

University of Waterloo
SENATE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL
Minutes of the April 9, 2026 Meeting

Present: Hassan Baaj, Michael Beazley, Raouf Boutaba, Sarah Burch, Sue Ann Campbell, Trevor Charles, Rob de Loë, Charmaine Dean (Chair), Ana Ferrer, Bruce Frayne, Peter Hall, Alison Hitchens, Todd Holyoak, Suzanne Kearns, Tony Ly (Secretary), Ellen MacEachen, Ian Milligan, Marina Mourtzakis, Kirsten Müller, Neil Randall, Justin Wan, Jeffrey Wilson, Stan Woo, Alfred Yu

Resources/Guests: Melissa Benjamin, Justin Nankivell

Regrets: Yasmeen Almomani, Steven Bednarski, Richard Cook, Tom Duever, Vivek Goel, Sara Hart, Misha Khan, Sushanta Mitra, Amir Nazemi, Nicholas Pellegrino

Organization of Meeting: Charmaine Dean took the chair and Tony Ly acted as secretary. The secretary advised that a quorum was present.

1. Governance Resources

This item was provided for information only.

2. Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

2.1 Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared.

2.2. Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

The Chair informed council members that item 8 on the agenda will be deferred.

Council heard a motion to approve the agenda and the minutes of the February 12, 2026 meeting as amended. Burch and Baaj. Carried.

2.3. Minutes of the February 12, 2026 Meeting

Council approved the minutes of the meeting as distributed.

2.4. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair reported that there were questions from students regarding the topic of Defense Research. A summary document was included in the previous Senate agenda package for information. There will be an update at the next Senate meeting about the luncheon discussions with Senators regarding Defense Research.

3. Regular Agenda

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair will be leaving the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and Ian Milligan will be Acting Chair. The next joint Senate Graduate Council and Senate Research and Innovation Council meeting will be held on June 15, 2026. The topics for discussion will be: (1) Graduate research, funding, and student financial support; and (2) Strategic priorities for graduate education. The Chair invited members to submit other topics of interest for the joint meeting.

5. Research Security Plan

Nankivell provided a presentation about the Research Security Plan. The government announced a 5% tax that is tied to research security in 2025. In response to evolving government requirements, there will be a working group that will focus on research security. The 5 key elements related to research security include: Government and risk framework; Due diligence and risk management;

Communication and knowledge sharing; Cybersecurity; and the Built environment. The Government of Canada has provided a Named Research Organizations List, which contains institutions that could pose a risk to Canada's national security. Additional materials and guidance will be shared with campus stakeholders. The Chair invited members to send any questions and comments to Nankivell.

6. Canada Impact+ Research Chairs Program

Council received an update on the Canada Impact+ Research Chairs Program. Müller spoke to the materials provided in the meeting package. There were over 300 applications, virtual interviews were conducted with 41 candidates, 23 applicants completed in-person interviews, and the final submissions included 9 applicants. Key discussions by council members included details about demographic factors of the applicants. The applicant pool demonstrated broad international representation from 30 different countries. Approximately 31% of individuals identified as a minority, and there was no Indigenous applicant. A second intake is anticipated, and an internal review will assess lessons learned and identify potential process improvements.

7. Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

Charmaine Dean left the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The Acting Chair, Ian Milligan, provided council members with an update on DORA. Members discussed the potential institutional adoption of DORA, which promotes reduced reliance on journal-based metrics in evaluation and adopting a narrative excellence approach. While there was general alignment with DORA principles, campus stakeholders have raised concerns regarding subjectivity, workload burden, and consistency across disciplines. Council members emphasized the importance of having clear evaluation frameworks, additional training for Chairs, and alignment with existing performance review processes. There will be additional consultation with stakeholders. Members were invited to submit their feedback through an online form.

8. Water Institute

This item on the agenda was deferred.

9. Other Business

No other items of business were identified.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Senate Research and Innovation Council will be held on May 14, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. in Needles Hall 3318.