
Public Session Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, January 16, 2020
2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Videoconference, ERC 3023

Members: Maria Saros (Acting Chair) (*videoconference*), Laura Elliott (*videoconference*), Kori Kingsbury (*videoconference*), Steven Murphy, Trevin Stratton (*videoconference*)

Staff : Jamie Bruno, Becky Dinwoodie, Cheryl Foy, Lori Livingston

Regrets: Francis Garwe (Chair), Doug Allingham, Lisa Edgar

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the public session to order at 2:05 p.m.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by L. Elliott and seconded by S. Murphy, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

There were none.

4. Chair's Remarks

M. Saros advised that, due to a scheduling conflict, F. Garwe was unable to attend the meeting and she would be chairing in his absence. She welcomed the members to the first committee meeting of the new year.

(T. Stratton joined at 2:07 p.m.)

5. President's Remarks

The President discussed the tragic event of Flight 752. He reported to the Board that there were 2 vigils held on campus last week to honour the victims. He noted that it will take a long time to heal, but the community has come together and is providing comfort during this time of loss.

The President was pleased to advise that the energy initiative is going full steam ahead. He reminded the committee that the goal is to establish a national consortium with representation

from all sectors. The consortium will support the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050 with research. Energy is the largest single area of expertise of the university and the university will be well positioned to lead initiative. He will be travelling to Calgary in February to finalize things with the partners who are already on board.

The President reported that there have been discussions regarding the skills shortage in Canada. The university must continue to thinking about practical ways to ensure our grads have more than just technical skills (e.g. teamwork, business etiquette, etc.). in order to further differentiate Ontario Tech as a job ready university. A committee member commented that we cannot differentiate technology from the professional skills required. In order to prepare a student for the future, they must be nimble and ready for change. If we get distracted by what is missing today, it is likely we will overlook what will be needed in the future.

5.1 Strategic Discussion: Bicameral Governance & Internal Stakeholder Engagement

S. Murphy introduced the discussion. He reviewed the values that underly bicameral governance and emphasized the importance of achieving a healthy balance between the two sides of governance. Over the last decade, institutions are noticing that faculty do not spend as much time on campus as they have in the past. He also noted the university's enhanced ability for collaboration between Faculties because of the lack of departments and silos.

Universities are experiencing less engagement at all levels, likely due to increasing service commitments, family commitments, etc. It is integral to think about ways to get internal stakeholders excited about governance. It is also important to consider how to create more opportunities for faculty to engage with each other and with governance in structural ways and other alternatives. A university is stronger when not only the Board is engaged, but the academics are engaged with each other and the university. A large percentage of what the academy does relies on volunteers (journal reviews, grant referees, etc.)

C. Foy added that good governance involves removing obstacles to help stakeholders work together more effectively. A member commented that the reduction in people giving back is not unique to the university sector. A suggestion was made that a way to strengthen bicameral governance is to identify pain points and work towards solving the problem together. C. Foy related that to the work of the joint Board and Academic Council By-law Review Working Group, which focused on reviewing and updating the by-laws. Tackling a less nebulous problem might work even better.

The committee liked the idea of having a joint strategic discussion and focusing it on a challenge. The members could work in groups to tackle four or five problems and then present their solutions to the rest of the members. Future skills was a proposed topic of discussion. It could be an ideation session with a subset of the Board and a subset of Academic Council. If the initial session goes well, we could replicate the session in order to gain some momentum. It was also suggested that the ideas could be combined (i.e. have an ideation session followed by a bbq

social event). The committee agreed that the Board should focus on engagement with Academic Council before turning their attention to engagement with other internal groups.

6. Governance:

6.1 Board Engagement:

(a) Annual Committee Practices Assessment Development

C. Foy provided an overview of the background to the development of the annual committee practices assessment. The results of the assessment would be used to identify committee priorities for the following year. The assessment would also provide the Committee Chair with an opportunity to learn how well the committee is working together, as well as giving them a deeper dive into the committee's actual practices and dynamics around the table. C. Foy reminded the committee that she developed the Board assessment when she joined the university in 2013. The faculty governors conducted a review of the assessment in 2017. She advised that the draft committee assessment was developed following a benchmarking exercise.

There was a discussion regarding the compilation of the committee assessment results and with whom the results would be shared. C. Foy confirmed that a high-level summary would be presented during the public session of each committee meeting, with the detailed results being presented during the non-public session. The key themes and trends coming out of the results would be highlighted for the committees. It was suggested that it would be helpful for the Board to review the results of all the committees. The committee supported implementing the committee assessment as presented.

(K. Kingsbury joined at 2:44 p.m.)

6.2 By-laws Implementation Update

C. Foy provided a status update on the implementation of the new by-laws. She noted that many items on the implementation plan have been completed. She noted the work that has been done on updating the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the committees of Academic Council, the Steering Committee in particular. Once the reviews at the committee level are completed, the Governance and Nominations Committee will be moving down to the Faculty Council level. There was a discussion regarding how the Academic Council Handbook will change as the new procedures and ToR are in place.

6.3 Policy Update:

(a) Policy Against Violence, Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace 2018-2019 Review Report

J. Bruno advised that the review is underway and that consultations are continuing, including with the university's Health and Safety committees (one for each campus location). The Health and Safety Committees met in late December and had until yesterday to provide feedback on the

policy. If there are any recommendations coming out of the feedback, he would present them to the committee at the next meeting.

7. Consent Agenda:

Upon a motion duly made by L. Elliott and seconded by K. Kingsbury, the Consent Agenda was approved as presented.

7.1 Election Process 2020-2021

7.2 Minutes of the Meeting of October 10, 2019

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by K. Kingsbury, the meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary