

**ACADEMIC COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of February 27, 2024**  
2:31 – 3:49 p.m. – 5<sup>th</sup> [videoconference](#)

**Present:**

Murphy, Steven (Chair)	Fernando, Shanti	Nokleby, Scott
Aamir, Asifa	Hosseini, Sayyed Ali	Rastpour, Amir
Aquanno, Scott	Hossein Nejad, Mehdi	Rodgers, Carol
Arcand, JoAnne	Jones, Ferdinand	Ruttenberg-Rozen,
Bailey, Robert	Kassarisi, Andrea	Robyn
Barber, Wendy	Kay, Robin	Simmons, Denina
Beligan, Mihai	King, Alyson	Stokes, Joe
Bluehardt, Mary	Kishawy, Hossam	Tepylo, Diane
Christou, Ted	Liscano, Ramiro	Thompson, Dwight
Crawford, Greg	MacMillan, Patricia	Ubor, Tega
Davidson, Catherine	McAlpin, Breanne	Vettor, Shannon
Duff, Ana	McGregor, Carolyn	Watterworth, Michael
Eklund, Mike	Naumkin, Fedor	

**Regrets:**

Azad, Nader	Giorgees, Ifrodet	Livingston, Lori
Barari, Ahmad	Felder, Ruth	Partosoedarso, Elita
Brown, Samantha	Frazer, Mitch	Serote, MaryCae
Bryant, Toba	Jacobs, Les	Stoett, Peter

**Staff & Guests:**

Ayotte, Kirstie	McCartney, Kimberley	Maclsaac, Brad
Bauer, Chelsea	McLaughlin, Christine	Nyaamine, Ruth
Bruno, Jamie	Hamilton, Barbara	Papke, Darryl
Callahan, Stephanie	Heslip, Michelle	Thrush, Sarah
Freeman, Jennifer	Hester, Krista	Townsend, Lisa
Gottlieb, Sara	Levy, Melissa	Turner, Lauren

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. A. King read the land acknowledgement and shared the importance of respecting the rights of the Indigenous peoples who originally inhabited the lands where we live and work. She recognized the benefits her family has gained from these lands, and reflected on how her family history has shaped her perspective on reconciliation and responsibility towards Indigenous communities.

**2. Agenda**

A member requested that item 12(e) be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular meeting agenda.

A member noted a spelling error in the minutes of the Meeting on January 23, 2024.

*Upon a motion duly made by M. Hossein Nejad and seconded by H. Kishawy, the Agenda was approved as amended.*

### **3. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair was pleased to announce the reappointment of Dr. Lori Livingston as Provost and Vice-President, Academic for a second term and thanked the members of the Renewal Advisory Committee for their efforts during the renewal process. He reminded the members that February is Black History Month and that there are still events ongoing around campus. The Chair also congratulated the men's basketball and hockey teams for advancing in their respective divisions. He discussed the recent funding announcement made by the Provincial government and advised there are still many unanswered questions as to how the funding would be distributed, the requirements to receive the funding, and a timeline; the University has not yet received any further details.

In response to a question, the Chair advised that "need" has not yet been defined by the Province as a grounds for receipt of additional grant money. A member then asked a question about efficiency reviews, internationalisation and the NOUS group. In response, the Chair advised that the University has been operating under efficiency pressure for years. He did not have knowledge of the webinar or organization the member asked about.

### **4. Inquiries and Communications**

#### **COU Academic Colleague Report**

A. King presented the COU Academic Colleague Report, highlighting the presentation by the Ontario University Student Alliance (OUSA) of which the Ontario Tech Student Union is a member. She advised that the concerns raised are consistent amongst all the Universities. She also advised that during the COU President's Report, the recent announcement on international student restrictions was unexpected.

### **5. Provost's Remarks**

The Chair invited M. Bluehardt to deliver the Provost's remarks in L. Livingston's absence. M. Bluehardt provided an update on the Dean of Science search noting that the advertisement went live in early February. The Search Advisory Committee is on track to conduct first round interviews from late March to mid April, contingent upon the applicant pool. Additionally, she confirmed that the Search Advisory Committee for the Dean of Education search would convene in March.

In response to a member inquiry about the delay in commencing the Dean of Education search, M. Bluehardt explained she lacked the specific details beyond what the Provost had previously mentioned regarding staggering the ongoing

searches. M. Bluechardt advised she would take the question back to the Provost to provide further updates.

## **6. Student Success**

M. Bluechardt presented the Student Success report on behalf of L. Livingston. She emphasized that the report is for informational purposes only and represents a multi-faceted approach involving various faculty, staff and student initiatives. Its purpose is to offer an overview, encompassing multiple areas that support the diverse and complex needs of students; it is not exhaustive. In response to a question, J. Stokes confirmed that the recently administered Faculty surveys are not included within the Student Success report; they will be incorporated into a forthcoming report from the Student Success Committee. In response to a question about year 1 to year 2 retention rates, J. Stokes explained that the data is supplied to, and compiled by, Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) in the United States; he also explained the time between collection and publication as well as the impact of the pandemic. M. Bluechardt encouraged members to continue to provide ideas to support students.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **7. Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC)**

M. Bluechardt presented the USC report, advising that the Committee's February meeting was another busy one.

#### **a) Major Program Modifications**

##### **(i) Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Education – Intermediate/Senior and Primary/Junior**

M. Bluechardt presented the Major Program Modification, noting the objective of the proposal was to strengthen candidates. R. Kay added that the changes reflect flexibility in the teaching format for quality.

*Upon a motion duly made by R. Kay and seconded by S. Aquanno, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Education's Primary/Junior and Intermediate/Senior programs.*

##### **(ii) Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies and Educational Studies Advanced Entry**

M. Bluechardt presented the Major Program Modification, noting the proposal is aimed at long-term enrolment growth and advised that possible forthcoming changes to the reference to "special education" would be reviewed through an EDI lens. R. Kay also spoke to the possibility of extending EA and CYW degrees by adding flexibility to the delivery of the program.

*Upon a motion duly made by R. Kay and seconded by A. King, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Educational Studies and Educational Studies Advanced Entry program, to add a specialization in Special Education and modify course contact hours and mode of delivery options for courses.*

**(iii) Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Science in Physics – Nanotechnology and Clean Energy Specialization**

M. Bluehardt presented the proposed Major Program Modification and advised that the proposal was purely a name change.

*Upon a motion duly made by G. Crawford and seconded by S. Aquanno, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Science in Physics to rename the ‘Nanotechnology and Clean Energy’ Specialization to ‘Nanophysics’.*

**(iv) Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Justice Victimology & Victim Studies specialization and Policing in Society specialization**

M. Bluehardt presented the proposed Major Program Modification and advised the objective of the proposal is to make the application of a criminology degree clearer and attract enrollment.

*Upon a motion duly made by A. King and seconded by S. Aquanno, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Justice program to add specializations in Victimology & Victim Studies and Policing in Society.*

**(v) Major Program Modification – BA and BSc in Psychology – Cognitive and Brain Sciences specialization**

M. Bluehardt presented the proposed Major Program Modification and advised the changes represent a maturation of the program and reflect the expertise of new faculty members within the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Fernando and seconded by S. Vettor, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the BA and BSc Psychology program to add a new specialization in Cognitive and Brain Sciences.*

**(vi) Major Program Modification – BEng Mechanical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering and Management Programs - Artificial Intelligence specialization**

M. Bluehardt presented the proposed Major Program Modification noting the proposal does not increase the number of required courses; it is in lieu of electives.

H. Kishawy also advised that these changes would assist students with job readiness.

*Upon a motion duly made by S. Nokleby and seconded by H. Kishawy, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the BEng Mechanical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering and Management programs to create a specialization in Artificial Intelligence.*

## **b) Major Program Modification and Minor Program Adjustments**

### **(i) Bachelor of Health Science in Kinesiology**

M. Bluechardt presented the Major Program Modification proposing two specializations of four credits each. C. Rodgers added that this will assist with future marketing as well as pursuit of certification.

*Upon a motion duly made by J. Arcand and seconded by S. Fernando, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Health Science in Kinesiology program to establish two new specializations.*

### **(ii) Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronics Engineering**

M. Bluechardt presented the Major Program Modification indicating it was like the previous proposal introducing AI specialization.

*Upon a motion duly made by H. Kishawy and seconded by S. Nokleby, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the BEng Mechatronics Engineering and Mechatronics Engineering and Management programs to create a specialization in Artificial Intelligence.*

## **8. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)**

### **a) Major Program Modification**

#### **(i) Master of Arts and Master of Education in Education programs and Education in the Digital Age Graduate Diploma Program**

R. Kay presented the Major Program Modification noting that the addition of an in-person option provides flexibility for students.

*Upon a motion duly made by T. Christou and seconded by R. Kay, pursuant to the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the MA and MEd in Education programs and the Education in the Digital Age Graduate Diploma program.*

## **9. Research Committee**

### **(a) Research Committee Update**

The Chair invited J. Freeman to present the Research Committee Update on behalf of L. Jacobs. J. Freeman proceeded to present an update on the current Canada Research Chair (CRC) openings and detailed the targeted areas. She confirmed that the information had been circulated to Deans, and applications were due in March. Commencement of recruitment is scheduled to begin in April. She advised Academic Council about internal funding and Research Excellence calls, which are scheduled for spring. She provided an update to the Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC) with implementation beginning in May.

In response from a question regarding the STRAC policy and banned entities, J. Freeman advised that there are currently no Canadian entities listed but faculty members should be aware of who they are partnering with and conscious of international affiliations. In response to a question regarding the CRC special hire requirements, J. Freeman advised that the sanctions are externally imposed by the government and the universities openings reflect current gaps within the institution to meet the CRC requirements. The University is required to track and report on diversity. A member asked how the tracking of candidates was completed and J. Freeman confirmed through the assistance of HR with safeguards ensured not to bias the hiring process.

#### **(b) Research Targets**

J. Freeman and S. Thrush presented the Research Targets. S. Thrush highlighted the development of metrics to illustrate the progress towards the achievement of the goals outlined in the Strategic Research Plan (SRP) 2020-2025 as well as future iterations thereof. She advised Academic Council that the metrics will be incorporated into the institutional metrics annual report.

In response to a question regarding faculty consultation on the proposed metrics, S. Thrush indicated that while discussions were held with researchers, not every type of research is captured within them. She acknowledged that some qualitative content could be beneficial. J. Freeman noted that the metrics are rooted in the SRP, which was developed by the Research Committee in broad consultation with faculty members. The next round will follow a similar process. In response to a question about potentially tracking impediments as well as achievements or progress, S. Thrush advised that year-over-year data should help to identify impediments as it is intended to illustrate what is reasonable to achieve given the University's capacity as well as what is possible.

### **10. Conferral of Posthumous Degree**

M. Eklund presented the Conferral of Posthumous Degree for the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, Nuclear Engineering PhD candidate, Robert Farkas. Robert passed away suddenly in mid-January. M. Eklund shared that Robert

was a brilliant student and nuclear professional, with a good-natured and caring personality.

*Upon a motion duly made by M. Eklund and seconded by D. Simmons, pursuant to the recommendation of the Registrar, Academic Council hereby authorizes the conferral of a posthumous degree to Robert Farkas.*

## **11. Consent Agenda**

### **(a) Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2024\* (M)**

### **(b) Minor Program Adjustments from USC\* (I)**

- (i) Indigenous Studies Minor
- (ii) BSc and BA in Psychology - Affective Science and Mental Health specialization
- (iii) Developmental Psychological Science specialization
- (iv) Bachelor of Health Science in Medical Laboratory Science program and Medical Laboratory Science Bridge program
- (v) Bachelor of Science in Nursing-Collaborative Nursing program and RPN to BScN Bridge program

### **(c) Minor Program Adjustments from GSC\* (I)**

- (i) Master of Business Analytics and Artificial Intelligence
- (ii) Master of Financial Data Analytics
- (iii) Graduate Diploma in Police Leadership
- (iv) Master of Science in Nursing

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

## **12. Other Business**

### **(a) Land acknowledgement for March Academic Council meeting**

M. Bluehardt volunteered to do the land acknowledgement for March.

## **13. Termination (M)**

*Upon a motion made by S. Nokleby, the meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.*

Lauren Turner, University Secretary