

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the MEETING of TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020 Videoconference, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

#### Present:

Murphy, Steven (Chair)  
Barari, Ahmad  
Barber, Wendy  
Bliemel, Michael  
Bradbury, Jeremy  
Crawford, Greg  
Davis, Owen  
Davidson, Catherine  
Dubrowski, Adam  
Easton, Brad  
Eklund, Mike  
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  
Marques, Olga  
McCabe, Janet  
Naumkin, Fedor  
Pierce, Tess  
Partosoedarso, Elita  
Rahnamayan,  
Shahryar  
Rodgers, Carol  
Roy, Langis  
Scott, Hannah  
Serenko, Alexander  
Shon, Phillip  
Stoett, Peter  
Stokes, Joe  
Tokuhiro, Akira

#### Staff & Guests:

Alam, Nazifa  
Babb, Shay  
Balde, Khalil  
Bambrick, Belinda  
Basha, Robson  
Bauer, Chelsea  
Bignell, Paul  
Bouffard, Alix  
Bowles, Natasha  
Bruno, Jamie  
Buono, Leo  
Chamas, Fadi  
Chandhok, Paras  
Chu, Hunter  
Costantino, Mateo  
Crichlow, Wes  
Dack, Angelique  
Depatie, Caleb  
Dinwoodie, Becky  
Drinkwalter, Andra  
Elliott, Laura  
Fanous, Joseph  
Foy, Cheryl  
Fullerton, Kathryn  
Glassford, Noah  
Hester, Krista  
Holocinski, Zygmunt  
Hossain, Mamun  
Katigbak, Paul gabriel  
Kostrzewa, Mathew  
Kwan, Nicholas  
Lau, Celeste  
Leavitt, Olivia  
Lee, Isaac  
Levy, Melissa  
Long, David  
MacIntyre, Hayden  
Maclsaac, Brad  
Major, Liam

McCartney, Kimberley  
Mcnish, Daniel  
Molinaro, Nichole  
Mollica, Cole  
Muralitharan, Kishore  
O'Halloran, Niall  
Oosterhuis, Tyler  
Orian, Colin  
pal Sandhu, Harveen  
Perry, Julian  
Pitcher, Cathy  
Prajapati, Jaykumar  
Raihan, Wahbi  
Reynolds, Curtis  
Riggi, Christian  
Robern, Gil  
Sankarlal, Joshua  
Sawatzky, Kevin  
Scanga, Franco  
Shah, Sulaman  
Shokunbi,  
    Oluwadamilola  
Sivia, Alapjeet  
Smimou, Kamal  
Soldatovic, Nikola  
Spyksma, Sydney  
Stoll, Owen  
Sun, Max  
Tahir, Haiqa  
Tariq, Rumiza  
Tsoumagas, Benjamin  
Uppal, Amtoj  
Verma, Mohit  
von Uders, Isaiah  
Walker, Alexa  
Williams, Rajiv  
Witt, Jacob  
Wong, Carolyn  
Woolvett, Jack  
Wright, Sharifa  
Wu, Ting jian  
Yardy, Kevin  
Yousaf, Mahnoor  
Yurczyszyn, Luke

**Regrets:**

Mostaghim, Amir  
Obasohan, Jacinta  
Sami, Ramin  
Sheikh, Jahan

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

**2. Agenda**

*Upon a motion duly made by F. Jones and seconded by S. Fernando, the Agenda was approved as presented.*

**3. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair noted that the meeting was being held by Google Meet, at the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee. Transitioning to Google Meet as the video conference platform will provide Academic Council with features that are not yet available in the standard BlueJeans platform. Google Meet also has capacity for 250 participants and will address the issue we experienced last month with BlueJeans reaching maximum capacity at 100.

The Chair also noted that it was the last official meeting of 2020. He shared that he was proud of everyone and how they have adapted and persevered throughout the year. He is greatly appreciative of everyone's hard work. It has not been easy, but we will continue to get through this together.

With the continued rising number of COVID cases, the Chair encouraged everyone to remain vigilant and follow the preventative protocols.

The Chair reported on events he recently attended, including "As long as the Sun Shines and the Rivers Flow: a discussion on treaty-making in Canada" where Chief Dave Mowat of Alderville First Nation discussed the history of treaty-making and the renegotiation of the Williams Treaties. The Chair has also been attending department meetings and Faculty Council meetings. He shared that he is witnessing the resilience of our community and he has been buoyed by these meetings. He is excited about the future. The Chair also thanked everyone for participating in the virtual Open House on November 22.

**4. Provost's Remarks**

The Provost started her remarks with several congratulatory messages. She congratulated Dr. Kishawy on his appointment as Dean of FEAS – his term started on November 1. She thanked everyone who participated in the virtual open house on the weekend. She also thanked those who participated as members of the

Tenure and Promotion Committee and Continuing Appointment Committee. The Provost informed Council that the university was awarded a gold star rating for sustainability measures and only two universities in Canada were awarded platinum status. She congratulated Ken Bright and Peter Stoett on this achievement. The Provost reported on the pilot for student success. The initiative will be extended for the winter term. She explained that students who may otherwise be suspended will be allowed to continue and will be required to meet with advisors who will serve as academic coaches.

### **(a) Enrolment Update**

The Provost reviewed the summary report that was included in the meeting material. She explained that the reference to FTEs in the summary refer only to the fall term. In response to a question from a Council member, she clarified what “undeclared” means in the report.

### **(b) Vision, Mission, and Values Consultation**

The Provost advised that a number of consultation sessions were held over the past few weeks. The goal was to bring an updated document to Academic Council for further consultation. The document included in the meeting material sets out draft language for the refreshed vision, mission, and values. The feedback of Council will be incorporated into the next version. They have had productive online sessions with faculty, staff, and the Student Union and have been continuously updating the document.

Comments from Academic Council members included:

- suggestion to keep the idea of a “sticky campus” but reimagine it so as not to explicitly refer to campus as it is not consistent with how things are right now – think of a different way of talking about getting students more involved and integrated into the university;
  - the Provost noted that we are not going to be in a pandemic state forever – the vision, mission, and values look forward and will last for some time
- the values haven’t changed much and there is greater emphasis on inclusion;
- one of the current values is “Dedication to Quality and Intellectual Rigour” – as a learning institution, we should keep something like this as a value – should capture that we value academic excellence;
- suggestion to include more values;
- suggestion to reflect research intensive nature of the university (as stated in the university’s Act that we are a research-intensive institution)
- clarification as to what is meant by “putting people first” – does this take priority over environment?

- the Provost noted that we value people at the university – would love to articulate that we value students, staff, faculty and they are a first priority for the university
- suggestion to replace “putting people first” with something like “we value the people in our community”

## **5. Steering Committee Delegation of Authority Review**

T. Pierce presented the report. There was a question regarding whether there is data about members missing Academic Council (AC) due to COVID. The Chair clarified that the delegation of authority would not be relied upon unless AC is unable to reach quorum. Having the delegation of authority in place is more of an insurance policy.

A question was asked about using the polling feature for AC votes going forward. The matter will be considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

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

## **6. President’s Equity Task Force Report**

The Chair thanked W. Crichlow and the President’s Equity Task Force for all of their work over the past few years. He introduced W. Crichlow to present the report. W. Crichlow thanked the present and past task force members. W. Crichlow reviewed the key sections of the report, which was included in the meeting material. W. Crichlow recognized B. Maclsaac’s involvement in the Caribbean scholarship initiative. W. Crichlow noted the tremendous amount of work that was required to complete the report.

The Chair stated that the report is an important step for the university in working towards equity, diversity and inclusivity. This is only the beginning and there remains much work to be done. The work of this task force is important and timely, and will continue under the direction of our new Director of EDI, Sharifa Wright. The university is already taking action on many of the task force’s recommendations, which include:

- hiring of a Director of EDI;
- hiring of a Human Rights expert and establishing a Human Rights Office, which is leading relevant policy changes & there is a lot of policy activity happening in this area right now;
- grassroots initiative of AC to establish an EDI working group;
- Board’s priority this year to develop a Board Governance EDI Strategy; and
- work of the compliance officer is focused on a number of equity initiatives.

With the arrival of the Director, EDI, and Human Rights Director, the university will be implementing a more coordinated approach to EDI. The Chair emphasized that he and the senior leadership team are committed to setting the appropriate tone at the top and reiterated that we are all responsible for creating a culture of equity and inclusivity. Cultural change takes time and we are committed over the long term. \*

A member noted that in the opening letter, there were references to many American tragedies and would have liked to see references to Canadian tragedies included.

(E. Partosoedarso joined at 3:18 p.m.)

W. Crichlow advised that it was the first time such a survey was done at the university. The task force conducted an enormous amount of consultation that began two years ago (attended Faculty Council meetings, a number of town halls, etc.). This was a first step to begin the EDI discussion at the university. A member commented that they were very impressed with the report and that it took a lot of time and expertise. W. Crichlow advised that S. Wright will also be engaging in public consultation. It is not easy work to do and starts with building trust across the institution. The university is learning from other institutions as to best practices and we are in a good place to implement some of the recommendations in the report.

A suggestion was made to have training modules available for faculty (referenced requirements of Tri-Council funding). L. Jacobs advised that the Office of Research Services has been developing training in collaboration with some other OCUR universities. L. Livingston added that S. Wright has developed a go-forward plan, which includes training. Further, there is EDI training for all selection committees. We must keep in mind that the Director of EDI is only one person.

The Chair thanked W. Crichlow again for all of his work leading the task force and for his advice.

## **7. 2021-2022 Budget Approach**

L. Livingston reviewed the budget report. She noted that there will be a continuing need for vigilance with respect to the budget. L. Livingston reviewed the key observations:

- New first year enrolments down by 7.5% - less than originally anticipated but still of significant concern – must focus on recruitment efforts.
- Tuition revenue is down due to program mix of enrolments and fewer international students.
- If there are surplus funds this year, will be making strategic investments to support employees & students, student recruitment, and upgrading technology assets to support operations in virtual environment.

- Chief concerns moving forward are increased competition for students & continuation of government's frozen tuition framework.
- Need to stay on top of this over the coming months.

B. Maclsaac clarified that this is the budget process and not a budget.

L. Livingston and B. Maclsaac responded to questions from Council, a summary of which follows:

- How are metrics in SMA impacting this process?
  - L. Livingston confirmed that the government agreed not to implement new SMA metrics for funding for a 2-year period.
- How would surplus funds be allocated for student & staff support?
  - L. Livingston advised that as we move through the year, will continue to monitor the anticipated surplus as it is still at risk (e.g. if winter enrolment drops) - no further details were available at the time.
- What can be learned from this year's budget process so that the budget can be more accurate?
  - B. Maclsaac responded that lessons were learned with respect to unfilled positions.
  - He also advised that KPMG confirmed that 3% variance is normal with respect to budget variances.
  - There has also been enhanced Q2 forecasting based on the previous year.
- A comment was made that if the university puts money into recruitment, the university must also invest in faculty and support for those students.
  - L. Livingston advised that to the extent possible, the university will invest in areas of growth – must be strategic as to how surplus funds are invested.

## **8. Virtual Proctor System Directives**

L. Roy presented the updated directives for approval. He reminded Council of the discussion regarding the directives during last month's meeting. The directives were revised to incorporate feedback from Academic Council. He highlighted the change made to the timing of the review cycle, which was reduced to 6 months. He noted the steps that would be taken during that 6-month time frame. He also noted that they would be scheduling a strategic discussion on virtual proctoring and alternative assessments in the new year. The updated directives provide a balanced set of parameters for exams that require it and will protect students and faculty.

L. Roy responded to questions from Council, which included whether Proctortrack should be removed as a specific software name and whether universities as a collective have suggested that these systems be reviewed by the Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. L. Roy confirmed that Respondus and Proctortrack have



undergone reviews by the university's Privacy Office. There was a discussion regarding whether a professor/instructor must review all of the red flags identified by the system. L. Roy clarified that anyone who would normally be in the exam room would be responsible for reviewing the red flags. A member commented that he has used Respondus Monitor and it does discourage students from cheating. Students are told at the beginning of the exam to send the instructor an e-mail when they have visited the bathroom, gone for water, etc. and he advised he would only review the video if there was a problem. The member noted he has not experienced any issues with the software, so far. There was also a discussion about the privacy of other individuals if a student does not live alone. L. Roy advised that there are solutions available to such situations and that students should discuss this with their instructors.

*Upon a motion duly made by L. Roy and seconded by H. Kishawy, pursuant to the recommendations of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council approved the Online Proctor Directives, as presented.*

One member abstained.

## **9. Policy Consultation:**

### **(a) Compliance Policy**

C. Foy provided an overview of the development of the policy and advised that the policy would help start building a framework for compliance. The university has 400+ pieces of legislation that must be complied with and there is not currently a framework in place that allows us to demonstrate our compliance with that legislation. The establishment of the policy will allow us to identify the individuals responsible for ensuring compliance with specific legislation. C. Foy introduced S. Babb to further discuss the policy. S. Babb noted that the proposed policy includes tools that will form the building blocks of a compliance framework and will give the university the ability to confirm what is being done and what should be done. A key element will be the training aspect to ensure everyone is aware of their compliance obligations.

The feedback and questions of Council included:

- What does “university employees” mean? It might be too broad of a category.
  - S. Babb clarified that compliance is expected of all of our employees – applies to full-time and part-time employees. The policy would also apply to appointees, volunteers, etc.
  - C. Foy added that each executive is taking responsibility for compliance in their areas.
- What are the penalties for non-compliance?



- C. Foy clarified that the policy refers to legislative non-compliance – penalties depend on the specific legislation that is not being complied with.
- The policy is intended to provide guidance to ensure individuals are not taking these types of risks.

C. Foy advised that this is a multi-year project and used the Controlled Goods Policy as an example. C. Foy invited Council members to submit written comments following the meeting, as well.

## **Committee Reports**

### **10. Undergraduate Studies Committee and Graduate Studies Committee Report (Langis Roy)**

#### **(a) Academic Integrity Policy Documents**

L. Roy presented the documents for approval. He reminded members that the documents came to Academic Council for consultation in September.

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

#### **(b) English Language Proficiency – Duolingo English Test**

L. Roy presented the documents for approval and provided the background to the proposal. L. Roy and J. Stokes responded to questions from Council members. J. Stokes clarified that there is a distinction between Duolingo as an English teaching tool and as an English test. He advised that it was used as an emergency measure during COVID and the proposal would implement it on a permanent basis.

*Upon a motion duly made by L. Roy and seconded by O. Marques, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council unanimously approved the use of the Duolingo English Test (DET) from applicants, as sufficient evidence of English language proficiency (with a recommended minimum score of 110 for the majority of programs and 120 for Education and Nursing programs), effective for the 2021/22 admissions cycle.*

## **11. Research Update**

L. Jacobs informed Council that research funding from non-industry sources has surpassed last year's total with four months left. Four of the seven Faculties have already surpassed their totals for last year. He thanked everyone for their hard work on their submissions and successes. The second item of good news is that they have successfully hired a new IP Officer, who started the previous week. L. Jacobs advised that the new IP Officer is a terrific fit, is well versed in academia,

and has lots of patent experience. He also informed Council that one of the partnership officers is soon returning from parental leave.

They have solidified plans for the undergraduate research support programs and asked members to keep this in mind if they would like to hire students for summer research programs. He also discussed the federal government's Canada Research Continuity Research Fund, which has been established to cover direct costs of COVID on research across the country. The initiative is currently at the third stage and the university has an allotment of \$139,000 if researchers can show the costs incurred due to COVID. L. Jacobs asked researchers to submit their costs in order to recover them.

## **12. Consent Agenda:**

- a. Minutes of Meeting of October 27, 2020**
- b. Conferral of Degrees – Fall 2020**

A question was asked about the minutes and whether the minutes should reflect that students were expressing concerns about the virtual proctor systems in the chat during the last meeting. B. Dinwoodie advised that she tried to reflect the substance of the students' concerns in the minutes as part of the discussion without attribution, as guests do not have standing to make comments during a meeting. She asked whether there were any student concerns that were missing from the minutes. None were noted.

*Upon a motion duly made by H. Scott and seconded by L. Jacobs, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.*

## **13. Other Business**

## **14. For Information:**

- a. COU Academic Colleague Report**
- b. 2021-2022 Election Process**

## **15. Termination**

*Upon a motion duly made by L. Jacobs, the meeting terminated at 4:30 p.m.*

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary