ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 15, 2026

The meeting was held in Wemple Hall, Room 166, and via Zoom.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Aidan Bobkowicz	Lynne Jackson	Jane Sanders	
Graham Broad 🌐	Liam Kennedy	Jennifer Silcox	
Arashdeep Chahal	Allyson Larkin	Derek Silva *	
John Dool	Miriam Love	Natalie Spruce	
Russell Duvernoy	Braedan Lovie	Karen Thomson	
Jordan Fairbairn 🌐	Krista Lysack	Renfang Tian *	
Josephine Gemson *	Donna Maynard	Paul Tufts	
Eunice Gorman	Alison Meek *	Joseph Turnbull	
John Grant	Laura Melnyk Gribble	Robert Ventresca	
Tom Gray	Eleni Nicolaides	Tyler Waddilove	
Chaya Halberstam	Brian Patton	Corinne Walsh	
Erin Hannah	Jeff Preston *	Ruth Wilson	
Joe Henry	Felipe Rodrigues	Paul Wilton	* Regrets
Peter Ibbott	Patrick Ryan	Mark Yenson	🌐 Zoom

OBSERVERS: A. Casson, J. Eastabrook, Fr. Chris Gillespie and Emma Swiatek

MINUTE TAKER: Ann Hoffer

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Chair R. Ventresca.

1.0 Land Acknowledgment

L. Jackson offered the land acknowledgement, noting the contrast between the sounds of nature and the windowless meeting space. Lynne reflected on rewilding her family farm as an example of the relationship between people and the natural world. She spoke to coloniality as a hierarchical system and decoloniality as a practice that broadens and redistributes knowledge and authority. She referenced scholarship on the decolonization of universities, highlighting Adam Gaudry's three-phase framework of Indigenous inclusion, Indigenization, and structural transformation to advance Indigenous presence and leadership across the academy.

2.0 Opening Prayer

Fr. Chris offered an opening reflection, drawing on Mother Teresa's "Anyway" meditation to encourage perseverance in service and community life. He then led the assembly in prayer.

3.0 Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of March 25, 2026
Moved by: B. Lovie, L. Melnyk Gribble
CARRIED

4.0 Committee Reports

4.1 Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) Committee

Members received the written draft Strategic Enrolment Plan (2026/27-203-31) (SEP) on Friday following the SEM meeting. M. Yenson noted that the SEP reflects community input from the March 11, 2026 presentation and the collaborative work of multiple units. He advised that the draft SEP will return to Academic Council for a recommendation to advance the SEP to the Board and to ensure alignment with the Academic Plan (AP).

The SEM Committee presented the draft SEP for information and feedback.

K. Thomson provided an overview of King's evolving enrolment approach, noting the shift to an integrated SEM framework and the importance of using the student's decision-making journey when selecting an institution to guide strategic decision-making. She highlighted how the SEP supports coordinated, data-informed efforts across units and balances technology with a personalized student experience. She also outlined the multi-stage SEM approach and confirmed that future stages will align the SEP with the forthcoming AP.

J. Turnbull outlined the enrolment prediction model, a regression approach using five years of data, and acknowledged the team effort of the Enrolment Projection Tool Task Force (J. Eastabrook, T. Gray, C. Rodgers-Rowley, F. Rodrigues, and himself). Joseph provided an overview of the tool's purpose, limitations, and preliminary insights. He noted that further analysis and refinement will continue as the model develops.

A. Casson provided an overview of attraction and conversion within King's integrated SEM approach, highlighting coordinated efforts across units to support prospective students throughout the recruitment journey. She noted that attraction and conversion activities draw on a range of outreach and engagement strategies, supported by team-based collaboration and ongoing use of digital tools.

J. Eastabrook provided an overview of ongoing work to strengthen student success, retention, and graduation. She noted that the Retention Subcommittee has established multi-year goals and that efforts continue to better understand factors influencing student withdrawal. Upcoming analysis and committee review will help inform future retention initiatives.

Highlights from a 25-minute discussion:

- Members emphasized the importance of work-integrated learning and discussed challenges related to retaining high-achieving students. They noted the need to balance investment in strategies with demonstrated impact and highlighted the importance of strengthened supports for at-risk students. Feedback from students regarding organizational factors, such as career-oriented programming, food services, parking, and housing, were also noted, along with the need to align brand awareness with the student experience.

- Members expressed support for adopting the CRM and noted its alignment with sector priorities. Suggestions were offered regarding recruitment focus, including exploring opportunities in additional regions.
- Members discussed opportunities to strengthen brand awareness, including consideration of Western's broader reputation, and noted that market research will guide this work. They also discussed how King's mission will be reflected in the SEP, with confirmation that mission, vision, and values will be integrated through alignment with the AP.
- Clarification was provided on the role of academic units in program development, noting that the AP will proceed through EPC and AC and will be aligned with the SEP.
- Members encouraged clarity on roles and responsibilities to support implementation, with confirmation that units accountable for AP actions will have defined measures and metrics.
- Members discussed considerations related to international enrolment and associated financial implications, including the importance of monitoring projections and reviewing assumptions annually. Specific questions were noted for offline follow-up.
- Members also discussed international partnership agreements, with confirmation that existing agreements and relationships are being reviewed and refreshed.

4.2 Governance and Nominations Committee

Motion: That Academic Council recommend to the Board that the Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC) Terms of Reference be amended to reflect revisions aligning with TCPS 2 requirements, clarifying roles and composition, and affirming independence in ethics decision-making while maintaining appropriate governance and accountability.
Moved/Seconded by Governance and Nominations Committee
CARRIED

No discussion.

5.0 Executive Reports

5.1 President

R. Ventresca provided a verbal update on his written report circulated earlier in the day. He noted that the search for the VPAD is underway, with the selection advisory committee established and meeting soon. Members were encouraged to attend upcoming staff retirement celebrations in recognition of colleagues' contributions to King's.

Rob reported that the Mission Sustainability site, which provides staff with updates on progress toward the five-year plan, is now accessible internally and thanked IT colleagues for their work. He noted that Phase 1 of the website renewal is nearing completion and that Phase 2 will begin under the leadership of D. Perreault, Director of IT, over a six-month period to refine infrastructure and content.

He announced that Tanya Talaga has been confirmed as the first speaker in the Veritas Lecture Series for September, with additional speakers to be announced. Rob thanked all who contributed to the Spring Open House, noting its success as a key conversion event.

R. Ventresca reminded members that the Tree Planting Ceremony will follow the final Academic Council meeting of the year and that that Convocation for King's students will take place at 10:00 a.m. on June 11, 2026.

5.2 Vice-President Academic Dean (Interim)

M. Yenson provided a brief update, noting the success of Research Week and thanking faculty, students, and organizers for their contributions. Mark advised that planning for the Academic Plan is underway and that consultation with academic leaders and the broader community will continue. He also noted that King's will host IPEC this week in collaboration with Western and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

T. Gray provided a high-level enrolment update, noting that application activity is progressing as expected and that federal policy continues to influence international enrolment. He confirmed that King's continues to accept summer and January-start applications.

Highlights from a 17-minute discussion:

- Members discussed international pathway models and their implications for student recruitment.
- Members reviewed indicators related to student persistence and noted trends in student mobility among institutions.
- Members also discussed factors influencing acceptance patterns this cycle and noted that clearer trends will emerge later in the admissions timeline.

5.3 King's University College Student's Council

President Ventresca acknowledged and thanked outgoing KUCSC leaders (B. Lovie, A. Bobkowicz, and A. Chahal) for their insight and dedication to council, committees, and student life, and welcomed the incoming KUCSC President for 2026–27 which was followed by a round of applause.

B. Lovie announced the KUCSC Executive for 2026–27:

- **President Breandén Dunn**
- **VPSA Himm Lai**
- **VPSE Matt Booth**
- **CCO Abby Kaspersma**
- **CFO Maria Garces**

B. Lovie reported that exam-period activities are underway and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work collaboratively with Academic Council throughout the year.

6.0 Consent Agenda

6.1 **Educational Policy Committee**

6.2 **Mission Integration and Inclusion Committee**

6.3 **Scholarship and Bursary Committee**

Motion: To approved the Consent Agenda.
Moved by: L. Melnyk Gribble, P. Ibbott
CARRIED

7.0 Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

8.0 New Business

Members received an update that internal polling shows strong student interest in pursuing double majors, with many students unaware this option exists.

ACTION: Survey results from MEM and Psychology will be shared with the wider community, as they provide useful insight for retention planning

It was noted that, although included in the Consent Agenda, the Scholarship and Bursary Committee report includes a significant new scholarship, and appreciation was expressed for the work of T. Ahrens and the team.

9.0 Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:13 p.m.
Moved by: P. Ryan, P. Ibbott
CARRIED

Robert Ventresca,
Chair

Paul Wilton,
University Secretary