

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING of TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2021 Videoconference, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)
Al-Shawesh, Yousef
Azad, Nader
Barber, Wendy
Bliemel, Michael
Crawford, Greg
Davidson, Catherine
Davis, Owen
Duff, Ana
Eklund, Mike
Elliott, Laura
Felder, Ruth
Fernando, Shanti
Frazer, Mitch
Hogue, Andrew
Hossein Nejad, Mehdi
Jacobs, Les
Jones, Ferdinand
King, Alyson
Kishawy, Hossam
Liscano, Ramiro
Livingston, Lori

Lloyd, Meghann
Naumkin, Fedor
Obasohan, Jacinta
Partosoedarso, Elita
Rodgers, Carol
Roy, Langis
Ruttenberg-Rozen,
Robyn
Serenko, Alexander
Stoett, Peter
Stokes, Joe
Tokuhira, Akira

Staff & Guests:

Abdel Aal, Hesham
Alvi, Shahid
Babb, Shay
Bardin, Sylvie
Bauer, Chelsea
Bignell, Paul
Bruno, Jamie
Bryant, Toba
Callahan, Stephanie
Cantrell, Sarah
Dinwoodie, Becky
Foy, Cheryl
Hamilton, Barb
Hester, Krista
Johnson, Kerry
Kim, David
Livingstone, Clarissa
MacIsaac, Brad
MacRae, Brent
McLaughlin, Christine
Mostaghim, Amir
Sankarial, Joshua
Scott, Hannah
Shahbazpanahi, Shahram
Stamatopoulos, Vivian

Regrets:

Barari, Ahmad
Bradbury, Jeremy
Dubrowski, Adam
Easton, Brad
Kay, Robin
O'Rourke, Nicholas
Rahnamayan, Shahryar
Rastpour, Amir
Sami, Ramin
Sheikh, Jahan
Slane, Andrea

1. Call to Order

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

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by E. Partosoedarso, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair hopes everyone is keeping well and enjoying the summer. He emphasized the importance of resting and refreshing before the start of the fall term. He noted that there is anxiety about the return to campus as the fourth wave begins.

He thanked Council members for making time to attend today's meeting. While Council does not usually meet over the summer months, in light of the fall planning, it was important to meet this month.

The Chair welcomed the new members of Council and thanked the departing student members.

As COVID continues to morph and will be with us for some time, it is important for us to do everything possible to prevent the spread of the virus. The priority has always been ensuring the safety of the campus community. As things continue to change, it is important to remain flexible and respond to the changing conditions. The Chair discussed the university's vaccination requirement to attend campus. This measure will help everyone feel safer as they return to campus. The Chair reminded Council that the requirement comes into effect on September 3. He hopes everyone can get vaccinated as soon as possible. He noted that accommodations will be made on the basis of human rights grounds and medical exemptions. He asked everyone to do their part in keeping the community safe, of which vaccination is only one aspect (masking, distancing, etc.). We must continue to remain vigilant and follow the rules to help prevent the spread of the virus.

The Chair discussed helping the community learn to live with COVID, as it seems we will be living with it for some time. People have been living with elevated levels of anxiety throughout the pandemic. The university should not be a source of stress but a source of support.

The Chair responded to questions from Council. There was a question about the mandatory vaccination policy - if someone does not get vaccinated for a reason outside of Human Rights or medical reasons, can they continue to work from home or study remotely? The Chair described the vaccination requirement as establishing a perimeter around campus and to be let inside the perimeter, an individual must

provide proof of vaccination. A member asked that if an unvaccinated person has a need to be on campus, would there be another means of attending campus (e.g. negative test)? The Chair advised that that will have to be worked through with the unions and the process has begun.

4. Provost's Remarks

The Provost welcomed Sarah Cantrell, AVP Planning & Strategic Analysis to her first AC meeting and provided an overview of S. Cantrell's background. The Provost reported that the search process for the permanent Deputy Provost has begun. A call for expressions of interest to serve on the search committee has gone out. The search is being conducted in accordance with the Policy on Senior Academic Administrative Appointments. She reminded Council that the deadline for expressions of interest is today.

The Provost confirmed that the new building will be open in September. A number of units will be moving into the building (Health Sciences, Student Life, OTSU). She discussed the name of the building, Shawenjigewining Hall, which translates to "The Kind Place". She emphasized the importance of using and honouring the name of the building.

The Provost also discussed September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Classes will be ongoing and she encouraged everyone to keep it as a meeting-free day in order to participate in the events that are being organized for that day. She thanked the Indigenous Education Advisory Council, Rick Bourque, Jill Thompson, and the President's Reconciliation Taskforce for all of their work.

The Provost responded to questions from Council members. She confirmed that the offices in the new building will be ready at the end of August/beginning of September and Student Life will be moving into the building on September 15.

5. Steering Committee:

(a) Delegation of Authority Review

M. Hossein Nejad presented the delegation of authority for consideration.

Upon a motion duly made by M. Hossein Nejad and seconded by L. Jacobs, Academic Council unanimously renewed the delegation of authority to the Steering Committee on the following basis:

- *the delegation of authority comes into effect upon Academic Council failing to achieve quorum at either a special meeting or a regular meeting of Council. Failure to achieve quorum will not be declared until at least fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time of the meeting in question;*

- *the delegation of authority will continue for one month or until the next scheduled Academic Council meeting, whichever is earlier. However, should Academic Council be unable to reach quorum, the delegation of authority will continue. The Steering Committee, with the support of the Secretariat, will arrange for the next Academic Council meeting as quickly thereafter as possible;*
- *the scope of the Steering Committee's delegated authority includes the Steering Committee will have the authority to exercise AC's responsibilities as set out in Article 1.1 of By-law No. 2, including the appointment of replacement members to the Steering Committee, if necessary; and*
- *the reporting requirements relating to the delegation of authority are the Steering Committee agenda and material to be circulated to AC to provide AC members with an opportunity to provide feedback for consideration by the Steering Committee; the Steering Committee meetings will be public and available AC members may join virtually to listen; notice of decisions made by the Steering Committee on behalf of AC will be distributed immediately following the meeting, with the relevant minutes to be provided to AC after approval.*

6. Fall 2021 Planning Update

The Provost provided a fall planning update. She shared that they are optimistic about the upcoming academic term and observed that students are anxious to return to campus and enjoy the full university experience. Throughout the last 18 months, the university has been working in constantly changing conditions, trying to determine what the next week looks like never mind the following months. The Provost thanked everyone who has been involved in the planning process. She also thanked members of AC and the university community for their patience. COVID has taught us the importance of remaining patient as we try to plan ahead.

The Provost reminded AC that town halls have been held on a monthly basis and the next town hall is scheduled for August 30 at 11:00 a.m. The town hall details are in the weekly report. She encouraged people to attend the town hall, as the situation continues to evolve. There is continued concern about the Delta variant. The Provost noted the tremendous planning efforts by Jackie Dupuis, the Operations Committee, and Health & Safety Committee throughout the year. As we prepare for the fall term, we must think about having some events on campus to in order to test out our protocols. We recently held an age-friendly event on campus.

Every single aspect of what we will be doing in the fall has been run through risk management. We know that the majority of people on campus will comply. The Provost discussed the experience of Durham College (DC) with enforcing protocols, as DC continued to have some people on campus. DC's experience tells us that having to deal with non-compliant students is a relatively rare event. FAQs are being

developed and developing a handbook has also been discussed. We will be continuing with physical distancing and masking on campus. Those measures could be increased in a couple of weeks. Campus security is also available to help de-escalate situations. The Provost asked for patience as they develop the FAQs/handbook.

Good news for fall:

The Provost also provided an update on fall registration. As of today, we are at 98% of target for registration at the undergraduate level, which is a 1% increase over last year. In terms of new first year class, we are at a 10% increase over last year. We will still have a flow through issue with our lower numbers last year. The Provost advised that we are trending well for projected registrations and enrolments.

For the fall term, approximately 60% of courses have at least one on-campus component (e.g. lecture, lab, tutorial) and 70% of our students will have the opportunity to participate in on-campus component. About 10% of students have no option but to be on campus (e.g. nursing and education students). Less than 10% of courses do not have an option for online or streaming.

B. MacIsaac discussed the following key points:

- the mandatory vaccination directive is included in the meeting material for written feedback;
- we are currently in stage 3 of the province's road map to recovery – several weeks ago, we had anticipated that masking and physical distancing requirements might be removed - 2m distancing will be maintained in classrooms;
- the university did not pivot to have more students on campus;
- as part of stage 3, active screening is still required and the screening form must continue to be filled out before coming to campus – a question will be added to the form about vaccination status – if fully vaccinated, will be able to come onto campus and those who are not vaccinated will get a red outcome and will not be allowed to come to campus; security will be monitoring doors of entry and not all doors will be open; and
- the FAQs will include information about accommodations and the request for accommodation form.

The Provost and B. MacIsaac responded to questions from Council, which included:

- Will doors between the university and DC remain closed?
 - Since DC has also moved to mandatory vaccination, anticipated that the doors will be open between the institutions.
- Will active screening be required or a QR code?
 - As long as we remain in stage 3, daily screening will be required.

- What are the protocols dealing for cleaning equipment (e.g. in gym)?
 - Protocols dealing with equipment or individual department space has been decentralized to departments because it is so specialized (e.g. when using a photocopier, people are being asked to wipe it down before and after using).
- What is the best way to disinfect microphones?
 - This will be confirmed.
- B. MacIsaac discussed the process for collecting vaccination information.
- If need a microphone for class, a request can be made.
 - A member commented that they attended training for 61 Charles and there were microphones available in those rooms.
- What about students who registered in a course with an on-campus component and are not vaccinated?
 - Students will have to take ownership of their situation and get vaccinated in order to participate in the on-campus component.
- What about the possibility of submitting forged vaccination evidence?
 - When vaccination evidence is uploaded, it will be approved on the honour code and there will be people in the background spot-checking these documents to help identify forged documents. If any forged documents are identified, the Student Code of Conduct will apply.
 - Unfortunately, this is not 100% fool proof, but we are doing our best and relying on people to be as honest as possible.
- When will the vaccination upload platform be ready?
 - Expect it to be up and ready for August 30 or 31, in time for orientation events.
- Can these rules be used in a course syllabus?
 - Syllabus documents are already lengthy and the situation may change after language is added to a course syllabus – refer students to the website information system in order to help remain nimble.
- Use of elevators currently limited to 1 person – will this create movement challenges?
 - Will be increased to 3 people in the fall and encourage using the stairs – priority will be given to individuals with disabilities
- Will offices be deep cleaned before the return to campus?
 - Cleaning staff returned to 100% capacity in August and deep cleaning is being done across campus. Reminder that two years ago, we moved to bringing our own garbage and recycling to centralized locations. If people need disinfectant wipes, they can be requested from campus.
- C. Foy advised that accommodations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the student must be reasonable with what they accept.
- The Chair noted that it is difficult to include answers to all possible questions in one place. The Chair asked members to help share information with their colleagues.

- What happens if a faculty member has to self-isolate and is unable to teach an on-campus component?
 - Should work with the Dean to identify adaptations in such a scenario.
 - If need to shift a course online from in-person, could implement that but would not transition from online to in-person.
 - Must be considered for each individual situation.
- What about the inevitability of having a campus member diagnosed with COVID? What will the notification process be and the steps to keep campus secure?
 - The university continues to work closely with Durham Region Public Health – that will be discussed today with the Pandemic Response Team and the question will be answered during the Town Hall next week.
 - Process for information will also go through the Health & Safety Committee

The Chair thanked the community for all of the efforts throughout the pandemic. It is evident that people are passionate about the university and our students and will continue to do everything we can to keep the community safe.

7. Other Business

8. Termination

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford, the meeting terminated at 3:49 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary