

University of Waterloo
SENATE
Minutes of the Monday May 6, 2024 Meeting
[in agenda order]

Present: Nasser Abukhdeir, Sheila Ager, Bilal Ahmed, Avery Akkerman, Marc Aucoin, Veronica Austen, Aubrey Basdeo, Jordan Bauman, Jean Becker, Jeff Casello, Judy Castaneda, Martin Cooke, Cecilia Cotton, Laura Deakin, Charmaine Dean, Catherine Dong, Mark Ferro, Paul Fieguth, Wendy Fletcher, Genevieve Gauthier-Chalifour (Secretary), Mark Giesbrecht, Vivek Goel (Chair), Rob Gorbet, Mike Grivicic (Associate Secretary), Vikas Gupta, David Ha, Neela Hassan, Nadine Ibrahim, Narveen Jandu, Acey Kaspar, Achim Kempf, Veronica Kitchen, Scott Kline, Sachin Kotecha, Christiane Lemieux, Ondrej Lhotak, Lili Liu, Brad Lushman, Jennifer Lynes Murray, Stephanie Maaz, Ellen MacEachen, Carol Ann MacGregor, Blake Madill, Colleen Maxwell, Kristiina Montero, Kirsten Muller, Richard Myers, Cathy Newell Kelly, Christopher Nielsen, James Nugent, Everett Patterson, Nicholas Pellegrino, Nicholas Pfeifle, David Porreca, Neil Randall, Jacinda Reitsma, Mary Robinson, James Rush, John Saabas, Rida Sayed, Asher Scaini, Mark Seasons, Marcus Shantz, Siva Sivoththaman, James Skidmore, Anita Taylor, Sharon Tucker, Diana Vangelisti, Johanna Wandel, Mary Wells, Clarence Woudsma, Changbao Wu, En-Hui Yang

Guests: Aldo Caputo, Nenone Donaldson, Raj Doshi, Jenny Flagler-George, Anne Galang, Diana Goncalves, Nicholas Joseph, Andrea Kelman, Hiren Kukreja, Eleanor McMahon, Christine McWebb, Bessma Momani, Ahmad Nabil, Fayaz Noormohamed, Mary Power, Karl Schuett, Daniela Seskar-Hencic, Tham Sivakumarah, Greg Smith, Allan Starr, Brandon Sweet, Nickola Voegelin, Dan Weber, Tim Weber-Kraljevski, Sarah Willey-Thomas

Absent: John Abraham*, Dominic Barton*, Andrew Chang*, Kim Cuddington, David DeVidi*, Teresa Fortney*, Bruce Frayne*, Murray Gamble*, Peter Hall, Chris Houser*, Natalie Hutchings, Shana MacDonald, Peter Meehan, Troy Osborne, Beth Sandore Namachchivaya*, Sivabal Sivaloganathan, Katie Traynor, Stanley Woo*

OPEN SESSION

The chair welcomed Senators to the meeting and offered remarks:

- A special welcome to new Senators as well as those returning to Senate after a time away
- Upcoming observances include the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit Peoples (also known as “Red Dress Day”)
- Convocation ceremonies upcoming in June, and watch for communications and opportunities to participate
- Recent announcement of Renison University College’s 12th president and vice-chancellor, the Rev. Dr. Marc Jerry, whose term starts on July 1, 2024

1. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Marcus Shantz offered a territorial acknowledgement along with a personal reflection.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Senators were asked to declare any conflicts they may have in relation to the items on the agenda. No conflicts were declared.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, AND APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The chair provided one amendment to the agenda to add a representation under item 7(b). A motion was heard to approve the agenda as presented/amended, and to approve or receive for information the items on the consent agenda, listed as items 14-19 of the Senate agenda. Porreca and Deakin. Carried.

4. MINUTES OF THE APRIL 8, 2024 MEETING

Amendments were provided to clarify under item 5 of the minutes that the research funds in question are not part of the operating budget of the University but are external funds, and to correct an error in the meeting attendance. A motion was heard to approve the minutes as amended. Newell Kelly and Porreca. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The chair observed that business arising is captured under item 7(b), and that the item pertaining to the ADDS report from April is expected to be brought back to Senate at the June meeting. There was no further business arising.

6. TEACHING AWARD WINNERS

a. Carol Hulls – recipient of the Distinguished Teacher Award

Jeff Casello introduced Professor Carol Hulls, who provided a short presentation: fostering growth in students by setting appropriate challenges; importance of finding ways to get students to think of the world around them; emphasis on universal design, and the potential for Waterloo to have a charter for accessibility and inclusion; sincere congratulations to all teaching award recipients.

b. Shannon Kennelly – recipient of the Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student

The recipient was unable to attend the Senate meeting.

7. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

a. President's Update. Goel provided his report and offered the following:

- Recent federal budget included \$2.4 billion to support AI in Canada, for which it is expected a portion will be accessible to researchers for computation services
- Federal parliamentary committees currently have studies underway on the distribution of federal research funding between different types of institutions, and also on Islamophobia and anti-Semitism
- Provincially, the government introduced Bill 166 and gives the Minister of Colleges and Universities new directive powers to require universities and colleges to have policies on student mental health, anti-racism/anti-discrimination and tuition/ fee transparency
- New Ontario housing bill will exempt publicly-assisted institutions from the Planning Act and allows student housing plans/proposals to be developed on an accelerated basis
- Recent event to celebrate Chancellor Dominic Barton, and new podcast hosted by the Chancellor exploring the Global Futures

Members clarified: Bill 166 would allocate directive powers to compel institutions to have policies in the identified areas; as consultation proceeds on the campus planning process and plans for property developments on all campuses are made, there will be contemplation of potential shared developments with campus stakeholders.

b. Reporting to follow up from Senators' requests at April Senate Meeting

Goel noted that the ongoing conflict in Gaza is a significant topic in the Waterloo community and around the world. The University supports individual and collective rights, including the right to protest, while emphasizing the importance of maintaining a safe environment in compliance with the University's policy framework. Toward this end, in January 2024 the University launched a task force to develop the University of Waterloo's Principles for Freedom of Expression and Respectful Engagement. Goel indicated that the University will review its frameworks for research partnerships and will report on this at a future meeting, and that questions pertaining to the specific investments in the University's investment funds will be considered by the Board of Governors and the appropriate committees thereof – there are existing policies and obligations around responsible investment and the consideration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in making investment decisions. He noted that in previous considerations for ESG, the focus was on fossil fuels and that the University may examine ESG again with a focus on social justice issues.

Dean offered observations re: research partnerships: academic freedom is a grounding principle for research and scholarship, including partnerships, and these activities are subject to the university's policy on ethical conduct of research and also subject to compliance with all relevant policies, procedures, ethical requirements, and legislation; the University has strong processes that guide these partnerships and applies a set of diligence tools for assessments of partnerships; in 2019, 2020 and 2023 Waterloo led initiatives to bring leaders together across Canada to compare best practices on international partnerships and safeguarding research, and it may be useful to consider having a place for such a conversation again; there is an opportunity to develop an integrative set of guidelines and principles on partnership assessment; 21 projects were undertaken under the partnership with Technion, which ran from 2014-2022 and totaling ~\$900,000.

Senators discussed: compliance with federal and provincial law does not necessarily consider the issues of research partnerships issues in the context of international law nor in the context of ethical debates; these issues deserve a more robust examination with a broader lens; compliance with the law does not necessarily consider questions of right and wrong.

Representation

Ahmad Nabil addressed the Senate as follows: noted presence of Special Constable Service at recent demonstrations, and concern that this presence unfairly impacts the protests; echoed demand for action from the University to end partnerships with Technion and to divest from companies that supply the Israeli military; question of how said partnership and investments would align with the draft values statement under consideration on the meeting agenda. Members discussed: a case could potentially be made for general divestment from companies involved in defense/armaments; the rationale for questioning partnership with Technion could also be applied to those with US institutions that conduct research in the space of defence.

The delegation circulated materials to Senate with two draft motions. The University Secretary clarified that motions must be put forward by a Senator, and that in light of the meeting agenda having already been approved and the information not previously circulated for consideration, the Senate must first determine whether it is prepared to entertain the motions presented. The substance of the motions would subsequently be debated if first approved for consideration by the body.

Senate heard a motion:

That the following motions be added to the Senate agenda:

- i. *The University of Waterloo immediately terminate all partnership agreements, including the Strategic Research Partnership signed on 19/05/2021, with Technion Israel Institute of Technology*
- ii. *That Senate recommend the Board of Governors divest from all weapons manufacturers and all organizations that supply military equipment to Israel; and,*

That Senate recommend the Board of Governors terminate all agreements and partnerships with all weapons manufacturers and all organizations that supply military equipment to Israel; and,

The Senate recommend the Board of Governors establish strict policies and procedures for investments, agreements, and partnerships such that they abide by the University of Waterloo Values Statement, International Law, and are publicly disclosed on a quarterly basis.

Pfeifle and Sayed.

Members debated the motion: the first motion could still allow individual faculty to enter into such partnerships; some Senators did not feel there was enough information available to have informed debate on these items at this time; debate could mitigate escalation of protest activity; the topic of Technion had been discussed by Senate in recent meetings and information on the partnership has been provided; a deferral of this item would allow for more information to be gathered; assertion of Technion links to the Israeli military may garner contrary views; in other instances where geopolitical factors impacted international partnerships, those were guided by government policy; there is not currently public disclosure on specific investment assets, as the University invests via pooled funds; a Senate working group could be struck to ascertain the facts for Senate to debate, or Senate could hold a separate session to review the information available; passage of the first motion may have little effect given that no new funds have been expended in recent years; it is unclear what debate occurred at Senate with the initiation of the Technion partnership; in 2002, Canada listed Hamas as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code and this could be included in a balanced consideration of partnerships and divestment related to the situation in Gaza.

By consensus, Senate considered motions (i) and (ii) separately. For (i), the question was put and the motion was defeated. For (ii), the question was put and the motion was defeated.

8. REPORT – SENATE GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL

Casello provided an overview of reports (a) and (b).

a. Major Modifications – Civil Engineering Co-Operative Program

A motion was heard to approve the proposed major modifications to the Master of Engineering (MEng) in Civil Engineering – Co-operative Program, effective September 1, 2024, as presented. Casello and Wells. Carried.

b. Major Modifications – Chemical Engineering

A motion was heard to approve the proposed major modifications to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Engineering (MEng) in Chemical Engineering, effective September 1, 2024, as presented. Casello and Wells. Carried.

9. REPORTS – SENATE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

a. Major Modifications – Recreation and Leisure Studies and Recreation and Sport Business

Newell Kelly provided an overview of the report. A motion was heard to approve the proposed major modifications to Honours Recreation and Leisure Studies, and Honours Recreation and Sport Business, effective September 1, 2025, as presented. Newell Kelly and Liu.

Concerns were expressed re: one course which is not in the Waterloo course calendar, as well as discrepancies in the course weightings in the draft, and also on the elimination of languages and humanities courses from the plan. The item was deferred to the next meeting pending further review.

10. REPORT – SENATE LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

a. Waterloo Values – Review of Draft Values Statement

Michael Dorr and Melanie Will provided a presentation and spoke to the development of the draft statement: consultation was undertaken across the University community; mindful that values set expectations and in so doing drive behaviours; detail on the values as enunciated; plan to establish a working group to set best practices in the coming months. Members noted that some of the terminology used in the draft values statement have been politicized in the public discourse and are used here with the intent of avoiding the exclusion of members from the community. A motion was heard that Senate endorse the Values Statement as presented in the attachment to this report, and further to recommend that the Board of Governors give final approval to the same Values Statement. MacEachen and Porreca. Carried.

11. REPORT – SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

a. Senate Governance Review Recommendation: Academic Quality Enhancement (AQuE) Committee

Casello provided an overview of the report and recommendation, noting that the committee will help to streamline existing processes. It was noted that the relative lack of availability of student Senators may pose difficulty in fully populating the committee, and that Senate may review this in a year's time. A motion was heard to that Senate approve the creation of the proposed Academic Quality Enhancement Committee of Senate, as presented. Casello and Woudsma. Carried.

12. REPORT – COU ACADEMIC COLLEAGUE

In the interest of time, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

13. REPORT – HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE: SPRING 2024 CONVOCATION LIST OF HONORANDS

This item was received for information.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda was approved under item 3, with items approved or received for information.

14. SENATE WORK PLAN

Received for information.

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15. **REPORT – SENATE GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL**
Received for information.
 16. **REPORT – SENATE UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL**
Received for information.
 17. **REPORT – SENATE LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**
Received for information.
 18. **REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH & INTERNATIONAL.** Received for information.
 19. **REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST**
 - a. **Faculty Appointments, Leaves.** Received for information.

20. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

With no further business in open session, Senate convened in confidential session.

May 14, 2024
MG/dg

Mike Grivicic
Associate University Secretary to
Senate