MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY
MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

March 10, 2026, 4:00 pm
Tweedie Hall & Microsoft Teams (hybrid format)

Present: I. Andrea, B. Annear, F. Antonelli, L. Beck, A. Beverley, F. Black, Y. Bourgeois, C. Brett (Secretary), G. Brooks, P. Brown, E. Doukas, S. Fanning, D. Fleming, A. Francis, C. Forstall, M. Grant, D. Hamilton, M. Hamilton, M. Hashemi, A. Horwood, R. Inglis, R. Isnor (Vice-Chair), B. Jewett, K. Johnston, N. Johnston, H. Lane, C. Langlais, M. LaPointe, C. MacDougall, T. MacNeil, D. Mawhinney, V. Meli, K. Morse, C. Pringle-Carver, T. Reiffenstein, N. Robinson, J. Ropson, R. Rubin, S. Ruckenstein, C. Salter, R. Schellenberg, L. Schwartz, V. St. Pierre, I. Sutherland (Chair), J. Tomes, K. Vail, M. Vicaire

Regrets: W. Paluch

Guests: C. Pomare, T. Roberts, G. Sandala

01.03.10 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.

02.03.10 Approval of agenda

Motion (L. Beck/R. Schellenberg): that Senate adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion carried

03.03.10 Consent Agenda (V. St. Pierre/L. Beck)

a. Approval of minutes (Regular meeting February 6, 2026)
b. Approval of minutes (Special meeting March 2, 2026)
c. Report from the Committee on Emeriti Appointments
d. Discover Mount Allison

Approved

04.03.10 Business Arising from the Minutes

V. Meli asked about a reference to a change in international tuition that was in the President's Report from February but not in the minutes. I. Sutherland noted that the changes were not part of the oral report. They include a reduction in the deposit fee and a tuition reduction for international students paying their deposits by March 1.

M. Hamilton asked if there had been any communication with the Government of New Brunswick on the topic of university financing since February 18. I. Sutherland answered that no new information had been shared.

05.03.10 Report from the Chair

I. Sutherland characterized February 2026 as a difficult month. There was a campus closure due to a safety and security issue, new of potential cuts in funding from the provincial government, and the onset of new international conflict. He thanked staff in Student Affairs who are working with people affected.

The President highlighted aspects of his written report, starting by acknowledging the longstanding work of Dr. Alex Fancy on the occasion of the final Tintamarre performance, Exit 26. He informed Senate that the Strategic Planning Implementation Group is in place and will hold its first meeting on March 17. Year one priorities have been identified, and project charters are under construction. Updates and consultation forums will follow.

The Chair noted initiatives including: the searches for the new Director of Student Equity and Community Development, the Canada Impact+ Chairs; a workshop on AI in Higher Education on March 13; the launching of three Mount Allison Excellence Awards in Equity & Belonging, Environmental Sustainability, and Teamwork & Collaboration; the upcoming announcement of a $2M endowment fund to support environmental and sustainability initiatives and research; the roll-out of university transition program; the university exceeding its annual fundraising target; plans to replace landline telephones with VOIP.

The President informed Senate of the Grace Annie Lockhart Pin awards, which will be presented to over one hundred alumnae.

I. Sutherland congratulated the following students on recent successes:

- Mary Goudy, first place in the undergraduate category, BMO Apex Startup Challenge
- Mount Allison's team of five students, mentored by Rob Currie, Executive-in-Residence at the Ron Joyce Centre for Business Studies, second place at the CFA Society Atlantic competition
- Bentley Huffington, recipient of the2026 Frank H. Sobey Award in business
- Jigmet Angmo and Rajan Minocha-McKenney, national finalists McCall-MacBain Scholarships.

The President invited senators to a Town Hall on March 11 at which an update will be provided on the CIL project. He noted that the project is currently on-time and on-budget.

The Chair informed Senate that the security issue on campus in mid-February was the result of a concerning message found on a desk in the Wu Centre. Authorities are still investigating but found no evidence of imminent threat. The university is debriefing its response.

On financial matters, the President noted that domestic recruitment indicators show a year-on-year increase, while international indicators show a decline. That decline has attenuated slightly from the February update. The provincial budget will be tabled on March 17. In the absence of information on its content, the university will complete its budget as planned, with a $2.5 million reduction in expenditures.

V. Meli said that she interacted with two international students this year who had housing challenges. She wondered if the new international tuition discounts would attract students who would need additional supports. I. Sutherland answered that Government of Canada requirements, including financial ones, for study permits have increased.

V. Meli asked about the process for reviewing applicants for the Canada Impact+ Chairs. R. Isnor responded that there have been fourteen expressions of interest to date, with a deadline of March 20. Two review committees will be struck.

A. Beverley asked about the nature of the Year 1 Foundation Streams to be worked on by the Strategic Planning Implementation Group, in particular academic program delivery, development, and framework stream. C. Pringle-Carver answered that the streams were developed in consultation with President's Council and Cabinet. Consideration was given to elements of the Strategic Plan that were deemed important to focus on in the first year.

R. Isnor stated that the academic program delivery, development, and framework stream would include developing a way to assess the health of academic programs. He added that this tool is the "framework" referred to in the stream. The Provost added that external help may be needed to develop such tool. For example, such a framework has been constructed at Bishop's University. C. Forstall asked how the envisioned health checks differ from the current program reviews. R. Isnor answered that the current process makes no comparisons among departments, and that it may prove useful to bring in elements not currently covered in program reviews. L. Beck noted that the framework used that Bishop's University has led to enrollments as a criterion for staffing decisions. I. Sutherland noted that considerations other than class sizes are important at Mount Allison.

K. Morse asked how the foundation streams and project charters developed by the Strategic Planning Implementation Group relate to the commitments, vision, and strategic directions identified in the Strategic Plan. He noted that the new vocabulary could create confusion. C.

Pringle-Carver responded that document on how the streams relate to the elements of the plan will be released in the coming weeks.

06.03.10 Report from University Planning Committee

R. Isnor informed Senate that the committee continues to work on revisions to Policy 5901 on Academic Program Development and on a template to guide programs on staffing requests.

Turing to academic reviews, the Provost noted that the report following the site visit in Classics is pending, while reports for Drama and Screen Studies, Philosophy, and Commerce have been received. The committee expects to meet soon with representatives from Modern Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Biology, and Economics to discuss their recently completed reviews.

R. Isnor also noted that the committee has vacancy. M. Hamilton noted that any replacement would be for a full term.

07.03.10 Honorary Degrees

Citing his position Chair of the Honorary Degrees Committee, I. Sutherland vacated the Chair of the meeting. R. Isnor chaired the meeting for this item.

Motion (K. Morse / A. Beverley): That Senate instruct the Committee on Committees and Honorary Degree Committee, in coordination with the Board of Regents, to review the purposes of and processes for the conferral of Honorary Degrees, updating the committee's terms of reference and other relevant documents, and that Senate not consider any future Honorary Degree nominations until this review has taken place and been approved by Senate.

Motion subsequently withdrawn and introduced with rewording

K. Morse informed Senate that the motion grew out a discussion among some members of the Faculty of Arts who wish to seek clarification about the purposes for and procedures pertaining to granting honorary degrees. He cited difficulties using the nomination form, changes in convention around former staff, faculty, and students receiving honorary degrees, and the need to have minuted discussion around honorary degrees as reasons for bringing the motion. The stipulation that no honorary degrees be approved pending the review of processes was added to provide incentive for the committee to work at pace. A. Beverley added that the motion would be a formal recognition of the need to improve the honorary degree granting process.

T. Reiffenstein asked about the ongoing work of the Honorary Degrees Committee on a process for rescinding honorary degrees. R. Isnor answered that the sub-committee working on this policy has submitted a draft to the committee, but the committee is yet to consider the draft. K. Johnston said that she did not see anything in the motion that would interrupt that work. Rather, the motion would lead to consideration of the issued outlined in the accompanying document.

G. Brooks expressed support for the review but said he did not support suspension of considering candidates for honorary degrees. He noted that granting degrees is an important function of a university, one that should not be suspended. He suggested that giving the committee a deadline would suffice to guarantee timely completion of the work.

C. Forstall asked if it possible for Senate to direct a joint committee of Senate and the Board of Regents in this way. K. Morse answered that the wording of the motion takes into consideration the joint nature of the committee.

I. Sutherland expressed agreement with the notion of reviewing the processes around granting honorary degrees. He estimated that a review of this nature would take approximately 18 months. He did not think it wise to suspend the honorary degree process for that long. He said that the current list of approved candidates may last for only a year or two and that renewal is needed. He argued that honorary graduates bring value to the university by interacting with students, engaging in philanthropy, and expanding our alumni network, many of whom do important advocacy work for the university. He noted that the Honorary Degrees Committee has introduced changes in past two years including background checks, a two-step review process, and requiring recipients to sign letters acknowledging that their degrees may be rescinded if they contravene the values of the university. He concluded by expressing the opinion that suspending consideration of honorary degrees would be a disservice to the university.

A. Beverley agreed that honorary degrees provide value to the university. She also stated that she was unaware of the number of currently approved candidates. She said that the intent of the motion is to provide urgency to the review.

K. Morse noted the purpose of the review is to make sure that the process strong and robust. He noted that recent events including the granting of degrees off campus and a higher proportion of recipients with existing connections to the university may erode some of the value of honorary degrees. He also expressed an opinion that developing a rescinding policy seems to be taking a long time. He acknowledged that a deadline for the review could expedite process called for in the motion.

At that point, K. Morse and A. Beverley presented following revision to the motion.

Motion (K. Morse / A. Beverley): That Senate instruct the Committee on Committees and Honorary Degree Committee, in coordination with the Board of Regents, to review the purposes of and processes for the conferral of Honorary Degrees, updating the committee's terms of reference and other relevant documents. This review is to be completed no later than the meeting of Senate in September 2027.

Motion carried

M. Hamilton noted that the honorary degrees process and discussions around them seem fraught. He wondered if a short pause on nominations would be reasonable.

T. Reiffenstein asked what proportion of nominees accept invitations to receive honorary degrees. I. Sutherland answered that the President and Chancellor select candidates from the approved list before making any calls. Of the calls he made last year, one person was not available, and no one declined. He noted that the list of approved candidates shrunk considerably when the eligibility carryover due to COVID expired.

In response to a question by G. Brooks, R. Isnor noted that it is possible for senators to write to the committee with suggestions. G. Brooks noted that some universities allow approved candidates to remain on the list of potential recipients for more than three years.

After the revised version of the motion carried, I. Sutherland reassumed the Chair.

08.03.10 The Composition of Senate

Motion (A. Horwood/E. Doukas): that Senate establish an Ad-hoc Committee to Consider the Composition of Senate (the "Ad-hoc Committee"). The terms of reference and membership of the Ad-hoc Committee shall be as follows.

Terms of Reference:
(a) The Committee will determine the desirability and/or efficacy of making changes to the composition of the Mount Allison Senate to incorporate representation of a student in the Aviation program.
(b) The Committee will present its final written report, including any recommended changes to the composition of Senate, no later than the end of July 2026.

Membership - 5 members:
- the Secretary of Senate (chair)
- the MASU President & CEO
-the MASU Vice President, Academic & University Affairs
-1 student who is currently in the Aviation program
-2 faculty members or librarians, who must be voting members of Senate

Motion carried

K. Vail noted the Aviation Society approached MASU seeking better representation in university governance. She noted that there is now a large number of Aviation students and that these students face unique challenges due to the two-campus nature of their program. K. Vail also noted that Aviation students may serve as representatives in Social Sciences or Science, but do not have a dedicated seat on Senate. The motion asks for the creation of a committee to consider adding such a dedicated seat.

K. Morse noted that the current bylaw calls for seven student Senators, one of whom must be an Indigenous student. MASU decides how to apportion the other six. K. Vail answered that MASU would like to see representation of Aviation students without reducing representation for other students, which would require an additional student Senator. C. Salter, an Aviation student and current Social Sciences Senator, said that he views his role to represent all students in the Faculty of Social Sciences and would not be comfortable advocating for the needs of Aviation students in his current position.

R. Inglis reminded Senate that its role in any bylaw change would be to make a recommendation to the Board of Regents, consistent with a practice last carried out in 2018. C. Brett informed Senate that he had shared documents relating to that process with MASU.

L. Beck asked if other programs that span faculties, for example Psychology, would be treated unfairly if Aviation is singled out for representation. K. Vail responded that the uniqueness of the Aviation program calls for special representation.

A. Beverley asked for and received clarification that the motion does not contain any recommendation on changing the bylaw. Instead, it creates a committee to study the issue.

Motion (A. Horwood/E. Doukas), conditional on the passage of Motion 1: that Senate call for nominations from the floor and, if nominations are received, hold an election to fill the following vacancies on the Ad-hoc Committee to Consider the Composition of Senate
2 faculty members or librarians, who must be voting members of Senate.

Motion carried

I. Sutherland called for nominations to fill the positions on the Ad-hoc Committee. S. Ruckenstein and T. Reiffenstein self-nominated and were acclaimed to the committee.

09.03.10 Student Survey on the Timing of the Fall Break

K. Vail presented results from a survey of student views on the timing of the Fall Break. MASU conducted the survey for information purposes, not with any intention of asking Senate to reconsider current scheduling. The survey had 315 responses, 234 of whom had experienced the Fall Break in both October and November. A majority of respondents (58%) preferred a break in November, while 34% preferred an October break, and 6% expressed no preference. Written responses highlighted that some students found that not enough work was completed before the October break, while others cited the lateness of the November break impacting health. Students expressed concern about not being directly consulted about the timing of the break. Student athletes had special concerns relating to the timing of practices and the Fall Break.

I. Sutherland acknowledged receipt of the report, underscored the importance of student consultation, and thanked MASU for conducting the survey.

10.03.10 Report from the Committee on Committees

C. Forstall presented the report.

11.03.10 Other Business

12.03.10 Adjournment

There being no other business, thee meeting adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Brett
Secretary