

The Senate of York University

Synopsis

The 671st Meeting of Senate held on Thursday, November 26, 2020 via Zoom

Remarks

The Chair of Senate, Professor Alison Macpherson of the Faculty of Health, welcomed Senators to the meeting and extended appreciation for their continued participation in collegial governance processes while balancing other activities and duties during the University's remote operations. Acknowledging the landmark decision made by Senate in October to change the University's grading scheme and progression standards, the Chair applauded the Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee (ASCP) and its current and former Chairs, Senators Chloë Brushwood Rose and Kim Michasiw, respectively, for shepherding efforts associated with the initiative.

In the context of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and enhanced restrictions in the City of Toronto, President Rhonda Lenton's remarks included the following:

- gratitude to members of the University community for their efforts to maintain University operations during these uncertain times
- the importance of working together collectively to simultaneously respond to the pandemic and look ahead to post-pandemic recovery
- an update on the University's enrolment picture which is generally positive thanks in part to strengthened Strategic Enrolment Management efforts in recent years, with overall Fall 2020 enrolment numbers anticipated to exceed pre-pandemic targets despite declines in intake among domestic students at the undergraduate and graduate levels and international students
- results of a recent survey about the student experience in the remote delivery context, which suggest some uncertainty in terms of student retention going forward
- the timeliness of reflecting on who York's students are and what new emerging programming the University might offer in view of the anticipated increase in demand for upskilling and training as a result of the pandemic and advances in artificial intelligence and automation and the provincial government investment of \$59.5M to support Ontario's micro-credential strategy
- the impacts of the pandemic on research and innovation productivity

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- best wishes for the holiday season

The monthly “Kudos” report on the achievements of members of the York community can be accessed with other documentation for the meeting.

Reports

Academic Colleague to the Council of Ontario Universities (COU)

Speaking to the written report included in the agenda, the Academic Colleague to COU, Senator Brenda Spotton Visano, reported on the October COU meetings in which new COU President and CEO Steve Orsini conveyed COU’s three key priorities and a number of updates were provided on policy matters and initiatives under discussion at the provincial level.

Facilitated Discussion

Under the auspices of the Executive Committee, a facilitated discussion was held on planning for the delivery of academic programs in the Fall/Winter 2021-2022 academic year, with Senators invited to share comments and observations on the following question:

As in-person teaching and learning gradually return to York’s campuses, what pedagogical or curricular insights should be retained from the experiences of the pandemic, and how will these experiences shape the way that students learn, as well as the way that academic programs are designed and delivered in future?

A wide-ranging discussion ensued in which a number of themes surfaced, including the challenges and opportunities encountered by students and faculty members in the remote course delivery environment, the timeliness of considering the development of a pan-University understanding of online learning and the clarification of Quality Assurance parameters around changes to the mode of program delivery post-pandemic, and the importance of grounding all program planning decisions in supporting the achievement of program learning outcomes.

Senators’ input was gratefully received and, along with feedback from Faculty Councils, will inform local and pan-University planning and decision-making as appropriate for the 2021-2022 academic year.

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Approvals

Senate approved the recommendation of its Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee to change the name and mandate of the Institute for Research on Digital Learning, to be called the Institute for Research on Digital Literacies going forward.

On the recommendation of its Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee, Senate approved a minor revision to the *Policy on York University Grading Schemes*.

Committee Information Reports

Executive (Professor Mario Roy, Vice-Chair)

The Executive Committee's information items included the following:

- its ongoing monitoring of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on academic activities, with actions pertaining to the disruption outlined in its written Report
- its approval of members of Senate committees nominated by student Senators
- its review of the Faculty Council rules and procedures of the Osgoode Hall Law School and the School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design
- additions to the pool of prospective honorary degree recipients and the decision supported by the Sub-Committee on Honorary Degrees and Ceremonials for the University to issue digital copies of diplomas to graduates so they can have timely confirmation of their credential
- an update on its membership for 2020-2021
- the anticipated cancellation of the December Senate meeting

Academic Policy, Planning and Research (Professor Brenda Spotton Visano, Chair)

APPRC reported on the following items:

- Committee input to the President, Provost and Vice-President Finance and Administration on the university budget consultation
- the initiation of preliminary discussions about academic governance structures and processes for Markham Centre Campus

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- its receipt of a Report from the Organized Research Units (ORU) Sub-Committee and a briefing from the Vice-President Research and Innovation on the report on the internal audit of ORUs
- the plans for the VPRI to deliver his Annual Report in February once external data has been obtained and analyzed
- its discussion with the Provost on the Faculty Complement Renewal Strategy
- its concurrence with a proposal from the Provost to establish the Helen Carswell Chair in Dementia Care, which will proceed to the Board for review
- an update on its membership for 2020-2021

ASCP (Professor Chloë Brushwood Rose, Chair)

ASCP's information items included an update on recent implementation activities associated with the transition to the new grading schemes and the following minor changes approved by the Committee.

Faculty of Education

Discontinuation of the stop-out pathway for the Bachelor of Education program

Faculty of Graduate Studies

Changes to admission requirements for the Master of Business Analytics program, Schulich School of Business

Changes to admission requirements for the Master of Management in Artificial Intelligence program, Schulich School of Business

Changes to Graduate Studies Regulations on Academic Honesty, Balance of Degree Fees and Registration

Additional Information about this Meeting

Please refer to the full Senate agenda and supplementary material posted online with the Thursday, November 26, 2020 meeting for details about these items.

<https://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/senate/meeting-agendas-and-synopses/>

January Meeting of Senate

Senate's next meeting will be held at 3:00 pm on Thursday, January 28, 2021.