
SENATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Report to Senate with Recommendations

June 2022

UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



Table of Contents

1. Background 5

2. The University of Waterloo’s Senate 5

3. Senate Governance Best Practices..... 6

4. Consultations 6

5. Themes and Summary of Discussions at the Senate Executive Committee 7

6. Recommendations..... 8

Appendices 13

1. Background

In November 2021, the University's Senate Executive Committee discussed the prospect of undertaking a Senate Governance Review in light of a recent similar exercise undertaken by the University's Board of Governors. The committee agreed to proceed with a review, with an eye to improving Senate's governance and operation. Members identified a number of potential benefits in such an exercise which they believed would lead to improvements like: making Senate discussions more strategic, streamlining meeting frequency, finding opportunities for better connections with the Board of Governors, refining agenda materials, and generally enhancing Senate's function and operations. In January 2022, Senate approved the Terms of Reference for the work (see Appendix A), which would be executed by the Senate Executive Committee (see Appendix B for the list of members of the Senate Executive Committee).

2. The University of Waterloo's Senate

The [*University of Waterloo Act, 1972*](#) delineates Senate's membership and powers (see Appendix C). Senate is comprised of *ex-officio* and elected members. *Ex-officio* senators include the president who is the chair of Senate, the vice-president, academic & provost, who is the vice-chair of Senate, other vice-presidents, the Faculty deans, the heads of the federated and affiliated university colleges, and other senior administration. Elected senators come from the Board of Governors, the faculty of the University, the faculty of the federated and affiliated university colleges, the graduate and undergraduate students, and alumni. Senate's powers and authorities relate to the University's educational policies. This includes matters such as: establishment of organizational structures, academic programs, and curricula of study; setting the qualifications for members of faculty and the standards for admission; long-term academic planning; conferring degrees; and making recommendations to the Board about the use of University resources, or federation or affiliation with other institutions. A number of [committees and councils](#) have been created by Senate to assist it in the exercise of its powers.

The Senate has four Bylaws which regulate Senate business and its supporting committees and councils. They are:

[Bylaw 1 – Business and affairs of Senate](#). Describes general rules and protocols, including: definitions; titles; Senate's meeting schedule; meeting requirements and materials; rules about quorum, conflict of interest, representations, service on committees, terms of office; open and closed meetings; the secretary; bylaws; and Faculty constitutions.

[Bylaw 2 – Committees and Councils of Senate](#). Describes the establishment, membership, and the powers and duties of the Executive, Finance, and Long Range Planning Committees and the Graduate and Research, and Undergraduate Councils. (Note: the Honorary Degrees Committee, Honorary Member Committee, and University Committee on Student Appeals were founded by Senate separately.)

[Bylaw 3 – Selection of Members of Senate](#). Describes election processes, details, and timelines for elected faculty and graduate student Senate seats. (Note: Undergraduate student elections are managed by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association as is described in the Bylaw.) It also defines the University Secretary as the University’s Chief Returning Officer and describes representation by alumni and the Board of Governors.

[Bylaw 4 – Naming of additional *ex officio* members of Senate](#). Describes the resulting need for increases to the number of members in other constituencies to maintain the ratio of such numbers as defined in the [University of Waterloo Act, 1972](#) when additional *ex officio* members are added to Senate. (Note: The current Senate membership composition per the Bylaw is [tracked online](#).)

3. Senate Governance Best Practices

The University of Waterloo’s Senate must be guided by the University’s mission:

The University of Waterloo’s mission is to advance learning and knowledge through teaching, research, and scholarship, nationally and internationally, in an environment of free expression and inquiry.

In addition, it should exercise its role in the University’s bicameral governance structure guided by sound principles relating to:

- Academic freedom
- Stewardship, accountability, and transparency
- Stakeholder participation and engagement
- Diversity of representation and of thought

4. Consultations

At the beginning of its work, the committee devised a survey of current and past Senators (back to 2016; see Appendix D). It was made available to approximately 260 individuals during the month of February 2022; 123 responses were received. In addition, an external consultant was hired to assist the committee with analyzing the results of the survey and completing 1:1 interviews with key individuals (see Appendix E). The consultant was Christine Tausig Ford, President, Higher Thinking Strategies, and former Vice-President, Universities Canada. Ms Tausig Ford produced a report on her findings for the committee which it received and discussed at its May meeting (see Appendix F).

5. Themes and Summary of Discussions at the Senate Executive Committee

Through the course of its meetings during February, March, April, and May 2022, the committee discussed a variety of subjects relating to Senate's operations. Members discussed Senate meetings generally, including what topics and issues it should discuss and consider, how to enable time for strategic discussions, how to identify key strategic academic matters for discussion, and whether to implement an annual work plan. They looked at how frequently Senate meets, including the need for a rationalized schedule for Senate to do its work properly but efficiently. Consideration was given to improving Senate agenda packages and materials by identifying opportunities for improvements to their structures and associated materials, implementing cover sheet templates for consistency of reporting and providing necessary information to inform decision making. The complement of, and the current practices, structures, terms of reference, and mandates of Senate's committees and councils were also examined. The committee discussed ways for Senate to engage on critical matters like equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and Indigenous relations, and considered key recommendations relevant to governance in the [Report of the President's Anti-Racism Task Force](#), specifically those relating to the federal government's 50-30 Challenge and University governance body membership. Members noted that there are two critical areas in need of development: orientation – there is a need to develop an orientation framework and implement it to inform new and ongoing Senators and the community about a variety of key governance-related matters; and, communication – there is a need to develop and implement a plan for ongoing and two-way communications. Finally, members considered Senate's relationship with the Board of Governors, and discussed the benefits of working with the Board to identify ways to mutually inform each other about their respective business, of seeking opportunities for shared events and conversations, and of identifying areas of mutual interest for which a joint working group or committee should be formed.

From these discussions, a number of key themes emerged, including:

- The need to consider ways to increase delegations to committees and councils to make more time at Senate meetings for increased engagement on critical topics and strategic matters
- The desirability of enabling and facilitating Senate to focus on areas of strategic and broad importance
- The need for a variety of improvements to Senate agendas and materials, including implementing templates for reports to Senate to ensure context and critical details are included to inform Senate decision-making
- The desirability of finding ways for Senate to have a line of sight into, and receive reports about key academic matters that do not arise currently via reports from its committees and councils
- The benefits of establishing an annual Senate Work Plan
- The need for orientation and a better understanding broadly of Senators' roles and responsibilities
- The benefits of implementing a portal as a resource for Senators and the whole community about Senate business, and, as a resource to hold reference materials, offer a way to raise questions, and provide a way to transparently execute some Senate business asynchronously
- The need for improved communications generally
- The benefits of a review of Senate's Committees' and Councils' mandates and memberships
- The desirability of finding ways to connect with the University's Board of Governors

A list of the committee's recommendations resulting from this work follows. A chart of the recommendations with responsibility and timing is attached at Appendix G.

6. Recommendations

I. Meetings, Agendas, and Materials

In order to reduce time spent at Senate meetings on *pro forma* matters, establish a work plan, improve the flow of meetings and the quality of agenda packages and presentations, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Delegate appropriate Senate matters elsewhere, with proper reporting back (*e.g.*, approval of the rosters of graduands).
2. Create a work plan that is mindful of the academic calendar and discussed by the Senate Executive Committee so Senators will have expectations about what is coming to Senate throughout the governance year.
3. ¹In the work plan, include regular reports on specific institutional activities from the vice-presidents (*e.g.*, SMA, international activities, research, *etc.*).
4. In the work plan, ensure time is provided for discussions about key academic matters (*e.g.*, admissions, tuition, early discussion of new initiatives).
5. In the work plan, create paths for reporting to Senate on matters outside of committee and council business (*e.g.*, activities at the Centre for Teaching Excellence, the Student Success Office, the Quality Assurance Office, the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Relations, and Operations Committees, and other offices which are addressing institutional commitments about wellness, Indigenization, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism; potential reporting from the Faculty Councils).
6. Streamline and improve the flow of agendas.
 7. In agendas, move *pro forma* items to the consent agenda and remove items entirely that are not required or do not serve the Senate's mission.
8. Establish firm rules regarding presentations to ensure they are brief and stimulate discussion, and that materials and the presentation are distributed in the meeting's agenda package.
9. Create templates for report cover notes which ensure that clarity is provided about: due diligence that has been completed to date, governance path, the nature of discussion at the committee or council from which the report derives, financial implications and risks, pros and cons, and what Senate is being asked to consider.
10. Define the appropriate contents of the reports from the Faculty deans (and consider the committee's suggestion that faculty and administrative appointments and promotions be made available in a shared database).
11. Consider whether Faculty Councils should submit reports to Senate and receive reports back.

II. Method

In order to make improvements to Senate's overall schedule and operation, to provide members with an introduction to the Senate and their roles, to enhance communications with the community, to implement technological tools to enhance Senate governance, and to articulate key information about the Senate, the following recommendations are proposed:

12. Acquire a portal for Senate to enable communications, receive questions, provide informational resources, and be a way potentially to execute some Senate business including voting at or between meetings.

¹ Note: indented recommendations are associated with the recommendation above.

13. Revise the annual Senate meeting schedule to reflect the rationalized annual work plan. (Key considerations: ensuring transparency; enabling substantive strategic discussions; respecting essential academic practices and schedules, and key matters requiring approval or endorsement by Senate (*e.g.*, budget); the potential for alignment with the Board of Governors' cycle of meetings; in discussion with the Board, potential reconsideration of the start of the governance year to align with academic cycles; how meetings may be held (in-person, virtual, and hybrid).
14. Ensure the timing of meetings in the day to allow more equitable participation.
15. Assess and acquire technology to provide better engagement at meetings (*i.e.*, leverage break-out rooms for strategic discussion).
16. Implement an annual assessment by Senators of Senate performance.
17. Review the composition and size of Senate, including from an equity, diversity and inclusion perspective.
18. Design and implement an orientation program for Senators.
19. For the orientation, consider the following:
 - Review what the Board is doing with its orientation activities for inspiration
 - Following a session for all members, provide sessions specific to constituencies
 - In consultation with the Board of Governors, identify opportunities for shared sessions, including consideration of a joint learning session at orientation, or at the Board Retreat which would benefit both bodies
 - Include equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism training
 - Include a session dedicated to creating welcoming and safe spaces to provide feedback, share in the discussion, and raise dissenting opinions
 - Encourage incoming Senators to attend meetings as guests before their service begins
 - Provide subject-specific information and checklists that can be accessed asynchronously
20. For orientation and ongoing education, create information pieces about:
 - Senate's authorities / governance structure / Bylaws
 - Governance principles
 - The annual Senate meeting schedule and work plan
 - Senate membership and its constituencies
 - The standing committees and councils of Senate and their powers
 - A flow chart of Senate decision-making
 - The Board of Governors and its authorities / governance structure / Bylaws
 - Meeting agendas – structure and format
 - Meetings – quorum, order of business, decisions and voting, conflicts of interest, confidentiality
 - Expectations and responsibilities of Senators
21. Design and implement a Senate communications plan. Consider:
 - Ways to communicate broadly what occurs at Senate meetings
 - Ways for the community to bring its views to Senate
 - Advice for Senators about how to share information from meetings with colleagues
 - Earlier distribution of draft minutes following meetings
 - Raise awareness among members of the community of the importance of Senate in academic decision-making. Consider ways to encourage more interest among faculty, students and staff

III. Committees and Councils

In order to ensure alignment with Senate's needs, and to empower the bodies appropriately, the following recommendations regarding Senate's supporting committees and councils and their mandates are proposed:

22. Review Senate's committee and council structure and recommend changes, including whether any additions are desirable (*e.g.*, the establishment of a Senate Governance Committee), and whether there are any matters or areas for discussion which would benefit from a Senate working group.
23. Consider greater delegation to decrease duplication, while continuing to ensure Senate oversight.
24. Ensure committees and councils act as forum to discuss strategic issues which they should bring to Senate for discussion.
25. Review how appointments to Committee/Councils are made to ensure transparency.
26. Strike an *ad hoc* committee (in conjunction with, or in communication with the Board of Governors) to consider a topic of joint interest, for example: relevant recommendations (re: governance body memberships) from the President's Anti-Racism Task Force, or the student experience.
27. Identify pathways for the two Student Relations Committees and the Student Services Advisory Committee to bring information to Senate
28. Direct the committees and councils to review their terms of reference, membership, and what is delegated to them, and make recommendations for improvements. They also should consider ways to enable strategic discussions at meetings and explore options regarding chair-ships. Some recommendations to particular committees and councils:
 29. Executive Committee – identify topics or themes for presentation and discussion at Senate; formalize the Chancellor appointment process; consider formal adoption of Rules of Order; consider whether Senate's size could be reduced; consider ways to encourage more interest in Senate by the community.
 30. Finance Committee – with discussion with the Board of Governors, consider an annual joint meeting with the Board's Finance & Investment committee regarding the budget; consider membership (fewer ex-officio members who already have multiple venues to review and comment on the budget).
 31. Long Range Planning Committee – use as a venue to stimulate strategic discussions to bring to Senate; and assess key academic performance indicators.
 32. Graduate and Research Council – discuss and consider the memo from the associate deans of research re: that council.
 33. Both Councils:
 - Reconsider what is sent to Senate for approval or information, and what is sent in the consent and regular reports
 - Include greater detail and context for materials sent to Senate for decision (*e.g.*, the nature of discussion at the meeting, the council's assessment of the matter; explicitly what Senate is being asked to decide and why)
 - Consider whether a curriculum committee/s should be created

IV. Relations with the Board

In order to implement best practices with respect to the relationship between the University of Waterloo's Senate and the Board of Governors, and identify ways the two bodies may work together, the following recommendations are proposed:

34. Review scholarship on governance best practices with respect to Senate and Board relations and include in orientation.
35. In conjunction with the Board Governance Committee, evaluate the benefit of a Joint Senate-Board “meeting” or event, and what joint orientation activities should occur (also see #19). Consider interactions in a social setting to help bridge gaps in understandings between Senate and the Board of Governors.
36. In conjunction with the Board Governance Committee, evaluate the benefit of a joint Senate-Board Committee (also see #26).
37. Create a module about the Board in Senate’s orientation and recommend to the Board Governance Committee that it do likewise (also see #20).
38. Implement a regular report to the Board about recent Senate business and recommend to the Board Governance Committee it do likewise.

Appendices

Appendix A – Governance Review Terms of Reference

Appendix B – Senate Executive Committee Membership

Appendix C – Senate’s Powers in the *University of Waterloo Act, 1972* and Senate Bylaws 1-4

Appendix D – Results of the Survey of Senators

Appendix E – Report of the External Consultant

Appendix F - Excerpts from Senate Executive Committee minutes regarding the Review

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

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Appendix A – Terms of Reference

Senate Executive Committee Senate Governance Review 2022

Terms of Reference

The Senate Executive Committee will undertake a review of the governance activities of the University of Waterloo Senate and its committees and councils, and will make short- and long-term recommendations to Senate for consideration and approval. To inform its work, the committee will review academic governance and best practices at peer institutions.

Mandate

The Senate Executive Committee will consider matters related to the academic governance of the University of Waterloo undertaken by Senate and its committees and councils. In particular, it will:

1. Review the practices of the Senate and its committees and councils, including without limitation: structures, terms of reference and mandates, frequency of meetings, and, will make recommendations to Senate for development and/or change where appropriate with a view to improving efficiency while maintaining transparency and accountability. The review will examine the format of meetings, including the role of virtual or hybrid meetings, as well as the use of portals or other technology to support dissemination of materials and activities such as voting.
2. Review and make recommendations regarding the content of Senate agenda materials to ensure items for discussion or decision are informed by appropriate supporting documentation.
3. Consider ways to facilitate discussion and engagement about academic issues of strategic importance at Senate, and, ways to better align Senate's annual cycle with that of the University's Board of Governors to ensure both bodies are mutually informed. With respect to the latter, consider, in consultation with the Board Governance Review Committee, and make recommendations for potential joint sessions of the Senate and Board of Governors and/or respective committees.
4. Consider and make recommendations for orientation/onboarding and ongoing support for Senators, including clarifying Senators' responsibilities.
5. Consider and make recommendations for improving communications about the role and work of Senate to the broader University community.
6. The committee will consult with Senators, Governors, and other interested stakeholders in the UW community.
7. Regularly update Senate about its activities, via reports from the President, and at the completion of its work, produce a report with recommendations for Senate's consideration and approval.

Term

The committee will execute its mandate beginning January 2022 with a view to completing a final report for Senate's consideration in Spring 2022. Some recommendations may be suggested for implementation in Fall 2022, and some may be proposed for further consideration and/or implementation in the future.

Meetings

The committee will add time to its regular monthly meetings to undertake the work. It may establish smaller working groups, and/or direct the secretary to investigate particular matters and suggest improvements.

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Appendix B – Senate Executive Membership

2022-2023

Chair: Vivek Goel, President and Vice-Chancellor

Secretary: Karen Jack, University Secretary

Ex-Officio Members

James Rush, Vice-President, Academic & Provost

Jeff Casello, Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs

Lori Curtis, President of the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo

Faculty Representatives

Arts: Joan Coutu

Engineering: George Freeman

Environment: Clarence Woudsma

Health: Luke Potwarka

Mathematics: Christiane Lemieux

Science: Graham Murphy

Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) Representative

Carol Ann MacGregor

Undergraduate Students

Benjamin Easton

Catherine Dong

Graduate Student

Glaucia Melo

Alumni

Michael Beauchemin

2021-2022 members who participated in the work, but departed the committee in May 2022:

Faculty Representative from Environment: Johanna Wandel

AFIW Representative: Kristina Llewellyn

Undergraduate Student Representative: Oudy Noweir

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Appendix C – Senate’s Powers in the *University of Waterloo Act, 1972* and Senate Bylaws 1-4

Powers of the Senate

22. *The Senate has the power to establish the educational policies of the University and to make recommendations to the Board of Governors with respect to any matter relative to the operation of the University and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, this includes the power,*

- (a) to make recommendations to the Board of Governors relative to the creation, establishment, maintenance, modification, or removal of organizational structures such as faculties, schools, institutes, departments or chairs within the University;*
- (b) subject to the approval of the Board of Governors, in so far as the expenditure of funds is concerned, to establish, maintain, modify or remove, curricula of all courses of instruction including extension courses;*
- (c) to determine policies concerning the qualifications of faculty members within the University with respect to appointments or promotions in rank, or to the granting of tenure, in connection with research or teaching or academic administration;*
- (d) to determine standards of admission of students to the University;*
- (e) to consider and determine the conduct and results of examinations in all faculties or academic units;*
- (f) to hear and determine appeals from the decisions of the faculty councils on applications and examinations by students;*
- (g) to confer degrees, diplomas and certificates or other awards in any and all branches of learning and in any subject taught in the University or its federated or affiliated colleges;*
- (h) to confer honorary degrees in Divinity, without fees, upon the recommendation of any theological college federated or affiliated with the University;*
- (i) to confer honorary degrees in any department of learning;*
- (j) to undertake, consider and co-ordinate long-range academic planning;*
- (k) to consider and to recommend to the Board of Governors policies concerning the internal allocation or use of University resources;*
- (l) to consider and to recommend to the Board of Governors the federation or affiliation of the University with any college for teaching any branch of learning;*
- (m) to create councils and committees to exercise its powers;*
- (n) to provide, if considered necessary, for an executive committee which shall act in the name and on behalf of the Senate between regular meetings of the Senate; and*
- (o) to enact by-laws and regulations for the conduct of its affairs.*

Senate has four Bylaws to help Senate exercise its powers:

Bylaw 1 – Business and affairs of Senate

- Articulates Senate rules and protocols generally.
- It includes: definitions; titles; Senate’s meeting schedule; meeting requirements and materials; rules about quorum, conflict of interest, representations, service on committees, terms of office; open and closed meetings; the secretary; bylaws; and Faculty constitutions.

Bylaw 2 – Committees and Councils of Senate

- Articulates the establishment, membership, and the powers and duties of the Executive, Finance, and Long Range Planning Committees and the Graduate and Research, and Undergraduate

Councils. (Note: the Honorary Degrees Committee, Honorary Member Committee, and University Committee on Student Appeals were founded by Senate separately.)

[Bylaw 3 – Selection of Members of Senate](#)

- Describes election processes, details, and timelines for elected faculty and graduate student Senate seats. (Note: Undergraduate student elections are managed by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association as is described in the Bylaw.)
- Defines the University Secretary as the University’s Chief Returning Officer.
- Describes alumni and Board of Governors representation.

[Bylaw 4 – Naming of additional *ex officio* members of Senate](#)

- Describes the resulting need for increases to the number of members in other constituencies to maintain the ratio of such numbers as defined in the [University of Waterloo Act, 1972](#) when additional *ex officio* members are added to Senate.
- The current Senate membership composition as per the Bylaw is [tracked online](#).



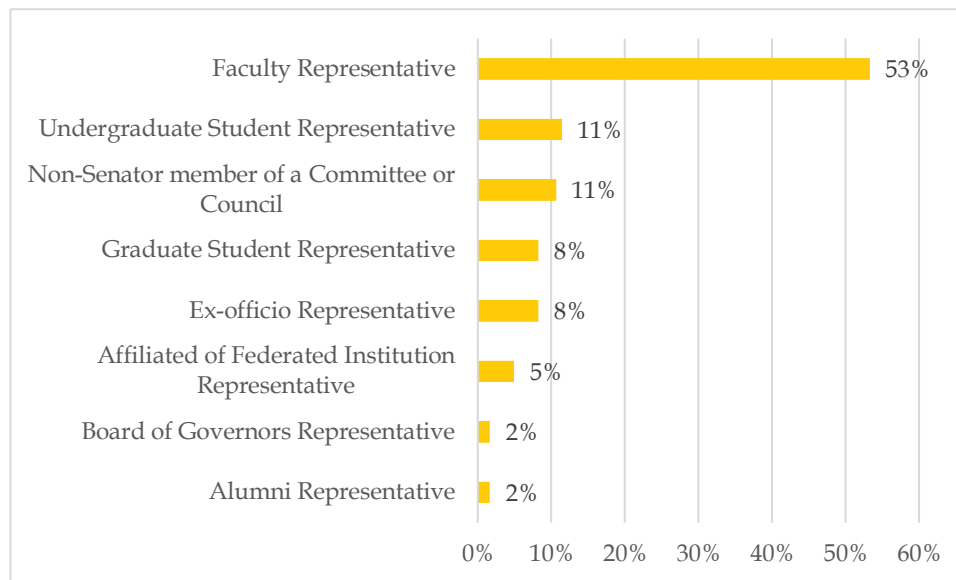
Table of Contents

General Questions.....	3
Senate Meetings and Agenda Packages.....	5
Senate Committees and Councils	25
Executive Committee	25
Finance Committee	27
Graduate & Research Council.....	29
Honorary Degrees.....	31
Honorary Member of the University.....	33
Long Range Planning.....	34
Undergraduate Council.....	36
Comments and Areas to Improve	38

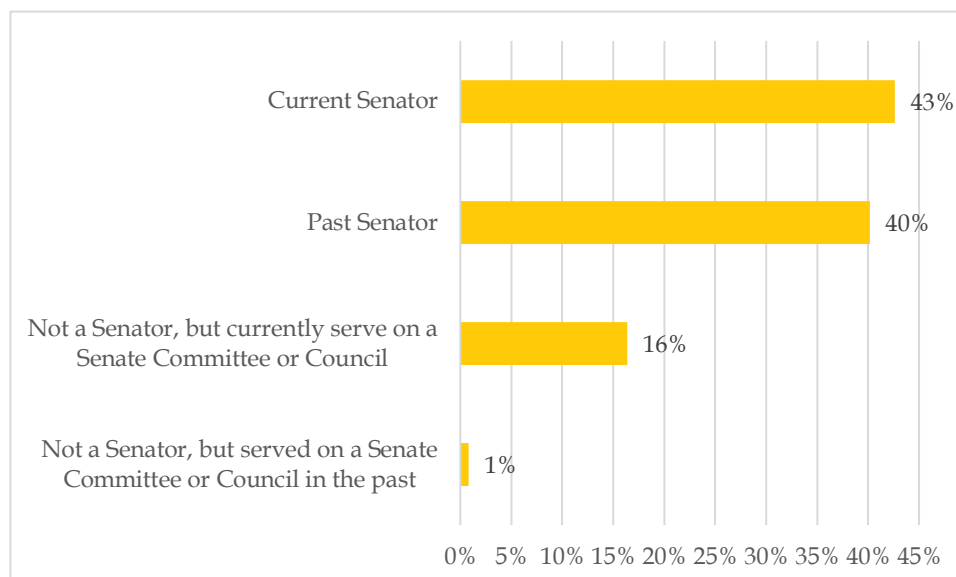
122 out of 260 respondents.

General Questions

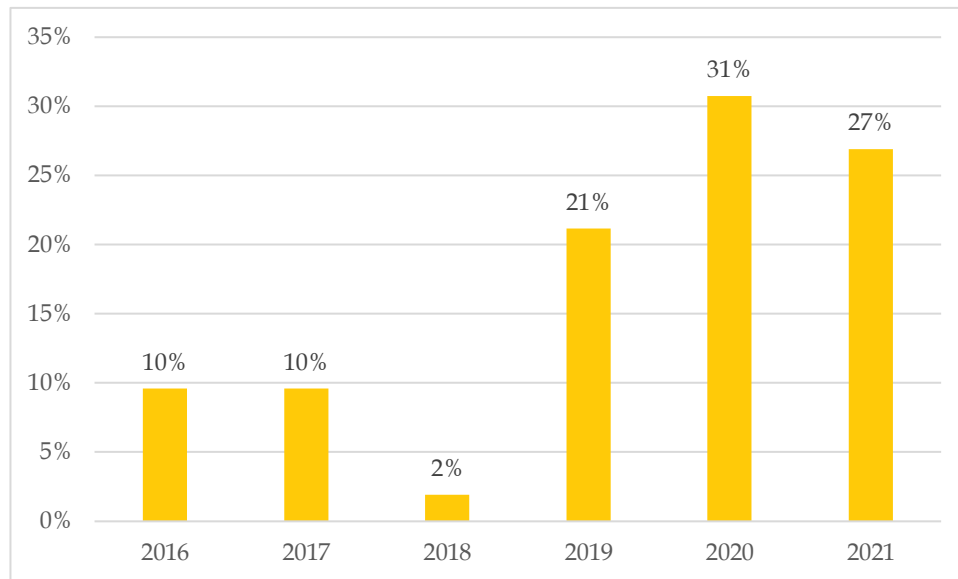
1. From which Senate constituency are/were you appointed or elected? I am/was a:



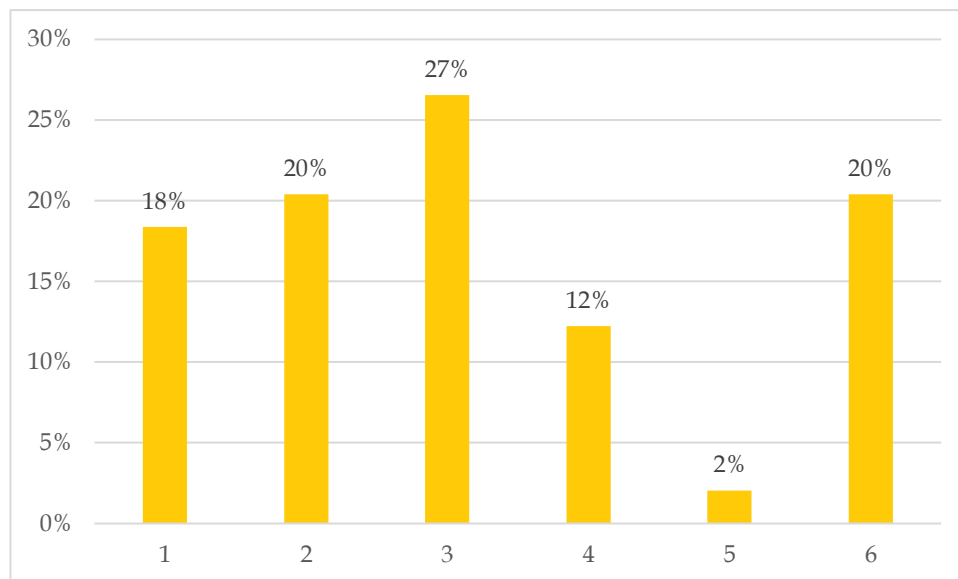
2. I am/was a:



3. Which year did you start your appointment? (Question to current Senators)

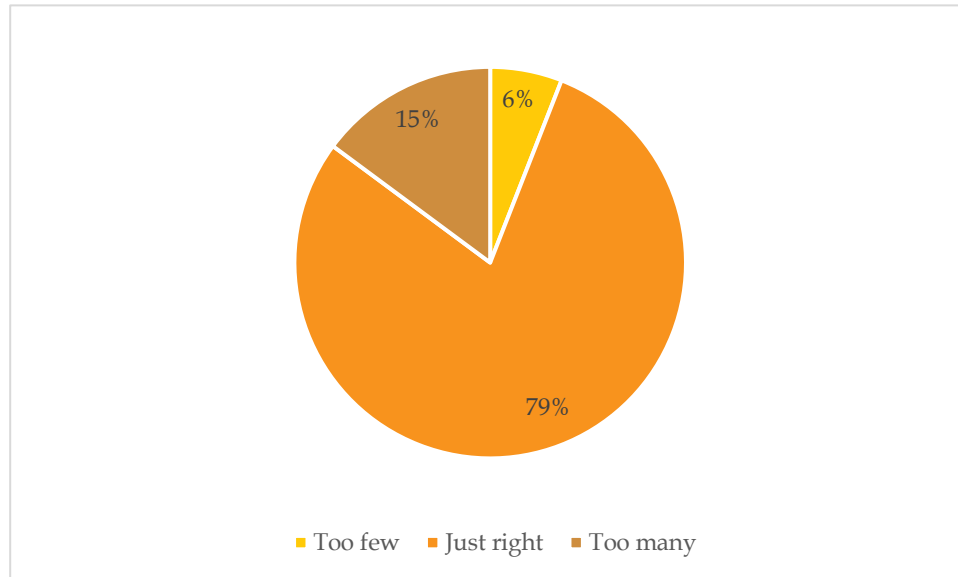


4. How many years did you serve as a Senator? (Question to past Senators)

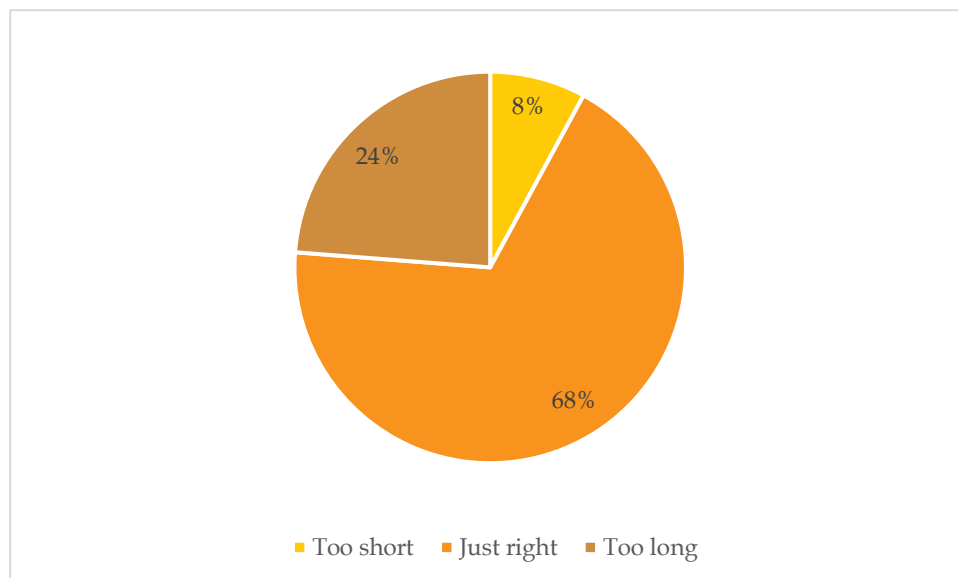


Senate Meetings and Agenda Packages

5. Please comment on the frequency of Senate meetings (9 per Governance year):



6. Please comment on the length of Senate meetings (between 1 and 2 hours):



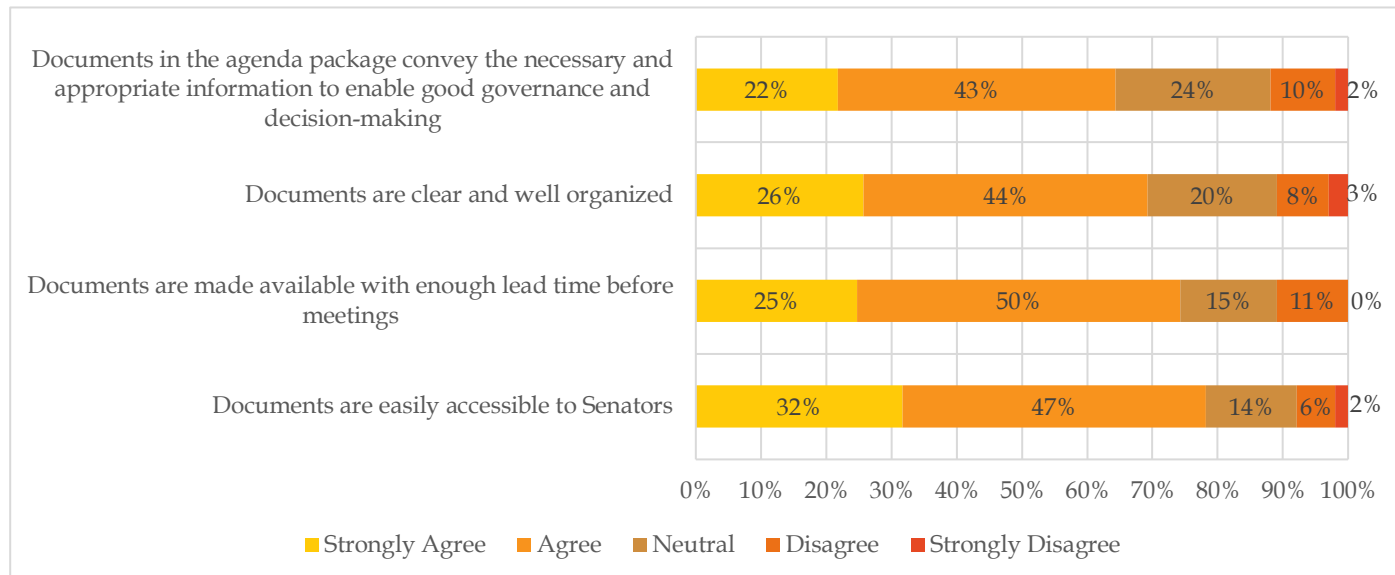
7. Do you have any comments regarding the frequency and/or length of Senate meetings?

- No, they seem fine
- The problem is on average the senate length is okay but occasionally it's very long and other times it's very short. For the most part it's good but it's hard if a person has say child care responsibilities at some specific time and we go over - they're sort of forced to leave.
- Too much time spent on general information sharing and operational (rather than strategic) decision.
- like all meetings - the emphasis should be on discussion and decision making - senate meetings tend to give too much air time to senators who want to speak up - but have no bearing on the outcome or decisions - i.e. too many voices..
- We should hold the December meetings, especially if virtual meetings are an option. When the December meeting was cancelled the university had not yet announced the switch to virtual classes in Winter 2022. With a "lack" of agenda items, it would have given us good time to discuss this and understand potential return options.
- They occasionally extend after 5pm, which is difficult for some people.
- From my understanding, post-pandemic senate meetings ran for longer than in-person or pre-March 2020 meetings, so my comment about them being too long is only relevant to recent meetings
- I thought the rough monthly meetings was great. I would not advise more meetings, as people could get too operational with so many meetings, or lose their interest.
- The meetings that go for nearly 2 hours are too long! And many are dominated by lengthy reports from individual branches of the university.
- Length: I think we could consider more aggressive use of the consent agenda, and leaving more time for discussion. Anything that can be in pre-read or pre-circulated (esp. slide decks) should be. Frequency: nine does seem like a bit much and I worry it might have led some colleagues to not participate. Perhaps six is better.
- Frequency and duration is good. Some meetings go long but it is infrequent. During my tenure senate meetings were well managed. It was dissapointing to see so many senators working on email grading papers etc. Not sure why they wanted to be on senate.
- Length could be longer if there was more in-depth discussion opportunities
- No. Seem about right to me.
- Not really. It seemed appropriate.
- Often times the discussion was cut short because we were tight for time. I believe that better decisions would be made if we provided more time for discussion. I should note, this is only valuable if the senators show up prepared... which, clearly many of them did not (i.e., asking questions that were blatantly in the agenda package and the prepared materials - so this also wasted time)
- They were sometimes way too long. The estimates on how long each portion would take were usually off.

- Some agendas are too long for the allotted time
- If meetings had more time to discuss critical issues then the length is fine or could even be longer. Currently the meetings feel long because there is little real engagement with critical issues.
- Sometimes too many issues are raised and the meetings can go on for a long period of time, but this is rare
- Too many and too long of anything is not good - regular meetings is beneficial but they need to be better signposting of the various actions/areas of concern that need to be covered. That would help in guiding the meetings.
- They should fit the needs of the discussion. Otherwise they seem transactional instead of using the Senate for what it should be used for.
- Ideally, meetings could be capped at one hour.
- Could use asynchronous options to initiate discussions and handle routine matters. Could introduce a formal break so meetings aren't such a marathon.
- I think they could be every other month
- Try to make six Senate meetings per governance year.
- Can be shorter
- Why aren't there any in May and August
- The frequency and length seem fine. The senate needs to be better utilized for planning purposes. Half an hour (?) at each meeting should be used for this purpose.
- I would prefer more meetings for shorter periods of time. The meetings could more informative/discussion based on some issues and less cumbersome on others
- They are/were appropriate wrt frequency and length.
- I answered just right to the previous question, but in reality, the appropriateness of the length depends on the suitability of the content. If the discussions are meaningful and engaging, the length is not important.
- Should be timed according to all three terms - maybe 2 per term for a total of 6?
- Vivek does a better job of keeping things on track, so the length is less of an issue. There may be cause for concern in the dependence on good Chairing.
- I think the frequency of meetings is just right. There were occasional meetings that dragged on a bit but generally the length was appropriate and I appreciated the timing suggested in the agenda.
- I served a total of 12 years on Senate; in the years I have served, more and more time is given to non-essential items such as presentations of faculty research. While this is meritorious, it is not properly Senate business. If such presentations are to be kept, I recommend that the meetings be longer. Senate is and should be a deliberative body, not a venue for top-down communications. I'd reign in the length of the President's updates & Q & A sessions, too.
- It always seemed as though there was enough on each agenda to justify a meeting. Meetings did not feel to drag on.

- The frequency seems sufficient for the type of business that Senate conducts. Admittedly, they're a little long for comfort though – and that's with actual discussion being rare. I think that the length of the meetings decreases Senators' willingness to engage in discussion about agenda items.
- While I appreciated the opportunity to listen to research presentations, my feeling is these take up too much time and have often pushed important votes quite late, even past the scheduled end of the meeting. Senators with other obligations often had to miss crucial votes and several times decisions had to be tabled due to lack of quorum.
- It is difficult for parents of young children to stay on campus past 4:30 or 5pm. I would have preferred meetings to start earlier so that daycare pick ups can be accommodated. This may be why there are very few younger and early career Senators at UW.
- <1.5 h
- We should formalize not meeting in December. We could probably reduce the remaining meetings by two.
- I thought meetings were often too short in that some meetings just consisted of routine reporting. If you're going to bring 80+ people together, make the time worthwhile by putting forward substantive issues to discuss and debate. Use Senate to consult on ideas, not just perform mechanics of governance.
- Considering the nature of matters to be discussed at Senate, I worry about making the meetings shorter as this will create an urgency around time available for discussion that may limit the ideas shared; I would rather the meetings be booked as they are and end early if discussion doesn't occur rather than shorten the meetings and potentially miss out on discussions.
- Length is appropriate for current frequency; more frequent and shorter meetings could be better
- They are appropriate given the level of discussion we expect. If senators hold stronger opinions they may be helpful to lengthen slightly. 9 a year is a good balance.
- It's hard to gauge what is "just right" given the two years of pandemic. Longer meetings would be OK if there were more engaging topics. Regular reporting could be briefer
- good information provided in advance
- I cannot answer Q4&5 since there is a presumption that is unstated and unclear. (Since you FORCED me to answer them to submit, I selected two choices at random. Any forced choice makes you questionnaire data results meaningless. Didn't anyone teach you that before you put this together? So much for UW education quality ...) If it is about the current format, too much and too long. If we actually have substantive discussion with different viewpoints accepted and taken seriously and not derided, then I would be in favour of that.
- I find that they're quite long, and much of it seems to be taken up by procedural and uncontroversial items, which seems ripe to me for elimination or handing off to Senate Exec committee to approve, unless controversy arises

8. Please comment on Senate agenda packages:



9. Do you have any comments about Senate agenda packages?

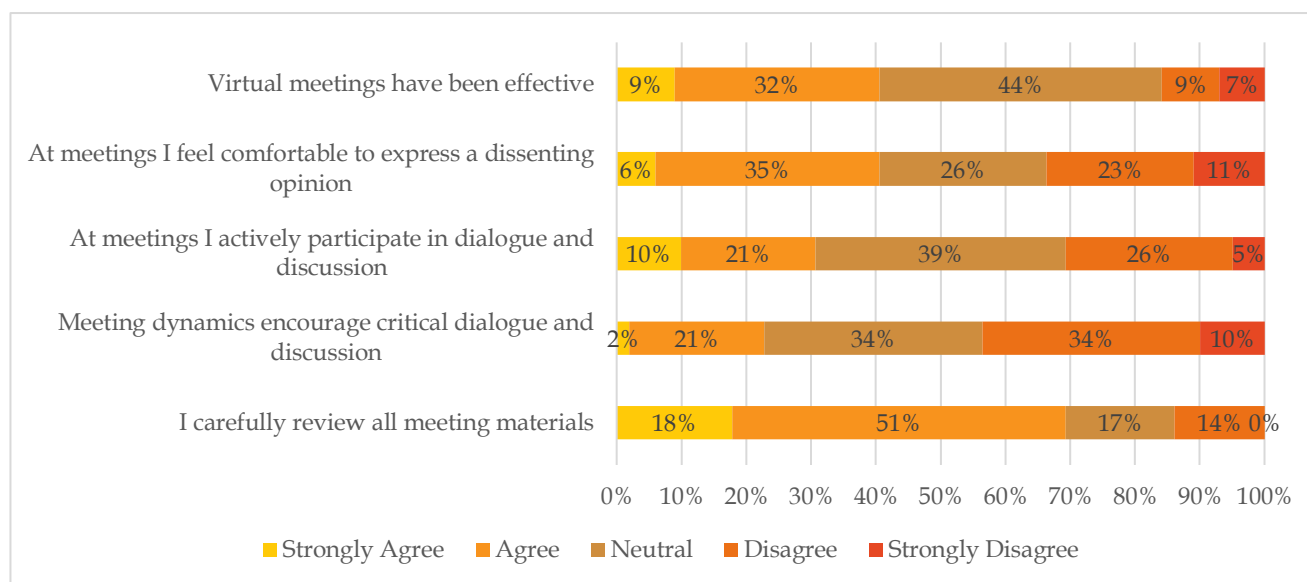
- Generally too long, and overwhelmingly full of details that cannot meaningfully be read.
- The last few packages have been fantastic. I would still like to see the reports from the faculty embedded in the main package - tacked on at the end - if possible. Otherwise it's an extra click which probably isn't needed.
- perhaps colour code or bring a synopsis of where decisions need to be made and where it's "for information" - i.e. rather than a 10 page submission on new programs or something
- Given the amount of material, it may be good to flag beforehand parts that might require an extended discussion.
- I preferred the PDF files with bookmarks on the side. I usually just download the PDF and use it instead of the SharePoint site.
- They are very long and hard to get through. It would be helpful if, as per Word Documents, there was a navigation pane on the side that we could use to find the right documents. I appreciate that the table of contents is hyper-linked, but it's awkward to have to keep going back to the table of contents to find the section.
- This is my personal opinion. I was Feds/WUSA president, so I had time to review these packages (it was my job). I can see however, how first students would not have time to read the entire packages. However, I do not think that is a reason to shorten them
- Too much content and not enough time to read them...
- The packages are usually 50-100 pages long - and one needs to dig for the pages relevant to decision making.
- The new SharePoint site that Diana (I think) put together is great.

- My impression is that very few senators read them. A lot of issues that would seem to be controversial pass without discussion and I think that is because people have not read the material provided to senators.
- As an element of an overall critique about the strategic level being too high-level, the documents circulated are often too high-level as well.
- I can't access the information on line as I have no login or password. Each month I have to request the package to be sent to me directly.
- There was absolutely no orientation to the Senate. So it took a while for me to understand the role and figure out the agendas.
- Sometimes the agenda packages seemed to omit certain points that would have made a difference with how the discussion would go (i.e., we would be given bullet points about changes in Engineering, because Engineering wants this to happen and so it should happen... sorta kinda thing. It was annoying)
- It would have been nice to get it a bit earlier.
- It would be helpful for the agenda to have hyperlinks with each section of the package for ease of reference. Apologies if this already occurs and it is my access issue that does not seem to have that feature.
- These are largely uninformative unless one has the time to dive deeply into the 200 pages. Summaries of information and previous discussions (at lower levels) would be most helpful.
- Love the new SharePoint links for each category!
- Each item could have a summary of key points before hitting the mass of detail. Recent attempts to reduce the size by off-document links are terrible. We should decide whether the format is digital-first or print-first.
- Ideally hyperlinks in the agenda would take you to the relevant page; adding page numbers was an improvement
- I know it's typical for minutes to be circulated as part of the package for the following meeting, but I've never understood why this is how it is done. If I missed a senate meeting, I would appreciate being able to catch up via the minutes (even if labelled provisional or draft) without waiting until the next meeting.
- My preference would have been to have the packages a bit earlier, to ensure there was enough time to review, discuss as needed with others and come prepared for the meeting.
- It would help to have stronger direction to information that should be reviewed ahead of a vote. The document is long and that information can be buried in reports.
- I was there when we transitioned from paper to pdf/online. By and large the package is very good. Some of the individual items in it are possibly not formatted for best readability.
- With 80 to more than 100 pages, the agenda package in its current form is pretty heavy. Consider to have a power point format to contain key points for meaningful discussion.
- Too long sometimes, too much Jargon. Need summaries

- Agenda packages should be broken up into two parts. The first should BRIEFLY introduce each agenda item, especially highlighting important points (pro and con) in the discussion leading to its introduction. The second part can have the technical details of various items that have such (and can be referenced from the brief introduction, so searching is reduced).
- Too long, pagination is often not consistent (difficult to follow in meetings). Too much focus on matters that are never discussed.
- I would like more information about senate subcommittee activities.
- Although well-organized, the giant document is difficult to navigate; perhaps better to arrange in individual sub-themes via posts on a dedicated secure website?
- Well-organized, no issues.
- One week is too short a time at certain times of the year for proper review of complex matters.
- Overall, Senate Agenda packages were well organized and easy to review/understand. It sometimes felt as though some of the context was missing
- They are very difficult to navigate through - it would be easier if the individual sections (that match the agenda items) had a branching structure for each item
- It helps to give the relevant page number on the front page
- The packages were very long, as a graduate student it was hard to know which aspects I should read, whether all of them, or only parts. The time given was also a bit short to review materials. If this isn't possible to adjust due to the nature of the agenda items, then I think giving clearer guidelines of what different people might wish to focus in on in their reading, could be one way to improve it. Of course in an ideal world student members would read everything, but it is a lot of dense reports, and I think it would be better for everyone if students came informed and having read the key items. This would reduce general fact-type questions from the student reps, and also ensure the discussions at Senate are on the real issues at play.
- it is rare enough that I wish I had other documentation, that I don't remember any specific instances, just a vague feeling
- I appreciate the recent improvements with page numbers on the agenda pages, new sharepoint site, etc. They make them much easier to navigate. I know people complain they are too long, but Senate is the top academic body at a U15 university. Of course they contain a lot of information!
- The packages themselves are fine. Some of the reports provided by other committees/units are ridiculously detailed. There can be a lot of overkill.
- Accessing archival agenda/minutes is difficult and inhibits institutional memory for senators who are not members of the UW administrations (e.g. undergraduates)
- The UW SharePoint Site is acceptable, but could be improved by moving to a system with a better UI. Functionally, having a file folder system rather than a system of hyperlinks would be an improvement. Something like OneDrive or Google Docs.

- I would say that documents ought to be made more detailed and presentations and such in-meeting be made less detailed, to speed up business. Have everyone read it on their own time.

10. Please comment on your experience before and at Senate meetings:



11. Do you have any comments about your experience before and at Senate meetings:

- Too much information / presentation, not enough actual meaningful discussion.
- I love virtual meetings - saves a lot of time in commuting and makes it more accessible. Hoping for the end of my remaining term to be online. I wish though we were required to do *something* to vote yes on a motion - it would force more people to listen I think. I personally find it hard to get too far out of line with a dissenting opinion given I'm not continuing/tenured but lately I've been trying to be a bit braver in speaking up when I think things are wrong.
- The virtual senate is good in many ways, but certainly not conducive to critical dialogue and discussion - we tend to see only a few faces and hear mostly the same voices.
- I was more fully engaged when we were in-person. When accessing the senate meeting on-line it is very easy to be distracted with e-mails, etc..
- Discussion is monopolized by a small group of vocal senators. There are times when comments/questions seem to be at a very operational level which should have a better place at the committee level.
- It was hard to be empowered in a role with such unclear parameters, when it's not clear where the line is, so to speak, it's hard to push and advocate
- (never did a virtual meeting)
- Not enough time to read, learn and discuss issues

- The meetings feel mostly pro forma and decisions seem like rubber-stamping.
- I think the only issue is the length of presentations, meaning the q + a can sometimes feel a bit rushed. I also don't know the best way to handle this, but the q + a format tends to turn into "call-and-response" between the reporting administrative member and the body of Senate. More cross conversation and free-ranging discussion would be good. But it is also hard to do so in a large group. Perhaps some use of breakout groups etc could help make it a more deliberative forum.
- I am not one to speak much unless I really have something to say. As such in senate I never voiced an opinion. Senate is/can be intimidating due to the sheer number of people in the room. I sat on a number of senate committees and found it easier to voice an opinion. I never felt like there was suppression of opinion, more that people would voice an opinion beside me but not convey that to senate as a whole. Human nature to not draw attention to themselves in large groups?
- Fearing pushing back against the rubber stamp as a student can be truly intimidating.
- A lot of Senate business is designed to launder a process already-completed, and is not conducive to meaningful discussion. However, meaningful discussions at Senate are not usually dismissed when they occur.
- The process works well and I enjoy the meeting being virtual.
- It felt like a club to which I didn't belong so whatever I would say was inconsequential. You needed to be in the know and known to contribute.
- Certain members from certain faculty's had a sense of entitlement that needed to be shutdown.
- It was usually the same 5-10 % of Senators that had comments/questions. Something should be done to encourage everyone to participate.
- There is little critical discussion on the most pressing issues facing the university. At times, the Senate seems like a rubber stamp feature for programs and programming already decided. For example, there has been no discussion at Senate about the return to work plan.
- I have only participated in virtual senate meetings, but they have been well organized
- If committees have already reviewed, then the Senate should not review the material again - there is insufficient time for that, and it is a distorted discussion. Dissenting views may be permitted, but have no influence unless it's from FAUW. There is a huge amount of tradition and inertia in effecting change. There is much routine business - let that be completed quickly and efficiently, so that more time is available to use the Senate as a sounding board for change, with the relevant committees tasked to focus on reporting back. Have one item for discussion at each meeting so that there is a focus of thought - no decision needed, but opportunity for discussion, thus encouraging all views.
- I have only ever been to online meetings. They do not foster any sense of membership or community.
- Really like the open question period introduced by Feridun.

- There is often not enough time or space created for dialogue; we mostly approve things already approved elsewhere. More time to discuss emerging issues (return to campus) rather than rubber-stamping changes already agreed would be helpful
- There is sometimes good dialog and discussion, and sometimes not. I find it depends on the topic.
- It was a bit of an imposing environment so not all student senators felt comfortable speaking their thoughts and opinions. However, I always felt welcome to do so based on the relationships I had with the faculty and admin present at those meetings.
- The agenda was often rushed and some people dominated the discussion, making it hard to ask a question or make a point. A lot of people in the room were disengaged at the same time, so it was very unbalanced. Perhaps there should be a chance to send in questions ahead of time to allow for a more participatory debate.
- The timing of the agenda implied that some major items of potential controversy had to be dealt with in a very compressed time frame before the meeting.
- It often felt like the undergraduate opinion did not matter or did not matter as much as the administrators' opinions/presumptions. If they wanted something passed, it passed. It did not matter whether or not the students disagreed with it. Often when the students provided their perspective, it was written off in favour of the professors or the staff.
- Too few senators express opinions of any kind and very few express dissenting opinions. That is because the meetings are set up to discourage this. Time is always a factor.
- My experience is pre-pandemic. I would like more reporting from faculty, staff, student relations committees.
- For the most part, the discussions at Senate are not constructive. Many of the items (from SGRC and UGSC) could go on consent. I generally assume due diligence has been done at the committee level and where questions are raised, they are usually dealt with by way of clarification, with little debate or discussion. The forum itself is too large to act as a deliberative body and the oversight role of senate is not clear. In my two years on Senate, i cannot recall any matter being reformed in some meaningful way as a result of questions raised at senate. Strategic items within the mandate of Senate tend to be presented but do not form the basis of senate resolutions (at least in the past two years), as such they are not debated.
- I generally concentrate on the issues that relate to my portfolio. The remaining (administrative) issues I pay less attention. There are times when there is content on the agenda for which I think it would have been useful to have been consulted - i.e., they intersect with my portfolio - but that doesn't always happen.
- The volume of material precludes discussion; also sense of one-way communication, the presentation of material assumes rubber-stamping from Senate
- While we all dislike showboats, there has been in the recent past a tendency to set a tone of efficiency as more valuable than oversight.

- While I do my best to review meeting materials in advance and pay attention during meetings, it rarely feels like there's a genuine purpose to being there. For student Senators, it can be difficult to parse the significance of various items or infer what an appropriate level of in-meeting dialogue is.
- I have found the guest presentations to be interesting and thought provoking.
- Freedom of speech at University of Waterloo is shunned. Only speech that is appealing to senior leadership is allowed. People risk careers by speaking against certain issues.
- I served on the Senate during the tenures of Presidents Johnston and Hamdullahpur. Especially under President Johnston, and to a lesser extent during President Hamdullahpur's first term, I felt often felt that decisions were rushed and Senators were not encouraged to drill down into complicated issues.
- In theory I felt able to bring opposing/critical/dissenting views, and as a grad I never felt the president or other executives dismissed what I said or were unwelcoming. However, I think the meeting structure, format, and time allotted makes it generally difficult to contribute more than a passing comment. I often felt that raising a dissenting opinion would be seen as delaying an already long meeting, and because I struggled to have enough time to review the pre-meeting materials in time, it made me nervous I would ask a question that was already answered in the materials, and therefore delay things unnecessarily and cause annoyance from the faculty/leadership.
- It's clear that many Senators don't bother reading the materials. I don't know why elected members in particular would sign up for the role and then not take it seriously. People want things spoonfed to them and I don't understand this type of thinking. We wouldn't accept that point of view from our students!
- At Senate meetings, there is so much routine and process/procedure that real discussion and debate is often not possible.
- I'm fairly new to Senate (in my first year) so am still learning how things work; an orientation to the expectations of Senators would be helpful for new folks.
- "Before" is the best -- and maybe most important -- part. Connect with people, build relations, get a few small things taken care of. As for the meetings, I come from many years of experience with Senates at smaller universities where 25% of the faculty would be in attendance. The discussions were always very lively -- sometimes too lively! The contrast with UW Senate was striking for me. In some ways it would be nice to have meetings with more "real" exchanges of ideas but that may be difficult to achieve with such a large group. One other observation: the architecture of the room works to inhibit discussion. I can barely see the people on the other side!
- When you are not part of a committee there's little an independent senator can do to make effective change on behalf of your constituency..
- It does a good job of it's core function -- approving business. Occasionally, presentations (research, teaching, new initiatives) are really helpful and informative. Critical discussion? Not so much.

- because I am not being part of the faculty, some of the discussion is a bit abstract to me, but I understand that it is University business. I do find it interesting and a learning opportunity for me.
- I have absolutely no confidence that the university has any tolerance whatsoever for dissenting opinions. In particular, I think there is absolutely no empathy (and I mean empathy, not sympathy): there is no desire to even attempt to understand an alternate viewpoint. Frankly, the president's comments yesterday about the recent events in Ottawa was entirely one-sided and did not invite any possible response.
- Students normally feel that they do not have an opportunity to share their thoughts. I often raised questions or concerns and then was pulled aside after meetings. These asides explained that items on the Senate agenda are hand selected by the President and, therefore, do not require public comment. It was humiliating. But it was my job to publicly ask questions and make comments so I had to continue, despite knowing I would have to sit in these "disciplinary" meetings afterwards.

12. Do you have any comments regarding virtual, in-person, or hybrid Senate meeting formats?

- The one good thing that the pandemic has done I think has been to move meetings online. It's the one thing I hope doesn't go away when the pandemic ends.
- The question about virtual meetings makes me think that a mix of virtual and in-person meetings might be a good approach moving forward. The in-person could foster more dynamic and active conversations, and be framed that way, whereas the virtual meetings can be presentation heavy and/or more focused on getting approval (ie. consent agenda).
- I've never attended in person -- can't imagine they are more efficient
- Virtual meetings have been run well. I can see this format being useful in the future, or hybrid at the very least. I do wonder about how much a hybrid meeting could slow things down.
- I prefer in person meetings to virtual meetings. That being said, there are some major advantages to virtual meetings, in that they allow broad participation from a large number of people. Hybrid meetings are the worst of the three options. My experience with hybrid meetings is that in-person attendees have a great experience, and remote attendees are completely ignored, and have a horrible experience.
- I much prefer in-person as conducive to better quality exchange. However in a post-pandemic world we should probably aim for hybrid as a way to be inclusive.
- Virtual meetings make it more accessible to those who are not local.
- After my time
- I only know the virtual format.
- I actually really like the virtual format of Senate. If only the cookies could come in the mail.

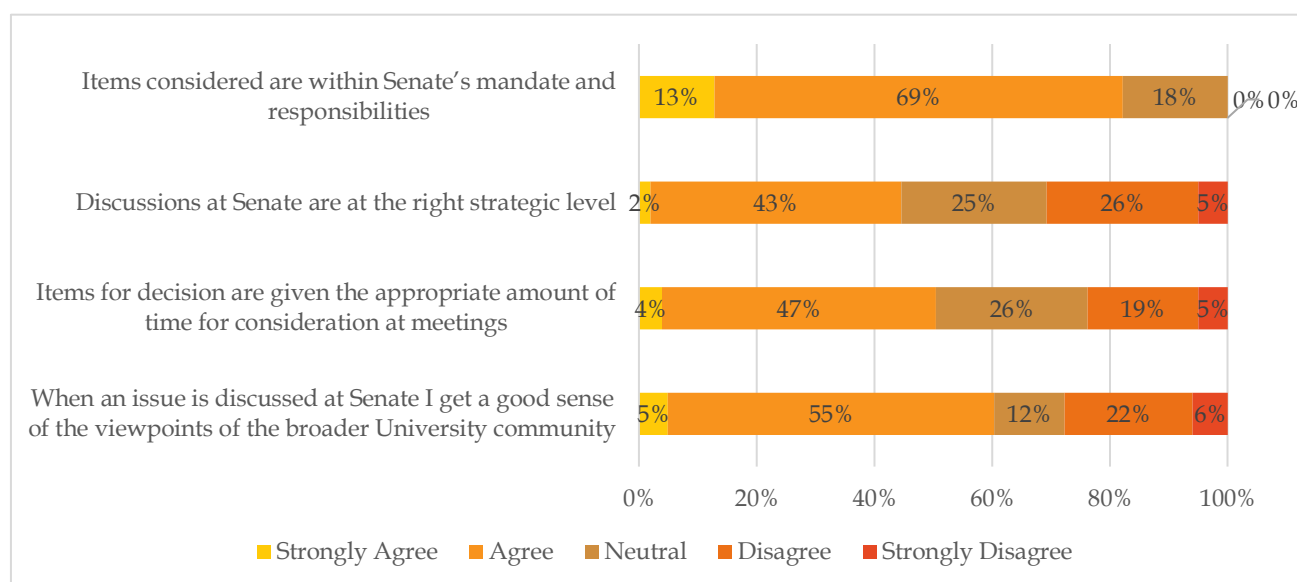
- Virtual meetings do not guarantee adequate attention and participation of Senators. In-person is a must since there is more than just voice that communicates a constituency's position.
- I was on senate when it met in person
- I was not a Senator when virtual/hybrid meetings were introduced.
- I would like virtual or hybrid.
- I only attended a couple of virtual senate meetings, at the end of my term. My score is more about virtual meetings in general.
- NOTE: You need an "N/A" for your virtual meeting question... because not all past senators will have done this...
- I never did virtual Senate meetings, but based on my experience with other virtual meetings, it sounds very unpleasant to me.
- Virtual or hybrid meetings allow for higher attendance and participation for faculty. This is particularly the case for those with childcare responsibilities, given that the timing of the meetings relative to daycare/school times.
- Looking forward to being in person
- In person is best, virtual second best -not good for discussion, hybrid least best - a split audience leads to split opportunities for involvement
- hybrid would be good, especially if short or one-off meetings were needed.
- I think the virtual senate meeting are great, especially for those of us with young children at home.
- This kind of meeting - where I know ahead of time whether I am likely to want to speak or not - is, in my opinion, the perfect candidate for a virtual or hybrid meeting. With this many people, and an agenda ahead of time, there are many benefits to the virtual meeting and few drawbacks to not having an in-person meeting.
- Virtual meetings of senate are at the bottom of quality of virtual meetings experienced during the pandemic. No use of community-building tools. No ability to vote.
- Hybrid would be fine. I think admin should pay attention to the chat--not everyone has time or can speak, and the chat can collect more ideas/opinions.
- Better to have good participation than to require attendance in person.
- In-person sessions were great. I never experienced virtual or hybrid.
- Senate was in person when I was a senator
- There can be a few people who dominate discussion and they tend to be older white men who speak over others. Virtual can make them feel more present when others are less visibly engaged. In person there are more diverse voices.
- virtual meetings did not occur when I was on senate
- Virtual format worked very well.
- Virtual does seem more efficient in a number of ways, but of course the social aspect is lost - I'm not sure that matters.
- I have no experience with COVID times in Senate, but have participated in similar meetings by telephone, which really was not a pleasant experience.

- Experience has almost exclusively been virtual
- See my answers to 10. Online or not, I would like more information about FRC, SRC, UGSC, GRC.
- Some in person meetings would be desirable.
- I think hybrid senate meetings are great. But, we need a better voting system.
- hybrid would be ideal, especially if the meetings run throughout all three terms.
- Did not experience virtual or hybrid meetings.
- In person is far superior because online you are not having a full deliberation because so much of the communicational stream is missing.
- I have only ever attended virtual Senate meetings! I do wonder whether in-person meetings are more conducive to active engagement. I've certainly felt that virtual environments do little to encourage engagement.
- Moving back to in-person meetings when possible would be best.
- There appears to have been less participation than when at in-person meetings.
- Was not a Senator during this time
- It would be nice to continue to give virtual option. Can make it more feasible to attend for those who have to be home at the end of the afternoon.
- In-person would generally be preferable.
- The digital format wasn't ideal for such a large/diverse body, in my opinion. Since I was elected during the pandemic, I never had the chance to get a feel for how decisions are made in the meetings in-person, and not being able to see other attendees faces made it hard to tell how my contributions were received or if anyone was actually listening. Because of this, mostly I felt like I was there as a seat-filler, and I didn't feel properly equipped to represent graduate students like I was elected to do.
- The virtual format is too awkward for such a large group to feel like they are being heard. Though, the chat is nice because it allows those who might not speak up to voice an opinion, and the ability to "thumbs up" a comment shows the scope of support for a thought in a way that in-person meetings haven't been able to capture. Perhaps after each in-person speaker we have a "thumbs up" moment to assess level of agreement?
- Hybrid sounds like a good idea, but I think is really hard to do well without a serious investment in a good system and even more importantly, a serious investment of human resources to manage each meeting. If we want to embrace hybrid as a long term option, I think we need to dedicate financial and human resources. Fully virtual, with some improvements in things like voting would be ideal.
- I've never attended a virtual Senate meeting. BTW there should be an N/A option for Q11 (and some others) - neutral does not capture that and instead skews your statistics.
- I think the meetings should either be in person or virtual; I worry that a hybrid method may prevent discussion due to technology limitations. In virtual meetings, it can be hard to follow the chat and the conversation at the same time - I feel this issue would be worse in hybrid meetings. Sadly I've never been to an in-person Senate meeting though

so don't know how conversation flowed without the chat feature and cannot comment on whether the chat feature is an improvement or not.

- While I appreciate the convenience of virtual meetings, I think we would lose a lot if we adopted that format as standard practice.
- I have only attended online so cannot comment
- The option for virtual meetings improves attendance, but stifles constructive debate.
- The socializing before and after in-person meetings is a significant way to build social capital and goodwill among Senators, and should not be discounted.
- I prefer face to face meetings because it helps me understand what others are thinking or expressing by their body language. On a positive note, the virtual meetings have reduced the time of commitment.
- In-person or hybrid are fine; as long as we continue to have pointless masking requirements, however, I will avoid going on campus as much as possible.
- I'm excited to try in-person when possible. Online makes it difficult to engage with the body
- Hybrid Senate is a great idea. We have many co-op student representatives who sit on Senate and virtual will allow them to complete their role.

13. Reflecting on your experience at Senate, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



14. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at Senate?

- I felt that the discussions in person were better than they have been online.
- More broad discussion items would be nice to have, not just presentations and questions. With respect to the last part of Question 12, all university matters are within the mandate of the Senate (many simply for recommendation to Board).
- I appreciate the diversity of views, including hearing from students.
- Need to aim the focus higher for strategic value. Too much gets stuck in the weeds.
- Student senators are often patronized
- Sometimes it strayed too far into what I would consider Board responsibilities
- Not enough time for good discussion on such a large body
- Senate seems a forum for providing the upper administration's viewpoint - we don't hear dissenting voices.
- Sometimes I think there's a misunderstanding of Senate's role, esp. vis-a-vis policy revision/FAUW/etc. There is always a fine line to be waged between being an active, serious, deliberative forum or a rubber stamp, but we also need to have more consideration of the hard work that goes into things before they hit the Senate floor. Perhaps an orientation session to new Senators would help (full disclosure: I have been on the Board of Governors, and found the orientation/onboarding there very helpful).
- There are bad times, and good times at Senate. Overall, there is a severe lack of attention to graduate studies across UWaterloo, which is one of the greatest money generators for the institution (greater than undergraduate enrollment), and graduate students are not recognized as workers, or real contributors to the institution, or society. Thus, they are limited with respect to their "salary", work opportunities, their extra-curriculars are very frowned upon by their supervisors... The university is not open to dialogue to better understand, rather revisit, the philosophy of post-secondary work/education.
- I think when issues are discussed at senate they tend to be highly relevant to a small amount of people. That is the nature of having departments faculties etc. That said I had a much better understanding of the university as a whole after serving on senate. I also think that much of what senate does is hidden (if you don't read the material you receive) in the part of senate that is simply approved (consent agenda? I forget the name for it). Personally I think too much is in there but to be fair anyone can bring up issues. As for strategic level... that is difficult as it feels like decisions are made prior to senate then presented to senate. This means that admin really manages senate as it is not consultative so much as there for approval. That said asking large groups of academics to make decisions is likely not productive.
- The approach has traditionally been having the Senate rubber-stamp items, so discussion is usually limited to at most a yes/no on an administration presented item. Being presented with multiple real options would be preferable. I sometimes felt the extent of what senate could get out of administration is an answer to a question a month after it was relevant, or admin coming back and saying something like "we took your

feedback, consulted and thought some more, and are still going in the same direction as before"

- It can be a useful forum to raise an issue for discussion, but not so much to push for a decision or action.
- Most of the time it felt like the Senate approval was a fire gone conclusion and we were just a rubber stamp. If there was something raised that was an issue, it was quickly dealt with and usually dismissed. I think there was one time that an issue was taken back for further consideration. But yes, mostly a rubber stamp process.
- Something about Senate seemed ineffective, but I could never quite put my finger on what was wrong. Somehow the body did not seem sufficiently engaged with, or invested in, the issues up for discussion. Discussion was dominated by a small number of individuals (not because of how the meeting was run, just because they were the only ones who consistently had something to say). It was rare to have an item before the Senate where I felt the discussion led to useful recommendations or caught a vote that might otherwise have passed. Maybe that's a good thing and just means everything was working fine. And maybe the problem was just me, not being very good at interacting with such a large body in a fairly formal setting. But whatever the reasons, I ended my term thinking that very little of use had been accomplished, and we were largely rubber-stamping. This may not be a fair comment, and is almost certainly not useful to you! But I make it anyway.
- not everyone's voice is equal - that much was clear.
- Senate should be discussing the major issues for the life of the academic programming. Most items seems information only.
- The Senate is a mix of members who are there by dint of their position and others who want to be there and volunteer for election - that doesn't necessary represent all viewpoints. But Senate members are not asked to represent only one constituency but to act collegially - I hope they all remember that! As for sufficient discussion time - that depends on what the intention is for discussion. Is it for feedback, then there needs to be sufficient time for review, but the Senate committees and officers should be the ones primarily tasked with an in-depth discussion of the points, which they then bring to Senate. I felt that there was often only a surface discussion, which is inevitable in a busy agenda, and thus often those who spoke the loudest were heard - the dissenting voice was not heard or able to influence in such a large meeting. Hence why the committees are essential.
- They go off-topic so often I usually forget what we were talking about.
- I'm not sure we actually track what is going on academically at the university. We spend a lot of time on singing praises and on minor details.
- As above, I think that Senate needs to be more looped into on-going policy discussions (even if only updates), COVID (rather than having a closed group with limited reporting until decisions are taken) etc.

- I noticed that faculty members were often not included on some sub-committees, like the finance committee. I wasn't sure how well the subcommittees worked, as the one I was on didn't meet very often.
- It's not always clear to me what the role of senate is. It can feel like we are there to vote yes as opposed to discuss proposals.
- I felt that at times discussion was possibly too narrowly focused on the needs/desires of a few. In contrast some larger strategic items seemed to be rushed through -- partially because of the lack of engagement of some members that represented faculty interests/did not know about other faculties, and did not seem to engage with larger issues.
- The Senate meetings contain too many routine things which are better left for other committees.
- Many times, there was no way to actually block a motion. Even when there was strong opposition to something, it still went through. There was no real power given to the undergraduate caucus (there were too few of us and therefore, even together, we could not affect any change). The administrators often disregarded and our points of view. I did not feel like I could ever convince anyone to see my perspective because their minds were already made up.
- As mentioned above, there needs to be more time allocated for planning type issues. Too often such discussions are terminated as not immediately relevant and "to be brought forward at a later date". This never seemed to happen until some decree was mentioned in passing (one example I recall was the Confucius Institute). I really believe it is incumbent on presenters to be more forthcoming with negative implications of proposals so that senators can be appropriately prepared for a full discussion of an issue. One of my first senate meetings had the announcement that the "Middle East Campus" was being moved from (I forget where) to (I think Dubai). I was not very aware of anything about Senate at the time, but this seemed to be a MAJOR change in plan that was receiving NO discussion in Senate. In fact, senators FORCED the administration to allow discussion about the establishment of this campus at all! This lack of transparency is frequent and did not improve over the previous president's term. This led to a lack of trust of the senior administration among faculty that was atypical of my early experience at Waterloo.
- Senate meetings are so very broad, that only matters that are really of concern to specific groups are surfaced. This may not be a bad thing, but it may depend on how vocal groups are to voice concerns or dissent.
- I feel like multiple important past discussions that were within Senate's mandate were strategically and inappropriately shielded from discussion at Senate.
- see above
- Strategic level: while high-level items and initiatives are discussed, little attention is given to challenges of systemic implementation or fundamental change at systems level
- The quality of discussion depends a lot on Senate membership. Sometimes individual Senators or the FAUW contingent will knock us onto tracks better discussed elsewhere.

- In general, as implied above, there had in the past been too much emphasis on "managing" the meetings and, at times, minimizing opportunities for deliberation.
- I found that many members of the Senate did not express their thoughts and thus only a narrow set of viewpoints were heard. It also felt like not all viewpoints were considered valid, especially if they challenged the status quo
- Admittedly, I don't quite understand the purpose of the student presentations we frequently see at Senate. Perhaps they are to give insight into the activities of our various graduate programs? I feel that they compress the rest of the agenda and contribute to the sense of "rubber stamping" in the meetings – the Senate rarely feels like a place to have discussions at all.
- There's a heavy emphasis on reporting and defending, but not a great deal of consensus building from the Senate on strategic initiatives. We seem to have a structure for having representative 'ears' from the faculties, but not much direction for input in the other direction.
- Being able to speak freely is not encouraged. One risks being shunned collegially by raising dissenting views even if they are backed with evidence.
- I thoroughly enjoyed and benefitted from my time on Senate. This is a forum in which all comments and perspectives are welcome. It is a highly collegial, constructive and positive decision-making environment.
- Most of the decisions seemed to be only at the final stage, with the real work happening in committees, but I didn't know how one would go about joining a committee or task force to have more of a say. Thus, the decisions coming up for a vote all seemed to have been extensively discussed previously, and basically a done deal. This made it feel like the Senate is a "rubber stamp" type body, and from what I recall there wasn't a single vote that failed to pass during my whole term, and almost every vote was an anonymous "yes." This made it so that if I wanted to vote "no", I would very often be the only one, and it made me feel exposed to be constantly dissenting in such an anonymous space, where like I said, you have no way to know what the other people think about your contributions.
- Senate's powers seem pretty operational when I look at the University Act. It would be nice for Senate to engage in more discussion of appropriate strategic things relating to the academy, so I encourage this potential direction as long as it is done well. I just would hate for Senate's actual responsibilities to be pushed to the consent agenda only to allow more time for the same voices to use "strategic discussion time" to grind axes. We already see lengthy conversations about things that are not Senate business be allowed to occur.
- I have no idea what you mean by "right strategic level."
- We spend very little time considering the motions before us. The time assigned to reports to the senate is satisfactory.
- It has been a great experience for me. the first year was a blur, but going forward, I am much more comfortable at the meetings.

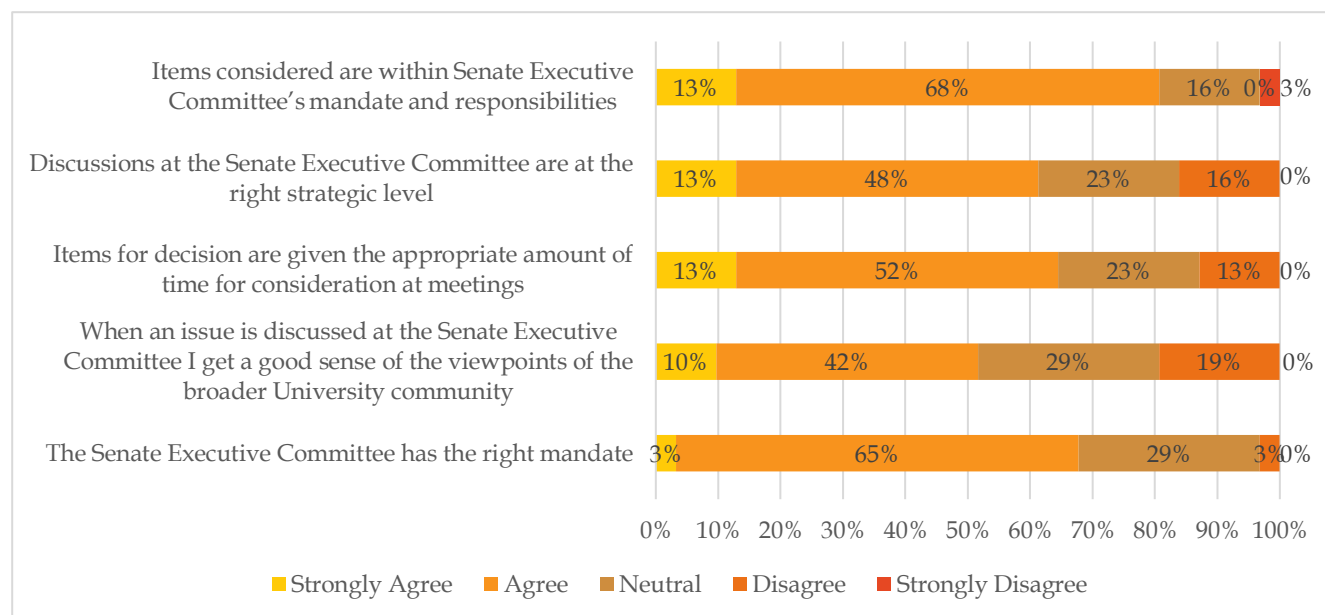
- I don't think I can express things better than has Thomas Sowell in "Intellectuals and Society."
- Disicions seem very rubber-stamp like. If we're not going to reasonably be saying no, should just hand approval off to Senate executive committtee.
- Often discussions are cut short, despite concerns still lingering. It is prudent to ensure there is enough time for discussion on items of contention.

Senate Committees and Councils

Question #	Committee/Council Name	Yes	No
15	Senate Executive Committee	31	91
19	Finance Committee	19	103
23	Graduate & Research Council	23	99
27	Honorary Degrees Committee	28	94
31	Honorary Member of the University Committee	4	118
35	Long Range Planning Committee	31	91
39	Undergraduate Council	15	107

Executive Committee

16. Reflecting on your experiences at the Senate Executive Committee, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



17. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Senate Executive Committee?

- Senate executive has worked well, is focused, and was a good committee to be on.
- It certainly felt like a rubber stamp most of the time, but honestly I don't see that as a bad thing. We mostly just approved agendas, and I'm fine with rubber stamping that

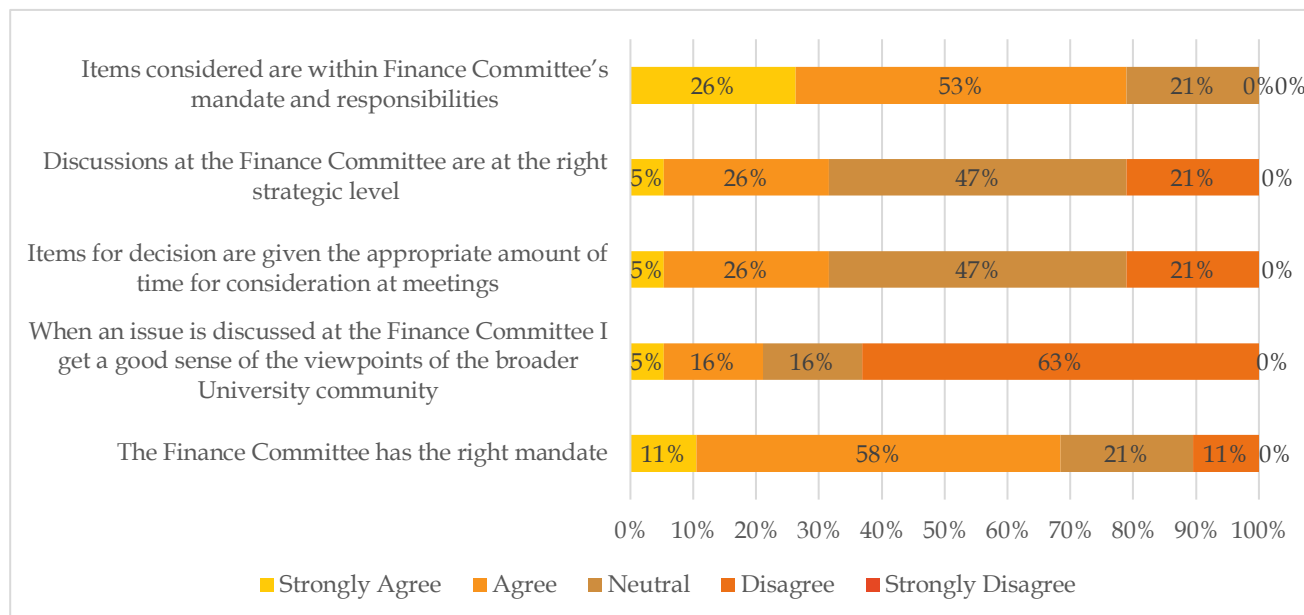
- It was a good experience, collegial, good discussions, open to opinions etc. Like many faculty members I think I would blame admin for any disgruntlement. After being on exec I found a far greater respect for uppvadmin and the challenges they face and why decisions are made the way they are. To be honest exec was more like what I expected senate to be like.
- Again, the agenda seems to be rubber stamped with little encouragement for engagement by those in attendance.
- It is nice to see that something is happening now on SEC. Previously, it did not seem to have any actual function, other than to vote yes and leave.
- Good place to raise issues before they hit the senate.
- SEC was often just about setting and approving the agenda; I don't recall any where there was significant discussion of the issues themselves (as opposed to whether or not they should be on the Senate agenda).
- I has been new to the committee, and have not attend a single meeting yet.
- For years, Senate Executive only considered the Senate agenda. The only time that substantive conversation took place was when there was an agenda item that might be controversial. I think Senate Exec could be a place where there is meaningful input on agenda-setting for Senate.
- Senate Exec, in my experience, has focused on the structure of Senate agenda, rather than specifically on the discussion of the content
- It was a decade ago
- Sense of purpose has been heightened by undergoing Senate Governance review.
- Again, I have no idea what you mean by "right strategic level." What is a strategic level? Is there a simpler term, or does the love for corporate-speak preclude straightforward language?
- The SEC being a smaller body permits more strategic discussion than what occurs at the whole of Senate, though much of the work at both bodies feels pro-forma with little ability to influence outcomes (aside from this governance review, perhaps)
- SEC was a good opportunity to share concerns with the agenda before meetings. However, when answers were not recieved at SEC, and then posed at Senate, administration would express concerns with me bringing concerns forward at Senate.

18. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- I would generally not like to see the SEC be given more authority
- Was a very positive experience for me
- Senate Exec could consider ways to enhance discussion at Senate and consider platforms for members of the University to contribute to these discussions, both during and outside Senate meetings
- Senate Exec meetings were not that constructive. There wasn't much ability to influence the agenda per se; the President had an outsized voice in those decisions.

Finance Committee

20. Reflecting on your experiences at the Finance Committee, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



21. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Finance Committee?

- I did not get a sense that there was much room for critical conversation - perhaps most particularly from those members that are not as versed in financial matters as others. I am not sure how this can be addressed, but it might be good to ensure everyone feels like they have something to offer. The Finance Committee feels more like a rubber stamping committee (but perhaps this is just an indication that we are healthy financially?)
- I was surprised that felt that people didn't speak up/ask questions and seemed to just want the meeting to conclude quickly. I can't recall if there was a student on that committee but if not that might be a good addition.
- As a faculty member not familiar with fiscal practices at the university, it would have been useful to have a "finance primer" session to provide background and context for how the university manages its finances, how they are reported, etc. It was hard to comment on the documents provided without sufficient context as to how finances work at UW
- I never felt we had enough detailed documentation to make meaningful recommendations. Questions and discussion were largely about the background (e.g. where certain numbers came from). So the meetings seemed more like an opportunity

for the FC to understand the budget, than for them to make meaningful recommendations.

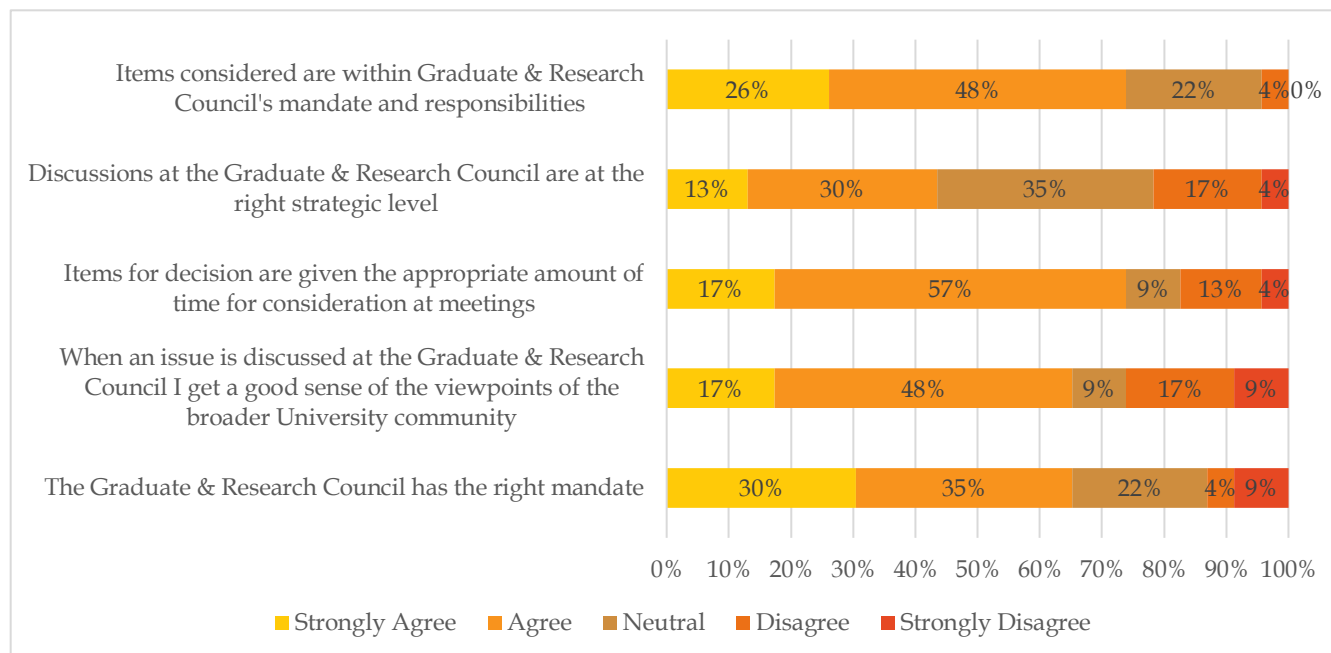
- The budget conversation always seemed perplexing... Senate does not have power over it, and it was for information (if I remember correctly) but we were empowered to speak up about it... a weird dynamic to be sure.
- It seems to echo Senate, approving decisions already made elsewhere
- It was never that clear what the mandate of the finance committee is, precisely. There was not a lot of strategic dimension (other than responsible operating budget balance.) By and large the data provided were not sufficient for a good understanding, and requests for additional alternate data presentation/measurements actually lead to all the relevant data being not published any more (I am speaking in particular of different ways to measure the 'cost' of faculty vs the 'income' of students taught.
- It seemed that the Senate Finance Committee met very rarely when I was a member.
- Difficult to understand the scope of the financial sheets because they are very high level. Not sure how to deal with this.
- My experience on the Finance Committee was from long ago. All that I recall was feeling completely ill-equipped to grapple with the budget figures presented to us.
- (Again, the strategic level thing.) Information wasn't as full as I would have wished. You had to ask a lot of questions to get information about what particular budget items actually contained, and you were often made to feel like you were being a bother for asking those in the know to explain in greater detail.
- Also rather rubber-stamp-y. Did not feel like I had any control over the process, and I question why have me vote to approve something that I could not reasonably vote against to?

22. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- The committee is itself a rubber stamp before a rubber stamp is affixed at Senate. I see little added value from this committee unless it receives an increased mandate, otherwise its superfluous, and just makes it look like Senate is doing more due diligence than it is actually doing.
- Essentially there was a 'test run' of the senate presentation of the budget. Senate is NOT responsible for budgeting nor the business aspects. It is responsible for academic programming matters. However, Senate should be better involved and informed regarding budget implications of academic decisions. As well, this committee maybe should be given more input/room to make suggestions on resource allocation. Any University MUST (in my view) agree on some degree of cross-subsidization among faculties and programs within faculties. I missed any discussion of this aspect, nor even a direct open addressing of it. It appeared as if these issues (that seem to be the Dean's domain) were avoided at all cost.

Graduate & Research Council

24. Reflecting on your experiences at the Graduate & Research Council, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



25. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Graduate & Research Council?

- You have a room full of senior administrators spending huge amounts of time mindlessly approving trivial changes to the graduate calendars of individual graduate programs. A tragic waste of time of so many busy people. I don't see why these should not be kept at Faculty level.
- Discussions are collegial. Some members are more vocal than others. The student reps are really good and bring incredible value to the council. Jeff Casello as a co-chair is excellent. Jeff is considerate and facilitates the meeting in a way that makes every member feel valued and their views are important. Jeff's updates are valued add and members appreciate Jeff's style. Charmaine as a co-chair could use some mentoring from a person like Jeff as she needs to work on her facilitation style. Charmaine is quite abrupt which makes members feel they cannot speak up or share concerns or bring questions forward. New members to the council could benefit from an orientation from the one of the chairs or Kathy Winter before joining the council. As a new member, its challenging to understand how the council functions, it's role and mandate, etc. New members join and seem to just have to figure things out as they go.
- Well run and thoughtful conversations.

- A lot of the time is spent on curricular motions rather than on discussing/debating strategic directions.
- Again, I have the sense that more time needed to be spent on non-immediate issues to help planning and generate ideas for the future.
- As with Senate, a more strategic focus at SGRC will be useful. I also feel like membership should work more fully to integrate Research and Graduate (and postdoctoral) studies.
- I find the agenda of the council is packed with issues mostly on the Graduate side. While I enjoy learning of these affairs, I find that I can contribute little to curriculum changes, which take up most of the Council's time
- I was a member before it became the monopoly of Associate Deans. Bring back regular Senators as faculty reps, keep the Associate Deans as needed.
- Some of the discussions are fruitful, but most of the time motions pass unanimously without discussion
- Useful to get the input from students
- Good discussion leading to appropriate action and/or recommendations
- As a graduate student representative, I formally joined October 2021 and I was not personally introduced/ welcomed to the Senate - I thought this was standard practice until other Faculty members and grad reps joined later on. I'm sure it was an accidental miss, but when graduate students donate additional free labour hours to university operations, it is worthwhile making them feel welcome and appreciated.

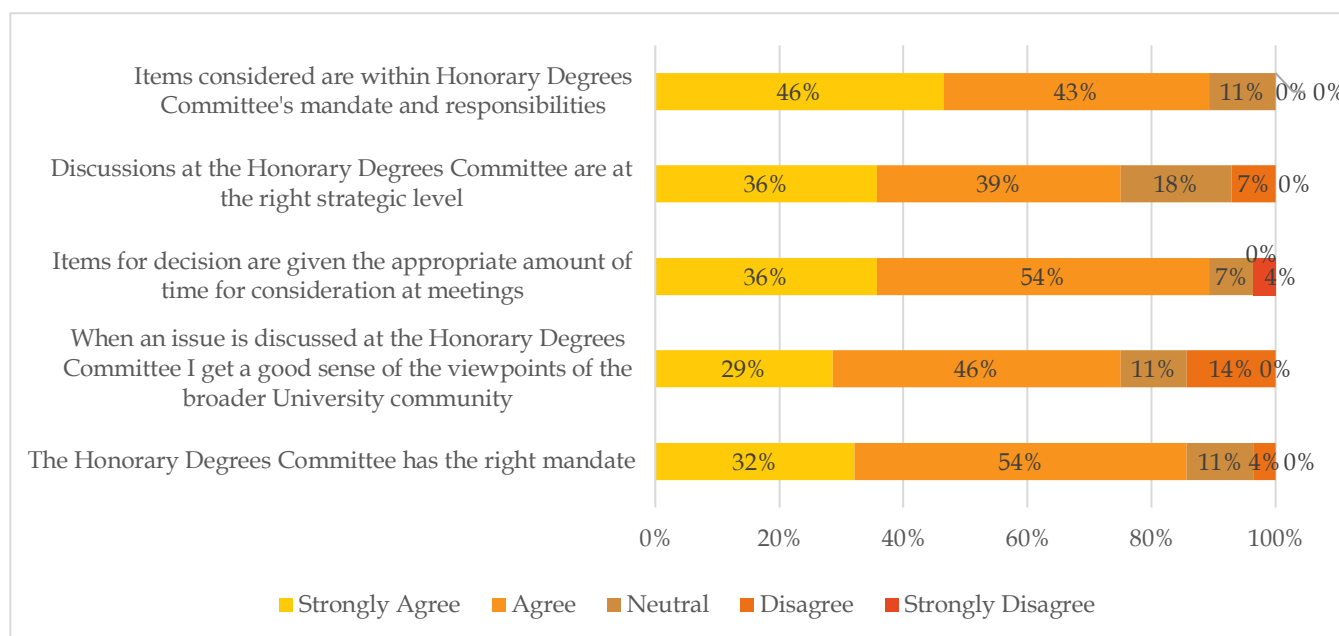
26. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- Graduate and Research should be separated into separate bodies.
- The majority of SGRC seems to be concerned with graduate student matters, as opposed to research. As part of this governance review, I hope some consideration is paid to separating them out (as I believe was the practice in the medium-to-distant past).
- I am generally in favour of maintaining its current structure and mandate
- Funding of students is an ongoing problem that should receive greater attention and this is one place that could help.
- We should consider adding postdocs to SGRC
- There is an idea to separate the research from the graduate affairs of the council. Worth exploring as it would allow more time to devote to each aspect of the council's mandate.
- While there has been some discussion of splitting this Council into separate ones for Graduate Studies and Research, I believe that the two are so closely related that it would be preferable to continue with the present Council and its mandate
- Decisions made by this committee still need approval by Senate despite the committee's comprehensive membership. Even though graduate and research are incredibly important to the university, this committee feels like a rubber stamp committee. Most of the decisions are routine and non-controversial. Yet the majority of

- Mandate is appropriate
- The GSRC should consider evaluating graduate student research milestones more broadly and their role and applicability in the professional development of graduate students. For example, my department requires a "seminar" milestone where I present my research in a public forum to the department. Alternative milestones could include research publications, op-ed publications, conference participation, and many more significant professional development goals currently undocumented by the department.

Honorary Degrees

28. Reflecting on your experiences at the Honorary Degrees Committee, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



29. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Honorary Degrees Committee?

- Prior Chair's perspective dominated at outset of most meetings
- Was unclear on whether it was an ethical issue that we were giving some of our largest donors- wasn't sure if that was an appropriate thing to ask? The president chairs and without being actively empowered to do so it is difficult for students senators to feel comfortable asking questions to the President that might not be received well
- Smaller setting facilitated discussion and interaction
- One of my favourite committees! I am being serious. It's a good way to understand the overall university vision esp. vis-à-vis the interplay between academics, government

relations, and advancement. Sometimes it requires tough, confidential discussions which are well handled.

- Again a positive experience. I am not a fan of honorary degrees but it was an interesting committee to sit on as it kind of pushed all the wrong buttons for me. Good exposure for me and it was well run and managed as a committee
- Was by far and away my favourite part of Senate.
- Because of the process for bringing forward honorary degree candidates, there is often very little opportunity for meaningful discussion once an honorand is proposed at this committee. I also never felt as though the committee had a consistent view of what qualities an honorary degree recipient should exhibit.
- It was very interesting, especially as there were contentious discussions held that benefited from the various viewpoints of the membership.
- Undergoing a transition right now--becoming more focused on strategic goals of the University... likely a good thing.
- The process for awarding honorary degrees should be revisited. At this point, there is a disconnection between what Honorary Degrees Committee does and who would be eventually selected for honorary degrees.
- I repeat: more time is needed to help plan for the future. "Due diligence" seems to me to be the bare minimum. Standard web searches do not seem to be adequate to me. I don't have a better suggestion, but maybe a few conversations on the topic might generate useful ideas.
- the terms should be longer than one year
- Once a candidate comes up from a Faculty, it can be very hard to precipitate a measured discussion at HDC. As a result there are occasionally embarrassing discussions at Senate.
- I've enjoyed the level of discussion that can take place in a smaller committee!
- I haven't been able to attend the meetings due to scheduling conflicts!
- Excellent committee, very collegial

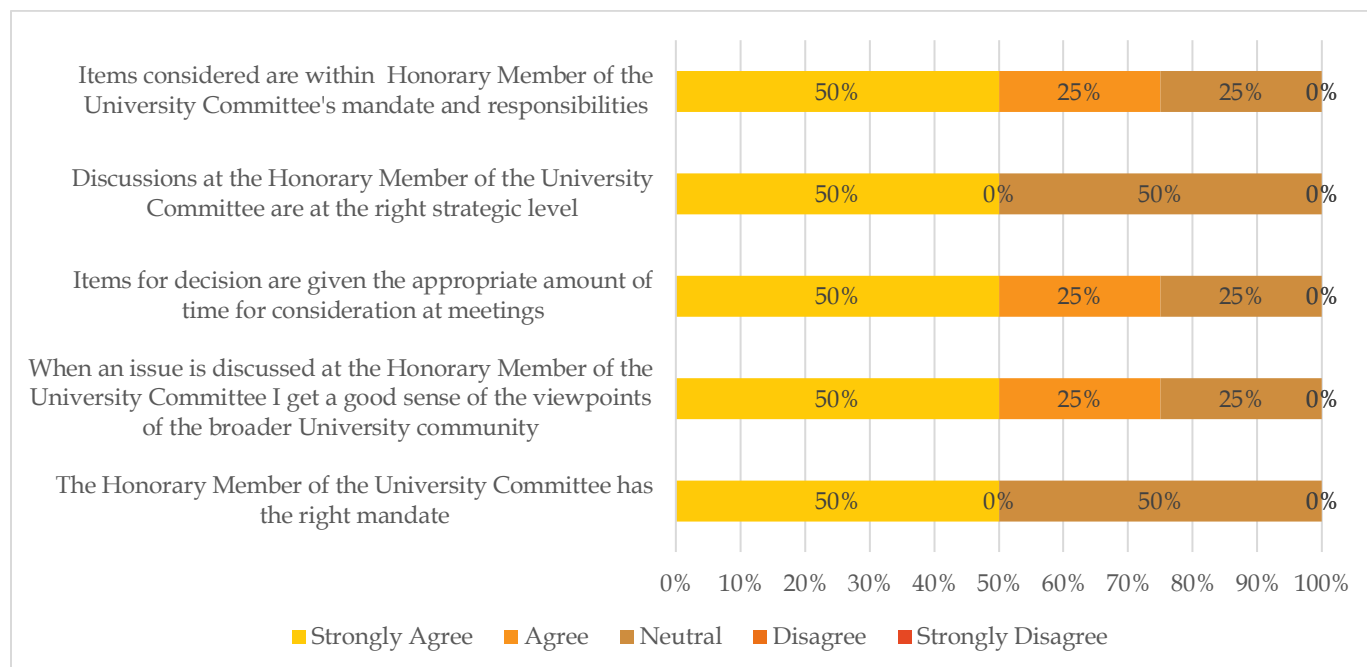
30. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- I would keep as is. I think there could be more formalization of its relationship w/ various faculty Honours/ Awards committees.
- Mandate is pretty straight forward so not much to discuss.
- This committee was fine, and because the stakes on the university are low, the level of control and responsiveness to committee members concerns are closer to what I'd expect of other committees. On another note, it needn't be the President chairing this committee, feels like their time might be better applied elsewhere, so long as they're able to send correspondence to the committee if they have serious objections to a candidate.
- This committee would be more useful if its focus was more strategic and less concerned with specific recipients.

- The responsibility and ownership are not clear.
- I appreciate the presence of resources surrounding honorary degree decision-making available to both committee members and the general community online.

Honorary Member of the University

32. Reflecting on your experiences at the Honorary Member of the University Committee, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



33. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Honorary Members of the University Committee?

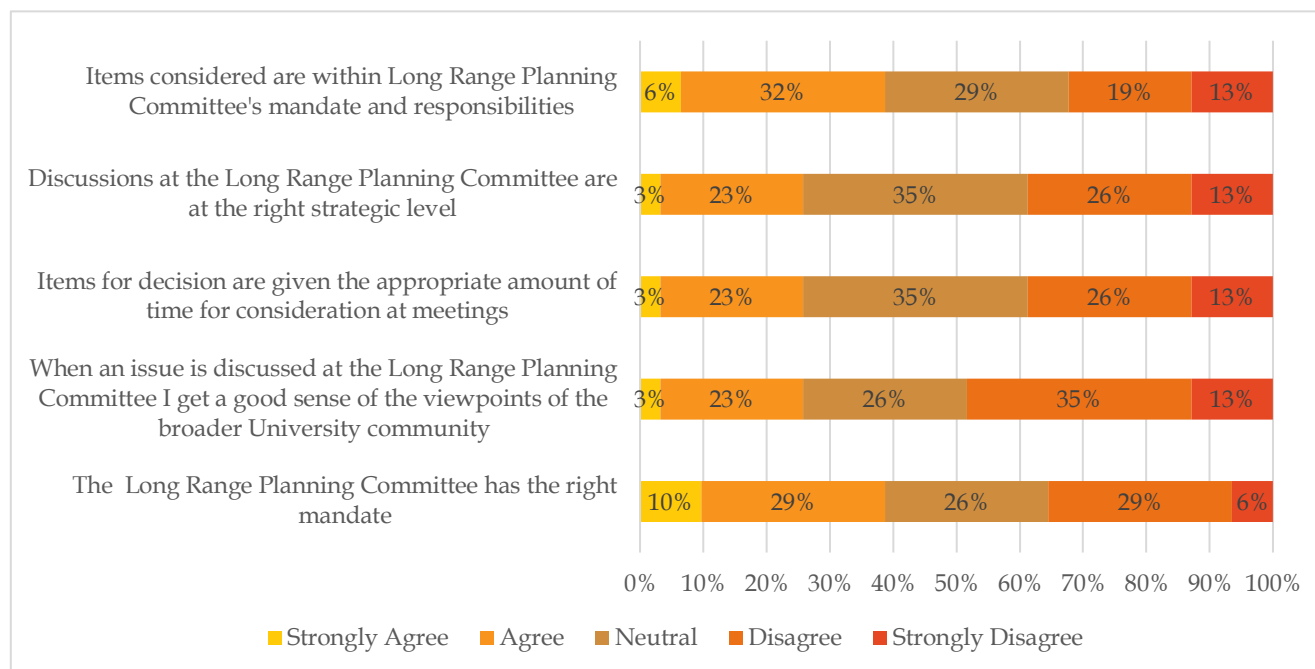
- tended to be principled and in best interests of institution
- There is a shortage of candidates for Honorary Members. The university should revisit the purpose of awarding Honorary Members, and reconsider how to engage those Honorary Members and how to create a positive and impactful loop. Otherwise, people may not care about being awarded a Honorary Member..

34. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- Seeking retiree staff with exceptional extracurricular impact often meant candidates were rarely from former roles or positions that were demanding or intensive and where contributions were exceptional citizenship but not a fit with criteria.

Long Range Planning

36. Reflecting on your experiences at the Long Range Planning Committee, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



37. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Long Range Planning Committee?

- committee has rarely met in recent years
- I often felt that LRP was informed about strategic decisions more than they were able to engage and discuss strategic decisions. I have not served on the LRP with the current president, so this may no longer be the case.
- Although I technically sat on this committee for a year, the committee never had a meeting
- Not a single meeting was held for the LRPC throughout my term in this committee.
- Echo chamber. Nothing for decision. Only FYI. Completely misused. What a shame.
- Committee was not such a good experience. Chaired by provost and continuity at that position was a little tenuous at the time I believe. I never felt there was any long range planning so much as approval of what felt like cherry picked projects. Never felt like there was a discussion of what was needed or where the university was going etc. Felt ad hoc and disorganized. That's pretty harsh but it just felt dysfunctional and token.
- The mandate of this committee is extremely broad and vague. It often felt more like a forum for the Provost to talk, and less a venue for actual long-range planning.

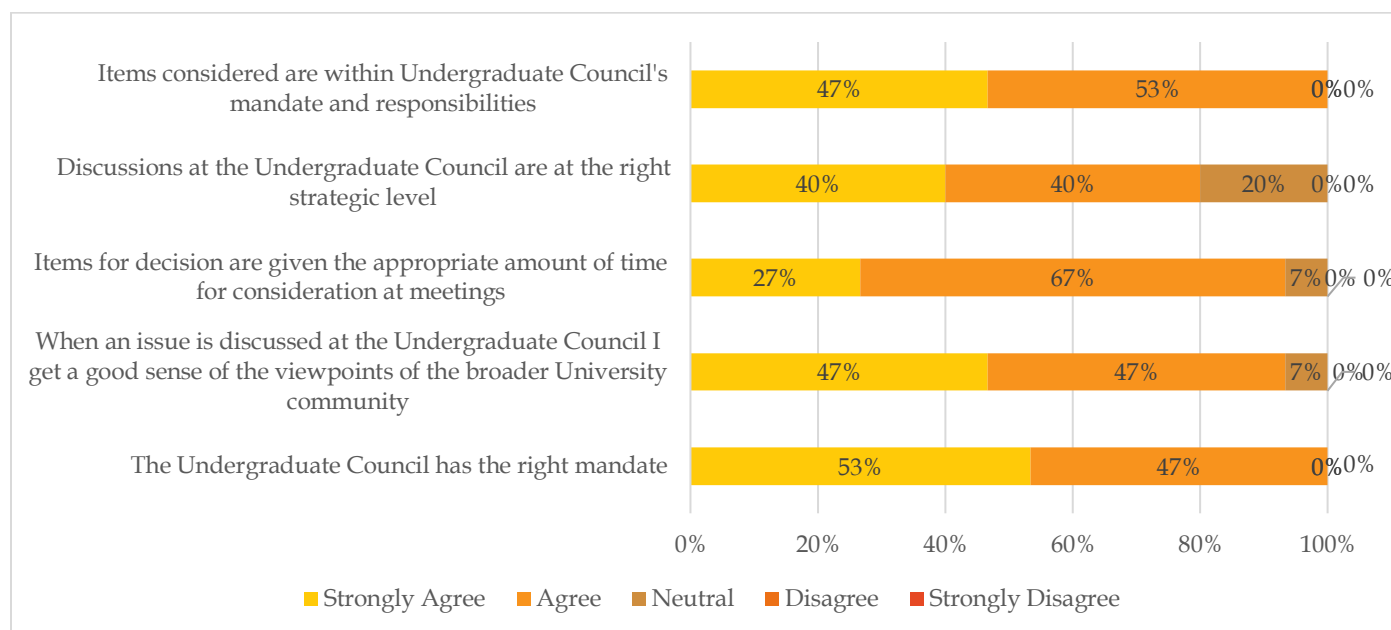
- I have been new to the committee, and have not attend a single meeting yet.
- The two years I sat on LRPC, there was a total of one meeting. This committee should be generating lots of useful ideas and concrete suggestions for implementation. I don't know if things have changed; I hope so.
- It would benefit from a stronger focus. The group is large and disperse - it does not behave like a planning committee- long range planning seems to be done by the presidents "strategic planning group". The long range planning committee appears to be moot to me.
- This committee was not very functional while I was on it. Basically, it could have not existed.
- The long range planning committee has not met for the entire time I have been on it (2 yrs). This is notwithstanding that the University has been engaged in strategic planning exercises. None of the work of the various Strategic plan implementation committees has been brought to LRPC - although it should.
- These meetings are mostly canceled. I have no idea what the mandate is. I would very much welcome conversations on the long range issues of the University - strategic enrollment, campus infrastructure, etc.
- I don't believe that the committee has met yet in the time I've been a member!
- Good discussion
- Again, the strategic level thing.
- It appeared to me that the Long Range Planning Committee merely received reports from elsewhere. It did not engage in any planning itself.

38. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- See above, maybe I never understood the mandate but really never felt planning was happening and issues were put forward for approval with no alternatives so???
- There needs to be a better link between this committee and the work of the Board of Governors.
- Meet.
- The LRPC should be dissolved and or replaced with a REAL planning committee.
- The marginalization of the role of this committee is troubling and should be reviewed.
- Needs a complete overhaul
- Worked well

Undergraduate Council

40. Reflecting on your experiences at the Undergraduate Council, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:



41. Do you have any comments on your experiences and discussions at the Undergraduate Council?

- It's been a nicely collegial group wherein there's a chance to ensure that needed stakeholders have been consulted and that possible impacts to decisions have been considered.
- (is this a new name for USRC? that is what I served on) It was great to direct student concerns here with a smaller, more relevant group, rather than through Board/Senate
- Was a great part of my experience, and the calibre of the people present and the discussions is truly an uplifting experience.
- Council groups are way too large in online meets generally so it is hard to have a say and be fast enough if your wifi is terrible.
- Undergraduates do not have enough members on SUC for their concerns to be taken seriously.
- The undergraduate council appropriately set up and represented each branch of students. It was much better as a platform of discussing possible issues whereas senate just seemed like a formality for already decided things that could not affect change in any way. I think I had much more of a voice on council.

- I haven't been a member for a while, but this Council works very well.
- Too much time goes to routine curricular stuff for the amount of talent in the meetings. More strategic discussion of a range of issues would be better.

42. Do you have any comments regarding this Committee or Council and its mandate?

- I've experienced it as a vital group for ensuring the health of our curriculum and programs. It too is a space where one can learn from the experiences of the other faculties.
- Good committee, good level of control, I like the moving from the detail-heavy model to a more strategic decision making model that was present while I was there. It seems odd the low level of overlap between Senators and members of undergrad council.
- The SUC mandate should be slightly more broad, and be more able to make decisions on behalf of Senate for complex matters.
- Some universities have a standing "curriculum subcommittee" that can do a lot of the SUC grunt work, so SUC could meet less frequently to talk about higher level issues.

Comments and Areas to Improve

43. Do you have any comments regarding Senate's committee and council structure?

- I have never been asked to be on any other committee. I have no idea by what mechanism people are chosen. It does not appear to be transparent.
- Nothing serious.
- It is all a bit mysterious how committees are actually formed, and how anyone might be aware of the strengths or interest that specific members have and how they might best contribute.
- I do not know have a sense of the structure beyond SUC; at times, it would be nice to have a chance for more integration with the Grad Council given the fact that matters impacting the grad programs can impact the undergrad programs in that grad students are often instructors in the undergrad programs (is there an opportunity for a grad student rep or a Grad Council rep to serve on SUC and vice versa?).
- Although it's lean compared to the structure of other university senates, it is effective and well-functioning for the most part
- No comment
- As above, Grad and Research should be separated
- No idea if this is possible, but having students serve 1-2 year terms, but then leaving for co-op made it difficult to get/keep them engaged. Maybe has changed since virtual meetings
- Not enough experience yet to judge.....
- As noted above, graduate & research could be separated.
- I think it is good and would encourage senators to step forward and serve on these committees. It brings people like me in closer contact with admin and makes the university far more human.
- I don't think there is much need for new committees. I think LRP and Finance might need some serious overhauls if they are actually to be meaningful, or else might be better off being terminated.
- There was insufficient dialogue between the Senate and Board of Governors on areas where their responsibilities overlapped (eg strategic planning). The two bodies should understand each other. Senate's committee structure can accommodate this cross-over.
- I would love to be more involved and participate in subcommittees but have no idea how to do this. Would love to have access to information on how to do this.
- It seems appropriate.
- It honestly feels like a rubber stamping factory. Take that for what its worth - seemed rather pointless to me at times.
- A smaller Senate membership might help it to function better. If the Senate is seen as a chore/trial that must be completed in the stages of approval/review, then it is not functioning. People are already busy, so efficient use of committees is essential.

- Likely there are improvements to be made regarding approval levels--more might be delegated from Senate down to the Undergrad and Grad sub-committees to shorten the agenda (even the consent agenda) for Senate.
- I feel disconnected from what goes on in undergraduate and graduate/research councils. Their reports are often very vague. Not sure the finance or long-term-planning committees ever do anything.
- just more engagement of faculty members across the range of committees
- Again, I felt more empowered at the council rather than senate. At the very least, in council, they asked every branch for a report in every meeting. That small thing gave everyone a chance to speak and contribute each time rather than senate where we just sat and listened to people talk at us for hours.
- The change to provide Undergrad and Grad Council more power on routine matters was a good one. Again, honest information summarizing pros and cons of decisions made there would be welcome in the package presented to Senators.
- Only the suggestion to explore a split of the research and graduate council
- We should be willing to consider new approaches to approvals of programs/curriculum/etc, that will reduce the amount of rote voting in favor of motions at meetings with lots of expensive people in attendance.
- I think it would be helpful at the full Senate council to have reports/overviews from committees, and to overview the types of discussion that were had at committee sessions (not just the recommendation) so that the council can better appreciate the context.
- No as I have not served on Senate, I am only vaguely familiar with its structure in relation to committees
- Seems to work well as presently structured
- As a graduate student, I don't feel like I was told about the different committees, how to join one, etc. Thus, I didn't feel like I was able to contribute fully to Senate, since so much of the real discussion seems to happen in these committees.
- Some committees seem useless. I support ensuring they are made useful or dissolved.
- Being new to the Senate, it is hard to comment but I do like how open and transparent the Senate meetings are as it seems critical to allow for voices of all on campus to be heard in a neutral, non-Faculty/Department space..
- The position of USRC and SSAC within UW governance is somewhat ambiguous. I understood that they were committees which ultimately reported Senate (especially USRC) but I realize I may be mistaken. Clarity on administrative committees' position in the UW governance hierarchy would benefit student leaders who have such short tenure in these positions.
- It think that it would be best to split SGRC to a separate Senate Graduate Council and a Senate Research Council
- The committee structure prevents senate meetings from being too long, but is unrepresentative of constituencies on campus. Needing to have a committee seat to

make effective change on relevant policy stifles minority voices to an unacceptable degree.

- What is the point in them? The exec decides who has the appropriate viewpoint and appoints such people to said committees. How about considering people with highly divergent viewpoints if you actually want things done in a way that might save this place from the coming collapse?
- For all the procedural and committee-referred decisions on the senate agenda, put them on the senate exec committee agenda instead, send the SEC agenda to all of senate, and if someone cares enough (or say if 25 people care enough) to object to SEC deciding something, only then bring it to senate at-large

44. Do you have any recommendations for potential Senate committees?

- I've enjoyed being asked to be on the special committees - it's not clear to me how these decisions are made though. Some more openness about this would be good.
- A long term strategy committee?
- 1) The university used to have a Pandemic Planning Committee. It may be time to revive that. (not necessarily a Senate committee). 2) Policy 1 revising committee (possibly joint from BoG, with FRC and SRC reps also present).
- Consider representation on the committees, including student representation
- What about Alumni Relations - this could focus on partnerships for coop, advancement activities, contributions to academic research as a few examples
- More regular touch ins with Karen/Vivek with each constituency
- recruit peopel. Maybe let us sit for more than a year if we are on committees that we engage well with
- Student Experience is tied directly to academics (along with professional and personal endeavors) and certainly has a place at Senate... because it is not a fitting Board discussion
- Arguably the biggest issue for students, both undergraduate and graduate, is mental health. Senate should form an ad-hoc Mental Health Committee with both undergraduate and graduate representatives from each Faculty to make recommendations to Senate to fix the mental health problems students face at UW.
- A separate committee to represent the members of the Teaching Stream.
- I'd like to see senate take more oversight of academic operations so perhaps that could be a committee of its own.
- Improving the affordability of living in the waterloo region for students.
- Postdocs - to be included with SGRC?
- An implementation committee that looks at systemic structure of the university and investigates ways to improve
- Renewed mandate for Alternative Credentials Approval Committee, perhaps a curriculum subcommittee of SUC and SGRC.

- EDI - Cohesive implementation of structural changes across faculties/admissions/curricula/scholarships/indigenous applicant pathways etc
- I think there could have been a pandemic committee, to help make educational-related decisions during the pandemic. While I was on Senate, we were not really consulted on such decisions. I figured they were probably spread out over various ones, but I think having them in one committee centralized, would have been more transparent, accountable, and coordinated.
- A committee on instruction. There is no university-wide body where all members of the university can discuss teaching on this campus. There are many problems that need addressing: technology deficit; substandard classrooms; lack of support for teaching innovation - I could go on. Instructors don't have a direct say in these matters at UW; too much gets decided by ASUs and non-faculty personnel.
- Perhaps USRC and SSAC should be formalized as reporting to the Senate.
- Senate committees should be expanded when possible, and should move towards having more elected and fewer appointed members. Committees on Undergraduate issues, as the largest group should be Balkanized rather than concentrated into a single group. Undergraduate issues are the most numerous, if the least glamorous.
- How about a Thinking Different committee that could actually consider something other than the vision of the anointed?

45. What aspect of Senate's operations are working we at present?

- Overall procedure and governance
- I do like the online meetings.
- Timely communications, clear presentations, generally good reference material, willingness to entertain any or all questions
- Well-supported agenda and business items; learning and research presentations very useful
- Q&A periods, presentations of decision items
- The senate meetings have been accessible during COVID, with online meetings--I appreciate that accessibility.
- Meetings are smartly run and packages are well prepared.
- Karen and the team are great
- Senate should be expanded to include all Department Chairs.
- Hard to tell...
- I think we come to good decisions with the interests of the university in mind. While there certainly are louder constituents in Senate than others, I think ultimately we come to decisions that reflect the university.
- I will answer question below at same time. I think that the majority of faculty think senate plays the role that the board of governors plays. They do not know senate is engaged with academic issues only and not the rest of university admin. Our governance structure is not the same as most universities in Canada and I am unsure

most faculty know this. My experience on senate was very good and I enjoyed that time. It was well managed, bit ponderous but to be expected.

- Operationally, the logistics of Senate are usually very smooth, and credit to the Secretariat to that.
- I don't want to comment because it has been a few years since I was there.
- Meetings are well run, efficient, and hit the mandate.
- The online meetings are working well. Then again, I have nothing to compare against.
- Able to gather people quickly and flexibility due to online meets
- Discussion of matters of strategic importance; campus representation (though possibly too light for staff)
- Consent agenda. Question period with president.
- Virtual meetings are working fine, except for the exclusion of the chat
- Check the grammar of that question. Not sure what you're asking.
- Given the next question, I presume you meant "working well at present?" I think Senate is adequate at the moment.
- The approval of curricular and academic changes are effective. They could be streamlined.
- Graduate
- The overall structure of the Senate operations seems to work smoothly.
- I think that there is genuinely a high degree of transparency for the greater UW community with respect to the Senate's activities.
- Agenda is clear; discussions are done in a respectful way.
- Mandate is suitably linked to its structure
- The meetings seem well organized and efficient.
- A good sense of collegiality exists and thankfully UW's Senate doesn't dissolve into arguments that I know occur at other Senates in Canada. I am curious about the rationale and timing of this governance review though. Why is it being done so early in the new president's tenure? It suggests that he might think that things at Senate aren't working well at all, and I don't understand how he can have come to that conclusion so quickly. He has chaired only four meetings so far, and this review was announced at his third meeting so he decided this was necessary after only two meetings and only a few months on the job at an entirely new place with an entirely different governance structure than the one he worked in for decades? Respectfully, it looks rushed and as if something else is prompting the review. I worry that changes might be made too hastily without knowing the consequences. Many potential changes that might result from this work might be great, but I have sincere questions about motivations and why, in what I would suppose ought to be a year of seeking to understand this place, this felt like an immediate priority.
- I think all aspects of Senate seem to be working, but I am new and do not have much context with which to judge.

- Business is transacted smoothly. Consent agenda is very efficient. Presentations are a good way of building broader awareness of what's happening across the university.
- I assume you mean "well". The honours committees bias towards business acumen, but are otherwise non-offensive.
- Dealing with the business that the statute and by-laws require us to do.
- Grammar checking certainly isn't working well ;)
- Meetings run efficiently and there is adequate student representation.

46. What aspects of Senate's operations are not working well at present?

- Discussions are dominated by a few voices.
- Very little of substance is actually discussed and thought through. Most of senate is either presenting information, or bringing matters which have been discussed extensively elsewhere.
- I think I would change the voting system to require all members do *something* to register a vote.
- Dominated by a few voices, not very discursive, not clearly representative of different strengths across university, not fully transparent in committee formation
- Lack of substantive discussions. Senate has elected representatives from across the campus community. We should be using that collective brain power and insight as best possible. Currently, it is mostly reserved for rubber stamping and minor amounts of discussion.
- There are a huge number of decisions being made at the Central Planning Group, which is independent of Senate. At the beginning of the pandemic this made sense. The university was scrambling to figure out what to do and we were in a crisis. We are now (almost) 2 years into the pandemic. I would have hoped that we would have created a better structure for these decisions that allowed for better collegial governance.
- It's a large room with often the same people who speak up. But I have felt that it is respectful and open.
- Need some orientation so Senators understand their role and strategic contributions.
- Senate has often been used as a rubber stamp process. The forum should be leveraged for consideration and debate over material issues being presented to our campus community; instead, all too often major decisions have been made in advance of senate approval - and discussion within the senate has merely been procedural. uWaterloo should seek to better leverage the keen involvement of stakeholders to improve campus governance and strategic direction.
- Room for discussions in agenda - if we always run over, and there are questions, having tight timelines stifles the ability to have valuable discussion
- Too large of a body and not enough time to learn about and discuss the issues
- No comment
- Format does not reflect an open academic forum.

- Long presentations that could have been circulated in advance aren't a good use of people's time. That said, if there is a pre-read, members need to be expected to read them (and gently reminded of such).
- The strategic layer.
- N/A
- I think things work well.
- There is no orientation for new senators. That's just irresponsible. And anything that could be done to make the time worthwhile, to feel like as a senator you are doing something worthwhile would be helpful
- members need to be held accountable for their position within our community. they MUST come prepared and they MUST engage... too many useless senators
- Meetings are primarily information only and lack true collegial governance engagement with critical issues. AFIW are not effectively treated as UW faculty as per the UW Act. AFIW are missing from most reports on sabbaticals, tenure/promotion, awards, etc. It can be noted that AFIW approvals are distinct from their employers, but AFIW faculty accomplishments should be recognized as UW faculty (again as per the UW Act).
- A lack of focus or clarity on what Senate's role should be, and how Senators could better serve this purpose.
- MS teams emotes for voting and silence for abstain and against votes
- Agendas are becoming more formalized, which has advantages; however the approach is becoming less welcoming to open dialogue; this may, in part, be influenced by the technology-mediated format (less conducive to open dialogue)
- Data presented as text. Statistics without error indicators and over too-short time intervals. Powerpoint slide presentations where form supercedes function. No encouragement of community.
- Open discussion/debate about emerging/on-going issues is lacking
- It often feels like a formality and not an actual approval process. Perhaps voting "yes" shouldn't be assumed, but required. Other than that, people should be required to engage further in the material presented. Currently, it seems as though only the people presenting are talking at everyone else and then the motion is assumed to pass. Need to increase everyone's engagement by giving them a voice.
- Most thing seem fine, but my sense is that the Senate is essentially a rubber-stamp group.
- I think Senate is too large and that a review of the membership is in order. One example is the "VP Advancement" who sits on Senate with an inherent conflict of interest. The academic interests of the university are not necessarily reflected in a position whose mandate is to provide revenue to the university. If the size of the Senate could be reduced by 15% or so, Senators might actually get to know one another a bit better.
- There seem to be relatively few questions/dissenting opinions in senate. This seems odd to me as we have such a diverse population across the university

- A lack of collegial governance. Our new president wants to move on from Covid? Well, he should move past the opaque decision-making system that seems to have superseded Senate for the past two years. See here: <https://fauw.blog/2022/02/10/is-uws-collegial-governance-model-still-working/>
- The updates from the President | Vice Presidents should be provided in advance so that meaningful questions could be addressed. There should also be an intake process by which the PVP can receive questions from Senators that may provide direction on what is "top of mind" for the institution
- Lack of connection with the Board of Governors; definite sense that Senate is a rubber-stamping organization.
- There's an extremely high barrier to entry, I think, for understanding the structure of the Senate as well as being able to navigate it. For instance, it's not obvious how one would hypothetically sponsor an item all the way to the Senate floor. I think there's also a lacking in proactive support for student Senators – there is little-to-no support provided for a student entering the role, leading to uncertainty surrounding their new responsibilities and how they ought to approach Senate decisions and discussions.
- Decisions being made at senior levels that impact the institution are not approved by Senate but should be with terms of reference e.g., WatSpeed, hiring initiative for racialized people.
- Meeting agendas very dry. Not much discussion or sense of purpose for the body
- Items for which Senate is the only approving body do not always get a chance to be discussed that could result in a change to the motion presented. Some presentations that are more like "updates" can be long and unlikely to yield strategic discussions.
- I think there should be better onboarding for new members, especially graduate and undergraduate students, but even for new faculty members or others who might be interested. Sending a link to a folder with a bunch of things to read isn't enough, it just bogs the person down and doesn't give a real idea of what it means to serve on Senate, and how one could actually have an impact. On a related note, pairing student members with a mentor of some kind (people could volunteer) would be good. Then we could ask this person questions, for example, before or during the meeting, and this would help ensure our contributions are relevant, fit the mandate, etc. I think it would also have made me feel more comfortable taking part in discussions and expressing my opinions.
- An orientation would be helpful. Senators should understand their roles better.
- Roberts Rule of Order is not comprehensively applied and followed. Passing motions via email that impact the entire graduate student body should not be tolerated - nor should motions be passed based on a non-response to email.
- The role of Senate and its impact to researchers and students alike is very poorly known. The impacts of Policy 73 often choke out debate on potential improvements. I acknowledge that much of this is due to provincial funding, but too often I feel like we're shooting ourselves in the foot RE: finances. The committee structure, in general, is arguably quite bad at servicing the needs of senate beyond time commitments.

- Free-flowing discussions following administrative reports. There are two or three usual suspects who hold forth with commentary that is not particularly relevant, while others remain silent.
- Long-range planning (and I don't mean these stupid 10-year plans; I mean things like GeorgiaTech did where they envisioned the university in 25 years time. Frankly, the idea of an instructor in front of a bunch of students is a 2000+ year-old model; consider something different.
- It doesn't seem like the body itself presents much value besides fulfilling the requirements of the Act. Most decisions have reasonably been made already, the body is way too big to have meaningful discussions, and I don't think anyone feels ownership over the process of items.
- There should be more opportunity for discussion of items. It shouldn't be a rubber stamp for decisions already made.

47. Do you have suggestions for ways to improve Senate's communication channels?

- I do like the way things are done overall and the recent improvements to the package have been incredible. Having hyperlinks to issues has made a huge difference and page numbering to where the issues begin - brilliant!
- Calls for agenda items, particularly when Senate Exec feels there may be a lack of items, would be productive. Can fill in space with strategic discussion items taken from suggestions from members.
- Have a way for ppl to submit open questions
- All Senators should be involved in committees to really participate and contribute
- Make them less hierarchical - and more frequent earlier in the decision-making process.
- I think they work well.
- Maybe an email or a web site where people can see what happened at senate, what decisions were made etc. Maybe this exists already. In general I think senate is a mystery to most faculty.
- Senators should be encouraged to add agenda items. Senate discussions should be about the greatest challenges facing the academic life of UW and AFIW.
- Improve the agenda package, or perhaps pick and highlight the key topics for discussion, and provide more background info on them ahead of the meeting.
- Maybe use a platform that isn't MS teams
- I value the flexibility and scheduling advantages of virtual meetings, but there is more opportunity to have input and discussion when in-person. This might be mitigated online with appropriate strategies, and I acknowledge that we have a new President whom we have not yet experienced in-person at Senate; so the changes may be partly about leadership, and partly about virtual delivery...
- Use an ongoing discussion forum. Use backchannel chat. Make profile photos work. Encourage cameras on. Use electronic voting. Build in breaks.

- The undergraduate students in the year that I served had formed a caucus. This was a great method to discuss ideas and issues, ask questions and prepare for the meetings. It helped the students express their opinions on the matters at hand whereas they often felt like they couldn't do so at the Senate meetings (either because students weren't given time to speak or it felt that our concerns weren't heard). I think this type of small grouping where people are required to engage with other groups to get opinions and bounce ideas might help.
- I have already made suggestions to the package. More transparency as to the content of each agenda item would be a good start.
- Communications re: programs/priorities and motions should provide opportunity for diverse opinions to be presented. Whether that be requiring a statement on any opposing/negative/ opinions/stances that were presented. In my opinion, we get a 'feel good' message about most things and I often wonder/believe the picture is not as rosy as is being presented. I often wonder if I am the only one thinking this way.
- As above, Senate should be a two-way conversation - from Senators to leadership prior to the meeting.
- Not specifically, but better use of internet platforms.
- Something other than email
- As a Senate committee member who isn't part of Senate, I would appreciate more communication between the committee membership and Senate, if only to understand more about how Senate decisions are made and how committees integrate with that process
- Explore newer communication channels to encourage sharing of opinions. E.g., sometimes when people use the chat during the meeting it actually leads to constructive observations
- Need articulate Chairs of the various senate committees who are well versed on the issues under consideration
- I'm not sure, email is fine, I wasn't a fan of the sharepoint, I found it confusing to be honest. But that may just be me.
- Provide the monthly agenda directly to all faculty members. You can't get the community involved without direct communication. Provide faculty members with clear contact information for their representatives so that they can make their views known to Senate via their representatives.
- Get more students, graduate and undergraduate, involved. Faculty is often poor at communicating the impacts of research on the student experience, and the most enthusiastic support comes from the largest group(s) on campus. We often neglect how much work is done, in lab, by our students.
- When items of major significance require approval, consider presenting the item at one meeting, and asking for a vote at the next meeting. This allows concerns to emerge -- and also to be resolved -- between meetings.
- Senate communicates?

- Share more information about discussions pertaining to students on student channels. Utilize and equip the student leaders on Senate to have discussions with students.

48. What items of strategic interest would you like Senate to consider in the coming few years?

- With the (perhaps) finishing of policy 76 I think this solves a huge problem this university has had in terms of growth. There are some points of concern I have but I fear that asking to talk about them might get me into trouble and since I'm close to being tenured I don't want to mention them right now. I would love to be asked again in 6 months however.
- A thorough review of the impact of the Waterloo Budget Model and how it trickles down - or not - to department and school levels, and whether this aligns or not to the University's goals towards equity, inclusion, but also interdisciplinary and cross faculty collaborations....
- Improved conditions for lecturers and a flattening of the disparities between this group and TT/tenured faculty. . . . along a similar line, is the university doing well in limiting reliance on contract academic staff ("sessionals") and creating full-time jobs or are we too more and more dependent upon the casualization of labour?
- Re-instate the University Librarian annual presentation to the Senate on a recurring basis;
- The role that the recording of lectures will play in the long term.
- 1) Policy 1. The process is antiquated and no longer serves the university effectively. As it governs FRC and SRC, it would be appropriate for FRC and SRC to defer to a committee of Senate, possibly joint with BoG, with some members of FRC and SRC present. 2) Reduction of reliance on sessional lecturers. Improving the quality of our undergraduate offerings should be a strategic priority.
- I would like to see Waterloo somehow bring together its health departments in a way that communicates our health strengths to external audiences. At present, health is spread across faculties.
- Our role in the evolving post pandemic health landscape, UW of the future: 2050
- Strategic plan initiatives, performance and compliance
- No comment
- I think the current approach of really letting Senate dig into Strategic Plan themes is working well, and I would encourage sticking with that for the next few years.
- There are a number of issues. On the graduate studies side I find the lack of funding for international students a huge hinderence to the flow of education, intellect and opportunity. Many of the faculty at UW went to universities outside of Canada and we are not allowing that at UW (unless very wealthy). Those opportunities are what frame many of us in the long term. For undergrad I would like to see more value placed on quality of education over volume of students (cash flow). There is a point where increasing the number of students ends up costing more than if we kept class sizes and

enrolments smaller. I am in Science and there is pressure to increase teaching loads (my classes are already close to 400 students) and to eliminate courses with smaller (25) enrolments. These small senior level courses are where students really learn and eliminating them is wrong. The work load of 400 students is immense and close to unmanageable at the senior level (upper 3rd and 4th year). I think those workloads are going to become a serious issue in the very near future. This will be reflected in program quality (multiple choice exams in 4th year?, no research opportunity available for most students) as well as in faculty burn out (I have 4 weeks vacation, there is no possible way to take more than 5-6 days due to marking exams and assignments). Outside of senate UW needs to stop rebranding over and over. It has a reputation, solidify that and market that to potential undergraduates. UW is good, go with that. I think the campus really needs some balance. I know the engineering history and background but faculties such as mine (Science) are slowly drifting into irrelevance (Our infrastructure and opportunity for students reflects the 70's and 80's). There comes a time to decide if those faculties are simply token or if they will be supported at a level that allows for growth and development. My final comment is that after being here for almost 20 years UW feels a bit lost as to what it is and where it should go. Every other university is doing what used to make UW unique. UW simply hasn't matured and hasn't found it's feet. Still a remarkable place but feels adrift.

- I sense present Senators more than I are ones who can answer this question well, but I imagine rolling in discussions about enrollment and growth strategy (it impacts academics seriously), of the future of interdisciplinarity while at the same time certain programs are moving in the direction of excluding people outside their department taking their courses, the quality of the co-op system, student satisfaction, policies that can increase % of tenure track instructors, and more.
- Supports fir student life and mental health and how that connects to achievement and success in coop.
- EDI, Mental Health, and policy processes with FAUW. For example, it is unworkable that policies take years to develop at UW (e.g. ethics, parental leave, faculty appts for lecturers) and are not responsive to the collegial requests of faculty through FAUW.
- Faculty appraisal - change from the post-hoc grading to a mentoring system. Quality assurance of teaching in the University, staring with simple things, such as consistency of student experience and expectation for a similar degree across the university.
- Onboarding support, and helping new Senators gain a sense of why they are on it.
- Possibly a COVID enforcement committee or a COVID transition council/committee
- Student mental health. Student rights. Student privacy rights. The extent to which "academic freedom" has in recent years been used by instructors as a shield from criticism of their poor teaching methods.
- Future of remote and hybrid teaching at Waterloo for regular programs.
- Equity and Indigeneity--how to make substantive change across the university
- Student fees and the cost of living in Waterloo. Student satisfaction measurements with academic structures such as examinations and professor evaluations.

- How to reinvigorate collegial governance, identify and remove barriers to interdisciplinarity on campus
- No comment.
- new models of learning (online, hybrid; flipped classrooms; etc.); indigenization; research strategies/prioritization
- Strategic Planning. Enrollment Visions. The strength of the University as compared to the strength of Faculties. The value add of being part of the Waterloo community. The strength and leveraging of our alumni to advance educational goals...
- It is likely that coming years see an increase in interdisciplinary research. This may bring up many issues in terms of how to evaluate, measure and position research at the university. Currently, it seems that we are not well equipped with a senate-equivalent body to discuss or work on these issues. It is unlikely that the GRC can take up this burden
- How to overcome some existing systems and structures to improve research and pedagogy and deliver the Strat Plan objectives. E.g. Systemic interdisciplinarity will not be achieved with the current siloes in place; IST's delay or lack of response fundamentally inhibits pedagogy
- Ensuring that all decision making that affects the institution be approved via Senate or subcommittees and not just implemented by senior administration.
- Student experience. Micro credentials that are stackable.
- Where should we strike the balance between grad and undergrad, between domestic students and international, between teaching and research
- How best to ensure that pressing policy issues of national and international import are reflected in curricula across campus - e.g., climate crisis, coping with pandemics, health generally and sustainability.
- seems OK as is
- I think the Senate should consider how increasing precaritization in the academy reduces quality of undergraduate education. Labour and inclusion issues have a huge impact, as we know scholars from historically marginalized groups are more likely to be in precarious roles, and also get tenure less often, etc. This makes it harder for students to build relationships with professors, especially to get to know them well enough to get advice on their next career steps, reference letters for graduate school admissions, etc. It makes the academy less representative of society at large, reducing the chance for students from marginalized groups to see themselves represented. In turn, it makes our research and teaching less diverse, and therefore less valid, reliable, and valuable. I think the Senate should discuss concrete actions UW could take to be a leader in this space. The university should be a leader in providing high quality jobs in our community, based fully on merit.
- Structure and delivery of courses post-pandemic. Restructuring course loads for students so that they have a fewer number of courses per term (but same number of learning/contact hours).
- Graduate student supervision

- Building on the lessons we have learned from the pandemic about creative and flexible ways to teach and work; I think if we can incorporate the good things we have learned going forward, the institution can work in a more efficient and productive way helping more individual students, staff, and faculty to thrive in a work situation (e.g., hybrid with some on campus and some remote work) that is suited to their needs.
- Geopolitical risks to University operations are important for Senate to consider. Additionally, the role of the University in civic society more generally--how can we foster the social conditions necessary for democracy to thrive in Canada and beyond? How actively should the University engage in political issues? How can we engage populations historically excluded from the University?
- We should really take a deep look at how we value Entrepreneurship over Research. This, in my opinion, is being misinterpreted by our policies and data, and will cause us to slip behind other comparative Universities in the future. I would also encourage Senate to examine how we can improve the research experience for Graduate and Undergraduate students, be it through expanded benefits or labour collaboration. Finally, I would hope Senate takes the time to consider academic equity, we often over emphasize the diversity and inclusivity aspects of our work, and fail to consider the material conditions linked to those situations.
- I am not sure whether the senate is the place to *develop* strategy. It is an unwieldy group and it's primary mandate is to carry out statutory obligations. It's an approval body, not an idea body. Developing strategy outside of senate, and then bringing it to senate for approval as required, is probably more effective.
- long range planning
- I think there may be interest among faculties to create online versions for some courses that didn't have online versions before the pandemic. I don't know if this would be considered as an item of "strategic interest", but if it does happen, I imagine there will be many discussions at UAC, SUC, etc.
- Survival when parents and potential students discover alternative education forms that cost a tenth of what we charge. How about we consider exit paths that are less than four years? How about we stop forcing students to take courses that we want them to take and start having a system where students have the fastest exit path to a job? And then have life-time learning mean something?
- I would like to see them consider how to enable further diversification and risk-taking in UWaterloo's operations. Much of the time it feels like we pat ourselves on the back about how innovative and disruptive the Waterloo model of experiential education was 60 years ago, but we conservatively hold on to those innovative systems as they become the norm and status-quo. Our faculty, staff, and students seem as conservative and change-resistant as any other institution, but are made worse with the delusion that we are still as innovative as we were 60 years ago. Areas that I think could help this is a focus on the value of extra-curricular experiences alongside co-curricular (co-op) and curricular experiences. Perhaps we could credential experiences in volunteering and community work in certificates or reduce the severity of a hit to one's academic

performance that comes as a consequence of extra-curricular engagement as an idea, but in general I feel that the senate is a conservative body made up by faculty, staff, and students that are only able to be part of it due to their comfort and preference with the status-quo of the system.

University of Waterloo Governance Review of Senate

Report to Senate Executive Committee

Analysis of survey and interviews

“In the beginning, with inadequate facilities, with courses being changed constantly, and perhaps the most pervasive and upsetting of all, still with no degree granting powers, the group of faculty and students who made up this embryo university coalesced and generated the dynamic out of which a great university was created in a shorter period of time than has ever been recorded in the educational history of Canada.”

-James Scott, **Of Mud and Dreams: University of Waterloo 1957-1967**,
The Ryerson University Press, 1967.

“Waterloo is built for change.”

Connecting Imagination with Impact, University of Waterloo
Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

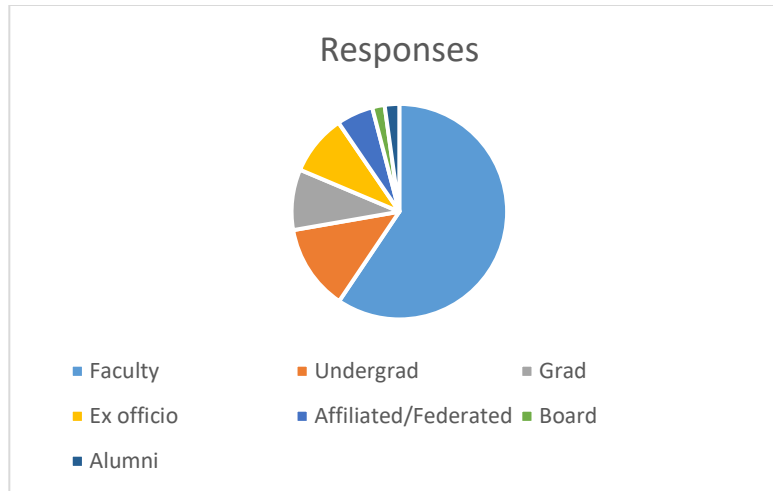
Overview of process

The University of Waterloo Senate Executive Committee’s governance review of Senate provides “an opportunity for Senate to reflect on its performance and future needs over the medium- to long-term”. It is an opportunity to revitalize Senate governance, and to consider new approaches than can bring back the innovative spirit in which Waterloo was founded.

The university asked higher education consultant Christine Tausig Ford, president of Higher Thinking Strategies, to analyze a survey of Senate as well as to conduct a series of stakeholder interviews. The interviews were conducted in late March 2022, and those interviewed are listed in Appendix A. The interviews reflected many of the same views that were expressed in the responses to the survey and provided deeper context and observations. A number of the issues raised have already been discussed by the Senate Executive Committee, including how to encourage more strategic discussions; the need for Senate orientation; and a review of the practices, structures, terms of reference and mandates of Senate committees.

This report provides an analysis of the responses to the survey questions and to the open-ended invitations to provide additional comments, which were plentiful. It also reports on and analyzes the interviews. Finally, a series of recommendations arising out of the analysis is found on page 14.

The survey was sent to 260 Senators, past Senators and non-Senators who are or were members of Senate committees. It received an almost 47 percent response rate. More than half of those responses came from faculty members.



Responses from faculty, ex officio and affiliated/federated representatives were relatively evenly split between current and past senators – not surprisingly as they remain on campus over many years. Among students, responses came mainly from past senators. Given the strong response rate, the survey provided a solid understanding of the views of Senate members, particularly those from faculty. The interviews focused on ex officio appointees, who are listed in Appendix A.

The responses to the survey and interviews, taken together, provide insight into what Senators believe is working well for the Waterloo Senate, and areas in which academic governance can be strengthened.

What is working well

Many respondents, both to the survey and the interviews, appreciated the highly collegial nature of the Waterloo senate, which they believe demonstrates trust in the university and its governance. Participation in Senate was seen as an expression of “good faith” in the university. It was clear to observers that comments and questions are encouraged and are being taken seriously by President Vivek Goel, and that follow-up answers will be provided.

While some survey respondents said that students or new and untenured faculty could feel intimidated and hesitant to speak at senate, there was little agreement that this was the case among those interviewed. That said, surveys of senates at other universities have shown more hesitation to speak among women and racialized faculty. These demographics were not explored in the Waterloo survey.

Just over 80% of all respondents to the survey believe the frequency of Senate meetings is “just right”. About 55% believe the length of Senate meetings is “just right”, including 73% of faculty respondents. Senators were more likely to believe meetings were too long, rather than too short, with 19.4% holding this view. Students and ex officio representatives were somewhat more likely to believe the meetings were too long, although half of these groups still believed the length was right. Some concerns were raised about whether the December meeting was

necessary. However, others saw that meeting as an opportunity for greater reflection on strategic issues. Concerns were also raised about Senate meetings that lasted longer than the allotted two hours, particularly with respect to those with childcare responsibilities.

Four out of five Senators surveyed believe that items considered are within Senate's mandate. Sixty percent said they get a good sense of the viewpoints of the broader university community when issues are discussed (although 12% were neutral and 28% disagreed). Half of all survey respondents said decisions were given an appropriate time for consideration

Areas for improvement

While comments on aspects of the Senate experience were generally positive, there were many areas that survey respondents and interviewees alike felt could be improved. Responses to the survey and to interviews were similar: Senators would like to see a more engaged and strategic Senate. In the survey and interview comments, Senate members hearkened back with nostalgia to the days of Waterloo's founding, with its innovative and unique approach to higher education. Many Senators are eager to consider ways of returning to that sense of a university undertaking groundbreaking experiences.

The agenda package

While survey responses to questions about the agenda package were relatively positive, it was clear from the additional comments that the length and format of the documents were problematic. The survey found:

- 69% said the agenda package contained the information necessary for good governance and decision-making
- 70% said documents were clear and well-organized
- 75% said they were available with enough lead time before meetings
- 79% said they are easily accessible.

However, the comments told a different story. Senators described the package as "long and overwhelmingly full of details", routine, and largely uninformative. One faculty member described it as "long and unfathomable at times." That said, survey respondents and interviewees alike appreciated the improvements that have already been made to help Senators navigate through the documents. Moving reports from faculties to a separate area with an easy-to-locate link is seen as a good step. The agenda package could be further improved by making it more attractive to enhance readability.

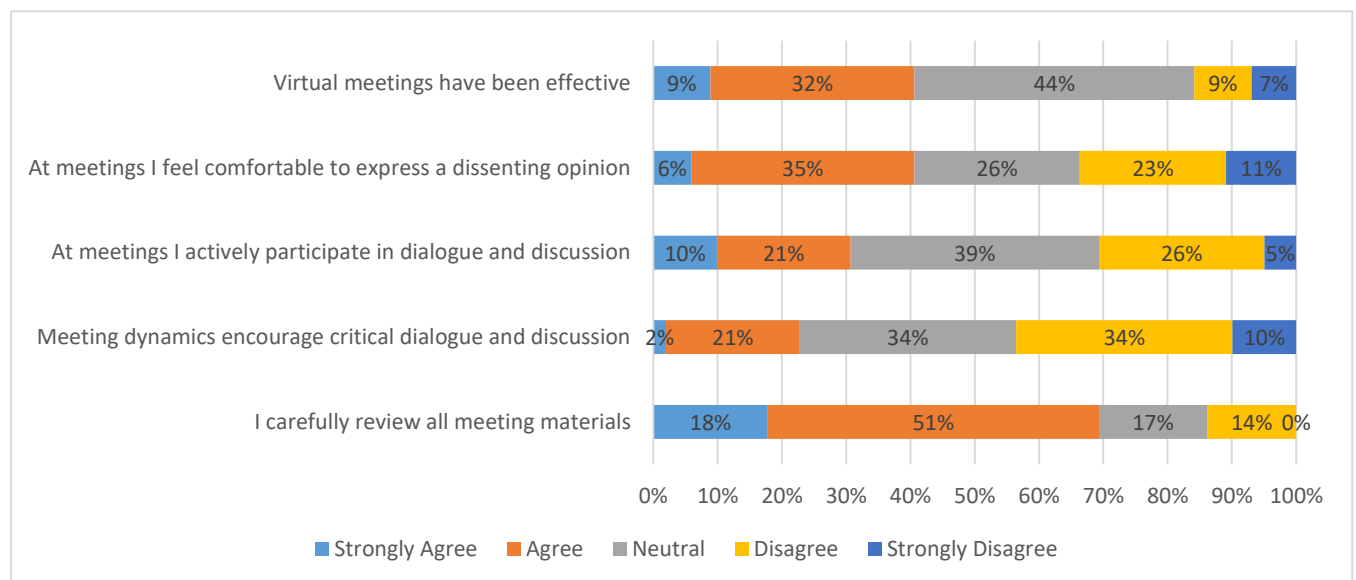
Additional streamlining of agendas would be welcome, along with summaries or key bullet points highlighted to help guide discussion or alert Senators to areas where decisions are required. It was also suggested that presentations be included in a "pre-read" section of the package, so that there would be less time spent on going through presentation slides, and more time available for strategic discussion on issues raised by the presentations. Since almost 70% of those surveyed said they "carefully review meeting materials" (see page 4), sharing presentations ahead of time should not present challenges, especially if these are clearly identified in a separate section of the documents, in the same way as the faculty reports.

An annual workplan, to be approved by Senate, was also recommended, and would help Senators to be prepared for discussions. Finally, some suggested use of a governance portal, rather than Sharepoint, to make documents more easily accessible.

Importantly, there were strong suggestions from many respondents that Senate reports overall should be improved. Each report, they suggested, should have a cover memo, and there should be templates and standards for the reports themselves. A critical element for any such template is the inclusion of both context and proposed questions or cues, designed to inform and guide discussions on the Senate floor.

The Senate experience

The responses to a series of survey questions focused on the Senate experience were challenging to analyze. A high number of respondents frequently chose “neutral” as their answer, perhaps reflecting disengagement, a lack of clarity on how best to answer the questions or simply politeness and an unwillingness to be negative. That said, these questions tended to have more negative responses than previous questions.



The responses are relatively positive to two questions. Virtual meetings are seen as effective by 41% of Senators, although 44% say they are neutral. Almost 70% of Senators say they carefully review meeting materials.

Responses related to the quality of discussions, however, were less positive, and Senators expressed concerns about whether dissenting opinions are welcome or possible. Less than half -- 41% -- said they would be comfortable expressing a dissenting opinion, while 26% were neutral, and 34% said they either disagreed or strongly disagreed and stated they are not comfortable expressing dissent. Under one-third (31%) said they actively participated in discussion and dialogue, but an equal percentage disagreed, and 39% were neutral.

The written responses to the survey provide greater context to these responses. A number noted that virtual meetings are not conducive to critical dialogue or dissent. They also pointed to the length of presentations as a barrier and believed that some of the most critical issues facing the university do not come to the senate floor for discussion. Moreover, Senators noted that the same small group dominates discussions, making it difficult to ask questions.

While most agree that Senate discussion is respectful, a few were concerned that expressing dissenting views would be seen negatively, particularly by faculty colleagues. Of note, Senators, both in the survey and ex officio interviews, spoke about the downside of collegiality. With so much emphasis on collegiality, Senators may be too “nice” when they should be speaking up to express concerns or disagreement.

The view that Senate is a “rubber stamp” was stated often in survey responses. This is a view common to university senates across Canada and was expressed not only in the survey and but also in interview comments. Many believe that the Waterloo senate simply approves matters that are discussed and determined elsewhere¹.

Respondents frequently spoke of the “decentralized” nature of Waterloo. Issues coming to Senate are discussed beforehand in multiple layers of academic governance before coming to the Senate floor – departments, faculties, senate committees and councils, and in various administrative and leadership groups. Items seem to come to Senate as a “*fait accompli*”, and there is little apparent room for disagreement.

Moreover, there are many advisory committees, some of which are related to Senate’s responsibilities for academic governance and educational policy. These are supported by the University Secretariat, but a number do not appear to have a direct relationship to Senate or its committees. Some could be formed as ad hoc working groups or sub-committees of Senate, thereby allowing Senators to provide input at an earlier stage. A recent example is the new Digital Learning Strategy Working Group, which would benefit from a strong connection to Senate.

The University Secretariat also supports a number of committees beyond Board and Senate committees, and it will be important to review whether these committees should have a relationship to Senate or to Senate committees; that they are related to the governance work with which the Secretariat is charged; and to ensure that the Secretariat has the appropriate resources to support this work.

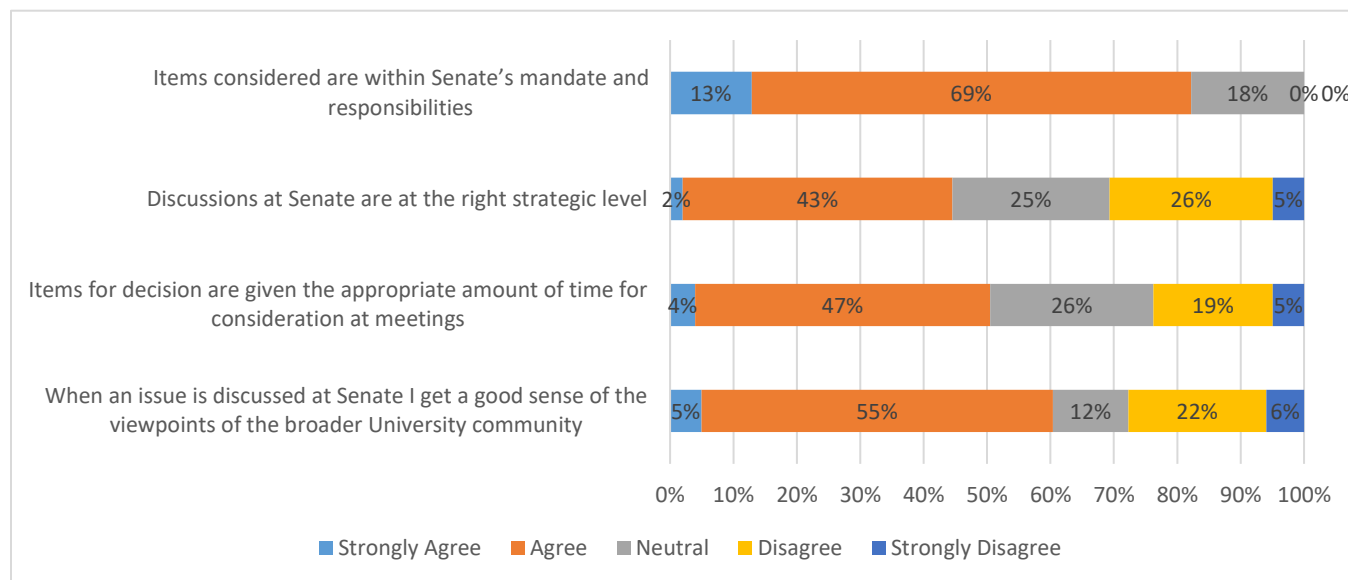
Strategic discussions

The survey questions, written comments and interviews all pointed to significant issues in generating strategic discussions at Senate. In many ways, these reflected the comments noted

¹ In a survey of Canadian university senates in 2012, 64 percent of senators said that senate “primarily approves decisions made elsewhere”. In a recent discussion with the principal author of this report, Glen Jones of OISE at the University of Toronto, he noted that this situation has likely not changed. (Lea Pennock, Glen Jones, Jeff Leclerc, Sharon Li, “Challenges and Opportunities for Collegial Governance at Canadian Universities: Reflections on a Survey of Academic Senates”, *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2016.

above with respect to engagement and the ability to dissent. The issue of how to engage Senators in meaningful strategic discussions is among the most critical for the Senate Executive Committee to resolve – and is challenging for many Senates across Canada.

The survey results, written responses, and interviews with respect to Senators’ experience in strategic discussions and issues raised for decision are concerning:



Both survey respondents and interviewees believe that Senate should be – but currently is not – a place for meaningful conversations about the future of the university. Large Senates such as Waterloo’s mitigate against such open-ended conversations. Waterloo’s Senate is comparable in size to Western University (103 Senators) and the University of Toronto Academic Board (115 members). Queen’s University has only 68 Senators, with 12 ex officio and 56 elected from various constituencies. McMaster University has 67 Senators, with 16 ex officio, but almost 30 official “Senate observers”, which include positions such as associate vice-presidents, associate deans, and the heads of several student unions.

It is difficult to have strategic discussions in large Senates, but it is particularly difficult to do so in a virtual setting. As universities return from pandemic restrictions, consideration should be given to the best format for Senate. Respondents agreed that virtual senates have advantages in terms of access, but in-person meetings allow for more discussions. Some suggested the use of smaller break-out groups to allow greater engagement.

A hybrid approach, with some Senators attending virtually and others in person, was suggested by some. However, others noted that this would likely make substantive discussions even more difficult. Senators comment that hybrid meetings would require investment in new technologies and greater human resources to manage the meetings. Hybrid meetings seem to represent “the worst of both worlds”. A return to in-person meetings was frequently mentioned as optimal, at least for some of the meetings during the year. Survey respondents noted that in-person meetings allow for more diverse voices and a greater exchange of views.

Whether virtual or in-person, there is no doubt that there is a strong interest among Senators in more strategic “big picture” discussions. Senators said Waterloo would benefit from meaningful conversations about the future direction of the university. Some said they would like the university to return to its innovative roots, and consider new approaches to programs, curriculum, and student experiences. Open discussion and debate about emerging issues is seen as lacking.

To be successful in creating such dialogue, discussions must be meaningful, and there needs to be room for constructive criticism or disagreement. Again, Senators noted the importance of ensuring the context for discussions is clear, and that the agenda documents flag areas for questions. They also noted that committees could be helpful in framing and guiding discussion.

Presentations, often designed to provide background and spark discussion, were seen as too long, with a focus on routine issues. They are often seen as operational or information-sharing, with a heavy emphasis on reporting from administration. Respondents said there were too many slides, and not enough guidance to spark deliberative discussions or build consensus.

It will be important to consider how the agenda can be reframed to make the appropriate time for strategic discussions. An obvious solution raised by a number of Senators was more vigorous use of the consent agenda. Items that are “for information only” can easily be moved to the consent agenda. There were a number of suggestions to delegate more decisions to committees, particularly more curriculum-related decisions to the two councils. For this to be effective, the bylaws and procedures need to be clear on what decisions committees can make, and what needs to remain a whole-of-Senate oversight responsibility. Guidelines and training on how to use consent agendas effectively would be helpful.

Certainly, there was no lack of suggestions on topics for potential future strategic discussions. Frequently, Senators commented that the university’s Covid response should have been discussed by Senate, and that the academic post-pandemic impact should be a topic of discussion. Other suggestions included:

- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Reconciliation and Indigenization in the academy
- Sustainability
- The student curricular and co-curricular experience, and student satisfaction
- Enabling diversification, risk-taking and creative disruption
- The academic implications of infrastructure and infrastructure deficit
- Enrolment visions and academic reputation
- Internationalization and geopolitical risks
- How policy development and change processes can be enhanced
- The research experience for undergraduate and graduate students
- New approaches to curriculum including new credentials, flexible ways to teach and learn, and interdisciplinary programs.

Lack of profile, interest, and knowledge

Concerns were raised about the lack of profile and interest in Senate throughout the campus. Elections do not attract a significant number of candidates, and many are acclaimed. Senate is seen as a platform for a few voices. There were suggestions that more effort be made to communicate the value and purpose of Senate to the university community, and to encourage new voices to consider joining. Some suggested “town halls” to better explain the purpose and value of Senate. Others suggested greater effort should be made to attract guests, especially new faculty, to Senate meetings.

Some questioned whether the “right voices” are at Senate. It was frequently noted that ex officio appointees constitute a large group. While faculty outnumber ex officio representatives, the perception remains that Senate is dominated by administrators, rather than faculty. While respecting the *Act*, Senate Executive Committee may wish to review the current composition of Senate to ensure ex officio voices do not dominate Senate and its committees.

Specific representatives were identified as missing from Senate deliberations. Postdoctoral students, for example, are not included. Senators perceive little focus on issues such as anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion, and reconciliation. Some suggested Senators would benefit from EDI training, and that committees and Senate as a whole should adopt a commitment to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation in its bylaws and committee terms of reference², and to considering whether Senate may wish to reserve some of the elected or appointed seats for First Nations, Métis or Inuit people.

It was also noted that, despite the presence of Board members on Senate, there was little connection to the Board, nor understanding of its work and priorities. In this respect, a number of respondents suggested the establishment of joint Board-Senate committees in areas such as student experience, or EDI and reconciliation.

Importantly, Senators need an orientation program. (A program for Senate orientation is currently being developed, and this has also been the focus of discussion by the Executive Committee.) Senators, both elected and ex officio, said they did not know what their roles and responsibilities are. They wondered how committee members were selected, and it was noted that members frequently prefaced questions by saying, “I don’t know if this is appropriate...” – which was seen as a sign that Senators do not know which topics or questions were appropriate

² A recent Senate governance review at the University of Guelph recommended that Senate play a leading role in furthering Guelph’s commitment to Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation. It recommended a series of short and medium-term recommendations including establishing two elected Senate seats for First Nations, Métis or Inuit students, an elected Senate seat for a First Nations, Métis or Inuit faculty member, and developing a plan for recruitment of First Nations, Métis or Inuit faculty and students to Senate.

for Senators to raise. One member suggested a Senate retreat for new Senators. Others suggested a retreat for all Senators, which would include a component of governance education. Onboarding support and mentoring as well as an ongoing program of Senate governance education were also suggested.

The establishment of a Senate Governance and Nominating Committee would enhance governance understanding and practices. It could also lead to greater diversity among appointees, and encouragement of more university community members to stand for election.

Committees

Executive Committee

This committee drew the most positive responses, both among survey respondents and those interviewed. Just over 80% of those surveyed believe that items considered are within the committee's mandate, and 68% think the committee has the right mandate. The majority also believe that items are given the appropriate time for consideration and 61% said that the discussions are at the right strategic level, with only 13% disagreeing.

The committee was seen as having a good balance of members. Respondents and interviewees saw this committee as a good experience, collegial and a place for substantive discussion. Members noted that the work of the committee has become more meaningful in the past year, going beyond simply setting and approving the agenda. They believed that the committee's oversight of the Senate governance review has further heightened the value of this committee.

Finance Committee

Survey responses with respect to this committee were overwhelmingly neutral or negative:

- 47% were neutral in whether discussions were at the right strategic level, and 21% disagreed.
- 63% did not get a good sense of viewpoints of the broader University community during discussions.

Interviews confirmed these views. Respondents agreed that there is little discussion at this committee, and few questions are raised. This is partly because of the composition of the committee – many of the members have already discussed the budget in various other venues. Others said they did not feel they had enough understanding of financial issues to make appropriate decisions, and that not enough documentation was provided to allow committee members to make meaningful recommendations.

All agreed that this committee is currently not working effectively. Some suggested that the committee should be disbanded, and consideration of the budget be moved to the Executive Committee, while others suggested that the budget could go directly to Senate without a review by a Senate committee and be presented by the vice-president academic and provost. That said, a few felt that more Senators would benefit from greater clarity on the academic implications of the budget and the impact of funding on the academic priorities of the university. Some suggested that Senators could join the Board Finance and Investment

Committee members in both financial training and review of the budget, in order to enhance cohesive decision-making.

Graduate and Research Council and Undergraduate Council

There was a general belief that both the Graduate and Research Council and the Undergraduate Council are well-run and provide an opportunity for thoughtful discussion. However, like Senate, many were not sure that the councils had the right mandate and believed that these committees would benefit from more strategic discussions rather than the current almost exhaustive focus on curriculum.

Part of the problem lies in an issue identified earlier in this report – the decentralized nature of Waterloo, and the fact that curriculum issues, particularly if they are not major, have already been fully vetted in departments, faculties and by deans. It is also not always clear to council members whether they have the power to approve changes, or whether recommendations need to go to Senate.

The councils could be more useful in identifying cross-cutting topics, generating ideas, and discussing strategic academic issues before they move to Senate. Discussions by council members could also serve to shape some of the questions Senate might be asked to consider. To have more time for such matters, respondents frequently suggested several possible solutions: either to establish a curriculum subcommittee of each council, or a separate curriculum committee that would report directly to Senate, or to delegate more decisions to individual faculties.

Clearer guidelines on which curriculum decisions can be delegated to the two councils would also be helpful. Such council decisions could then be included in the Senate consent agenda, recognizing that if any concerns are raised before approval of the consent agenda, items can be pulled out for discussion and/or decision.

As with Senate overall, survey comments raised questions about the number of senior administrators who sit on both of these councils and suggested a review of the composition of the councils.

A specific issue has been raised by associate deans with respect to the Graduate and Research Council, and that is whether research should have its own council, as it did in the past. This is currently being considered by the Graduate and Research Council. Some said, however, that keeping research within GRC meant that the growing interest in engaging undergraduate students in research was not covered by this council.

Long range Planning Committee

Survey and interview respondents believe that the Long Range Planning Committee needs a significant refresh. (It should be noted that the comments were made before the President announced that this committee would be the focus of discussion for Waterloo @ 100. This promises to be an invigorating and interesting theme for the committee.)

Respondents noted that this committee rarely meets, and members did not understand its mandate. In particular, the role of the committee in the development of the Waterloo strategic plan was not clear to Senate members.

Some suggested that this committee, too, be disbanded. However, as the Waterloo Senate moves into more strategic discussions, this committee could serve as a helpful forum to frame discussions before they reach the Senate floor.

Recommendations arising from analysis

Some of the issues raised by survey and interview respondents can be tackled relatively quickly. Others will require medium- and longer-term solutions. Both groups highlighted key issues about Senate performance, and these recommendations stem from those comments and suggestions:

- While Senate meetings are viewed as collegial, there is little discussion of items that come forward from committees, nor of “big picture” strategic issues facing the university. Many Senators are keen to have more such discussions come to the floor of Senate, and to identify ways to make time in the Senate agenda for such discussions.
 - Senate is large, which makes strategic discussions difficult – and even more challenging in virtual meetings. Returning to in-person meetings is seen by most as the best opportunity to enhance strategic and generative discussions, even though it may reduce convenience and access.
 - The Senate committees currently do not act effectively as a forum to frame strategic issues prior to coming to Senate. A fuller review of committee composition, powers and duties, as expressed in Senate Bylaw 2, should be a longer-term outcome of the current Senate governance review. Strategic Senate discussions could come forward from a number of committees, including executive, the councils, and long-term planning.
 - Greater use of the consent agenda, and better understanding of its purpose and how it should be used, would also help make time on the agenda for strategic discussions.
- The university is highly decentralized, which means there is a great deal of duplication, and items coming to Senate are discussed often and fully in many other locations, including departments, faculty councils, Senate committees, and a lengthy list of academic and operational committees under the purview of the University Secretariat. This means that many Senate members see materials multiple times before they come to Senate and therefore do not feel the need to engage again in discussions at Senate committees or Senate.
 - Consideration of greater delegation could be helpful in decreasing duplication, while continuing to ensure Senate oversight.
 - While faculty outnumber ex officio appointees on Senate, the voices of ex officio appointees, particularly administrators, are seen to dominate Senate and its

committees. A review of Senate and committee composition, roles and responsibilities should be undertaken as part of this governance review.

- Consideration of whether a separate curriculum committee, or a sub-committee of the councils, coupled with judicious use of the consent agenda, was suggested by several Senators to free up the time of the councils for greater discussion on key issues.
- Orientation for new and continuing Senators is an urgent need. Some suggested that a Senate retreat would be helpful. Senate may wish to consider establishing a Governance and Nominating Committee to engage in ongoing discussions on governance.
- The lengthy agenda package, while improved recently, does not help Senators quickly understand issues, risks or financial and other implications, or to know where decisions need to be made. Standardized templates for Senate reports, which should include cover sheets with summaries and questions to guide discussion, would be helpful.
- Presentations, both to Senate and to Senate committees, should be used to open discussion and could be included in a “pre-read” package. Multiple slides and lengthy presentations were often cited as problematic.
- Consideration should be given to potential avenues to ensure multiple voices have an opportunity to take part in academic governance. In particular, raising awareness among members of the entire university community of the importance of Senate in academic decision-making was recommended. The Senate Executive Committee should consider ways to encourage more interest among faculty, students and staff in standing for election to Senate.
 - Greater focus on equity, diversity and inclusion and reconciliation was recommended by many Senators.
- Greater collaboration between the Board of Governors and Senate is important on cross-cutting issues. A number of Senators raised the possibility of joint Board-Senate committees, reporting to both governance groups, to tackle cross-cutting issues. The report of the President’s Anti-racism Taskforce, due out soon, was suggested as a possible focus for a Board-Senate joint committee. Some Senators also suggested that the student experience would be another potential area to be tackled by a joint Board-Senate committee. Interaction between Board and Senate members, either in social settings or on specific issues, would help bridge some gaps in understanding.
- Both the Finance Committee and the Long Range Planning Committee should be carefully reviewed. A number of Senators believed that both could be abolished. Neither were perceived as functioning well currently. However, there are approaches to refresh both:
 - Suggestions included joint meetings of the Senate Budget Committee and the Board of Governor’s Finance and Investment committee to review the budget, and greater training in financial matters and support in understanding the financial implications of budget decisions.
 - The Senate Executive Committee should make efforts to ensure that the Budget Committee composition does not include as many ex officio members who have multiple other venues to review and comment on the budget.

- The Senate Long Range Planning Committee could be assigned responsibility for examining and framing cross-cutting strategic discussions before they come to the Senate floor, helping spark discussion at Senate, and helping Senators to better understand issues, risks and choices.
- Regularly identifying and regularly assessing Senate performance metrics would be helpful in advancing academic governance at Waterloo.

Appendix A: Interviews

Senior leadership:

Vivek Goel, President and Vice-Chancellor

James Rush, Vice-President Academic and Provost

Charmaine Dean, Vice-President Research and International

Jeff Casello, Associate Provost, Graduate Studies

David DeVidi, Associate Vice-President Academic

Catherine Newell Kelly, Registrar

Deans:

Douglas Peers, Arts

Mary Wells, Engineering

Jean Andrey, Environment

Lili Liu, Health

Mark Giesbrecht, Mathematics

Robert Lemieux, Science

Andrea Kelman, Executive Director, Office of the President

Benjamin Easton, President, Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association

Lori Curtis, President, University of Waterloo Faculty Association

Governance:

Mike Grivicic

Diana Goncalves

Alice Raynard

Kathy Winter

Thank you to Karen Jack, University Secretary, for her knowledge and guidance, and Madisson McKellar for her support during the interviews.



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Appendix F – Excerpts from Senate Executive Minutes regarding the Review

University of Waterloo SENATE GOVERNANCE REVIEW Compilation of Senate Executive Committee Meeting Discussions January – May 2022

4 JANUARY 2022

The president spoke to the draft terms of reference and invited members to weigh in on them and the review in general. In discussion, key goals include: improving efficiency; increasing transparency and accountability; finding ways to engage Senate on strategic matters. Questions for the committee to consider are: where should Senate's energy and time be focused; how frequently should it meet, and in what format; how to improve agenda materials; how to align Senate's cycle with the Board's cycle. He noted the need for consultations and the committee agreed with the suggestions that it review a survey to be used for part of this purpose, and that 1:1 interviews also should occur with appropriate individuals and offices. Members discussed some matters that require some clarity, including Senate's constituencies, Senators' roles, and ways for Senators to engage appropriately with the community. There was agreement with suggestions that: agenda materials should be improved with better introductory and summary information to provide context and why approval is being sought, and that they should include more links to supporting materials being considered in the committees and councils; orientation should occur. Members understood that updates to the terms of reference regarding orientation and potential work with the Board's Governance Review Committee will be made before it is brought to Senate for information this month. Members heard that a work plan will be developed and some research relating to best practices and models at other institutions will be done for the next meeting.

7 FEBRUARY 2022

Update on Survey and Plans for 1:1 Conversations

The chair thanked members for contributing feedback to the survey and advised that it was distributed on 1 February 2022 and will run for one month. Members heard there has been a good response already, and that an external consultant is being engaged for the 1:1 interviews and analysis of the results of the survey. There were no comments regarding the memorandum about individual consultations distributed with the agenda.

Work Plan

The chair invited feedback on the proposed work plan distributed with the agenda. Members understood that materials will be prepared and circulated for discussion at meetings and the results of the consultations will feed into the work in the future too. There were no comments on the plan.

Items for Discussion at Senate

The chair invited members to discuss ways to enable Senate to devote time for discussion of strategic matters. In discussion: an impression that disengagement with some agenda matters is due to awareness that due diligence has occurred at the committee or council delegated to do that work; agreement that there is greater engagement on matters like admissions and tuition; a suggestion that better clarity in reports on matters which have had a full debate, and what is being asked of Senate would be worthwhile; a suggestion that matters bearing Senate's consideration which are outside of committee or council business be included in agendas; appreciation for discussions which can influence matters and decisions before they are made; a suggestion for improved cover notes for agenda materials; the potential to restructure agendas and use technology to enable engagement; a question whether Senate's size hinders deep conversations, and ways to address that; a suggestion that time be reserved at meetings for pre-submitted questions; a suggestion that all presentations at Senate engage the body on substantive matters of direct relevance to all of Senate; an observation that the committees and councils would benefit from direction from Senate to engage in strategic discussions too.

Frequency of Meetings

The chair invited members to discuss whether Senate's current schedule of meeting nine times each governance year is correct, and if not, consider the right number of meetings that should be held each year. In discussion: a caution that a reduced number of meetings may be perceived as a decrease in transparency; agreement that if the number of meetings does decrease, there would be a need to ensure substantive discussions happen elsewhere; a suggestion that a firm decision be taken on whether to hold the December meeting or not; some various options for types of meetings, and their frequency, including expanding the length of the meeting "year"; the option of fewer, but longer meetings with deep dives into the strategic plan and the use of technology to transparently undertake routine Senate business, perhaps asynchronously; a suggestion to ensure that any changes to meeting frequency do not make calendar changes more difficult to undertake; a suggestion to start meetings earlier in the day; some caution that business occurring outside of meetings may inhibit discussion that might otherwise occur and there may be hesitancy in flagging matters for discussion from this type of business; agreement that technology should be used to enable discussion, not hinder it; the need for some homework on some suggestions.

7 MARCH 2022**Update on Consultations**

The chair informed members of the excellent response rate to the survey (~50%) and that Christine Tausig Ford, President, Higher Thinking Strategies, and former Vice-President, Universities Canada has been engaged to analyse the results of the survey and complete the 1:1 interviews. Members understood that she will produce a report on findings for this committee's May meeting.

Review of Senate Agenda Materials

The chair invited the secretary to speak to the briefing note regarding Senate agenda materials, which she did. In the discussion that followed: a suggestion that a database of the information contained in the reports from the Deans of the Faculties might be useful for a variety of purposes including Senate reporting; expressions of support for maintaining the confidential session at the conclusion of regular business at Senate meetings; broad agreement with the proposal to establish report cover page templates so that reports contain information about the due diligence already undertaken and make more explicit what is being asked of Senate; an observation that Senators might appreciate advice about how to share information from Senate meetings with colleagues; a suggestion that further context be provided when new academic programs are introduced, and, from the chair, agreement with that idea, and hence why, at recent meetings the deans have been invited to speak to some of the new academic programs that have come forward, and, in addition, that future Strategic Plan updates at Senate will provide opportunities for Senators to learn about and weigh in on burgeoning initiatives; a suggestion that this committee be tasked though its terms of reference to identify topics or themes for presentation and discussion at Senate; a suggestion that the reports from the councils would benefit from motions being grouped at the front of reports with supporting materials attached; a suggestion that the councils' reports include more detail about which matters generated concerns or discussion so that Senate can discuss these matters more fully.

Review of Senate Committees and Councils

The chair reviewed the briefing note distributed before the meeting, including the U6+ sector scan, the mandates of current committees and councils, and a submission from the associate deans of research regarding the Graduate and Research Council. He invited members to weigh in on where key matters should be discussed, and whether any current committees or councils require reconsideration. In discussion: agreement that the Senate Graduate and Research Council should discuss the memo from the associate deans and that Casello will report back to this committee on the conversation; a suggestion that the Long Range Planning Committee's mandate might benefit from the addition of consideration of space and sustainability; ways to enable communication between Senate and the Board to ensure they are more aware of each other's business, and that consideration be given to potential joint meetings when there are subjects of mutual interest; agreement with the

suggestion to find ways for Senate to have lines of sight into and predictable reporting about activities that do not naturally arise via committee and council reports (e.g., activities at the Centre for Teaching Excellence, the Student Success Office, the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Relations, and Operations Committees, and other offices which are addressing institutional commitments about wellness, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism); the potential benefits of two-way communications between Senate and the community; a suggestion that consideration be given to opening Senate committee and council chair roles to Senators outside of administration; the need to find opportunities for discussions at Senate (or its committees and councils) about ways to ensure students are exposed to important subjects like sustainability and Indigenization; a suggestion that the councils review their delegated authorities and bring forward any suggestions for potential changes.

4 APRIL 2022

Update on Consultations

The chair advised that Christine Tausig Ford has completed her interviews and attended the open session of Senate as an observer in March and will do so again in April. He noted that her work is on track for production of a report of her findings for this committee's May meeting which she will attend.

Senate Orientation

The chair spoke to the briefing note distributed in advance of the meeting and advised that some lessons learned regarding orientation from the recent Board Governance Review will be helpful in devising an orientation program for Senators. He invited members to comment on the suggestions in the note, and weigh in with their own ideas. In discussion: the benefits of having incoming Senators observe meetings before they start, and the opportunity to subsequently raise questions in an orientation session; general support for the suggestions in the note; an observation that student Senators may appreciate a dedicated session which could include encouragement for them to be actively engaged and to exercise their agency at meetings, and, a suggestion that collaboration with the student associations on this activity would be worthwhile; a suggestion that faculty might appreciate a dedicated session too which would help to inform them about Senate's role and mandate; a suggestion that a way to effect the previous suggestions would be to have a session for everyone and then subsequent break-out sessions for the constituencies; the merits of a joint event for Senate and the Board; the benefits of a work plan so Senators will have expectations about what is coming to Senate throughout the governance year; ways to provide information asynchronously, possibly with subject-specific checklists so that information is provided as needed.

Senate Communications

The chair introduced the subject and observed that there is a need for better communications out of Senate about what is occurring at its meetings and a need to find ways for the community to bring its views to Senate. In discussion: resources are necessary to support the work; ways to communicate more immediately about decisions taken at meetings; connections with the university colleges and the need for clarity regarding their representatives' roles on Senate; the benefits of a portal and offering ways for the community to raise questions, and discussion of some operational aspects of such a system; the merits of considering what type of information might be reported by the Faculty Councils to Senate; the utility of orientation and communication materials for the broader community, including student media.

2 MAY 2022

Report from the Consultant

The chair welcomed Christine Tausig Ford to the meeting and on behalf of the committee, thanked her for her excellent report. He invited her to speak to her findings, which she did. Following her review, and in response to questions, she shared: her opinion that effort be placed on reconciliation efforts while finding creative solutions for decolonization activities in light of the challenges of opening the *University of Waterloo Act*; ways

to encourage those with dissenting opinions to speak up, including direct messaging to this effect in the future orientation activities.

Relations with the Board

The chair spoke to the briefing note distributed with the agenda. In discussion: the similar findings made on this subject by the Board Governance Review; whether, in light of some common areas of interest, a joint Senate-Board working group should be considered; a suggestion that scholarship on best practices be reviewed; whether any orientation activities might be held jointly by the Senate and Board; a suggestion to find pathways for the Student Relations, and the Student Services Advisory Committees to provide informational reports to Senate; the desirability of finding ways to generate interest in the community re: Senate's activities.

The chair advised that the draft final report of the group's findings and recommendations will be distributed to members soon for feedback in advance of final consideration at the 6 June meeting. He thanked Ms Tausig Ford again for her valuable contributions to the group's work and she departed the meeting.

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

		Who is Responsible	Timing	Status
	I. Meetings, Agendas, and Materials			
1.	Delegate appropriate Senate matters elsewhere, with proper reporting back (<i>e.g.</i> , approval of the rosters of graduands). <i>{may require bylaw revisions}</i>	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee (SEC)	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
2.	Create a work plan that is mindful of the academic calendar and discussed by the Senate Executive Committee so Senators will have expectations about what is coming to Senate throughout the governance year.	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
3.	In the work plan, include regular reports on specific institutional activities from the vice-presidents (<i>e.g.</i> , SMA, international activities, research, <i>etc.</i>).			
4.	In the work plan, ensure time is provided for discussions about key academic matters (<i>e.g.</i> , admissions, tuition, early discussion of new initiatives).			
5.	In the work plan, create paths for reporting to Senate on matters outside of committee and council business (<i>e.g.</i> , activities at the Centre for Teaching Excellence, the Student Success Office, the Quality Assurance Office, the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Relations, and Operations Committees, and other offices which are addressing institutional commitments about wellness, Indigenization, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism; potential reporting from the Faculty Councils).			

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

6.	Streamline and improve the flow of agendas.	President and Secretary to consider and implement	19 September Senate meeting	
7.	In agendas, move <i>pro forma</i> items to the consent agenda and remove items entirely that are not required or do not serve the Senate's mission.			
8.	Establish firm rules regarding presentations to ensure they are brief and stimulate discussion, and that materials and the presentation are distributed in the meeting's agenda package.	President and Secretary to consider and implement	19 September Senate meeting	
9.	Create templates for report cover notes which ensure that clarity is provided about: due diligence that has been completed to date, governance path, the nature of discussion at the committee or council from which the report derives, financial implications and risks, pros and cons, and what Senate is being asked to consider.	President and Secretary to consider and implement	19 September Senate meeting	
10.	Define the appropriate contents of the reports from the Faculty deans (and consider the committee's suggestion that faculty and administrative appointments and promotions be made available in a shared database).	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
11.	Consider whether Faculty Councils should submit reports to Senate and receive reports back.	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
	II. Method			
12.	Acquire a portal for Senate to enable communications, receive questions, provide informational resources, and be a way potentially to execute some Senate business including voting at or between meetings. <i>{may require bylaw revisions}</i>	President and Secretary to consider and implement	2023; requires resources and RFP - Consider implementation of portal before September 2022	
13.	Revise the annual Senate meeting schedule to reflect the rationalized annual work plan. (Key considerations: ensuring transparency; enabling substantive strategic discussions; respecting essential academic practices and schedules, and key matters requiring approval or endorsement by Senate (<i>e.g.</i> , budget); the potential for alignment with the Board of	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

	Governors' cycle of meetings; in discussion with the Board, potential reconsideration of the start of the governance year to align with academic cycles; how meetings may be held (in-person, virtual, and hybrid). <i>{some will require bylaw revisions}</i>	Executive Committee		
14.	Ensure the timing of meetings in the day to allow more equitable participation.	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
15.	Assess and acquire technology to provide better engagement at meetings (<i>i.e.</i> , leverage break-out rooms for strategic discussion).	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
16.	Implement an annual assessment by Senators of Senate performance.	President and Secretary to consider and implement	Ready by February 2023 to survey Senators in March (near the completion of the governance year)	
17.	Review the composition and size of Senate, including from an equity, diversity and inclusion perspective.	President and Secretary to consider	TBD	

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

18.	Design and implement an orientation program for Senators.	President and Secretary to consider and implement	March 2023 to implement for the start of the next governance year (May)	
19.	<p>For the orientation, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review what the Board is doing with its orientation activities for inspiration • Following a session for all members, provide sessions specific to constituencies • In consultation with the Board of Governors, identify opportunities for shared sessions, including consideration of a joint learning session at orientation, or at the Board Retreat which would benefit both bodies • Include equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism training • Include a session dedicated to creating welcoming and safe spaces to provide feedback, share in the discussion, and raise dissenting opinions • Encourage incoming Senators to attend meetings as guests before their service begins • Provide subject-specific information and checklists that can be accessed asynchronously 			Several pieces of this work will be produced earlier than March 2023 and can be disseminated to Senate at appropriate opportunities
20.	<p>For orientation and ongoing education, create information pieces about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate’s authorities / governance structure / Bylaws • Governance principles • The annual Senate meeting schedule and work plan • Senate membership and its constituencies • The standing committees and councils of Senate and their powers • A flow chart of Senate decision-making • The Board of Governors and its authorities / governance structure / Bylaws • Meeting agendas – structure and format • Meetings – quorum, order of business, decisions and voting, conflicts of interest, confidentiality • Expectations and responsibilities of Senators 			
21.	<p>Design and implement a Senate communications plan. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to communicate broadly what occurs at Senate meetings • Ways for the community to bring its views to Senate • Advice for Senators about how to share information from meetings with colleagues • Earlier distribution of draft minutes following meetings 	President and Secretary to consider and implement	September 2022	

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness among members of the community of the importance of Senate in academic decision-making. Consider ways to encourage more interest among faculty, students and staff 			
	III. Committees and Councils			
22.	Review Senate's committee and council structure and recommend changes, including whether any additions are desirable (<i>e.g.</i> , the establishment of a Senate Governance Committee), and whether there are any matters or areas for discussion which would benefit from a Senate working group. <i>{some will require bylaw revisions}</i>	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Initial recommendations ready for the 6 September SEC meeting	
23.	Consider greater delegation to decrease duplication, while continuing to ensure Senate oversight. <i>{will require bylaw revision}</i>			
24.	Ensure committees and councils act as forum to discuss strategic issues which they should bring to Senate for discussion.			
25.	Review how appointments to Committee/Councils are made to ensure transparency. <i>{may require bylaw revision}</i>			
26.	Strike an <i>ad hoc</i> committee (in conjunction with, or in communication with the Board of Governors) to consider a topic of joint interest, for example: relevant recommendations (re: governance body memberships) from the President's Anti-Racism Task Force, or the student experience.	President and Secretary to discuss with the Board of Governors	TBD	
27.	Identify pathways for the two Student Relations Committees and the Student Services Advisory Committee to bring information to Senate.	President and Secretary to consider and make recommendations to appropriate committee	TBD	

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

28.	Direct the committees and councils to review their terms of reference, membership, and what is delegated to them, and make recommendations for improvements. They also should consider ways to enable strategic discussions at meetings and explore options regarding chair-ships. Some recommendations to particular committees and councils: <i>{will require bylaw revisions}</i>	Chairs of Senate's Committees and Councils to consider and make recommendations to Senate Executive Committee	Committees and councils to begin discussions in Fall 2022 with a view to making recommendations by Winter 2023	
29.	Executive Committee – identify topics or themes for presentation and discussion at Senate; formalize the Chancellor appointment process; consider formal adoption of Rules of Order; consider whether Senate's size could be reduced; consider ways to encourage more interest in Senate by the community.			
30.	Finance Committee – with discussion with the Board of Governors, consider an annual joint meeting with the Board's Finance & Investment committee regarding the budget; consider membership (fewer ex-officio members who already have multiple venues to review and comment on the budget).			
31.	Long Range Planning Committee – use as a venue to stimulate strategic discussions to bring to Senate; and assess key academic performance indicators.			
32.	Graduate and Research Council – discuss and consider the memo from the associate deans of research re: that council.			
33.	Both Councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reconsider what is sent to Senate for approval or information, and what is sent in the consent and regular reportsInclude greater detail and context for materials sent to Senate for decision (<i>e.g.</i>, the nature of discussion at the meeting, the council's assessment of the matter; explicitly what Senate is being asked to decide and why)Consider whether a curriculum committee/s should be created			
	IV. Relations with the Board			
34.	Review scholarship on governance best practices with respect to Senate and Board relations and include in orientation.	Secretary	Summer 2022	
35.	In conjunction with the Board Governance Committee, evaluate the benefit of a Joint Senate-Board “meeting” or event, and what joint orientation activities should occur (also see #19). Consider interactions in a social	President and Secretary to discuss with The	TBD	

Appendix G – Chart of Recommendations and Accountability

	setting to help bridge gaps in understandings between Senate and the Board of Governors.	Board of Governors		
36.	In conjunction with the Board Governance Committee, evaluate the benefit of a joint Senate-Board Committee (also see #26). <i>{may require bylaw revisions}</i>	President and Secretary to discuss with The Board of Governors	TBD	
37.	Create a module about the Board in Senate's orientation and recommend to the Board Governance Committee that it do likewise (also see #20).	President and Secretary to implement the former and discuss with The Board of Governors the latter	Former: March 2023 (combine with recommendations regarding orientation) Latter: Immediately following Senate's endorsement of the recommendations from the Review	
38.	Implement a regular report to the Board about recent Senate business and recommend to the Board Governance Committee it do likewise.	President and Secretary to implement the former and discuss with The Board of Governors the latter	Former: October 2022 Latter: Immediately following Senate's endorsement of the recommendations from the Review	