



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Strategy & Planning Committee

Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of April 3, 2024 1:00 p.m. to 2:17 p.m. via Hybrid – videoconference & 5th Floor Boardroom

Members: Lynne Zucker (Chair), Eric Agius (Vice-Chair), Frank Carnevale, Laura Elliott, Matthew Mackenzie, Steven Murphy, Michael Rencheck, Hannah Scott, Kim Slade, Michael Watterworth

Regrets: Ahmad Barari, Mitch Frazer, Lisa McBride

Staff: Kirstie Ayotte, Disha Gupta, Barbara Hamilton, Krista Hester, Les Jacobs, Lori Livingston, Brad MacIsaac, Sarah Thrush

Guests: Chelsea Bauer, Frank Carnevale, Celine, Jahan, Ade Oyemade, Dale MacMilan, Joanne Nickel, Kim Slade, Dwight Thompson

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and read aloud the land acknowledgment.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by M. Mackenzie and seconded by K. Slade, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts were declared.

4. Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of February 8, 2024

Upon a motion duly made by F. Carnevale and seconded by M. Rencheck, the Minutes were approved as presented.

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the Strategy & Planning Committee (S&P) meeting, expressing gratitude to those involved with the productive PD Retreat that took place

earlier in the day. She highlighted the session's emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and belonging (DIB), underlining the importance of fostering diverse perspectives while addressing social tensions. She encouraged ongoing discussions among governors to propel the University's strategy forward, aligning it with key pillars such as Tech with a Conscience and Partnerships. Additionally, she proposed monitoring progress on these fronts and collaborating with senior leadership to drive further development.

6. President's Remarks

The President echoed the Chair's sentiments regarding the DIB Retreat, expressing appreciation for the governors' engagement. He then reflected on the upcoming end of term, extending gratitude to the academic and administrative staff as well as celebrating the achievements of the various university varsity teams. He discussed efforts to determine the University's share of the recently announced government funding noting that despite the uncertainty surrounding future government support, there is a commitment to prudent financial management including consideration for reserves. Additionally, he addressed the challenges with international student recruitment noting allocation for undergraduate international students remains static, however, despite recruitment delays and bureaucratic hurdles, the focus remains on maintaining high-quality education and students.

7. Strategy

7.1. Strategic Discussion: Information Technology

B. Maclsaac opened the strategic discussion by introducing Ade Oyemade as the newly appointed Executive Director of Information Technology at the University, highlighting her experience and approaches to digital innovation. He noted Ade's promotion from within the University demonstrating a commitment to internal administrative development and highlighted her notable achievements including orchestrating digital transformation initiatives and enhancing operational efficiency and student experiences.

B. Maclsaac and A. Oyemade presented the S&P Digital Strategy report providing an overview of the highlights from the past year. They advised efforts were focused on enhancing student engagement and experience, with several notable achievements including implementation of digital access for students, allowing 24/7 online support accessing transcripts, extension of the elements used to employee training and mobile learning, automation of back-office processes to streamline operations and improvements to security systems including multifactor authentication and system upgrades. Moving forward, plans include enhancing advisor efficiency through innovative technologies, monitoring and addressing gaps in AI tool usage on campus, continuation of self-service options for students and pursuing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) transformation for administrative systems. A. Oyemade advised the Committee that the current Banner systems setup shared with Durham College is no longer feasible due to frequent, expensive updates and customizations, leading to inefficiencies. Consequently, it was decided to separate from Durham College. While

many networking infrastructures will remain shared, the enterprise side will be separated. The top priority will be to automate tasks and streamline business processes to reduce manual technical requirements and minimize customization costs associated with upgrades. A. Oyemade stressed the complexity of the transition, outlining a projected timeline and emphasizing the need for thorough testing before any implementation is announced.

In response to a question regarding the financial implications and the potential cost savings over time, B. MacIsaac acknowledged that moving to the cloud may not completely offset costs, it will lead to efficiencies and changes in resource needs. The transition may result in both reduced and increased expenses, but the overall benefit lies in improved speed and responsiveness to the University's specific needs. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of project contingency planning, establishing governance structures for scope management, and employing lean techniques to maximize cost savings. The IT Team is currently finalizing the Request for Proposal (RFP) process which will focus on technical expertise for transition. An option within the RFP will offer companies to bid on governance and change management support. The collaboration will include aligning processes with industry standards for program assurance, technical expertise and project planning.

Referring to a question raised regarding research requirements and safety concerns of cloud computing, A. Oyemade highlighted the benefits of cloud technology, citing increased protection and the need for constant updates in on-premises systems. She also noted the cloud technology being considered would be fully Canadian based.

Responding to a question regarding software lifecycle, A. Oyemade confirmed the current provider is moving towards cloud-based solutions and expecting all users to migrate within the next two to three years.

7.2. Research Strategy

L. Jacobs brought attention to the upcoming completion of the University's five-year strategic research plan, which is crucial for compliance with federal and provincial research funding requirements. He outlined the forthcoming comprehensive consultation process, aiming for inclusive representation across Faculties noting the plan aims to strengthen key areas and foster innovation in adjacent ones to enhance the university's research profile. He stressed the process of plan development and its importance to define the University's uniqueness, particularly as a tech-focused and research-intensive university and urged the Committee to brainstorm key themes or ideas for the next strategic plan that will highlight areas underdeveloped in the current plan like internationalization, skills development and talent retention, while also addressing the need to differentiate the university from others, being mindful of crowded research spaces, and focusing on applied research.

8. Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Krista Hester, Interim University Secretary