

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

September 9, 2025, 4:00 pm
Windsor Grand Room & Microsoft Teams (hybrid format)

Present: F. Antonelli, L. Beck, A. Beverley, F. Black, Y. Bourgeois, C. Brett (Secretary), P. Brown, E. Doukas, A. Fancy, S. Fanning, C. Forstall, M. Grant, D. Hamilton, D. Hornidge, A. Horwood, R. Inglis, R. Isnor (Vice-Chair), B. Jewett, K. Johnston, L. Kelliher, H. Lane, M. LaPointe, C. MacDougall, T. MacNeil, D. Mawhinney, C. McLaughlin, V. Meli, K. Morse, R. Moser, W. Paluch, C. Pringle-Carver, T. Reiffenstein, N. Robinson, R. Rubin, S. Ruckenstein, R. Schellenberg, L. Schwartz, V. St. Pierre, I. Sutherland (Chair), D. Thomas, J. Tomes, K. Vail, M. Vicare

Guests: J. Mullen, G. Sandala, A. Smyth

Regrets: B. Annear, P. Brown, G. Cruttwell

01.09.09 Territorial Acknowledgement

I. Sutherland read the official territorial acknowledgment written by Elders and the Indigenous Advisory Circle as follows:

We would like to acknowledge that we are located within the territory of Mi'kma'ki, the unceded, ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq. Our relationship and our privilege to live on this territory was agreed upon in the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1752. Because of this treaty relationship it is to be acknowledged that we are all Treaty people and have a responsibility to respect this territory.

02.09.09 Approval of agenda

Motion (L. Beck/V. St. Pierre): that Senate adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion carried

03.09.09 Welcome to Senators

I. Sutherland welcomed Senators and read the names of all new Senators. He also welcomed N. Robinson, the new Vice President, Student Affairs. All new Senators were welcomed with applause.

- 04.09.09 Consent Agenda (R. Isnor/E. Doukas)
- Approval of the minutes (May 8, 2025)
 - Report from the Academic Integrity Committee
 - Report from the Re-admissions Appeals Committee
 - Discover Mount Allison

Approved (1 abstention)

05.09.09 Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes

06.09.09 Report from the Chair

The Chair highlighted several aspects of his written report, including successes in faculty research funding, progress on the new library and multi-sport complex, new scholarships in the McKenna School of PPE, and the completion of a draft Strategic Plan. The plan which has subtitle, “Broad Minds, Bold Futures, Lifelong Connections,” re-affirms the university’s foundations as a small, liberal arts and sciences institution. The President invited senators to review the plan prior to a Special Meeting of Senate on September 16.

I. Sutherland reported that there are approximately 700 new students this term, with a total enrollment of around 2400. He noted that the retention rate and domestic recruitment were strong, but that international recruitment had a year-to-year decline of approximately 10%. He thanked recruiting, marketing, and communications leaders and staff for their efforts.

The President report that last fiscal year’s deficit was \$1.2 million, approximately half of the original projection. Nevertheless, a deficit remains, and work has started on a Deficit Elimination Framework. One of the changes is a transition to portfolio-based budgeting and away from additive budgeting.

I. Sutherland thanked staff in Student Affairs and Residence Life, along with MASU and the Orientation Chairs for putting together a successful welcome to Mount Allison. Senators showed their appreciation with applause.

Finally, the Chair invited Senators to a reception at Hammond House at 4 pm on September 18.

In response to a question from M. Hamilton about the distinction between portfolio-based and additive budgeting, the President explained that portfolio budgeting begins with an allocation of spending to each of the Vice President, who then decide how to apportion that spending in their respective areas. By contrast, additive budgeting sees the Vice Presidents canvas their departments for spending needs. The responses are used to develop spending requests. I. Sutherland noted that the additive model sets people up for disappointment because limited funds lead to a number of requests being denied.

A. Beverley asked what question Senate would consider at the Special Meeting on September 16 and if Senators could share the draft Strategic Plan with their departments. I. Sutherland answered that Senate would be asked to endorse the plan, and asked Senators to rely on their judgment as Senators when deciding whether to endorse the plan.

K. Johnston asked for clarification on two points in the written report relating to Student Affairs: on the nature of the interim appointments in Student Affairs and on whether there is currently an advisor for Indigenous students. N. Robinson replied that the interim roles are meant to help during the new Vice Presidents’ transition. Student Affairs is currently receiving feedback on the

needs for and potential structure of Indigenous and Equity Advisors. At present, Nicole Porter is available to advise Indigenous Students.

I. Sutherland noted the passing of Elder-in-Residence, Constance “Connie” Nevin, on Thursday, July 24, 2025.

07.09.09 Report from University Planning Committee

R. Isnor noted that the committee had its first meeting of the year on September 8, which it worked out its agenda for the year and took time for members to familiarize themselves with the planning context for the year. In addition to program reviews and staffing requests, the committee expects to work on a policy for academic program development and a framework for assessing the health of academic programs. The Provost noted that the review of Classics is still in progress and that reviews in Philosophy, Commerce, and Screen Studies and Drama will be carried out this year.

08.09.09 Updates to the 2025-2026 Calendar of Events and the Provisional 2026-2027 Calendar of Events

Motion (V. St. Pierre/R. Schellenberg): that Senate approve changes to the 2025-2026 Calendar of Events and the Provisional 2026-2027 Calendar of Events as circulated.

Motion tabled due to a motion below

Motion (K. Morse/K. Johnston): that the motion on the floor be tabled.

Motion to table carried

C. McLaughlin noted that the makeup classes at the end of terms often lead to student confusion over which classes are operating on those days. R. Isnor noted that clarifying language should be worked on.

D. Hamilton noted that the provisional calendar has the last day of exams one day before the closure of the university, which gives little time for grading. C. Brett noted that the Academic Calendar does allow for grading to be completed before the first day of the Winter term. D. Hamilton responded that would entail grading during the holidays. M. Hamilton added that an early start to the Winter 2027 term adds to the quick turnaround for exam grades.

K. Morse asked if the last day of term should be April 2 instead of March 30 and noted some punctuation inconsistencies. He also noted this is there have been last-minute changes in the Academic Calendar in each of the last three years. Finally, he asked that calendar changes not be published before Senate approves them.

09.09.09 Discussion of Honorary Degrees

I. Sutherland outlined the current process for selecting honorary degree recipients. The Honorary Degrees Committee receives nominations, then prepares a provisional list of candidates. These provisional candidates are then externally vetted in advance of a second meeting of the

committee to prepare final recommendations to Senate. The recommended candidates are considered by Senate, in camera. Candidates approved by Senate remain on a list of potential recipients for three years. In any given year, the President and Chancellor select the recipients from the list of candidates approved by Senate.

K. Morse expressed surprise at the conferring of two degrees off site during the summer of 2025, noting that these were announced to the community after the fact. He said that conferring honorary degrees in that way did little to connect the recipients with the community. He also wondered if voting behaviour of Senators would be affected by how they perceive the distinction between stocking a list of potential recipients and granting a degree to a particular candidate for sure.

I. Sutherland responded that there are good reasons to confer degrees out-of-cycle and off site: health or mobility issues, travel issues, and establishing a presence of the university. K. Morse responded that these reasons do not preclude advance notice to the community and wondered whether the secrecy of the events of summer 2025 was to avert potential controversy. I. Sutherland noted that advance notice should have been given.

C. Forstall asked about the purpose of conferring Honorary Doctorates. I. Sutherland responded that the degrees give the university the opportunity to acknowledge people who have made substantial contributions, to expand our network into the community, and to bring prominence to the university. The President noted the presence of several prominent political leaders at one of the off-campus events over the summer.

A. Beverley noted that the selection of honorary degree recipients gives rise to who we want to celebrate at Convocation, which added to the surprise of degrees being conferred outside of Convocation. She also wondered the portion of the policy between approval by Senate and conferring of the honorary degree should be more explicit. I. Sutherland answered that the post-approval stage

K. Johnston characterized the recent revisions of the policy on selecting honorary degree recipients as incomplete. Referring to discussions at Senate in May 2022, she noted that the revisions did not consider procedures for revoking or rescinding degrees, did not address whether a simple majority vote in Senate is sufficient endorsement of a candidate, and did not consider whether vetoes should be given to, for example, the Indigenous Advisory Council.

C. MacDougall stated that she asks her students to reject appeals to tradition and power, including improving standing with powerful people, and wants to hold the university to that same standard. She also warned against the appearance of conflict interest.

K. Johnston asked what follow-up there will be on this discussion. I. Sutherland answered that he will convey the messages of this meeting to the Honorary Degrees Committee. In response to a question by C. Forstall, the President noted that he would include the issue of removing individual from the Senate-approved list in those messages.

D. Mawhinney noted that the tradition of not awarding honorary degrees to former faculty has not been followed in recent years.

K. Johnston noted that she loves standing with students at Convocation but finds it difficult to do so when she is not proud of the honorary degree recipients. I. Sutherland asked for trust in the new process. K. Johnston noted that this trust can be eroded by secrecy.

10.09.09 Report from the Committee and Committees

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following faculty to the Senate Agenda Committee in accordance with Policy 3006(4.1)

Sarah Fanning

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following faculty to the Committee on Emeriti Appointments in accordance with Policy 3006(4.1)

Karl Hele

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following faculty to the University Planning Committee in accordance with Policy 3006(4.1)

Rachelle Pascoe Deslauriers

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett); That Senate elect the following faculty to the University Planning Committee in accordance with Policy3006(4.1).

Susan Andrews

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following faculty to the Academic Information Technology Committee in accordance with Policy3006(4.1).

Mike Wang

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following for the Indigenous Student Senator position for the Academic Appeals, Teaching and Learning and Academic Matters (Curriculum and Academic) committees:

Myles Grant

Motion (J. Tomes/C. Brett): That Senate elect the following for the Graduate Studies Committee:

Christelinda Laureijs

All motions carried

Nominations from the floor for vacancies noted in the committee's report resulted in the following motion.

Motion (V. St. Pierre/ J. Tomes): that the following be elected to committees indicated with terms starting immediately and ending June 30, 2028.

Dave Bray to the Research Ethics Board

Julia Riley to the Graduate Studies Committee

Danielle Inkpen to the Academic Integrity Committee

Elizabeth Wells to the Committee on Emeriti Appointments

Caitlin MacLaughlin to the Academic Matters (Curriculum and Programs) Committee

Motion carried

M. Hamilton asked if the substantial number of committee vacancies is a symptom of workload issues. H. Lane asked if increased numbers of stipendiary or term positions may be a contributing factor. I. Sutherland answered that the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty at the university is the same as it was ten years ago. He also wondered if the Committee on Committee should review the committee structure.

11.09.09 Election to the Committee on Committees

Motion (C. Brett/J. Tomes): that Senate elect the following to the Committee on Committees with a term beginning immediately and ending June 30, 2028.

Christopher Forstall

Geordie Miller

Motion carried

12.09.09 Other Business

There was no other business.

13.09.09 Adjournment

On a motion by M. Hamilton, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Brett

Secretary