



ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2025

The meeting was held at 2:35 p.m. in South Annex, Room 060, and via Zoom.

COUNCILORS:

Laura Béres	Joe Henry	Pat Ryan
Nonie Brennan	Peter Ibbott	Jane Sanders
Graham Broad *	Jen Jeffrey	Steve Shajimon
Claudia Clausius	Liam Kennedy	Jennifer Silcox *
Adrienne Co-Dyre	Allyson Larkin	Ridley Smith
Tracy Cunningham	Miriam Love	Ricardo Soto
John Dool *	Kristin Lozanski *	Natalie Spruce
Russell Duvernoy *	Donna Maynard	Thomas Tieku
Jeannette Eberhard	Alison Meek	Joseph Turnbull
Jordan Fairbairn *	Laura Melnyk Gribble	Robert Ventresca
Josephine Gemson	Jacquie Newman	Corinne Walsh *
Eunice Gorman (for C. Traher)	Loretta Norton (for M. Penner)	Paul Wilton
Chaya Halberstam	Brian Patton	Mark Yenson
Erin Hannah	Jeff Preston	

OBSERVERS: Karen Thomson, Jim Donovan Panchaud

MINUTE TAKER: Ann Hoffer

R. Ventresca, Chair, called the meeting to order.

1.0 Land Acknowledgment

R. Ventresca offered a land acknowledgement.

2.0 Opening Prayer

J. Donovan Panchaud opened with a prayer.

3.0 Committee Reports

3.1 Planning and Priorities Committee

M. Yenson, Committee Chair and Vice-President Academic Dean, asked if there were any questions regarding the report submitted with the agenda. No questions were raised.

K. Thomson discussed the FY26 budget process, highlighting the shift from an incremental to a bridge budget model, combining zero-based budgeting for operating funds and activity-based budgeting for strategic initiatives. She explained that three scenarios (pessimistic, realistic, optimistic) will guide proactive mitigation scenarios, aligned with enrolment cycle triggers. A 3- to 5-year outlook will allow for adjustments and investments. Karen also mentioned the President's Task Force on Planning and Budget, established in fall 2024, which will provide a budget model recommendation in the coming months. She noted that an integrated approach to strategic planning and budgeting is in place, with all Chairs and Budget Unit Heads given a template for the

Planning and Priorities Committee's decisions. The Vice-President and Academic Dean will manage the academic side, while the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee will conduct a deeper-dive by program and student type, though this work will not be completed this cycle. The goal is to increase budget process transparency over time. A 5-minute discussion ensued.

- The existing 8-year conversion rate data is being projected forward, with the realistic scenario showing little change.
- The transition to starting with a zero-based budget is necessary due to the current structural deficit, which will worsen without action.
- The Strategic Plan needs to be translated into an Operational Plan. Key initiatives will be presented to Planning and Priorities, and departments have been asked to include correlations between retention, conversation, and attraction in their proposals
- International Student Program, the largest budget line, is for tuition offsets aimed at reducing international students accounts

ACTION: Revised Budget Reports to now include footnotes to help members interpret the data.

3.2 Educational Policy Committee

M. Yenson, Committee Chair and Vice-President Academic Dean, noted that the motion comes forward, already moved and seconded. A 3-minute discussion followed, highlighting positive feedback on the removal of prerequisites in philosophy courses, which increases access for other students, as well as the new formatting.

Education Policy Committee moved and seconded

That Academic Council approve the following course and program proposals.

1. Economics 2222 A/B – Econometrics I Course revisions
2. History Minor/Major – Module revisions
3. Philosophy 3072 F/G – Bernard Lonergan on Religion and Culture Course revisions
4. Philosophy 3886 F/G – Advanced Topics in Social Political Thought Course revisions
5. Psychology 3262 F/G – Current Research in Behavioral Pharmacology New course
6. Psychology 3300 F/G – Applied Clinical Settings New course
7. Psychology Major – Module revisions
8. Social Justice and Peace Studies 3365 F/G – Alternative Dispute Resolution Course revisions

CARRIED

4.0 Reports

4.1 President

R. Ventresca, President (Interim), adding the following verbal updates to his written report that was circulated with the agenda.

- 125 International Student Visas have been allocated to King's, with four assigned to the Seminary. A positive gesture from Western; however, expectations should be tempered as international applications are down. Unused Visas will be clawed back if not use by June 30th.
- The search for a Director of Institutional Planning and Finance (DIPF) is underway, aligning with the Strategy Corp report's emphasis on better data integration. This role focuses on integrating finance, planning, and analysis. The VPSS portfolio was reorganized to elevate strategic discussions, including IT's involvement in data governance and AI.
- A culture shift is needed for data-driven planning, as the old budget-based approach no longer works for us. A sector-experienced accountant has recommended a new approach to refine our thinking.

The floor was opened for questions, leading to an 18-minute discussion.

- The ideal candidate for the DIPF role will be an accountant with experience in public sector post-secondary education.
- In response to questions about the DIPF's reporting structure and the number of VPs, Rob shared the details are pending approval of appointments, policies and procedures. The focus is currently on immediate needs, with Rob tasked to assess and recommend next steps.
- We need an Institution Planning and Budget Office with connections to DIPF (finance, planning, and analysis), IT (Dom Perreault for technical governance and ethics), and the inter-department unit group (Planning and Priorities).
- Faculty expertise in predictive modelling was highlighted, along with the need for a clearer data definitions and improved data sharing, while workload concerns were noted despite strong faculty interest.
- It was emphasized that members must have and be able to interpret these packages, and the Planning and Priorities Committee is encouraged to prioritize CRM

4.2 Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim) Information

M. Yenson, Vice-President Academic Dean, delivered a verbal report, highlighting that much of his recent focus has been integrated into his committee work, particularly with the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee. He thanked K. Thomas for her energy and expertise, as well as the contributions of other Committee members. Mark shared that 125 PALs have been granted and emphasized the need to focus on conversions. He also provided examples of strategic ideas begin discussed by the Attraction, Conversion, and Retention task groups. A 2-minute discussion ensued.

- King's PALS are offered universally, similar to Western and Huron, and are not performance-based.
- Scholarships can strategically enhance recruitment and retention of stellar students.
- Both equity and excellence are addressed in the strategic plan, and criteria of the affiliation agreement are being met.

4.3 King's University Council Students' Council Report

Tabled.

5.0 The Unanimous Consent Agenda

Agenda items 5.1 Governance and Nominations Committee Report, and 5.2 Scholarships and Bursaries Committee Report, and and 5.4 Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2024 were moved from the Consent Agenda to 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 respectively.

J. Preston moved, J Jeffrey seconded

That Academic Council receive the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee Report on the Consent Agenda.

CARRIED

6.0 Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

6.1 Governance and Nominations Committee

M. Yenson, Committee Chair and Vice-President Academic Dean, introduced the motion regarding virtual participation, which was already moved and seconded. A 1-minute discussion followed.

MOTION: Council functions primarily as an in-person meeting. To maintain

accessibility, a member who is reasonably unable to attend in-person may participate virtually.

CARRIED

- No existing policy currently in place.
- The University Secretary will be the arbiter of such request, trusting that individuals seeking accommodation have made the appropriate assessment.

6.2 Scholarships and Bursaries Committee

J. Gemson, Committee Chair and Associate Dean Academic, introduced the motion regarding the introduction of new awards at King's, which was already moved and seconded. A 5-minute discussion followed. The original motion as amended as follows:

MOTION: That Academic Council approve the introduction and terms of reference of the School of Social Work Diversity and Equity Award

(The Paul & Virginia Werstine Shakespeare Scholarship was removed from the motion.)

CARRIED

- The School of Social Work Diversity and Equity Award mentions 'financial need' without specifying how its determination. Students submit a budget to qualify for this designation but are not required to include it with each scholarship application.
- The first "establishment" paragraph in the Paul & Virginia Werstine Shakespeare Scholarship will be removed; the second is correct.
- The Paul & Virginia Werstine Shakespeare Scholarship is linked to a third-year course, but could be awarded to a fourth-year student; the Werstines are to be consulted to confirm intent.

ACTION: The Paul & Virginia Werstine Shakespeare Scholarship was referred back to the Committee for clarification from the Werstines.

6.3 Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2024

It was noted that K. Thomson, Chief Operating Officer, should be listed as a participant. The roster currently only includes the vacant Vice-President Financial and Support Services role. The University Secretary clarified that By-law revisions require Board approval. Members invited K. Thomson and the new Director of Institutional Planning and Finance to attend Council meetings as a resource.

Clarification was provided that the apostrophe in the councillor list denotes regrets.

L. Melnyk Gribble moved, P. Ibbott seconded

To approved the Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2024, as amended

CARRIED

7.0 New Business

No items were identified.

8.0 Adjournment

C. Clausius moved, and L. Melnyk Gribble seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

CARRIED

Robert Ventresca,
Chair

Paul Wilton,
University Secretary