ONTARIO TECH UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES of MEETING of TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020
VIDEOCONFERENCE, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)
Barari, Ahmad
Barber, Wendy
Bliemel, Michael
Bradbury, Jeremy
Crawford, Greg
Davis, Owen
Davidson, Catherine
Easton, Brad
Eklund, Mike
Fernando, Shanti
Gaber, Hossam
Heydari, Shahram
Hogue, Jessica
Hossein Nejad, Mehdi
Jacobs, Les
Jones, Ferdinand
Kay, Robin
Kishawy, Hossam
Livingston, Lori

Khalid, Osama
Lloyd, Meghann
Mahmoud, Qusay
Marques, Olga
McCabe, Janet
Partosoedarso, Elita
Pierce, Tess
Rahnamayan, Shahryar
Roy, Langis
Scott, Hannah
Serenko, Alexander
Stoett, Peter
Stokes, Joe
Tokuhiro, Akira
Woolridge, Lyndsay

Staff & Guests:

Babb, Shay
Dinwoodie, Becky
Foy, Cheryl
Hamilton, Barb
Hester, Krista
MacIsaac, Brad
McCartney, Kimberley
McGovern, Sue
Molinaro, Nichole
O'Halloran, Niall
Pitcher, Cathy

Regrets:

Frazer, Mitch
Habibi, Sarah
King, Alyson
Mostaghim, Amir
Naumkin, Fedor
Rodgers, Carol
Shon, Phillip
Williams, Alyssa

1.   Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

2.   Agenda
Upon a motion duly made by E. Partosoedarso and seconded by L. Jacobs, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3.   Chair's Remarks
The Chair started by saying he hopes everyone enjoyed the summer and is keeping well. It was great to see strong governance over the summer months. He reported on his attendance at the panel session on Understanding and Talking About Anti-Black Racism in Canada. He remarked that it was a great event, which was moderated by T. Pierce. He noted that it was well attended and thanked everyone who attended. He looks forward to many more such discussions.

He provided a brief update on return to work planning, as the Provost would be providing a more detailed update. He asked that if people do not have to be on campus, please do not come to campus. It is recognized that there are teaching needs that require visits to campus. Efforts are being made to try to avoid a second wave or minimize a second wave through our actions. There is concern about the return to school contributing to a second wave and the goal is to keep people as healthy as they possibly can. The Provost and President will be splitting time on campus.

The President offered special thanks to the group of researchers examining wastewater in Durham, which will lead to recognizing an uptick in the virus early on. This is a great example of the work being done at the university to assist with measures combatting COVID. A member thanked the Chair and Provost for their efforts to monitor those who are on campus. There was a discussion about the measures being implemented to track students when on campus, as well.

4.   Minutes of the Meetings of July 28, 2020
The Chair noted proposed amendments to section 11 of the minutes. It was agreed to remove the first sentence of the proposed amendment.

Upon a motion duly made by H. Gaber and seconded by F. Jones, the Minutes were approved as amended.

5.   Business Arising from the Minutes
There was none.

6.   Provost's Remarks
The Provost echoed the Chair's remarks about the commitment of community members to attend meetings during the summer. She noted a high level of engagement with all taskforce members in an effort to anticipate issues that might arise. She thanked everyone involved – it has been a tremendous experience with everyone focused on ensuring a safe return. She reaffirmed that recommendations requiring Academic

Council's feedback will be brought forward to Council. She encouraged Council members to visit the Ready for You website.

The Provost also thanked those involved in the orientation planning, particularly Student Life and the Student Union. It is going to be a different experience and will take a tremendous amount of energy to welcome students to campus. She informed Council that there has been good uptake in terms of MyStart and other orientation activities.

(a)   E-Learning Task Force Update:
(i)   Syllabus Changes

C. Foy reviewed the changes to the recommended syllabus document. She noted that the Office of the University Secretary and General Counsel (USGC) was consulted by the E-Learning Taskforce and the USGC made recommended changes to the document. The USGC has also been working with Teaching and Learning to conduct privacy impact assessments (PIA) for the tools being used at the university, prioritizing Respondus, Proctortrack, and video conferencing tools. Consistent with the university's commitment to "Tech with a Conscience", the plan is to develop a PIA process for new tools so they can advise on the impact of technology on the community. C. Foy confirmed that some of the assessment work is available in the FAQ section on the Ready for You website.

There was a discussion regarding the Freedom of Expression Policy and how it would apply to the syllabus. C. Foy clarified that the updated syllabus was being presented to raise awareness and to encourage use of the updated language. C. Foy responded to questions. Questions and feedback from Academic Council included:

- What about procedures for the Test Centre?
  - The Provost advised that individuals in the Test Centre have adapted well and they will continue to work with faculty to provide students with accommodations.
- update spelling of "behaviour"
- on page 3, can the wording be changed to "may be using"?
  - C. Foy advised it will take time to complete PIAs for all technology – if faculty are not using the listed technology, may delete the bullet.
- concern expressed about waiver-type language
  - C. Foy advised that the language in the syllabus was drafted to address concerns raised by the E-Learning Taskforce – the wording is recommended but not required.
  - C. Foy explained that the syllabus serves as a type of contract with the student – linking to something in the document is weaker than including it in the document itself.
- noticed there is a link to ITS requirements from the syllabus template and this page includes recommended minimum download speed but not upload speed, which seems like an oversight

- lower median internet speed available in rural areas – are there legal implications?
  - C. Foy advised we will have to accommodate students where necessary.
- C. Foy added that instructors should wait until the updated syllabus template is available rather than cutting and pasting into the syllabus.
- Concern expressed about students leaving programs if they do not want to waive their rights.
  - tech requirements deal with minimum requirements for connectivity and does not serve as a waiver – suggestion made to add "if cannot meet the minimum technical requirements, need to contact someone"
- Concern about the timing of the recommendations
  - C. Foy responded that everyone is working as quickly as they can.
- Possible to include blanket statement to apply to peer shared applications?
  - C. Foy responded that it will take time to continue to update the syllabus and recommended contacting the USGC for additional advice.

There was also a discussion about trigger warnings and when they should be used. C. Foy reiterated that they wanted to bring the updated syllabus to the faculty's attention and it is up to the faculty how they implement it.

(ii)   Policy Updates
C. Foy provided an overview of the Online Examination Proctor Directives, including the consultation pathway. She responded to questions from Academic Council, which included:

- What about oversight of data and retention of data? Should that be addressed in these directives?
  - N. O'Halloran clarified that the directives would apply to both Respondus and Proctortrack; he advised that the Privacy Office reviewed these tools and those issues are addressed in the agreements with the individual service provider; they are working with vendors to arrive at a consistent retention period for both tools and the recommendation is to delete data as soon as possible (at start of next term in order to ensure the data is available for academic misconduct proceedings).
- Should the directives be updated to address TAs possibly downloading the information? Should provide guidance for future technology.
- Suggestion to update the language in section 8.1 to include scheduled breaks – the monitoring tool is not perfect but instructors need a tool to monitor and these are risk minimization tools.
- Section 5.1: reference to "real time"– suggestion to consider rewording it as could be restrictive and should allow for option of real time monitoring by TAs.

- N. O'Halloran clarified that the virtual system is not in real time.

7. Steering Committee Delegation of Authority Review

C. Foy presented the report setting out the background to the delegation of authority. She noted that Ontario is no longer under a State of Emergency and asked Council to consider whether it still makes sense to leave the delegation of authority in place. A member commented that she feels the delegation of authority is no longer necessary since the State of Emergency has ended. There was a discussion as to whether the delegation of authority was COVID specific. C. Foy clarified that the resolution was passed to provide for a mechanism to carry on with the business of Academic Council in the event that Academic Council fails to reach quorum in the context of COVID. A suggestion was made to refer this to the Governance and Nominations Committee (GNC) for review and perhaps develop a standing delegation of authority (similar to what the former Executive Committee had). Council was reminded that the Steering Committee Terms of Reference were only just recently reviewed and updated and that the GNC still has several committees' Terms of Reference left to review. A member expressed concern that Academic Council might not have time to implement the delegation of authority in the context of a second wave.

Upon a motion duly made by H. Scott and seconded by G. Crawford, Academic Council renewed the delegation of authority to the Steering Committee on the same basis as it was approved on April 3.

Five members opposed the motion.

8. Nomination to Academic Council

Upon a motion duly made by T. Pierce and seconded by L. Roy, Academic Council unanimously approved the following appointment to Academic Council:

- *Faculty At-large position – Adam Dubrowski, August 25, 2020 – June 30, 2023*

9. Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC)

(a) Cyclical Program Review 18-Month Follow-Up Reports:
(i) Bachelor of Engineering in Manufacturing Engineering
(ii) Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering Cyclical Program Reviews

G. Crawford presented the reports for approval. There was a discussion about making the machine shop available to undergraduate students and to researchers across campus.

(M. Lloyd left at 3:57 p.m.)

A concern was raised about the rates charged by ACE not being typical for researchers. A suggestion was made that machine shop plans should be university wide. Access has been provided on an ad hoc basis to this point. A question was asked about the status of the recommendation to form a First Year Curriculum Committee with instructors from the Faculty of Science to coordinate the delivery of Natural Science courses to Engineering students. It was confirmed that a meeting with the Associate Dean from Science took place before COVID-19 and was then put on hold. G. Crawford clarified that the recommendation was to create a committee, which has been completed, and the discussions about engagement in curriculum will be long term.

Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by H. Kishawy, pursuant to the recommendation of USC, Academic Council unanimously approved the 18-Month Follow-Up Reports for the Bachelor of Engineering in Manufacturing Engineering and Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering Cyclical Program Reviews, as presented.

(O. Khalid joined at 4:02 p.m.)

(b)   Faculty of Education Major Program Modification – Minor Program in Educational Studies and Digital Technology

G. Crawford presented the proposal for approval. There were no questions.

Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by H. Kishawy, pursuant to the recommendation of the USC, Academic Council unanimously approved the new Minor program in Educational Studies and Digital Technology, as presented.

(c)   Faculty of Social Science and Humanities Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

G. Crawford presented the proposal for approval. There was a comment made that the establishment of new programs should be communicated to all Faculties.

Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by P. Stoett, pursuant to the recommendation of the USC, Academic Council unanimously approved the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, as presented.

(d)   Faculty of Social Science and Humanities Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Science in Psychology

G. Crawford presented the proposal for approval. There were no questions.

Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by P. Stoett, pursuant to the recommendation of the USC, Academic Council unanimously approved the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Science in Psychology, as presented.

(e) **Minor Program Adjustments** (information only)**:**
(i) **Faculty of Education – Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies and Digital Technology**
(ii) **Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science – Bachelor of Engineering in Manufacturing Engineering**

10.   Strategic Discussion: Blended Learning Part 1: Exploring the Concept

(H. Scott left at 4:11 p.m.)

The Chair suggested that given the time constraints, the discussion be carried over until the September meeting to ensure a full discussion is possible. This was supported by Academic Council.

C. Foy provided an overview of the discussion topic. The plan is to have a three-part discussion, with the first part focusing on the concept of blended learning with the purpose of getting clarity amongst ourselves what it is and what it is not at our university. The goal is to arrive at a more common understanding of what blended learning means at Ontario Tech. The second part will be focused on the challenges and opportunities associated with blended learning. The focus of the third part will be on what's next and how we foster and promote cultural change at the institution. The goal is to make the discussions very strategic and not operational while focusing on using the lessons learned by going online to improve learning at the institution. Notes will be taken during the discussion. A differentiator for the university will be to create opportunities for students to apply learning in real life situations as soon as possible.

11.   Other Business
A request was made for a progress update on the appointment of the Deputy Provost. The Provost confirmed that the appropriate procedures are being followed and they are in the process of contacting those candidates who expressed interest. The Provost also confirmed it will be a short-term appointment.

12.   Termination
There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by B. Easton, the meeting terminated at 4:33 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary