



A meeting of the Senate was held on Thursday, April 22, 2010 in Robert Sutherland Hall, Room 202 at 3:30 p.m.

#### 4. Chair's Report

The Vice-Chair announced the appointment of Dr. S. N. Liss as new VP (Research) for a five-year term starting on September 1, 2010. Dr. Liss is a microbiologist and current Associate Vice-President (Research Services) at the University of Guelph. He succeeds Dr. K. Rowe, whose second, five-year term ends in August.

The Vice-Chair read a report from the Principal, who was attending a Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Executive Heads meeting at RMC and unable to attend Senate.

##### **Internal Updates**

Faculty Deans, Queen's Library and other units submitted responses to the Principal's *Where Next?* document. Submissions are the product of extensive work by many people. The Principal expressed many thanks to them for their efforts.

The submissions, which are the first step in the year-long Academic Planning process, will be shared with the team of six Academic Writers appointed earlier this year. The team will synthesize submissions over the summer and produce a draft Academic Plan by September.

The fall term will be devoted to detailed discussion of this draft plan, at Senate, in ty ( )TjETEO( ty)-4( ( )TjEpuft )iuplf



**Moved by Senator Silverman, seconded by Senator Woodhouse, that Senate approve the proposal to introduce a Collaborative Masters in Applied Sustainability Program in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science and the School of Graduate Studies with an implementation date of September 1, 2010.**

In response to a question from Senator Notash, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, B. Surgenor explained that, following current practice, graduate students in a research masters program can take one 400-level course outside their department as part of their graduate program.

**Carried 10-30**

**3. Academic Procedures (Appendix G, page 86)**  
**c) Official Grading Scale**

**Moved by Senator Chaudhry seconded by Senator Silverman, that, in light of the May 20, 2009 approval by Senate of a new official grading system that included reference to a top GPA of 4.0 corresponding to an A+ grade, that Senate approve the final sentence of the May 20, 2009, motion be revised to: “A top GPA of 4.3 will correspond to the highest achievable grade of A+.”**

SCAP Chair C. Beach noted that the adoption of the 4.3 GPA in the document informing Senate of the new official grading system is inconsistent with the motion approving the new system, which Senate passed on May 20, 2009. The current motion revises the earlier decision and is largely a housekeeping matter to ensure the Senate document is consistent.

In response to several senators, who questioned why 4.3 was chosen to correspond to an A+ grade, C. Beach replied that SCAP received extensive feedback favouring the use of 4.3. The 4.3 GPA is used by several Canadian universities as well as Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. The change also:

- represents the least change from the current system;
- makes it easier for academic units to make decisions about students for scholarships, fellowships and academic progression, because there is more differentiation in grades at the top end of the scale;
- gives a sense of fairness; so if a student has done outstanding work, the GPA should reflect this.

Some senators expressed concern that when Queen’s students apply elsewhere to graduate school their exceptional 4.3 GPAs would be considered at the same level as a 4.0. C. Beach noted that a 4.3 GPA rewards students for top performance and enables easier progression, and that letters of reference carry a lot of weight. He noted that it was not advisable to keep the GPA at 4.0 and lower the A to 3.8 because it would discriminate against Queen’s students unfairly.

C. Beach noted that some schools and departments may have to change their own marking rules with the new system. For example, in the School of Graduate Studies, a mark of under 65 per cent is deemed a failure and falls midway within a GPA category, so the School has adopted a B- corresponding to a 2.7 grade point as the minimal acceptable mark to proceed.



Senator Stairs replied that the proposal filed by SORC last September adjusts the composition of

