

University of Waterloo
SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the February 17, 2026 Meeting

Present: Ashley Day (Secretary), Laura Deakin, Tom Duever (Acting Chair), Mark Ferro, Vikas Gupta, Nadine Ibrahim, Blake Madill, Damian Mikhail, David Porreca, Rida Sayed, Jessica Rindlisbacher, Mark Seasons, James Skidmore, Justin Wan

Resources/Guests: David DeVidi, Jenny Flager-George, Andrea Kelman, Tony Ly

Regrets: Carol Ann MacGregor, Vivek Goel

1. Governance Resources

This item was provided for information only.

2. Open Session

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1 Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3.2. Minutes of January 12, 2026 Meeting

A motion was heard to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2026 meeting, as presented. Porreca and Madill. Carried.

3.3 Business Arising from the Minutes

Any items of business arising have been addressed in the balance of the agenda.

4. Reports to the Senate Executive Committee

4.1. Chancellor Review

Ashley Day, Associate University Secretary, spoke briefly to the next steps in the Chancellor review process. A member recommended the Advancement and Convocation teams be asked for feedback in addition to the list provided in the materials.

4.2. Senate Alternative Credentials Committee Proposal

The Chair noted this proposal was last received by SEC at the November 2025 meeting. The proposal has since gone to Senate Graduate Council (SGC) and Senate Undergraduate Council (SUC) for a second round of feedback and recommendation to Senate for approval.

Dave DeVidi, Associate Vice-President Academic, spoke to the revised proposal, as provided in the meeting materials. Members discussed the proposal and that it would be important the SUC and SGC maintain a line of sight into what the Senate Alternative Credentials Committee (SACC) is approving. DeVidi noted that the Chairs of SUC and SGC would both sit on SACC and would be responsible for forwarding any items to the appropriate governance body for awareness. There would also be regular reporting from SACC to Senate to maintain transparency. As SACC would not create stackable credits, a process for bringing ideas and credentials forward from the faculty level (Grad Operations or Undergrad Operations committees) could be developed. It was clarified that stackable credits would remain under the mandate of SUC and SGC.

The committee briefly discussed the Senate Academic Innovation Committee proposal brought forward by a senator in November 2025, and any potential overlap in mandates. The scope of the SACC proposal is specific to the approval of alternative credentials and is intended to integrate with the existing governance framework including the work of SUC and SGC. Its intent is to remain agile with an asynchronous model, as adopted by the current Alternative Credentials Approval Committee

(ACAC) and Senate Academic Quality Enhancement Committee (AQUE). As SACC has been in development since 2024 and has gone through multiple rounds of feedback, and was a recommendation from the Credentials Framework report, it has been reviewed and recommended by both SUC and SGC to proceed to Senate for final approval.

The Committee agreed that given the substantive material was not available at the time the package was distributed, additional time was needed for members to review and consider the proposal, and that an e-vote should be conducted for the motion to recommend that Senate approve the creation of a Senate Alternative Credentials Committee, as presented, effective May 1, 2026. The Committee agreed that the e-vote would close before distribution of the March 2, 2026 Senate package. If the motion carries, the item will be placed on the March 2, 2026 Senate agenda for approval.

5. Senate Agenda Preparation

5.1. Senate Work Plan 25/26

This item was provided for information only.

5.2. Draft March 2, 2026 Senate Meeting Book

Members reviewed and discussed the main items of the agenda. A member inquired if a report from the Staff Association may be appropriate in the future. The Secretariat will take the suggestion into consideration. Members noted the number of items on the agenda, and it was suggested that the decision items from the Senate Graduate Council and Senate Undergraduate Council be moved earlier on the agenda.

A motion was heard that the Senate Executive Committee approve the March 2, 2026 Senate agenda as amended. Sayed and Porreca. Carried.

6. Other Business

The Chair spoke to the materials as provided in the meeting package. At the January 26, 2026 Senate meeting a question was raised regarding academic freedom for academic administrators including those who are ex-officio members of Senate. An interpretive memo to clarify provisions in university policy and based on academic scholarship and legal perspectives on this topic was drafted and provided for the Committee's information. A separate communication was received by the Secretariat to SEC from Faculty Senator Nasser Moheiddin Abukhdeir related to Academic Freedom of Faculty Members not Subject to the MoA. The letter is provided for the information of SEC as requested by the Senator.

The committee discussed the materials in detail. Deakin noted that the topic could be incorporated into the Roles and Responsibilities for Senators document currently in development by the Senate Engagement Working Group for clarity and education purposes.

Members agreed that both the interpretive memo and the communication from the Senator should be included in the Senate package for information, and that a cover memo be added to clarify the development of each document.

7. Adjournment

It was noted that the next meeting of the Senate Executive Committee will be held on March 24, 2026, from 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

February 20, 2026

Ashley Day
Associate University Secretary