



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Strategy & Planning Committee

Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of February 8, 2024 2:00 p.m. to 3:58 p.m. via videoconference

Members: Lynne Zucker (Chair), Eric Agius (Vice-Chair), Ahmad Barari, Frank Carnevale, Laura Elliott, Mitch Frazer, Lisa McBride, Steven Murphy, Michael Rencheck, Hannah Scott, Kim Slade, Michael Watterworth

Regrets: Matthew Mackenzie

Staff: Kirstie Ayotte, James Barnett, Jamie Bruno, Disha Gupta, Barbara Hamilton, Krista Hester, Les Jacobs, Lori Livingston, Brad MacIsaac, Ruth Nyaamine, Joe Stokes, Sarah Thrush, Lauren Turner

Guests: Dwight Thompson, guest governor

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and read aloud the land acknowledgment.

2. Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by E. Agius and seconded by A. Barari, the Agenda was approved as presented.

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts were declared.

4. Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of November 16, 2023

Upon a motion duly made by E. Agius and seconded by H. Scott, the minutes were approved as presented.

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the first S&P meeting of 2024 and welcomed the new Committee members. She then briefly recognised that lately a number of

Universities are under unprecedented fiscal pressure. She expressed admiration of the leadership team at Ontario Tech and their plans to use growth as a strategy to keep moving ahead in these challenging times.

6. President's Remarks

The President shared several good news updates including increased applications – a total 73% increase over the last three years; he thanked the various internal stakeholders for their efforts with a special mention to the Registrar's Office team. He then advised the Committee that the provincial government's response on the Blue-Ribbon Panel is anticipated this month. He also noted that the University ranked first among small research-intensive universities in Canada and that brand momentum is continuing.

The President then provided an update on the federal government's announcement last month that placed a cap on international students. He expressed concern about the harm that this causes to Canada's reputation amongst international students. He advised that the provincial and federal governments are meeting and the University's government relations unit has been actively engaging with and monitoring this issue. He advised that this development underscores the importance of the University's differentiated growth strategy and noted that the University is already attentive and responsive to labour market needs.

The Committee expressed support for the President and the leadership team and commended efforts to position the University well for the future. In response to a request for clarification, the President provided a short summary of the cuts and freezes of grants and tuition in Ontario over the last decade. He also explained the structural deficit of the University's finances.

7. Strategy

7.1. Strategic Discussion: Campus Master Plan

B. Maclsaac opened the Strategic Discussion with an overview of the differentiated growth plan, its connection with the Campus Master Plan, and the driving force of the Integrated Academic-Research Plan (IARP). He briefly discussed the historical overview of the growth that took place over the years since 2002 from zero to 11,000 students and how IARP outlines a vision of significant differentiated enrolment growth to 18,000 students by 2030.

B. Maclsaac then presented a general formula for space needs, noting that more specific data will be presented as plans progress.

He then drew Committee members' attention to the consultations on space planning that have taken place at the University. He highlighted the connection between budget planning and space allocation. He also noted that the COU space standard formula used across Ontario universities is under review; he is the co-chair of the reviewing group.

B. Maclsaac then briefly discussed the 2011 Campus Master Plan and how the University's focus has shifted from leasing to owning buildings. He then discussed the 2015 Campus Master Plan created jointly with the Durham College master plan and how it showcased the broad vision of growing the physical presence of the University and then detailed the phasing plan in place for the next 30+ years which showcases the growth we can attain over a particular stretch of Simcoe Street North. He highlighted that the major asset our University has is the possession of land to grow and the limiting factor being capital to build. Using the general example of the eventual need for 300,000 gross square feet at approximately \$700/square foot, a total investment of \$210 million is required. B. Maclsaac discussed potential timelines and phasing.

As it won't be possible to immediately embark on constructing new buildings, B. Maclsaac explained that the University is currently reviewing its current space use. He also noted that the University is considering whether expanding space is the top priority or if investment in people should be sequenced first. He closed his presentation by discussing a recognized need for student support including expanded student housing and other services. He advised that at this time, the University's preference is for a public-private partnership with private partners designing, building, and financing new a new residence that the University will operate. Land would be retained on a long-term lease.

A discussion of the presentation then ensued. In response to a question about current residence capacity, B. Maclsaac advised that University students occupy approximately two thirds of the 1350 beds that are shared with Durham College. As the University grows from 11,000 students to 15,000 students, demand for residence beds is expected to grow by 1300. In response to a question about modelling data and the costs and benefits of a public-private partnership, B. Maclsaac clarified that the data presented is generic and for illustrative purposes. He advised that the University regards a public-private partnership for residence as beneficial as it shifts risk, meets housing demands, and presents an opportunity that does not demand capital the University does not have. In response to a different question, B. Maclsaac confirmed that building heights on campus are restricted due to proximity to the Oshawa Airport. A member commented favourably on the push to provide more student housing as well as the exploration of a public-private partnership model; leadership was encouraged to consider hybrid versions when the final business case comes forward for approval. In response to a final comment, B. Maclsaac confirmed that consultations are ongoing and that input received would be considered in the space needs of the future.

7.2. Student Recruitment

L. Livingston presented an update on Student Recruitment, advising that recruitment is a key priority at the University, even more so in light of the current fiscal situation.

L. Livingston discussed the three key pillars to the recruitment strategy: (i) domestic, (ii) international and (iii) digital. The latter has been particularly impactful with this

generation's students who are more attentive to social media as opposed to traditional forms of recruitment. She also noted that the digital strategy has expanded the University's geographical reach. She reiterated the impressive jump in applications over the last three years shared by the President in his remarks.

L. Livingston also noted that the University is tracking the growth recorded by other universities and is continuously analyzing the diversified market strategy in place for international recruitment. The University remains committed to not being overly reliant on one or two markets to reduce risk.

In response to a question, L. Livingston explained that the cap on international students will apply to all undergraduate and select groups of graduate students. In response to a further question, she confirmed that course-based masters programs bring in higher tuition for the University than undergraduate or research-based masters programs. A brief discussion then ensued on the usage of the term differentiated growth in the context of recruitment strategy.

7.3. Research and Innovation

In response to an action point, L. Jacobs provided an update on grants received by the University pertaining to small modular reactors (SMRs). He advised that just over \$3 million has been received in the last six months.

L. Jacobs then presented the update on Research and Innovation. He discussed how the "pull" approach adopted by the University is unique in that it looks at the needs of industry and community partners and makes them the root of any research enterprise. This was contrasted with a "push" approach where universities embark on research and then push it out to the market. He acknowledged that the University's research and innovation is targeted opposed to comprehensive. He also noted that an objective of his office is to seamlessly integrate entrepreneurship and commercialization into the research enterprise.

L. Jacobs noted other key elements of the research enterprise including internationalization and commercialization, EDI, expanding experiential learning opportunities, and the expansion of infrastructure to support a living lab campus. He shared the view that differentiated growth and research are complementary and a catalyst for success. He gave reputation and rankings as an example, noting that improvements therein drive student attraction and enrolment. Similarly, increases in research funding lead to financial supports for students, as 80-90% flows through to undergraduate and graduate students.

A brief discussion then ensued. A member spoke favourably of successful graduate programs and research being good advertising for new undergraduate students. In

response to a concern, L Jacobs clarified that key industry partners are not always private corporations; he provided OPG and Alstrom as examples.

8. Planning

8.1. Board Retreat Planning

The President reminded the Committee that the theme for the retreat will be Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI); he opined that it is a subject that is more important than ever in a world that is polarized and where universities are under attack. The story Ontario Tech has to tell is a powerful one; the University is proudly different. Education is approached holistically and uplifts our entire community. He noted that the Board will, as fiduciaries, have an interest in the reputation of the University. An objective of the retreat will be to provide the Board with tools to engage in discussions and to defend the University if necessary, in this polarized context.

R. Nyaamine then explained how the University has adopted new and different approaches by anchoring onto the acronym of Diversity Inclusion and Belonging. She also identified this as a critical component for the growth strategy. She shared some of the partnerships between her team and other offices of the University. She also noted the shift in EDI from supporting underserved communities to leveraging the University's strengths and attract investment in the University community. She shared the intent that the Board be equipped with the tools and the language to have a conversation about EDI and belonging.

8.2 Student Success

L. Livingston built on what was addressed by R. Nyaamine that the University has a diverse student body even in terms of their needs and the support that needs to be provided to them. The University is using a multi-pronged strategic approach to support the students and briefly discussed the next steps enlisted to ensure the same.

In response to a question, J. Stokes clarified that the University does track international students' success and data around it separately with the help of international advisors who are part of the recruitment team.

8.3 Institutional Metrics – Strategic Research Plan Metrics

L. Jacobs discussed the University's effort to create an institutional metric with a dashboard approach. He noted that in addition to internal metrics, there are also metrics reported to the provincial government; the University is trying to avoid redundancy between the two.

L. Jacobs noted that the list of metrics included in the materials are meant to measure the progress of the research and innovation enterprise at the University. It recognizes that the enterprise involves students and ties in efforts in commercialization and entrepreneurship along with research funding. In response to a question, he confirmed that this academic year will be the first reporting year for these metrics. In response

to a suggestion, L. Jacobs agreed to consider how to incorporate untethered research into the metrics. A brief discussion then ensued on how to quantify certain activities and present the data. L. Jacobs advised that there were neither metrics nor targets when the Research Plan was created in 2020; both will be factors in the 2025 Research Plan.

9. Significant Project & Contract Oversight

9.1. Capital Project Tracking Sheets

B. Maclsaac presented the Capital Project Tracking Sheets.

10. Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Lauren Turner, University Secretary