OCAD UNIVERSITY SPECIAL MEETING OF SENATE MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2016; 2:30PM – 5:30PM
ROOM 322, 230 RICHMOND STREET WEST

Present:  b.h. Yael (Chair); Lillian Allen; Frederick Burbach; Sara Diamond; Jim Drobnick; Andrea Fatona; Richard Fung; Deanne Fisher; Roderick Grant; Richard Hunt; Selmin Kara; Martha Ladly; Caroline Langill; Alexander Manu; Gabrielle Moser; Martha Muszycka-Jones; Lewis Nicholson; Elisabeth Paradis; Paulette Phillips; Helmut Reichenbächer; Ryan Rice; Gillian Siddall; Evan Tapper; Marie-Josée Therrien; Virginia Trieloff; Emma Westecott; Ryan Whyte

Regrets:  Rushmita Alam; Annette Blum; Keith Bresnahan; Nicole Collins; Catherine Delaney; Judith Doyle; Michelle Forsyth; Simon Glass; Julian Goss; David Griffin; Lynne Heller; Chantelle Hope; Johanna Householder; Camille Isaacs; Colette Laliberté; Jacqueline Lee; Gerald McMaster; Gayle Nicoll; Luke Painter; Jill Patrick; Carol Roderick; John Semple; Vladimir Spicanovic; Jennie Suddick; Natalie Waldburger

Secretary:  Hillary Barron

Due to a lack of quorum, only items 4 and 5 were discussed at this meeting. All other items were postponed until the May 25, 2016 meeting of Senate.

4. Special Topics Discussion: Interdisciplinarity and Student Experience at OCAD University

Caroline Langill gave a PowerPoint presentation on the topic of interdisciplinarity at OCAD University. She highlighted the distinction in definitions for multidisciplinary, crossdisciplinary and interdisciplinary work and spoke about interdisciplinary pedagogy and how one might promote it through educational activities and environments such as within the studio. Areas where interdisciplinarity emerges at OCAD University within programs, minors and specializations were also exemplified.

Discussion:  Teaching across faculties was raised as a good way to promote interdisciplinary as was bringing studio experience into the liberal arts classroom and vice versa, for example. It was also argued that in order to promote interdisciplinarity, it is the student that needs to move between Faculty areas. Furthermore, opportunities for students to move horizontally between the Faculties were discussed as was the need to have courses or program areas more porous to facilitate this. Members spoke further about the ridged construction of programs and the interest in having students self-select what they
need for their education. The notion of interdisciplinarity as entanglement to promote ideas of experimentation and slow learning were also discussed, particularly in the context of Graduate Studies. In relation, the need to discuss infrastructure issues to support interdisciplinarity was raised. One main challenge identified in achieving interdisciplinarity is the lack of electives students are allowed to take. It was also proposed that scheduling allow for all Faculty of Design core studios, for example, to take place at the same time so cross-disciplinary activities can occur and with increased studio time.

Graduate Studies and restrictions on faculty members to teach in programs such as the Interdisciplinary Master’s in Art, Media and Design were raised in the context of silos between graduate and undergraduate studies and between the three Faculty areas. Other concerns raised included the need for graduate student access to undergraduate student shops as well as the ability for graduate student teaching assistants to exercise their expertise in the shops versus in art history courses. This important discussion was suggested to also be raised within the Academic Plan, Research Plan and facility-related plans in its connection to transforming space at the institution. The other perspective presented was that of OCAD University students who may not do well in an interdisciplinary environment or who come to the institution for a highly specialized education. The need for flexibility and choice in this regard was emphasized as crucial to the student experience.

The challenges related to supporting greater access to studios was revisited highlighting limited resources and the strain on technicians to accommodate all students, including graduate students. Furthermore, it was explained that the studio infrastructure was built from a very disciplinary undergraduate model and therefore facilities need to be further developed to offer greater access.

It was stated that instructors today are much more interdisciplinary thinkers than in the past such as in the fields of graphic and communication design. As such, it was expressed that more interaction between faculty from different disciplines should be encouraged such as through access to common spaces. The idea of an informal credit system of exchange between faculty members was also discussed to encourage sharing of expertise to students across the Faculty areas.

The Vice-President, Academic acknowledged that interdisciplinarity and the delivery of curriculum has been a focus of the Academic Plan Steering Committee and will continue to inform its discussion.

5. **Presentation on OCAD University’s Vision and Mission**

Richard Thomas and Sady Ducros from Kinetic Café gave a PowerPoint presentation to discuss the purpose of a vision and mission, and their process, research and strategies to-date to develop this. Senators were then engaged in a facilitated exercise. The input generated would be incorporated, along with other facilitated stakeholder engagements, into creation of new vision and mission for the institution.