



BOARD OF GOVERNORS' 131st REGULAR MEETING

Minutes of the Public Session of the Meeting of February 22, 2024 12:30 p.m. to 2:01 p.m. Videoconference

GOVERNORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Laura Elliott, Board Chair

Maria Saros, Vice-Chair and Chair of Governance, Nominations & Human Resources

Lynne Zucker, Vice-Chair and Chair of Strategy & Planning Committee

Steven Murphy, President

Eric Agius

Ahmad Barari

Carla Carmichael, Chair of Audit & Finance Committee

Frank Carnevale

Dale MacMillan

Matthew Mackenzie

Lisa McBride

Mike Rencheck

Hannah Scott

Gaurav Singh

Kim Slade

Dwight Thompson

Michael Watterworth

Emily Whetung

REGRETS:

Mitch Frazer, Chancellor

Roger Thompson, Vice-Chair of Audit & Finance Committee

BOARD SECRETARY:

Lauren Turner, University Secretary

STAFF:

James Barnett, *Vice-President, Advancement*

Jamie Bruno, *Vice-President, People and Transformation*

Jacquelyn Dupuis, *Director, Risk Management*

Sara Gottlieb, *General Counsel*

Barb Hamilton, *Legal Executive Assistant*
Krista Hester, *Chief of Staff*
Lori Livingston, *Provost & Vice-President, Academic*
Brad MacIsaac, *Vice-President, Administration*
Joe Stokes, *University Registrar and AVP International*

GUEST:

Carolyn McGregor, Dean, Faculty of Business and IT

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the public session to order at 12:30 p.m. and read aloud the land acknowledgement.

2. Agenda

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

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

None

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2024 and welcomed Kirstie Ayotte, the new Assistant University Secretary. The Chair thanked everyone for joining virtually, including guests before briefly highlighting the ongoing talks about the international student cap, and the anticipated implementation of the Blue-Ribbon Panel recommendations. The Chair also congratulated the senior leadership team, staff and faculty while appreciating their hard work towards the jump in applications this year.

5. President's Report

The President noted a number of external impacts and success updates pertaining to the University. He noted the success of the engineering research day during the week where students met 250+ industry experts. The President briefly noted a couple of positive updates on the sports front to keep the Board informed of how sport can foster collective identity and shared inspiration among students.

The President advised that considering uncertainty on multiple fronts, the University must focus on aspects that are under its control. He briefly highlighted that the University ranked as the most research-intensive small university in Canada; he shared an update on the increase in applications this year resulting in a cumulative 73% jump in applications over the last three years.

The President made remarks about the government's lack of response to the Blue-Ribbon Panel and the unfortunate likelihood that any action will only be on grants and not tuition. With respect to international students, he noted that it is an important issue despite not being a university heavily reliant on international enrolment. He advised that this development underscores the importance of the University's differentiated growth strategy. The President emphasized the need to build on the University's strength being the only STEM based university in Ontario and being responsive to labour market needs.

In response to a comment, the President clarified that the Masters and Doctoral programs are not covered under the international student cap imposed by the Federal Government. He noted that while the larger universities will fight to maintain their intake levels, it is pertinent to note that the undergraduate intake impacts the future graduation student population at the University.

6. Presentation by Dean Carolyn McGregor

C. McGregor delivered a presentation on her work over the years pertaining to Tech with a Conscience for health, wellness, resilience, and adaptation in urban, remote communities and beyond to space.

C. McGregor left the meeting.

7. Academic Council

O. Ubor presented the Academic Council report, highlighting the presentation on micro credentials along with consultation on the Intellectual Property Policy in November and the 2024-2025 tuition framework, timeline for elections policy for open positions in Academic Council, recommendations for undergraduate academic appeals and honorary degrees terms of references presented in January.

Committee Reports

8. Audit & Finance Committee (A&F) Report

8.1 Third Quarter Financial Reports

C. Carmichael presented the Third Quarter Financial Reports, noting that the approved balanced budget required the University to use \$1 million of reserves. She advised that the current forecast now shows a \$4 million surplus at the end of the fiscal period. She drew the Board's attention to Appendix 1 showcasing variance by category and noted that the \$4 million surplus is made up of additional revenue, less expenses which is further broken down by excess of \$4.8 million of revenue compared to budget due to interest rate increase. She highlighted that the surplus also includes savings and operating expenses of \$2 million due to labour cost savings and lagging of full-time high hires. She also noted the additional capital expenditure above budget of \$2.8 million.

C. Carmichael briefly referred to the GAAP financial statements and noted that end of year may look different in finals against forecast due to accounting requirements for the deferred revenue associated with income producing units.

In response to a question about whether \$4 million meets the surplus target, C. Carmichael noted that based on increase in bargaining units, the rate of increase in salary would amount to \$4 million per year, hence to sustain, the University needs to aim for a surplus. B. Maclsaac further clarified that the 2022 paper referred to the need for deferred maintenance, it was proposed to have \$4 million surplus.

In response to a question about administrative costs, B. Maclsaac clarified that administrative would include support units such as finance and facilities. He noted that in order to balance the budget, it is assumed all people in these units will be hired and stay for a full year. He advised that where there are in-year savings or higher than anticipated enrolment, the additional funds are normally allocated to one time only capital projects. In response to a question about human resources, C. Carmichael noted that resourcing the required staff, administrative staff, capital expenditure, facilities and student housing are all elements that the University needs to ensure are aligned to support the differentiated growth strategy. She advised that the Audit and Finance Committee has received risk assessments and is monitoring and challenging leadership on this front.

8.2 2024-2025 Tuition and Ancillary Fees

C. Carmichael presented the proposed 2024-2025 Tuition Fees. She advised that the recommendation from management, and endorsed by the Audit and Finance Committee, is to adjust tuition fees in accordance with MCU allowances. She reminded the Board that a tuition anomaly increase of up to 7.5% for three programs is permitted per the MCU. She went on to note that the tuition rates as a whole are appropriate and competitive. She further noted the 0-5% changes, 0 assumes the rate remains frozen by the Ministry and 5% being the increase recommended by the Blue-Ribbon panel. Should the Ministry release a new tuition framework, the University will use ranges to adjust the undergraduate tuition fees. She also noted the recommended 5% increase on international tuition.

In response to a question about safety nets for students facing hardship with tuition increases, C. Carmichael advised that there are increases in endowments and bursaries. B. Maclsaac added that 10% of domestic and 4% of international tuition is

set aside as aid. He described some ways in which the University proactively assists students facing financial hardship.

In response to a question about how the proposed tuition relates to the budget assumptions, B. Maclsaac clarified that the proposal is consistent with last year's three year budget.

In response to a question about tuition for different programs at the University, B. Maclsaac explained that the average tuition plus ancillary fees range from approximately \$12,000-\$13,000 per year for domestic students. He further noted that the tuition fees for all programs at the University are at or below median and ancillary fees are at above median due to high capital projects costs included in the fee.

Upon a motion duly made by M. Mackenzie and seconded by L. Zucker, pursuant to the recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee, the Board of Governors hereby approves the 2024-2025 Tuition Fees, as presented.

C. Carmichael presented the proposed 2024-2025 Ancillary Fees. She advised the Board that they have been established in accordance with relevant policies and procedures. In response to a question about co-op fees, B. Maclsaac explained that the fee was raised last year in response to a review conducted 16 months prior. Co-op fees will not increase this year but are expected to increase next year in response to inflation.

In response to a question about society, membership and student union fees, B. Maclsaac clarified that these fees are collected by the University and then disbursed to the student union who in turn pay the membership and society fees.

Upon a motion duly made by E. Agius and seconded by M. Rencheck, pursuant to the recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee, the Board of Governors hereby approves the 2024-2025 Ancillary fees, as presented.

8.3 Interim Risk Update

C. Carmichael presented the Interim Risk Update, drawing the Board's attention to certain highlighted aspects of risk. She gave a brief overview of the mitigation strategies around emerging global climate, cybersecurity and the differentiated growth strategy. In response to a question, B. Maclsaac advised that the Statement of Investment Policies is not included in the Interim Risk Update as returns are within acceptable parameters and do not pose a moderate or greater risk.

9. Governance Nominations & Human Resources Committee (GNHR) Report

M. Saros reported that the Committee reviewed the Board election process which outlines the timing and eligibility of teaching staff, students and governor positions. Materials are on the consent agenda.

10. Strategy & Planning Committee (S&P) Report

10.1 Research and Innovation

L. Zucker reported that the University received \$3 million in funds for small modular reactor related research projects; she briefly mentioned the discussion of the University's pull approach where research at the University is grounded in market and industry needs, this is a differentiator for the University. She noted the discussions about the differentiated growth strategy and how research, research reputation and ranking are important as they attract applications. She concluded by highlighting that 80% of the funds obtained for research go towards undergraduate and graduate students.

10.2 Student Recruitment

L. Zucker provided an update on student recruitment, highlighting the University's use of a mix of domestic, international and digital strategies to attract applicants. She advised that the University is pivoting towards course-based Masters and professional programs for international students. She noted that student recruitment is a driver for differentiated growth; the University's differentiation is also a market advantage.

10.3 Student Success

L. Zucker provided an update on student success, sharing the multi-dimensional approach spearheaded by the Provost that includes academic advising, mental health support, financial aid and advising to students for scholarships, grants and government funding. She also noted the offering of retention programs and the use of surveys to obtain feedback. Specific support services for international students including services towards inclusion and belonging were highlighted.

In response to a question about support for rural domestic students, the Provost advised that the adaptation of such students, including Indigenous students who are not near large cities, is top priority at the University. The University is introducing special information and orientation sessions for parents and family members this fall. J. Stokes added that travel costs are factored into considerations for scholarships, bursaries and OSAP.

11. Consent Agenda

Upon a motion duly made by M. Mackenzie and seconded by E. Agius, the Consent Agenda was approved as presented.

- 11.1. Minutes of Public Session of Board Meeting of November 30, 2023**
- 11.2. Minutes of Public Session of A&F Meeting of November 23, 2023**
- 11.3. Minutes of Public Session of GNHR Meeting of October 27, 2023**
- 11.4. Minutes of Public Session of S&P Meeting of November 16, 2023**
- 11.5. Honorary Degrees Committee Terms of Reference**
- 11.6. Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference**
- 11.7. Statement of Investment Policies**
- 11.8. Board of Governors Meetings Dates 2024/2025 and 2025/2026**
- 11.9. 2024 Election Timelines**

12. Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made by M. Mackenzie, the public session adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Lauren Turner, University Secretary