

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING of TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021 Videoconference, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)
Al-Shawesh, Yousef
Barber, Wendy
Bliemel, Michael
Bradbury, Jeremy
Crawford, Greg
Davis, Owen
Davidson, Catherine
Easton, Brad
Eklund, Mike
Elliott, Laura
Fernando, Shanti
Frazer, Mitch
Gaber, Hossam
Heydari, Shahram
Hogue, Jessica
Hossein Nejad, Mehdi
Jacobs, Les
Jones, Ferdinand
Kay, Robin
King, Alyson
Kishawy, Hossam
Livingston, Lori

Lloyd, Meghann
Mahmoud, Qusay
McCabe, Janet
Mostaghim, Amir
Naumkin, Fedor
Obasohan, Jacinta
O'Rourke, Nicholas
Partosoedarso, Elita
Pierce, Tess
Rahnamayan,
Shahryar
Rodgers, Carol
Roy, Langis
Serenko, Alexander
Shon, Phillip
Stoett, Peter
Stokes, Joe
Tokuhiko, Akira

Staff & Guests:

Babb, Shay
Bignell, Paul
Bruno, Jamie
Crouse, Dan
Dinwoodie, Becky
Foy, Cheryl
Hamilton, Barb
Heslip, Michelle
Hester, Krista
Maclsaac, Brad
McCartney, Kimberley
McGovern, Sue
McLaughlin, Christine
Molinaro, Nichole
Nickle, Joanne
Pitcher, Cathy
O'Halloran, Niall
Sankarial, Joshua
Scanga, Franco
Wright, Sharifa

Regrets:

Barari, Ahmad
Dubrowski, Adam
Kay, Robin
Marques, Olga
Scott, Hannah
Sami, Ramin
Sheikh, Jahan

1. Call to Order

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

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by W. Barber and seconded by F. Jones, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and ensuring the continued governance of the university. He reflected that we have been dealing with COVID for over a year now and it has not been without its challenges. The Chair thanked the community for all of their support. He reminded Council of the initiatives the university has engaged in to support the pandemic response (e.g. graduating nurses early, wastewater testing, etc.). As we approach the end of the semester, it is normally a stressful time of year and the pandemic has exacerbated this.

The Chair noted that it is a time for optimism, as the warmer weather arrives, outdoor activities are starting up, and vaccinations continue to roll out. However, everyone must continue to be vigilant as health experts warn of the third wave.

The Chair reported on the Pi Day Speaker Series. He shared that he has received positive feedback on the events. The university also celebrated Pi Day, which took place on a weekend. All of the money raised goes towards the Student Relief Fund and students in need.

The Chair discussed the university's virtual Open Houses. Much has been learned from each one and they continue to get better. He reported that he has heard from parents and students of their positive experiences during the Open Houses and how they get a sense of the caring community of the university. He reminded Council that the next Open House is on March 27.

4. Minutes of the Meeting of January 25, 2021

Upon a motion duly made by L. Elliott and seconded by H. Kishawy, the Minutes were approved as presented.

A member asked about the timing of when minutes get posted online once approved. B. Dinwoodie advised that the website will be updated soon.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

6. Provost's Remarks

The Provost started her remarks with several good news items. She reported that the results of the eCampus Ontario call for proposals were released last week and 19 of the university's 62 proposals were successful (31% success rate) and the university will obtain funding of approximately \$2.4m. She thanked everyone who submitted a proposal. The proposals were highly innovative and thoughtful. She also reported that seed funding of approximately \$100,000 will be set aside to be invested in some of the projects that were unsuccessful in the eCampus Ontario process. She advised that the results of the eCampus Ontario call for submissions are embargoed and further details could not be released at that time. The Provost responded to questions from Council about the funding. There was a discussion of the Teaching Innovation Fund (TIF). The Provost advised that funding for the TIF in 2020-2021 would have required salary cuts, which was not advisable given the implementation of a new learning management system.

The Provost acknowledged that March is National Engineering Month. On a lighter note, Hunter the Ridgeback is the university's mascot and it was National Puppy Day. She encouraged members to post photos of their puppies in honour of Hunter.

7. Inquiries & Communications:

(a) COU Academic Colleague Update

A. King delivered the COU Academic Colleague update. She provided an overview of the reports included in the meeting material. She reported that the COU Academic Colleagues recently had a session focused on combatting misinformation. They also had a session focused on online learning and she noted that many of the points raised were substantially similar to points made during Academic Council's blended learning strategic discussions. A. King responded to questions from Council members.

(b) Board of Governors Update

L. Elliott delivered her first Board report as the governor member of AC. She reported that the Board met on February 25 and immediately before the meeting, the Board had a PD session focused on EDI to assist with the Board's governance EDI strategy development. Some of the key matters discussed during February's meeting included:

- welcoming the newest LGIC appointee to the Board, Kathy (Ran) Hao;
- a strategic discussion focused on fiscal sustainability;
- review of the third quarter financial reports & receipt of a 2021-2022 budget update – the 2021-2022 budget will be coming forward for approval at the Board's April meeting; and
- approval of the Compliance Policy documents, as well as several banking resolutions.

L. Elliott was pleased to inform Council that the updated version of the Vision, Mission, and Values was approved by the Board, as presented. She reported that the Board Chair thanked Academic Council for their feedback on the document and emphasized that the Board values the views of Academic Council. One of the goals of adding a member of the Board to Academic Council was to help strengthen the communication between the bodies, and this was an example of that.

8. Steering Committee:

(a) Delegation of Authority Review

T. Pierce presented the motion for approval. The Chair reminded Council that there is no risk associated with approving the delegation of authority. A comment was made that last summer, it was agreed that AC would meet over the summer to ensure everything was in place for the fall and asked whether this would be considered again for this summer. The Chair advised that this would be discussed during Other Business.

Upon a motion duly made by T. Pierce and seconded by J. McCabe, Academic Council renewed the delegation of authority to the Steering Committee on the same basis as it was approved on April 3.

One member abstained.

(b) Blended Learning Strategic Discussions

The Chair reminded Council that the next session would be focused on a wrap up of the previous sessions and to determine what the next steps will be. The Steering Committee has asked the USGC to canvass AC for their availability on April 6 and April 9 for the next session. He reminded Council that a Google poll has been distributed to AC and encouraged members to complete the poll if they have not done so already.

9. Integrated Plan Update

L. Livingston thanked everyone who participated in the virtual consultation sessions, as well as the Student Union for coordinating student feedback on the Integrated Plan. She confirmed that the consultation process followed this year was identical to the process followed last year. A lot of feedback has been received on the version being presented to Council and she invited additional feedback from members. L. Livingston responded to questions and comments from Council. She invited members to provide any additional comments they might have to her in writing. The updated plan will be presented to SLT for approval.

L. Jacobs spoke to the research aspects of the Integrated Plan and invited questions from Council. He advised that there is close alignment between the Integrated Plan and the 5-year Strategic Research Plan.

There was a question regarding the reference to increased hybrid learning and reimagining physical campus spaces being accomplished by 2023 (p. 12). The member commented that the Space Planning Paper seemed to be a long-term plan as opposed to being implemented by 2023. L. Livingston clarified that these are action statements as opposed to planned outcomes. She confirmed that many of the action statements have not changed much from the previous version of the plan. Further, a strategic plan should not be used as an accountability statement but as a vision.

10. Policy Consultation:

(a) Undergraduate Academic Appeal Policy & Procedures

B. Dinwoodie provided an overview of the review process and proposed amendments. A. Mostaghim, a member of the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC), added that several members of the committee have suggested including more compassionate language in the appeal policy documents and process. He advised that there have been occasions when the committee reviewed an appeal and could not grant an appeal based solely on compassionate grounds. He emphasized that it is important to find a balance between compassionate and procedural grounds. C. Foy added that it was recently suggested that there may also be occasions when the AAC might want to refer an appeal for investigation before making a decision in order to understand whether discrimination might have taken place. B. Dinwoodie clarified that the AAC Terms of Reference will be coming to AC for consultation and will need to be approved by the Board as it contains a delegation of authority. There was also a discussion of the provision that provides that disciplinary penalties will not be enforced pending the outcome of an appeal (sections 12.1 and 12.2). B. Dinwoodie advised that she will work on this provision with the Registrar.

Committee Reports

11. Research Board

L. Jacobs presented the Research Board report. He reported that the TriCouncil season for grants is beginning and they have received some positive results already. He informed Council that 10 SHIRC small grants were awarded to faculty across the university. The Research Board has organized their priorities into 4 categories: Canada Research Chairs Program Policy review, data management strategy, research metrics dashboard, and institutes and centres. Working groups have been working hard to advance those priorities. A number of initiatives are well on their way, including the Brilliant Energy Institute, which is hiring an Executive Director. They are also exploring the idea of having a research centre/cluster focused on long-term care. Recommendation will be coming forward to Council for consideration in several months. L. Jacobs responded to questions from Council members. There was a discussion regarding the announcement of successful candidates in internal competitions.

12. Undergraduate Studies Committee

(a) Undergraduate Scholarship Policy

L. Roy provided an overview of the policy coming forward for approval. He clarified that it is codifying what is taking place already and moving the document into the Policy Library. L. Roy responded to questions from Council. He advised that the policy applies only to the major undergraduate scholarships awarded by the university and does not document the amount of the award. He confirmed that the policy is reviewed every several years. J. Stokes added that they are the centrally awarded scholarships and donor awards are not included.

Upon a motion duly made by L. Roy and seconded by G. Crawford, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council unanimously approved the Undergraduate Scholarship Policy, as presented.

13. Governance & Nominations Committee

(a) Election Results

L. Livingston presented the election results for approval.

Upon a motion duly made by L. Livingston and seconded by O. Davis, pursuant to the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer and the Governance & Nominations Committee, Academic Council unanimously approved the following appointments:

Teaching Staff Positions on Academic Council for the term of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024:

- *Faculty of Business & Information Technology - Nader Azad*
- *Faculty of Business & Information Technology - Ferdinand Jones*
- *Faculty of Engineering & Applied Science - Ramiro Liscano*
- *Faculty of Health Sciences - Elita Partosoedarso*
- *Faculty of Social Science & Humanities - Ruth Felder*

Student Position on Academic Council for the term of September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022, renewable for an additional year:

- *Jessica Leishman (undergraduate)*

Upon a motion duly made by L. Livingston and seconded by J. Obasohan, pursuant to the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee, Academic Council unanimously approved the following appointment to the Academic Appeals Committee:

- *Helene Marie Goulding, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024*

(b) Draft Faculty Council Vice-Chair Selection Procedures

L. Livingston provided an overview of the draft procedures that were being presented for consultation. The comments on the draft procedures included:

- s. 6.4 – in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the associate dean would chair – many Faculties have more than one associate dean – clarify that “an associate dean” would chair to allow for greater flexibility;
- Vice-Chair has a limited role on Faculty Council – in terms of selection process, it seems to be a little cumbersome in approach – with appropriate direction, could be decided within the Faculty rather than going to GNC – since GNC members do not attend all Faculty Council meetings, they might not be aware of the Faculty dynamics – being the body that is most impacted, suggest keeping the authority within the Faculty;
- the role of Vice-Chair is to mainly run Faculty Council meetings when the Dean is not available – asked for clarification as to whether the Executive Committee makes operational decisions – if so, why should the Vice-Chair be part of that committee?
- suggested clarifying the mandate of the Faculty Council Executive Committee, as well;
- Vice-Chairs should not be handpicked by GNC – too heavy handed to have GNC do it;
- if there is a Vice-Chair of a body, they are usually seen as a representative of the body – decision should be kept within the Faculty & suggested that an election process be followed;
- important to have the Vice-Chair serve on the Executive Committee to help with their preparation for chairing meetings;
- s. 6.2 – Vice-Chair to chair not only when the Chair is absent, but also when the Chair wants to participate in the discussion;
- sees the value of an election process, as well as an expression of interest approach – if expression of interest approach, could be perceived bias & should have GNC make the decision;
- s. 9.1 – clarify what is meant by first meeting of the academic year – first meeting of Faculty Councils in an academic year vary – should consider amending;
- what is the purpose and practicality of having a Vice-Chair? suggestion to consider a different structure – one elected member of each Faculty on GNC – consider having that representative also serve as Vice-Chair of Faculty Council to expedite the process; and
- Executive Committee/Steering Committee – don’t want to use Executive Committee as a Steering Committee as there is too much to discuss – agenda setting for Faculty Council meeting usually done by Dean in consultation with Associate Deans – necessity for bigger Faculties to have a separate steering committee.

(c) Review of Faculty Council Terms of Reference

L. Livingston provided an overview of the proposed amendments to the Faculty Council Terms of Reference. The comments of Council members included:

- suggestion to change language from recommendation to approval at the Faculty Council level;
- C. Foy clarified that there is some approval authority delegated to Faculty Council and it is implicit that when Faculty Council makes a recommendation that they approve it; “recommend” is short hand for recommendation for approval;
- In the Faculty of Science, their Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and Graduate Curriculum Committee make recommendations to Faculty Council – clarify this in the terms of reference for the curriculum committees;
- people who are on leave remain members of Faculty Council and can vote – if on research leave, do not attend Faculty Council and do not vote – reconsider this point in the Terms of Reference;
- clarification that faculty members who are on research leave are welcome to attend Faculty Council meetings but are not counted as part of the quorum;
- Vice-Chair and the role of the Executive Committee – Executive Committee was initially a committee of Faculty Council and was there to support Faculty Council – seems that the role of the Executive Committee has evolved more into an operational committee – something missing from the Terms of Reference is the importance of consultation – should include other operational matters that Faculty Council should be consulted on – strengthen the consultation language in the Terms of Reference;
- COVID has changed the perspective of faculty on research leave; before COVID, many faculty on research leave left and did not want to participate in Faculty Council meetings – consider discussing their interest in continued participation;
- there is a distinction between governance and operations – Faculty Councils are governance bodies and the Faculty Council Executive Committee plays a governance role and a role in advising the Dean on operational issues – be mindful about putting too much into the Faculty Council Terms of Reference, as it is a governing body as opposed to operational body;
- inclusion of the sessionals – broadens perspective, but limited in number – group also includes teaching assistants – need a balance with the group; and
- there was a discussion regarding the timing of the drafting of the Faculty Council Executive Committee Terms of Reference.

(d) Review of Academic Council Procedures for the Election of Teaching, Non-Academic Staff and Student Representatives

L. Livingston presented the proposed amendments and invited Academic Council’s feedback. A member expressed support for reducing the number of nominators for graduate student nominees. There was also a request for clarification regarding the definitions of administrative staff and teaching staff. C. Foy advised that the definition of teaching staff is set out in the university’s Act and cannot be changed. The Chair added that if members have further thoughts, please send them to B. Dinwoodie.

14. For Information:

(a) USC Minor Program Adjustments:

(i) FESNS Bachelor of Engineering in Nuclear Engineering

(ii) FSSH Sustainability Studies Minor

**(iii) Undergraduate Program Review 18-Month Follow-up Report –
Bachelor of Science in Chemistry**

(b) GSC Minor Program Adjustments:

(i) Faculty of Science MSc and PhD – Applied Bioscience

15. Other Business

A member asked whether Council would be meeting over the summer like they did last summer. The Chair advised that this would be discussed with the Steering Committee and an answer would be provided at the April meeting.

16. Termination

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by H. Gaber, the meeting terminated at 4:28 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary