



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Strategy & Planning Committee (S&P)

Minutes of the Public Meeting of
Thursday, January 30, 2020
2:00 p.m. to 3:35 p.m., ERC 3023

Attendees: Thorsten Koseck (Chair), Liqun Cao, Kevin Chan (*videoconference*), Owen Davis, Steven Murphy, Jim Wilson, Lynne Zucker (*videoconference*)

Staff: Becky Dinwoodie, Lori Livingston, Brad Maclsaac, Susan McGovern

Regrets: Doug Allingham

1. Call to Order

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

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by O. Davis and seconded by J. Wilson, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

There were none.

4. Minutes of Public Session of Meeting of October 24, 2019

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

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair started off by discussing safety and shared a story about almost being hit by a driver texting while driving.

(L. Cao & K. Chan joined at 2:04 p.m.)

6. President's Remarks

The President provided an update on COU's efforts to ensure universities remain on the provincial government's radar. COU is emphasizing that it does not have to be skilled trades OR universities. It is a good time for colleges and universities to work together. It is essential to prepare students for jobs that do not exist yet. It is also important for Canada to think about ways to retain Canadian talent.

The President also discussed the university's government relations. He and S. McGovern continue to encourage government representatives from all parties to make announcements on campus.

The President also updated the committee on the work of Universities Canada. He reminded the committee that research is federally funded. There is a focus on changing EDI through the research lens of universities. There is a lack of data about marginalized group representation as it is voluntary reporting.

The university's energy initiative is in full swing. The purpose of the initiative is to provide research-based evidence to help transition to a carbon neutral economy and to put Ontario on the map in terms of energy and energy technology. It will kick off in Calgary and continue to roll out in 2020.

The President discussed the university's involvement in the early stages of planning for a new hospital in Durham Region, which has forced us to think about what the med school of the future will look like. It is integral to identify the gap in technologies being used in hospitals and the education med students are getting. A new hospital will provide the opportunity to bring the university's engineering expertise to the health sector.

The President responded to questions from the committee.

7. Strategy

7.1 Strategic Mandate Agreement 3 (SMA3)

L. Livingston updated the committee on the status of the SMA3. The first draft was submitted to the Ministry on December 17. There is a phone call scheduled with the government the following week to discuss the initial draft. L. Livingston emphasized that it is primarily a funding exercise. She anticipated that discussions would continue for some time.

7.2 Strategic Discussion: Universities and the "Skills Gap"

S. Murphy introduced the topic for discussion. He posited that what people generally do poorly is learn from history. As an example, he used the current high demand for boilermakers. While the role is in high demand today, we must think about what the individuals in that role will be doing five years from now. It is integral to think about what

the jobs of tomorrow are going to be. The university should be responsive to the skills gap while recognizing that it is a more complex issue. Employers tend to focus on immediate needs and universities should be prepared to push back on industry. Larger organizations disproportionately put money into training their employees. When employers are challenged, they tend to step up.

Since it is difficult to predict the jobs of the future, graduates should be equipped with an agile set of competencies. It is difficult to develop the exact skills needed for jobs through curriculum; however, there are opportunities outside of the curriculum to help prepare students for the workforce.

S. Murphy discussed opportunities available in Health Sciences for completing stackable credentials (med lab and nursing programs). It would start with specific program-related skills and would extend to soft skills development, as well. There was a discussion regarding the university's efforts to develop micro credentials. The university is working on centralizing those efforts. There are Faculties working with continuous education and others working directly with industry. Micro credentials need to be examined in a more comprehensive way going forward.

The Chair commented that when hiring university graduates, employers do not expect them to be experts but do expect them to be problem solvers. There was also a discussion about how individuals already in the workforce need continuing education and upskilling. S. Murphy commented that lifelong learning is critical and changing the culture will take some time.

7.3 Women for Stem

S. McGovern reported on the Women for Stem initiative. She explained that it is a true third-party initiative. The first event was held the night before and it was a success. During the event, many participants were asking about what more they could do for the university. S. McGovern noted that the goal of \$2m is big, but they are making good progress towards reaching it. S. McGovern responded to questions from the committee. She advised that approximately 20 students per year in the initiative is a good number.

8. Planning

8.1 Student Success

L. Livingston delivered a presentation on the university's student success initiatives. She clarified that student success is defined as a student entering into a program and obtaining an academic credential. L. Livingston reinforced that students are at the core of the university's mission. She explained the correlation between a student's incoming average and their chance of success. She also noted that as the number of student applications increase, so will the admission averages. L. Livingston highlighted the university's ranking in the province in terms of student retention and the need to push

ourselves to do better. Ensuring student success is everyone's business.

L. Livingston reviewed the following key student success initiatives that focus on first year students:

- transition pedagogy: better curriculum delivered by good teachers to prevent early and disappointed departure (Kitt, 2014);
- orientation week programming: differentiated for extroverts and introverts, acknowledge cultural differences (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2019); and
- enhancing advisor skillsets: consider identifying dedicated academic advisors for first year students (McFarlane, 2013).

There was a discussion regarding the factors that might contribute to low student attendance at orientation and ideas of how to improve student attendance. L. Livingston also discussed the development of the Ontario Tech Student Success Program (OTSSP). She highlighted the mental health advantages of the new OTSSP, which allows underperforming students to remain with their cohort and maintain the relationships they developed during their first year.

8.2 Board Retreat Planning

S. Murphy reminded the committee that the retreat is scheduled for the evening of May 27 and morning of May 28. It was suggested that a deep dive into mental health should be one of the key topics. Many university students are at the age where mental health symptoms are first exhibited. The Board could learn about the university's approach to mental health. Other suggestions included an update on the five strategic pillars and the energy initiative. S. Murphy added that the energy initiative would likely be well into development and the time might be better spent on discussing mental health. It was also suggested to have a speaker at the dinner. The committee supported focusing the retreat on mental health.

9. Advancement

9.1 Pi Day

S. McGovern discussed this year's Pi Day events. The Chair encouraged committee members to participate in the events. S. McGovern added that if they are unable to participate in person, they could promote the events on social media.

10. Other Business

11. Adjournment

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by L. Cao, the meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary