



**OCAD UNIVERSITY REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF SENATE
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026; 3:15PM – 5:45PM
HYBRID – ROOM 322, 230 RICHMOND STREET WEST**

Present: Sandra Gabriele (Vice-Chair); Sean Baker; Parantap Bhatt; Philippe Blanchard; Maggie Broda; Claire Brunet; Ross Bullen; Peter Coppin; Melissa General; Nicholas Di Genova; Susan Ferguson; Deanne Fisher; Simon Glass; Bentley Jarvis; Minjeong Ju; Tredegar Kennedy; Ian Keteku; Katherine Kiloh; Susan Kun; Ashok Mathur; Riley Midroni; Michelle Miller; Angus Mok; Amish Morrell; Suzanne Morrisette; Tannis Nielsen; Suharu Ogawa; James Olley; Ben Peto; Cindy Poremba; Prakriti Pratijit; Helmut Reichenbächer; Angelika Seeschaaf-Veres; Ana Serrano; Vladimir Spicanovic; Sarita Srivastava; Suzanne Stein; Amy Swartz; Emma Westecott; b.h. Yael

Regrets: Angela Bains; Sophia Chaudhary; Ian Clarke; Maya Desai; Jim Drobnick; Julian Goss (Chair); Simone Jones; Fidelia Lam; JJ Lee; Peter Morin; Lesley-Ann Noel; Maria-Belén Ordóñez; Neal Prabhu; Nancy Snow; Annie Tung; 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. Senate members were informed that the Vice-Chair would preside over the meeting in the absence of the Senate Chair. It was noted that a special meeting of Senate will be held on June 22, 2026 to provide a report on the consultation on academic structures.

2. Senate Agenda for April 27, 2026

Motion to approve the Senate agenda for April 27, 2026, moved by Suzanne Stein, seconded by Helmut Reichenbächer.

It was confirmed that an update on the provincial funding announcement would be provided in Item 5: Information Update from the President and Vice-Chancellor. It was requested that an update on the Faculty of Art decanal search process be provided in Other Business.

Motion carried.

3. Senate Minutes from March 30, 2026

Motion to approve the Senate minutes from March 30, 2026, moved by Ana Serrano, seconded by Deanne Fisher.

The final sentence of the last paragraph in Item 12 was updated to make the language more definite (from “could” to “should”). It was requested that further discussion take place in

Other Business about the restructuring of the former Office of Diversity, Equity and Sustainability Initiatives (ODESI) office.

Motion carried, as amended.

4. Consent Agenda Information Items

Motion to accept the consent agenda information items, moved by Susan Kun, seconded by Susan Ferguson.

Motion carried.

5. Information Update from the President and Vice-Chancellor

The President provided an update on the provincial government's embargo on communication of details of the February 2026 funding announcement. It was confirmed that the University will be able to release more information at town hall meetings following the presentation of the annual operating budget to the Board of Governors on May 11, 2026. It was further noted that information on the revised multi-year forecast and budget efficiencies related to the Deloitte Efficiency and Accountability Fund (EAF) report and other University initiatives would be shared at the same meetings.

Discussion

It was confirmed that the budgeting process as it pertains to academic matters is within the purview of the academic administration, while the Senate normally receives the draft annual operating budget assumptions for information. It was clarified that the budget assumptions were not shared this year due to the provincial government's embargo on the new funding announcement.

Concerns were raised about the impact of section cuts and other initiatives on the delivery of academic curriculum. It was requested that more information be made available to the Senate on financial plans and the Deloitte EAF report, so that faculty members can better understand the current context and how they can help protect program quality.

In response, it was reiterated that budgeting is not in Senate's purview, but that the Deans, Program Chairs and Graduate Program Directors are actively engaged in both the budgeting process and initiatives related to financial sustainability. The Deloitte consultation process was then described and it was emphasized that the EAF report is regarded by the Executive Team as an internal document containing a set of preliminary recommendations. These recommendations, it was explained, were subsequently synthesized into a final set of fifteen actionable recommendations, which were shared with the community in January 2026 along with management's response to the EAF report sent to the Ministry. It was also emphasized that the final recommendations largely overlap with work the University is already undertaking, and have helped the University make the case for the other elements of the University's three-pronged strategy, notably advocacy to increase government funding.

It was observed that some university Senates have dedicated committees to advise on financial matters. In response, it was cautioned that these committees are not common, and not always considered effective.

In further discussion of the importance of consensus building and continued consultation around financial stability, it was suggested that lessons from past initiatives should be

proactively considered as part of the development of new initiatives. It was also noted that curricular innovations to address sustainability should consider creative ways to enhance students' employment outcomes, and should not be restricted to small adjustments within current structures. It was confirmed that all curricular changes, such as the new proposed program in the Faculty of Art, are required to proceed through governance for final approval.

Lastly, the President reported that the provincial government's attention is increasingly turning to questions of university governance. It was confirmed that the University is monitoring closely the potential implications for university autonomy of recent proposed legislation.

6. Student Matters

A student Senator requested that consideration be given to extending the closing date for course evaluations. In response, it was explained that the course evaluations close on the last day of classes to ensure a clean separation between course evaluation and the subsequent course assessment period. It was confirmed that in future further attention would be given to opening course evaluations earlier, particularly in years when a large number of snow-days create exceptional end-of-year scheduling pressures.

Further student concerns were reported about the requirement to clear student work from studios on the last day of critiques. It was explained that this requirement can pose significant challenges, especially for students with long commutes. In response, it was noted that administrative deadlines of this type are not under the purview of Senate, but that the academic administration would look into the matter further.

7. Indigenous OCAD

Senate members were referred to the enclosed Indigenous Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and asked to read them in advance of the next Senate meeting. It was explained that the ILOs are being reviewed, and that it will be valuable to learn from Senate members how the ILOs are being embedded into curriculum.

8. Senate Executive Committee (SEC)

Motion to move in camera, moved by Susan Ferguson, seconded by Helmut Reichenbacher.

Motion carried.

IN CAMERA SESSION OF SENATE:

Commenced at 4:25 p.m.

8.1. Recommendation for Academic Administration Appointments

The Senate approved the following academic appointments:

- Re-appointment of Associate Professor Peter Coppin as Chair of the Industrial Design program, Faculty of Design
- One year extension of the appointment of Assistant Professor Amish Morrell as Interim Graduate Program Director of the Criticism and Curatorial Practice program in the School of Graduate Studies
- One year extension of the appointment of Associate Professor Michele Mastroeni as Interim Graduate Program Director of the Strategic Foresight

and Innovation, Design for Health, and Inclusive Design programs in the School of Graduate Studies

- Approval of an additional appointment which is embargoed pending approval by the Board of Governors.

8.2. Recommendation for Emerit Status

The Senate approved the conferral of Emerit status on Associate Professor Bruce Hinds.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF SENATE:

Resumed at 4:48 p.m.

9. Senate Academic Policy and Planning Committee (SAPPC)

9.1. Revision to the Senate By-Laws: Committee Consolidation

Motion to approve the Senate By-Law revisions to consolidate the Senate Academic Policy & Planning Committee and the Senate Quality Assurance Committee into one Senate standing committee, as presented, moved by Susan Ferguson, seconded by Ana Serrano.

Highlights of the proposed consolidation were outlined, including the close alignment of the two committees' functions, precedents at other universities, the large faculty and student complement in the new membership, and the new name of the committee as the Senate Academic Policy Planning and Quality Assurance Committee (SAPPQAC).

Discussion

In response to concerns about decolonial processes in reviewing governance structures and by-laws, it was noted that the large number of faculty and students on the new committee will allow for a diversity of viewpoints, and that decolonization is a lens that all committees must apply in their work. It was clarified, with reference to the membership provision that "The Vice-Provost, Students and International, or the University Registrar" sits on the committee, that the presence of one or the other would be determined on a year-to-year basis.

Motion carried.

10. Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee (SUSC)

10.1. Laptop Program Changes for 2026-2027

Motion to approve the additional Undergraduate Laptop Program Changes for 2026-2027, moved by Emma Westecott, seconded by Suzanne Stein.

Motion carried.

11. Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)

11.1. IQAP Major Modification to Criticism and Curatorial Practice

Motion to approve the Criticism and Curatorial Practice graduate program Major Modification, moved by Amish Morrell, seconded by Susan Kun.

The proposal was commended for its attention to decolonization. It was noted that care will need to be taken to ensure that Indigenous instructors teach courses advertised as taught through an Indigenous lens. It was clarified that no more than

0.5 credits at the 4000 level can be applied towards the 7.5 total credits in graduate programs, and that the 0.5 credits can only substitute for electives.

Motion carried.

12. Senate Committee Information Reports

The Vice-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)
- Senate Research Committee (SRC)

The Vice-Chair drew attention to the linked drafts of the graduate program Major Modification proposal briefs and also highlighted the linked Letters of Intent for Major Modifications to develop co-operative education (co-op) streams in three programs.

An update was provided on the timeline of the restructuring consultation process being coordinated by the SAPPC Working Group. It was explained that the first step in the consultation will be a series of surveys sent to faculty, students, and impacted staff. Next, an external facilitator will be hired to lead Listening Sessions and a series of Co-Design Workshops. It was emphasized that the facilitator will not function as a consultant (who would provide specific recommendations) but will instead assist only in gathering feedback to be reported to the Working Group. It was also confirmed that facilitators would be sought who have experience with the post-secondary sector, and who demonstrate a human-centered approach. Finally, it was reiterated that the Working Group is not a decision-making body but is charged with designing the consultation process and reviewing the data collected.

Discussion

Concerns were raised about whether the facilitators would have sufficient knowledge of the University. In response, it was confirmed that the facilitators will have access to the survey data in aggregate, but that efforts will be made to not otherwise influence their perception of the institution. It was also clarified that the potential facilitators do not support hybrid consultations, although fully online sessions are possible.

Feedback was offered on the construction of the faculty survey. It was observed that Faculty-level administration appears to be the survey's primary focus, which might circumscribe the range of potential outcomes by not opening space for discussion of other aspects of the University's academic structure, for example the degree of centralization or decentralization. In response, it was clarified that the Working Group designed the survey to be as neutral as possible, and that there are opportunities both within the survey as well as in the subsequent sessions and workshops to explore broader structural issues. It was also observed that a degree of self-reflectivity on the assumptions of the surveys can be incorporated into the process as it develops.

It was suggested that the consultation process should consider not only administrative structures, but how these structures interact, and particularly how better communication among units can be encouraged. It was also confirmed that models from other universities, both domestically and internationally, would be researched.

It was clarified that, following the completion of the consultation, the Executive Team will develop a proposal for submission through governance in the Fall, with an anticipated implementation date of Fall 2027. Concerns were raised about how this timeline might coincide with other structural changes being undertaken at the University, notably the new program being developed in the Faculty of Art. Concerns were also raised about the speed of consultation, and it was suggested that structural changes might be better developed in stages in order to protect program quality and institutional reputation. In response, it was emphasized that financial sustainability is a pressing matter, and that it is important that the University demonstrates that it is working proactively to examine all possible efficiencies, whatever changes it ultimately chooses to undertake. It was also noted that revisions will be subject to governance approval and that a one-year implementation window has been planned for any restructuring, if applicable, to ensure change is made in a coordinated manner. It was emphasized that protecting long-term program quality and the student experience are central goals of efforts to achieve financial sustainability.

Motion to extend the duration of the meeting by fifteen minutes, moved by Helmut Reichenbacher, seconded by Emma Westecott.

Motion carried.

It was confirmed that other structural changes are being considered, such as trimestering, and that the non-academic administration is also engaged in review of administrative structures. In response to a concern about how core priorities will be identified and how success will be measured, it was noted that the Strategic Considerations would continue to be used as a critical lens for evaluating all proposals.

Finally, it was observed that the current social context, particularly around employment prospects, has shifted significantly over the lifetime of current faculty, and that all restructuring initiatives will need to take account of this new reality.

13. Other Business

Senator b.h. Yael requested that they be recorded formally in the minutes as having requested access to the full Deloitte Efficiency and Accountability Fund (EAF) report.

It was confirmed that the position of Dean of the Faculty of Art will not be advertised until the outcome of the restructuring process is known. Senators were invited to share any concerns about this or other potential Faculty-level changes in the academic structure consultation process.

A concern was raised that moving the Human Rights & Equity Office (HREO) into the People & Culture unit may negatively impact the impartiality and confidentiality of complaint resolution processes. The reporting arrangements for HREO were reviewed. It was emphasized that the current structure, in which the office reports to People & Culture with

dotted-line reporting to the President, ensures both that Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy (RWLEP) processes are confidential and protected and that University-wide Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity training and development initiatives can be effectively implemented through People & Culture structures.

Finally, it was observed that it will be important for the University to continue to build industry connections as it addresses financial sustainability. It was suggested that a more decentralized structure could empower faculty members already engaged with external partners to broaden and strengthen these initiatives.

14. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, moved by Helmut Reichenbächer, seconded by Suzanne Stein.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.

[Originally signed]

Julian Goss, Senate Chair

[Originally signed]

Natalie Nanton, Senate Secretary