



**ACADEMIC COUNCIL  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (USC)**

**Minutes of the Public Session of the January 21, 2025 Meeting  
via Videoconference  
9:00 a.m. – 10:46 a.m.**

**[Undergraduate Studies Committee Agenda & Materials 2024-2025](#)**

**Present:** Mary Bluechardt (Chair), Wendy Barber, Kimberley Clow, Ana Duff, Randy Fortier, Janet McCabe, Mehdi Hossein Nejad, Scott Nokleby, Darryl Papke, Jemma Tam, Adam Wingate

**Regrets:** Tega Ubor

**Staff and Guests:** Kirstie Ayotte (Secretary), Jessica Boswell, Lindsay Coolidge, Nicola Crow, Michelle Heslip, Andrea Kassaris, Kimberley McCartney, Diane Tepylo

**1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and J. Tam read aloud the Land Acknowledgement, encouraging members to carry the spirit of unity and gratitude forward, inspiring acts of kindness and reconciliation.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

*Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow, and seconded by R. Fortier, the Undergraduate Studies Committee approved the Agenda, as presented.*

**3. Minutes of the Committee Meeting of December 17, 2024.**

*Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by R. Fortier, the Undergraduate Studies Committee approved the December 17, 2024 Minutes, as presented.*

One (1) abstention noted.

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

None Noted.

**5. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair highlighted an exciting agenda for the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and thanked everyone for their contributions. She expressed gratitude to those who attended the recent Employee Appreciation at the Carriage Cup, a University event recognizing employees while supporting student athletes, and that the event was enjoyed by many faculty, staff and students.

## **6. Minor Program Adjustments (Approval)**

### **a) Faculty of Business and IT: Entrepreneurship Minor for Students outside FBIT\* (M)**

M. Hossein Nejad noted that the University-wide Entrepreneurship Minor is being updated by reducing required courses by one and adding more electives for flexibility and choice for students. He clarified that the total number of courses remains the same.

*Upon a motion duly made by M. Hossein Nejad and seconded by A. Duff, USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Entrepreneurship minor for students outside FBIT to adjust course requirements.*

### **b) Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science: Bachelor of Engineering (Hons.) in Automotive Engineering\* (M)**

S. Nokleby noted that the minor program adjustment increases elective opportunities for automotive students by combining two courses into one, freeing up space to add another elective and supporting specialization options.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by W. Barber, USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Automotive Engineering.*

### **c) Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science: Bachelor of Engineering (Hons.) in Manufacturing Engineering\* (M)**

S. Nokleby advised that this change aligns the program with other engineering programs by offering a course better suited to students' needs. It also enables students to pursue the AI specialization, as the course serves as a prerequisite.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by K. Clow, USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to the Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) in Manufacturing Engineering.*

### **d) Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science: Electrical Engineering and Electrical Engineering Smart Grid Specialization\* (M)**

S. Nokleby advised that this change reduces the course load for engineering students by integrating two courses into one, lowering the typical six-course semesters to five where possible while maintaining essential content.

Concerns were raised regarding the reduction of math instruction. S. Nokleby advised that to better focus on students' needs and reduce workload, the content from two math courses was

combined into one, ensuring students still receive the necessary material. The driving force behind this change is workload reduction while maintaining key content.

J. McCabe joined the meeting.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by K. Clow, USC hereby approves the Minor Program Adjustment to Bachelor of Electrical Engineering and Bachelor of Electrical Engineering – Smart Grid Specialization to adjust course requirements.*

One (1) Abstention noted.

## **7. Major Program Modifications (Recommendation)**

### **a) Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science: New Minor in Nuclear Technology\* (M)**

S. Nokleby noted that the new minor in Nuclear Technology would be available to students in various engineering programs such as mechanical, electrical, and mechatronics, aiming to give students an advantage when applying for jobs in the nuclear sector, a major employer for engineering graduates.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by R. Fortier, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to add a minor in Nuclear Technology.*

### **b) Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science: Railway Engineering Specialization\* (M)**

S. Nokleby advised that Ontario Tech is addressing industry needs by developing a railway specialization, the first of its kind in Canada. Major companies, including Alston Railway, Atkins Realis, Metrolinx, TTC, and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC), support the program and will offer co-op positions for students. He highlighted that this initiative responds to a lack of dedicated railway engineering programs in Canada, aligning with Ontario Tech's mission to meet industry demands.

In response to a question regarding teaching resources, S. Nokleby advised that the specialization will initially be taught by industry experts with some existing professors qualified in rail engineering. The goal is to demonstrate demand for the program to support future dedicated faculty hires. The Committee acknowledged that this was an exciting opportunity for the University.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by R. Fortier, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Engineering in Automotive, Manufacturing, Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering programs for the addition of a Railway Engineering Specialization.*

### **c) Mitch and Leslie Frazer Faculty of Education: Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) – Educational Studies – addition of Co-op and GAS Transfer (pathway)\* (M)**

W. Barber highlighted a minor addendum on the program proposal noting that there is also an existing course change which had been approved with the initial Faculty Council presentation. She confirmed that there would be no change required to the Motion.

D. Tepylo advised that the Faculty has spent one to two years developing a co-op program modeled on existing programs in the Faculty of Business and IT (FBIT) and the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science (FEAS), creating a structure that fits well with their undergraduate program. She noted that students completing the College program can enter the second year of the University program, needing to make up a few required courses. She confirmed that admission would require a high average, offering another pathway for students.

In response to a question regarding transfer credits, D. Tepylo advised that transfer credits would primarily be generic, except for a possible writing core credit. She noted that required courses such as EDST 1100U should be taken early as it is a co-op prerequisite, and others can be taken at any time.

*Upon a motion duly made by R. Fortier and seconded by S. Nokleby, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to add a Co-operative education (Co-op) option and GAS-Transfer pathway to the Educational Studies program.*

#### **d) Faculty of Health Sciences: Bachelor of Health Administration\* (M)**

J. McCabe noted that this program is currently in person with low enrollment and is proposed to transition to an exclusively online format to attract more students. She advised that the program will mostly use existing courses, adding an HR Management course and a seminar series, with support from FBIT. She advised that there had been lots of consultation with industry partners, and students and this proposed change reflects the results of the consultation and identified student needs.

A member expressed support for this change to test the waters by this program going exclusively online.

From questions arising from the program going to an exclusively online format including the use of AI by students, J. McCabe acknowledged the growing issue in both online and in-person courses, noting that faculty are working on helping students use AI responsibly, including helping build skill-sets in the use of AI, but no universal solution exists. She also acknowledged the possibility of in-person exams for online courses to provide some control.

Frustration was expressed by some Committee members over the lack of an AI and Academic Integrity University-wide policy.

A member raised concern regarding a core course that is to be provided by FBIT being primarily taught in-person and the lack of students in the program to justify creating an additional online section. They noted that there have been ongoing discussions between FBIT and the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHSci) whether the FBIT course is the right fit for the students in an online only program since it may not align with their needs or academic path. They noted that there hasn't been a clear response received on how to address this issue.

After fulsome discussion, the Committee agreed to table the Motion until FBIT and FHSci could finalize the details for the FBIT online delivery section of the program.

*Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by R. Fortier, the USC recommendation to Academic Council for the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Health Administration to deliver the program fully online, synchronously and asynchronously was **tabled** to postpone the decision and will be brought back to USC following further considerations and consultations.*

**e) Faculty of Health Sciences: Medical Laboratory Science\* (M)**

J. McCabe advised these changes were made in response to changes in the National Certification Exams as announced by The Canadian Alliance of Medical Laboratory Professionals (CAMLPR). She noted that the Medical Laboratory Science program has worked to align with the new standards, ensuring it meets accreditation and exam requirements. She advised that most of the changes involve course learning outcomes, with content remaining similar but restructured for better representation.

*Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by R. Forter, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Medical Laboratory Science program.*

**f) Faculty of Health Sciences: Bachelor of Health Sciences – Kinesiology - to Durham College – Massage Therapy Pathway\* (M)**

J. McCabe advised that the changes allow for Kinesiology graduate students to transfer into the massage therapy program at Durham College after graduation. She noted that a course that was previously not provided has been added, making the transfer option available. She acknowledged that it is a unique pathway that will provide students with additional career opportunities and confirmed that the added course is an elective, so students would need to be informed if this was a pathway they would like to pursue.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by R. Fortier, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Health Sciences – Kinesiology to create a new pathway with Durham College.*

**g) Faculty of Health Sciences: Physical Education Minor\* (M)**

J. McCabe advised that this minor is in collaboration with the Faculty of Education (Fed), offering their students the opportunity to gain an additional teachable qualification. She confirmed that this is not open to other University students.

D. Tepylo noted that there have been discussions with other Faculties for the potential to develop other pathway programs like this. This is the first one to be proposed.

*Upon a motion duly made by R. Fortier and seconded by K. Clow, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to create a Physical Education Minor.*

**h) Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Bachelor of Arts – Legal Studies\* (M)**

K. Clow explained that the new Legal Studies and Forensic Psychology double major reduces completion time to four years while maintaining core content. A joint program with a UK university introduces a practical law training approach, which combined with the more theoretical approach offered currently through Ontario Tech programs, helps prepare students for legal practice in Ontario or the UK. She added that this opportunity is doing what is best for students, providing opportunities to expand learning by getting both theoretical and practical learning experiences.

K. Clow also noted that the new four-year option balances core courses, and the existing five-year pathway will remain available for those who prefer it. Academic Advising will promote the streamlined option while continuing to support students choosing the longer route. These changes have strong support from the Legal Studies program.

*Upon a motion duly made by A. Duff and seconded by K. Clow, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to:*

- 1. Create a new double major in Legal Studies and Forensic Psychology*
- 2. Establish a new pathway with Teesside LLB, Middlesbrough, UK.*
- 3. Update the names of two Legal Studies specializations*

**i) Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Bachelor of Arts – Liberal Studies\* (M)**

K. Clow advised that the Liberal Studies program aims to add a three-year general degree for students transitioning from the four-year honours program, aiding retention and accommodating mature professionals seeking shorter programs. She noted that advanced entry options will also be introduced for the honours degree.

In response to a question regarding the program listing on the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC), K. Clow confirmed that it was intended as a retention pathway and was not aware of any active recruitment plans for the program.

K. Clow acknowledged that three-year programs were historically common in Canadian Universities, many institutions have shifted to four-year degrees. However, the demand for three-year degrees persists in FSSH, especially for Liberal Studies, as a retention option.

M. Bluehardt added that three-year programs are re-emerging due to changing needs, such as professionals seeking shorter degree options to advance their careers.

A. Wingate explained that currently, students who complete a three-year degree cannot later use those credits to re-enroll and pursue an honours degree. Typically, students are encouraged to switch programs while still enrolled, rather than completing a degree and returning later for another credential.



Concerns were raised about the three-year Liberal Studies degree being seen as a path to graduate school. It was emphasized that the program is not designed for further academic progression, and clear communication is needed to avoid misconceptions.

*Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by A. Duff, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to establish a 3-year (General) degree in Liberal Studies as well as Advanced-Entry and GAS pathways to the existing program.*

**j) Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: FSSH Co-operative Education\* (M)**

K. Clow advised that FSSH has been actively working with Program Directors to establish co-op opportunities in several of their programs. She noted that other faculties have co-op as part of their programs and FSSH would like to do the same. This was acknowledged and a recommendation made by a member to reach out to other faculties for support based on the experiences they have had.

Concerns were raised regarding the reliance on sessional instructors and the overload on teaching for co-op programs, with particular focus on the proposal's lack of clarity regarding staffing needs.

Members emphasized the importance of maintaining high-quality education and ensuring adequate resourcing for sufficient funding for full-time faculty to support workload distribution. Additional resources required for sessional instructors and the uncertainty of student enrollment were also highlighted, along with it was not faculty's responsibility to find funding/resources. A member also noted that within the resource section of the proposal there was no mention that this opportunity would be on a temporary basis pending review of numbers leading to looking at hiring full-time faculty if there was a demonstrated need.

K. Clow noted that to maintain full capacity for programming, wherever faculty was not available, sessional instructors would be brought in. She noted that faculty would have flexibility to teach in Spring or Summer and not in the Fall and/or Winter terms. D. Papke clarified that Spring/Summer courses would depend on enrollment, with resource allocation managed in consultation with the Dean and Provost. Members stressed the need to balance growth with ethical staffing practices and ensuring fair workload distribution to maintain education quality.

In response to a question about the need for Spring/Summer courses in the co-op program, K. Clow explained that the alternating school/work schedule requires students be at school during the Spring/Summer term, making the courses necessary. L. Coolidge added that while the program was originally designed to alternate terms, there is also an eight-month placement option. However, to meet accreditation requirements, students must work across different seasons, which the University is addressing if it moves forward with the accreditation.

In response to a question regarding existing practicum and internship opportunities, K. Clow clarified that the intention is for co-op to run concurrently. Students who don't participate in co-op can still engage in practicum and internships as usual, and while co-op hasn't replaced these programs, students in co-op could still choose to participate in them.

*Upon a motion duly made by R. Fortier and seconded by S. Nokleby, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to add Co-operative education (Co-op) option to the Communication and Digital Media Studies, Criminology and Justice, Legal Studies, Liberal Studies and Political Science programs within the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities.*

**k) Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: Bachelor of Arts - Criminology and Justice – specialization in Global Crime and Justice\* (M)**

K. Clow advised that the Criminology program is re-packaging existing courses into a new specialization to attract students. She noted that no new courses are being introduced and that the focus is on creatively presenting current offerings to highlight their appeal and draw interest.

*Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by S. Nokleby, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to establish a new specialization in Global Crime and Justice within the Criminology and Justice program.*

**l) Faculty of Social Science and Humanities: New Minor – Victimology and Victim Studies\* (M)**

K. Clow presented the new Minor in Victimology and Victim Services.

*Upon a motion duly made by K. Clow and seconded by S. Nokleby, USC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Major Program Modification to add a minor in Victimology and Victim Studies.*

## **8. For Information**

### **8.1 Minor Curricular Change**

**New Course:** [SIMU - 1000U - Foundations of Healthcare Simulation](#)

**Course Changes:**

[BUSI - 1450U - Statistics for Business](#), [BUSI - 1700U - Introduction to Entrepreneurship](#), [BUSI - 3650U - Innovation Management](#), [BUSI - 3710U - Entrepreneurial growth](#), [EDST - 2110U - Assessment and Evaluation](#), [EDST - 3460U - Working with Clients and Partners](#), [ELEE - 2530U - Electrical Engineering Mathematics: Essentials and Applications](#), [ELEE - 2790U - Electric Circuits](#), [ELEE - 3110U - Signals and Systems](#), [ELEE - 3240U - Applications for Electromagnetics](#), [ENGR - 2100U - Computational Engineering Applications](#), [FSCI - 4410U - Forensic Science Thesis Project I](#), [FSCI - 4420U - Forensic Science Thesis Project II](#), [INFR - 4120U – Grade Mode Error](#), [INFR - 4345U - Game Analytics](#), [INFR - 4350U - Human-Computer Interaction for Games](#), [KINE - 1030U - Quantitative Reasoning](#), [KINE - 4461U - Applied Topics in Sport and Exercise Psychology](#), [LBAT - 4000U - Liberal Studies Capstone](#), [MANE - 4110U - Design for Manufacturing](#), [NUCL - 2240U - Nuclear Engineering Fundamentals](#), [NUCL - 4460U - Nuclear Power Systems](#), [NUCL - 4510U - Nuclear Plant Chemistry](#), [NUCL - 4610U - Corrosion for Engineers](#), [NUCL - 4880U - Principles of Fusion Energy](#)





## **9. Volunteer for February Land Acknowledgement**

J. Tam volunteered to provide the February 2025 meeting's Land Acknowledgement

## **10. Termination**

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby, the January 21, 2025 USC meeting terminated at 10:46 a.m.*

Kirstie Ayotte, Assistant University Secretary