



**OCAD UNIVERSITY REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF SENATE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2025; 3:15PM – 5:45PM
ONLINE**

Present: Julian Goss (Chair); Caroline Langill (Vice-Chair); Michelle Astrug; Kevin Bae; Sean Baker; Parantap Bhatt; Philippe Blanchard; Amanda Boulos; Maggie Broda; Chen Cao; Peter Coppin; Susan Ferguson; Deanne Fisher; Stephen Foster; Simon Glass; Spencer J. Harrison; Simone Jones; Ian Keteku; Katherine Kiloh; Fidelia Lam; Francis LeBouthillier; Ashok Mathur; Isabel Meirelles; Diane Mikhael; Angus Mok; Jennifer-Amy Murphy; Eric Nay; Tannis Nielsen; Lesley-Ann Noel; Suharu Ogawa; Ben Peto; Neal Prabhu; Nicholas Pye; Lauchlan Reid; Ana Serrano; Nancy Snow; Vladimir Spicanovic; Derek Sullivan; Anna Trần; Sarah Trantum; Annie Tung

Regrets: Angela Bains; Ross Bullen; Jim Drobnick; Susan Kun; Barbara Rauch; Sarita Srivastava; Jaime Watt

In Attendance: Natalie Nanton, Senate Secretary; David Wagschal, Associate Senate Secretary; and other members of the OCAD University community.

1. Remarks from the Chair

The meeting was opened with a Land Acknowledgement. The Senate Chair announced that the annual Senate elections nomination period for Faculty Area and Faculty At-Large seats would open on February 25, 2025. Senate members were encouraged to submit nominations. Senate members were also reminded that curriculum approvals are within the purview of Senate, but that decisions related to the operationalization of curriculum, including section planning, are managed by the Faculty Offices, and that questions or concerns related to curriculum implementation should be addressed to academic leadership. It was further observed that the impacts of section planning on pedagogy and the student experience can only be productively discussed at Senate when the appropriate spheres of responsibility are clearly delineated.

2. Senate Agenda for February 24, 2025

Motion to approve the Senate agenda for February 24, 2025, moved by Simone Jones, seconded by Philippe Blanchard.

Motion carried.

3. Senate Minutes from January 27, 2025

Motion to approve the Senate minutes from January 27, 2025, moved by Spencer J. Harrison, seconded by Susan Ferguson.

Motion carried.

4. Consent Agenda Information Items

Motion to accept the consent agenda information items, moved by Simone Jones, seconded by Spencer J. Harrison.

It was clarified that the references in the President's report to the Training Equipment and Renewal Fund (TERF) refer to the third round of TERF grants, and that the University is actively working on the next round.

Motion carried.

5. Information Update from the President and Vice-Chancellor

The President updated Senate members on the search process for the next Vice-President, Academic and Provost and informed members that it is expected that the successful candidate will be announced soon. The community was thanked for their thoughtful and committed engagement with the process. The president also updated Senate member on the ongoing work of the administration to address the current financial challenges, highlighting the success of a recent student town-hall.

Discussion

It was clarified that the student-town hall was designed to provide students with further context for stories they may be reading in the media about the post-secondary sector. It was noted that matters discussed included the budget, the multi-year forecast, and the nature of the University's revenues and expenses. It was confirmed that additional town-halls are being planned.

6. Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Academic Colleague Report

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Academic Colleague provided a verbal report on the February 11-12 meetings of the COU Academic Colleagues. The COU Academic Colleague highlighted discussions of graduate supervision, the expansion of new degree pathways into graduate programs, and work to streamline the Ontario Visiting Graduate Student (OVGS) program. Also highlighted were plans to engage in coalition-building with business and industry. It was noted that while the provincial election is taking place the COU does not engage in advocacy or comment on party's platforms.

Discussion

It was confirmed that the discussion of graduate supervision focused on the document Principles for Graduate Student Supervision at Ontario's Universities (2023), which can be downloaded from the COU website.

7. Report from the Indigenous Education Council (IEC)

The Chair referred Senate members to the written report of the February 7, 2025 meeting of the Indigenous Education Council (IEC). The report highlighted updates on the hiring process for the Executive Director, Indigenous Engagement role; concerns brought to the meeting by IEC student members and the Indigenous Student Association (ISA); discussion of a proposal for an Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB); an update on a proposal to provide tuition support to Indigenous students from local Nations; and discussions of Indigenous citizenship and self-identification.

Discussion

It was confirmed that other post-secondary institutions have been developing IREB protocols in order to address, among other concerns, cultural appropriation, stereotyping, racism, and the inappropriate accessing of Indigenous knowledges and funds.

8. Student Matters

Student Senate members highlighted ways that students can actively engage in shaping OCAD U's future as it navigates the current financial challenges, including through co-design of innovative teaching and learning models and utilizing the insights of the new Universal Design for Learning (UDL) 3.0 standards. Senate members were invited to engage in creative discussion on what might be changed or developed in the University's teaching and learning practice using resources already available to faculty.

Discussion

Senate members offered several suggestions, including encouraging students to take a more active role in communicating how they would like to learn; developing co-created and student self-directed criteria for critiques and other assignments to strengthen peer-peer learning; opening space for students to develop confidence to engage in more self-directed learning; developing more peer-to-peer learning in research groups that combine undergraduate and graduate students; and encouraging students to take the lead in studio critique practices.

It was cautioned that care should be taken in applying standards such as UDL 3.0, given that "universal" can imply ideas of euro-centric normativity which are not applicable Indigenous pedagogy.

9. Senate Executive Committee (SEC)

Motion to move in camera, moved by Spencer J. Harrison, seconded by Caroline Langill.
Motion carried.

IN CAMERA SESSION OF SENATE:

Commenced at 4:00 p.m.

9.1. Recommendation for the Election of Senate Chair

The Senate elected Jules Goss, Faculty of Design, as Chair of the OCAD University Senate for a second consecutive two-year term effective July 1, 2025.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF SENATE:

Resumed at 4:04 p.m.

10. Senate Academic Standards Committee (SASC)

10.1. Revisions to Policy 2.15: Undergraduate Student Mobility/Exchange Program

A presentation was provided on the proposed revisions to Policy 2.15: Undergraduate Student Mobility/Exchange Program as well as on the connected revisions to Policy 2.17: Residency Requirement, Undergraduate. With reference to Policy 2.15, the presentation emphasized that exchange courses will now normally count only as electives, although provisions are in place for potential substitution requests. It was further noted that Program Chairs will no longer be involved in the

assessment of outgoing students and that it is now explicitly stated that application does not guarantee selection and that exchange courses cannot overlap with courses taken at OCAD U. Numerous operational and terminological updates were also noted. With reference to Policy 2.17, it was explained that the principal revision is the removal of restrictions on taking non-resident credits in the final year/semesters, so that students will have more flexibility as to when they might take Exchanges or other non-resident credits.

Discussion

It was clarified that bursaries are available to assist students with the financial costs of exchange experiences, and that students remain eligible for OSAP loans while on these programs.

Motion to approve the revisions to Policy 2.15: Undergraduate Student Mobility/Exchange Program, moved by Lauchlan Reid, seconded by Vladimir Spicanovic.

Motion carried.

10.2. Revisions to Policy 2.17: Residency Requirement, Undergraduate

Motion to approve the revisions to Policy 2.17: Residency Requirement, Undergraduate, moved by Ben Peto, seconded by Spencer J. Harrison.

Motion carried.

11. Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

11.1. New Policy: Policy on Graduate Degree Requirements

Motion to approve the revisions to the Policy on Graduate Degree Requirements, moved by Vladimir Spicanovic, seconded by Philippe Blanchard.

It was explained that this new policy has been created to establish greater consistency and balance across all graduate programs, and to create a clear set of definitions. The consultation process supporting the policy's development was outlined, and highlights of the policy were described, including the 7.5 credit length standard for all programs, the 6.5 credit maximum for specifically required courses, and the standardized credit-weights for theses and Master's Research Papers (MRPs).

Discussion

It was clarified that, following the policy's adoption, each graduate program will need to undertake modifications to align their requirements with the new policy. It was confirmed that as part of this process programs will need to ensure that the skill-development and learning outcomes of the program are still met in the revised program structure. It was also confirmed that work is being done in the School for Graduate Studies to enhance the availability and selection of electives, including through opening core courses of some smaller programs to students in other programs.

It was clarified that the current policy does not include the requirement for a mandatory Indigenous studies course, but that this possibility is being considered, particularly in light of anticipated changes to the provincial Degree-Level

Expectations (DLEs) to incorporate expectations related to Indigenization and decolonization.

Finally, it was suggested that the policy would be strengthened by providing more clarity as to the substantive difference between a Thesis and MRP. Concerns were raised that at present students undertaking MRPs may not receive the same level of faculty support as students taking thesis.

Motion carried.

12. Senate Committee Information Reports

The Chair referred members to the consolidated Senate Committee Information Report which included reports from the following committees:

- Senate Executive Committee (SEC)
- Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee (SAPPC)
- Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee (SUSC)
- Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)
- Senate Academic Standards Committee (SASC)
- Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC)

Highlights of the reports included an overview of the recent Board of Governors Liaison Subcommittee meeting; approval of curriculum in the Faculty of Art & Sciences; the decision to conditionally pause admission to the Design for Health (DHEA) program, if it does not receive enough applications for its 2025 cohort; and discussion of potential pathways for the DHEA program such as transitioning it to an online and accelerated format.

Discussion

A discussion took place about several possibilities for restructuring the Design for Health program. The Dean of Graduate Studies confirmed that many different possibilities will be considered by the DHEA program director and faculty, who will be engaged over the course of the next year in determining the best way forward for the program.

13. Strategic Academic Discussion: Strategic Considerations

The document “Strategic Considerations” was presented to Senate members. It was explained that the Strategic Considerations are intended to be used as an evaluative tool to help the University make decisions as it addresses the current financial challenges. It was emphasized that the Strategic Considerations have been developed by the Executive and Senior Leaderships teams, with facilitation from OCAD U CO, and have been subject to several rounds of iterative refinement, including with the Board of Governors in January and at the recent Joint Board of Governors-Senate Liaison Committee meeting. Senate members were invited to provide feedback on the seven criteria, which were briefly described.

Discussion

It was confirmed that the Strategic Considerations are intended to be used by the whole community and can be used at different stages of evaluation including as a framework for guiding initial conversations and generating new ideas. It was also noted that the tool is

intended to engender discussion of how ideas might be implemented, who needs to be consulted, and who might be impacted.

Senate members suggested several ways to strengthen the document and its implementation, including adding references to underline the importance of broad consultation, and particularly cross-Faculty consultation; giving further consideration to the quality and veracity of data informing the use of the tool; ensuring that the tool can robustly identify both positive and negative impacts of potential proposals; expanding the metrics in criteria #2 to include research, publications, and other forms of knowledge dissemination, including podcasts and other media; adding more explicit references to “art & design” and “community” throughout the document; clarifying some of the more technical language (e.g. “Net Promoter Score”, “media sentiment analysis”); clarifying that some metrics will be generated by the community; and expanding the implicit scope of the purpose of education to encompass not just student agility but sustainability and well-being. Concerns were also expressed that the priorities of the Academic and Strategic Plan related to Indigenization, decolonization are minority voices may not be sufficiently centered within the tool. A brief discussion then took place on expanding the fora where the tool might be used, although it was recognized that there are many already-existing committees and groups where it can be employed. It was requested that “practise based” be rephrased as “practice-based”.

It was clarified that the metrics in the document are meant only to be examples, and may change and develop as the document is used iteratively by the community. It was also confirmed that the document will itself likely evolve as it is rolled out across the University.

14. Other Business

Senate members were reminded of the upcoming information session on Academic Budgeting to be held on March 10. Concerns were raised about the potential impact of recent cuts on student progression and elective choice, and it was confirmed that the Academic Budgeting session would provide further details on how sections are distributed to ensure that students are able to meet all of their degree requirements. It was observed that one of the key challenges facing the University at present will be finding creative ways to ensure that students retain the greatest possible agency over their educational pathways given the resources that are available.

15. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, moved by Vladimir Spicanovic, seconded by Isabel Meirelles.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.

[Originally signed]

Julian Goss, Senate Chair

[Originally signed]

Natalie Nanton, Senate Secretary