

Commentary on the submission from Memorial

Dr. Thomas Baird, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, MUN
August 25, 2014

Last week the Committee received a submission from Memorial University that made several recommendations which, if enacted, would further restrict access to information at public institutions.

I personally disagree with recommendations 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9, but I will not criticize them in detail. Instead, I contend that the submission from Memorial University does not legitimately represent the views of the university community. Furthermore, I contend that the recommendations conflict with the University's official core values.

The provenance of Memorial's submission document

I reproduce below a record of email correspondence with University Privacy Officer Rosemary Thorne who presented the submission in a public hearing last week.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Baird

Sent: August 21, 2014 11:25 AM

To: Thorne, Rosemary

Cc: Cooper, Morgan

Subject: submission to the ATIPPA review panel

Hello,

I am writing to learn more about MUN's submission to the ATIPPA review panel. Available here:

http://www.parcnl.ca/documents/memorial_university_submission_final.pdf

I want to know

1. Who prepared this document?

2. Were faculty consulted about or asked to contribute to the preparation of this document?

3. Who approved this document (e.g. the Board of Regents, the Senate, the President, Deans, VPs)? In particular, on whose authority has

this submission been made by "Memorial University"?

thank you,

Dr. Thomas Baird - Math & Stats

On 21/08/2014 17:09, Thorne, Rosemary wrote:

Good afternoon,

The Memorial University submission to the ATIPPA Review Committee was developed over the summer by a working group:

Mary Barron, Associate Director, Human Resources

Vicki Collins, Executive Director, Marketing and Communications

Michael Fowler, Human Resources Manager, Marine Institute; chair, IAPP Advisory Committee

Mary Mandville, Director, Faculty Relations

Sheila Singleton, University Registrar

Shelley Smith, Chief Information Officer

Rosemary Thorne, University Privacy Officer

Carol Tibbo, Director, Office of the Vice-President (Administration and Finance)

Wilfred Zerbe, Dean, Faculty of Business Administration

The submission was approved by Mr. Kent Decker, Vice-President (Administration and Finance).

Submissions to the ATIPPA Review Committee were open to the public and, I understand, they are open to receiving submissions until 31 August. No individual faculty member was asked to participate in the working group, but all members of the senior academic administrators group was invited to solicit and provide input to the working group. MUNFA was advised of the ATIPPA Review and the opportunity to make a submission to the ATIPPA Review Committee.

If you would like to meet with me to discuss the submission, I would be glad to do so.

Regards,

Rosemary

I call the Committee's attention to the following points.

1. The working group that prepared the submission is composed solely of administrators and bureaucrats. There is no representation from faculty, students, or any other group.
2. No draft of the document was circulated to the wider university community for comment.
3. The submission was not approved by either the Senate or the Board of Regents, the two governing bodies of the University. Instead, it was approved by another administrator.
4. Most ATIPPA requests received by the university are submitted by members of the university. Yet the people who submitted requests were not asked to contribute to, or comment on, the submission.

These four points demonstrate that the submission does not legitimately represent the views of the university community.

Memorial's core values

In 2013, Memorial University created a vision statement (see appendix), which outlines the mission and core values of the institution. The vision statement has strong legitimacy, having been approved by both governing bodies: the Senate and the Board of Regents. The core values that seem most relevant are:

Integrity: Being honest and ethical in all interactions, maintaining the highest ethical standards in teaching, research, public engagement and service.

Collegiality: Engaging others with respect, openness and trust in pursuit of a common purpose, having regard for individuals, ideals and the institution as a whole.

Responsiveness: Being receptive to individuals and communities.

Accountability: Accepting responsibility for achievement of common goals and objectives.

Freedom and Discovery: Supporting the freedom to pursue knowledge that is based on individual and collective intelligence, curiosity, ingenuity and creativity.

I ask that the Committee consider recommendations from Memorial only insofar as they are compatible with these core values.

thank you for your attention,

Dr. Thomas Baird - Assistant Professor of Mathematics, Memorial University

Appendix

The MUN vision statement is reproduced below.

Vision:

Memorial University will be one of the most distinguished public universities in Canada and beyond, and will fulfill its special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mission:

Memorial University is an inclusive community dedicated to innovation and excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity, service and public engagement.

Memorial welcomes and supports students and scholars from all over the world and contributes knowledge and expertise locally, nationally and internationally.

Values:

Excellence: Encouraging and promoting excellence through innovation and creativity, rigour and pragmatism.

Integrity: Being honest and ethical in all interactions, maintaining the highest ethical standards in teaching, research, public engagement and service.

Collegiality: Engaging others with respect, openness and trust in pursuit of a common purpose, having regard for individuals, ideals and the institution as a whole.

Inclusiveness and diversity: Embracing and acting on responsibility to guarantee diversity and equity.

Responsiveness: Being receptive to individuals and communities.

Accountability: Accepting responsibility for achievement of common goals and objectives.

Freedom and Discovery: Supporting the freedom to pursue knowledge that is based on individual and collective intelligence, curiosity, ingenuity and creativity.

Recognition: Acknowledging, tangibly, all aspects of university enterprise including teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity and public engagement.

Responsibility to place: Valuing and fulfilling the special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador by supporting and building capacity for excellence that:

- addresses needs and opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador;
- engages the university community on matters of national and international significance;
- produces and delivers academic programs of national and international calibre; and,
- recognizes the dynamic opportunities presented by a multi-campus institution.

Responsibility to learners: Recognizing students as a first priority and providing the environment and support to ensure their academic and personal success.

Interdisciplinary collaboration: Supporting overarching themes in all pursuits that cut across academic units and address significant opportunities and challenges for which Memorial is particularly well positioned to build nationally and internationally recognized capacity.

Sustainability: Acting in a manner that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable in administration, academic and research programs.