

## Board of Governors' 140<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting

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### Minutes of the Public Session of the December 4, 2025 Meeting via Videoconference 12:02 p.m. - 12:39 p.m.

#### **Governors Present:**

Laura Elliott, Board Chair  
Eric Agius, Vice-Chair  
Nolan Bederman  
Carla Carmichael  
Joe DeSario  
Cynthia Domjancic  
Lorraine Gray  
Neeraj Grotra  
Laura Money

Lisa McBride  
Steven Murphy, President and Vice-Chancellor  
Roger Poirier  
Michael Rencheck  
Hannah Scott  
Gaurav Singh  
Jeff Spiegelman  
Dwight Thompson

#### **Regrets:**

Ahmad Barari  
Frank Carnevale  
Mitch Frazer, Chancellor  
Matthew Mackenzie

Alveena Shrestha  
Emily Whetung-MacInnes  
Susanna Zagar

#### **Staff and Guests:**

Kirstie Ayotte (Secretary)  
Jamie Bruno  
Nicola Crow, Board Secretary  
Krista Hester

Lori Livingston  
Brad MacIsaac  
Jemma Tam  
Sarah Thrush

#### **1. Welcome and Call to Order**

The Chair called the Public Session of the Board of Governors Meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. and L. Elliott provided their personal Land Acknowledgement.

#### **2. Agenda (M)**

*Upon a motion duly made by J. Spiegelman and seconded by N. Bederman, the Agenda was approved as presented, including approving and receiving the Consent Agenda and its contents.*

#### **3. Conflict of Interest Declaration**

None

#### **4. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the 140<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors' meeting and went over meeting protocols for the Public Session.

The Chair congratulated Kirstie Ayotte on her upcoming transition to the role of Assistant to the President, with appreciation expressed for her contributions in supporting the Board and the

broader University community. The Chair also thanked Governors for their continued service and acknowledged staff for their work supporting students and University operations.

The Chair also extended greetings for the different holidays recognized this time of year, along with well wishes for rest and time with family and friends.

## **5. President's Report**

The President thanked faculty, staff, and students as the University concludes another successful term. The President reflected on Ontario Tech's strong positioning as a pragmatic energy university, particularly through its regional, national and global leadership in nuclear and other key energy priorities. He highlighted rapid advancements in AI, emphasizing the University's human-centered, values driven approach and its growing national profile, including high-level engagement with federal policymakers as experts in the field. The President also noted that the University is establishing itself as the go-to place to discuss AI, such as the nexus between AI and energy.

The President also enthusiastically highlighted Ontario Tech's recognition as Canada's Research University of the Year for a third consecutive year, expressing pride in the University and crediting the exceptional contributions of faculty researchers, research leadership, and Board support, all of which underscored the impact of research excellence on undergraduate education.

## **6. Academic Council Report**

J. Tam provided the Academic Council Report from the meetings held on October 28, 2025 and November 25, 2025, noting that at this time no recommendations for approval were being brought forward to the Board from Academic Council. She provided key highlights from the Report including the approval of the Fall 2025 degree conferrals, the finalizing of Faculty Council appointments and membership, and the receipt of informational updates from Committees, budget planning reports, policy consultations, and updates on human rights training initiatives.

## **7. Audit & Finance (A&F) Report**

L. Money highlighted an interim risk management update provided to the Committee at its November 20, 2025 Meeting. She noted that the update focused on mental health for both students and employees, which the Committee was pleased to receive as it highlighted that the University was making mental health a priority. L. Money reported that the Committee heard about increasing demand for student mental health services, reflecting both enrollment growth and greater willingness to seek support. She further reported that the Committee also learned about the proactive strategies that have reduced high level interventions and supported student retention, as well as the broader system wide funding pressures and trends in mental health needs. With respect to employees, she noted that while North American trends indicate growing mental health needs, the University has not experienced the same intensity, due in part to proactive supports and existing benefits. She advised that work is ongoing to develop key risk indicators to further strengthen wellness for both students and employees to maintain these as institutional priorities.

A Member noted that faculty are seeing an increase in student mental health needs and emphasized that current triage systems identify crisis cases but may not fully address ongoing demand for support. The Chair acknowledged the concerns, noting the broader system wide impact and reaffirmed the University's continued attention to student and staff mental health needs.

### **7.1 2026-2027 Budget Planning\* (D)**

L. Money provided an overview of the November 20, 2025 discussion on the 2026-2027 budget assumptions, outlining a challenging fiscal context shaped by frozen tuition and grants, pressures on international student enrollment due to federal caps, and rising labour costs. She noted that Leadership confirmed continued funding constraints and reviewed international tuition and enrollment impacts, while emphasizing that growth alone will not ensure a sustainable future for the University. She advised that the discussion highlighted a shift toward a “Differentiated Growth 2.0” strategy, focused on flexible, accessible, industry aligned programming for traditional and non-traditional learners, including working professionals through virtual, asynchronous and condensed courses, micro-credentials, and ladder pathways. The Committee also heard how this approach includes stronger industry partnerships, co-op opportunities, and AI integration to support and maintain student success, program quality and retention, while reaffirming the importance of balancing growth, quality, and student needs amid a complex external landscape.

A Member asked whether enrollment growth is sustainable given funding constraints and student needs. B. Maclsaac explained that intake is carefully managed to optimize capacity, ensure program viability, and avoid excessive costs, emphasizing that strategic growth supports the University’s long-term stability and efficiency. L. Livingston added that admissions are cohort-based and tied to program viability.

In response to a question regarding low enrollment programs, the President noted that the University actively consolidates programs and repackages courses into career aligned offerings to enhance student experience and enrollment.

### **8. Governance, Nominations & Human Resources (GNHR) Report**

G. Singh reported that the Committee met on October 30, 2025 and that the key items from the Public Session, are included within the Board’s Consent Agenda.

### **9. Strategy & Planning (S&P) Report – No Report**

The Chair noted that the November 6, 2025 S&P Meeting did not proceed, hence there is no Report.

### **10. Consent Agenda:**

The Chair confirmed that the contents of the Consent Agenda were approved and received under Agenda Item # 2

**10.1 Minutes of the Public Session of Board Meeting of October 9, 2025\* (M)**

**10.2 Minutes of the Public Session of A&F Meeting of June 19, 2025\* (I)**

**10.3 Minutes of the Public Session of GNHR Meeting of June 13, 2025\* (I)**

#### **GNHR Public Reports:**

**10.4 2024-2025 Annual Consolidated Human Rights Office Report\* (I)**

**10.5 Respectful Campus Policy\* (M)**

### **11. Adjournment**

There being no other business, and upon a motion duly made by L. McBride, the Public Session of the Board of Governors Meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Nicola Crow, University Secretary