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**SENATE COMMITTEE on UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES**

**MINUTES**

Thursday, August 28, 2025

2:15PM | Brightspace

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| **CHAIR**Dr. S. Sullivan  | **SECRETARY**Ms. J. Porter | **RECORDING**Ms. K. Donovan |
| **PRESENT**Dr. J. Browne Dr. N. CookDr. P. CoadyDr. L. GalagedaraDr. G. GeorgeDr. D. GillDr. P. IssahakuMr. B. Kerr Dr. D. KirbyMs. W. RodgersMs. B. SimmonsDr. K. Simonsen Ms. A. Watkins  | **ABSENT**Dr. E. DavisDr. S. HardingMs. J. HowellMr. M. Islam (MUNSU)Mr. T. Jesso (GCSU)Dr. J. KiellyCpt. V. March Ms. S. PappleDr. K. PowerMs. N. SmithMr. P. SullivanMr. M. WallerMr. D. Wells | **REGRETS**Dr. L. Bruce-RobertsonMs. C. Parsons |

1. **New Business**
	1. **Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2025**

A draft of the minutes for the meeting of July 17, 2025 was circulated.

**MOTION** P. Coady / G. George

*RESOLVED* that the minutes for the meeting of July 17, 2025 be approved as circulated.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 2*

* 1. **Academic Misconduct Case ME 7703 – Investigator: P. Coady**

P. Coady presented the main points of the investigation:

* This case involves an allegation of cheating specifically, using a cell phone during the final exam for ME 7703.
* The invigilator observed the student access their phone during the exam and proceeded to ask the student to switch seats. The student was reluctant at first but later agreed.
* During the process of changing seats, the student tried to discretely remove the phone from beneath their seat. This was witnessed by the invigilator.
* The invigilator asked the student to hand over their phone. The phone was unlocked and visibly open to study related materials.
* The invigilator notified the chief invigilator, who then came to the exam room and spoke with the student.
* The student admitted to accessing their phone, showed their files and expressed remorse for their actions.
* The chief invigilator informed the student they could finish their exam, but ultimately the student chose not to.
* Both the invigilator and chief invigilator were interviewed during the investigation. Both confirmed the details outlined in the investigators report.
* During the student interview,
	+ The student took full responsibility for accessing their phone.
	+ The student expressed feeling confident at the start of the exam but later became panicked, stressed, and anxious, which led to the mistake.

Following the summary, the Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions of fact. The Committee had a few questions which were answered by the investigator.

**MOTION** J. Porter / L. Galagedara

*RESOLVED* that the student be found guilty of the allegation of academic misconduct based on their own admission of having used a phone during the examination.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 1*

J. Porter indicated that the student had not previously been found guilty of academic misconduct by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies and outlined the precedents for this type of misconduct. J. Porter noted several past cases which involved possession and/or use of a cell phone, as well as possession and/or use of a cheat sheet. Common penalties include 0 in the course, the completion of the integrity course, a letter of reprimand, and 3 semesters of probation.

**MOTION** K. Simonsen / P. Issahaku

*RESOLVED* that the Committee issue the following penalties for the student:

* 0 in the course
* 3 semesters probation commencing Fall 2025
* completion of INTG 1000
* letter of reprimand

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 1*

* 1. **Academic Misconduct Case ENGI 003W – Investigator: D. Gill**

D. Gill presented the main points of the investigation:

* The student is accused of using AI on their Work Term Report for ENGI 003W.
* The instructor became concerned when they noticed irregularities in the reference list such as false web results and “dead” links.
* The instructor asked the Undergraduate Technical Communications Co-ordinator to review the assignment. Between the two of them, they found a number of irregularities.
* The instructor communicated their concerns with the student via email. Several replies were received but ultimately, the instructor was not satisfied with the students’ responses and launched a formal allegation of academic misconduct.
* During the student interview,
	+ The student explained that the report was meant to be a personal reflection and considering the course is not for credit (it is simply PAS/FAL) there was no incentive to cheat.
	+ The student did not view this report as a serious academic endeavor, did not put in their full effort and essentially, slapped the report together.
	+ The student was running out of time and turned to ChatGPT to produce references.
	+ The student claimed to have only reviewed the first couple references before submitting the report.
	+ The student was given the opportunity to address each of the concerns outlined by the instructor, with an emphasis on the reference list. When questioned about the irregularities in the paper the student had a reply for every allegation:
		- Longer word length is due to it being a technical paper and technical terms are longer.
		- British spelling is because the student studied in the British system.
		- Placeholders are simply a result of the students writing style.
		- The student was rushed and didn’t put in much effort so a lot of mistakes were missed.
* The course outline states on multiple occasions that the use of AI is prohibited. The instructor also confirmed that this message is regularly communicated in class. Therefore, students are well informed of the policy.

Following the summary, the Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions of fact.

**MOTION** P. Coady / N. Cook

*RESOLVED* that the student be found guilty of the allegation of academic misconduct based on their own admission of having used a prohibited aid.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 1*

J. Porter indicated that the student had not previously been found guilty of academic misconduct by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies and outlined the precedents for this type of misconduct. J. Porter noted several past cases which involved the use of AI. Common penalties include 0 in the course, the completion of the integrity course, a letter of reprimand, and some form of probation. Suspension varied and was not always applied. The most severe suspension issued was 1 semester.

**MOTION** P. Coady / K. Simonsen

*RESOLVED* that the Committee issue the following penalties for the student:

* “FAL” in the course
* probation commencing Fall 2025 and lasting until graduation
* completion of INTG 1000
* letter of reprimand
	1. **Appeal – Promotion Decision – Term 6 – Engineering**

J. Porter presented the main points of the appeal:

* This is a promotion appeal from Term 6 to Term 7, Engineering.
* The student did not meet the promotion requirements.
* The student appealed to CUGS and the key points of the decision letter are as follows,
	+ CUGS acknowledged the personal and emotional challenges the student faced including, an extended history of abuse and trauma.
	+ The student’s promotion average was 41.2%, well below the 60% required.
	+ The student failed the same course twice, had two failed attempts for promotion and, one marginal promotion.
	+ The student has only completed 1 work term.
	+ At the time of promotion, the student was on probation for academic misconduct.
	+ The letter also outlines the procedure for readmission and notes that readmission applications are only permitted after a term of 2 years.
		- In the interim, CUGS suggested the student complete additional courses at Memorial to show academic readiness.
* In the student’s letter of appeal, they outline a history of physical and mental challenges, dating back to 2017.
* The student acknowledged each failed promotion attempt and outlined the extenuating factors that contributed to that failure.
* Included in the appeal package are a number of supporting documents including,
	+ Confirmation of visits to the Health and Wellness Centre.
	+ 2 health certificates, mainly to address deferred exams.
	+ Court documents
	+ Medical documents from Eastern Health
	+ Some reference to study permit.

MOTION P. Coady / L. Galagedara

RESOLVED that the Committee deny the appeal based on the grounds cited by the Engineering Appeals Committee.

CARRIED

*Abstentions: 1*

* 1. **Appeal – 5-year Regulation**

S. Sullivan provided a brief overview of the regulation and noted that the Committee is currently in the process of introducing a Calendar Change that will remove this regulation.

S. Sullivan also clarified that this appeal is simply to waive the regulation. The appeal to drop courses will be decided by the Special Senate Sub-Committee on Retroactive Drops and Readmission.

J. Porter indicated that the student was not aware that retroactive drops was an option but feels it would be beneficial given that they are currently applying to universities in the hopes of completing a bachelors degree.

**MOTION** W. Rodgers / P. Coady

*RESOLVED* that the Committee approve the appeal.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 0*

* 1. **Appeal – Required to Withdraw – Bachelor of Commerce**

J. Porter presented the main points of the appeal:

* The student was required to withdraw from the Bachelor of Commerce program.
* Included in the package is the promotion decision letter outlining the withdrawal,
	+ Promotion regulations require students to achieve a minimum 60% over the last 30-credit hours. The student did not meet that bar as of the end of Winter 2025.
* Also included in the package is the CUGS decision letter denying the students appeal for reinstatement.
	+ CUGS was sympathetic to the student’s circumstances but noted that accommodations should have been pursued at the course level during the semester.
	+ The letter outlines the student’s eligibility to apply for readmission, and notes that the student is permitted to retain their Spring semester courses.
	+ As of this time, the student has not applied for readmission but did retain their Spring semester courses.
* Students must be enrolled in the Commerce program to be eligible for 3000-level courses or higher. Students outside the Commerce program are eligible to enroll some 2000-level and elective courses.
* In the students letter of appeal, they outlined a number of medical circumstances that affected them during the semester. The student noted that their health struggles prevented them from reaching out and communicating with the university.
* It was the students understanding that they could complete course work and submit medical documentation later on. The student believed they would be excused on medical grounds given their health struggles and supporting medical documentation.
* The student reported feeling better in April, at which time they worked hard to complete their course work. The student reached out to several professors regarding assignments and exams, their communication is included in the appeal package.
* The student reached out to the Academic Program Manager in business to discuss late and/or retro drops. The student claims they were misinformed and not made aware of the fact that if they wrote the final exam they would have less options available to them in regards to dropping courses.
* Also included in the appeal package is a letter of support from the appellants parents.

**MOTION** J. Porter / G. George

*RESOLVED* that the Committee deny the appeal and encourage the student to apply for readmission into the Fall 2025 semester.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 1*

* 1. **Department Name Change – Biochemistry**

J. Porter presented the main points of the request:

* This is a relatively straightforward request.
* A while back the Department of Biochemistry changed the *program* name from Biochemistry to Human Biosciences and administrative changes were implemented.
* All relevant scholarships and awards have been updated to reference Human Biosciences
* New “HUBI” course codes now appear in the University Calendar
* This change has been endorsed and approved at the department level.

**MOTION** J. Porter / K. Simonsen

*RESOLVED* that the Committee move the endorsement for the name change from the Department of Biochemistry to the Department of Human Biosciences, to Senate.

**CARRIED**

*Abstentions: 1*

* 1. **Standing Item – Updates from Senate and Office of the Registrar**

Senate

* The President has expressed interest in meeting with Senate Standing Committees and S. Sullivan has accepted the invitation.
* The meeting will likely happen in the coming months, potentially the second SCUgS meeting in September, or early October.

Office of the Registrar

* Most graduate applications have been processed. Incoming applications are being processed as they are received.
* Fall 2025 registration is ongoing. The waitlists have been deactivated.
* The Canada Games were a success. Visitors had a good time and have now returned home.
	1. **Standing Discussion Item – Academic Misconduct**
* W. Rodgers provided an update regarding the newly revised integrity reflection course:
	+ The course is intended for students who have been found guilty of academic misconduct.
	+ Revisions were made to distinguish the reflection course from the regular INTG 1000 course, which all students are required to complete, and to encourage deeper reflection.
	+ The revised course is called SCUgS Integrity Reflection.
	+ Much of the content is the same, with several additions,
		- More opportunities for reflection
		- A values exercise
		- Scenario-based activities
* Enrolment in the new course opened last week and is already showing signs of higher engagement.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned.