REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS/AGENDA COMMITTEE

Faculty of Social Science – Revised Constitution

Notice of Motion regarding Classroom Computer Log-in Requirements

Candidates for Degrees and Diplomas – Autumn Convocation 2012

Election Schedule for Spring 2013

FOR APPROVAL

1. Faculty of Social Science – Revised Constitution

Recommended: That Senate approve the proposed revisions to the Faculty of Social Science Constitution as outlined in **Appendix 1**.

The proposed revisions are as follows:

- a simplified definition of Social Science student for membership purposes
- a reduction in the number of required meetings and of quorum for meetings
- provision for electronic voting

The Faculty has been experiencing very low turnout at committee meetings. It is anticipated that reducing the number of required meetings and quorum will allow committees to hold more effective meetings. Allowing for electronic ballots will ensure that committees are kept at full strength between committee meetings.

FOR INFORMATION

2. Notice of Motion regarding Classroom Computer Log-in Requirements

See **Appendix 2**.

The Committee reviewed the notice of motion at its most recent meeting. In its considerations, the Committee acknowledged that information technology security is a significant consideration for all members of the Western community, and noted the sincere concerns and challenges that the proposed motion seeks to address.

The question for the Committee was how best to proceed in response, and here its deliberations were governed by two significant considerations. The first of these has to do with overall responsibility for computing security. University policy in this area is set out in MAPP 1.20, *Computing Resources Security*, which is a policy of the Board of Governors, not Senate. This would mean that any vote on the motion at Senate could only be advisory to the Board and not binding. The second consideration is that Ops/Agenda has neither the expertise not the authority to recommend a remedy that would address the circumstances that motivated the notice of motion. However, SUIT, the Senate Sub-Committee on Information Technology, does have responsibility for advising SCUP and Senate on IT matters. With the aim of providing a remedy that might address the concerns raised, Ops/Agenda has asked SUIT to review the notice of motion and consider whether there are any practical solutions that might mitigate the concerns raised therein. A response has been requested in time for the next meeting of Ops/Agenda so that a final report on the notice of motion can be provided at the November meeting of Senate.

3. **Candidates for Degrees and Diplomas – Autumn Convocation 2012**

On behalf of the Senate the Provost approves the list of Candidates for Degrees and Diplomas upon the recommendation of the Registrar [S.96-124]. The list of Candidates approved by the Provost will be appended to the Official Minutes of the October 19, 2012 Senate meeting.

4. **Election Schedule for Spring 2013**

Faculty and Administrative Staff Constituencies	
Call for Nominations [WWW, Western News]	Thursday, January 10
Nominations Open	8:30 a.m., Thursday, January 10
Nominations Close	4:30 p.m., Thursday, January 24
Posting of Nominations [Room 4101 STH, WWW]	Friday, January 25
Balloting on the Web - Polls Open	12:01 a.m., Tuesday, February 5
Balloting on the Web - Polls Close	11:59 p.m., Wednesday, February 6
Posting of Results [Room 4101 STH, WWW]	Thursday, February 7

Graduate and Undergraduate Student Constituencies	
Call for Nominations [WWW, Gazette, Western News]	Thursday, January 10
Nominations Open	8:30 a.m., Thursday, January 10
Nominations Close for Graduate and Undergraduate “Academic” Constituencies	4:30 p.m., Thursday, January 24
Nominations Close for Undergraduate “At Large” Constituency	4:30 p.m., Monday, January 28
Mandatory Candidates’ Advisory Meeting [Place TBA – arranged by USC]	evening, Monday, January 28
Posting of Nominations [Room 4101 STH, WWW]	Tuesday, January 29
Campaign Period begins	12:01 a.m. Tuesday, January 29
Campaign Period ends	11:59 p.m., Monday, February 11
Balloting on the Web - Polls Open	12:01 a.m., Tuesday, February 12
Balloting on the Web - Polls Close	8:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 13
Posting of Results [Room 4101 STH, WWW]	Thursday, February 14

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
Composition and Rules of Procedure

1. The Faculty of Social Science shall consist of the following Departments and Academic Units: Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Aubrey Dan Program in Management and Organizational Studies, and Women's Studies and Feminist Research[1].

   Admission of other Departments to the Faculty of Social Science will require the following steps:
   (i) application of the Department concerned to the Senate
   (ii) approval of this application by the Senate, after consultation with the Faculty of Social Science and any other Faculty concerned

2. The academic and administrative head of the Faculty of Social Science shall be the Dean of Social Science who may be assisted by one or more Associate Deans. Appointments to these positions shall be made in accordance with current University policy.

3. Student enrolment in the Faculty of Social Science shall consist of ~~all first year students of the University who take three or more Social Science courses, students in Honors programs in Departments and Academic Units of the Faculty of Social Science, all three-year B.A. students taking majors or special degree programs offered by Departments and Academic Units within the Faculty of Social Science, and any students, who, in the opinion of the Senate, have academic needs which are best met by enrolment in the Faculty of Social Science.~~ **Full- or Part-Time Western students (at the undergraduate, special undergraduate or graduate level) whose current faculty of registration is the Faculty of Social Science**.

4. There shall be a Council of the Faculty of Social Science, responsible to Senate, and composed of:

   (A) The following ex officio members:

   (i) The President & Vice-Chancellor
   (ii) Such Vice-Presidents of the University as the Senate may determine
   (iii) The Dean (who shall be Chair of the Council) and Associate Deans of the Faculty of Social Science
   (iv) The Vice-Provost or an Associate Vice-Provost of the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
   (v) Such other ex officio members as the Senate may, from time to time, determine.

   (B) (i) All full-time members of the Faculty of Social Science.
   (ii) All full-time members of the faculty of the University holding joint appointments with Departments and Academic Units in the Faculty of Social Science.
   (iii) One member of the Faculty of Social Science Regular Full-Time staff, elected thereby.
   (iv) Six students, of whom at least two shall be graduate students in the Social Sciences, elected by the appropriate student bodies.
   (v) The following representatives holding the rank of Lecturer or higher:
   2 from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities
   2 from the Faculty of Science
   1 from the Faculty of Information and Media Studies
   1 from the Faculty of Education
   1 from the Faculty of Engineering
   1 from the Faculty of Health Sciences
   1 from the Faculty of Law
   1 from each of the Affiliated University Colleges
   (vi) Such other members as the Senate may, from time to time, determine.

5. Members of the above categories shall be entitled to participate fully in meetings of the Council, i.e., to speak, to propose motions, to vote.

6. The Council shall meet at least ~~four~~ **two** times each year, **normally in Fall and Spring,** and at such other times as the Council, Chair or Senate may prescribe. A minimum of ~~40~~ **20** members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

7. A special meeting of the Council ~~shall~~ **may** be called on the written notice of twelve (12) of its members, and shall be convened within ~~seven (7)~~ **ten (10)** days thereafter, to consider the matter(s) set out in the notice.

8. The Council shall advise Senate on all matters under the jurisdiction of the Senate which are pertinent to the Faculty of Social Science or referred to the Council by the Senate, and shall determine policy on all such matters if so delegated by the Senate.

9. The Council shall establish ~~an Executive Committee and~~ such other committees as it considers necessary. ~~The Executive Committee shall always have a majority elected by the Council.~~ The Council may delegate authority to its committees but these shall be responsible to the Council.

10. Nominations proposed by the Nominating Committee for the election of members to Departmental and Faculty Committees, and to other bodies within the University, shall be circulated electronically with a request for additional nominations.

11. Elections held by Council to appoint members to Departmental and Faculty Committees and to other bodies within the University, may be held by electronic vote.

1**2**. The by-laws and regulations for the conduct of the Council's proceedings shall, where practicable, be those adopted by the Senate.

Revised: ~~July 2008~~
April 2012

[1] Jointly with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Notice of Senate Motion regarding Unique Classroom Computer Logins

(for September 21st , 2012 Senate meeting)

1) Whereas the new login policy to use classroom computers leads to a reduction in the effective teaching time;
2) Whereas the policy of a unique login mechanism prevents unregistered new faculty from access to the system;
3) Whereas the policy represents a transfer of risk to teaching faculty with regards to the protection of privacy of student information;
4) Whereas the policy also represents a transfer of risk to teaching faculty regarding the security of their Western Financial information, including such aspects as bank account information and the ability to redirect it, pension information and the ability to change it, and a general increase in the risk of identity theft; and
5) Whereas not all teaching faculty have recourse to use a laptop computer as an alternative to the use of classroom computers;

Therefore, be it resolved that ITS is instructed to suspend its conversion of classroom computers to the new login mechanism, until such time as an alternate login mechanism is provided acceptable to teaching faculty.

Rationale for the Motion:

ITS has embarked upon a policy or requiring users to use their unique Western login on classroom computers. Some classrooms have already been modified in this way, and the process is continuing.

Two meetings involving concerned parties in the Faculty of Science have been held in an effort to obtain an alternate login mechanism. The concern is that, in the event that an instructor's account is hacked, all student information stored on Western systems as well as the instructor's personal financial information is readily available to the hacker.

In these meetings ITS has resisted efforts to maintain more than one account per user as it sees this as a less secure system.

The focus of the August meeting centred on the likelihood that a dedicated hacker could retrieve an instructor's user ID and password electronically. In the September meeting, just held this week, it was pointed out that a much more likely scenario is that a dedicated student or group of students manages to capture the information via cell phone video. (This is not unlike the pickpocket scenario in which one party distracts the victim by bumping into them while the other party steals the wallet.) As is shown repeatedly in the public at large, there is a segment of the population that is highly motivated to inflict this type of damage.

Instructors are already working with a very tight window of 10 minutes during which the departing instructor must log off the system, gather up, handle student questions while the entering instructor must log onto the system , load software, start response software etc --- all the while dealing with students asking questions. In many classrooms, it is virtually impossible to cover up what is entered. In large classes where all of these factors are at play --- of which we have many ay Western --- the likelihood of the user ID and password being captured by a party intent on getting it becomes very high. And as is well known in probability, if an event has a positive chance of happening, if you repeat it often enough, it will happen. Access to this secure information will be obtained by parties not entitled to it.

At the same time, Western maintains no "double lock" on the student information we maintain on university grade systems like Sakai , or for that matter our own financial information. As soon as an account has been compromised, grades can be changed, the logins of other students can be found, and even our paycheques can be redirected or our pension choices changed.

In response to this, the advice widely conveyed at the meeting in order to protect this sensitive information was that the only solution was to avoid the use of the classroom computers altogether --- requiring faculty to bring their own laptops to class. This end result effectively renders the classroom computers useless, not to mention a large waste of resources.

It is a reasonable question to ask, in the midst of all of these aspects, whether the Administration is exercising due caution with respect to the protection of the security of these forms of private student and faculty information, in the light of this very real threat.

As an academic matter, it is relevant for Senate to comment as well on the time impact that processes put in place to strive for a secure environment. How much teaching time is being lost?

In the light of this, it seems to me as a Senator that two things are called for:

1) In order to exercise due caution for matters of privacy of information, the Administration needs to suspend immediately the conversion of classroom computers to the new login protocol;
2) An alternate method for establishing the identity of instructors, so as to enable them to gain access to the classroom computers needs to be found that is acceptable to teaching staff.

In my own limited opinion, the credible solutions appear to be a) for access to be provided by means of swiping the band on our Western IDs, b) the plan for unique IDs to be softened to allow for a unique separate teaching login for all teaching faculty, c) new ID cards with a chip to be issued for use with a smart keyboard, or d) for double locks to be placed on student information systems and faculty financial systems. However, other options may be identified by ITS over the course of the campus wide consultations that such a serious matter requires.

David Stanford,

Senator for Science, 2011-13

September 19th, 2012.