



**ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 22, 2025**

The meeting was held in Labatt Hall, Room 103, and via Zoom.

COUNCILORS:

Aidan Bobkowicz
Graham Broad
Arashdeep Chahal
Adrienne Co-Dyre
John Dool
Russell Duvernoy
Jordan Fairbairn
Josephine Gemson
Eunice Gorman
John Grant
Tom Gray
Chaya Halberstam
Erin Hannah 🌐
Joe Henry
Peter Ibbott

Liam Kennedy
Allyson Larkin
Miriam Love
Braedan Lovie
Krista Lysack
Donna Maynard
Alison Meek
Laura Melnyk Gribble
Brian Patton
Marcie Penner
Jeff Preston
Felipe Rodrigues *
Patrick Ryan
Jane Sanders

Jennifer Silcox
Derek Silva
Natalie Spruce
Karen Thomson
Renfang Tian *
Thomas Tieku
Paul Tufts
Joseph Turnbull 🌐
Robert Ventresca
Corinne Walsh *
Ruth Wilson 🌐
Paul Wilton
Mark Yenson * * Regrets
 🌐 Zoom

INVITED GUEST: Christy Bressette, Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President Indigenous Initiatives, Western University

OBSERVERS: Ramanpreet Grewal, Abby Kaspersma, Cynthia Lessard, Sonya Lobsinger, Wendy O'Toole, Rodney Parker, Carri Rodgers-Rowley, Emma Swiatek, Erin Wilson.

MINUTE TAKER: Ann Hoffer

R. Ventresca, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m.

1.0 Land Acknowledgment

N. Spruce offered a traditional land acknowledgment.

2.0 Opening Prayer

W. O'Toole delivered the opening prayer.

3.0 Affirming Declarations of Indigenous Citizenship or Membership at Western University (Policy 1.58)

C. Bressette, Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President Indigenous Initiatives, Western University, expressed appreciation for the Anishinabek Nation flag displayed in the meeting room and the traditional gift of tobacco. Following Indigenous protocol, she introduced herself by spirit name "Hard Working Woman," identifying as a member of the Turtle Clan from Kettle and Stony Point First Nation.

Christy presented Western's Indigenous Citizenship Affirmation Policy, which applies to all individuals—students, faculty, staff, and community members—in both academic and service roles, as well as in funding contexts such as scholarships. The policy is framed around citizenship and community connection rather than self-identification, helping to safeguard Indigenous-designated opportunities and prevent ethnic fraud.

In consultation with Indigenous communities, the affirmation process is Indigenous-led and grounded in the principle: *Nothing about us without us*. Citizenship must be affirmed through documentation and recognition by the community, which must claim the individual and confirm lineal connection. An Indigenous Affirmation Committee reviews all applications.

Christy noted that under the Indian Act, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit each maintain their own registries, and many global Indigenous nations have similar systems. Recognizing that some individuals may have lost familial ties due to historical trauma (e.g., residential schools, adoption), the policy allows for a written explanation to support their application. Mental health services are available to support applicants through this potentially triggering process.

The policy has been piloted for two years and was formally adopted by Western's Senate in June 2025. It is a relational and respectful process that prioritizes integrity and healing. It is aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Western's Strategic Plan, and Indigenous Plan.

Resources such as *A Guide Towards Indigenous Allyship* and *Guide Towards Allyship in Indigenous Research* are available on Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives website. Local Indigenous communities include:

- **Anishinabek:** Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
- **Haudenosaunee:** Oneida Nation of the Thames
- **Lunaapéewak:** Delaware Nation at Moraviantown

Christy emphasized that Indigenous people are leading this work and offered support in developing a similar policy at King's. Members applauded Christy for her leadership and generous sharing of knowledge.

C. Bressette departed the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

4.0 Committee Reports

4.1 Scholarship and Bursary Committee

Josephine provided context for two motions returned to the Scholarship and Bursary Committee by Academic Council on June 18, 2025, for further research. The motions were presented for vote and proposed to be considered together.

Motion 1: That Academic Council approve a revision to the International Experiential Learning Awards for full-time students, reducing it from \$1500 to \$1000, effective September 2025

Motion 2: That Academic Council approve a revision to the International Experiential Learning Awards for part-time students, reducing it from \$1000 to \$500, effective September 2025

Moved and seconded by the Scholarship and Bursary Committee
DEFEATED (13 in favour, 18 opposed)

Highlights from 23-minute discussion:

- Members expressed concern about reduced student funding and the retroactive impact on students admitted under previous award expectations.
- It was noted that Western registers students in experiential learning courses as full-term, allowing them to avoid additional intersession fees.
- Some members emphasized the importance of equity and accessibility, citing the high cost of international programs and the need for additional bursary support.
- Clarification was provided that bursaries are funded through operations, though departments may seek donor support through the Foundation.
- Members were reminded that rejecting these motions would require identifying alternative areas for budget reductions.

4.2 Governance and Nominations Committee

R. Ventresca, on M. Yenson's behalf, presented the motions for vote and recommended they be considered separately.

Motion: To recommend to the Board and Corporate Members that the number of student seats on Academic Council be increased from three (3) to five (5), with the two (2) additional seats to be elected at-large through the King's University College Students' Council (KUCSC), in accordance with section 2.2 of the Academic Council Bylaws regarding elected membership.

Moved/seconded by the Governance and Nominations Committee

CARRIED (one abstention)

Highlights from 5-minute discussion:

- Members discussed a proposed increase in student representation on Academic Council from 7% to 11%, noting that this would bring it closer to the 19% representation seen on Western's Senate. It was emphasized that faculty would remain the majority and that adding "at large" student seats would help amplify student voices.
- Some members referenced the original design of Academic Council, which had limited student seats due to concerns about workload. Others noted strong student interest in participating, with many attending meetings as observers, and highlighted the value of the experience in learning institutional processes.
- Support was expressed for the increase in principle, though questions were raised about the appropriate mechanism for electing "at large" student members outside of Academic Council.

Motion: That the membership of the Planning and Priorities Committee be amended to include an *ex officio* voting seat for the President of the King's University College Students' Council (KUCSC), in addition to the existing elected student representative.

Moved/seconded by the Governance and Nominations Committee

CARRIED (one opposition, one abstention)

Highlights from 1-minute discussion:

- The rationale for the motion was to increase student agency in budget planning
- In response to a question about including PAOA and KUCSA representatives, it was clarified that the proposal focused solely on student constituents. The

Interim President noted that PAOA members are already represented on the committee.

It was noted that the report included a "For Information" item, which required a mover and seconder to be brought forward for discussion.

Motion: That the motion introduced and revised by Drs. Meek and Ibbott be brought back for discussion.

Moved by: A. Meek Seconded by: P. Ibbott

CARRIED (1 opposition, 5 abstentions)

The Chair reminded Council that his prior advice had been overridden and clarified that, if passed the motion would be hortative in nature and not directive.

Highlights from 13-minute discussion:

- Members discussed the process and intent behind a proposed governance motion. Concerns were raised about procedural clarity, including the role of the Governance and Nominating Committee, which had advised it provides guidance but not wordsmithing.
- It was noted that the motion's current wording may fall outside the scope of the bylaw, potentially surrendering delegated authority back to the Board or encroaching on the President's role.
- While the intent to improve Council's functioning was broadly supported, members emphasized the need for careful wording and a structured process, including retraction, notice of motion, and consultation. Suggestions included forming an ad hoc committee and considering the development of a constitution to complement the existing bylaw.
- The motion was withdrawn, with agreement that further conversation on governance is needed.

Item Raised from the Floor – Governance Review

Members engaged in a 6-minute discussion regarding the potential creation of a task force to review Academic Council governance. It was noted that the Governance and Nominations Committee would need time to consider the Terms of Reference and explore the formation of an ad hoc committee to examine operating procedures in relation to the bylaw.

One member expressed concern about proceeding without a formal notice of motion and emphasized the importance of allowing existing committee structures to function unless exceptional circumstances arise. The mover clarified that they serve on the relevant committee and viewed the proposal as a way to broaden participation in this work.

Motion: That the Governance and Nominations Committee be referred to develop Terms of Reference for a task force to examine Academic Council governance and bring a recommendation back to Academic Council.

Moved by: C. Halberstam Seconded by: A. Meek

CARRIED (4 abstentions)

Point of Order

A member raised concern that the agenda indicated a 4:00 p.m. end time. The President (Interim) clarified that a motion passed in May 2025 set Academic Council meetings to run for two hours. While an earlier start time was considered, scheduling conflicts led to a 2:30 p.m. start, allowing meetings to extend to 4:30 p.m. He apologized for the typographical error in the agenda.

4.3 Educational Policy Committee Decision

Motion: That proctor ratios for Examination periods be approved as shown below.

# of Students in Room	# of Proctors
December/April Final Exam Proctor Ratios in 2024-25:	
1-24	1
25-99	2
100+	3
Proposed Proctor Ratios for December/April Exams:	
0-35	0
36-60	1
61-100	2
100+	3

Moved/seconded by Committee

DEFEATED (10 in favour, 11 opposed, 8 abstentions)

Highlights from 3-minute discussion:

- Members expressed concern about reducing the number of proctors, citing larger class sizes and the need for adequate supervision. It was noted that the absence of additional proctors could be problematic. In response, it was clarified that the motion aims to ensure prudent use of college resources and outlined how students would be appropriately assigned and divided.

Motion: That effective September 1, 2026, *Certificate - Religious and Cultural Diversity* be offered at King's University College.

Moved/seconded by Committee

CARRIED

Highlight from 1-minute discussion:

- The program is not expected to incur costs and may increase foot traffic from main campus and Huron, offering potential indirect benefits

5.0 Reports

5.1 President (Interim)

In the interest of time, R. Ventresca opted not to provide a high-level overview of his report, which was submitted with the agenda. No questions were raised.

5.2 King's University Council Students' Council Report

B. Lovie, KUCSC President, provided a verbal report on the status of the KUCSC consultation with the London Transit Commission on the King's Transit Plan, noting that

the LTC is open to having a public consultation meeting at King's. Members were invited to share their perspectives.

ACTION: Members to share their perspectives to be included in the plan directly with B. Lovie.

6.0 The Unanimous Consent Agenda

6.1 Strategic Enrolment Management

6.2 Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim)

Motion: To received the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee Report and the report from the Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim)

Moved by: L. Melnyk Gribble, B. Lovie

CARRIED

7.0 Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

7.1 Minutes of the Meeting of September 24, 2025 (previously 6.3)

A member proposed that the agenda and minutes should be presented for approval at the meeting. R. Ventresca clarified that agenda approval falls under the purview of the Governance and Nominations Committee and asked if there were concerns with the minutes. The member indicated there were none.

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of September 24, 2025, as circulated.

Moved by: J. Preston, seconded by A. Bobkowicz

CARRIED

8.0 New Business

None

9.0 Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 4:16 p.m.

Moved by: P. Ibbott, seconded by B. Lovie

CARRIED



Robert Ventresca,
Chair



Paul Wilton,
University Secretary