



SENATE MINUTES

Hybrid Meeting

Senate & Board Chambers, Brantford

Wednesday April 12, 2023, 2:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Present: D. MacLatchy (Chair), M. Abu-Rshaid, A. Acharya, N. Amanullah, D. Antonowicz, G. Ashoughian, A. Beek, P. Bryden, R. Buehler, M.L. Byrne, E. Cameron, M. Cantalini-Williams, J. Casey, L. Chu, S. Cameron, A. Clarke, J. Coolman, M. Coulter, A. Diebold, A. Domurath, T. Dowling, M. Elayyan, E. Fox Tree, A. Herman, C. Hoang, P. Ironstone, A. Jorgenson, I. Joseph, L. King, S. Lachapelle, D. Law, J. Leung, L. Luccisano, K. Lund, R. Makarov, S. McGill, R. McGowan, B. McKay, P. McLaren, K. Menon, J. Newman, A. Ngo, L. Noronha, H. Northwood, J. Popham, S. Ramsay, J. Reid, K. Schnarr, J. Schwieter, K. Shankardass, D. Smith, T. Snoddon, D. Thomas, D. Treleaven, B. Walker, M. Walton-Roberts, K. Werbin, B. Wolfe, B. Walker, J. Zhan.

Regrets: P. Elliott, V. Kitaev, C. Johnston Turner, M. Khan, E. Maier, E. Mercier, J. Mueller, A. Parker, R. Sterne, C. VanEvery-Albert, D. Wheatley.

Absent: M. Brolley, S. Chamberlain, A. Diebold, A. Essaji, G. Yun, D. Yerichuk, K. Zhu.

Secretariat: A. Juhik, S. Kelly, A. Kornobis, P. Marfisi, P. Nicholls.

1. Open Session

a. Call to Order & Approval of the Consent Agenda, D. MacLatchy

Items 2.b.ii.a-e were removed from the agenda to be postponed to a later date to follow the delivery of the Milton Business Case to the Senate.

Motion (A. Clarke/M. Abu-Rshaid): that Senate approve the Consent items listed for approval under item 6.a. as revised. **Carried.**

b. Leadership Update

i. Report of the President, D. MacLatchy

Several efforts were put forward to deter large unsanctioned gatherings on St. Patrick's Day and communicate the potential consequences of attending. Official numbers had not yet been released, however it was anticipated that it would be higher than 2022 but nowhere near its peak in 2019. The news cycle pertaining to the gathers remained in the local news cycle.

The provincial government approved their budget with limited funding allocated to the post-secondary sector. The University continued to gather information on how best to present to the Blue Ribbon Panel noting that working groups had been established within the sector, one of which Vice-President Finance & Administration Lloyd Noronha had been appointed to.

Performance based funding as per SMA3 was to be resumed. Work had been done to shadow the University's metrics while this framework was on pause. All institutions will be allowed to re-weight their metrics twice based on the results. Pending the outcome of the Blue Ribbon Panel, estimations would be made based on this model.

The federal budget was also released noting limited funding to the post-secondary sector generating concerns surrounding graduate student funding.

The Senate Discussed: how the University performed in its SMA3 metrics and how it would be faring should they be applied; the level of provincial government oversight and control given reduced funding levels; reactions to the recently released budgets; what it meant to be a publicly funded institution across the sector; advocacy to the provincial and federal government to be more active partners in post-secondary funding given the introduction of more regulatory and compliance requirements.

ii. Report of the Interim Provost and VP Academic, H. Northwood

The provincial government introduced the tuition anomaly program which was designed to allow post-secondary institutions to apply for exemptions to the tuition freeze for up to 3 programs that had tuition fees which were 15% or more below the sector average. A limitation was put in place that would not allow universities to put forward any health-related programs. Laurier applied for this program for its Bachelor of Business Administration, BSc Computer Science, and BSc Data Science. These were reviewed in alignment with student financial needs. If successful, the University would be able to raise tuition up to 7.5% for incoming students in the fall and continue to increase it over subsequent years. Should Laurier's proposals under this program be approved, amendments to the Tuition Fee Report would be brought through the governance cycle for approval.

Searches continued for the University Librarian and AVP and Dean, Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies, both of which were progressing well. A thank you went to Search Committee members for their diligence and engagement throughout the process.

The Faculty Award for Service Excellence and Community Engagement was awarded to Christina Han and Jerzy Kaplanek. Laurier held its first in

person three-minute thesis competition since before the start of the pandemic.

The Senate discussed: the timeline on the provincial government's decision about the tuition anomaly program.

iii. Question Period: Written or Verbal

None.

c. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes, D. MacLatchy

None.

2. Reports and Recommendations from Standing Committees

a. Senate Executive and Finance Committee, D. MacLatchy

i. 2023-2024 Non-Tuition Fee Report, Z. Danis

The Non-Tuition Fee Report is brought forward on an annual basis for Senate review and Board approval. Non-tuition fees must be in line with ministry guidelines, the University's Non-Tuition Fee Protocol Agreement, and evaluated by the non-tuition fee protocol committee which is made up of members from university administration, the WLU Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association. Many fees were renegotiated and increased to accommodate for inflation and those that had to be paused when there was limited on campus activity due to the pandemic.

The Senate discussed: the rationale behind the significant increase to student recreation fees; that the Students' Union Board of Directors also would review and approve the report; concerns surrounding the student health plan fees only being charged in the fall not allowing students enrolling in a different semester to opt into the plan and impeding their ability to complete their studies.

Motion (L. King/A. Clarke): that on the recommendation of the Senate Executive and Finance Committee, Senate recommend the Board of Governors approve the 2023-2024 Non-Tuition Fee Report, as presented.
Carried with 1 abstention.

ii. 2023-2024 Budget (Operating & Ancillary) Report, H. Northwood / L. Noronha

The presented budget had been reviewed and recommended by both the Senate Executive & Finance Committee and the Finance, Investments & Property Committee.

The budget brought forward proposed a \$1.9 million deficit. While the University had been targeting a budget surplus strategy, a bridging year was required to move the University towards a surplus due to the frozen tuition framework, visa processing issues and the impacts of the pandemic. Austerity measures of \$5.8 million would be built into the budget for the upcoming year to lessen the deficit as much as possible. Less would be continued to reserves than anticipated, however this strategy would stay in tact.

A \$13 million decrease in tuition and grant revenue was projected. The University rolled back international student numbers and its overall strategy in reaction to the ongoing pandemic and visa processing delays. Projected summer numbers were better aligned to 2022 actuals to ensure a more accurate revenue projection. The ongoing tuition freeze was also noted as a major factor for the decrease. Projections for inflationary salary costs had also increased as it was a bargaining year. Direct costs of Teaching and Learning would be increased given the growth and need for more resources in the Faculty of Science and Faculty of Education. Institutional costs will be more favourable given a good pension valuation and interest rates. Essential requests would be more strategic in nature which positions moving into base that were previously one time only funding. Budget targets equated to 2% across the University with different levels of cuts across departments. The University will still need to position itself for its intended growth.

The Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association have agreed to the Comprehensive Student Services (CSS) fee which would help address program enhancements including athletics, housing and food insecurity.

Enrollments numbers were brought forward noting that the overall students head count was anticipated to rise by 311 students. Projections had been tried up to better align with actual student numbers over the 2022-2023 year as opposed to those previously forecasted. Increases were expected to all student types (domestic, international, undergraduate, graduate, full time) other than part-time students. International student enrollment was expected to increase as a result of the first full cohort transferring from the Wilfrid Laurier International College. Additionally, concerns surrounding international student mobility is expected to decrease allowing more students to return to full time studies.

A multi-year operating outlook was brought forward with three different scenarios, noting the base scenario was expected to be the most realistic, option 1 optimistic and option 2 pessimistic. The University remained optimistic that recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Panel would result in changes to the tuition framework. A surplus position was projected for the base case in 2025/2026. It was also noted that there would be a dip in 2024/2025 when austerity measures would be removed from the budget.

Ancillary remained a key revenue driver with a \$3.7 million surplus for the 2023-2024 year. This number was lower than last year due to the

restructuring of some components to the operating budget. The reserve went into deficit early on in the pandemic mainly due to residence vacancies, but was expected to be completely paid back over 2023/24. Any surpluses would be invested into reserves to address deferred maintenance on student residences.

The University was expected to stay in the positive on a consolidated basis. An overview was provided of the University's net income/loss ratio noting some volatility mainly due to one-time events/initiatives such as the pandemic, building sales, and the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program.

Looking ahead, it was noted that the changes to the tuition framework would be a crucial factor in returning the University to a strong financial position. Plans would continue to increase enrollment on the Brantford campus.

The Senate discussed: remedying inconsistencies in head counts; contributions to the rollback in overall operating costs; how austerity measures were being contributed centrally and outside of faculties; how collective bargaining numbers were calculated within the budget; first year attrition rates.

Motion (H. Northwood/L. Noronha): That on the recommendation of the Senate Executive & Finance Committee, the Senate recommend the Board of Governors approve the 2023-24 budget, as proposed. **Carried with 1 abstention.**

b. Senate Academic Planning Committee, H. Northwood

i. Faculty of Education, M. Cantalini-Williams

a. Major Modification

A motion was brought forward to allow students to petition to transfer campuses following their first year of study in the Bachelor of Education program.

The Senate discussed: the ease at which students can transfer and if putting this in place would assist this process.

Motion (M. Cantalini-Williams/J. Leung): that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee the Senate approve the policy for students transferring between campuses in the Bachelor of Education program. **Carried.**

ii. Faculty of Science, A. Clarke

a. Major Modification, Physics and Computer Science

The following motion was postponed to a future meeting:

Motion: that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve offering the existing Honours BSc Computer Science program in Milton.

- b. Major Modification, Physics and Computer Science

The following motion was postponed to a future meeting:

Motion: that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve offering the existing Honours BA in Computer Science in Combination with another BA program in Milton.

- c. Major Modification, Physics and Computer Science

The following motion was postponed to a future meeting:

Motion: that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve offering the existing Minor in Computer Science in Milton.

- d. Major Modification, Psychology

The following motion was postponed to a future meeting:

Motion: that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve offering the existing Honours BA Psychology and Honours BA Psychology in Combination with Another BA programs in Milton.

- e. Major Modification, Psychology

The following motion was postponed to a future meeting:

Motion: that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve offering the existing Minor in Psychology in Milton.

- f. Major Modification, Psychology

The motion proposed the removal of Brantford Foundations courses for those taking Psychology on the Brantford campus. This change would allow students to take further courses and electives and would be in line with programming changes that occurred with other programs on the Brantford campus.

Motion (A. Clarke/B. McKay): that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes

in the degree requirements for the Honours BA Psychology, Honours BA Psychology in Combination with another Honours BA Program, Honours BA Psychology: Forensic Specialization, Honours BA Psychology: Forensic Specialization in Combination with another Honours BA Program, and the Honours BSc Psychology program in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences. **Carried.**

g. Major Modification, Science

The following motion was brought forward to extend the breadth of the Honours BSc program to help open up further opportunities and career paths to science students.

Motion (A. Clarke/B. McKay): that on the recommendation of the Senate Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes to breadth requirements for the Honours BSc Science and Honours BSc Science- LLB (Sussex) Stream programs. **Carried.**

3. Matters from the Consent Section of the Agenda

None.

4. Other Business

It was noted that there were upcoming Senate Committee vacancies and Senators were encouraged to nominate themselves or other faculty members they felt would be interested.

5. In Camera Session

An *in camera* session was not held.

6. Adjournment

7. Consent Items

The following items were provided for approval or information. The items noted for approval were approved by consent unless otherwise highlighted during item 1.a.

a. Items for Approval

- i. Agenda
- ii. Draft Minutes of the March 7, 2023 Senate Meeting

b. Items for Information

- i. Report of the Senior Executives
- ii. 9 Month Fiscal Update
- iii. Report of the Program Review Sub-Committee
- iv. Nominations Report

Note: If you need assistance or have a question about this agenda or the Senate, please contact the University Secretariat office, by email to skelly@wlu.ca or 519-884-0710 x 2981.