

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

On behalf of Senator Deane, Vice-Principal (Academic) the following statement was read by Principal Williams:

Senators will recall from the last meeting that Vice-Principal Deane announced the impending release of his discussion paper on the curriculum. That document, "Contexts and Imperatives for

Main Motion

Moved by Senator Stairs

seconded by Senator Oosthuizen

For 2009 Convocations, that the Senate appoint the Dean of Arts and Science and the Dean of Graduate Studies to preside at convocation in the absence of the Chancellor, or the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, or the Vice-Principal (Academic), or the Vice-Principal (Research). The exercise of this authority will be decided by the Principal after consultation with the Chancellor, once the convocation dates have been approved.

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understand the science, economics, politics, and most importantly truth of climate change and how human and environmental suffering can and will be caused by inaction.

All peoples will be affected by climate change though not all equally. The negative effects of a warming planet will fall disproportionately on the most disadvantaged members of our societies. Unfortunately we as individuals, as an institution, as a nation and as a planet cannot prevent all of these human induced environmental calamities. The UNFCCC has resigned itself to 2 degrees of warming over the next century, but a new specter has surfaced from the scientific data. Many scientists, including James Hansen, the head of NASA's Goddard Institute, are predicting that if we do not make a drastic change to the organization of our communities, over the next decade and beginning in the next year, we will be unable to exercise *any* control over our climate through any mitigation effort. The potential effects of inaction can be devastating, and make it necessary for cities, corporations, nations and even universities, to do their part to take part in addressing climate change.

It is true that this one institution will have a minimal impact on total greenhouse gas emissions, even if it were to become carbon neutral tomorrow. Maya Angelou once wrote, "The horizon leans forward, offering you space to place new steps of change". The Presidents Climate Commitment is a great step forward, but it cannot serve as the only step forward, only as the *first* step forward. Ratifying the commitment will follow the great work of Queen's leaders who have begun championing this cause. Leaders such as Dr. Pearce in the department of Mechanical Engineering, who is valiantly pursuing solar technology and efficiency standards at this University; Doctor Smol in the department of Biology, who has received numerous academic awards for his work in climate reconstruction; Professor Garvie from the Department of Economics, who has devoted a entire course to the Economics of Climate Change. Signing the agreement will give hope to all those students who pursue these courses in an attempt to become better global citizens as well. And let us never forget as well, that if Queen's truly wishes to engage the world, to build international linkages, and demonstrate our global consciousness, then Queen's must begin to demonstrate leadership in global issues such as sustainability and climate change.

We have waited far too long to take up this challenge. We must turn from inaction to action and sign a public commitment to combat climate change. Complacency is no longer an option in the face of the overwhelming costs of doing nothing. If we are to continue to espouse the virtues of truth and justice as an institution of higher learning, we must act.

In closing, I began this discussion by explaining that a measure of a good leader is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency, and to take action accordingly. Today, leaders are recognizing a problem, and taking action. Communities are recognizing a problem, and taking action. And so too, should our community.

I thank Senate for its time and patience.