




ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 21st, 2025

The meeting was held in Wemple Vitali Lounge.

COUNCILORS:

Laura Béres
Nonie Brennan 
Graham Broad
Claudia Clausius 
Adrienne Co-Dyre
John Dool
Russell Duvernoy
Jeannette Eberhard 
Jordan Fairbairn
Josephine Gemson
Eunice Gorman
Chaya Halberstam
Erin Hannah
Jeff Preston

Joe Henry
Peter Ibbott
Jen Jeffrey
Liam Kennedy
Allyson Larkin 
Miriam Love
Kristin Lozanski
Donna Maynard
Alison Meek
Laura Melnyk Gribble
Jacquie Newman
Loretta Norton (for M. Penner)
Brian Patton

Pat Ryan
Jane Sanders
Steve Shajimon
Jennifer Silcox 
Ridley Smith
Ricardo Soto
Natalie Spruce
Thomas Tieku
Joseph Turnbull
Robert Ventresca
Corinne Walsh
Paul Wilton
Mark Yenson

 *Virtual*

MINUTE TAKER: Kate Deonarine

R. Ventresca, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM.

1.0 Land Acknowledgment

The land acknowledgement was offered by Jessica Medinilla, a Recruitment Officer in Enrolment Services

2.0 Opening Prayer

R. Ventresca extended a warm welcome to all in attendance and offered blessings to the group.

3.0 Committee Reports

3.1 Educational Policy Committee

M. Yenson, Chair, presented the following motion for decision:

MOTION:

That Academic Council approve that effective September 1, 2025, The Major Module Revision- Introduction of Major in English for Teachers be introduced at King's University College.

**M/S Educational Policy Committee
CARRIED**

3.2 Scholarship and Bursary Committee

M. Yenson on behalf of J. Gemson presented the motion for decision:

MOTION:

That Academic Council approve the recommendation that a revision to the entrance scholarship eligibility, increasing the eligibility criteria to an average of 85%, instead of 82%.

**M/S Scholarship and Bursary Committee
TABLED**

M. Yenson recommended that the motion be tabled for further consideration and revisited once there is greater clarity regarding the current recruitment cycle and its potential future impact. It was noted that there is no immediate urgency associated with this motion.

MOTION:

That Academic Council approve the recommendation that a change in the amount of the SHSM scholarships, from \$2000 per student to \$500 per student.

**M/S Scholarship and Bursary Committee
CARRIED
(3 abstentions)**

Concerns were raised that the proposed amount could impact student interest, with some advising that the \$2,000 figure may be overly generous. The discussion focused on whether this amount effectively attracts more students and clarified that the intention is strategic, aiming not for a higher amount but for a more targeted approach. It was noted that this strategy is designed to support students in need, and the committee was commended for its efforts to ensure equity in this decision.

4.0 Reports

4.1 President (Interim) Report

R. Ventresca delivered a presentation outlining Western's potential partnership with Navitas aimed at enhancing the recruitment of international students into undergraduate and first-year professional master's programs.

R. Ventresca emphasized potential benefits of the partnership, including the acceleration of revenue growth without requiring up-front investment, as well as the diversification of the international student population. The partnership may also ensure that international students have access to robust support systems and full participation in Western's student services and extracurricular offerings.

R. Ventresca outlined Senate's decision-making process, noting that the proposal would be subject to review by relevant committees and ultimately require approval from Western's Board of Directors, with a further update expected in June.

Detailed consideration was given to the potential risks and benefits for King's, particularly if Western were to proceed independently, which could jeopardize King's international recruitment efforts. Currently, King's enrolls just over 400 international students, representing approximately 17% of the combined international student body at King's and Western. Should conditional offers be extended proportionally under the partnership, King's could see an increase of 10 international students by 2028–29, growing to an additional 130 by 2033–34.

A comprehensive discussion was held regarding Western's International College, focusing on its role as an undergraduate pathway program and the rationale behind its establishment. The logic and sustainability of such a model were examined, including what it entails, why it exists, and how it could impact broader institutional strategies. The conversation returned to the implications for King's, with detailed discussion on the risks and advantages of this initiative. Notably, there has been no formal engagement with Western to date, though the formal approval process was outlined, and it was emphasized that the partnership could significantly influence King's international recruitment efforts—particularly if Western proceeds independently.

It was also noted that King's holds two seats on Western's Senate, highlighting a potential channel for influence. The possibility of more structured engagement with Western was raised as a strategic opportunity. Pricing strategies were also discussed, with P. Ibbott commenting on the variation in pricing models across different partners.

The conversation shifted to Kingsway Academy and its current affiliation with King's, including questions around student success rates, the clarity of its connection to King's, and opportunities to enhance or reimagine this relationship. There was recognition that multiple contracts currently exist with Kingsway, but that the arrangement is not yet optimized. However, there are emerging visions for this partnership, including the potential for space integration.

It was noted that the timeline for any potential collaboration would target a 2026 launch, requiring significant planning and engagement within the next 3–4 months.

Board-level involvement would be critical, and while this specific partnership is under consideration, alternative options remain on the table. Western will continue to pursue its international recruitment infrastructure and strategies, which may augment or diverge from King's approach.

T. Tiekue raised a question regarding a statement in the report (page 32), which suggests that over the next 3 to 5 years, there may be a need to ensure that King's remains "small," potentially implying a downsizing of operations. In response, R. Ventresca clarified that the reference to "smallness" pertains to the distinctive sense of community at King's, rather than a directive to reduce size or scope. Emphasized that there is, in fact, an expectation of growth, and that any future investments must be strategically designed to enhance King's market competitiveness. R. Ventresca further noted that the goal is not simply cost-cutting, but rather a balanced approach that includes thoughtful investment in key areas.

Future discussions will focus on leveraging existing institutional assets to support sustainable growth, with the overarching intent to remain competitive and market-relevant in the evolving postsecondary landscape.

4.2 Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim) Report

M. Yenson provided an update on committee activities and extended congratulations to the School of Management, Economics, and Mathematics (MEM), with particular recognition for the successful completion of a module led by J. Turnbull. M. Yenson expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts of academic units in supporting summer course planning, noting careful coordination and thoughtful execution.

The summer session has generated \$5.7 million in gross earnings—a promising figure, though already incorporated into the current budget. Emphasized that summer offerings play a vital role in supporting students' academic progress. For the first time, King's has received a cheque from Western through the cross-flow process, marking a positive financial milestone.

Regarding Intent to Register (ITR), overall figures are up from the previous year, with domestic ITRs increasing from 73% to 77%, and international ITRs reflecting a 41% rate, with individual international confirmations reaching 74%. Outreach efforts, particularly one-on-one engagement, will continue throughout the summer.

The discussion also touched on the topic of generative AI and academic integrity, noting that related policies are now linked to broader institutional frameworks involving multiple stakeholders across the community.

On the admissions front, tracking efforts show increased engagement, although only 60 of the 160 available PAL (Provincial Attestation Letter) slots have been used to date, indicating significant capacity for further utilization.

An update was provided on the suspension of admissions to several academic programs, along with an explanation of the associated procedures. The following programs were noted as affected:

- Thanatology (HSP)
- all modules in World Religions and Cultures;
- Minor in Middle Eastern Studies;
- Specialization in Catholic Studies; and
- Specialization in Religion & Society.

It was clarified that academic advising will play a critical role throughout this process, not only to support affected students but also to assist with course planning and ensure alignment with administrative decisions. A clear distinction was made between academic advising responsibilities and administrative determinations related to program suspensions.

Questions were raised about the role of EPC and how decisions regarding program suspensions are made. A discussion followed, outlining the committee's process and criteria used to determine which programs should be suspended, ensuring transparency and alignment with institutional priorities.

Faculty achievements were acknowledged.

4.3 King's University Council Students' Council Report

Incoming Student Council President, B. Lovie shared an update following his participation in his first round of committee meetings and took the opportunity to introduce several of his colleagues. Highlighted early engagement with key stakeholders and outlined several new initiatives currently underway.

Among the topics discussed were upcoming summer hiring plans and the involvement of departmental representatives in supporting these efforts. B. Lovie also referenced preliminary discussions on transit planning, noting that a new proposal is expected to be brought forward in June. Emphasized the importance of connecting with executive leadership and fostering greater collaboration with academic programs, signaling a proactive and inclusive approach to institutional leadership.

5.0 The Unanimous Consent Agenda

5.1 Mission Integration and Inclusion Committee Information

5.2 Governance and Nominations Committee Information

5.3 Teaching Excellence Award Committee Information

5.4 Minutes of the Meeting of April 23rd, 2025 Decision

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda

Moved: B. Lovie / P. Ryan

CARRIED

6.0 Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

None.

7.0 New Business

P. Ryan indicated an intention to propose a new motion, along with a clear rationale. The rationale outlined the purpose and anticipated impact of the motion, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and academic priorities.

MOTION:

Academic Council (AC) directs itself, the Education Policy Committee, and the Priorities and Planning Committee to meet at least monthly over the months of June, July, and August of 2025 to address the structural and financial issues facing the College.

Moved: P. Ryan / J. Newman

CARRIED

The rationale for the motion was that: KUC leadership has reported the need to identify over \$17.5 million in reduced annual expenditures or increased revenues within the next three years. Meeting this target will require significant structural reforms, with proposals needing to be submitted by September and October 2025 for implementation in 2026–27.

Many of these reforms fall under the scope of the Academic Council's Educational Policy and Priorities and Planning Committees. To ensure a thoughtful and informed process, these committees should form work teams over the summer to begin necessary investigations and planning.

Delaying this work could lead to rushed and less collaborative decision-making in the fall, jeopardizing the quality of reform efforts.

MOTION:

That the Academic Council (AC) direct the Education Policy Committee (EPC) to develop plans for adjusting academic programs to reduce costs and report their findings to the Academic Council by September 2025.

MOVED: T. Tiekue / P. Ibbott

CARRIED

The rationale for the motion was that: Page 32 of the President's Report highlights the need for immediate and long-term action—over the next 3 to 5 years—to secure King's future as a small, primarily undergraduate Catholic university affiliated with Western. This will require further cost reductions beyond the 15% implemented this year, with potential programmatic and teaching impacts.

To ensure these decisions are made thoughtfully and collegially, the motion calls for the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) to take a leadership role, actively engaging program heads, directors, and chairs. Setting a September deadline will allow Academic Council to have a meaningful discussion and provide strategic guidance to the Priorities and Planning Committee in advance of the 2026–27 budget cycle.

Council members spoke in support of the motion, offering aligned rationales.

MOTION:

That the Academic Council (AC) meetings run for a duration of two (2) hours.

MOVED: A. Meek / L. Gribble

CARRIED

The rationale for the motion was that: Members have adequate time and complete information to engage in informed decision-making, without feeling rushed. It was also noted that any extension of meeting times—such as adding an additional 30 minutes should be approached with caution, as it may conflict with members’ teaching schedules.

MOTION:

That within the meeting materials for the next Academic Council meeting and quarterly thereafter, Academic Council be provided with additional financial information including a statement of cash flows, updates on employee future benefits liabilities, and changes to non-cash operating working capital.

MOVED: J. Turnbull / J. Newman

CARRIED

The rationale for the motion was that: To make available, in advance, key financial information typically included in the audited financial statements released in September. Providing this data earlier will support academic bodies in understanding the broader financial context and help build necessary buy-in for upcoming changes—some of which may be difficult or unpopular.

8.0 Adjournment

MOTION:

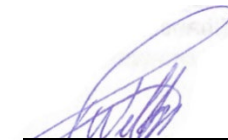
To adjourn the meeting [at 4:10pm].

Moved: P. Ibbott Seconded: L. Gribble

CARRIED



Robert Ventresca, Chair



Paul Wilton, University Secretary