



**OCAD UNIVERSITY REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF SENATE
MONDAY, MARCH 31, 2025; 3:15PM – 5:00PM
ONLINE**

Present: Julian Goss (Chair); Caroline Langill (Vice-Chair); Michelle Astrug; Kevin Bae; Angela Bains; Sean Baker; Philippe Blanchard; Amanda Boulos; Maggie Broda; Ross Bullen; Chen Cao; Peter Coppin; Jim Drobnick; Susan Ferguson; Deanne Fisher; Stephen Foster; Simon Glass; Spencer J. Harrison; Simone Jones; Ian Keteku; Katherine Kiloh; Susan Kun; 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; Lauchlan Reid; Nancy Snow; Vladimir Spicanovic; Sarita Srivastava; Derek Sullivan; Anna Trần; Sarah Trantum

Regrets: Parantap Bhatt; Nicholas Pye; Barbara Rauch; Ana Serrano; Annie Tung; Jaime Watt

In Attendance: Natalie Nanton, Senate Secretary; David Wagschal, Associate Senate Secretary; Adam Wiendels, Executive Director, Marketing & Communications; and other members of the OCAD University community.

1. Remarks from the Chair

The meeting was opened with a Land Acknowledgement. The Senate Chair reminded members that Senate meetings will return to a hybrid format in April and May. Senate members were also encouraged to attend the annual joint session of the Board of Governors and Senate scheduled for April 14, 2025. A brief update was provided on Senate elections.

2. Senate Agenda for March 31, 2025

Motion to approve the Senate agenda for March 31, 2025, moved by Nancy Snow, seconded by Angela Bains.

Motion carried.

3. Senate Minutes from February 24, 2025

Motion to approve the Senate minutes from February 24, 2025, moved by Spencer J. Harrison, seconded by Susan Kun.

It was confirmed that it had been incorrectly noted in Item 12: Senate Information Report that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) had approved a Letter of Intent for the Design for Health (DHEA) program. It was confirmed that the record would be revised.

Motion carried, as amended.

4. Consent Agenda Information Items

Motion to accept the consent agenda information items, moved by Spencer J. Harrison, seconded by Jennifer-Amy Murphy.

The Deans were invited to speak to priorities or recent initiatives in their respective areas.

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies highlighted the recent site visit of external reviewers for the proposed PhD in Creative Practice program, noting that it is anticipated that the final new program proposal brief will be presented to Senate in May. It was also confirmed the Design for Health (DHEA) program will not proceed with having its intake suspended for next year. Work on expanding residency options for graduate students was highlighted.

The Dean of Design provided an overview of several new large-enrollment pilot courses and highlighted work to align Faculty of Design programs with industry partners. It was noted that a meeting would soon take place with students to brainstorm solutions to concerns that had been raised in a student petition. Plans for the summer and fall were outlined, including two design charettes on student housing and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The Dean of the Faculty of Art reviewed a recent donor-funded initiative which gave students the opportunity to encounter and engage with working artists. Several artist and sabbatical talks were also highlighted, and two Teaching Intensive Stream faculty were congratulated for achieving permanency. A brief update was then provided on curricular work taking place in First Year Art and on the Contemporary Art & Media (CAAM) program proposal.

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science highlighted recent program-area meetings focused on developing strategies to address financial sustainability challenges. Successes in recent double-credit and large-enrollment studio courses were also noted. Finally, several recent faculty talks were highlighted and the Dean congratulated students in the Creative Writing (CRWR) program on their successful fundraising for the production of the student journal Pulse.

Motion carried.

5. Student Matters

Student Senate members expressed the importance, particularly in the current financial climate, of moving beyond conventional methods of curricular development to consider how students might be more actively engaged in pedagogical design. Senate members were invited to consider how instructors and students might co-create and test innovative models of art and design education through centering student agency, embracing experimentation, and advancing systemic change.

Discussion

It was clarified that a central concern for students is that they not only be consulted in curricular design, but also actively engaged in curricular development from the beginning of the process. It was also noted that one potential focus for development would be a means of increasing individual students' time with instructors, particularly in critiques.

It was suggested that a session of the May curriculum week could be dedicated to further exploring students' role in curricular creation and development. It was also observed that efforts to center student voices in pedagogical design are strongly aligned with efforts to decolonize the classroom, and an example was provided of a recent successful pedagogical innovation where a professor intentionally minimized their voice in the critique process. Further examples were provided of the benefits of reducing the hierarchical structure of the classroom by engaging students in the active co-designing of themes, norms and standards for their own classes and the classes of future students. It was confirmed that there are a wide range of ways to engage students in curricular development, both within individual courses and more broadly across the institution.

6. Senate Executive Committee (SEC)

Motion to move in camera, moved by Lesley-Ann Noel, seconded by Isabel Meirelles.
Motion carried.

IN CAMERA SESSION OF SENATE:

Commenced at 4:02 p.m.

6.1. Recommendation for Honorary Degree Recipients

The Senate approved the 2025 OCAD University Honorary Doctoral Degree recipients.

6.2. Academic Administrative Appointment

The Senate approved the following academic administrative appointment:

- Philippe Blanchard, Interim Dean in the Faculty of Art

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF SENATE:

Resumed at 4:15 p.m.

6.3. Senate and Senate Committee Meeting Dates 2025-26

The Senate and Senate Committee Meeting Dates for 2025-26 were presented. It was noted that the dates have been planned around holidays, including religious holidays. It was emphasized that the May 2026 meeting of Senate will be held near the end of the month.

7. Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee (SAPPC)

7.1. New Policy on Visiting Scholars

Motion to approve the Policy on Visiting Scholars, moved by Isabel Meirelles, seconded by Ashok Mathur.

It was explained that the proposed policy will fill a gap by allowing for short-term appointments of visiting professors from within Canada and internationally. It was emphasized that the policy will be administered by the Research Office, which reflects the intention that visiting scholars will focus primarily on collaborative research/practice in their engagement with the University. It was also confirmed that this engagement could entail use of the University's facilities.

Discussion

It was confirmed that this policy will provide a formal framework for requests that the University has already been receiving from scholars interested in working for short periods at OCAD University, for example during a sabbatical. It was observed that, in the current political climate, it is possible that these requests will increase.

It was confirmed that requests for office space and other facility access could be included in the application.

It was suggested that, while at present the policy restricts Visting Scholar appointments to scholars with conventional academic appointments, in the future it may be desirable to expand the policy's scope to include other qualified artists, designers or scholars. It was observed that this would also help further the Academic & Strategic Plan's priority to decolonize art and design education.

The importance of an approval and vetting process was affirmed, given the possibility of fraudulent identity claims.

It was suggested that Visiting Scholars should be asked to give a few public engagements during their stay in order to introduce them to the community and better integrate them into the life of the institution. It was also noted that Visiting Scholars are sometimes facilitated through the RBC Centre for Emerging Artists & Designers (CEAD), and it was suggested that this could be recognized in a future version of the policy.

Motion carried.

8. Senate Committee Information Reports

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

- Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee (SAPPC)
- Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee (SUSC)
- Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)
- Senate Academic Standards Committee (SASC)
- Senate Research Committee (SRC)

The Senate Chair drew Senate member's attention to the approval of the Letter of Intent for a new Honours BFA program in Contemporary Art and Media (CAAM); the approval of a Minor Modification to the Experimental Animation (EXAN) program, which added a Bachelor of Design (BDes) degree designation; the approval of several new large-enrollment studio course pilots; and initial reviews of a draft Pass/Fail grading policy for undergraduate students.

Discussion

It was requested that it be recognized that the Contemporary Art & Media (CAAM) program is in part being proposed to respond to financial pressures, and that its approval will entail the closure of four existing programs. In response, it was noted that while it is anticipated that the four programs will close, the new program is being designed with the explicit

purpose of ensuring that the curriculum represented in these program areas will remain intact and available to students at the institution, while also enabling greater interdisciplinarity. It was also confirmed that the proposal is still in early stages. It was suggested that additional input from students into the proposal would be welcome. Finally, it was observed that additional discussion needs to take place at the institution on creative ways of addressing financial sustainability that extend beyond the cutting or reconfigurations of current structures.

9. OCAD University's 150th Anniversary

A presentation was provided on preparations for the University's 150th Anniversary in 2026. The presentation began with a reflection on the value and history of the institution, as well as the opportunity that the anniversary presents to not only celebrate the past and present OCAD U community but also to reimagine its future. Plans and high-level objectives for the current and next two fiscal years were outlined, including public polling to inform public awareness and fundraising campaigns, the development of branding and financing strategies, and the development of a strategy to engage the whole community in anniversary activities. The membership of the OCAD U 150 Steering Committee was reviewed, and it was confirmed that further sub-committees would be established as plans progress.

Caroline Langill, Vice-Chair of Senate, assumed that chair at 4:56 pm.

Discussion

It was noted that the anniversary plans will need to reflect, in a physical way, an awareness of the oppressive treatment of Indigenous peoples throughout the 150 years of the institution's existence. It was suggested that the anniversary could be an opportunity to show how art and artists are able to advance the liberatory politics of oppressed groups.

Motion to extend the duration of the meeting by ten minutes, moved by Jules Goss, seconded by Isabel Meirelles.

Motion carried.

It was suggested that one way to address issues in the institution's past might be to interview alumni, perhaps in a series of podcasts, about challenges they have experienced, and how the institution has since worked to address those challenges.

It was observed that the anniversary is an important opportunity to reflect on the institution's "north star", and has significant potential both to extend the reach of the school to new audiences and to reposition and reestablish its reputation for older ones. Senate members were encouraged to "think big" about possibilities in this direction. It was confirmed that members are welcome to email either of the Steering Committee's co-chairs with further ideas or suggestions.

Jules Goss, Chair of Senate, resumed the chair at 5:03 pm.

10. Other Business

No other business was raised.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, moved by Spencer J. Harrison, seconded by Jennifer-Amy Murphy.
Meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

[Originally signed]

Julian Goss, Senate Chair

[Originally signed]

Natalie Nanton, Senate Secretary