



ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES of MEETING of TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2020 VIDEOCONFERENCE, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)
Barari, Ahmad
Bliemel, Michael
Bradbury, Jeremy
Davis, Owen
Davidson, Catherine
Easton, Brad
Eklund, Mike
Fernando, Shanti
Frazer, Mitch
Gaber, Hossam
Habibi, Sarah
Heydari, Shahram
Hossein Nejad, Mehdi
Jacobs, Les
Jones, Ferdinand
Kay, Robin
King, Alyson
Kishawy, Hossam
Livingston, Lori

Lloyd, Meghann
Mahmoud, Qusay
Marques, Olga
McCabe, Janet
Naumkin, Fedor
Partosoedarso, Elita
Pierce, Tess
Rahnamayan,
Shahryar
Rodgers, Carol
Roy, Langis
Scott, Hannah
Serenko, Alexander
Shon, Phillip
Stoett, Peter
Stokes, Joe
Tokuhiro, Akira
Woolridge, Lyndsay

Staff & Guests:

Babb, Shay
Barber, Wendy
Bignell, Paul
Dinwoodie,
Becky
Drinkwalter,
Andra
Foy, Cheryl
Hamilton, Barb
Hester, Krista
Hunter, Bill
Liscano, Ramiro
Maclsaac, Brad
McGovern, Sue
Molinaro, Nichole
Nickle, Joanne
Pitcher, Cathy

Regrets:

Greg Crawford
Hogue, Jessica
Khalid, Osama
Mostaghim, Amir
Roy, Langis
Williams, Alyssa

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by H. Gaber and seconded by R. Kay, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for participating in the meeting, which is greatly appreciated to ensure priority academic matters are handled throughout the pandemic. Since it was a fairly light agenda, the Steering Committee agreed it would be a good opportunity for Academic Council to have a strategic discussion. As the academic governing body, Academic Council plays a key role in developing the academic strategy for the institution. Accordingly, Academic Council was consulted during the development of the both the Integrated Academic Plan and Strategic Research Plan. As a governing body, Academic Council should allocate time to engage in high-level strategic discussions about broader, long-term academic issues.

The Chair reminded Council that during a recent discussion, a member asked how faculty could participate in efforts to promote the university to potential incoming students. That question inspired today's discussion topic.

The Chair also thanked those who participated in the recent town halls, we well as the staff behind the scenes for helping make those happen. He provided a brief update on the return to work planning, as the Provost would be giving a more detailed update. He noted that when we talk about a return to work, the workplace will be different from what everyone is used to. The university will be almost completely online for the fall semester and people will return to campus as they need to. It is a logistical challenge and he gave the Provost full credit for balancing competing priorities.

4. Minutes of the Meetings of June 2 and June 23, 2020

Upon a motion duly made by O. Davis and seconded by F. Jones, the Minutes were approved as presented.

J. Bradbury abstained.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

6. Provost's Remarks

The Provost offered congratulations to Drs. Janette Hughes and Sheldon Williamson who had their CRC Chairs renewed for a second term, which is wonderful news for them and the institution. She also reported on the exceptional academic achievement of our student athletes. Of our 220 student varsity athletes, 40 were named OUA academic award winners (26 last year), 22 were named USports Academic All-Canadian award winners (14 last year) and there were no suspensions. These are tremendous

accomplishments and the Provost congratulated Craig Fisher, Scott Barker and the teams.

The Provost went on to discuss the onboarding of our incoming students and orientation plans. Formal orientation will take place from September 2-4, with most initiatives being led by Student Life. People can opt in to the formal schedule and they are looking for volunteers over the Labour Day weekend. There may be some students who physically come to campus and bridging supports will be offered over the weekend. The Provost invited creative ideas to welcome students to campus (most likely virtually). The President and Provost will be leading the way and are working with the Orientation Committee.

The Provost updated Council on the work of the Community Advisory Taskforce (CAT). She thanked the First Year Student Transition and International Taskforces, which are chaired by Joe Stokes and Langis Roy, respectively. The Telework Taskforce was only recently formed and is quickly coming together. The Ready for You website has been updated significantly and will continue to be updated frequently.

Various buildings and functions are in various stages of return. The focus is on ensuring the health and safety of everyone upon return. Some recently implemented measures include: enhanced cleaning protocols, posting of signage directing traffic flow, and set up of hand sanitization stations. She acknowledged the Operations Taskforce for all of their work. Unit leads have been asked to identify priority returns within their unit. It is important to ensure an equitable return to work. It is a challenging logistical exercise.

The Provost responded to questions from Council, a summary of which follows:

- Will professors be able to return to campus to conduct virtual meetings? Will they be able to access equipment at work?
 - Everyone who returns to campus will have to complete mandatory COVID training – B. MacIsaac confirmed that training sessions are running every Monday.
 - L. Jacobs advised they are approving research applications pending the training and that faculty do not have to wait until training is complete to submit an application.
 - Faculty were advised to liaise with their Faculty Dean regarding requests to return to campus as the Deans are coordinating the plan to return to campus – must ensure that we can do contact tracing and be aware who is on campus at any given time.
- Request made for taskforce reports be disseminated to Academic Council for review.
 - Provost would be happy to provide a copy of the PowerPoint summarizing the recommendations and actions being taken by the taskforces.
 - Provost clarified that actions being taken by taskforces involve primarily compiling information & not establishing new academic processes.

- CAT tasked with discussing recommendations – although there was discussion about including information and helpful resources in syllabi, no action was directed and no decisions made – if anything needs to be brought to AC, it will be.

(a) Quality Assurance Audit Report

The Quality Council's audit team visited the university from February 24-26. The team examined existing processes on paper, examined past reviews, and met with individuals involved in the quality assurance process. The team reported they found no causes for concern and made several recommendations to help improve processes. The Provost advised that there is a link to the summary report in the main report. She advised that many of the recommendations were implemented already, including updating the university's IQAP at last AC meeting in June

A comment was made that the recommendations are important to the university's quality assurance process. Accordingly, a request was made for Academic Council to receive updates along the way regarding the implementation of the recommendations. The Provost advised that seven of the eleven the recommendations have already been implemented. She also noted that several of the recommendations are clerical in nature. She confirmed that Council AC will continue to be updated accordingly.

(b) Provost Office Unit Review

The Provost provided a summary of the results of the external review of the Provost's Office. She reminded Council that she informed them of the review at the September 2019 meeting. Three external reviewers conducted the review in early December and provided their report to the university in January. The Provost commented that the review is one of the best she has seen in her career. The external reviewers were very candid in their commentary and the report contained comments and judgments on specific individuals. While her preference would be to release the full report, in this case the full report will not be shared due to the nature of the information contained therein. The recommendations of the reviewers are as follows:

1. Create a new position for a Deputy Provost whose chief responsibilities will entail a combination of teaching innovation, learning supports, and student success.
2. The Office of the Registrar should be moved from the portfolio of the AVP Planning and Analysis and report directly to the Provost.
3. Institute a new International Office to be led by an Academic Director.
4. Clarify the role of the AVP Planning and Analysis.
5. Create the new position of Communications Officer within the Office of the Provost.
6. Strengthen the autonomy and independence of Information Technology across Ontario Tech University from Durham College.
7. Review of the organization of Student Life in light of the new reporting structure.

The Provost noted the caveat that these are recommendations only and do not need to be followed, particularly due to the university's budget constraints. She does not plan on hiring additional people, especially in light of recent layoffs.

The Provost responded to questions about the Deputy Provost role. There was a discussion regarding the qualifications for the role, as well as the position title. She advised Council that it was strongly recommended that the Deputy Provost hold an academic appointment in order to bridge the academic side of the university with supports for students. The call for expressions of interest was sent out on July 17 and the deadline for applications is July 31. The Provost clarified that she anticipates it would be a full-time role; however, there might be a modified workload initially for the fall term to assist with the transition. There is room for discussion as to what the role would look like for the first year and going forward.

A question was raised as to why the title of Deputy Provost was selected? The Provost advised that the review team felt the title would carry a bit more gravitas. The new title would also signal a move away from the former Associate Provost and Associate Dean positions. She advised that there was a Deputy Provost at her last institution. There was a discussion regarding how long the term of appointment will be. The Provost advised that the length of term would be negotiated with the individuals applying for the role. The term length for the previous Associate Provost role was 5 years. Since the role will be filled internally, the length of term is open for negotiation with the successful candidate. The Provost also discussed the evolution of the Associate Provost role into three Associate Dean roles and noted a legacy of change. We will begin a new era with a new role.

7. Steering Committee Delegation of Authority Review

C. Foy reviewed the renewal of delegation of authority, which has come forward at every meeting since the authority was initially delegated in April. She reminded Council that the authority would come into effect on Academic Council failing to reach quorum. There was a discussion regarding when the delegation of authority would stop. C. Foy advised that Academic Council needs to take into consideration the status of the virus and whether there is still a risk of not reaching quorum. The concern is that we do not know how many people will be affected by the virus, as we are still anticipating a second wave, which still has potential to impede achieving quorum.

It was suggested that for September, links to Public Health sites with COVID updates could be provided to ensure people have the same information. C. Foy clarified that there is low risk of anything negative happening by continuing the delegation of authority. A new member suggested the development of a policy that ties the delegation of authority to declarations of emergency. C. Foy confirmed that there are more permanent measures in place, including the updated Steering Committee Terms of Reference.

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

M. Eklund abstained.

8. Nomination to Academic Council

B. Dinwoodie presented the nomination to Academic Council for approval. She advised that the nomination was coming directly to Council for approval with the support of the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Upon a motion duly made by M. Eklund and seconded by J. Bradbury, Academic Council approved the following appointment to Academic Council:

- *Faculty of Education position – Wendy Barber, July 28, 2020 – June 30, 2023*

9. Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)

H. Kishawy delivered the GSC report in L. Roy's absence.

(a) Cyclical Program Review 18-Month Follow-Up Reports:

- Master of Applied Science and Master of Engineering in Automotive Engineering;**
- Master of Applied Science, Master of Engineering, and Doctor of Philosophy in Electrical and Computer Engineering; and**
- Master of Applied Science, Master of Engineering, and Doctor of Philosophy in Mechanical Engineering**

H. Kishawy presented the reports for approval and responded to questions. There was a discussion about the recommendations that were on hold because of the finalization of a financial model. H. Kishawy advised that it was discussed several months ago at a Faculty Council meeting. The referenced financial model related to the new programs and required additional resources from the Provost's Office. H. Kishawy confirmed that a new faculty member was hired and is devoted to the Engineering program.

Upon a motion duly made by H. Kishawy and seconded by Q. Mahmoud, pursuant to the recommendation of GSC, Academic Council unanimously approved the 18-Month Follow-Up Reports for the Master of Applied Science and Master of Engineering in Automotive Engineering; Master of Applied Science, Master of Engineering, and Doctor of Philosophy in Electrical and Computer Engineering; and Master of Applied Science, Master of Engineering, and Doctor of Philosophy in Mechanical Engineering, as presented.

(P. Shon left at 3:45 p.m.)

(b) GSC Minor Program Adjustments:

- Faculty of Health Sciences – Master of Health Sciences**

ii. Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities – Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Forensic Psychology

There were no questions.

10. Strategic Discussion:

Focusing on students as a key university stakeholder, as we plan for the return to campus, how can we differentiate Ontario Tech from other institutions to enhance student experience and engagement?

The Chair introduced B. Hunter and thanked him for agreeing to lead the discussion. The Chair noted that the discussion was very timely as we plan to return to campus.

B. Hunter delivered a presentation on engaging students. He emphasized the importance of stirring curiosity, as neural activity promotes learning and staying engaged. He identified the key elements of enhancing student experience & engagement:

- arousing curiosity
- create opportunities for practice
- provide appropriate feedback

(M. Lloyd left at 3:55 p.m.)

B. Hunter provided the following suggestions for engagement:

- Discuss the kinds of feedback you will provide and how to use it.
- Seek student input regarding the kind of feedback they value.
- Emphasize the importance of acting on feedback—strongest approach would be to allow/encourage revision.
- Provide clear information on standards (rubric).
- Build in peer feedback system (PeerScholar, Joordens)
- Explain learning strategies for your area.

Learning is a strategic, self-regulated activity. It is important to disrupt the model that “teaching is telling”. It is important to show students that professors also engage in self-disruption of the notion that teaching is synonymous with telling, which also involves modelling the kind of self-regulated inquiry that characterizes expert learners. B. Hunter reminded Council that the support of Teaching and Learning is available and they are a great resource.

Discussion Summary:

- How do you engage a class of 200?
 - feedback doesn’t always need to come from the instructor - look at other ways to engage students online (e.g. short poll)
 - feedback can also be between/among students – can get them engaged in small groups

- o suggestion that students must submit assignment with another colleague's feedback
- How do you change current culture of instructors and students?
 - o culture of student submissiveness – students think professor's role is to tell them information
 - o important to challenge culture up front – need to think about doing things differently – students need to take responsibility for what they are doing

(F. Jones & C. Davidson left at 4:16 p.m.)

- Reference to article about "guerilla learning" from professor at Kwantlen – take command of your education
- with online teaching and learning, is there "renewed" importance in hand-written note taking? Or is this specific to tactile learners?
 - o suspect there is less note taking happening with online learning
 - o taking notes is effective depending on what you do with the notes – important to do something with the notes (e.g. summarizing them, reviewing them)
- Re: changing culture, perhaps we need this disruption as a university, or at least we can use this pandemic as an opportunity to leap forward; to quote Paul Romer, Nobel Prize winner in economics 2018, "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste." How do we use the crisis to transform the university and pedagogical culture?
- Thoughts on how to use instructor-student engagement strategies in the classroom as a catalyst for broader student-to-student engagement outside of the classroom?
- Peer feedback is useful (e.g. code reviews in programming courses to enhance programming skills), but the quality of feedback is important and this requires knowledge in the field. Think about peer reviews of conference or journal papers -- quality varies a lot.
- A. Tokuhiro commented and provided the following graphic:



The Chair thanked B. Hunter for his presentation and discussion. He encouraged members to reach out directly to B. Hunter to continue the discussion.

11. Other Business

A follow up question was asked in relation to the appointment process of the Deputy Provost and whether it would fall under the appointment procedures for Associate Provost. The Provost referred to the appointment procedures and noted the provision dealing with the situation where the Associate Provost is absent for more than 2 months or the office is unexpectedly vacant. The Provost advised that the title is different but they have not started the appointment process yet and she will ensure the proper process is followed.

12. Termination

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

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary