ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING
July 23, 2025

The meeting was held at 2:05 p.m. in Labatt Hall, Room 103, and via Zoom.

COUNCILORS:

Aidan Bobkowicz *
Graham Broad 🌐
Arashdeep Chahal *
Adrienne Co-Dyre *
John Dool
Russell Duvernoy
Jeannette Eberhard *
Jordan Fairbairn *
Josephine Gemson
Eunice Gorman *
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
Jacquie Newman 🌐
Marcie. Penner
Brian Patton
Jeff Preston
Felipe Rodrigues
Patrick Ryan 🌐

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

* Regrets
🌐 Zoom

OBSERVERS: Karen Gingrich, Linda Whidden, Emma Swiatek, Ramanpreet Grewal

MINUTE TAKER: Ann Hoffer

R. Ventresca, Chair, called the meeting to order and extended a special welcome to R. Wilson, who has joined Council in place of L. Beres.

1.0 Land Acknowledgment

A. Larkin offered a land acknowledgment and shared insights from Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, reflecting on the question, "What kind of world do we want to leave behind?" She emphasized social justice, peace studies, and the concept of *amour-mondé* (loving the world) as a way to cope with environmental and economic anxieties. Allyson expressed a desire for a world where a liberal arts education, grounded in Catholic intellectual tradition, is accessible to future generations.

2.0 Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was incorporated into the land acknowledgement.

Point of Order
B. Patton raised a point of order regarding the approval of the draft agenda.

Motion: B. Patton moved, J. Sanders seconded, to approve the draft agenda.

Motion to Amend: A. Meek moved, B. Patton seconded, to amend the agenda by adding Approval of the Agenda as agenda item 3.0, and switching the Tabled Motion from June 16, 2025, under New Business, and Committee Reports (previously 7.0 and 3.0).

Point of Order
J. Newman raised a point of order proposing a friendly amendment, that approving the draft minutes should follow immediately after approval of the agenda for the purposes of confirming previous discussions in order to build on them and continuing with business arising. The Chair ruled that the motion was allowed to proceed. Jacquie proposed the following:

3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda *(previously 6.0)*
    - 4.1. Minutes of the Meeting of May 21, 2025 *(previously 5.6)*
5. Tabled Motion from June 16, 2025
6. Reports *(previously 4.0)*
    - 6.1. President (Interim) Verbal Report *(previously 4.1)*
    - 6.2. Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim) *(previously 4.2)*
    - 6.3. King's University Council Students' Council Report *(previously 4.3)*
7. The Unanimous Consent Agenda *(previously 5.0)*
    - 7.1. Educational Policy Committee *(previously 5.1)*
    - 7.2. Planning and Priorities Committee Report *(previously 5.2)*
    - 7.3. Strategic Enrolment Management Committee *(previously 5.3)*
    - 7.4. Mission Integration and Inclusion Committee *(previously 5.4)*
    - 7.5. Governance and Nominations Committee *(previously 5.5)*
8. Committee Reports *(previously 3.0)*
    - 8.1. Scholarship and Bursary Committee *(previously 3.1)*
9. New Business *(previously 7.0)*
10. Adjournment *(previously 8.0)*

3.0 Approval of the Agenda

Motion to Amend: J. Newman moved, A. Meek seconded, to approve the agenda as amended.
Vote: CARRIED

4.0 Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

4.1 Minutes of the Meeting of June 18, 2025
A. Meek raised a concern that the Tabled Motion had not been fully reflected in the minutes, including the 19-minute discussion that took place on the matter.

Motion: Moved by B. Lovie, seconded by L. Melnyk Gribble, to approve the Minutes of Meeting held on June 18 2025.
Vote: **CARRIED**

5.0 Tabled Motion from June 16, 2025

D. Silva raised a concern regarding the ruling on the request to defer the Motion, noting that it was initially deemed incorrect, but in fact was correct and requested this be documented in the meeting minutes. The motion was ultimately Tabled. The University Secretary acknowledged the confusion during the meeting and apologized for his error.

Motion: Moved by A. Meek, seconded by P. Ibbott, "Going forward, be it resolved that any institutional decision at King's University College that carries both financial and academic implications must be presented to and approved by the Academic Council before it can be implemented.”

After reviewing the Tabled Motion, the President advised that it exceeds Academic Council’s authority as outlined in the bylaws:

- Academic Council has an advisory role on the operating budget, with approval by the Board, which delegates implementation to the administration.
- Council reviewed a multi-year budget framework for financial sustainability by 2030
- The Board holds legal and financial responsibility for the university, and the matters in the motion fall under Board and Administration authority.
- General Bylaw grants the president “general management and direction of the business and affairs of the corporation”
- Legislation prevent consultation with Council on human resource matters
- If passed, the motion would be hortatory and non-binding.

Based on these grounds, the Chair ruled the Tabled Motion Out of Order. A 49-minute discussion ensued.

Point of Order

Motion: Moved by D. Silva, seconded by B. Patton, to challenge the Chair’s ruling on the deferred Motion.

The University Secretary noted the appropriate process be that the rational provided by the mover required a response from the Chair. The Chair clarified that the units in question support programs generally and do not fall under Council’s purview.

Vote: CARRIED

Referring to Council’s By-law (1.2 a-g Consultation by the Board), discussion on friendly amendments ensued:

- Use of word “oversight” instead of “approval”
- Use “major financial decisions” instead of “carries both financial and academic implications”
- Given the best practice of motions first going through a Council Committee, it’s worth it for us to go through this motion in fine detail to go through steps of evaluation of choices being made and in terms of how it impacts the collegium

- Many iterations of friendly amendments were proposed:

  “Going forward, be it resolved that any major institutional decision at King’s University College which carries major financial implications that directly impacts academic programming must be presented to Academic Council before it can be recommended.” However, clarification was sought on the use of “directly” as since we are in the business of developing the whole person which means that things coming from Student Affairs would now go to Council

The University Secretary noted that the Deferred Motion had a mover and seconder, now with several friendly amendments proposed. He noted that Bourinot's Rules recommends notice of new substantive motions and that they way other Senates including Western approach new business is for an issue to be introduced in one meeting, referred to the appropriate committee for consideration, potential wordsmithing of a motion, and report to Council at the next meeting.

A. Meek agreed to accept the amendments, adding that she would be happy to defer it, but not to September.

- Responding to a question about the academic governance review and whether the above timelines could be met, the University Secretary shared that he has yet to see the feedback and would recommend deferring the Referred Motion to the Governance and Nominating Committee for discussion/review
- Members supported deferring the motion to Governance and Nominating Committee for review and inviting those involved in crafting it to speak, aiding in wordsmithing.

Motion: Moved by L. Melnyk Gribble, seconded by B. Lovie, to defer and refer the Deferred Motion to the Governance and Nominating Committee.
Vote: Carried

6.0 Reports

6.1 President

R. Ventresca, President (Interim), shared his perspective from his role as Vice-President Academic Dean and 25 years as faculty member and student. He outlined challenges and emphasized the importance of good governance practices, noting that healthy disagreements are beneficial. He called for a review of academic and operational sides and emphasized the need for unifying vision for institutional coherence. He highlighted King's recent challenges, including incivility, and the need for timely, transparent decisions to address financial challenges and protect reserves.

R. Ventresca stressed the importance of transparency and collaboration, noting that each group must have the information relevant to their authority in order to make informed decisions. He acknowledged previous governance issues, such as budget approvals based on inaccurate assumptions, and emphasized the roles of the Board, Academic Council, and Administration in a healthy governance ecosystem.

The floor was then opened for questions on the President's report. A 9-minute discussion ensued:

- In response to a question about the Land Use Analysis, Rob explained that since the 2019 campus development plan, many changes have occurred, necessitating a new plan. He emphasized the need to assess the value of our assets and gather preliminary information on potential land uses (e.g., development, sale). He also noted that while there are zoning limitations, Administration must take proactive steps in gathering this information without waiting for external direction.
- In response to a question about decision-making bodies, Rob explained that the Board delegates the implementation of its policies to the President. Boards and

Senates govern universities, while Presidents have delegated authority.

6.2 Vice-President and Academic Dean (Interim)

M. Yenson, Vice-President Academic Dean, provided updates, noting that:

- Affiliation talks with Western have resumed. A final agreement is expected by the end of August, followed by approval from Western's Senate, Academic Council and the Board.
- First Year Enrolments now sit at 835 domestic and 88 international and we are trending over optimistic for domestic students at 969. Mark commended the Departments on moving admissions to course registrations!
- We have exhausted our PALS and have reached out to Western for 40 more allocations to use towards additional admits in September and January.

The floor was then opened for questions on the VPAD's report. A 1-minute discussion ensued:

- In response to a question about increased US recruitment, M. Yenson noted that while it's challenging to implement in 1.5 months, they are addressing it on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 King's University Council Students' Council Report

B. Lovie, President, KUCSC, shared that a formal policy will be submitted to the London Transit Commission next week. Braedan added that they aim to involve anyone who would benefit from increased transit at King's and welcomed interest. He also offered to sit in on any Committees without student representatives until elections are held and encouraged contact for participation.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Governance and Nominations Committee

M. Yenson, Committee Chair, explained that to accommodate well-earned vacations and given that many upcoming items would likely be progress reports "for information," he recommended keeping the motion as is, despite earlier discussions. A 2-minute discussion ensued:

- In response to the statement that this motion presupposes there are no motions coming from members to Academic Council, Mark replied that Motions typically come through committees, not from the floor.

Motion: Moved and seconded by the Governance and Nominations Committee, that Academic Council withdraw its request to meet in August and that the next Academic Council meeting be held in September.
Vote: **CARRIED**

8.0 The Unanimous Consent Agenda

Motion: Moved by B. Lowie, seconded by J. Preston, to receive the reports submitted by the Educational Policy Committee, the Planning and Priorities Committee, and the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee, shared for information.
Vote: **CARRIED**

9.0 New Business

Responding to the inquiry about the Foundation Year Program (FYP), G. Broad confirmed he was the primary instigator behind its cancellation, citing low registration (only 9 students) and operational challenges. Despite suggestions to keep it, the program faced too much friction, and with C. Clausius' departure, it was no longer feasible to continue with dedicated faculty. The FYP was intended as a test case for a core curriculum.

- A member shared a parent's frustration over the FYP being paused after their student declined other university offers to join the program.

Following the Call for Nominations (May 28, 2025) and Election Updates (July 15, 2025 and July 24, 2025), the following members have been nominated by Academic Council to serve on Presidential Search Advisory Committee:

- One Professional Officer Member of the Board, nominated by Academic Council:
  - **Amna Wasty**
- One Non-Academic Staff Member of the Board, nominated by Academic Council:
  - **Deanna Bond**
- Three faculty members from Academic Council:
  - **Graham Broad**
  - **Felipe Rodrigues**
  - **Thomas Tieku**
- One senior administrator or dean from Academic Council:
  - **Joe Henry**
- One student member of Academic Council:
  - **Braedan Lovie**

Motion: Moved by A Larkin, seconded by J Newman, to confirm Academic Council's nominees for Presidential Selection Advisory Committee.
Vote: CARRIED

10.0 Adjournment

Motion: Moved by B. Lovie, seconded by M. Penner, to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 p.m.
Vote: **CARRIED**

Robert Ventresca,
Chair

Paul Wilton,
University Secretary