

The Senate of York University – Minutes

Meeting: Thursday, 26 March 2026, 2:30 pm

Via Zoom

P. Burke Wood (Chair)	M. Fiola	N. Madras	B. Spotton Visano
L. Farley (Vice-Chair)	S. Gajic-Bruyea	V. Mago	J. Sufrin
S. Willey-Thomas (Secretary)	M. Giudice	P. McMahon	T. Taylor
G. Alboiu	A. Glasbeek	K. McPherson	P. Theophanidis
O. Alexandrakis	K. Glover Berger	B. Meisner	J. Thienpont
M. Andrade	J. Goodyer	R. Metcalfe	J. Tingley
M. Annisette	K. Gray	M. Morrow	G. Tourlakis
A. Asif	J. Hafner	Y. Munro	J. Trevett
P. Aulakh	M. Hamadeh	Y. Murugarajan	S. Trivedi
M. Baljko	E. Hamm	R. Mykitiuk	P. Tsisis
N. Balyasnikova	A. Harvey	R. Nasrazadani	E. Tungohan
L. Bay-Cheng	M. Hayward	O. Olofe	A. Valeo
M. Biehl	M. Herbert	R. Ophir	C. van Daalen-Smith
K. Bird	R. Hili	M. Ott	J. van Wijngaarden
S. Blake	W-M. Ho	O. Ouedraogo	W. van Wijngaarden
M. Bunch	A. Horkova	P. Park	E. VanBerkel
C. Burton	T. Kelly	S. Peacock	B. Vickard
M. Cado	R. Kenedy	E. Perkins	V. Vuong
A. Chinaei	A. Kimakova	D. Peters	A. Weaver
E. Clements	T. Kirchner	L. Philipps	R. Wellen
N. Couto	N. Kishinchandani	D. Pilon	B. Weobong
C. Cowdy	T. Kubiseski	S. Rehaag	R. Whiston
A. Czekanski	M. Lambert-Drache	T. Remmel	M. Winfield
S. Datta	F. Latchford	N. Richardson	S. Winton
S. Day	M. Longford	N. Ruest	X. Yu
M. Delgerbayar	P. Lynch	P. Safai	D. Zwick
J. Eastwood	W. Maas	C. Sánchez-Rodríguez	
C. Fanelli	M. Macaulay	R. Shao	
T. Farrow	A. MacLachlan	A. Solis	

1. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the 726th meeting of Senate and highlighted recent institutional developments, including York University's new Memorandum of Understanding with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Updates were provided on the formation of the Presidential Search Committee and the development of Senate's advisory statement to the Search Committee. An updated synopsis from the February Senate meeting was posted to the Senate website.

As no requests were received to remove the item from the consent agenda, it was deemed approved.

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2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

3. Inquiries and Communications

There were no inquiries or communications.

4. President's Items

Lisa Philipps, Interim President and Vice-Chancellor, reported on activities supporting her internal engagement priority which this past month included recent visits to various teaching spaces across the campuses, engagements with student groups, notably with the Glendon Student Caucus regarding bilingual education. She also met with YFS leadership to discuss concerns about the upcoming OSAP changes sharing with the student leaders that the administration is urging the government to update its OSAP calculator, reviewing the University's \$50 million internal student financial aid programs, and encouraging students to consider completing credits during the summer term under current grants as measures to mitigate the impact of the OSAP changes. Congratulations were extended to the men's soccer and women's field hockey teams, noting York is the only school in Ontario to win two national gold medals this year.

In the external context, the President provided updates on partnerships, highlighting a new *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation as a commitment to ongoing truth and reconciliation work. Community initiatives were also noted, such as the Gateways to Pathways Careers Forum at the Markham campus, York's role as the sole Canadian member of the Hemispheric University Consortium, and additionally the upcoming federal visit to the Markham campus to showcase science and biotechnology programs and to discuss federal infrastructure funding for the York School of Medicine.

On the topic of building learning capacities, advancements reported were a 26% growth in co-op work term opportunities over the last year, an upcoming expansion of active learning spaces with 300 new seats planned for Accolade West and Stong College, and recent successes in experiential education recognizing students who received national and provincial awards.

The President concluded by announcing that the submission of the University's next three-year operating budget to the Board of Governors will shift from April to June, with Senate receiving the budget report at its June meeting. Additional time was needed to analyze the Ministry's February funding announcement and the detailed information that has been gradually released to universities in recent weeks. Delaying

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the budget to June ensures that revenue projections are based on the most accurate and up-to-date information, a cautious step that aligns with the revised timelines of other Ontario universities. While the recent provincial changes offer some financial relief and flexibility, they are incremental and do not solve long-term financial challenges, necessitating continued efforts to find efficiencies and diversify revenue streams.

Committee Reports

5. Executive Committee

a. Senate Membership for 2026-2028 (Notice of Statutory Motion)

The Executive Committee gave notice of its intention to move a statutory motion establishing the membership of Senate for the period of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2028. The proposed membership sustains the current student seat allocations for the 2026-2028 period, however Executive agreed that a comprehensive review of student membership should be undertaken for the 2028-2030 period in alignment with the expected shift in student FTEs across the Faculties with the School of Medicine launching in 2028 and increasing enrolments at Markham.

In response to a question about the student membership review, it was confirmed that a comprehensive consultation exercise will be done that includes student input.

b. Information Items

Further to the Executive Committee's role as Senate's liaison with the Board of Governors in accordance with the Rules of Senate, the Committee reported on a joint meeting of Senate Executive and the Board of Governors Executive committees that was held on March 10, 2026. The topic of discussion centered on shared perspectives of the University, specifically considering York's current strengths alongside opportunities for institutional improvement.

Referring to the last communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors regarding the Board's rejection of Senate's recommended revision to the *Principles Governing a Presidential Search*, a Senator opined that the communication does not satisfactorily address the request for a full rationale for the Board's decision. Having had confirmed that the Principles revision was not discussed at the recent joint meeting of the Board and Senate Executive committees, the Senator hoped that the Chair of the Board, as a Senator, will attend an upcoming Senate meeting to provide a further response on the matter to provide a fuller response.

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The Committee reported the receipt of a formal communication from Glendon Student Senators, and shared that communication with Senate. A Senator requested an elaboration and update on how the specific matters and concerns raised by the students are being addressed by the administration. In response, the President advised that she recently met with the students at the Glendon campus where they discussed the long-term planning for sustainable bilingual post-secondary education in light of enrollment declines, ensuring academic pathways for students to access the full breadth of York's offerings, and a commitment to structurally include student voices in the future design process. The Provost will be discussing further with Glendon Council in May possible student pathways to support the student experience.

The Committee reported on the following information items:

- approval of two student senators to serve on Senate committees.
- its ongoing review of the rules of Senate.
- Status of the review of the *Senate Policy on the Academic Implications of Labour Disputes Resulting in the Disruption or Cessation of University Business* (Disruptions policy) with the expectation of bringing the revised policy to Senate for approval in April.
- discussion of challenges that arose from the recent changes from in-person to remote delivery when the campuses were closed due to inclement weather, a topic to be continued.
- Its ruling out of order a substantive motion submitted by a student senator requesting academic accommodations for a student day of action in late March.
- The consideration of a request for a Senate discussion on the academic impact of campus security initiatives, with a decision to be made by Executive after fuller information about the status of the initiative is received.
- The consideration of a hortative motion submitted by a senator, which was subsequently revised in response to Executive's review and included on the agenda of this meeting under Business for Which Due Notice Has Been Given.

6. Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee

Reported for information by the Committee was:

- The ongoing development of the next University Academic Plan, with timing of the Senate and community consultation on a draft Plan to be confirmed in the coming days
- Its continuing discussion of Senate's questions on the 2025 annual research report referred to it by the Chair of Senate from the February Senate meeting

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- The planned approach and timelines for APPRC’s review of the *Senate Policy on Organized Research Units* and its associated *Guidelines and Procedures*

7. Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy

- a. Establishment of degree of Master in Athletic Therapy, School of Kinesiology and Health Science, Faculty of Health

It was moved, seconded and *carried* that **Senate approve the establishment of the Master in Athletic Therapy (MAT) as a new degree type, to be housed in the School of Kinesiology and Health Science, Faculty of Health, effective Spring 2027.**

- b. Establishment of Master in Athletic Therapy degree program, School of Kinesiology and Health Science, Faculty of Health

It was moved, seconded and *carried* that **Senate approve the establishment of the Master of Athletic Therapy (MAT) degree program, as set out in Appendix A, to be housed in the School of Kinesiology and Health Science, Faculty of Health, effective Spring 2027.**

- c. Closure of streams in joint BSc degree program in Environmental Science, Faculty of Environmental & Urban Change and the Faculty of Science

It was moved, seconded and *carried* that **Senate approve the closure of the Biodiversity and Conservation Stream, and the Environmental Dynamics Stream in the joint Environmental and Urban Change (EUC) and Faculty of Science (FSC) BSc in Environmental Science degree program, housed in EUC and FSC, effective Fall 2026.**

- d. Closure of Classics and Classical Studies BA degree programs, Department of Humanities; and establishment of new Stream in Ancient World Studies in BA degree program in History, Department of History, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies

It was moved, seconded and *carried* that **Senate approve the closure of the Classics and the Classical Studies BA degree programs, housed in the Department of Humanities, LA&PS, effective F2026, and the establishment of a new direct-entry Stream in Ancient World Studies, ANCW, in the Department of History, LA&PS, effective F2026.**

- e. Addition of part-time option and changes to degree requirements in Master of Business Administration in Technology Leadership degree program, Schulich School of Business

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It was moved, seconded and *carried* that **Senate approve the addition of a part-time option and changes to the degree requirements for the MBA in Technology Leadership degree program, housed in the Schulich School of Business, effective F2026.**

8. Academic Policy, Planning and Research / Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy

- a. Report of the Joint Sub-committee on Quality Assurance

Senate received the report of the Joint Sub-Committee on Quality Assurance transmitted by the Academic Policy, Planning and Research Committee and the Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee.

9. Business for Which Due Notice Has Been Given

- a. Hortative motion: Interim University leadership

It was moved and seconded that

Senate hereby expresses its view that significant decisions affecting the longer-term direction of the university should await the appointment of a new President.

Speaking to the motion, the mover advised that its intent is to convey the opinion that in the unusual circumstances of having several interim incumbents in senior administrative positions, major changes that would affect the long-term direction of the University should wait until a new president is appointed through the legislative process and their mandate defined; it was not meant to challenge the statutory authority of the Interim President.

A wide ranging and robust debate ensued. Questions were raised regarding the typical duration of a presidential search and the specific definition of "major decisions". Several Senators voiced their strong opposition to the motion, arguing that it falls outside of Senate's jurisdiction and contradicts the statutory authority afforded by *The York University Act* (Section 13 (3)), which provides acting presidents the same powers and duties as a sitting president. Concerns were also noted that the motion's vagueness could impede positive and necessary initiatives from proceeding, citing the recent memorandum of understanding with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation as an example.

Those supporting the motion understood its intent as conveying the expectation that the management and administration of the University is the required responsibility of those who have generously stepped into these interim roles, without the additional

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burden of responsibility for altering the long-term future course of the University. Emphasized by those speaking in favour of the motion was its framing as hortative and therefore not contravening the authorities defined in The York Act.

On a vote, the motion was defeated with 27 voting in favour and 63 opposed.

10. Other Business

There was none.

Consent Agenda Items

11. Minutes of the Meeting of February 26, 2026

The minutes of the 26 February 2026 meeting were approved on consent.

12. Senators on the Board of Governors re: 3 March 2026 Meeting of the Board (M. Giudice, J. van Wijngaarden, for information)

The synopsis of the Board of Governors meeting of 3 March 2026 as conveyed by Senators Giudice and van Wijngaarden was noted.

Patricia Burke-Wood, Chair _____

Sarah Willey-Thomas, Secretary _____