

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

June 5, 2020

The meeting was held at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

SENATORS: 88

S. Basu	K. Gibbons	S. Morrison
A. Baxter	M. Grenier	S. Mumm
G. Belfry	A. Grzyb	A. Nelson
A. Borchert	C. Harasym	C. Nolan
L. Bot	M. Heath	J. Nord
H. Boyi	L. Henderson	N. Nuimat
L. Briens	K. Hibbert	K. Olson
D. Brou	H. Hill	I. Paul
S. Burke	I. Hocke	P. Peddle
E. Chamberlain	S. Hodgson	S. Pitel
A. Chant	A. Holm	S. Prichard
D. Cheng	A. Hrymak	V. Radcliffe
M. Cleveland	D. Jeffrey	G. Read
K. Cole	L. Jiang	G. Rezai-Rashti
K. Coley	V. Joe	S. Roland
J. Compton	R. Kennedy	C. Roulston
J. Corrigan	K. Kirkwood	A. Shepard
B. Craig	J. Kitz	V. Smye
J. Cuciurean	L. Logan	C. Steeves
S. Datars Bere	C. Ma	S. Taylor
M. Davison	D. Mallory	P. Thomlinson
C. Dick	A. Matchen	G. Tigert
J. Finegan	C. McLeod	J. Toswell
R. Flemming	L. Melnyk	S. Trosow
L. Frederking	Gribble	G. West
M. Garabedian	K. Mequanint	J. Wilson
B. Garcia	A. Meyer	K. Yeung
J. Garland	M. Milde	B. Younker
L. Ghattas	L. Miller	R. Zitikis
	K. Miller	

Observers: T. Belton, R. Bgeginski, S. Camiletti, K. Campbell, R. Chelladurai, J. Ciriello, J. Doerksen, L. Gribbon, B. Jalayer, J. Kum, D. Laird, J. Massey, M. Ruddock, J. Weese.

Land Acknowledgement

I. Paul read a Land Acknowledgement.

S.20-102 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of May 8, 2020 were approved as circulated.

S.20-103 **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT** [Exhibit I]

The President's Report, distributed with the agenda, contained information on the following topics: Coronavirus update, Labatt Family donations to nursing education and research, the Student Relief fund, campus community member accolades, leadership update.

The President additionally commented on the following items:

- The University has a strong admissions enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester
- The President thanked the Western community including faculty, staff, and student recruiters for their collaboration and assistance in developing plans for the Fall semester
- The President thanked outgoing Senators for their service and contributions to the academic community of the University
- The President discussed the University's pandemic response including an increase in financial aid to support undergraduate and graduate students
- The President noted changes to program delivery for the fall semester in transitioning to primarily virtual programming and acknowledged the uncertainty of program delivery in the upcoming winter term
- The University has postponed convocation and has planned several virtual ways of congratulating graduating students including videos and letters. The University will call back graduating students to offer the opportunity to participate in a formal in person graduation ceremony at a future date
- The President discussed the report developed by the Anti-Racism Working Group in response to an incident that occurred on campus in November 2019 and acknowledged recent events that have occurred both nationally and internationally in relation to racism

The President concluded his report, expressing his appreciation to the Western community, noting an extended holiday for faculty and staff in alignment with the Canada Day statutory holiday.

S.20-104 **UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA** [Exhibit II]

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the items listed in the Unanimous Consent Agenda (Exhibit II), except two, seven, and sixteen be approved or received for information by Senate by unanimous consent.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS/AGENDA COMMITTEE [Exhibit III]

S.20-105 **Senate Observers – Addition of the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives)**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That an Observer seat on Senate be assigned effective immediately for the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives)

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-106 **Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards (SCAPA), the Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP) and the University Research Board (URB) – Addition of the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives)**

S.20-107 **Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards (SCAPA)**

It was moved by, L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards (SCAPA) be revised to provide Ex Officio membership for the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives), effective June 5, 2020

A senator requested that the Operations/Agenda committee review the voting membership of the above listed Senate committees in the fall, noting a perception that committees may be becoming imbalanced when comparing voting members in ex-officio roles to members appointed by Senate.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-108 **Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP)**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP) be revised to provide Ex Officio membership for the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives), effective June 5, 2020.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-109 Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the University Research Board (URB)

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Terms of Reference of the University Research Board (URB) be revised to provide Ex Officio membership for the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Indigenous Initiatives), effective June 5, 2020

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-110 Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the University Research Board (URB) – Removal of the Responsibility for Appointing the Hellmuth Prize Selection Committee

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Terms of Reference of the University Research Board be revised as shown in Exhibit III, Appendix 1.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-111 Information Items Reported by the Operations/Agenda Committee

Exhibit III, Report of the Operations/Agenda Committee, contained the following items that were received for information by unanimous consent:

- Senate Membership – Vacancies Filled by Appointment
- Senate Membership – General Community Member
- Senate Meeting Dates for 2020-2021

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE [Exhibit IV]

S.20-112 Selection Committee for the Associate Vice-Presidents (Research)

D. Wakunick (Graduate Student), J. Cardy (HS), M. Davison (SCI), and A. Nelson (SS) were acclaimed to the selection committee for the Associate Vice-Presidents (Research)

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY AND AWARDS [Exhibit V]

S.20-113 Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Information and Media Studies, and Don Wright Faculty of Music: Introduction of a New Subject Area and New Course in Creative Arts

June 5, 2020

S.20-114 Introduction of “Creative Arts” as a New Subject Area

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That effective September 1, 2020, “Creative Arts” be introduced as a new subject area and included in categories A and B for Breadth Requirements for Graduation, as shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 1.

CARRIED

S.20-115 Introduction of Creative Arts 1020A/B – Introduction to Creative Arts

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That effective September 1, 2020 “Creative Arts 1020A/B – Introduction to Creative Arts” be introduced jointly by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, and the Don Wright Faculty of Music, as shown below.

A Senator (K. Olson) provided the following question in advance:

From a faculty member in A&H: why is FIMS offering two introductory courses on the creative arts in the new Creative Arts initiative when they don’t have a unit dedicated to the creative arts? It would make far more sense for either Arts & Humanities (which has writing and visual arts) or Music to be the lead in this.

L. Henderson, Dean (Faculty of Information and Media Studies) advised that the courses mentioned are listed under FIMS but represent a cross-disciplinary effort through a partner appointment process in FIMS. B.A. Younker, Dean (Faculty of Music) noted that the rationale for FIMS offering the courses at this point in time is reflective of the collaborative approach that has been taken between the faculties. M. Milde, Dean (Faculty of Arts & Humanities) highlighted it as an opportunity to provide interdisciplinary programming to students.

CARRIED

S.20-116 **Faculty of Engineering: Introduction of the Bachelor of Engineering Science ‘with Co-Op’ and Withdrawal of the Bachelor of Engineering Science ‘with Professional Internship’ and Summer Engineering Co-Op Program (SECOP)**

S.20-117 Introduction of the Bachelor of Engineering Science ‘with Co-Op’

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That effective September 1, 2020, a Bachelor of Engineering Science in XXX ‘with Co-Op’ be introduced in the Faculty of Engineering, as shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 2.

CARRIED

S.20-118 Withdrawal of the Bachelor of Engineering Science ‘with Professional Internship’

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That effective September 1, 2020, admission to the Bachelor of Engineering Science in XXX ‘with Professional Internship’ be discontinued, as shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 3, and

That students currently enrolled in the programs be allowed to either:

(a) transfer to the new Bachelor of Engineering Science in XXX 'with Co-Op' program upon fulfillment of the 12-month co-op/practical experience requirement, or

(b) graduate with the Bachelor of Engineering Science in XXX 'with Professional Internship' until August 31, 2024 upon fulfillment of the requirements, and

That effective September 1, 2024 the Bachelor of Engineering Science in XXX 'with Professional Internship' be withdrawn.

CARRIED

S.20-119 Withdrawal of the Summer Engineering Co-Op Program (SECOP)

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Summer Engineering Co-Op Program (SECOP) be withdrawn effective September 1, 2020.

CARRIED

S.20-120 Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry: Revisions to the Admission Requirements of the MD Program (Changes to GPA calculation due to COVID-19)

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Admission Requirements of the MD Program be revised, effective July 1, 2020 for the 2020-2021 application cycle, as shown in Appendix 4.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-121 Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry: Revisions to the Admission Requirements of the DDS Program (Changes to GPA calculation and Pre-requisites due to COVID-19)

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the Admission Requirements of the DDS Program be revised, effective July 1, 2020 for the 2020-2021 application cycle, as shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 5.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-122 Faculty of Social Science, Department of Geography: Introduction of a Certificate in Geographic Information Science

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That effective September 1, 2020, a Certificate in Geographic Information Science be introduced in the Faculty of Social Science as shown in Exhibit V.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-123 **Renewal of the Articulation Agreement between Western University, Faculty of Information and Media Studies, Bachelor of Arts, Major in Media, Information and Technoculture (MIT) and Fanshawe College regarding the transfer of credit for qualified graduates of the Interactive Media Design, Broadcasting – Radio, Journalism – Broadcast, and Broadcasting – Television and Film Production Programs**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve the renewal of the Articulation Agreement between Western University, Faculty of Information and Media Studies, Bachelor of Arts, Major in Media, Information and Technoculture (MIT) and Fanshawe College regarding the transfer of credit for qualified graduates of Interactive Media Design, Broadcasting – Radio, Journalism – Broadcast, and Broadcasting – Television and Film Production diploma programs for a period of three years, effective June 1, 2020, and shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 6.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-124 **Revisions to the “Structure of the Academic Year” Policy**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That the “Structure of the Academic Year” policy be revised as shown in Exhibit V, Appendix 7, effective September 1, 2020, subject to negotiations with the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association regarding implementation.

CARRIED

S.20-125 **Information Items Reported by the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards**

Exhibit V, Report of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards, contained the following items that were received for information by unanimous consent:

- New Scholarships and Awards

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PLANNING [EXHIBIT VI]

S.20-126 **Faculty of Arts and Humanities and Faculty of Social Science – Proposed Name Change: The Department of Women’s Studies and Feminist Research to the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors, that effective July 1, 2020, the Department of Women’s Studies and Feminist Research within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Science be changed to the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies.

CARRIED

S.20-127 **Faculty of Social Science – Proposed Name Change: The Department of Geography to the Department of Geography and Environment**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve, and recommend to the Board of Governors, that effective July 1, 2020, the Department of Geography within the Faculty of Social Science be changed to the Department of Geography and Environment

And

That Senate approve the Constitution of the Faculty of Social Science be amended to reflect the name change from the Department of Geography to the Department of Geography and Environment.

CARRIED

S.20-128 **Radiation-Induced Chemistry Research Chair**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve the Radiation-Induced Chemistry Research Chair be established and appointed within the Faculty of Science.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-129 **Antonio Mamandras Chair in Graduate Orthodontics**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve the Antonios Mamandras Chair in Graduate Orthodontics be established and appointed within the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry.

CARRIED (Unanimous Consent)

S.20-130 **Report on Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Appointment**

Senate received for information the Interim Report of the Provost's Task Force on Open Access and Scholarly Communication (February 2020), as shown in Exhibit VI, Appendix 4.

A senator (S. Basu) provided the following question in advance:

The Report on Promotion and Tenure lists cases based on gender and membership in three designated groups. However, it states that membership in designated groups is only available from those who have voluntarily completed an equity survey. This places Western in the situation of not actually knowing how diverse its cohort of faculty members is, nor the ability to fully analyze bias in hiring and promotion.

A question is: does Western have historical data on the rate of promotion success for members of each of the three designated groups? Also for each gender within each designated group? The number of cases would be expected to be not small for at least one of the designated groups, the so-called "racialized" in the report. I interpret this term to mean people of non-European-and-Caucasian and non-Aboriginal origin.

If Western does not have such data, when does it plan to start keeping a full census of designated groups and start tracking their progress in hiring and promotion? The Canada Research Chairs program already requires this data and some universities have also set equity targets. Without the necessary data we have an incomplete understanding of how diverse and equitable we actually are.

K. Campbell, Vice-Provost (Academic Planning, Policy & Faculty) advised that the Equity and Human Rights Services department conducts the confidential Equity Survey that is completed by faculty and staff and performs the linkage of the promotion and tenure data to the confidential equity data in order to produce the report on Promotion, Tenure and Continuing Appointments. She reported that the Western Employment Survey is a voluntary self-identification survey and stated that the University uses this survey because it is the least intrusive means of collecting data while respecting the protected grounds of designated group status as outlined by the Ontario Human Rights Code. She reported that due to the voluntary nature of the survey, approximately 70% of faculty have answered the survey and as a result the data would be considered incomplete. She advised that the Canada Research Chairs Program requires mandatory reporting of designated group membership, however the University follows the guidance of the Human Rights Commission.

With regard to the definition of racialized groups, K. Campbell stated that in the current survey, members of racialized groups are defined as persons, other than Indigenous persons, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. She reported that the University does have access to historical data and could begin producing an accumulative report for future reports on promotion, tenure and continuing appointments, however she noted that the current report is structured to meet the requirements of the Employment Equity Articles in the UWOFA and the UWOWFA collective agreements. She reported that the University will continue to improve the report and associated methodology and will look to refresh the survey to improve the response rate and capture more comprehensive data.

S.20-131 **Information Items Reported by the Senate Committee on University Planning**

Exhibit VI, Report of the Senate Committee on University Planning, contained the following items that were received for information by unanimous consent:

- Annual Report of the Working Group on Information Security 2019 (WGIS)

REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BOARD [EXHIBIT VII]

S.20-132 **Proposal to Establish the Western Institute for Neuroscience (Research)**

It was moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by M. Milde,

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the Western Institute for Neuroscience (Research) be established effective July 1, 2020.

CARRIED

S.20-133 **Information Items Reported by the University Research Board**

Exhibit VII, Report of the University Research Board, contained the following items that were received for information by unanimous consent:

- Recommendation for Renewal of the Bone and Joint Institute

REPORT TO SENATE OF THE ACADEMIC COLLEAGUE, COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES [EXHIBIT VIII]

S.20-134 **Academic Colleague Report on the April and May 2020 Meetings**

Senate received the Academic Colleague Report on the April and May 2020 meetings for information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS [EXHIBIT IX]

Exhibit IX, Announcements and Communications, contained the following items that were received for information by unanimous consent:

- Academic Administrative Appointments

S.20-135 **DISCUSSIONS AND QUESTION PERIOD**

Western's Summer Orientation

A Senator (S. Burke) provided the following question in advance:

The following content is intended to express and register concerns about Western's decision to host an in-person event on campus for frosh, starting in July. Perhaps there is additional information that was not included in the recent Gazette article, the Western update that followed, and Monday's Town Hall meeting. As it stands, and using the information that is currently available, this decision seems very confusing and counter to the very clear "safety first" decisions that have driven Western's COVID-19-related planning. The concerns submitted include:

1. The planned event is contrary to current provincial guidance of restricting gatherings to 5 people.
2. Social distancing measures on campus will be virtually impossible to enforce and manage 100% of the time.
3. Unnecessarily exposes students, their families, staff, and faculty members to risks without offering tangible benefits - students will be online, so orientation should be online.
4. Unnecessarily exposes members of the greater London community to those visiting Western from elsewhere, including Toronto/Windsor/Peel (all identified as Ontario's hot spots for COVID-19). It also reflects poor optics (Western can have events while Londoners are struggling).
5. Will use considerable resources with very little guarantee of success (stopping spread of COVID-19) and questionable benefit to all incoming students.

6. 'Voluntary' is misleading, as there will be pressure to attend (e.g., pressure from 'Fear of Missing Out').
7. There are numerous equity issues, particularly for those that cannot attend (from further away) or have other obligations (family, work). Creates a divide among those who do/don't attend.
8. Proper safeguards will require use of PPE, and this is a scarce resource that can be better allocated – seems disrespectful to front line health workers.
9. Knowing LHSC administrative and ICU practitioners' level of support for such an event would be valuable.

While there is agreement with the rationale that having all students attend in person would be a more effective way for them to feel connected to staff, faculty, and other students, the risk : benefit ratio here seems untenable. As we are transitioning so much of our educational offerings to online platforms, transitioning this event seems to be another thing that we may not wish to do, but need to do to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, and the London community at large.

Based on the above, please advise how this intended event is socially responsible and logistically feasible from a health perspective?

J. Massey, Associate Vice-President (Student Experience) reported that Western is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of students, staff and faculty. She stated that the University is focused on providing opportunities for first year students to form relationships that will support incoming student's mental health and academic success. She reported that the University is developing on campus opportunities to engage first-year students while remaining within the parameters outlined by the public health unit. She outlined the plans for the summer academic orientation program noting the following:

- The University intends to host 8, 1-day on campus visits for incoming first year students from late July to early August.
- Participation will be limited to 400 students per day
- Incoming students will be organized into small groups of 10-20 people
- Movement around campus will be coordinated and the number of buildings students will have access to will be limited
- Each group will be assigned at least one paid upper-year undergraduate student and one professional staff member
- Participants will be asked to wear face coverings

J. Massey noted that the University will continue to amend the summer academic orientation program plans in the event that public health guidelines change, and reported that a digital version of the program will also be available for students who are unable to come to campus for the experience.

S. Burke noted health and communication/messaging concerns regarding the on-campus orientation program and encouraged the consideration of a more robust online orientation program for the summer months to ensure the safety of staff, faculty and students.

Operating and Capital Budgets

A Senator (S. Pitel) provided the following question in advance:

The Operating and Capital Budgets for 2020-21 were presented to Senate in April 2020. What material changes since that time is Western aware of that impact the accuracy and reliability of the assumptions and allocations in those budgets?

R. Chelladurai, Associate Vice-President (Planning, Budgeting and Information Technology) stated that when the budget was presented in April, the University was waiting for confirmation of first-year enrolment projections. He states that the University has now received first-year enrolment confirmations and reported that the University will meet first-year enrolment targets. He confirmed that upper year and graduate level projections are yet to be determined.

In addition to enrolment, R. Chelladurai reported on revenue and expenses that have changed since the budget was presented. He stated that at this time, no changes have been identified from a revenue perspective. He did report that the University has incurred additional unexpected costs associated with the pandemic including a graduate student bursary program, PPE supplies, and initiatives aimed at the online delivery of courses. He noted that at this time, the University does not anticipate any changes to the Operating Budget or any allocations within the budget.

Proctoring of Examinations

A Senator (A. Chant) provided the following question in advance:

The Covid-19 crisis has complicated the process of administering examinations in courses. For the summer semester, examinations are being proctored by an American company rather than our own personnel (e.g. exam services staff, proctors, etc.). Students who are registered in summer courses are obliged to consent to being observed by webcam during their exam, show ID on cam, submit to biometric readings being taken, and having a recording made of their writing of exams. This naturally raises ethical and privacy concerns, in addition to challenges faced by some students without adequate technology. That said, the need to respond quickly to the crisis to avoid cancelling summer course offerings left few options.

As we have a little more time to plan for the fall and winter semesters, do we know if we will be relying on this same process for examinations or if we will have a process that eliminates these concerns?

J. Doerksen, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) reported that the Ministry provided a remote proctoring tool, Proctortrack, that can be implemented for online course programming. He acknowledged issues related to Proctortrack including accessibility and privacy issues and highlighted the FAQ posted to the Office of the Registrar's website to address issues associated with Proctortrack. He noted in addition to the frequently asked questions, there is a statement regarding online proctoring for students to review. He noted that the measures were considered interim measures to support summer programming and reported that students had additional options to request in-person proctoring or to withdraw from a course if preferred. He reported that the University will be seeking a request for proposal in the summer to assist in developing a more robust online proctoring tool for the fall semester.

A senator (S. Trosow) noted that remote proctoring along with online platforms to teach programs pose privacy risks for both faculty and students who use the systems. He encouraged further discussion and thought around the use of these programs and their implications. He conveyed the importance of transparency and communication with the University community regarding the terms of service for Zoom and the associated risks.

A senator (A. Chant) thanked J. Doerksen for providing further clarification regarding the steps that have been taken to support online proctoring. He queried whether the University was anticipating continued use of primarily online proctoring for the winter semester or if there will be a transition to in-person exams. J. Doerksen stated that the University was reviewing the winter term similarly to the fall term but would discuss the possibility of in-person exams for the winter term later in the fall.

International Pathway College

A Senator (A. Borchert) provided the following question in advance:

Last week, the motion that *“The Faculty of Arts and Humanities Council does not support the outsourcing of the crucial work of teaching first-year international undergraduates at Western to a private, for profit international ‘pathway’ college such as Navitas.”* passed with a large majority (88 for, 6 opposed & 8 abstentions). Would it be possible to receive an update on where discussions are on campus with regards to Navitas? The FAH faculty council also sought details about viable alternatives for Western to a for profit pathway. Could these please be made available?

A. Hrymak, Provost & Vice-President (Academic) reported that the University is continuing the due diligence analysis on the corporate aspect of the Navitas agreement. He noted that the University is reviewing which faculties are interested in exploring an arrangement with Navitas from an academic perspective. He stated that the next steps include reviewing the contract and what further requirements are necessary to fulfill in order to see if this is a viable opportunity for the University.

In regard to supporting international undergraduate student recruitment, J. Weese, Acting Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President (International) reported that the University has three new international recruitment officers linked to the faculties who are reaching out to international students to support these students in making a decision to attend Western University. Additionally, he stated that the logistics committee is reaching out to new and returning students to assist in supporting travel and quarantine requirements. He reported that Western International will continue to engage with international students and faculties to support a successful experience at Western University.

A senator (A. Borchert) thanked A. Hrymak and J. Weese for the information regarding Navitas and for supporting international students. She queried whether there were materials that could be viewed as viable alternatives to a for-profit pathway such as Navitas. A. Hrymak stated that regardless of Navitas the University would continue to have direct recruiting of international students by working with agents, building visibility in international high schools, and through partnership arrangements with other institutions. He noted that there were no additional alternatives that the University was aware of but encouraged the campus community to bring forward further suggestions and ideas for discussion.

A senator (J. Compton) asked for further information regarding the Navitas agreement, highlighting the Faculty Association’s statement that did not encourage a partnership with Navitas. A. Hrymak stated that Navitas provides more than two decades of experience in recruiting and supporting international students

into a variety of university partners around the world. He reported that the model for onboarding through providing a pathway gives the partner university academic oversight into the courses, delivery and assessment standards. He noted that the Navitas has long-term stable financial support through Australian capital and Canadian pension funds. He reported that the University would like to continue engaging in conversation with the UWOFA executive to address further concerns related to Navitas.

A senator (C. Harasym) queried whether there is evidence to show that Navitas diversifies its recruitment of international students, noting the majority of international students at Western are from Asian countries. A. Hrymak stated that the 2017 University of Manitoba study did not identify that the majority of cohorts recruited were from specific countries. He reported that should the University enter into an agreement with Navitas, there would be provisions to ensure diversification of source for international recruitment.

A senator (S. Pitel) queried who has been included in the consultation process regarding Navitas at a Faculty level. A. Hrymak reported that discussions have occurred with the Deans who have used different methods to engage with department chairs and program leaders within their faculties. Additionally, A. Hrymak stated that presentations have been provided to faculty councils to answer questions and to receive feedback. He noted that engagement and academic oversight within programs is necessary in order for the University to fulfill Western's requirements of a collaboration agreement with Navitas.

A senator queried whether students who are recruited through a Navitas pathway could be limited to specific programs if some faculties did not want to entertain a partnership with Navitas. A. Hrymak stated that the University is reviewing whether students could be provided a viable pathway within faculties that are interested in a partnership with Navitas. He stated that selectivity happens regardless of institutions citing programs that are available at some institutions and not at others. He noted that other institutions such as the University of Manitoba who have engaged in a Navitas agreement began with a small number of pathways and expanded their program pathways over a number of years.

A senator queried whether faculty members from institutions that have a partnership with Navitas have been engaged to receive feedback from a faculty member perspective, noting negative feedback that has been received. A. Hrymak reported that the University follows up on all feedback that might be cause for concern and stated that data has been provided from a number of studies to support a partnership with Navitas.

Decanal Searches

A Senator (J. Toswell) requested an update on the status of decanal searches. A. Shepard stated that decanal searches are still in progress and noted that some decanal positions will require extensions.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

A. Shepard
Chair

L.A. McKivor
Associate University Secretary

