



Item for Information:

Report on the September 26, 2013 Meeting of the York University Senate

Submitted by David Leyton-Brown (LA&PS Representative on Senate)

1. **Chair's Remarks:** The Chair (Prof. Mykitiuk) welcomed experienced and new senators, and new committee chairs into their roles. She reminded senators that Senate has the power to award degrees, and urged all members to attend Fall Convocation. She remembered former colleagues who passed away this summer, and Prof John Greyson who is being held prisoner without charge in Egypt. She observed that the senator survey expressed a desire for opportunities to discuss issues facing the university, and today's meeting would move into Committee of the Whole to encourage questions and discussion concerning the Program Prioritization exercise.
2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the June 27, 2013 meeting were approved.
3. **Inquires and Communications:**
 - a. Prof. Axelrod (Academic Colleague to the Council of Ontario Universities) described the role and structure of COU. The role of the Academic Colleagues is to represent and inform the academic collegium regarding COU policy issues, and to produce discussion papers on various issues.
4. **President's Items:**
 - a. The President began his report by celebrating the enthusiasm of Orientation Week. Janet Morrison, Vice-Provost Students, described this year's revised approach to Orientation – coordinated (Academic and Social Orientation), theoretically informed, intentional and evidence-based. 1100 student leaders were involved in Orientation. The Lions Pride Opening Ceremony had about 2000 new students and 1100 student leaders. You Had Me At Consent, hosted by the Centre for Human Rights, had over 3000 learners. The Lions football Frosh Frenzy had the highest ever attendance with over 1500 students, in the driving rain, and the Lions defeated Wilfrid Laurier. Expected outcomes include a sense of capability, a sense of connectedness, a sense of purpose, a sense of academic culture, and a sense of resourcefulness, all leading to success and York pride.
 - b. In updating other university events, he highlighted Homecoming this weekend, the annual university Town Hall October 2, infrastructure developments, and the sudden increase in research funding. He celebrated many examples of York accomplishments.
 - c. York has launched phase 2 of its brand awareness campaign, "this is my time".
 - d. He spoke about the article "Fortress York" in TORONTO LIFE magazine, and his widely circulated response. He argued that the article presents a distorted picture of York, with data and statistics taken out of context. While there is no acceptable number of sexual assaults, and one is too many, York actually has fewer incidents than the general population. Sexual assault is a societal problem, not specific to York. York has been working actively to improve safety on campus, and to improve relations with neighbors, community partners and society. There have been many supportive letters and calls from across the province. He was delighted to see the Excalibur editorial that showed so-called professional journalists how to approach the issue.



- e. The President discussed the four MTCU summer roundtables, on differentiation, graduate enrolment allocation, online learning and credit transfer. He described the global context, ministry pressures, and York's inputs, aspirations and concerns.
- f. The National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) will be conducted this winter between January and March, and he hopes to see an increased response rate that rises to or above the national average of 35%.

5. Committee Reports

- a. The Executive Committee recommended, and Senate approved, nominations to Senate committees.
- b. Under the report of the Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee Senate moved into Committee of the Whole to discuss the Program Prioritization initiative. Provost Lenton restated the challenges facing York (MTCU differentiation pressures, reputation, enrolment, and the unsustainable gap between revenue and expenditures). She gave some insights from student application data, analyzing what York first choice and second choice applicants consider critically important, and how they perceive York on those factors. The five most important factors that we can do anything about (e.g. not location) are academic reputation, quality of teaching, career-relevant and professional programs, graduates get good jobs, and credit transfer. Students choosing U of T prioritize reputation, while students choosing Ryerson prioritize career relevance. She said that to shift York place on these factors will require strategic investment, search for new revenues, and reduced expenses. She described the Academic and Administrative Prioritization (AAP) exercise, typical criteria, and the anticipated process with a steering committee, draft templates completed by programs and services, Deans/VPs comment, two Task Forces analyzing the templates against agreed criteria, reports to the President and VPs, and collegial review and implementation. The discussion focussed on the consultation process (e.g. re criteria, template design, evaluation), the role of Senate and APPRC, the operational role of the University Academic Plan, and the likelihood of program closures
- c. On the consent agenda, the Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee recommended that Senate authorize the granting of degrees, diplomas and certificates at the university's Convocations held from Fall 2013 to Spring 2014, and the forwarding of recommendations for certification from the Faculty of Education to the Ontario College of Teachers. The Committee also reported on approval by the Quality Council of four new York programs to commence: the BA program in US Studies (LA&PS), the BA and BSc programs in Global Health (Health), the Honours Minor Program in Japanese Studies (LA&PS), and the BEng program in Mechanical Engineering (Lassonde).

The September 2013 agenda can be found at the Senate Website:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate/meetings.html>