

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF REGINA COUNCIL  
WEDNESDAY, 9 December 2015  
EDUCATION AUDITORIUM 106**

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**Members:** 139 present.

**Guests:** 17 present.

Attendance records are appended to the official file.

**1. Introduction**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by President Timmons. President Timmons welcomed those attending the meeting from Saskatoon via live stream.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

Spooner - Stewart  
**moved that** the agenda be approved as circulated.

The question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

**3. Approval of the Council Minutes of the Meeting 25 February 2015**

Juschka – Stewart  
**moved that** the minutes be approved as circulated.

The question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

**4. Report from the Chair of Council**

President Timmons presented her report to Council. She reported that a “Town Hall” took place on October 14, 2015, which was a recommendation by Council at the Winter Council meeting. She also summarized the work that has been done to address Council’s recommendations from previous meetings, noting that she always tries to address the spirit of the recommendations that come from Council.

President Timmons provided a number of other updates including:

- The Board of Governors had a meeting this week which focused on several issues facing the University.
- There is a new Minister of Advanced Education, the Honourable Scott Moe. He is very active and interested in the activities of the University.
- President Timmons is working to schedule a meeting with the Premier, the U of S and Saskatchewan Polytechnic to discuss the impact of post secondary education in the province of Saskatchewan.
- There is a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce in January in which the President will give the address.
- President Timmons outlined the procedures for the meeting.

Discussion followed. President Timmons addressed the questions raised by Council members regarding the University budget process and the mental health services provided to students on campus.

## 5. Report from the Council Agenda Committee

### 5.1 Executive of Council

A. Revet presented the report on behalf of the Executive of Council and recommends the following motion to Council:

Revet – Yost

**moved that** on Executive of Council's recommendation, Council approve that the Director, Office of Research Services be added as an *ex officio* member of Executive of Council as defined in Section 4.3.4 of the Council Rules and Regulations.

The question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

### 5.2 Joint Council/Senate Committee on Ceremonies

Revet – Peters

**moved that** Council recommend to Senate (by plurality vote) one of the following four options regarding the Invocation at Convocation:

1. To maintain the Invocation as it stands;
2. To remove the Invocation;
3. To create a standard Invocation that is inclusive; or,
4. To have a moment of silent gratitude/prayer to mark the occasion.

The motion was amended as follows and Revet-Peters agreed that this was a friendly amendment:

**moved that** the motion be changed to a vote of ranking of the options on the ballot - #1 being the first choice and #4 being the last choice.

President Timmons explains that is this not a vote on whether or not to implement an option, it is a vote on what to recommend to Senate.

Council members discussed the options as presented. Appended as *Attachment A* to the minutes is a statement from Council member Risa Horowitz who asked that her statement be included in the minutes as presented to Council.

The question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

Once the discussion was concluded, ballots were distributed to Council members, returned and at the meeting only the greatest number of 1<sup>st</sup> option was considered due to time and resources at the meeting to consider all of the data. Once the votes were tallied, the Chair announced later in the meeting that the option to remove the invocation from Convocation received the greatest number of votes as the 1<sup>st</sup> option.

The Chair also reported that a summary of the ballot results would be included in the minutes and these are noted below:

Ballots received: 137

Ballots in which all four options were ranked: 53

Number per option presented:

	1 <sup>st</sup> choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> choice	3 <sup>rd</sup> choice	4 <sup>th</sup> choice
Maintain	32	8	10	29
Remove	57	9	7	20
Inclusive Statement	13	27	27	3
Moment of Silence	34	42	18	1

Of those individuals who chose to vote for only one option, the votes are noted as follows:

- 10 chose to vote only to maintain the invocation
- 24 chose to vote only to remove the invocation
- 1 chose to vote only to have an inclusive statement
- 14 chose to vote only to have a moment of silence

A motion to destroy the ballots will be presented under business arising at the Winter Council meeting.

### 5.3 Council Committee on Academic Mission

L. Groenevold presented the report on behalf of the Council Committee on Academic Mission (CCAM) and recommends the following motion to Council:

Groenevold – Chase

**moved that** the Council Committee on Academic Mission’s current Term of Reference 2 (“To review and make recommendations to the President on academic planning and programming”) be changed to the following: “To review and make recommendations to the President on academic planning and programming; and to evaluate and recommend proposals to end, establish, and/or substantially revise programs of study to the Council Committee on Budget, the Council Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Studies, and/or the Council Committee on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research.”

Discussion followed.

The question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

### 5.4 Council Member

F. Torabi recommends the following motion to Council:

Torabi – Jaffee

**moved that** Council recommends to the President the establishment of a mid-term review process for senior academic administrators including Associate Deans, Deans, Directors, AVPs and VPs, so that inputs from Council members will be solicited in a transparent and collegial way.

President Timmons explained the current performance review process noting that it is completed annually and that there are complicating factors given that those employed in these roles have current contracts in place and this recommendation could only be considered going forward.

Discussion followed with Council members speaking for and against the motion.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the question was called on the motion.

CARRIED

#### 5.5 Report from Council Agenda Committee

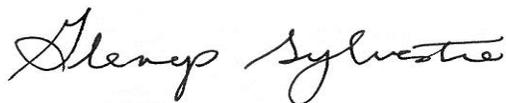
L. Ward presented the report, for information, on behalf of the Council Agenda Committee. On behalf of the Committee, he encouraged Council members to consider submitting discussion items for future Council meetings that pertain to broad policy questions and issues of long term interest of the University.

In closing, President Timmons thanked everyone for coming, Council members continued engagement and the Council Committees for their hard work. Appreciation was expressed to the Council Agenda Committee.

The Next meeting of Council will take place in the Winter term and the date will be announced by the Council Agenda Committee once the date is set.

It was noted that Council meetings, as stated in the Rules and Regulations, are normally held to consider broad issues that are in the long term interests of the University. The President would like Council to consider issues like retention, student satisfaction and research impact, for example. Motions or suggestions can continue to be submitted to the Council Agenda Committee through the University Secretariat for consideration.

#### 6. Adjournment – Peters (10:45 a.m.)



Glenys Sylvestre  
Executive Director (University Governance) and University Secretary

Good morning. My name is Risa Horowitz. I am associate professor in the Department of Visual Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, soon to be known as the Faculty of Media, Art, and Performance. I request that the statement I have prepared be included in the minutes of today's meeting.

Some present might feel that this motion raises discussion or questions about Indigenous practices on campus – but that is a different topic, and I, for one, am proud to work on a campus which aims to privilege and honour our true hosts. The topic today is Invocation, our Invocation, the history of our Invocation, or an Invocation, and so this is what I speak to.

I thank the Joint Committee and President Timmins for presenting the original motion at Senate last June to remove the Invocation from the Convocation ceremony. I hope that following today's meeting there will be no further delay for this to come to pass and I speak today as a member of the University of Regina Council in favour of Option 2: to remove the Invocation.

I do not support Option 1 to maintain the Invocation as it stands. The Agenda item identifies the Christian roots of the College in its founding by Methodists, yet there is no mention of a deity in the legislated University of Regina Act.

Option 3, if called an Invocation, is still an invocation – a summoning of a god or supernatural spirit: this can not be done inclusively of people who are not deistic or theistic.

Option 4 defeats its attempt at neutrality insofar as prayer is addressed to a deity, and not all members of our community believe in deities. I might support a quiet moment of reflection instead, offered by a non-religious figure: but this is not one of the four options presented.

I believe in one's right to practice one's religion. But I feel that the Invocation is presumptuous and imposes another's beliefs on to those present: those who may not share those beliefs. [I dare say that removing the Invocation could be seen as a positive step towards decolonization.]

There may be times, places, and congregations where it is appropriate to invoke a god if one so chooses – for example at the convocation ceremonies held by our Federated Colleges. Indeed, the original motion rationale at the June Senate meeting noted that “No matter the outcome of this discussion, it should be recognized that the University's... federated colleges remain free to determine what is appropriate for their own institutions.”

I respectfully urge this Council to support the Joint Committee of Senate and Council on Ceremonies, and recognize that the University of Regina graduation ceremonies are not an appropriate forum for an overtly imposed observance of religious or theistic belief.

Risa Horowitz  
9 December 2015  
University of Regina Council