

University of Waterloo
SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the September 8, 2025 Meeting
[in agenda order]

Present: Ashley Day (secretary), Laura Deakin, Tom Duever, Mark Ferro, Vivek Goel (chair), Vikas Gupta, Nadine Ibrahim, Carol Ann MacGregor, Blake Madill, Damian Mikhail, David Porreca, Jessica Rindlisbacher, Rida Sayed, Mark Seasons, James Skidmore, Justin Wan

Guests: David DeVidi, Jenny Flagler-George, Genevieve Gauthier-Chalifour, Emily Goodwin, Andrea Kelman, Tony Ly

Regrets: None

1. Approval of the Minutes

1.1 Minutes of the May 26, 2025 Meeting

No amendments were brought forward. A motion was heard to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2025 meeting. Deakin and Porreca. Carried.

1.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair noted consultations with staff groups regarding staff representation on Senate is pending and the University Secretary will provide an update at a future meeting.

2. Remarks from the Chair

The Chair welcomed new and returning members of the committee and gave an overview of the mandate of the Senate Executive Committee as outlined in Bylaw 2. It was noted that the terms of reference for this committee have not been thoroughly reviewed for many years, and as part of the ongoing review of all Senate committee and council mandates, a review of the Committee's terms of reference is anticipated for this governance year. The Senate Undergraduate Council and Academic Quality Enhancement Committee will also review their respective mandates this year.

The Chair reminded committee members that it is preferred members are present in person as much as possible for meetings considering substantive matters related to the nature of the committee's work and related discussions. A hybrid option is available and should there be no major items for discussion, the meeting may be moved fully online at the discretion of the Chair.

3. Report to Senate Executive Committee

3.1 Senate Engagement Working Group

The Chair gave an overview of the proposal which is an outcome of the last Senate Effectiveness Survey. The survey identified a number of items raised about the nature of Senate meetings which have been identified over the past few governance years. In light of the issues raised, the Senate Engagement Working Group will review, develop and recommend proposed changes to selected Senate governing documents and processes insofar as they relate to senator engagement and the matters outlined in the report.

A member requested that language be added to the report that clarifies one faculty senator from each Faculty would be selected. It was noted that, if approved by Senate, a call for expressions of interest will be issued by the Secretariat. Members from the Senate Executive Committee interested in participating on the working group as one of the two SEC-appointed members may get in contact with Ashley Day to express interest.

A motion was heard that the Senate Executive Committee recommend that Senate establish an ad hoc working group to review current practices and opportunities to enhance senator engagement, as amended. Skidmore and Porreca. Carried.

3.3 Elections to Senate Committees and Councils

The committee received a report with additional names identified to serve on Senate committees and councils. The Secretariat is working closely with the Chairs of the new Senate Graduate Council and Senate Research and Innovation Council to ensure vacancies are filled before the first meetings of each council.

A motion was heard that the Senate Executive Committee approve the membership of Senate committees and councils for 2025-26, as presented on the list of nominees attached to this report and in accordance with the delegation of authority approved by Senate on June 9, 2025. Porreca and Sayed. Carried.

3.3 Senate By-Elections

The committee received notice of the upcoming call for nominations from the Secretariat to fill faculty senator vacancies on Senate. The call will be published on September 16, 2025. Information is provided in the report on the by-election process which is informed by Senate Bylaw 3. Any questions can be directed to the Secretariat.

4. Senate Agenda Preparation

4.1 Senate Work Plan 2025-2026

The Chair provided a high-level overview of the Senate work plan for the 2025-2026 governance year. It was noted that a proposal was received from a Senator to establish a committee on academic innovation, further to discussion at the June 2025 Senate meeting. The Senator was provided with feedback on the proposal by the Secretariat and it was agreed that a broader discussion at Senate would be planned on academic innovation, including an update and proposed priorities for the Academic Innovation Working Group.

4.2 Draft Senate Meeting Book for September 22, 2025

The committee reviewed the draft Senate meeting book and discussed the main items on the regular agenda. The Chair provided a brief overview of what would be covered under the Report of the President including the activities and discussion over the summer with the Ministry of Colleges, Universities and Research Excellence and Security (MCURES) focused on University and College Governance, and the upcoming finance and enrolment updates expected at Senate this fall. The committee was briefed in confidence on the Naming Proposal. Minor editorial changes were received by the Secretariat from Porreca to be amended in the package.

A motion was heard to approve the September 22, 2025, Senate meeting book, as amended. Mikhail and Porreca. Carried.

5. Other Business

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Monday October 6, 2025, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.