

Nipissing University
Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting
February 10, 2023
2:30 p.m.
Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference

Members Present:

K. Wamsley (Chair), C. Richardson, C. Sutton, B. Law, C. Mady, P. Maher, P. Radia, D. Iafrate, N. Black

N. Colborne, S. Connor, J. Dech, H. Earl, R. Gendron, A. Hatef, K. Lucas, C. McFarlane, J. Murton, G. Phillips, S. Renshaw, M. Saari, S. Srigley, N. Stevens, L. Thielen-Wilson, M. Tuncali, R. Vernescu, R. Wenghofer, S. Winters

J. Allison, C. Anyinam, A. Armenakyan, J. Barker, G. Brown, C. Greco, D. Hay (Deputy Speaker), R. Hoffman, T. Horton, T. McParland, J. Muterera, L. Peachey, P. Ravi, G. Raymer, T. Sibbald (Speaker), R. Vanderlee

C. Irwin, O. Pokorny

S. Fiddler

S. Pecoskie-Schweir, J. Gagne

Absent With Regrets:

L. Chen, L. Sinclair, R. McEntee, H. Panchal, C. Phillips

The Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

Approval of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of: February 10, 2023

Motion 1: Moved by R. Gendron, seconded by S. Winters that the agenda of the Senate meeting of February 10, 2023, be approved.
CARRIED

Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of: January 13, 2023

Motion 2: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by S. Winters that the minutes of the Senate meeting of January 13, 2023, be adopted.
CARRIED

Reading and Disposing of Communications

Senator Richardson shared well wishes to Dr. Pavlina Radia, Dean, Arts & Science, as she moves to a new position as Provost and Vice-President, Academic at the University of Winnipeg.

Reports From Other Bodies

The President provided a detailed report which is appended to these minutes, highlighting a number of initiatives, including continued advocacy efforts with the Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities and the ongoing strategic planning process, which continues to see excellent engagement from various constituents.

The Provost and Vice-President Academic and Research (Interim) provided a report. The report is attached to the minutes.

The Vice-President Finance and Administration provided a report. The report is attached to the minutes.

The Alumni Advisory Board representative provided a report. The report is attached to the minutes.

The Joint Board/Senate Committee on Governance met on January 24, 2023, and was chaired by Senator S. Srigley. A brief history of the committee's work was reviewed for new and returning members.

The NUSU President provided a report. The report and an amended update are attached to the minutes.

Question Period

In response to a request for the rationale of cutting some Spring/Summer classes that seem to make a profit, the PVPAR spoke to the additional cost of program delivery when part-time instructors are utilized, particularly if students could be registered within courses already administered by full-time faculty. A lengthy discussion occurred, with major themes including the importance of faculty renewal, ensuring a balanced budget and more in depth consideration with respect to course creation. The PVPAR concluded the discussion by stressing the complexity of the issue, noting that there are different needs and challenges throughout all departments.

A question was raised around the process for program changes, specifically, if the University will be weighing profitability versus academic need for programming. The PVPAR stated that work is underway to determine what data will be used to provide targets for sustainability. It is expected these conversations will take place at AQAPC and will include both fiscal and academic sustainability measures. In response to a question about tenure and tenure-track faculty members, the PVPAR reiterated that changes to programs will not result in a loss of tenure and tenure-track faculty members.

Additional questions were addressed, including an inquiry about the University's strategy to convert applications to acceptances. The Registrar spoke to the improvements made to tracking data of different modes and touchpoints with specific students. Recruitment continues to work closely with marketing to assess what is working/has worked, and how to best market ourselves in an ever-changing environment. She also highlighted the many opportunities for potential and incoming students to engage with faculty.

Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils

Senate Executive Committee

- Motion 3: Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded by N. Stevens that the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated February 2, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

Academic Curriculum Committee

- Motion 4: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by C. McFarlane that the Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated January 9, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

Faculty of Arts and Science

Classical Studies and Modern Languages

Non-substantive:

That the course title for CLAS 2206 be changes as outlined in the attached document.

- Motion 5: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate consider motions 7-13 as an omnibus motion.
CARRIED
- Motion 6: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by M. Tuncali that Senate approved motions 7-13 as an omnibus motion.
CARRIED
- Motion 7: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 2606 – Love, Sex, and Eroticism in Ancient Greek and Roman Literature as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 8: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 2607 – The Trojan War as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 9: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 3616 – Christian and Pagan Literature and Culture in the Roman Empire as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 10: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 3626 – Plato’s Closet Dramas: Desire, Deceit, and Performance in the Platonic Dialogues as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 11: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 3636 – Empire and Resistance in Ancient Greece and Rome as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 12: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 4446 – Seminar in Ancient History as outlined in the attached document.
- Motion 13: That Senate approve the creation of CLAS 4456 – Seminar in Ancient Greek and Roman Literature as outlined in the attached document.
Motions 7-13, as omnibus, CARRIED
- Motion 14: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve the program requirements for the Honours Specialization in Classics be changed as outlined in the attached document.
CARRIED

Motion 15: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve the program requirements for the Specialization in Classics be changed as outlined in the attached document.
CARRIED

Motion 16: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve the program requirements for the Major in Classics be changed as outlined in the attached document.
CARRIED

Non-substantive:

The Classical Studies courses be banked as outlined in the attached document.

Non-substantive:

The Classical Studies courses be unbanked as outlined in the attached document.

Motion 17: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve the Classical Studies program be changed as outlined in the attached document.
CARRIED

English

Motion 18: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by S. Winters that Senate approve the creation of ENGL 2156 "Drama: Performance and Pedagogy" as outlined in the attached document.
CARRIED

Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)

Motion 19: Moved by C. Richardson seconded by R. Wenghofer that the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated January 20, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

By-laws and Elections Committee

Motion 20: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by D. Hay that the Report of the By-Laws and Elections Committee dated January 19, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

Honorary Degrees Committee

Motion 21: Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded by C. McFarlane that the Report of the Honorary Degrees Committee dated February 1, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

Senate Budget Advisory Committee

Motion 22: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by M. Tuncali that the Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated January 10, 2023, be received.
CARRIED

Teaching and Learning Committee

Motion 23: Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated December 15, 2022 be received.
CARRIED

Amendment of By-Laws

Rationale:

In 2019, the number of Senate committees was reduced to streamline the Senate committee structure as well as the number of members serving on the different committees. It was advised that the GSC continues to meet but is no longer a committee of Senate. It was noted that since this change the GSC has struggled to find consistent, efficient, and appropriate pathways to pass policy and curriculum related changes. Reinstating the GSC will parallel what's happening with the Research Committee. The proposal to move GSC back to a committee of Senate was approved at a GSC meeting.

Motion 24: Moved by D. Hay, seconded by T. Horton that the Senate By-laws be amended to include Article 9.6 Graduate Studies Committee as amended.
CARRIED

9.6 Graduate Studies Committee (GSC):

(a) *Ex Officio* Members:

- (i) Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
- (ii) the Dean of each Faculty, or designate;
- (iii) the Registrar, or designate;
- (iv) the Executive Director of Library Services or designate;
- (v) Graduate Program Coordinators from each graduate program;
- (vi) one (1) graduate student Senator (~~NUSU~~);

(b) Terms of Reference:

- (i) Recommend to Senate the new academic policies, procedures and regulations of the School of Graduate Studies;
- (ii) Advise Senate on the necessary resources and support for graduate studies and to recommend to Senate the introduction of new services or changes to existing services which would enhance the graduate student experience or make the University more attractive to prospective graduate students;
- (iii) Revise and update the regulations and procedures of current graduate programs for harmonization throughout the SGS;
- (iv) Review student admission policies for graduate programs;
- (v) Ensure adherence to time-to-completion requirements;
- (vi) Recommend to Senate changes to graduate curriculum or proposals for new graduate programs;
- (vii) Assist departments in the development of new graduate programs, in compliance with IQAP requirements;
- (viii) Finalize proposals for new programs, including the Business Plan, before submission to AQAPC and Senate;
- (ix) Make recommendations on any matter related to graduate studies to the appropriate Senate Committees (AQAPC, RC);
- (x) Ensure that all existing and new graduate scholarships, medals, bursaries and other awards are consistent with established and approved terms, conditions and criteria;
- (xi) Review the annual report on the School of Graduate Studies' activities; and
- (xii) Establish the criteria for membership in the Graduate Faculty.

And at the exclusion of the graduate student Senator:

- (xiii) Following the periodic appraisal of a program, review and report to Senate any measure that could improve the program;
- (xiv) Review and approve nominations for graduate scholarships (Tri-agency, OGS, others)

Rationale:

Members of the By-laws and Elections Committee discussed a modification to Senate By-laws regarding circumstances as to when the Senate Executive Committee can cancel a Senate meeting.

Motion 25: Moved by D. Hay, seconded by M. Saari that Senate By-Laws Article 6.0(f) be amended as outlined below.
CARRIED

- 6.0 (f) A regular meeting of Senate may be cancelled by the Senate Executive Committee when at least two-thirds (2/3rds) of all Committee members present vote to cancel that Senate meeting if:
- (i) The volume of business submitted for inclusion in the agenda is insufficient to warrant holding the meeting; and
 - (ii) There is no urgent or time-sensitive business requiring disposition prior to the next regular meeting.

New Business

Motion 26: Moved by D. Iafrate, seconded by S. Winters that Senate consider receipt of the Report on Graduation Applicants dated February 6, 2023.
CARRIED

Motion 27: Moved by D. Iafrate, seconded by M. Tuncali that Senate receive the Report of Graduation Applicants dated February 6, 2023.
CARRIED

Motion 28: Moved by D. Iafrate, seconded by M. Tuncali that Senate grant approval to graduate the students listed in the Report on Graduation Applicants dated February 6, 2023.
CARRIED

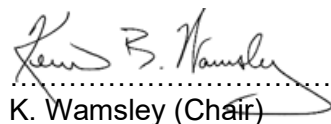
The Deans read out the February 6, 2023, graduands by faculty and degree and congratulated the students and faculty on their achievements.


Motion 29: Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded by D. Hay that Senate move in camera.
CARRIED

Motion 30: Moved by R. Gendron, seconded by M. Tuncali that Senate move out of camera.
CARRIED

Adjournment

Senate was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.


K. Wamsley (Chair)


A. Blaszczyk (Acting Senate Secretary)

President's Senate Report - 10 February 2023

Senators are aware that the university has submitted proposals for funding and has met on multiple occasions with the Deputy Minister and will meet again next week but, at this point, no word from the Province.

Three Senate meetings ago there was a call to inquire about the policy on Academic Bullying – if we had one. Following inquiries and thanks to Jenny in HR, who pointed out that we do in fact have a policy on academic bullying within our Respectful Workplace and Learning Environments policy, p. 5.

Strat planning is moving along at a good pace, with very good participation and engagement. We have completed sessions with the Board of Governors, University Management Group, NUICE, a meeting with Faculty of Arts Executive today, with EPS Council on February 15; 3 meetings with students during their OWL sessions this week; Staff session February 23 and Faculty session March 2. If you haven't already, check out the website as it tracks both our work and our progress and upcoming events. You can expect another level of meetings following these preliminary meetings, in addition to draft reviews.

My thanks to Chris Greco for serving as the Co-Chair of the Equity Action Planning Task Force. As you saw in my call for nominations, emails have gone out to various groups to populate the committee, which I anticipate will begin its work very soon.

Chartwell's has given us notice that they will forfeit the remainder of their contract and we have asked them to provide service until the end of April. We are currently engaging a third party with Canadore to create a Request for Proposals for the food services contract for the entire campus with nuances in service levels required for us. We are confident that we will have a new service provider in place for September. In the meantime, I encourage all of you to take lunch at the Bay Bistro and weekend brunch.

Our annual March Break Open House will be held on Saturday March 18. We have decided to focus our efforts into making conversions this year, although we will still be pleased to speak to grade 11s. Thanks in advance to faculty, staff, and students who will be operating this event. I am pleased to report that applications to Nipissing University are up approximately 18% for 2023-24; more importantly, First Choice applications are up 46% and Second Choice applications are up 6%. Congratulations to our recruitment team, marketing team, admissions team and to our schools and departments for doing their best to attract students. We will be working very hard to convert these applications into registrations.

Many thanks to Hilary Earl for organizing this year's Undergraduate Research event on March 24 evening and during the day on Saturday March 25, and to Barbi Law and her team for their work on Research Month. More coming on the 3 minute thesis and Faculty research celebrations. But for March 24-25, our undergrads will be presenting their posters and will engage in panel discussions. It is a great time to celebrate research at Nipissing and I encourage everyone to attend.

Next Thursday February 16 at 6:00pm the Equity and Diversity Committee of NUFA presents Dr. Denice O'Neil Green, who will be discussing how post secondary institutions can move EDI forward in meaningful ways – it is a virtual event that you can attend from home or join us in Room 200. Nipissing University and Canadore College are also sponsoring the event.

Lastly, I had a conversation with an international graduate student last week who said that he was so thankful for the NUSU food bank and what it provides to our students in need. NUSU reports that food bank use is up 5 fold from last year. So, please pay attention to the list of most-wanted and appropriate items and please give generously to the food bank, whether you drop off food directly or if you provide money for food purchases.

February 10, 2023 Senate Report
Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research (Interim)

1. Work continues to finalize the academic structure for the upcoming year.
 - The Dean of Arts and Science and the Dean of Education and Professional Studies will remain interim.
 - The search for the Associate Vice-President of Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies is ongoing.
2. Discussion of the Academic Plan will continue at the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee.
3. Plans are ongoing for the Open House in March
 - The focus will be on conversion.
 - Slightly different format with staff and faculty in their offices and classrooms.
 - A picture of Life as a Laker.
4. Research Month
 - March is Research Month and there are a number of events being planned. A full schedule of talks, workshops, and other events for students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty is forthcoming.
 - Please save the date for March 2nd for the kick off of Research Month with NU 360. We are still looking for faculty to share their research at this event (contact research@nipissingu.ca for information).
 - The annual Undergraduate Research Conference will be on campus March 24th-25th and we hope that faculty will support this event and encourage their students to participate.
 - We will close the month with the 3MT event on March 30th.

Senate Report
Vice-President, Finance & Administration
February 10, 2023

2023/24 Budget Cycle Update

Budget holders have been provided preliminary budgets and they have until January 25th to submit any budget requests. Integrated Budget Committee will be meeting with budget holders to review budgets in the first few weeks of February in preparation for the budget presentation to the Audit & Finance Committee of the Board of Governors on April 17, 2023. As we have not been apprised of changes to the provincial tuition framework, this will be a difficult budget process.

Credit Rating

Please see attached a copy of our DBRS Morning Star Credit Rating. Our current rating is BBB with a negative trend. Rating is supported by relatively low debt, the absence of unfunded pension liabilities and significant financial support by the Province. The negative trend reflects ongoing deficits which are eroding expendable net assets, and lack of available liquidity (or cash) especially in light of the Line of Credit being temporarily restricted. A positive rating action is possible if we have improved access to internal or external liquidity and return to sustainable operating surpluses to rebuild balance sheet flexibility.

Government Advocacy

Regular meetings have been held with representatives from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. These discussions center around our current financial position, within the context of the new Financial Accountability Framework. President Wamsley has also been advocating directly with the Minister and our MPP, Vic Fedeli as well.

Bookstore Update

In response to a question posed at the January 13, 2023 Senate meeting, Assistant Vice-President, Finance & Infrastructure, Renee Hacquard, contacted the Manager of the Bookstore who indicated the following:

- Long lines were only for a day or two at the beginning of the winter start-up which is normal for this time of year.
- They've have implemented the practice of having students line up outside the store to allow for better traffic flow inside the store.
- The doors were locked but only in cases when the store was full for tours of students making purchases. Once the tours cleared, the store reopened to all.
- They ran into problems with the tills at the beginning of winter start-up, as well as staffing shortages which lowered the number of students they could assist and is why capacity was limited, but Lori stressed that it was not limited to one student only.
- Current sales are low for this time of year; she thought it might be due to e-books, but does not know for certain.

Finally, we do not have a campus policy regarding accessibility to areas of campus during business hours. We will continue to work with the bookstore management to improve the student experience. Please notify Renee Hacquard directly of any complaints that are brought forward.

Rating Report

Nipissing University

DBRS Morningstar

December 13, 2022

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Rating

Debt	Rating	Rating Action	Trend
Issuer Rating	BBB	New Rating	Negative

Rating Rationale

On December 8, 2022, DBRS Limited (DBRS Morningstar) assigned an Issuer Rating of BBB with a Negative trend to Nipissing University (Nipissing or the University). Nipissing's credit profile is supported by the institution's relatively low debt burden and significant financial support provided by the Province of Ontario (the Province or Ontario; rated AA (low) with a Stable trend by DBRS Morningstar) through operating grants and extraordinary funding envelopes. The University's small size, program concentration, and medium-term refinancing risk constrain the rating. The Negative trend reflects the University's ongoing budget imbalances, which continue to erode expendable resources, and lack of available liquidity.

In 2021–22, the University posted a consolidated deficit of \$4.5 million, or 5.6% of revenues. The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in significant operating challenges for the University amid limited flexibility to increase revenues or adjust expenses without drastic reduction in student services and/or programming. Although some revenues returned in 2021–22, longer term headwinds to financial sustainability persist.

For 2022–23, Nipissing's budget points to a consolidated deficit of \$3.2 million. Management has indicated the year-to-date (YTD) financial performance is tracking close to budget. While tuition fees from domestic enrolment are tracking slightly below budget, this has been mostly offset by higher-than-expected tuition from international students. The University continues to manage expenditures close to budget with higher utility costs being offset by staff vacancies.

For the first time, Nipissing's budget includes a multi-year outlook that points to gradually declining deficits before reaching a near-balanced position by 2024–25 (on an operating fund basis). This assumes no increase in government grants, but does assume increases in domestic tuition fees and further growth in international enrolment. Absent a sustained increase in government funding and/or international enrolment, along with the ability to increase tuition fees for domestic students, the University would likely need to undertake meaningful cost reduction measures or risk the continuation of sizable deficits that could exhaust available liquidity in the near to medium term.

Nipissing's overall debt level is considered low in relation to other DBRS Morningstar-rated peers, although with no sinking fund, there remains considerable refinancing risk in 2027–28, when the majority of Nipissing's debt comes due. With no further debt anticipated, DBRS Morningstar projects a decline in debt to \$38.4 million (including guaranteed debt) in 2022–23, further declining to \$35.4 million by 2024–25. This equates to debt per full-time equivalent (FTE) of \$8,325 in 2022–23, and \$7,687 by 2024–25, assuming relatively stable enrolment. Nipissing's persistently weak operating performance and depletion of expendable resources, raise concerns about how liquidity needs will be met beyond 2022–23.

Absent an improvement in operating performance and access to liquidity, a negative rating action is possible as expendable resources could be exhausted over the near to medium term. A positive rating action would necessitate improved access to internal or external liquidity and/or return to sustainable operating surpluses and rebuilding balance sheet flexibility.

Financial Information

	For the year ended April 30				
	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Consolidated operating result (adjusted; \$ millions)	(4.5)	(4.0)	(1.9)	(4.1)	(2.4)
Surplus to revenue (five-year rolling average; %)	(4.2)	(3.4)	(2.8)	(3.5)	(3.7)
Debt per FTE (\$)	8,653	9,296	8,143	8,817	9,195
Expendable resources to debt (%)	13.9	21.8	31.8	31.3	33.3
Interest coverage ratio (times)	-	-	1.7	-	1.3

Issuer Description

Nipissing received its charter as an independent university in 1992. Located in North Bay, Ontario, Nipissing is a small northern university with approximately 4,600 FTEs. It is a primarily undergraduate institution with a strong focus on education and nursing programs, but also offers a range of arts, science, and professional programs.

Rating Considerations

Strengths

1. High level of government funding and support

Universities are a critical component of the public sector. Access to high-quality post-secondary education remains a priority for Ontario. The Province provides or controls a large share of the university revenue and has intervened in the University's affairs in the past to limit deterioration in operating results and to address other concerns.

2. No unfunded pension liabilities

Most Ontario universities have defined benefit pension plans. In contrast, Nipissing has a defined contribution pension plan for most of its employees, which alleviates the risk of meeting future benefit payments for retired employees or making special payments to eliminate funding deficiencies. Some of Nipissing's faculty members participate in the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTTP).

3. Moderate debt burden

Nipissing has a relatively low amount of debt outstanding in the form of amortizing bank loans and a guarantee on a Student Centre loan. DBRS Morningstar includes guaranteed debt in its measure of university debt. At April 30, 2022, the University had \$39.8 million in debt, or \$8,653 per FTE. The debt burden is low for the assigned ratings and Nipissing has no immediate plans for additional borrowing.

Challenges

1. Limited control of revenue and fixed cost base

Canadian universities have limited control over their main revenue sources—tuition fees and government grants. In recent years, the Province has implemented changes to the tuition fee framework for domestic students in regulated programs. As a result, Nipissing is operating in an environment of frozen tuition rates and fixed operating grants. Consequently, University budgeting is difficult because the underlying cost pressures are decoupled from the University's revenue drivers. Canadian universities' expense bases are largely fixed and growing, reflecting their tenured faculty, unionized support staff, externally mandated student aid requirements, and large infrastructure footprints. Taken together, this dynamic creates management challenges and slows the speed by which universities can adapt to changes in provincial policy.

2. Weak operating performance and strained liquidity

Operating performance has been weak for many years and Nipissing has a structural budget deficit, which is reflected in an average deficit-to-revenue ratio of 4.2% over the past five years. The history of weak operating results has translated into a relatively weak balance sheet. Net assets continue to fall, while the University's expendable resources amounted to just \$5.5 million, or 13.9% of debt, at April 30, 2022. TD Bank has informed the University that its line of credit is no longer available, further restricting the University's access to liquidity.

3. Weaker academic profile and program concentration

Nipissing is a small and relatively young university located in a small, more remote population centre. It has a relatively narrow program offering, modest research profile, and does not perform strongly in national and international rankings. The University's program offering is also heavily concentrated in teacher education and nursing. While these offerings have helped to define Nipissing's place in the provincial university network, the concentration exposes the University to changes in provincial policy and to changes in the education and nursing professions that have had a meaningful impact in recent years.

4. Small local catchment area

North Bay is a relatively small community of about 50,000 residents located 3.5 hours from both Toronto and Ottawa. The region is removed from larger urban centres with the strong local demographic profiles that would help to underpin stronger enrolment dynamics.

5. Less developed financial management framework

Nipissing's financial management framework is less developed than those of other DBRS Morningstar-rated universities. An independent operational review commissioned by the Province in 2015 identified weaknesses in the University's financial management and reporting practices. Since then, the University has taken several steps to strengthen the financial framework and internal controls; however, in a recent value-for-money audit conducted by the Auditor General of Ontario, Nipissing continues to fall short of best practices in certain areas of financial management and governance.

Operating Performance

2021–22 Results

In 2021–22, the University posted a consolidated deficit of \$4.5 million, or 5.6% of revenues. The coronavirus pandemic resulted in significant operating challenges for the University amid limited flexibility to increase revenues or adjust expenses without drastic reduction in student services and/or programming. Although some revenues returned in 2021–22, longer term headwinds to financial sustainability persist.

Total revenues increased by 5.7% during the year, mainly led by growth in tuition revenue and resumption of some ancillary activities. Tuition revenue was higher (+5.2%) resulting from higher overall enrolment (+3.9% year over year (YOY) to 4,599 FTEs). Domestic enrolment in many programs remains above the negotiated corridor for core operating grants. However, government grants are in line with predetermined funding levels with modest extraordinary supports to offset some pandemic-driven operating challenges. Given heavy dependence on domestic demand and limited international enrolment, the University has limited flexibility to increase tuition revenue while the domestic tuition fee freeze remains in place. Revenue from ancillary services rebounded (+107.9%) with the resumption of student activity on campus. While still lower than pre-pandemic levels, donations and other grants grew (+146.9%) in 2021–22. These increases offset revenue declines in other revenue (-4.6%), amortization of deferred capital contributions (-4.6%), and investment income (-16.4%).

In 2021–22, total expenditures grew by 6.1% as spending across most categories rose. Salaries and benefits expense was up by 2.8% YOY and operating and research costs increased by 13.5% YOY. The University spent the highest amount of student aid in many years, although some spending was likely flowthrough government grants. Occupancy costs were up by 44.4% YOY and interest costs marginally increased by 0.4% YOY. Amortization expense declined by 3.8% YOY.

Ongoing operating losses have weighed on the University's net asset position in recent years, with the latter declining to \$14.5 million in 2021–22 (from \$16.1 million as at prior fiscal year-end). The University's net asset position has weakened considerably over the past decade, having fallen from a peak of \$35.6 million of 2012–13.

2022–23 Budget

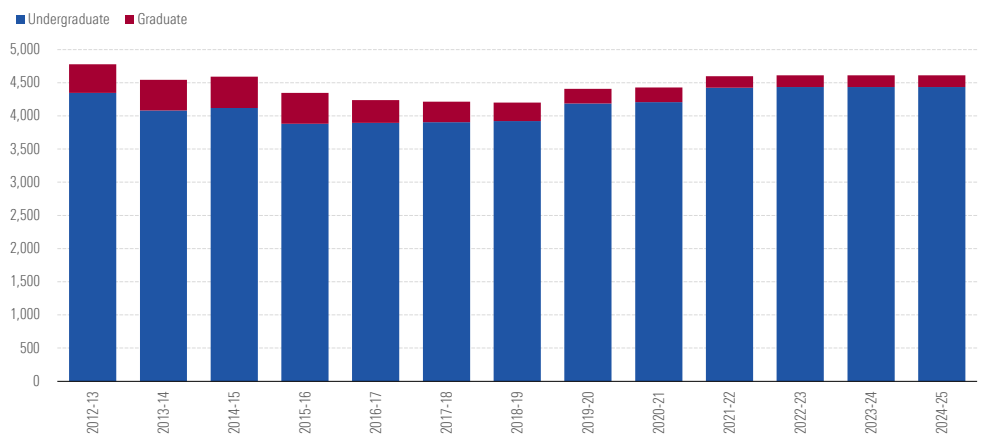
Nipissing's annual operating budget is prepared on a modified cash basis. Its scope differs from the University's audited financial statements but typically accounts for about 85% of revenue and expense.

Nipissing's 2022–23 budget projected an operating deficit of \$1.4 million, or \$0.8 million after transfers from internally restricted reserves. This year's budget also includes a forecast of consolidated results which points to a consolidated deficit of \$3.2 million.

On a consolidated basis, total revenues are projected to grow by 2.1% in 2022–23. This reflects Nipissing's expectation for limited enrolment growth but an improvement in contributions from ancillary operations from the return to in-person instruction and increased residence occupancy. The budget forecasts enrolment of 4,610 FTEs, representing an increase of just 0.2% YOY. The University anticipates reaching the enrolment cap for its Bachelor of Education program, although this will be offset by a reduction in Collaborative Nursing enrolment as the partnership with Canadore College is being dissolved. The University will continue to target modest growth in international enrolment. Operating grants are projected to increase slightly, helped by a one-time grant for northern institutions and increases to the nursing grants. Ancillary revenues are forecast to grow by almost 80%, reflecting a full return to campus and improved residence occupancy.

For 2022–23, consolidated expenses are budgeted to be \$84.5 million, down 0.7% compared with the prior year. The University has made targeted investments in revenue-generating areas including international student recruitment and support, external relations, and extended learning, which are expected to bear fruit in subsequent years and support efforts to return to a balanced operating position. Meanwhile, increased salary and benefit costs, largely due to collective agreement provisions, will add further cost pressure. Agreements with faculty and contract staff have expired, potentially adding further upward pressure to expenses. Negotiations may be further complicated by a recent Ontario Superior Court decision to strike down the government's Bill 124, which previously capped wage increases at 1% annually. These increases are being offset by reductions in nonstaff expenses, including reduced scholarships, and bursaries.

Exhibit 1 Total Enrolment (FTEs)



Sources: Nipissing University and DBRS Morningstar.

Operating Outlook

Management has indicated the YTD financial performance is tracking close to budget. While tuition fees from domestic enrolment is tracking slightly below budget, this has been mostly offset by higher-than-expected tuition from international students. The University continues to manage expenditures close to budget with higher utility costs being offset by staff vacancies.

For the first time, Nipissing's budget includes a multi-year outlook which points to gradually declining deficits before reaching a near-balanced position by 2024–25 (on an operating fund basis). This assumes no increase in government grants, but does assume increases in domestic tuition fees and further growth in international enrolment.

DBRS Morningstar understands that the University continues to advocate for increased provincial funding to address unfunded domestic enrolment, low average tuition for Nipissing's programs, and perceived inequitable distribution of the Northern Grant.

Absent a sustained increase in government funding and/or international enrolment, along with the ability to increase tuition fees for domestic students, the University would likely need to undertake meaningful cost reduction measures or risk the continuation of sizable deficits that could exhaust available liquidity in the near to medium term.

Auditor General of Ontario - 2022 Value-for-Money Audit

The Auditor General of Ontario recently completed a value-for-money audit of four Ontario universities. Below, is a condensed summary of the findings:

- Nipissing has not effectively monitored the profitability of ancillary services.
- The University manages endowment and externally restricted funds using separate ledgers but funds are commingled with cash from operations.
- The AGO found that Nipissing was losing money overall on its academic programming prior to the pandemic, but has not adjusted its program offerings.
- Capital projects may not always have a comprehensive business case presented to the Board when decisions about whether or not to proceed with a financial investment are being made.
- Board governance is not aligned with best practices on size, composition and term limits. The Board may lack key competencies; succession planning; and one or more oversight functions for effective governance.

While these shortcomings are of concern, DBRS Morningstar believes these factors are already evident in its assessment of the University's overall financial health. DBRS Morningstar will continue to monitor how the University responds to the AGO's concerns.

Capital

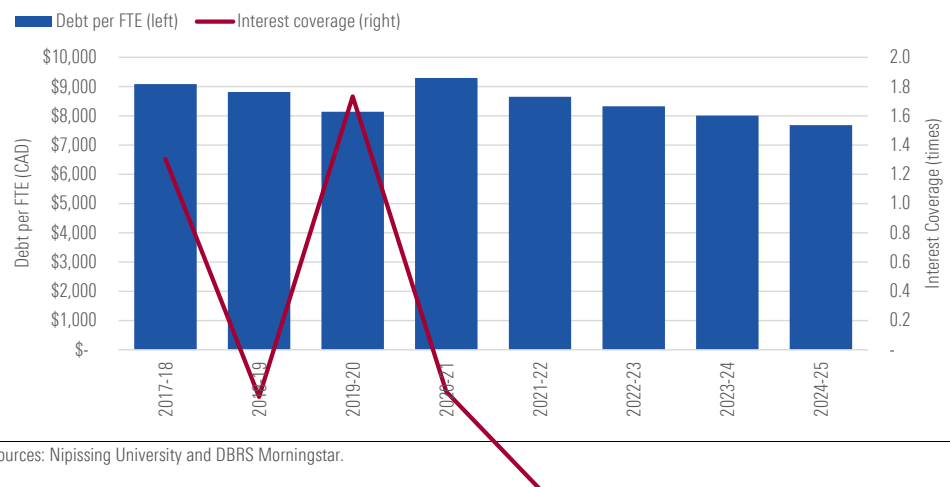
Nipissing's capital program remains very limited because of past weakness in enrolment and ongoing budget pressures. The University is primarily reliant on provincial Facilities Renewal Program (FRP) funding to address deferred maintenance as there is no room in the operating budget for additional contributions. In 2021–22, capital expenditure (capex) was just \$0.5 million, compared with a five-year average of \$1.1 million. With annual capex running well short of amortization expense, this suggests that the University's asset base is being depleted.

In February 2022, the Province announced \$1.6 million in FRP funding to be used for a new Nursing Simulation space, roof, and HVAC replacements.

Despite being a relatively young institution, budgetary constraint and limited capital spending have resulted in growth in deferred maintenance. The most recent estimate for academic and ancillary operations was \$57.9 million, while the facilities condition index was 0.26. This is materially weaker than the provincial average.

Debt and Liquidity

Exhibit 2 Debt per FTE and Interest Coverage



Sources: Nipissing University and DBRS Morningstar.

Nipissing's total debt stood at \$39.8 million as at April 30, 2022, down from \$41.2 million the prior year. Nipissing has guaranteed a loan of \$6.5 million for a 25-year term incurred by the NUSU to construct the new student centre. DBRS Morningstar includes guaranteed debt in its measure of university debt. After incorporating amortization of existing debt and a modest increase in enrolment, this results in debt per FTE of \$8,653, down from \$9,296 the prior year. Interest coverage worsened to (1.0) times (x) from (0.3)x in 2021.

In addition to the guaranteed obligation, the University's debt comprises of four amortizing loans with interest rate swaps, which converts the floating-rate loans to fixed-rate loans to hedge against interest volatility in the short term. However, the loans have 10-year terms and 25-year amortization periods, which exposes the University to interest rate risk and refinancing risk.

Nipissing's outstanding loans were valued at \$33.5M as at April 30, 2022 with all four loans set to mature in June 2027. As a result of the University's lack of financial flexibility and poor operating performance over the past years, Nipissing has been requested to enter into a General Security Agreement (GSA) before the end of the calendar year. Furthermore, Nipissing's access to their existing line of credit has been rescinded pending the signature of the GSA.

The University's balance sheet demonstrates a lack of flexibility compared with most other DBRS Morningstar-rated universities as a result of its relatively low net assets and expendable resources as a result of ongoing operating losses. DBRS Morningstar's primary measure of balance sheet strength is expendable resources, which comprises a subset of net assets, including unrestricted net assets, most internally restricted net assets, and internally restricted endowments. Expendable resources declined to approximately \$5.5 million, or 13.9% of total debt, down from \$9.0 million, or 21.8% of debt, the previous year.

Nipissing does not have a defined benefit pension plan. Instead, the University provides a defined contribution pension plan for most of its faculty and staff, and there is a small subset of employees that are members of the OTPP. Contributions to both plans are expensed when due and totalled \$3.2 million in 2021–22. Nonpension employee future benefits liabilities (medical, dental, life insurance) considerably declined to \$5.9 million from \$8.0 million in 2020–21.

Outlook

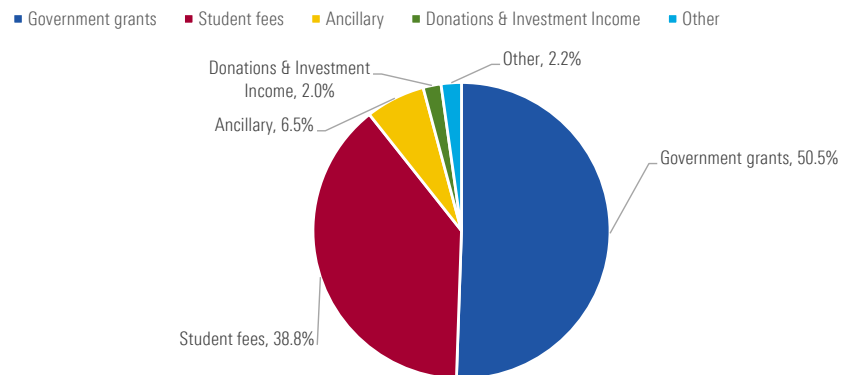
With no further debt anticipated, DBRS Morningstar projects a decline in debt to \$38.4 million (including guaranteed debt) in 2022–23, further declining to \$35.4 million by 2025. This reflects a debt per FTE of \$8,325 in 2022–23 and \$7,687 by 2025. Nipissing has indicated an ability to address near-term cash needs, though it may meet liquidity issues in the upcoming year.

Nipissing's current bank debt consists of four amortizing loans which are due in June 2027, exposing the University to refinancing risk in the next five years. Nipissing does not have an internal reserve or a sinking fund designated to pay down long-term debt, and it is estimated that Nipissing will have approximately \$28.0 million of principal due at maturity in 2027–28.

University Funding in Ontario

Canadian universities in the Province generally have three key sources of revenue for their core teaching and research activities: (1) government grants, (2) student fees, and (3) donations and investment income. For Nipissing, these accounted for approximately 94% of total revenue in 2021–22.

Provincial government funding remains one of the primary sources of revenue for universities across the country, although its relative importance remains under pressure in most provinces because of strained finances and competing priorities. Over time, this has led to a gradual shift in the relative shares of revenue provided by operating grants, which have declined, and tuition fees, which have increased.

Exhibit 3 Revenue Breakdown (2021–22)

Sources: Nipissing and DBRS Morningstar.

Government Funding (Provincial and Federal; 50.5%)

Government funding includes operating grants, research grants, and contracts as well as capital grants. Operating grants are the most important and stable revenue source.

The Province and universities signed the new SMA3 that establishes performance-based funding targets for the 2020–21 to 2024–25 fiscal years. This is a change from the previous enrolment-oriented funding model. SMA3 includes a set of 10 performance metrics, with funding consequences for not meeting the negotiated performance targets. In light of pandemic-led operating pressures and the need for funding stability, SMA3 funding remains decoupled from performance targets for the time being.

Research and capital grants are another important source of funding. The federal government typically provides 65% to 75% of all public research funding, whereas the Province provides the bulk of capital funding.

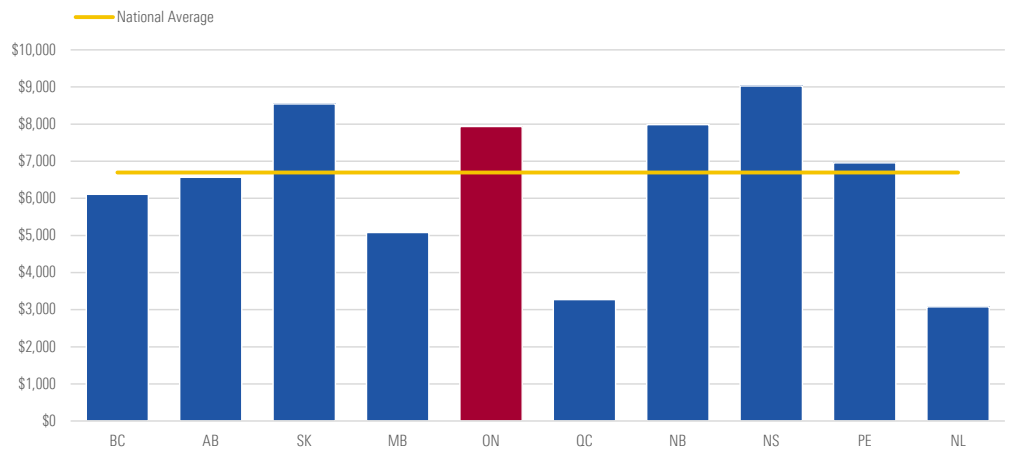
Research revenue is recognized as deferred contributions on the statement of financial position until spent on research, at which time it is recognized as income.

Student Fees (38.8%)

In 2019, the Province announced a revised tuition fee framework for regulated domestic programs at Ontario universities and colleges. The framework required Ontario universities to reduce tuition fees for domestic funding (eligible programs) by 10% in 2019–20 and to maintain domestic-funding-eligible program tuition fees at this level for the 2020–21 academic year. The tuition freeze was extended through the 2021–22 academic year. Although the tuition freeze continues into the 2022–23 year, universities are allowed to increase fees up to 5% for out-of-province students, which Nipissing has done.

International student fees are not regulated by the Province and are generally set to recover the full costs of international student enrolment and may also provide some offset to revenue declines from the current domestic tuition freeze.

Exhibit 4 Average Canadian Undergraduate Tuition Fees



Source: Statistics Canada.

Donations and Investment Income (2.0%)

Unrestricted donations and investment income, recognized on the statement of operations, represent a modest portion of the University’s total revenue. This primarily consists of investment income earned on operating reserve balances throughout the year. Earnings on restricted endowments are recognized as increases in deferred contributions and are not captured on the statement of operations until they are spent, at which point they are reported as part of investment income for restricted purposes.

Environmental, Social, and Governance Credit Risk Considerations

Environmental

There were no environmental factors that had a relevant or significant effect on the credit analysis. For more details about which environmental factors could have an effect on the credit analysis, please refer to the following checklist.

Social

There were no social factors that had a relevant or significant effect on the credit analysis. For more details about which social factors could have an effect on the credit, please refer to the following checklist.

Governance

There were no governance factors that had a relevant or significant effect on the credit analysis. For more details about which governance factors could have an effect on the credit analysis, please refer to the following checklist.

A description of how DBRS Morningstar considers ESG factors within the DBRS Morningstar analytical framework can be found in the *DBRS Morningstar Criteria: Approach to Environmental, Social, and Governance Risk Factors in Credit Ratings* at <https://www.dbrsmorningstar.com/research/396929/dbrs-morningstar-criteria-approach-to-environmental-social-and-governance-risk-factors-in-credit-ratings>.

ESG Factor	ESG Credit Consideration Applicable to the Credit Analysis: Y/N	Extent of the Effect on the ESG Factor on the Credit Analysis: Relevant (R) or Significant (S)*		
Environmental		Overall:	N	N
Emissions, Effluents, and Waste	Do we consider the costs or risks result, or could result in changes to an issuer's financial, operational, and/or reputational standing?	N	N	N
Carbon and GHG Costs	Does the issuer face increased regulatory pressure relating to the carbon impact of its or its clients' operations resulting in additional costs?	N	N	N
Resource and Energy Management	Does the scarcity of sourcing key resources hinder the production or operations of the issuer, resulting in lower productivity and therefore revenues?	N	N	N
Land Impact and Biodiversity	Is there a financial risk to the issuer for failing to effectively manage land conversion, rehabilitation, land impact, or biodiversity activities?	N	N	N
Climate and Weather Risks	Will climate change and adverse weather events potentially disrupt issuer or client operations, causing a negative financial impact?	N	N	N
Social		Overall:	N	N
Social Impact of Products and Services	Do we consider that the social impact of the issuer's products and services could pose a financial or regulatory risk to the issuer?	N	N	N
Human Capital and Human Rights	Is the issuer exposed to staffing risks, such as the scarcity of skilled labour, uncompetitive wages, or frequent labour relations conflicts that could result in a material financial or operational impact?	N	N	N
	Do violations of rights create a potential liability that can negatively affect the issue's financial wellbeing or reputation?	N	N	N
Human Capital and Human Rights		N	N	N
Product Governance	Does failure in delivering quality products and services cause damage to customers and expose the issuer to financial and legal liability?	N	N	N
Data Privacy and Security	Has misuse or negligence in maintaining private client or stakeholder data resulted, or could result, in financial penalties or client attrition to the issuer?	N	N	N
Occupational Health and Safety	Would the failure to address workplace hazards have a negative financial impact on the issuer?	N	N	N
Community Relations	Does engagement, or lack of engagement, with local communities pose a financial or reputational risk to the issuer?	N	N	N
Access to Basic Services	Does a failure to provide or protect with respect to essential products or services have the potential to result in any significant negative financial impact on the issuer?	N	N	N
Governance		Overall:	N	N
Bribery, Corruption, and Political Risks	Do alleged or actual illicit payments pose a financial or reputational risk to the issuer?	N	N	N
	Are there any political risks that could impact the issuer's financial position or its reputation?	N	N	N
Bribery, Corruption, and Political Risks		N	N	N
Business Ethics	Do general professional ethics pose a financial or reputational risk to the issuer?	N	N	N
Corporate / Transaction Governance	Does the issuer's corporate structure limit appropriate board and audit independence?	N	N	N
	Have there been significant governance failures that could negatively affect the issuer's financial wellbeing or reputation?	N	N	N
Corporate / Transaction Governance		N	N	N
Institutional Strength, Governance, and Transparency (Governments Only)s	Compared with other governments, do institutional arrangements provide a higher or lesser degree of accountability, transparency, and effectiveness?	N	N	N
	Are regulatory and oversight bodies insufficiently protected from inappropriate political influence?	N	N	N
	Are government officials insufficiently exposed to public scrutiny or held to insufficiently high ethical standards of conduct?	N	N	N
Institutional Strength, Governance, and Transparency (Governments Only)s		N	N	N
Consolidated ESG Criteria Output:		N	N	N

* A Relevant Effect means that the impact of the applicable ESG risk factor has not changed the rating or rating trend on the issuer. A Significant Effect means that the impact of the applicable ESG risk factor has changed the rating or trend on the issuer.

Statement of Operations (Adjusted)

(\$ thousands)	For the year ended April 30				
	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Total operating revenue	80,522	76,184	82,796	82,535	83,056
Total expenditures	85,075	80,152	84,701	86,599	85,496
Operating result (adjusted)	(4,523)	(3,968)	(1,905)	(4,064)	(2,440)
Nonrecurring revenues (expenditures) ¹	-	-	-	19	2,916
Change in fair value of interest rate swaps	-	-	-	-	377
Consolidated Balance as Reported	(4,523)	(3,968)	(1,905)	(4,045)	853
Revenue					
Tuition fees	31,257	29,709	28,826	29,095	28,652
Government grants	39,238	38,840	42,051	40,341	42,107
Ancillary services	5,228	2,515	5,809	6,053	5,673
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	1,477	1,532	1,519	1,532	1,887
Other revenue	1,779	1,864	2,756	3,389	3,132
Donations and other grants	200	81	585	717	483
Investment income	1,373	1,643	1,250	1,408	1,122
Total revenue	80,552	76,184	82,796	82,535	83,056
Expense					
Salaries and benefits	58,658	57,071	58,494	57,720	56,254
Operating and research	11,206	9,875	13,151	13,513	12,687
Student aid	4,768	4,481	4,736	4,497	4,432
Occupancy costs	6,022	4,171	3,726	6,178	6,443
Interest charges	995	991	999	1,085	1,705
Amortization	3,426	3,563	3,595	3,606	3,975
Total expense	85,075	80,152	84,701	86,599	85,496
Capital expenditures	534	213	831	874	2,824

¹ One time/nonrecurring items. In 2017–18, gain on disposition of assets.

Statement of Cash Flow (Adjusted)

(DBRS Morningstar-adjusted)	For the year ended April 30				
	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Consolidated balance as reported	(4,523)	(3,968)	(1,905)	(4,045)	853
Employee future benefit expense	629	662	561	556	494
Amortization of capital assets	3,426	3,563	3,595	3,606	3,975
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	(1,477)	(1,532)	(1,519)	(1,532)	(1,887)
Other noncash adjustments	-	-	-	(19)	(2,916)
Cash flow from operations	(1,945)	(1,275)	732	(1,434)	519
Change in working capital	(691)	5,140	850	(2,898)	(1,533)
Operating cash flow after working capital	(2,636)	3,865	1,582	(4,332)	(1,014)
Net capital expenditures	(534)	(213)	(831)	(874)	(2,824)
Free cash flow	(3,170)	3,652	751	(5,206)	(3,838)
Financing activities	(776)	(828)	(283)	(50)	1,473
Investing activities (excluding capex)	4,516	(394)	899	(119)	10,671
Increase (decrease) in cash	570	2,430	1,367	(5,375)	8,306
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	13,296	10,866	9,499	14,874	6,568
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	13,866	13,296	10,866	9,499	14,874

Statement of Financial Position (Adjusted)

Statement of Financial Position (\$ thousands)	As at April 30				
Assets	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Cash and cash equivalents	13,866	13,296	10,866	9,499	14,874
Receivables	2,438	2,831	2,770	4,461	3,584
Investments	26,378	30,894	30,500	31,399	31,261
Capital assets	69,637	72,529	75,879	78,643	81,375
Other assets	845	940	619	794	645
Total assets	113,164	120,490	120,634	124,796	131,739
Liabilities and Deferred Capital Contributions					
Payables and other current liabilities	6,520	6,416	5,080	4,696	7,558
Deferred revenue	6,441	6,273	3,535	3,373	4,117
Deferred contributions	11,784	13,246	11,801	13,651	12,789
Deferred capital contributions	32,499	33,732	35,036	35,805	37,226
Employee future benefits	7,956	10,047	10,132	8,894	6,523
Long-term debt	33,492	34,705	35,881	37,022	38,308
Total liabilities	98,692	104,419	101,465	103,441	106,521
Net Assets					
Unrestricted net assets	(10,335)	(9,457)	(8,215)	(7,111)	(3,393)
Internally restricted	7,903	8,371	9,477	9,814	9,637
Equity in capital assets	4,578	5,024	5,894	6,747	7,332
Endowments	12,326	12,133	12,013	11,905	11,642
Total net assets	14,472	16,071	19,169	21,355	25,218
Total liabilities and net assets	113,164	120,490	120,634	124,796	131,739
Commitments and Other Obligations (\$ thousands)					
Guarantees ¹	6,301	6,461	-	-	-
Capital commitments	-	-	-	-	-
	6,301	6,461	-	-	-

¹ Represents guarantee for Student Centre debt to be recouped through student levy.

DBRS Morningstar-Adjusted Summary Statistics	For the year ended April 30				
	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Total Enrolment (FTE) ¹	4,599	4,428	4,406	4,199	4,215
- Undergraduate	96%	96%	93%	93%	93%
- Graduate	4%	4%	7%	7%	7%
Total annual enrolment change	3.9%	0.5%	4.9%	(0.4%)	(0.5%)
Domestic (headcount, %)	98.5%	99.0%	98.4%	98.7%	98.8%
International (headcount, %)	1.5%	1.0%	1.6%	1.3%	1.2%
Total Employees (Full-time)	419	417	419	431	438
- Faculty & Instructors (Full-time)	173 ²	199	190	194	187
Operating Results (DBRS-adjusted)					
Surplus (deficit) (\$ thousands)	(4,523)	(3,968)	(1,905)	(4,064)	(2,440)
- As % of revenues	(5.6%)	(5.2%)	(2.3%)	(4.9%)	(2.9%)
-5-year average (rolling)	(4.2%)	(3.4%)	(2.8%)	(3.5%)	(3.7%)
Revenue Mix (as % of total DBRS-adjusted revenue)					
- Government funding (federal + provincial)	50.5%	53.0%	52.6%	50.7%	53.0%
- Student fees	38.8%	39.0%	34.8%	35.3%	34.5%
- Ancillary	6.5%	3.3%	7.0%	7.3%	6.8%
- Donation and investment income	2.0%	2.3%	2.2%	2.6%	1.9%
- Other	2.2%	2.4%	3.3%	4.1%	3.8%
Debt and Liquidity Analysis					
Total debt (\$ millions)	39.8	41.2	35.9	37.0	38.3
- Per FTE student (\$)	8,653	9,296	8,143	8,817	9,087
Debt, contingencies & commitments (\$ millions)	47.7	51.2	46.0	45.9	44.8
- Per FTE student (\$)	10,383	11,565	10,442	10,935	10,635
Expendable resources (\$ millions) ³	5.5	9.0	11.4	11.6	12.8
- As % of total debt	13.9%	21.8%	31.8%	31.3%	33.3%
Interest costs as % of total expenditure	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	2.0%
Interest coverage ratio (times)	(1.0)	(0.3)	1.7	(0.3)	1.3
Endowment Funds					
Total market value (\$ millions)	12.3	12.1	12.0	11.9	11.6
- Per FTE student (\$)	2,680	2,740	2,726	2,835	2,762
- Annual change	1.6%	1.0%	0.9%	2.3%	-0.4%

1. Funding eligible full-time equivalent undergraduate and graduate, excluding unfunded students/programs/courses. Presented on a standard credit load basis. Includes continuing education.

2. F2022 full-time faculty positions excludes individuals replacing leaves and sabbaticals.

3. DBRS Morningstar estimate. Includes unrestricted or internally-restricted endowment assets (none at Nipissing), internally-restricted net assets (excluding investment in capital assets and employee future benefits), the unrestricted surplus (deficit), and interest rate swaps.

Rating History

Issuer	Debt	Current	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Nipissing University	Issuer Rating	BBB	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.

Related Research

- *University Applications Grow in Ontario - What Does it Mean for Enrolments?*, February 28, 2022.
- *International Student Recruitment Rebound Hindered by Canada's Visa Processing Backlog*, November 1, 2022.
- *Rating Public Universities*, May 5, 2022.

About DBRS Morningstar

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We rate more than 3,000 issuers and nearly 60,000 securities worldwide, providing independent credit ratings for financial institutions, corporate and sovereign entities, and structured finance products and instruments. Market innovators choose to work with us because of our agility, transparency, and tech-forward approach.

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Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board report to Academic Senate January 2023

Homecoming

Nipissing University's 2022 Homecoming weekend took place from November 18th – 19th, 2022. Overall, we saw an increase in alumni attendance from 2019, but a decrease in student attendance and general engagement overall. A few factors contributed to this including weather, placement within the academic year and a perceived lack of interest. The Nipissing University Homecoming Working Committee debriefed in early December and NUAAB's events sub-committee will come together in February to start planning for 2023. Dates have been set for September 22-24, 2023.

A survey of 2022 Homecoming attendees was completed to solicit feedback. Most folks reported that they would prefer the event to return to the fall, that we diversify the events as part of the weekend, and that we include more alumni exclusive events. Overall, respondents reported that they enjoyed themselves overall. We will consider this feedback as we plan for Homecoming weekend in 2023.

Affinity Partners

TD Insurance has approached the alumni department about a new and exciting offer that will benefit alumni with small business insurance needs. The Alumni Office is learning more about this program and will collaborate with TD Insurance to begin to market this offering to Alumni.

TD Insurance has graciously provided a pair of Raptors tickets to raffle at the upcoming Shoot for Change event. Thank you!

LifeTouch will be on campus for the winter term January 23rd - February 2nd. They will be located in the Owl's Nest for their visit to campus. Last semester had a few hiccups but overall went smoothly.

Our Alumni Student Assistant, Hailly, has been busy working on the affinity comparison document so we can look at the gaps we have in benefits and services. This will help us continue to provide alumni with relevant products and services as a benefit to their membership as a Nipissing alumnus.

Academic Senate Report February 10th, 2023

Food Bank

After the food bank usage increased five times from 2019, there has been an even greater increase since the beginning of January. On average we are seeing 20-30 students a day. NUSU has been requesting food bank items, both physical and monetary. Non-perishable food items and hygiene items can be dropped off to the NUSU Student Centre between the hours of 8:30am and 8:30pm (Monday to Thursday) or 8:30am to 4:30pm (Friday). Monetary donations can be e-transferred to finance@nusu.com with the password being foodbank.

Holiday Cards for Seniors

Students partnered with NUSU to write holiday cards for seniors in the community. Over 300 cards were distributed to groups such as Cassellholme.

International students - January

NUSU held a welcome event for international students who arrived in Canada in January. This included a "Canadian" meal (poutine, beavertails and more), as well as attending the men's hockey game. This event allowed us to create relationships with the students and we have been fortunate to see them at numerous events already.

Icebreaker Series

The Icebreaker series is something new that we have started this academic year. We have organized events that would include different demographics and create opportunities for students to meet new people. This includes speed friending, sexy bingo, board games night, art night and more. We look to continue this next academic year and add even more events.

Academic Concerns

NUSU would like to highlight concerns that students have been bringing to NUSU. This includes:

- Not receiving assignments back in a timely manner
- Not receiving comments on assignments, essays, or tests before the official drop date
- Delays in the submission of final grades which also impacts those who need prerequisites and cannot move forward until grades come in
- Lack of early assignments at the beginning of the semester to get a general standing of where the student is within the course

Although we understand how much work the faculty puts in to each class, we are suggesting



that when planning out assignments, there are a few at the very beginning of class so issues can be addressed and mitigated.

NUSU Student Centre

For any faculty or staff looking to book the NUSU Student Centre, it can be done through the regular Nipissing University room booking form. A virtual walkthrough of the building can also be found at nusu.com/studentcentre.

Night Owls

NUSU has been hosting Night Owls, an event where the NUSU Student Centre is open until midnight. For these evenings, hot chocolate, coffee, tea, snacks and school items are supplied to students for free. There will be twelve Night Owl nights this semester for students. Buses will also be provided to ensure students get home safely.

The dates are:

- February 13th, 14th and 15th
- February 27th, 28th and March 1st
- March 27th, 28th and 29th
- April 3rd, 4th and 5th

North Bay Nugget

Each week, NUSU has been sharing a student profile in the Nugget both online and in print. This can be found [here](#). We have had great feedback from the community who are getting to read all of the great things students are doing and why they chose Nipissing University.

Bay Bistro

The Bay Bistro will be opening up officially in February. For the past month, students, staff and faculty have been able to eat in the restaurant so feedback can be received to form a final menu. Details will be posted on NUSU's social media and we will make sure to send information out to the Board of Governors.

Dr. Pavlina Radia

Congratulations to Dr. Pavlina Radia on her new position as Provost and Vice-President, Academic at the University of Winnipeg. We have appreciated working with Dr. Radia both as Associate Dean and Dean of Arts and Science. Dr. Radia and Dr. Walters have worked hard to have clear and open communication with not just NUSU but with students alike. This has not gone unnoticed and we are grateful for the tireless effort that has gone into this. We wish Dr. Radia all the best in her next chapter.