

ACADEMIC COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of April 23, 2024
2:31 – 3:47 p.m. [videoconference](#)

Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)	Fernando, Shanti	Nokleby, Scott
Aamir, Asifa	Hosseini, Sayyed Ali	Partosoedarso, Elita
Aquanno, Scott	Hossein Nejad, Mehdi	Rastpour, Amir
Arcand, JoAnne	Jacobs, Les	Rodgers, Carol
Azad, Nader	Jones, Ferdinand	Simmons, Denina
Bailey, Robert	Kay, Robin	Stokes, Joe
Barari, Ahmad	King, Alyson	Thompson, Dwight
Barber, Wendy	Kishawy, Hossam	Ubor, Tega
Beligan, Mihai	Liscano, Ramiro	Vettor, Shannon
Bluehardt, Mary	Livingston, Lori	Watterworth, Michael
Brown, Samantha	MacMillan, Patricia	
Christou, Ted	McGregor, Carolyn	
Davidson, Catherine	Naumkin, Fedor	
Duff, Ana		
Eklund, Mike		

Regrets:

Bryant, Toba	Felder, Ruth
Crawford, Greg	McAlpin, Breanne
Giorgees, Ifrodet	Serote, MaryCae
	Stoett, Peter

Staff & Guests:

Ayotte, Kirstie	McLaughlin, Christine	Scanga, Franco
Barnett, James	Nickle, Joanne	Sunstrum, Andrew
Bauer, Chelsea	Nyaamine, Ruth	Thrush, Sarah
Callahan, Stephanie	Papke, Darryl	Townsend, Lisa
Hamilton, Barbara	Reeson, Dana	Turner, Lauren
Hester, Krista	Nyaamine, Ruth	Windsor, Shelley
Maclsaac, Brad	Ruttenberg-Rozen,	Wingate, Adam
McCartney, Kimberley	Robyn	

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. D. Thompson read aloud the land acknowledgement and reflected on his grandfather as a generous, forward-thinking man. He has honoured him with a bursary for Indigenous students, acknowledging historical injustices and stresses reconciliation and forgiveness, inspired by his grandfather's example for a brighter future.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by S. Aquanno and seconded by M. Hossein Nejad, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees and advised that there has been no new information regarding the allocation of the \$900 million one-time funding for universities and colleges in Ontario. He further mentioned that the allocation of international students for the upcoming year is expected to be similar to last year's, expressing concerns about delays impacting enrollment. Efforts are in progress to fill available spots with high-caliber students. He continued by commending efforts of faculty and staff this term, expressing gratitude for their hard work and commitment to the University's success and thanked those that attended the recent kickoff event for the upcoming fundraising campaign. He concluded by acknowledging the upcoming convocation ceremony and growing alumni chapter.

a. 2024 Honorary Degree Recipients

The Chair noted indicated that on Wednesday, June 5 to Friday, June 7, Ontario Tech will celebrate the achievements and milestones of its class of 2024 along with six honorary degree recipients.

The university will present honorary degrees to the following:

- **Mr. Desmond Cole**, prominent Canadian journalist, broadcaster, author, and champion of inclusion and diversity, for his leadership as one of Canada's strongest voices in raising awareness about anti-Black racism, his work as an advocate, activist and journalist, and his significant connections to communities across Durham Region.
- **Dr. Jacqueline Gahagan**, Associate Vice-President of Research at Mount Saint Vincent University, for their distinguished contributions in health-equity research and advocacy, informing public policy for equitable health care, activism in support of equity-deserving populations with rights-based grassroots organizations, and dedication to HIV prevention, care, treatment and support in Canada and globally.
- **Mr. Paul Godfrey**, Founder and Special Advisor at Postmedia Network Canada Corporation, former Chair of Metro Toronto Council and former President and Chief Executive Officer of the Toronto Blue Jays, for his years of elected public service in the Greater Toronto Area, his formative role in the Canadian news industry, and his legacy of executive leadership in Canada's business community.
- **Ms. Roberta Jamieson**, an accomplished lawyer who was the first Indigenous woman to earn a law degree in Canada, for her tireless advocacy for the rights and autonomy of Indigenous peoples, her leadership in the field of alternative

dispute resolution, her efforts to improve education funding, access and opportunities for Indigenous youth, and for being a role model for those in public life, particularly women and Indigenous people.

- **Dr. Alan Shepard**, President and Vice-Chancellor of Western University, for his legacy of leadership and promotion of transformational change and innovation within higher education, and for his passionate advocacy of diversity, inclusion and belonging.
- **The Honourable Julie Thorburn**, a Justice with the Court of Appeal for Ontario, for her advocacy for improved access to justice for underserved groups in Ontario including Francophones, her demonstration of the values of integrity as a member of the justice system, and her promotion of equity, intellectual resilience and innovation in her career trajectory.

4. Inquiries and Communications

- **COU Academic Report**

Alyson King provided the COU Academic Report, focusing on a presentation regarding university governance that ignited discussion concerning the absence of references to equity considerations and the role of Faculty Associations. She emphasized that other universities are encountering comparable financial challenges. Additionally, she noted the introduction of Activity-based Budgeting (ABB) at the University, which received negative feedback. President Steve Orsini addressed funding uncertainties and issues concerning international students in his report and the meeting included the 317th full Council gathering, concentrating on critical university matters.

The Chair clarified that the University is not implementing ABB, it is used in the background to understand each Faculty's revenue and cost structure. He stressed the importance of distinguishing between using activity -based budgeting for information purposes versus basing faculty rewards solely on financial performance.

In response to a question regarding the changes to COU's management structure, and the impact on decision making, the Chair highlighted adjustments to committee memberships and names, but the core governance structure remains unchanged. He noted the changes are primarily for compliance with the not-for-profits act, aimed at aligning the COU with new regulations without altering the core functions.

5. Provost's Remarks

L. Livingston began by extending gratitude to faculty, staff and students for the successful completion of the Winter 2024 academic semester and encouraged rest and rejuvenation before the Spring/Summer semester begins. She confirmed that planning for new student orientation in September is underway and information will be released shortly.

a. Senior Academic Administrator Search Update

L. Livingston noted that the two finalists for the Dean of Science position delivered public presentations during the second round of interviews held on campus last week. Feedback has been submitted to the search firm and the Search Committee is awaiting a final summary report before making a recommendation. She also announced that the Mitch and Leslie Frazer Faculty of Education Dean search has begun, with job postings and a stakeholder survey issued. The search is on track to create a shortlist of candidates for interviews in early May.

Additionally, a call for volunteers to serve on the search committee for the Deputy Provost position has been circulated.

In response to questions asked, L. Livingston confirmed the stakeholder survey for the Dean of Education position was accessible via the email link that was circulated yesterday, and that at the present time, a decision to engage a search firm has not yet been made.

6. Advancement Update

J. Barnett highlighted the internal Campaign launch “Tech with a Conscience” which aligns with the University's brand. He noted the Campaign aims for a fundraising target of \$250 million, with \$56 million already being raised. The soft launch involved over 200 participants, and a public launch is anticipated for September. He mentioned the various partnerships signed over the past year and discusses collaboration with the Campaign Advisory Council. He noted that the Campaign priorities are aligned with the institution's focus on innovation and impact, including enhancing learning environments and fostering partnerships. He advised institutional priorities will encompass supporting academic space, student experience, mental health initiatives and IT infrastructure upgrades. Ongoing metrics will track individual fundraisers success and departmental support levels to ensure equitable distribution of resources.

Committee Reports:

7. Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC)

M. Bluehardt mentioned that the USC meeting did not include any major or minor modifications for consideration on this agenda. However, there was discussion about the nomenclature policy, currently undergoing consultations and expected to be presented at next month's Academic Council meeting.

8. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)

T. Christou congratulated the winners of the 2023 Graduate Excellence Awards and expressed gratitude for the supportive community. He announced an upcoming graduate Idea-thon in May, facilitated by industry experts, focusing on fusion energy and Canada's energy future. He also noted an upcoming event hosted by Jeanette Hughes discussing the joy of supervision.

9. Governance & Nominations Committee

a. 2024 Election Results

L. Livingston presented the 2024 election results noting that the Governance & Nominations Committee extended the nomination period as approved previously. Several positions have been filled and the unfilled positions are noted in the materials package.

In response to a question about filling vacant positions, it was clarified that calls for specific committee vacancies would be issued shortly. It was noted that there isn't another nomination or election period currently planned.

Upon a motion duly made by L. Livingston and seconded by S. Nokleby, pursuant to the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the following appointments:

Teaching Staff Position on Academic Council for the term of September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2027:

- *Faculty of Health Science: Janet McCabe*
- *Faculty-at-Large: Ana Duff*
- *Faculty-at-Large: Brenda Jacobs*
- *Faculty-at-Large: Robyn Ruttenberg-Rozen*

Administrative Staff Position on Academic Council for the term of September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2027:

- *Jessica Hogue*

Student Position on Academic Council for the term of September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025, renewable for an additional year:

- *Nawal Elshamiy (undergraduate);*
- *Jemma Tam (undergraduate);*
- *Krystina Clarke (graduate); and*
- *Jillian Slade (graduate).*

Student Position on the Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee for the term of September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025, renewable for an additional year:

- *Tega Ubor (undergraduate); and*
- *Jemma Tam (undergraduate)*

Student Position on the Undergraduate Studies Committee for the term of September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025, renewable for an additional year:

- *Jemma Tam (undergraduate)*

Upon a motion duly made by L. Livingston and seconded by H. Kishawy, pursuant to the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the reappointment of the following student members of

Academic Council and its Committees for an additional term ending August 31, 2025 (not eligible for further renewal):

- *Tega Ubor – undergraduate student member of Academic Council & member of Undergraduate Studies Committee*
- *Breanne McAlpin – undergraduate student member of Academic Council & member of Honorary Degrees Committee*

10. Research Committee

L. Jacobs elaborated on the Idea-Thon event with Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL), showcasing the University's partnership with CNL and their interest in engaging students from diverse disciplines. He thanked faculty members for their efforts in securing research grants, with an emphasis on upcoming Tri-Council applications and the support available for the process.

He confirmed that the two Canada Research Chair (CRC) positions in Nuclear Engineering and Artificial Intelligence are currently underway, with an anticipated completion date by Fall. Additionally, he advised the federal budget's focus on research included a significant increase in fellowship awards for graduate and postdoctoral students, addressing longstanding concerns and enhancing Canada's competitiveness in attracting talent.

Responding to a question regarding the Idea-Thon, T. Christou noted the event was primarily geared towards graduate students and information would be circulated to supervisors for information.

Regarding concerns raised surrounding equity, diversity and inclusion requirements for the CRC positions, L. Jacobs affirmed that an approved equity plan had been submitted to the program two years ago, indicating that the university is on track in meeting the requirements. He also noted that the upcoming positions would be targeted hires under this existing plan.

11. Policy Consultation

(a) Student Sexual Violence

M. Bluehardt introduced A. Sunstrum to present the revised policy on Student Sexual Violence noting that the policy aims to communicate the University's dedication to preventing and addressing incidents of sexual violence as well as providing support services. She reiterated that the policy was open for consultation only.

A. Sunstrum outlined the policy and procedures, emphasizing the recent hiring of a gender-based violence specialist. This specialist will support students affected by sexual violence and help them access support systems.

In response to concerns expressed over removing the Advisory Committee's terms of reference from the policy and the request for clarification for future review processes,

A. Sunstrum clarified that the University still has an Advisory Committee that consists of students, faculty and staff. Consultation has already occurred with the Committee as well as the Policy Advisory Committee. He noted that the decision to remove specific terms of reference regarding the Advisory Committee from the policy was made to facilitate potential changes to its composition without requiring a full policy revision. The Advisory Committee's role providing student feedback remains unchanged and its existence is still noted in the policy. The adjustment aligns with the university's approach to other policies.

12. Consent Agenda

(a) Minutes of the Meeting of March 26, 2024* (M)

(b) Cyclical Program Reviews from USC

a. Bachelor of Science in Computer Science – 18 Month Follow-Up

(c) Graduation Notwithstanding a Deficiency

(d) Conferral of Degrees – Winter 2024

(e) Professional Unsuitability Policy – SGPS

Upon a motion duly made by S. Aquanno and seconded by M. Hossein Nejad, the Consent Agenda was approved as amended.

13. Other Business

(a) Land acknowledgement for May Academic Council meeting

H. Scott volunteered to provide the land acknowledgement for May.

14. Termination (M)

Upon a motion made by M. Eklund, the meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

Krista Hester, Interim University Secretary