

University of Waterloo
SENATE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL
Minutes of the September 30, 2025 Meeting

Present: Katherine Acheson, Faisal Al-Faisal, Veronica Austen, Makenzie Campbell, Benoit Charbonneau, Victoria Chu, Laura Deakin, David DeVidi [Chair], Tanraj Dulai, Leeann Ferries, Jason Grove, Cathy Newell Kelly, Valery Lai, Tony Ly [Secretary], Carol Ann MacGregor, Sean Meehan, Cynthia Richard, Sharon Roberts, Anoushka Saha, Robert Stark, Victoria Swanson, Johanna Wandel, Richard Wikkerink

Resources/Guests: Rohem Adagbon, Jana Carson, Angela Christelis, Ashley Day, Paul Fieguth, Jennifer Gillies, Danielle Jeanneault, Carrie MacKinnon Molson, Remington Zhi

Regrets: Tom Duever, Vivek Goel, Damian Mikhail, Helena Shilomboleni, William Wong

Organization of Meeting: David DeVidi took the chair and Tony Ly acted as secretary. The secretary advised that quorum was present. The agenda was approved without a formal motion.

1. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council heard a motion to approve or receive for information the items of the consent agenda. Deakin and Charbonneau. Carried.

2. Approval of the Minutes of June 16, 2025 Meeting

Council approved the minutes of the meeting as distributed.

3. Undergraduate Awards and Scholarships

Council approved all new awards and scholarships as presented.

4. Curricular Submissions

Council received for information item 4.1 and approved items 4.2 – 4.5 on behalf of Senate.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

6. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed new and returning members to the Senate Undergraduate Council. The Chair emphasized the important contributions and participation of student members on this council.

7. Introduction and Orientation

The Chair provided an overview of the scope and mandate of the Senate Undergraduate Council, and Senate Bylaw 2 was reviewed. The Chair noted that this council has evolved over the past several years. A significant portion of the curricular related work is completed by the Faculty Councils and Associate Deans prior to the meeting. The Senate Undergraduate Council has delegated authority from Senate to approve all new undergraduate courses, the deletion of undergraduate courses, and proposed changes to existing undergraduate courses and minor changes to programs.

8. Curricular Submissions

8.2. Faculty of Arts

Acheson presented the proposal from the Faculty of Arts and clarified that the changes to the Economics program is not ready to move forward for approval. Roberts provided an overview of the major modifications for the double degree programs with Renison University College. Members discussed the rationale for the changes to the double degree programs.

A motion was heard to recommend that Senate approve the major plan modifications for the Faculty of Arts and Renison University College double degree programs for Social Development Studies and Bachelor of Social Work, effective September 1, 2026, as presented. Roberts and Acheson. Carried.

8.3. Faculty of Science

Deakin presented the proposal from the Faculty of Science and highlighted that the changes align with current scope of practices and international credentials. Members discussed how the workload was optimized and changes to the academic calendar.

A motion was heard to recommend that Senate approve the submitted retired courses, new courses, course changes, and major modifications to the Doctor of Optometry program, effective September 1, 2026, as presented. Deakin and Richard. Carried.

9. NSSE/FSSE Survey Results

Carson provided a presentation about the NSSE and FSSE survey results. Key discussion points included: U15 survey results; discrepancy between students' and instructors' data; and opportunities for further improvement. The Chair encouraged members to review the survey data and share the results with their colleagues. Members are welcome to contact Carson to request Faculty specific data. Presentation slides will be distributed to members. Communications will be sent out about the next round of data collection.

10. Disability Inclusion Steering Committee (DISCo) Report

Gillies presented the results from the DISCo final report and provided an update on the progress of accessibility standards on campus. Accessibility should be part of operational strategies and budget planning processes. Members discussed approaches to meet accessibility recommendations during times of high budget constraints. It is important that instructors receive updated information, and resources are used effectively to ensure that accessibility standards and legislative requirements are met. Gillies noted that a service model is being developed for different stakeholders on campus, which will help increase awareness about compliance obligations and ensure that support is available to achieve success.

The Chair emphasized that excellent education is accessible education. The Accessible Education Project is receiving two additional years of funding to help instructors remove artificial barriers for students. Gillies clarified that there are differences between accessibility and accommodations. An accessibility steering committee will be established to help plan and collaborate with stakeholders on campus.

11. Other Business

No other items of business were identified.

12. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on December 9, 2025 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in NH 3318.