



**BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Strategy & Planning Committee**

**Minutes of the Public Meeting of Monday, April 1, 2019
2:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m., ERC 3023**

Attendees: Thorsten Koseck (Chair), Doug Allingham, Kevin Chan (*videoconference*), Steven Murphy, Jessica Nguyen, Jim Wilson, Lynne Zucker (*videoconference*)

Staff: Robert Bailey, Becky Dinwoodie, Craig Elliott, Cheryl Foy, Brad MacIsaac, Pamela Onsiong, Susan McGovern

Guests: Mike Eklund, Christine McLaughlin

Regrets: Liqun Cao

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

2. Agenda

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

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

There were no conflict of interest declarations.

4. Minutes of Public Session of Meeting of November 1, 2018

Upon a motion duly made by D. Allingham and seconded by J. Nguyen, the minutes were approved as presented.

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair kept his remarks very brief.

6. President's Remarks

COU/UC Strategic Initiatives

The President discussed government positioning and the importance of highlighting the university's role with respect to jobs and reskilling people. He also discussed how the university's strategic priorities are guiding decision-making at the university, including the recommendation to proceed with the new building project and the rebranding. He

discussed the budget development process in the context of the government's 10% cut to tuition. Budget holders were asked to assess their budgets through a strategic lens and to propose reductions. Rather than implementing across the board budget reductions, reductions are being recommended based on the university's strategic priorities. The President emphasized that strategy is driving decision-making and used the new building project as an example. The new building will provide more space and a home for our students. Further, deferring the construction would not result in a gain to our bottom line.

The President discussed the contingency planning being done to help support the university's student union (USU) and clubs/societies in light of the new student ancillary fees opt-out. The university must work strategically with stakeholders to create a good culture on campus. The focus will be on educating incoming students on the value of the services and activities funded by the ancillary fees. He confirmed that 100% of the opt-out affects the USU. J. Nguyen discussed the educational efforts that will be made to inform students of the value of opting-in (e.g. IBegin, social/cultural programming, etc.). Students have until mid-September to decide whether to opt out, which provides the USU with time to connect with incoming students and demonstrate the value of the ancillary fees.

7. Strategy

7.1 Endowment Disbursement Report

C. Elliott reviewed the key aspects of the endowment disbursement report. He explained that the university is obligated to disburse at least 3-4% of the principal value of the endowment annually. The Investment and Audit & Finance Committees have recommended that the university disburse up to \$600,000 from endowments for student awards in 2019-2020. C. Elliott responded to questions from the committee. He clarified that there are no operational risks associated with increasing the amount available for disbursement.

Upon a motion duly made by T. Koseck and seconded by J. Nguyen, pursuant to the recommendations of the Investment Committee and Audit & Finance Committee, the Strategy & Planning Committee recommended the disbursement of up to \$600,000 from Endowment Funds for distribution as student awards in 2019-20 for approval by the Board of Governors.

7.2 Student Success

B. Maclsaac delivered the presentation on student success, which was also included in the meeting material. He commented that changes that are implemented to improve student success are never made in isolation; therefore, it is difficult to narrow down which factors are more effective than others. The SMA target was 80%, which was achieved, but internally we have a stretch goal of 82-84% over the next couple of years. There was a discussion as to whether consideration has been given to increasing admission averages. B. Maclsaac advised that for certain programs (nursing, med lab, engineering), the university has higher admission averages. While there is evidence that over 85% entrance average tend to persist more, we are first focused on being an access institution.

B. MacIsaac also reviewed the initiatives taken outside of the classroom to improve student success, which focus on creating connections (academic advisors, learning support centre, better communicating the services available, etc.). He also discussed the projects that are underway financed through the Student Success Innovation Fund. He noted some interesting data indicating a number of ways our students do not follow the normal trends with respect to persistence. B. MacIsaac responded to questions from the committee. He addressed the downward trend in the retention rates for the Faculty of Energy Systems and Nuclear Science and Faculty of Social Science and Humanities. Over 70% of students who do not return do so because of their GPA, not because they choose to leave.

7.3 Visual Identity Branding

S. Murphy discussed the university's rebrand and highlighted the extensive consultation process that was conducted. It was a big team effort and the official launch took place on March 27. The reception has been positive. The new brand rollout will be slow and methodical. The new brand has received local and national media, with the launch fortuitously coinciding with S. Murphy's appearance on The Agenda with Steve Paikin. From the alumni perspective, people want reassurance that the university's official name has not changed. The value of a degree from the university will increase with increased awareness and factors associated with the brand. S. Murphy emphasized that a brand in and of itself does little without a story. The new brand will make it much easier to tell our story and people will more easily remember the university.

7.4 Strategic Discussion: Living the Brand

S. Murphy introduced the strategic discussion. It is incumbent upon everyone to "live the brand". It is essential for people to promote the university itself to ensure there is always content supporting the brand. S. McGovern added that a lot of work will be done between now and September to update the physical campus, including new signage. There will be a new e-store for faculty and staff (business cards, new products) available at Brand Central. There was also a discussion about what incoming students will be receiving in September with the new brand on it. S. McGovern confirmed that there will be new branded products in the stores by September, but it will take several months to replenish the Nike, Adidas, and Under Armour apparel. Committee members shared positive comments on the rebrand launch and update to the website. The Board Chair commended J. Nguyen for delivering an excellent speech at the launch event as USU President.

8. Planning

8.1 Board Retreat Planning

C. Foy reviewed the discussion from the last meeting regarding the retreat. The committee expressed support for focusing the retreat on design-thinking and how to apply it to a strategic problem. Of the proposed retreat topics, the committee supported focusing the retreat on the future of Durham Region and the university. This broader theme would tie in with several other topics, such as continuing education and the needs of industry, building partnerships, and funding. This is also a timely subject for the Board since the Board Chair and the President have recently been involved in a number of discussions about the future of Durham.

9. Other Business

10. Adjournment

There being no other business, upon a motion duly made by D. Allingham and seconded by J. Wilson, the public session of the meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Becky Dinwoodie, Secretary