



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

February 13, 2026

The meeting was held at 1:30 at the Great Hall, Somerville House

SENATORS:

Y. Al-Ani	R. Gros	L. Melnyk Gribble
C. Alcantara	N. Haggerty	M. Mills
A. Ali	A. Hassan	M. Modeski
J. Antonelli	N. Harney	Z. Nadeem
A. Awawdeh	D. Heap	I. Namukasa
C. Barteet	J. Herrera	A. Nocilla
B. Begg	A. Hearn	V. Parsa
K. Big-Canoe	B. Hill	R. Ramachandran
S. Boe	M. Joanisse	W. Ritchie
A. Bryson	I. Johnsrude	S. Roland
N. Campbell	A. Jokhu	B. Rubin
K. Choi	M. Khimji	S. Schmid
B. Chronik	M. Kim	A. Shchepetkina
C. Chung	D. Kotsopoulos	A. Shepard
S. Clarke	S. Knabe	S. Sibbald
N. Coates	T. Layton	K. Siddiqui
K. Coley	H. Li	D. Smith
S. D'Arcy	G. R. Little	M. Stahl
M. Davison	L. Lingard	F. Strzelczyk
M. El-Sakka	M. Lebo	J. Walsh
D. Ferri	B. Lovie	L. Waller
R. Forrester-Jones	A. Lukawski	K. Yeung
C. Giannacopoulos	J. Makaran	J. Yoo
M. Green-Barteet	T. Mantler	N. Zabian

Observers:

R. Chelladurai, S. Hayne Beatty, S. Hendrikx, K. Henricus, J. Hutter, S. Lewis, E. Marshall, M. McGlynn, O. Oloya, V. Sarkany, M. Yenson

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

M. Mills offered a Land Acknowledgement.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS

ITEM 2.1 – Minutes of the Meeting of December 5, 2025

It was moved by B. Hill, seconded by C. Alcantara,

That the minutes of the meeting held on December 5, 2025, be approved as presented in item 2.1.

CARRIED

ITEM 2.2 – Minutes of the Meeting of January 16, 2026

It was moved by B. Rubin, seconded by D. Ferri,

That the minutes of the meeting held on January 16, 2026, be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

In addition to the written report provided in advance of the meeting, A. Shepard, President & Vice-Chancellor, provided verbal remarks, beginning with the recent announcement by the provincial government of \$6.4 billion in funding for the postsecondary education sector. The President noted that further details from the province are expected to be released in the coming days, which will allow for a reassessment of both current initiatives and future plans.

The President continued his report by commenting on the active investigation of the trespassing incident on campus. He advised that the investigation is currently under the authority of the London Police Service and that Western has initiated a review to ensure the necessary security protocols are in place to protect labs and property. The President acknowledged the Special Constables team for their service and timely response.

The President concluded his report with an update on Western's All-in Campaign, emphasizing significant overall successes.

A. Shepard responded to a question of clarification regarding a potential reset of the established enrollment corridor in light of the changes to the 2026-27 provincial funding allocations.

REPORT OF THE PROVOST

F. Strzelczyk, Provost & Vice-President (Academic) began her report with a brief update on the development of the University budget, recognizing that planning to date has been based

on information previously available and will be adjusted once further details are released about the provincial funding. Once complete information becomes available, Faculties and support units will be issued updated budget letters. Additionally, the Provost confirmed that the University budget will be brought forward as planned in April through the established institutional process.

F. Strzelczyk concluded her report by sharing that the results of the Future of Teaching and Learning survey have been posted on the website of the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) and commented on how Senators might be involved in Action Plan groups. Additionally, the Provost advised that more information will be shared at the March Senate meeting.

REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT (RESEARCH)

A. Allan, Associate Vice-President (Research) provided an overview of key research initiatives, highlighting efforts to improve public transparency and understanding of animal-based research. A. Allan commented on the advocacy efforts to align provincial and federal regulations on animal-based research, with a focus on reducing administrative burden and unnecessary duplication. Additionally, she informed Senate that the Animal Research Transparency Initiative working group will be reconstituted this spring, and provided additional details for those who wish to participate.

A. Allan responded to a question of clarification regarding types of limits that were put in place by the provincial government for research involving cats and dogs as Ontario is moving forward with much stricter limits on these types of research. She stated as Western does not have a veterinary school, Western Research collaborated with peer institutions in Ontario to advocate that legislation captures the importance of research with animal models.

REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS / AGENDA COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Operations/Agenda Committee (OAC), S. Roland presented the report of the Committee.

ITEM 6.1 – Questions for Senate

S. Roland presented the Chair's report on the questions for Senate received by OAC in advance, in accordance with the process established in the Adopted Policies and Procedures. She advised Senate that questions routed to Senate will be addressed at the Question Period.

REPORT OF THE SENATE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Senate Nominating Committee, G. Little provided the Nominating Committee report.

ITEM 7.1 – Membership – Senate Committee on Academic Policy

No nominations were received for the graduate student vacancy on the Senate Committee on Academic Policy.

ITEM 7.2 – Membership – Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA)

Maria Chen, undergraduate student, was nominated by the Nominating Committee and acclaimed to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) for a term ending June 30, 2026.

Sarah Mantz, graduate student, was nominated by the Nominating Committee and acclaimed to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) for a term ending June 30, 2026.

Roula Hawa, faculty member, was nominated by the Nominating Committee and acclaimed to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) for a term ending June 30, 2027.

No nominations were received for the remaining faculty member vacancy on SRBA for a term ending June 30, 2026.

ITEM 7.3 – Membership – Subcommittee on Undergraduate Academic Courses (SOC)

Maria Chen, undergraduate student, was nominated by the Nominating Committee and acclaimed to the Subcommittee on Undergraduate Academic Courses (SOC) for a term ending June 30, 2026.

ITEM 7.4 – Membership – Senate Committee on University Teaching Awards (SUTA)

Bri Watson, faculty member, was nominated by the Nominating Committee and acclaimed to the Senate Committee on University Teaching Awards (SUTA) for a term ending June 30, 2027.

ITEM 7.5 – Membership – Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP)

No nominations were received for the postdoctoral scholar vacancy on the Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP).

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY

On behalf of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, K. Yeung presented the Policy report. He advised Senate that, given the increased total number of scholastic offences and the level of discussion generated at the meeting of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, the Committee recommended that the Annual Scholastic Offences Report, typically placed on the consent agenda, be presented as a regular item for Senate's information.

ITEM 8.1 – Annual Scholastic Offences Report (2024-25)

S. Lewis, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) provided a presentation on the annual Scholastic Offences Report for the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. She noted an overall increase in scholastic offences and presented data with a breakdown by Faculty across several years. Additionally, S. Lewis discussed potential factors that may have contributed to this increase.

In response to a question, S. Lewis advised that the use of generative AI is counted as a plagiarism offence, which is the largest category of scholastic offences.

In response to a question of clarification on whether the University is exploring potential tools for detecting AI-generated content, S. Lewis advised that there is currently no proven method for reliably detecting the use of AI. Additionally, S. Lewis outlined factors that might contribute to the absence of reported scholastic offences in several Faculties.

S. Lewis addressed a question of clarification from a Senator, commenting on the approaches used to mitigate assessment-related stress that may contribute to the rise of offences and the supports available, including the use of flexible assessment techniques.

In response to a question regarding increasing workload, S. Lewis advised that practices may vary across Faculties when conducting investigations and indicated that any suggestions on how to enhance faculty support on this matter would be welcomed.

S. Lewis commented on the potential use of AI in both creating assessments and providing feedback and emphasized that responsibility for this lies with instructors and faculty members.

S. Knabe, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Information and Media Studies (FIMS) provided comments on the low-stakes reporting system at FIMS, a mechanism that allows instructors to flag concerns about student performance before they rise to the level of a formal scholastic offence. She noted that such conversations occur across most Faculties but are not captured and this new mechanism will help track them.

Additionally, S. Lewis commented on the updated Academic Integrity training module that now includes a section on generative AI.

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC CURRICULUM AND AWARDS

On behalf of ACA, A. Johnson presented the report of the Committee.

ITEM 9.1 – Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry: Introduction of an Honours Specialization in Public Health

It was moved by N. Campbell, seconded by R. Gros,

That on the recommendation of ACA, and conditional on approval by the Quality Council, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2026, an Honours Specialization in Public Health be introduced by the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry as shown in Item 9.1.

CARRIED

ITEM 9.2 – King’s University College: Introduction of a Certificate in Religious and Cultural Diversity

It was moved by B. Lovie, seconded by A. Ali,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2026, a Certificate in Religious and Cultural Diversity be introduced by King’s University College as shown in Item 9.2.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PLANNING

On behalf of SCUP, S. Schmid presented the report of the Committee.

ITEM 10.1 – Subcommittee on Enrolment Planning and Policy Report

R. Chelladurai, Associate Vice-President (Institutional Planning & Budgeting), began his presentation by addressing first-year undergraduate admissions and noted that the general admissions approach from recent years will be maintained for Fall 2026. He advised Senate that the pilot project allowing a reduced final-grade requirement for several programs will be extended for an additional year to further assess its outcomes.

R. Chelladurai noted that within the international cohort there will be two distinct streams of students and outlined the minimum grade requirements for both.

R. Chelladurai continued his presentation with the undergraduate enrollment projections that were discussed and reviewed through the standard planning process. He advised that in light of the recent provincial funding increase and tuition changes, once further details become available, the projections may be updated and shared with Senate.

R. Chelladurai responded to a question of clarification and outlined the role of Faculty leadership in the enrolment planning process and stated that Faculty leaders will continue to be engaged in prioritizing key enrolment objectives going forward.

R. Chelladurai responded to questions of clarification regarding a specific line item in the enrollment projections related to master’s students, offering additional context.

It was moved by S. Schmid,

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on University Planning, Senate approve the plans and processes for first year, first-entry undergraduate enrolment for Western and its Affiliated University Colleges and the use of the 2026-27 enrolment projections for Western’s budget planning purposes.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BOARD (URB)

On behalf of the University Research Board (URB), A. Allan presented the URB report and commented on the work conducted at the last URB meeting, including the reports received from the Western Academy of Advanced Research (WAFAR) and the Rotman Institute of Philosophy outlining their activities.

The Chair requested that additional details regarding the planned 2026 Interdisciplinarity Summit at the Rotman Institute be provided to Senate.

ITEM 12.0 – Report of the Academic Colleague

The Report of the Academic Colleague was provided to Senate for information.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONS/AGENDA COMMITTEE

Information Items Reported by OAC on Unanimous Consent:

- Item 13.1(a) – Annual Report of Convocation Board – 2025

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY

ITEM 13.2(a) – Revisions to the Policy on “Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction”

It was moved by C. Barteet seconded by S. D’Arcy,

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2026, the policy on “Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction” be revised as shown in Item 13.2(a).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Information Items Reported by Policy on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.2(b) – Faculty-Specific Undergraduate Sessional Dates (2026-2027)

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC CURRICULUM AND AWARDS

ITEM 13.3(b) – Faculty of Engineering, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering: Withdrawal of the Engineering Externship Program for Mechanical Engineering

It was moved by C. Barteet seconded by S. D’Arcy,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2026, admission to the Engineering Externship Program for Mechanical Engineering, linked to the Practical Elements of Mechanical Engineering program at Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology, be discontinued; and

That students currently enrolled in the program be permitted to graduate upon fulfillment of the program requirements by August 31, 2028; and

That the program be withdrawn effective September 1, 2028.

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEM 13.3(d) – Faculty of Law and School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Withdrawal of the Combined Juris Doctor / Master of Arts in History

It was moved by C. Barteet seconded by S. D’Arcy,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2026, admission to the combined Juris Doctor / Master of Arts in History be discontinued and that the program be withdrawn.

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Information Items Reported by ACA on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.3(a) – Faculty of Education: Introduction of OSAP-Eligible Micro-credentials (EDAQ 5855, 5856, 5909, 5910, 5911)
- ITEM 13.3(c) – Faculty of Health Sciences, Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing: Correction to the Effective Date for the Withdrawal of the Western-Fanshawe Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- ITEM 13.3(e) – Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on Program Review – Graduate
- ITEM 13.3(f) – New Donor-Funded Scholarships, Awards and Prizes

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

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

- ITEM 13.4(a) – Academic Administrative Appointments

QUESTION PERIOD

The full text of the questions submitted for the Question Period in advance of the meeting was posted in the Agenda at Item 15.0. The questions and responses are summarized below:

Question regarding AI-related academic offenses

The question was addressed under the agenda item 9.1.

Question regarding issues with the Brightspace grading interface.

S. Rodriguez, Director, Client Services (WTS), addressed a question regarding Brightspace potentially altering the way student papers appear online, clarifying that the issue pertains to formatting rather than the content of student assignments. He advised that instructors were informed of the problem and were provided with a temporary workaround, while a permanent solution is currently under investigation.

Question regarding the possible misuse of downloadable course content

S. Lewis responded to a question whether the ability for students to download entire course content from Brightspace could be linked to the reported increase in academic offenses and noted that the University will work with D2L on exploring an option that would allow instructors to control which content is available for download. She clarified that instructors cannot selectively restrict content in Brightspace, as the download function is globally on or off.

The Chair emphasized the importance of protecting academic integrity and advised that leading institutions should work together to find an effective approach.

Request for comparative information on administrative staff costs and complement trends

In response to a request for information on the administrative staff complement, similar to what was previously provided in respect of academic staff, R. Chelladurai provided a presentation (Appendix A). R. Chelladurai provided clarification on the extent of data available from peer institutions and the main resources for this type of information.

R. Chelladurai provided an overview of the data, benchmarking, and multi-year trends, drawing on internal information. He presented the key metrics, including all funding sources for non-academic staff and operating-funded staff, student-staff ratio, and operational expenditures in respect of administrative matters. R. Chelladurai emphasized that the information provided to Senate is most complete data currently available, as benchmarking data on non-academic staff is not available for other institutions.

The Chair advised that data on legal expenditures are excluded from public discussion.

Questions from the Senate floor

S. Lewis addressed a follow-up question concerning the process of determining penalties for low-stakes offenses and noted that the type of penalty is set by the Faculty.

A Senator expressed concerns regarding visa delay for international students, particularly prospective students from conflict zones, highlighting the challenges they face in completing requirements to obtain their study permits, and asked about supports that can be provided.

The President commented on the University's advocacy efforts and the range of channels engaged.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

A. Shepard
Chair

A. Bryson
University Secretary

Academic and Non-Academic Operational Expenditures

Ontario U6 Comparative Data

Presented to Senate
February 13, 2026

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Overview

Request from Senate:

Provide Ontario U6 comparisons, where available, to contextualize the budget data presented to Senate on December 5, 2025, with a focus on the proportion of operating expenditures allocated to non-academic units and administration.

Objective:

Support Senate's understanding of the budget processes.

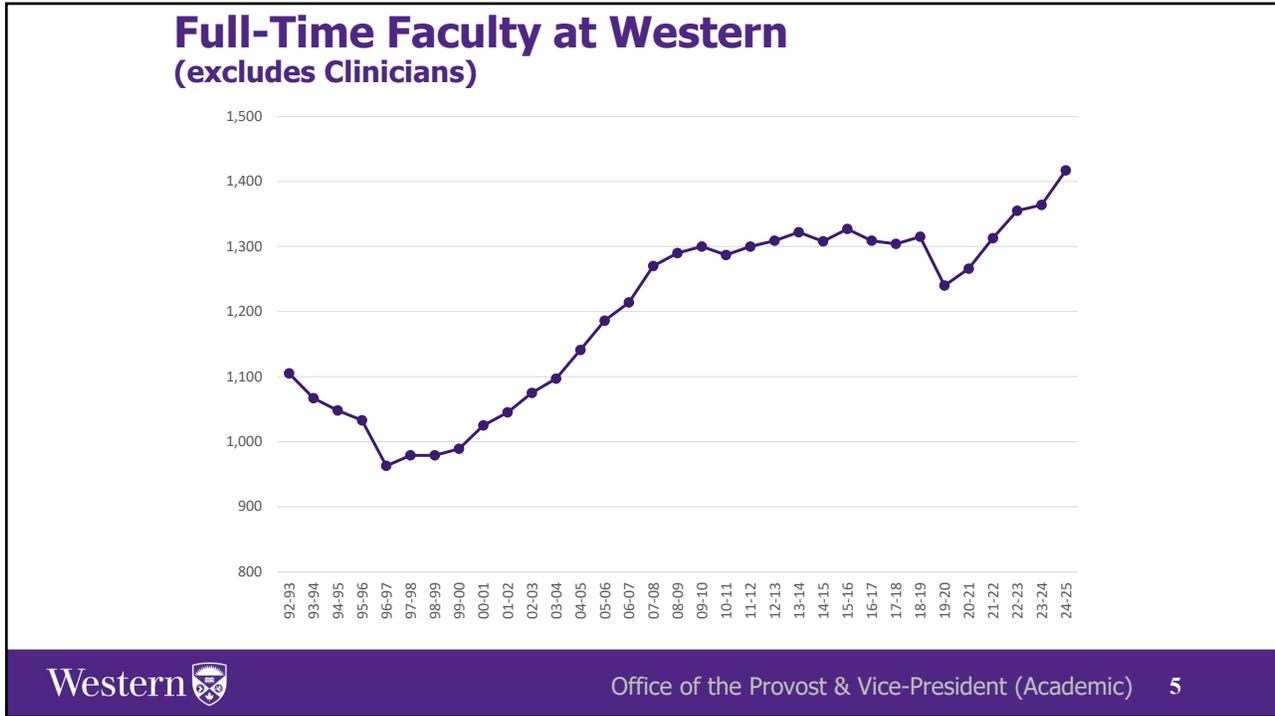
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The Budget Process Through Governance

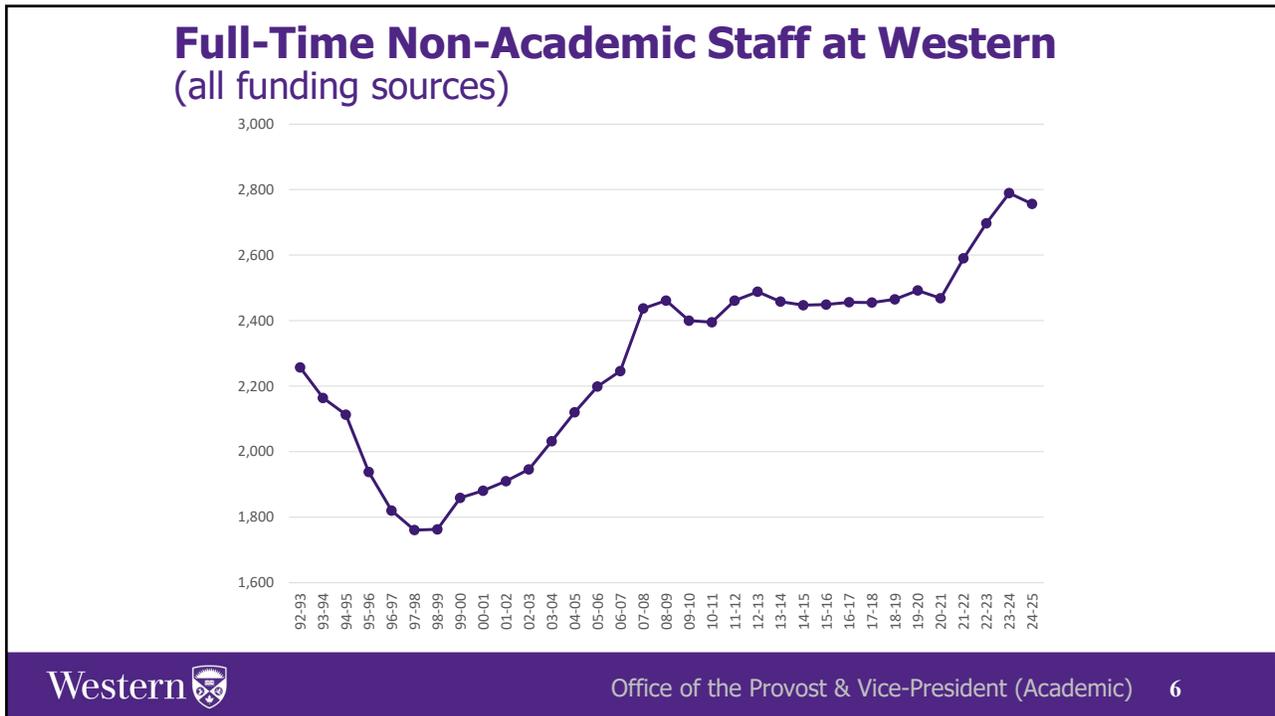
- SCUP is the chief forum within Senate for critical appraisal and coordination of long-term strategic, capital and budget plans for the University.
- SCUP makes recommendations concerning these plans to Senate.
- SCUP reviews and recommend to Senate the annual operating and capital budgets.
- Based on SCUP recommendation, Senate provides advice concerning these budgets to the Board of Governors through the President & Vice-Chancellor.

Data and Benchmarking

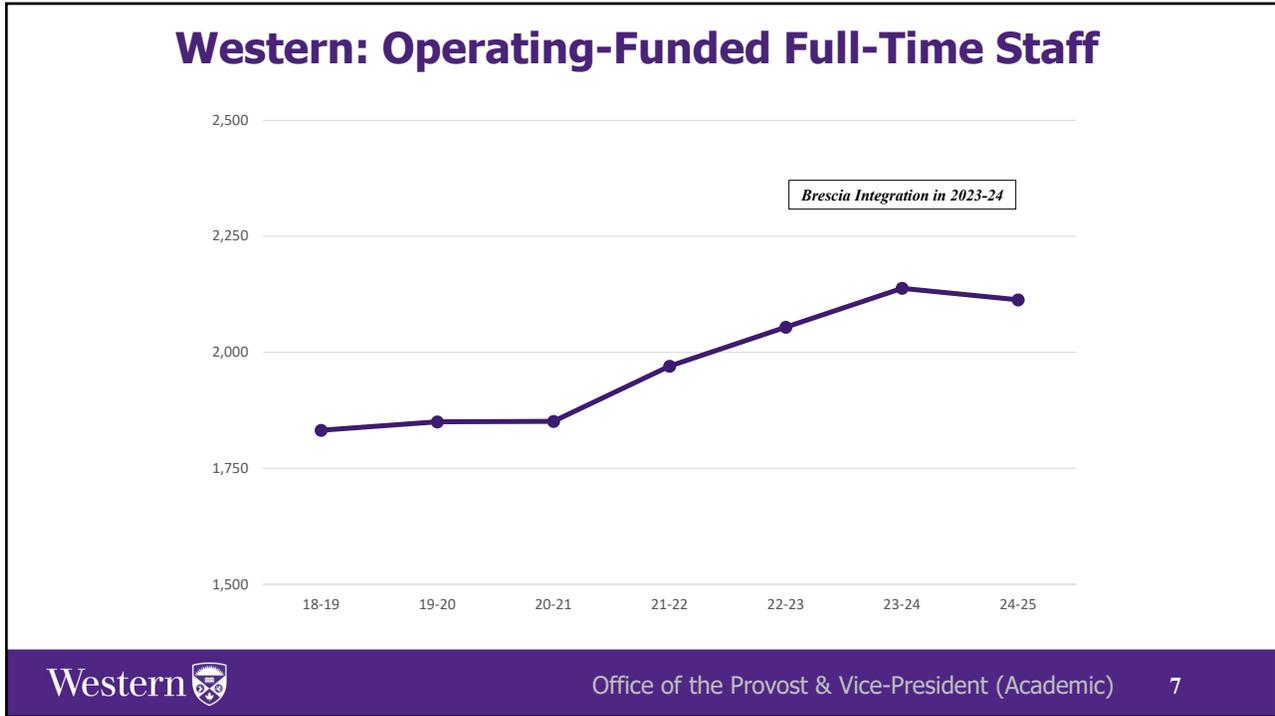
- Benchmarking data available through The Council of Finance Officers (COFO) Reports
- Benchmarking data on Faculty and Enrolments available through U15 Data Exchange, Statistics Canada
- Benchmarking data on Non-Academic Staff not available



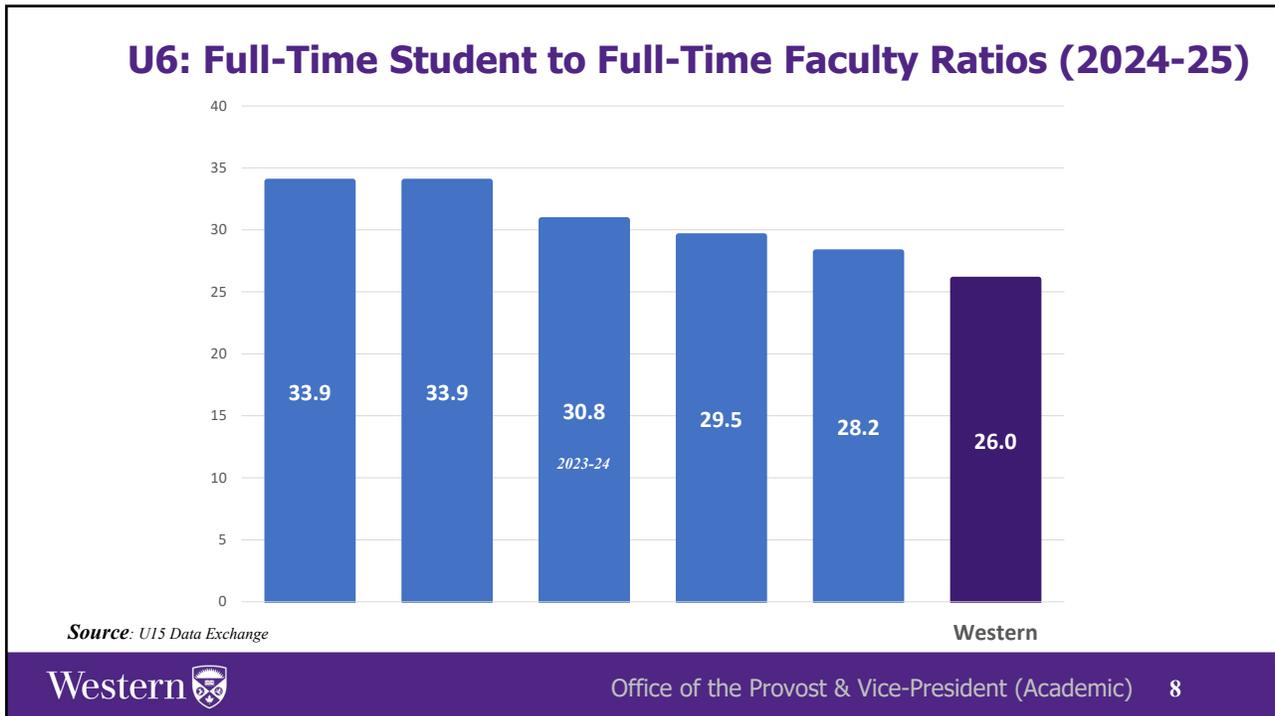
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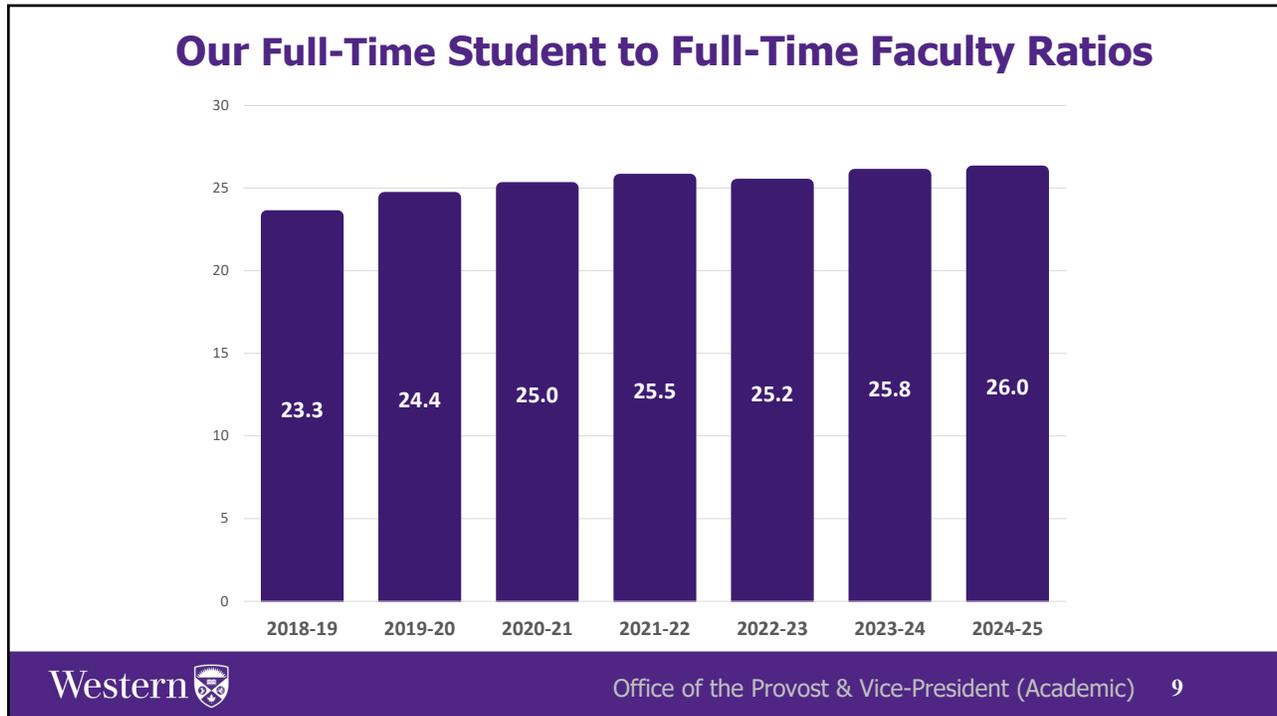
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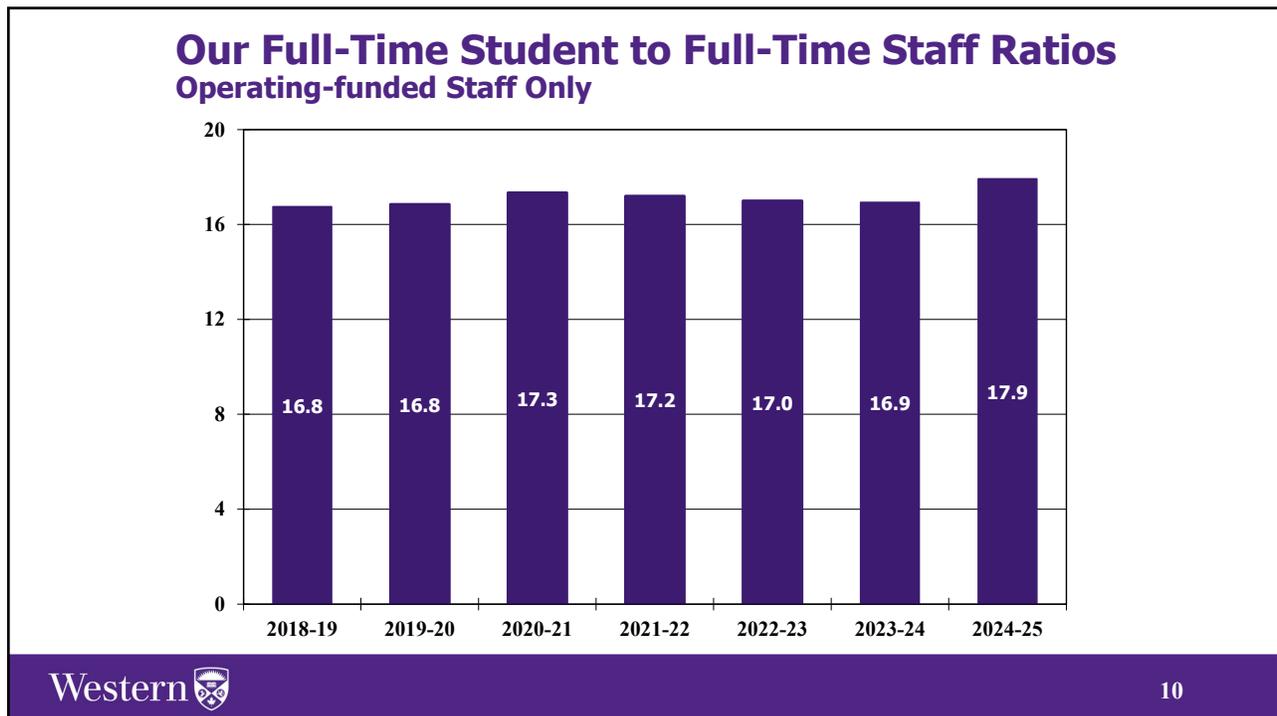
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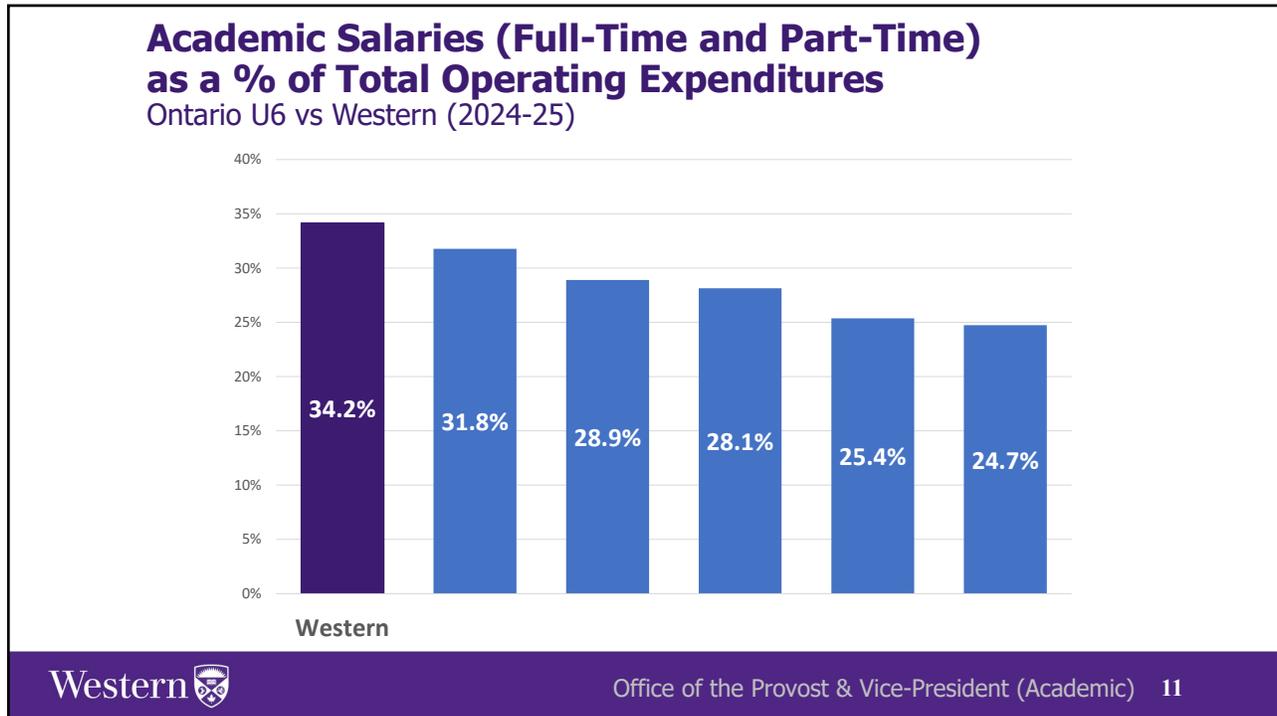
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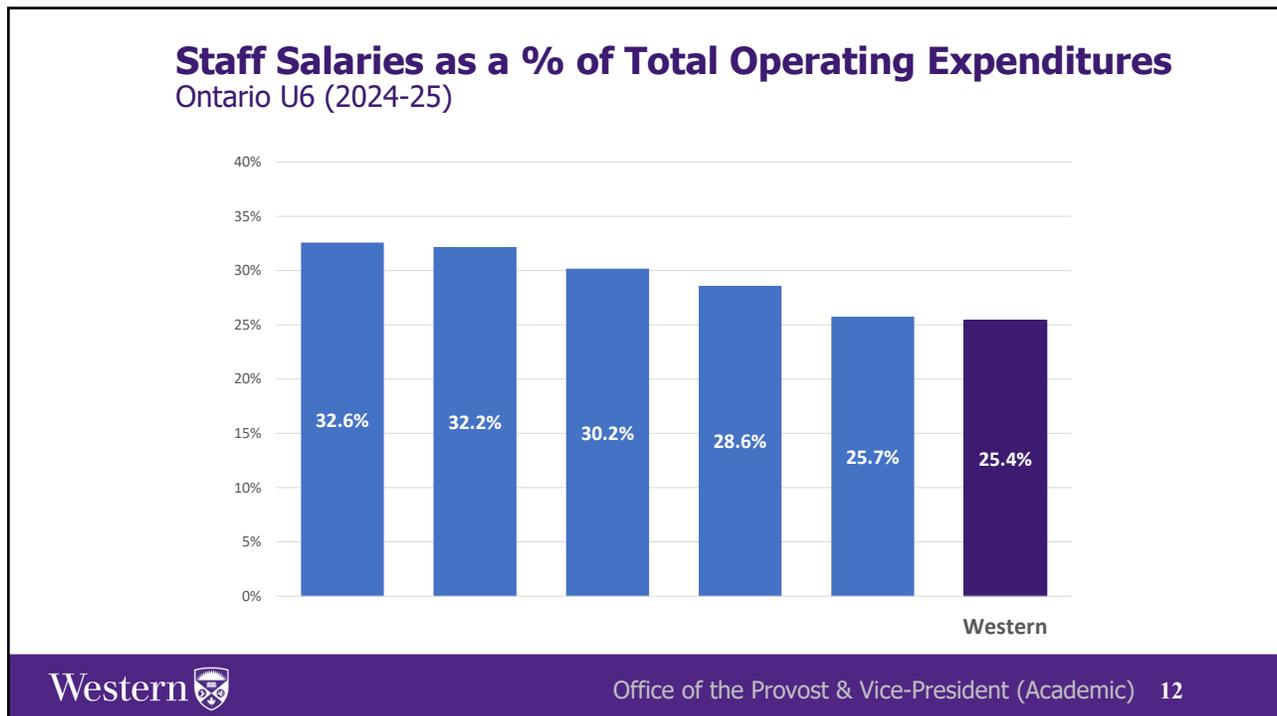
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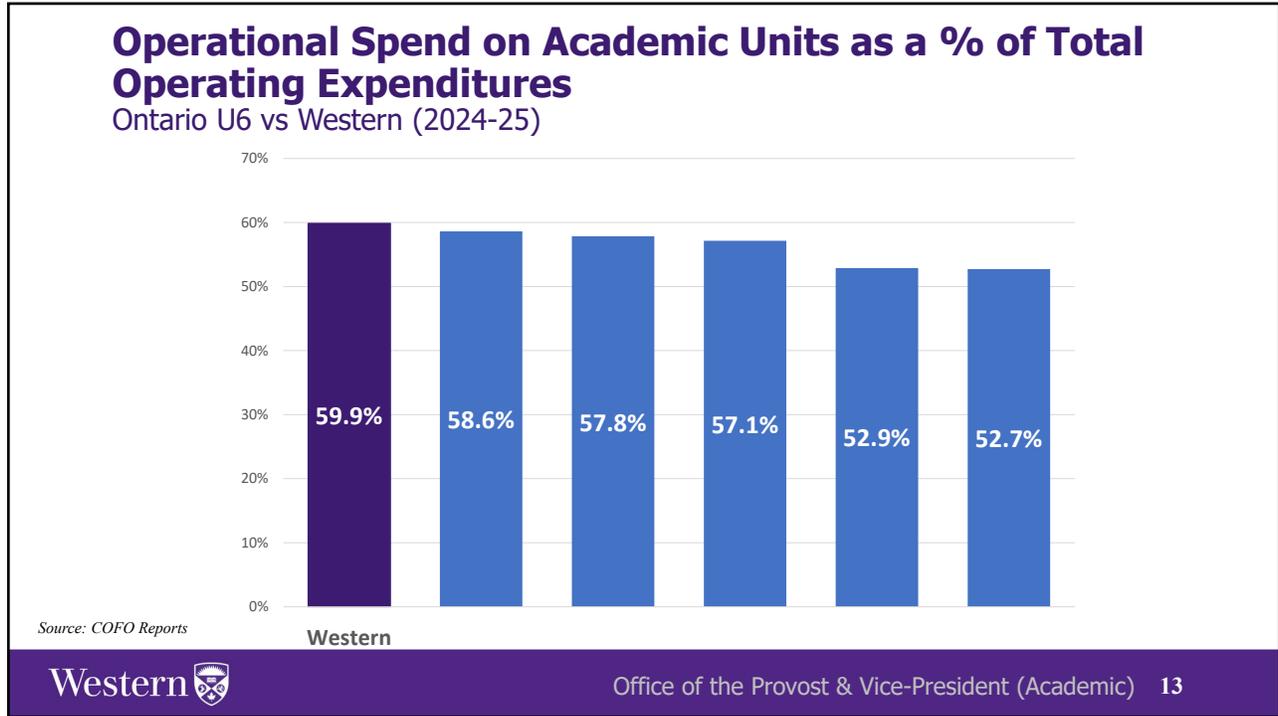
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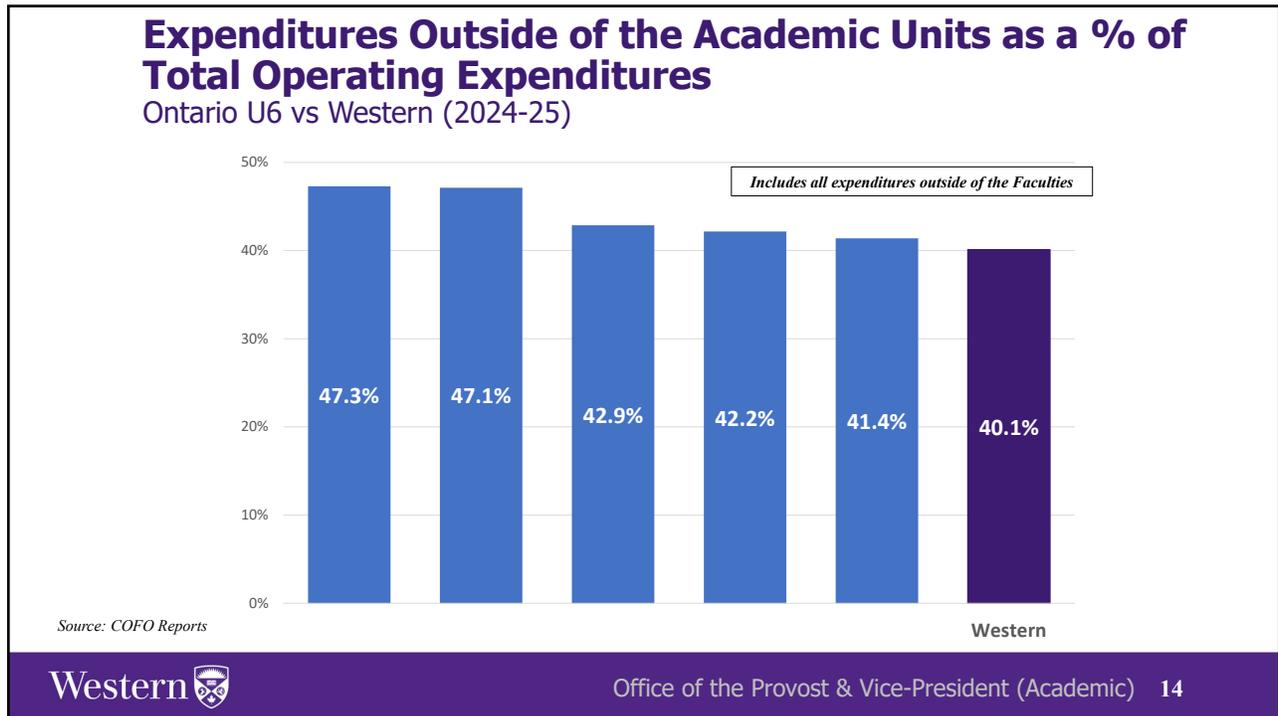
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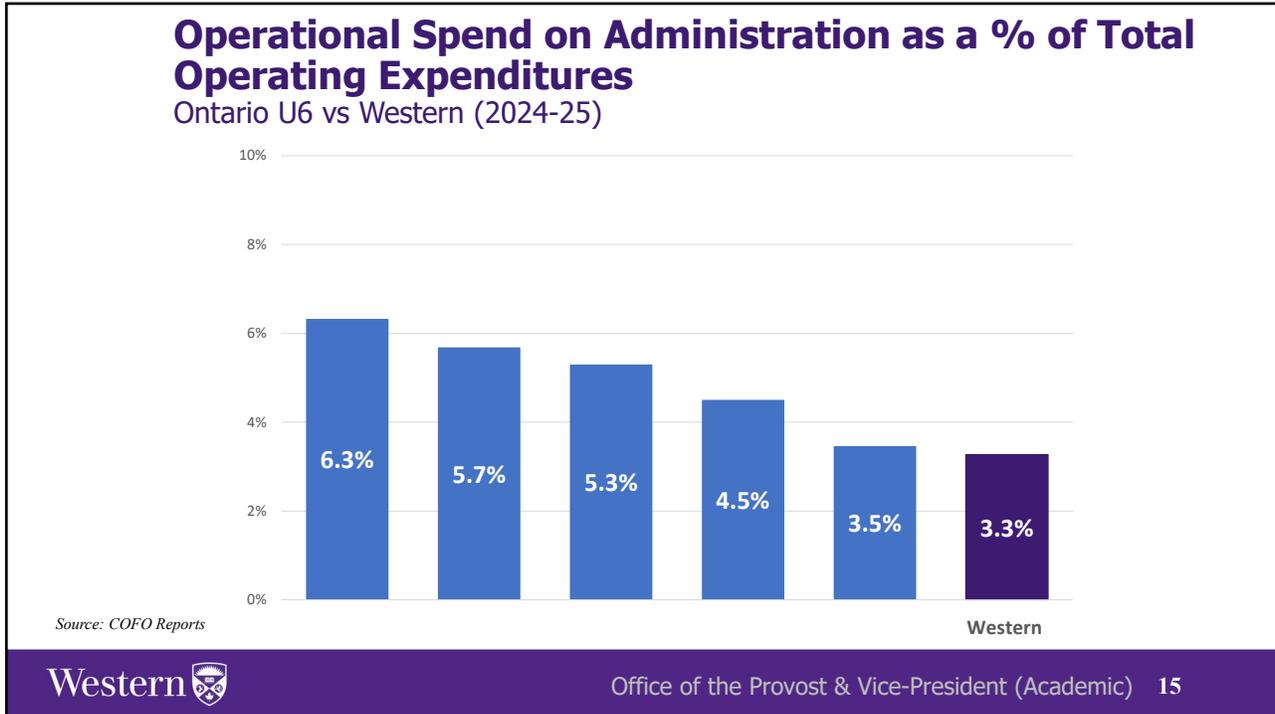
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Conclusion

- Western directs a larger share of operating spending to the academic mission than Ontario U6 peers.
- Western spends less outside academic units overall – including the lowest share on administration under COFO’s standardized definition.
- These results are based on comparable, sector-standard COFO categories.

Western Office of the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) 16

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