

**Senators Present:**

Dr. Dion Hepburn, Faculty-At-Large, Associate Professor, Vice Chair  
Mr. William Fielding, Administration, Data Analyst, Institutional Strengthening, Secretary  
Ms. Catharine Archer, Faculty-At-Large Representative, Librarian II  
Dr. Christine Kozikowski, Faculty Representative, Associate Professor, English Studies, Parliamentarian  
Dr. Thalia Micklewhite, Administration, Dean, Social and Educational Studies  
Dr. Douglas Barkey, Administration, Dean, Liberal & Fine Arts  
Dr. Maria Woodside-Oriakhi, Provost & Vice-President Academic Affairs  
Dr. Veronica Toppin, Administration, Interim Dean, Pure & Applied Sciences  
Mr. Shelby McPhee, Adjunct Faculty Representative  
Dr. Neressa Wallace-Bandelier, Faculty Representative, Associate, Education  
Mr. Paul McCann, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Education  
Dr. Kayla Stubbs, Faculty Representative, Associate Professor, Chemistry, Environmental & Life Sciences  
Mrs. Dale McHardy, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Business  
Mrs. Michelle Cunningham, Assistant Professor, Business  
Ms. Jessica Minnis, Faculty Representative, Professor, Social Sciences  
Dr. Paul Jones, Faculty Representative, Professor, Communication and Creative Arts  
Dr. Marky Jean-Pierre, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Communication and Creative Arts  
Mrs. Karol Mackey-Missick, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Nursing & Allied Health Professions  
Dr. Amin Kabir, Faculty Representative, Associate Professor, Mathematics, Physics & Technology  
Ms. Renate Roberts-McWilliam, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Mathematics, Physics & Technology  
Mr. Mario Adderley, Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Dean, TheCALM  
Dr. Ruth Gardiner, Faculty Representative, Associate Professor, TheCALM  
Dr. Camille Smith, Assistant Director, Counsellor II, Libraries/Counselling  
Mrs. Decoda Darville, Staff Representative, Assistant Director, Campus Life  
Mrs. Lesvie Archer, Staff Representative, Policy Fellow, Public Policy Institute  
Ms. Vivian McIntosh, Staff Representative, UB-North, Assistant Director, Enrolment and Retention  
Ms. Alexandria Neely, Student Representative

**Late with Apologies**

Dr. A. Marie Sairsingh, Faculty Representative, Professor, English Studies, Assistant Secretary

**Late**

Mrs. Leslie Dorsett-Lewis, Director, CeLearn, UB North

**Absent with Apologies**

Ms. Janyne Hodder, Administration, Acting President & CEO  
Mrs. Justina Toote-Knowles, Faculty Representative, Nursing and Allied Health Professions  
Dr. Nicolette Bethel, Faculty Representative, Social Sciences, Professor, Chair  
Ms. Lennise Lopez, Staff Representative, UB North, Assistant Registrar  
Mrs. Keturah Babb-Higgs, Staff Representative, Director of Government Relations & Civic Engagement

**Absent Senators**

Dr. Sophia Rolle, Adjunct Faculty Representative  
Ms. Natasha Taylor, Staff Representative, Administrative Assistant II, CeLearn  
Ms. Claire Charlow-Patton, Staff Representative, Registrar  
Ms. Shannon Louissaint, Student Representative  
Dr. Marlo Murphy-Braynen, Administration, Dean, Business  
Dr. Larry Russell Jr. Faculty Representative, Assistant Professor, Chemistry, Environmental & Life Sciences

**Absent Senators (cont.)**

Mr. Anthony Ferguson, Jr. Student Representative – UB North

Mr. Kamrenn King, Student Representative

**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 2:19 p.m. by D. Hepburn.
2. **Roll Call** - This was taken by W. Fielding.
3. **Prayer** - The prayer was offered by T. Micklewhite.
4. **Welcome** – D. Hepburn welcomed senators and gave some congratulatory announcements:
  - i. Congratulations were extended to Senator K. Babb-Higgs on the birth of her baby girl.
  - ii. Congratulations were also extended to Senator Lesvie Archer on her research which has attracted much publicity for research at University of The Bahamas.
5. **Approval of Agenda** - On a motion by D. Barkey and seconded by M. Adderley the agenda was approved.
6. **Minutes of Meeting 8 October 2024**
  - 6.1 **Approval of Minutes** - On a motion by C. Archer and seconded by T. Micklewhite the minutes of 8 October 2024 were approved.
  - 6.2 **Matters Arising – None beyond those items listed in the agenda.**
    - 6.2.1 **Update on Population of Academic Senate Committees – Committee on Committees: D. Barkey**

D. Barkey gave an update on the committees and noted that there is great progress so far. He also mentioned that all of the committees are quorate and can meet, however, listed below are a few positions that need to be filled:

      - Academic Policies Committee – 1 faculty
      - Faculty Development Committee – 1 non-senator, 1 faculty
      - Research and Creative Works Committee – 1 faculty
      - Statutes and Bye-Laws Committee – 1 faculty, 1 administrator
      - Libraries Committee – 4 non-senators
      - Faculty Handbook Committee – 1 non-senator, 1 faculty
    - 6.2.2 **Academic Senate Resolution on University of the Bahamas Graduation Ceremony: D. Darville**

At the last Academic Senate Meeting, the Student Affairs Committee was tasked with advising if changes should be made to the draft resolution on the commencement ceremony of University of the Bahamas.

Since then, the Committee had contacted the Ceremonies and Occasions Committee which is co-chaired by Mrs. Maelynn Ford and Mr. Colyn Major. This committee was currently in the process of speaking with the Board of Trustees about that particular item as well as other challenges it had been experiencing over the years.

The Ceremonies and Occasions Committee intended to present a proposal to the Board of Trustees in December and thereafter, they would provide the Student Affairs Committee with an

update. The Ceremonies and Occasions Committee was unwilling to share this proposal with the Academic Senate at this time.

A lengthy discussion ensued with suggestions and recommendations, with the proposed time limit for Commencement being a particular focus of attention. The discussion indicated that there was no need to revise the draft resolution approved by the Academic Senate in October.

After further discussion, a motion was proposed by D. Barkey and seconded by R. Gardiner to confirm the draft resolution and request that the Office Bearers develop a preamble outlining the challenges of the Commencement ceremony, before the resolution was shared with the University Community. The resolution was approved unanimously.

#### 6.2.3 **Notes of 2024 Commencement at the Oakes Field Campus - J. Hodder's Comments:**

W. Fielding – Reported that he and N. Bethel had met with J. Hodder, Acting-President & CEO and discussed the concerns of the Academic Senate regarding Commencement. She shared the concerns of the Academic Senate. She shared a document outlining her thoughts as to how the graduation ceremonies might be revised. At her suggestion, this document has been shared with the Academic Senate.

Ms. Hodder was of a similar mind as it relates to the concerns regarding Commencement. While the Academic Senate draft speaks to Commencement, the Acting President took a wider view to include the events that led up to the actual graduation ceremony.

W. Fielding noted the J. Hodder wished her document to be shared not only for information but for the Academic Senate's feedback which should be emailed to the Secretary.

## 7. **New Business**

### 7.1 **Curriculum Papers**

AS Paper No. 24-188	PHIL 101 - Introduction to Philosophy - GEN Ed (Revised)
AS Paper No. 24-189	HIST 211 – Bahamian History (Revised)
AS Paper No. 24-190	HIST 375 – A Transnational History of Women and Gender in the Caribbean (Revised)
AS Paper No. 24-191	EDUC 211 – Physical and Health Education (Revised)
AS Paper No. 24-192	EDUC 364 – Computer Studies in the Primary School (New)
AS Paper No. 24-193	EDUC 367 – Visual Arts in the Primary School (New)
AS Paper No. 24-194	EDUC 308 – Physical Education in the Primary School (Revised)*
AS Paper No. 24-195	EDUC 366 – Music in the Primary School (New)*
AS Paper No. 24-196	EDUC 467 – Visual Arts in the Secondary School (New)*
AS Paper No. 24-197	PHIL 101 – Introduction to Philosophy (Revised)*

\*Effective Semester/Year of the course is missing

**Decision:** *Following a motion moved by C. Kozikowski and seconded by T. Micklewhite, AS Papers No. 24-188, AS Paper No. 24-189, AS Paper 24-190, AS Paper 24-191, AS Paper 24-192, AS Paper 24-193, AS Paper 24-194, AS Paper 24-195, AS Paper 24-196 and AS Paper 24-197 were approved as a batch.*

7.2 **Update from Academic Senate Committees**

7.2.1 **Academic Policies Committee - Catherine Archer – Chair**

C. Archer listed the members of the Committee. She noted that it had met last week and will meet again next week and in December. The top priorities were the Archives Policy and also continuing the work that was done on the Gen Ed Policy.

**Curriculum and Academic Programmes Committee - Paul Jones - Chair**

P. Jones reported that the Committee has a team of 16 members and they have had 95% of attendance at meetings. He thanked the Committee members for their work and efforts.

7.2.2 **Faculty Development Committee - Ruth Gardiner – Chair**

R. Gardiner reported that the Committee consisted of seven members and that they have had two meetings: 24 September and 29 October, 2024. The Committee is tasked with reviewing and making recommendations to the Academic Senate regarding policies relating to the University's scholarships and funds for professional development for faculty.

The meeting format consisted of online Zoom meetings and they meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in every month at 2pm. She noted that they are functioning without handover notes; however, we are reviewing the current Industrial Agreement for historical perspectives and for guidance. She thanked the Senate Chair for attending their meeting in October 2024.

7.2.3 **Faculty Handbook Committee -Neressa Wallace-Bandelier – Chair**

N. Wallace-Bandelier reported that the Committee was presently made up of three members. They had met on 1 October and the draft of the 2024 Faculty Handbook was shared with the members for discussion.

She noted that the Committee had reached out to specific members of the Academic Senate who provided information to assist the Committee in moving closer to its goal of providing an up-to-date version the faculty handbook by the end of spring 2025. The Committee is planning to update the document with additions, deletions and amendments found in the new Industrial Agreement; specifically, policies dealing directly with faculty. The Committee also hopes to address any missing elements in the document.

7.2.4 **Promotion, Tenure and Post-tenure Committee – M. Jean-Pierre - Chair**

M. Jean-Pierre stated that the Committee was just one short of its full membership and has failed to elect a secretary. The Committee had met several times and will build upon the work already done by the previous Committee. The Committee had divided the aspects of promotion and post-tenure amongst its members in order to facilitate its work.

7.2.5 **Statutes, Bye-Laws and Rules Committee – T. Micklewhite - Chair**

T. Micklewhite reported that the Committee met on 23 October to elect the committee Chair. The next meeting is scheduled for 10 December, 2024 and it will continue to work on the guidelines that it has been given.

7.2.6 **Research & Creative Works Committee – A. Kabir - Chair**

A. Kabir reported that the Committee currently has six members and it has had one meeting at which the members discussed several recommendations and plans for research which will be presented at a later date.

**7.2.7 Student Affairs Committee – D. Darville – Chair**

D. Darville reported that the Committee met three times and noted that it has a full complement of members on their team and it is currently working on areas that will assist in developing the students such as internships, dress code and student success.

**8 Adjournment**

Following a motion by V. Toppin and seconded by R. Gardiner the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

**Secretary's Note**

The following papers were approved by round robin on the 22 November 2024:

AS Paper No. 24-198: Candidates for Graduation Spring 2024 NAHP Addendum 2

AS Paper No. 24-199: Candidates for Graduation Summer 2024 BUSI Addendum 2

Below we reproduce Senator Hodder's paper on the 2024 Commencement.

## Notes on 2024 Commencement at the Oakes Field campus

### Introduction

We have just concluded Commencement Week on the Oakes Field campus and I thank the Graduation Co-Chairs Maelynn Ford and Colyn Major, along with members of their committee, for the stellar work they did to ensure a week of joy and celebration for our students, our honoured guests and their families, and for the entire university community. Thanks are particularly warranted given this year's major challenge: changing the venue at one week's notice. We could not have had the spirit of celebration and joy we did have had it not been for the quality of work of the Co-chairs and their committee, indeed of all those who served in the various ceremonies, security, staff, protocol officers and more. The University is in your debt.

While getting to such success was challenging, we did succeed. We also learned important lessons from this experience, and it is on this basis I wish to propose modifications that could make this week less costly and improve the experience for everyone.

### Volume of work and resources

Graduation Week requires a very high volume of work and consumes a lot of resources: people, time and money. While this is inevitable and true for all universities, we need to consider whether we can continue to rely solely on internal resources. For example, the management of invitations suffered some setbacks; I am told some guests of the honorand did not receive their invitations and the collection of responses to invitations was complicated by the need to also inform guests of the change in venue. Also, there were cases where guests had to call to find out whether they would have access to valet parking and some staff at Atlantis apparently did not honour the free valet parking we offered guests. Communication between the University and students worked well, communication with others was more problematic.

We need to consider whether hiring an event planner for this event could provide timely assistance to make this event flow smoothly for all. We do not have a need for full-time events management staff as none of our other events are as complex, though some may be, but we may need for just-in-time support when planning large public-facing events to ensure the best possible experience for guests and to reflect the UB brand. We should explore the option of bringing in events planning support rather than relying solely on internal resources.

### Commencement Committee

The Committee should be chaired by the Board Secretary and a Co-Chair as necessary, but include delegated representatives of relevant VPs, including Provost, Enrolment Management, Student Services and others, and provide regular feedback to the Executive Leadership Team.

### Number of events

At Oakes Field, we had 5 consecutive events in 4 days:

1. Baccalaureate Service
2. Teachers' Commissioning
3. Nurses' Pinning
4. Awards
5. Commencement

Some thought should be given to reducing this number.

The **Baccalaureate Service** has long been a tradition and graduand attendance this year was good. Still, the speeches, except for those of the two students, were mostly the same as would be given at any Commencement. Thought should be given to shortening the event and focusing essentially on the spiritual nature of this event; a one-hour church service. Also, we might want to explore whether this event requires the wearing of graduation regalia? It is a church service.

The **Nurses' Pinning** ceremony also has an important tradition. It is also a beautiful ceremony filled with symbols emblematic of the profession. It does not require regalia, but instead requires the all-white uniform tradition of nursing. However, it does not have to be held during Graduation Week and could be scheduled at least one week before graduation.

The **Teachers' Commissioning** though a more recently adopted ceremony, holds meaning for the transition from student to professional. This year's speaker was outstanding. Still, this also could be held earlier. It could also be folded into a Commencement ceremony should we decide to split the graduation classes and hold more than one Commencement. There is no regalia at this ceremony.

Ordinary Academic Senate Meeting  
Tuesday, 11 November, 2024, 2:15 p.m. – 3:45  
p.m.  
RBC Auditorium  
This meeting was recorded.



UNIVERSITY  
OF THE BAHAMAS



The **Awards** ceremony. I have reservations about this ceremony. Why honour our best students in a ceremony which is only attended by the awards recipients themselves rather than have them honoured at Commencement? These are our star students and no one at Commencement learns that. It seems to me that we are losing an opportunity to focus community engagement with our very best students. I also have reservations about the awards themselves. It is not clear to the audience what each individual award represents, and it was also not clear why some awards were plaques, and some were plaques and envelopes. I We need to communicate better to the audience the meaning of the award, the nature of the award, and when appropriate, the value of the award. I also question the passing of envelopes from donors at this ceremony. While we have an awards policy, the audience needs to better understand what we are awarding, why and how. Also, how are we recording these awards as part of the student record or transcript? Finally, while the gold cord is a lovely symbol of achievement, could it not be awarded at Commencement as part of the walk-on process? This would better signal our pride in our high achievers and make them visible to others, not only to each other.

### **The Date of Commencement**

There are two problems with holding Commencement the last week in May. First, we do not have the time that would allow us to deliver the actual degrees to our students. This means, they walk and collect a blank folder and must come back to get their actual degree; unfortunate for them and additional work for us. Second, the time allotted for submitting grades, securing Senate approval, allowing Academic Affairs to verify, submitting to the Board for final approval, producing the degrees and diplomas and getting them signed is too short, placing pressure on Senate and Academic Affairs forcing the Board to review material at the very last minute.

We should consider moving Commencement to the second week of June.

### **The Venue**

While we are grateful to Atlantis for us assistance at the last minute, we cannot use this venue again. The volume of traffic and the limited parking present serious difficulties.

While the stadium has been used in the past, it will always be a risk for being rained out and it will likely also be too hot, especially if we move to a June date.

The safest option is BahaMar and if we intend to use it, we should reserve for at least two years and lock in the agreement.

### **One Ceremony or More**

Though this is in part due to particularly large class this year, the ceremony is too long. We should consider splitting into two or more though this may depend on class size each year.

### **The Time**

The best times are likely to be 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. We need graduands and those officiating to arrive early. Both the options allow families to have appropriate time for post-commencement family celebrations. Still, this choice could be tested with our students.

### **The Ceremony**

The ceremony is too long. The ceremony is too noisy. The ceremony loses its audience.

Whether we hold one or more ceremonies, we need to do three things:

- Cut down the time
- Reduce the noise-making incentives.
- Keep the graduands engaged until the end.

### **Programme Sequence**

#### **1. Procession**

- Strengthen the initial procession. Have the academic procession in place outside the hall and have the graduands pass through this gauntlet of faculty as they march in.



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- Have a marching band play very solemn music quite loudly during the entire processional. There should be a church-like, solemn feeling.
- Have many more faculty on stage as well as the Trustees. Create a sea of colour.
- Have faculty from each school sit at the end of the row of students from their school.

**1. National Anthem**

**2. Prayer**

**3. Chair's Remarks**

**4. President's Remarks**

**5. Valedictorian**

**6. Citation or Introduction of Speaker**

- Followed by awarding of honorary doctorate if applicable

**7. Speaker**

**8. Conferring of Degrees**

- Cut out the hooding section. Instead, ask candidates for a given degree only to stand, confer that degree and immediately have students approach to collect. Have 'hooders', member of faculty from that college, hood each student at the step of the stage before their walk on and place gold cord on those who have earned at the same time. Each student gives the Dean a card, which has their name and any award they have (including the gold cord symbol explanation). President shakes hands.
- Repeat for next degree.

**9. Turning of the Tassel**

- Once all students have walked and returned to their seat, proceed with tassel instruction (there will be noise)

**10. The Alma Mater**

**11. The Recessional**

- Start marching music at low volume while Speaker asks audience to allow the recessional to proceed.
- Increasing level of marching band – high energy cheer music.
- Platform leads, students follow.

**Programme Booklet**

We should evaluate the cost of producing the Commencement Booklet that gives the programme order and the names and of the graduates (with their awards next to their name). It does three things: provides a keepsake for the graduands, gives the audience something to read and gives clear expectations about how the ceremony will unfold and how it will end.

Is it possible that the pattern of leaving immediately after receiving one's degree began after we stopped producing the Graduation Programme?

**Other ideas:**

- Is there something we can do about controlled parking to facilitate exiting
- Could we host a post-ceremony modest reception?

J. Hodder