be important for Senate to provide input regarding academic needs in the physical planning process, but it may not require the existence of this committee to do so.

The Senate Committee on the Environment (SCE) is in a similar position. It meets regularly, has a diverse composition and has usually submitted an annual report. To all intents and purposes its mandate is very appropriate, given current concerns about sustainability at the University. Yet, the establishment of the President’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability and the Office of Sustainability raises questions about the continuing mandate of a Senate Committee on the Environment. Indeed, it would seem that there will be a good deal of overlap in the focus for these activities. Senate must ensure that the relevant functions of the SCE are reassigned and focused to ensure they are fulfilled. It must also ensure that it maintains a link to the Office of Sustainability and the President’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability. Currently, Senate appoints three faculty representatives to the President’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability; however, they are not Senators.

The Ombudsperson Advisory Committee is mandated to oversee the operation of the Ombudsperson office. The committee has a very narrow mandate since it only meets to select the Ombudsperson and the assistant Ombudsperson. Our review finds no evidence of work being done here as a Senate committee, since the role of Ombudsperson has been operationalized in the office of the Vice-President Student Services. There is no evidence that the committee does anything to assist with the Office of Ombudsperson; however, it will important for the Ombudsperson Office to maintain an annual reporting relationship with Senate.

We conclude that the uneven performance of Standing Committees is a function of:

• **Inappropriate composition, since the Committees are not always chaired by individuals who are members of Senate, and/or are not representative of Faculties and students.**

Both issues apparently contribute to reducing the significance of the work of Standing Committees relative to the leadership role expected of the Senate in defining academic policies. Senate Standing Committees that are chaired by individuals who are not senators diminish perceptions of the authority of Senate in university governance. While these committees may be operating under the authority of Senate, the sense that they report to Senate is lost. This is especially likely when Chairs do not attend the meetings of Senate to get a sense of the relevance of their committee to the work of Senate. Some Standing Committees do not have adequate representation across the Faculties or from the students. On the students side, in particular, the demands on the time of DSU designates are quite heavy and there are
often not enough student members to participate adequately in all committees.

- **There is a growing gap between the role of committees created by the senior administration and the Senate's involvement in academic policies; this gap has created a view that the current Senate Committees have become redundant.**

The Ad Hoc Governance Committee believes that a positive and close working relationship for the Senate with the senior administration of the University is essential to the life of the University. At the same time, we have found that opinions about the effectiveness of Senate Standing Committees are also derived from a concern that the work assigned to these committees is being operationalized by other groups created by the senior administration of the University. This is seen to be a challenge to the viability of the committee structure and the concept of collegial governance.

The attention of the Ad Hoc Governance Committee was drawn in particular to the creation of the **Office of Sustainability** which deals with environmentally relevant policies and overlaps with the work of the **Senate Committee on the Environment**; the work of the **Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching** which is directly related to work at the **Center for Learning and Teaching**; and finally the **Budget Advisory Committee**, which has seemed to have taken away the advisory role for the Senate in decisions about resource allocation that have been constitutionally assigned to the **Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee**.

Some argue that the Standing Committees must offer a more meaningful experience to get people to agree to serve on them. They should give the impression that serving makes a difference to the University and to them. Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee work is identified as a model for this as it deals with concrete proposals and the purpose of the hours spent on the committees' work is quite clear. As one respondent observed, 'you know where you are going on that committee, but you don’t always know that on other committees'.

The Ad Hoc Governance Committee has received a number of suggestions which could diminish the gap between the administrative committees and Senate Standing Committees. A common theme in these suggestions is to develop ways in which academic administrators could be more closely drawn into the work of the Committees themselves. In fact, some respondents are of the view that Senate could function effectively by having administrators serve as appointed committee members rather than as resource people. Others suggest that by ensuring the Senate has effective Standing Committees, there will be a diminished need for the administration to establish ‘special advisory groups’ to handle academic policy issues. In turn, this will then ensure that the administration will have a better appreciation of the time commitment required for faculty to serve on Senate Standing Committees.
The Ad Hoc Governance Committee also heard suggestions that Senate might execute its responsibilities without its Standing Committees at all. It was suggested that members of Senate could be more fully informed about academic policy directions if senior administrators were required to report to Senate about their initiatives. This would offer a more direct way for members of the Senate to receive information and offer advice on policy since they would speak directly to those who are responsible for implementing policies. Others suggested that members of the Board of Governors, other than Senators appointed to the Board, might participate in meetings of Senate on a regular basis or particularly when contentious issues which relate to academic policies are being discussed.

In order to ensure faculty involvement in the initiative underway to enhance the quality of the student experience at Dalhousie, we believe it is important for Senate to have an active role in the design and implementation of policies to achieve a better student experience. In particular, Senate should be a party to any new policy to create a more flexible curriculum for student needs just as it is with the University's efforts to enhance the learning and teaching environment. It should also contribute to a plan for developing and enhancing students' academic success in association with the Center for Learning and Teaching and/or the Vice-President, Student Services. As well, it should work with Board committees and the senior administration on matters relating to enrolment and to increasing student retention rates.

**Recommendations**

In light of these observations, the Committee has developed a number of recommendations regarding the reorganization of the Standing Committees that are aimed at strengthening them and clarifying their role in academic governance. We are recommending that some Standing Committees’ terms of reference be assigned to other Standing Committees in order to ensure their continued connection to the work of and visibility to Senate. We believe that this will make them more significant and encourage increased faculty participation. This will also provide an opportunity to create sub-committees within the larger Standing Committees, ensuring the functions of these current committees are retained within Senate. Working groups or task forces may be created on an as needed basis to consider specific issues or proposals in a specified timeframe.

We recognize that the Constitutional Provisions Governing the Operations of Senate regarding Senate Standing Committees will have to be amended to incorporate these proposals, if they are accepted by Senate.
We are recommending that:

1. The number of Standing Committees be reduced to four.

2. The terms of reference of absorbed standing committees, in some cases, be assigned to an appropriate Sub-Committee. Each Sub-Committee will report to one of the four Standing Committees to ensure the functions of an absorbed Committee are maintained within Senate. Working groups or task forces may also be established as needed, within each Standing Committee.

3. All Standing Committees be identified as Senate committees to recognize their reporting relationship.

4. Three of the four Standing Committees (SSC is the exception) will report annually to Senate as per their terms of reference.

5. All Senate Standing Committees will be chaired by a Senate Officer and all Senate Standing Sub-Committees will be chaired by a Senator.

6. Maintain current levels and perhaps increase the representation of students on Standing Committees.

7. The Senate, from time to time, may wish to review the terms of reference and the composition of the Senate Standing Committees and Sub-Committees.

In making these proposals, we understand that in some cases it will require an increase in the membership of Senate Standing Committees; but, ultimately decrease the overall number of individuals required to serve on Standing Committees. A detailed description of the recommended committee structure follows and is outlined in a flow chart contained in Appendix D.

Revised Senate Standing Committee Structure

1. Senate Executive Committee (formerly the Senate Steering Committee)

Senate Executive Committee (SEC) should continue to act as receiver for items requiring Senate’s attention. However we recommend that it should also act as an Executive Committee empowered to make time sensitive decisions on behalf of Senate in the interim between the regular meetings of Senate. We also recommend that the following Senate Standing Committees become sub committees of, and report to, the Senate Executive Committee on a regular basis:

- **Senate Nominating Sub-Committee** - No change in terms of reference; monitors the membership needs of Senate committees.

- **Honorary Degrees Sub-Committee** - No change in terms of reference.
2. Senate Committee on Academic Administration

The Senate Committee on Academic Administration (SCAA) continues to be the medium by which Senate is involved in academic regulations; however the connection with Senate should be enhanced through regular communication and an annual report. As important matters of academic regulations arise and necessitate a concentrated effort, the SCAA, from time to time, may need to establish work groups or task forces.

The SCAA functions inter-relate with various Senate Standing Committees; specifically the Senate Computing and Information Technology and Planning Committee, Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching, Senate Library Committee, Senate Committee on the Environment and the Senate Physical Planning Committee. These Committees can act as a resource to SCAA and can be considered a complement to the current workload of the SCAA, not as an additional workload. The work of these specific sub committees individually is not as strong as it could be if, by combining the functions, they could be formulated into one strong sub-committee.

We also recommend that:

- The Senate Sub-Committee on Academic Support Services be established. The Sub-Committee will be comprised of the major functions of the Senate Physical Planning Committee, Senate Computing and Information Technology Planning, Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching, Senate Library Committee, and the Senate Committee on the Environment to ensure the key functions of each standing committee will continue to be an integral part of Senate’s agenda.

- The Senate Committee on Academic Administration Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity be realigned as a Senate Standing committee as outlined in recommendation #4.

3. Senate Academic Priorities and Policy Committee (formerly the Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee)

We recommend a revision to the Committee’s mandate to expand its role for advice on academic policies and priorities in relation to internal and external bodies, thereby creating the Senate Academic Priorities and Policy Committee (SAPPC). Internal bodies would specifically include the Budget Advisory Committee and other university committees within faculties, administrative departments and the Board of Governors. Some of the external bodies which Senate has a regular association with are Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee (MPHEC), the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities and other universities. We also recommend that in conjunction with the Office of the President, Academic Vice-President and Provost, the SAPPC participate in bringing to the attention of Senate discussions of the significant issues facing the University such as: current strategic objectives of Dalhousie University,
enrolment management issues, the University fundraising campaign. The objective of this should be to offer an opportunity for Senate to comment on the top issues of the day which would enhance engagement of faculty in these issues through the leadership of Senate. Because the mandate of the SAPPC includes a responsibility for involvement in the annual budget process, SAPPC will establish a sub-committee which provides advice on academic priorities for the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC).

We recommend that:

- The SAPPC establish the **Senate Budget Sub-Committee** to provide advice on academic priorities for the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). We recommend that the Senate appointees on the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) be members of the sub-committee of SAPPC with three year terms.

For Senate to have an active role in the design and implementation of policies to achieve a better student experience, Senate should be a party to any new policy to create a more flexible curriculum for student needs. It should also contribute to a plan for developing and enhancing students’ academic success in association with the Centre for Learning and Teaching and/or the Vice-President, Student Services.

We recommend that:

- **Senate Sub-Committee on Student Experience** be established to monitor student experience which will be advisory to the Senate Policies and Priorities Committee. It should include representatives from Senate as well as the Centre for Learning and Teaching and report to SAPPC from time to time when directed for advice on matters relating to the quality of student experience.

The review and recommendation of academic courses and programs is a specialized task and should be conducted by a small, core group of Faculty who have expertise in this area.

We recommend that:

- The **Senate Courses and Programs Sub-Committee** be established to review and report specifically on program proposals.

### 4. Senate Committee on Academic Integrity

Because of the Senate’s direct role in the process of promoting academic integrity at the university we believe that bringing together under the authority of Senate, the work of various committees concerned with it, is now warranted. We propose that a new committee be established to concern itself with all
aspects of academic integrity. The membership will include the Academic Vice-President and Provost, and the Chairs of two current Senate standing committees Senate Discipline Committee and Senate Academic Appeals Committee, with representation from the Academic Integrity Officers as well as any others as directed by Senate. We suggest that the Vice-Chair (Academic Administration) Chair this committee. With respect to Senate Academic Appeal panel decisions and ratification, Senate will continue to have authority to ratify decisions, unless and until this authority is delegated elsewhere.

We recommend that:

- The **Senate Academic Integrity Committee** be established as a Senate Standing Committee.

- Two Sub-Committees, **Senate Discipline Sub-Committee and Senate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee** will report to the Academic Integrity Committee.

**Ombudsperson Advisory Committee**

The work of the Ombudsperson Advisory Committee is being managed by bodies outside the authority of Senate; however, an annual report from the Ombudsperson’s Office to Senate should be maintained.

We recommend that:

- The functions of the **Ombudsperson Advisory Committee** be absorbed into the Student Experience Sub-Committee.

**Annual Reporting**

Accountability and rigor for Senate Standing Committees can be maintained through regular, annual reporting to Senate. Therefore, the Senate will expect and require three of the four Standing Committees (SEC is the exception) to report annually to Senate as per their terms of reference and make recommendations, as required.

**Building Confidence in the Work of Senate**

During our consultations we formed the impression that the work of the Senate is largely ignored by a majority of the members of the Dalhousie community. By contrast, there is a widespread awareness of a growing significance of the senior administration in the affairs of all parts of the University. While we do not suggest these are contradictory interpretations, there is nevertheless a need to reconsider what steps could be taken to enhance the visibility and the necessity for the work of Senate committees. It should be
made clear to the faculty that the business of the Senate must be done and, that it will be done by committees which we appoint ourselves or are administrative committees of the university. Since many faculty members do not know how the Senate works or what its responsibilities are, they show little interest in the functions of Senate. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that faculty members are unwilling to serve on committees when asked to do so.

We therefore recommend:

- That Senate take steps to provide greater visibility for the Senate and the relevance of its committees within the University. For example this might be achieved by reporting Senate decisions in the Dalhousie News or the Notice Digest and by circulating a summary of annual reports of Senate committees to all faculty and staff. Deans might be encouraged to report on relevant activities of the Senate at meetings of department chairs or at faculty councils.

More generally, there is also a need for faculty to be assured that time devoted to Senate committees is relevant to their academic careers. University service is not often identified as a basis for successful progress through the ranks. We were advised that many believe their academic success will only be judged on the basis of their ability to win research grants, have satisfactory teaching evaluations and numerous publications. We conclude that effective participation by faculty in Senate work can only be achieved if its value is attached to service.

We also recommend:

- That steps be taken by the University to ensure that Deans, Directors and Department Chairs, are encouraged to consider Senate committee work as an integral expectation for career development among faculty members and investigate the mechanisms to recognize it accordingly.

For some respondents there is also some uneasiness about the value of Senate committees because they are perceived to matter less to the academic administration of Dalhousie than the university committees which have been put in place by the senior administration. Indeed, we have a sense that this is linked to a perception that the university administration might prefer to govern academic affairs with a minimal involvement of the faculty. We believe that this view is contrary to the collegial approach to governance and accountability which has characterized the University over the past several years and in particular Senate’s relationship with the Board and academic administrators. Nevertheless, Senate must recognize that some hold this view and are likely to see any thoughtful participation in governance as a waste of their time. We must monitor this perception carefully to ensure that it does not become prevalent and prevent the purposes and objectives of the University from continuing to be met successfully.
We therefore recommend that:

- Senate study sources of uneasiness about its work which may have given rise to perceptions of increasing social distance between the faculty and senior administration.
Appendix A

Current Standing Committees of Senate

• Academic Administration (SCAA)
  • Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity
• Academic Appeals Committee (SAAC)
• Academic Priorities and Budget (SAPBC)
• Computing and Information Technology and Planning (SCITPC)
• Discipline (SDC)
• Environment (SCE)
• Honorary Degrees
• Learning and Teaching (SCOLT)
• Library (SLC)
• Nominating (SNC)
• Ombudsperson Advisory
• Physical Planning (SPPC)
• Steering (SSC)
Appendix B

Current Senate Standing Committee Functions

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Academic Administration shall:

1. Advise Senate regarding changes in the University's academic regulations;
2. Serve to coordinate academic regulations across the Faculties;
3. Make recommendations to Senate on the following:
   a) Admission requirements
   b) Regulations for degrees and diplomas
   c) Examination regulations and procedures
   d) Academic dates
   e) Academic insignia and costume
   f) Convocations and other ceremonials
   g) Establishment of University prizes and medals
   h) Other issues of academic administration as may be assigned to the Committee from time to time by Senate, its Officers, or the Senate Steering Committee

SUB-COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity shall:

1. Advise Senate, through SCAA, on the University’s academic regulations and policies with regard to academic integrity;
2. Promote and facilitate the coordination and integration of the work and initiatives of the Centre for Learning and Teaching, the Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching, and the Senate Committee on Academic Administration with regard to academic integrity;
3. Develop and maintain the academic integrity website; and
4. Make recommendations on any issues to do with academic integrity that are assigned to the Sub-Committee.

SENATE ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

The Senate Academic Appeals Committee shall:

1. hear appeals from decisions at the Faculty level in cases brought by students regarding academic standards, course requirements, examinations and other evaluative procedures, grades, pass requirements, advancement requirements, graduation requirements and other University or Faculty academic regulations, when
   a) the student has exhausted the approved appeal regulations and procedures of the respective Faculty; and
   b) (i) the student alleges that a faculty member or agent of the University has omitted to make decisions on an academic matter; or
   (ii) the student alleges that there were irregularities or unfairness in the application of the regulations in question.
2. Not hear appeals:
   a) by students in professional programs regarding suitability for the practice of a profession;
b) by students on a matter involving a requested exemption from the application of Faculty or University regulations or procedures;

c) by faculty members against decisions of their Faculty's Academic Appeals Committee;

d) by applicants for admission to University programs.

SENATE ACADEMIC PRIORITIES AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Academic Priorities and Budget Committee shall:

1. Act as principal advisor to Senate in the determination of academic priorities, in the conduct of academic, and financial planning, and in the development of practical policies of implementation;

2. Within an annual financial framework of projected revenues and an expenditure ceiling established by the Board, be involved in the preparation of the annual budget so that it reflects the University's academic priorities; and make recommendations to Senate with respect to the proposed budget before its submission to the Board;

3. Evaluate and report to Senate on the character, significance and implications of proposals emanating from any office or sector that might substantially impinge upon the University's approved programs and priorities;

4. Monitor and promote the quality of the University's programs by conducting reviews of Faculties, the College of Continuing Education, and academic support units or otherwise as the Committee decides and Senate approves;

5. Respond to and report on such specific requests for information as it may from time to time receive from Senate;

6. Monitor and report to Senate on proposals and planning activities of external bodies such as the Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities (NSABCU) and the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), making policy recommendations where appropriate;

7. Advise Senate on priorities for capital fund-raising;

8. Initiate such other inquiries and reports as it deems useful or necessary.

SENATE COMPUTING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Senate Computing and Information Technology Planning Committee shall:

1. In consultation with the Computing and Information Technology Planning Committees of the Faculties, advise Senate and the Administration on plans for the application of information technology to the academic programs of Dalhousie.

2. Foster the orderly development of high quality computing and information systems and services for teaching, research, and administration within the University, consistent with planned objectives as envisaged by 1 above, as well as by the academic planning process generally.

3. Review the services, staffing and facilities for Dalhousie's computing and information technology needs.

4. Annually assess the proposed budgets for computer acquisitions, operation and expansion and shall report to the Senate and its planning committees.

5. Advise the Administration and the Senate regarding appropriate policies on relationships between Dalhousie and the other institutions with respect to computing services.

6. Be the senior University planning committee on computing and information technology and, as such, shall be consulted on the composition and terms of reference of any other committee at the University level which is to be concerned with computing and information technology services and facilities. All such committees shall report to or through the Senate Computing and Information Technology Planning Committee. Proposals that involve additional substantial expenditures on
computing services and facilities and those that involve major reorganization of such services and facilities shall be brought to the Committee at an early stage.

7. Guided by Senate policies, advise the President on new acquisitions of and significant changes in computing hardware, software, facilities and services for teaching, research, and administration at Dalhousie and this shall include staffing needs and communication needs for computing and information technology. Before any additional substantial expenditures on computing or information technology services and facilities are approved, the Committee shall be informed and its advice sought.

8. Meet regularly (at least quarterly), and shall report its activities to Senate, as directed by Senate, but at least annually.

SENATE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

The Senate Discipline Committee shall:

1. Consider all complaints or allegations respecting offences or irregularities of an academic nature, including those relating to admissions procedures and evaluation procedures, and may impose penalties in cases where the Committee finds an offence or irregularity has occurred;

2. Have the power to discipline a student who, before or during the course of the disciplinary process involving him or her, but prior to adjudication, has:
   (i) been compelled to withdraw academically;
   (ii) chosen to withdraw from the class, the program or the University prior to being disciplined;
   or
   (iii) chosen not to register at the University;

3. Assume jurisdiction when a complaint or allegation respecting offences or irregularities of an academic nature is brought to its attention by the Secretary of Senate; complaints or allegations may be made by faculty or other evaluators of academic work done by students; a panel of Discipline Advisors is available to assist and advise evaluators, and guidelines for evaluators with respect to violations of academic regulations are set out below;

4. Conduct hearings according to the elements of natural justice (see below, "Procedures before the Senate Discipline Committee and Senate Discipline Appeal Board") and such other procedures as the Committee may decide in advance, with due notice to all interested parties. A panel of three faculty and two students shall hear each complaint, including complaints made under the Code of Student Conduct. The Committee Chair or alternate chosen by and from the Committee shall chair each hearing;

5. Evaluate the evidence of innocence or guilt of an accused student. This evaluation shall include the premise that the more senior the student in terms of chronological age, year of university registration, extent of other exposure to university rules and regulations at Dalhousie University or elsewhere, the less credible are assertions of ignorance or innocence and the stronger is the case for a more severe penalty than would be imposed on a less senior student;

6. Report its findings, and any penalty imposed, to the Secretary of Senate who shall forward a copy of the report to the student; if the alleged offender is not a student, a copy shall also be sent to the Vice-President (Academic and Provost).

SENATE DISCIPLINE APPEAL BOARD

A Senate Discipline Appeal Board shall:

1. Hear appeals from decisions of the Senate Discipline Committee on the following grounds:
   (a) denial of natural justice;
   (b) disputed jurisdiction of the Senate Discipline Committee;

2. Have responsibility to ensure the execution of its decisions.
PANEL OF DISCIPLINE ADVISORS

Discipline Advisors shall:

1. Advise evaluators (see "Guidelines for academic evaluators regarding violations of academic regulations by students", below) as to whether particular conduct by a student appears to be a violation of the academic standards of the University;
2. Advise an evaluator on how to trigger the formal process of charging a student with a violation;
3. Advise an evaluator on how to prepare their case to the Senate Discipline Committee at a hearing called to adjudicate the alleged violation;
4. Assist the evaluator to start the formal process of charging an alleged violation, or to prepare the "case" for presentation to the Senate Discipline Committee, or to present the case to the Senate Discipline Committee.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Senate Committee on the Environment shall:

1. Recommend to Senate policies and practices that will enable Dalhousie to achieve and to maintain the highest possible environmental standards;
2. Review environmentally relevant practices, policies and programs, and make recommendations for improvements so that Dalhousie functions in an environmentally sound manner.

HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE

The Honorary Degrees Committee shall choose candidates for honorary degrees. Senate shall not consider for honorary degrees any names other than those which have been approved by the Honorary Degrees Committee.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING

The Senate Committee on Learning and Teaching shall:

1. Advise Senate on current University policy on learning and teaching, and propose revised policy as necessary;
2. Advise Senate on new educational methodologies and instructional technologies;
3. Promote and encourage the use of instructional development services and instructional resources;
4. At their request, consult with Faculties and departments on the development of new programs and policies relating to learning and teaching processes;
5. Encourage Senate and Faculties to adopt programs which will enhance learning and teaching effectiveness;
6. Monitor and advise Senate on administrative issues that have direct impact on learning and teaching;
7. Advise the Director, Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) regarding fulfilment of its mandate to enhance the educational experience of students.
SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Senate Library Committee shall:

1. Serve as an advisory committee without executive powers;
2. Monitor the services, collections, staffing and facilities of Dalhousie's libraries as components of an integrated network;
3. Annually assess the proposed budgets for library acquisitions, operation and expansion, and report to the Senate;
4. Act to coordinate the policies and assist in rationalizing the development of the University's libraries;
5. Advise the Administration and the Senate regarding appropriate policies with respect to the relationship among Dalhousie's libraries and external libraries;
6. Consider and make recommendations to the Senate regarding national, regional, or provincial policies which appear likely to affect significantly the well-being of Dalhousie's libraries;
7. Consult regularly with Faculties on all matters that come before it;
8. Review the Libraries' evaluations of collections in support of newly proposed academic programs, and report to SAPBC.

SENATE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall:

1. Propose at least one candidate for election to fill vacancies for Senate officers as they arise;
2. Ensure that an integrated slate of candidates is presented for election to vacancies for all standing committees of Senate, Senate nominees to the Board, and Senate representatives on other bodies (the Senate Steering Committee solicits nominations for review/search committees for senior administrative positions); Senate's representatives on the Board shall be broadly representative of the University, with no more than one from any one Faculty;
3. Keep in mind the need for the various committees – and particularly the Academic Priorities and Budget Committee – to be as broadly representative of the University community (including the student body) as possible, and the need for specialist expertise in some committees;
4. Be notified by the Senate Office whenever an irregular vacancy arises on any Senate committee, and shall have routine authority to make temporary replacements when a member of a Senate committee is to be absent from the University for a period of six months or less. Faculty members on leave are assumed to have resigned their committee responsibilities unless they indicate otherwise;
5. Make nominations as appropriate for elections to fill irregular vacancies for the remainder of the term of an absent member, where the absence and the remaining period will exceed six months.

OMBUDSPERSON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Committee shall:

1. Oversee the operation of the Ombudsperson Office;
2. Select the Ombudsperson and Assistant Ombudsperson and recommend their appointment to the Dalhousie Student Union Council, the Senate and the Board of Governors;
3. review and report to the Senate or the Student Union, or both, on any matter pertaining to the Office when such review and report is requested by either body, the Office itself, or the Committee itself;
4. Assist the Office, in an advisory capacity, at its request;
5. Assist the Office in maintaining its independence from all other bodies and persons within the University community.
SENATE PHYSICAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Senate Physical Planning Committee shall:

1. Monitor, evaluate and report to Senate on the use made of the University's existing buildings, grounds, and other physical facilities in the light of the University's generally established priorities, making policy recommendations where appropriate;
2. Provide academic input to the physical planning process by evaluating and reporting on proposals for major alterations in the existing physical plant and other facilities, for the construction of new buildings, for significant acquisitions of other varieties of capital equipment, and for innovations in land use, making recommendations where appropriate, before such proposals are adopted for implementation.

SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee shall:

1. Act as receiver, through the Secretary of Senate, for all items requiring Senate attention;
2. Allocate all matters of Senate business to the appropriate committees;
3. Ensure that the necessary deadlines for the completion of the business of Senate and its various committees are understood and that every effort is being made to meet them;
4. Advise the Secretary on the compilation of the agenda of Senate on the basis of a schedule suited to the effective and timely conduct of Senate business;
5. Convey the results of Senate deliberations to the appropriate implementing or other bodies;
6. Establish and receive reports from ad hoc committees, as necessary, to deal with issues that are beyond the scope of Senate's other standing committees; in particular, to hear student appeals regarding suitability for the practice of a profession (see Terms of Reference for Ad-Hoc Appeal Committees below);
7. Report regularly to Senate, via the Chair, on the actions it has taken;
8. Act generally to monitor the procedures of Senate and its various committees with a view to ensuring that they are operating as smoothly and efficiently as possible;
9. Solicit nominations and administer elections to the Senate Nominating Committee and to review/search committees for senior administrative positions.
10. Ensure that minutes of plenary and committee meetings of Senate are complete and accessible to the University at large, and make every effort to keep all members of the University well informed regarding the development of Senate business.

SENATE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Senate Library Committee shall:

1. Serve as an advisory committee without executive powers;
2. Monitor the services, collections, staffing and facilities of Dalhousie's libraries as components of an integrated network;
3. Annually assess the proposed budgets for library acquisitions, operation and expansion, and report to the Senate;
4. Act to coordinate the policies and assist in rationalizing the development of the University's libraries;
5. Advise the Administration and the Senate regarding appropriate policies with respect to the relationship among Dalhousie's libraries and external libraries;
6. Consider and make recommendations to the Senate regarding national, regional, or provincial policies which appear likely to affect significantly the well-being of Dalhousie's libraries;
7. Consult regularly with Faculties on all matters that come before it;
8. Review the Libraries' evaluations of collections in support of newly proposed academic programs, and report to SAPBC.
Appendix C

Senate Ad hoc Governance Committee Interviewees

Larry Maloney, Associate Vice-President, Academic
Jeff Lamb, Assistance Vice-President, Facilities Management
Peter Aucoin, Professor, Faculty of Management
Richard Evans, Senate Representative on the Board of Governors
Bonnie Neuman, Vice-President, Student Services
Lloyd Fraser, Chair of Senate
Mohammed El-Hawary, Former Chair of Senate
Tara Gault, Vice-President, Education, Dalhousie Student Union
Sunny Marche, Senate Representative on the Board of Governors
Deans’ Council
Committee of Vice-Presidents
Membership, Senate Computing and Information and Planning Committee
Tom Traves, President
Alan Shaver, Vice-President, Academic
Gudrun Curri, Chair, Senate Discipline Committee
Michael Pegg, Chair, Senate Physical Planning Committee
Appendix D

Senate Standing Committee Structure

Senate

- Senate Executive Committee
  Chair – Chair of Senate

- Senate Committee on Academic Administration
  Chair – Chair of Senate

- Senate Academic Priorities & Policy Committee
  Chair – VC(AP)

- Senate Committee on Academic Integrity (NEW)
  Chair – VC (AA)

- Senate Nominating Sub-Committee

- Senate Honorary Degrees Sub-Committee

- Senate Sub-Committee on Academic Support Services (NEW) (composed of SPPC, SCITPC, SCE, SLC, SCOLT)

- Senate Budget Sub-Committee (NEW)

- Senate Sub-Committee on Student Experience (NEW) Absorb the Ombudsman Cttee Functions

- Senate Courses and Programs Sub-Committee (NEW)

- Senate Discipline Sub-Committee

- Senate Academic Appeals Sub-Committee