



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

October 15, 2021

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

SENATORS:

A. Shami	L. Henderson	P. Peddle
K. Arora	R. Heydon	S. Powell
G. Balfour	S. Hodgson	S. Prichard
P. Barmby	T. Joy	D. Purcell
A. Barnfield	S. Kadish	A. Pyati
A. Baxter	E. Kalaydjian	V. Radcliffe
J. Baxter	S. Karky	G. Read
I. Berry	G. Kelly	L. Rigg
E. Boussoulas	D. Kotsopoulos	A. Robin
D. Brou	J. Lacefield	S. Roland
S. Burke	D. Laird	G. Santos
E. Chamberlain	J. Langille	E. Sapuridis
J. Chazi	M. Lebo	J. Schermer
M. Cleveland	D. Lee	A. Schuurman
K. Coley	L. Lewis	A. Shami
J. Compton	J. Li	A. Shepard
S. Constas	L. Logan	Z. Sinel
J. Corrigan	M. Longtin	V. Smye
J. Cuciurean	D. Malloy	C. Steeves
S. Datars Bere	M. Milde	L. Stephenson
M. Davison	L. Miller	L. Stoyles
G. De Viveiros	J. Minac	J. Watson
R. Dekoter	K. Mooney	G. West
M. Fahmida	S. Morrison	K. Yeung
J. Garland	A. Nelson	J. Yoo
K. Gibbons	J. Nord	S. Zivkovic
A. Haque	A. Pahargarh	
N. Harney	M. Patel	

Observers: P. Barmby, V. Bhat, C. Bressette, J. Doerksen, Z. Fakirani, R. Isard,
M. McGlynn, N. Narin, k. seanor

Land Acknowledgement

A. Pyati offered a Land Acknowledgement.

S.21-204 **Minutes of Prior Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of September 17, 2021 were approved as circulated.

S.21-205 **Business Arising from the Minutes**

L. Logan, Vice-President (Operations & Finance), responded to a question from the last Senate meeting on ventilation measures in office spaces and other areas on campus. She advised that the air quality was assessed in some areas with large gatherings, energy efficient buildings, clinical spaces, labs, offices, shared cubicle areas and common spaces within Stevenson Hall, Support Services Building and Mogenson Centre. These areas showed similar strong results as the classrooms, with minor adjustments made. L. Logan advised that Western's ventilation systems are meeting or exceeding industry recommendations for ventilation in buildings and classrooms. The results of the ventilation measures of all spaces will not be posted as reviewing every space within Western's buildings would divert resources needed elsewhere. L. Logan advised that questions and concerns regarding certain spaces can be directed to Facilities Management and an assessment could be completed on an exception basis.

S.21-206 **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

The President's Report, distributed with the agenda, contained information on the following topics: COVID-19 update, accolades, and leadership updates.

The President additionally commented on the following items:

- COVID-19 update: Western was a national leader in mandating vaccination. Vaccination rates of the campus community are between 98 and 99%.
- Applauded the efforts of all administrative and academic units on campus to ensure a safe environment to teach, learn, work and research during the pandemic.
- Equity census is underway. A comprehensive demographic survey for all staff, students and faculty, to better understand and enhance the diversity and demographics of the University.
- Announced the property purchase of the building at 450 Talbot Street.
- The London Police Service announced that they were unable to substantiate unconfirmed social media reports of sexual assaults at the Medway-Sydenham Hall residence, after interviewing 600 students.
- Sanction guidelines revised for students accused of sexual assault, as they will be trespassed from all residences, and depending on the allegation, may be trespassed from all other areas on campus.
- The Gender-Based and Sexual Violence Action Committee will review the implementation of the policy on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence.

- Search for an independent third-party reviewer to investigate the events of September is underway.
- Increased the number of Special Constables on campus.
- In the process of hiring Safety Ambassadors to be present in residence halls, particularly in the evenings and weekends.
- Police confirmed the tragic events that led to the death of first year student Gabriel Neil were unrelated to other events that may have occurred at Medway-Sydenham Hall.
- A candlelight vigil was held on October 1, 2021, remembering the life of Gabriel Neil at TD Stadium.
- The Great Hall and Alumni Hall have been made available to offer increased study and gathering space for students due to social distancing requirements.

The President concluded his report by thanking the Western community for a successful academic start to the year, but noted there is work to be done regarding culture. Western is one of Canada's greatest universities, with world class research and teaching, deserving of recognition. He noted that the Western community needs to have a reset in the relationship between fun and the fundamental academic mission of the institution, which can be achieved through a collective effort to promote change in the culture.

REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONS/AGENDA COMMITTEE

S.21-207 **ITEM 5.1 – Revisions to the Senate Election Procedures**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by G. Kelly,

That the Senate Election Procedures be revised as shown, effective October 15, 2021.

CARRIED

S.21-208 **ITEM 5.2 – Senate Observer: Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by G. Kelly,

That an Observer seat on Senate be assigned effective immediately for the Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion).

CARRIED

The USC representative expressed support of the addition of the Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) as an Observer, as it will allow for an equity and anti-racism lens on Senate.

S.21-209 **ITEM 5.3 – Senate E-Vote Result regarding the Notice of Motion to Revise the Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs**

E. Chamberlain provided an update on the Notice of Motion received at the last Senate meeting, regarding the temporary provision of additional self-reported absences. She advised that OAC's recommendation on the SRA motion was to discard the E-Vote result and bring it forward to Senate for consideration at its October meeting. It appears on the agenda as Item 7.1, under the Report of SCAPA. OAC also recommended that Senate be asked to determine a process for the use and determination of Senate e-votes for time-sensitive matters, to be brought forward for Senate's approval at a subsequent Senate meeting this fall.

REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

S.21-210 **ITEM 6.1 – SCAPA Subcommittee on Program Review – Undergraduate (SUPR-U)**

The following Undergraduate student members were acclaimed to the SCAPA Subcommittee on Program Review Undergraduate (SUPR-U):

I. Berry, S. Karky, and M. Patel, for a term to June 30, 2022.

S.21-211 **ITEM 6.2 – University Research Board**

The following members were acclaimed to the University Research Board:

K. Arora (UNDG) and V. Bhat (PostDoc), for a term to June 30, 2022.

An additional nomination was received from the floor for the senior staff member serving in a leadership position with a research focus vacancy.

[Secretary's note: The election resulted in a tie vote. In accordance with the Adopted Policies and Procedures of Senate, Section 5, the tie vote was resolved by lottery conducted by the University Secretary.]

C. Calmettes was elected to URB for a term to June 30, 2023.

S.21-212 **ITEM 6.3 – Operations/Agenda Committee**

The following members were acclaimed to the Operations/Agenda Committee:

A. Pyati (FIMS), T. Jenkyn (Eng), for a term to June 30, 2023.

S.21-213 **ITEM 6.4 – Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA)**

E. Boussoulas (UNDG) was acclaimed to the Senate Review Board Academic, for a term to June 30, 2022.

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY AND AWARDS

S.21-214 **ITEM 7.1 – Notice of Motion Referred from Senate: Revision to the Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs**

J. Cuciurean provided an overview of the Notice of Motion presented at the September 17 Senate meeting regarding the temporary provision of additional self-reported absences (SRAs). SCAPA recommended the motion to Senate on the following considerations:

- The return to campus and start of the fall term has been a difficult time for the Western community and resulted in heightened stress among students.
- Students may be dealing with trauma relating to the passing of a first-year student and the investigation of gender based sexual violence incidents.
- Additional SRAs could be a tool that can support the students dealing with trauma, which can be long lasting and present at a later date.
- Additional SRAs will encourage students who may be displaying COVID-19 symptoms to practice self-care and remain off campus.

A discussion regarding the revision to the policy for the addition of SRAs ensued. During the discussion, the following points were highlighted by Senators in favour of the motion:

- Several student Senators supported the motion, noting that students have experienced a difficult start to the year, adding that this flexibility would allow them to prioritize their wellness without jeopardizing their academic performance.
- While SRAs do not address critical issues or offer direct support, they encourage accessibility and wellness amongst students, as an SRA allows students in these situations the space and time they need to seek support.
- If students are seeking support, the support received may not be immediate due to the timeline of the process of accommodation. Additional SRAs would be a survivor-centric measure, as it would provide immediate relief, without the need to reiterate traumatic accounts to counselors.

The following points were highlighted by Senators against the motion:

- If a student is experiencing trauma through the second term, they would best be served by seeking support, rather than a mechanism that may cause the student to avoid seeking help, or result in a greater assessment load for students later in the term.
- Additional SRAs may eliminate an opportunity for counselors to identify a student in distress and direct them to appropriate resources.
- Students with COVID symptoms should not utilize an SRA to remain off campus, as most counselors are accepting a receipt of a COVID test in lieu of a Student Medical Certificate.
- If additional SRAs are provided to all students, irrespective of need, an advantage to students who do not have a need is provided, and is therefore unfair to students in need.
- Senators highlighted the administrative and organizational challenges caused by students utilizing SRAs in large numbers.

A Senator advised that the policy should be reviewed as per its review date timeline, to understand how SRAs are being utilized.

J. Cuciurean advised that the policy has a requirement to be reviewed within three years of initiation. A review of the policy was started last year; however, it was paused due to unprecedented circumstances and a review will be undertaken this fall or in January.

Following the discussion, a vote was called on the Notice of Motion: Revision to the Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs.

It was moved by G. Reid, seconded by S. Burke,

That effective October 15, 2021 until April 1, 2022, the “Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs” be temporarily amended as shown in Item 7.1 and,

That effective April 2, 2022 the previous version of the policy, “Last Revised 2019 10” be reinstated.

MOTION FAILED

REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BOARD

S.21-215 **ITEM 9.1 – Announcement of a Vice-Chair of the University Research Board**

L. Rigg, (Vice-President, Research) announced the Vice-Chair of the University Research Board Committee (Linda Miller).

S.21-216 **ITEM 9.2 – Western Research Chair Program**

L. Rigg provided a verbal report regarding the proposed Western Research Chair Program.

S.21-217 **ITEM 9.3 – Indigenous Research Committee Report**

C. Richmond, Associate Professor (Geography and Environment), presented the Indigenous Research Committee Report, which outlined a series of recommendations that will be implemented to support indigenous research initiatives.

S.21-218 **UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by G. Kelly,

That the items listed in the Consent Agenda, be approved or received for information by the Senate by unanimous consent.

CARRIED

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONS/AGENDA COMMITTEE

S.21-219 **Information Items Reported by the Operations/Agenda Committee on Unanimous Consent**

- 11.1(a) – Officers of Convocation

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY AND AWARDS

Information Items Reported by the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards

S.21-220 The following items reported by the Senate Committee on University Planning were received for information by unanimous consent:

- ITEM 11.2(a) – Notice of Motion Referred by Senate: Revision to the Adding and Dropping Courses Policy
- ITEM 11.2(b) Sessional Dates
 - 11.2(b)(i) Undergraduate Sessional Dates – 2022-23
 - 11.2(b)(ii) Faculty-Specific Undergraduate Sessional Dates – 2022-23
- ITEM 11.2(c) New Scholarships and Awards

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

S.21-221 **Information Items Reported through Announcements and Communications on Unanimous Consent**

The following items were reported through Announcements and Communications and were received for information by unanimous consent:

- 11.3(a) Honorary Degree Recipients – Autumn 2021

S.21-222 **ITEM 11.4 – Senate E-Vote (Time Sensitive): Notice of Motion: Revision to the Adding and Dropping Courses Policy Approval**

Senate received for information the results of the E-Vote for the Notice of Motion: Revision to the Adding and Dropping Courses Policy Approval received at the September 17, 2021 Senate meeting. The motion received sufficient votes and passed.

S.21-223 **DISCUSSION AND QUESTION PERIOD**

The full text of questions submitted in advance of the meeting were posted in the Agenda at Item 13.0 prior to the meeting. The questions and responses are summarized below.

1. A Senator inquired why polling stations were not hosted on-campus for the federal election held on September 20th and if the University will host on-campus voting in the upcoming provincial and municipal elections.

A. Bryson responded on behalf of P. White (Executive Director, Government Relations & Strategic Partnerships), who indicated that the vote on campus program was suspended by Elections Canada during this election cycle. The University was in discussions with the Southwestern Ontario Regional Office of Elections Canada on having a polling station for London North center. Due to the tight timeframe of the election, the deadline for a decision on a polling station was August 27. The University received the return to campus operational approval guidelines from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities on the evening of August 31. As a result, a polling station could not be implemented. Traditionally, Western welcomes polling stations on campus for elections at all levels of government. It is expected that in both the upcoming provincial and municipal elections, Western will host polling stations on campus for voting, in partnership with Elections Ontario, and the City of London.

2. An Observer questioned why the Sexual Violence and Student Safety Task Force does not include designated representatives from employee groups at Western.

A. Shepard responded that in order to designate representatives from each employee group, the committee members number would start at 16, not including additional members. A manageable size committee is preferred as it is more collaborative and allows for easier scheduling of meetings. He advised that two co-chairs were announced, and the composition of the task force will be deliberated to ensure it is inclusive and representative of the various groups on campus.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

A. Shepard
Chair

A. Bryson
University Secretary