

Nipissing University
Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting
August 11, 2023
10:30 a.m.
Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference

Members Present:

K. Wamsley (Chair), A. Graff, C. Mady, D. Walters, D. lafrate, N. Black

L. Chen, R. Davis, R. Gendron, G. McCann, S. O'Hagan, G. Phillips, S. Srigley, N. Stevens, L. Thielen-Wilson, S. Winters, H. Zhu

A. Adler, J. Barker, K. Ferguson, C. Greco, D. Hay (Deputy Speaker), T. McParland, G. Raymer, A. Schinkel-Ivy, T. Sibbald (Speaker), M. Sullivan, J. Thornborrow

O. Pokorny, L. Sinclair

R. Hehn

R. McEntee, E. Cooke, H. Panchal, S. Greco

Absent With Regrets:

C. Sutton, B. Law, H. Earl, A. Hatef, J. Murton, S. Renshaw, T. Smith, R. Vernescu, A. Weeks, R. Wenghofer, C. Irwin, T. Horton, P. Millar, J. Muterera, R. Vanderlee, V. Williams, S. Fiddler, P. English

The Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

Approval of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of: August 11, 2023

Motion 1: Moved by N. Black, seconded by S. Winters that the agenda of the Senate meeting of August 11, 2023 be approved.
CARRIED

Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of: July 14, 2023

Motion 2: Moved by D. Hay, seconded by R. Gendron that the minutes of the Senate meeting of July 14, 2023 be adopted.
CARRIED

Business Arising From the Minutes

Following a request, the June 26, 2023, Senate minutes were amended to include the four questions regarding the removal of the ACAD 1601 courses requirement.

Reading and Disposing of Communications

On July 26, 2023, Senate received the following communication from Sarah Hadley on behalf of the Arts and Science Faculty Council meeting:

- Motion: The Arts & Science Faculty Council (July 26, 2023) advises Senate to recommend or not recommend the following list of departmental mergers:
- History, Anthropology, and Ancient Studies
 - Philosophy, Political Science and Economics and Social Welfare
 - Psychology, Sociology, and Child and Family Studies
 - Gender Equality and Social Justice, Religions and Cultures, and Indigenous Studies
 - Fine Arts and English Studies
 - Biology and Chemistry and Geography

Dan Walters, as chair of Faculty Council, followed up with the following summary of the conversation at Faculty Council as Rationale for the motion:

The Senate By-laws Article 10.1 (b) outlines the terms of reference for Faculty Councils; subsection iii states that faculty councils can *make recommendations to Senate, or to an appropriate Senate standing committee on any matter deemed to be of relevant academic concern to the University*. First, the A&S Faculty council deem the restructuring of departments to be a relevant academic concern to the University. Second, A&S Faculty council argues that the process for changing the departmental structure was not followed. Under the Nipissing University Act, Article 22.2(a) the powers of Senate include making *recommendations to the Board respecting the establishment, maintenance, modification or termination of organizational structures such as faculties, schools, institutes, departments, or chairs within the University*. A&S Faculty council argues that without a recommendation from Senate to the Board, the modification of departments did not follow the correct procedures. As such, the A&S Faculty Council put forth a motion for Senate to consider, and recommend or not recommend, the departmental modifications listed above. Third, the A&S Faculty council suggest that the process did not follow the spirit of collegial governance as set out in the Report of the Special Governance Commissions by ignoring the departmental votes against the restructuring.

Members of the Senate Executive Committee voted unanimously that the motion be referred to the Joint Committee to be considered along with the original motion of July 14, 2023. Members were satisfied that the procedural questions raised in the original motion pertain to the motion(s) presented here.

Senate will address this motion when information is communicated from the Joint Committee. Once direction has been provided, Senate can receive it and give the question due consideration, providing everyone with the information required to make an informed decision.

In recognition of their appreciation and general agreement with the action of Senate Executive, a motion was offered from the floor (Motion 3).

- Motion 3: Moved by D. Tabachnick, seconded by R. Gendron that Senate refer the question of the departmental mergers in the Arts & Science Faculty to the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance.
CARRIED

Reports From Other Bodies

The President provided a report. The report is attached to the minutes.

The Provost and Vice-President Academic provided a brief oral report advising that the academic planning process is being developed and will be launched in September, and that she is looking forward to the opportunity to consult broadly with all stakeholder groups. Invitations will be forthcoming for formal and informal opportunities to consult on the academic plan.

She reported of the urgent challenge to find housing for our students. A housing task force is being established, but in the meantime if anyone has available space and would like to consider the opportunity of hosting students, please reach out to our recruitment office. She advised that she is looking forward to meeting our budget targets with respect to the enrolment that we are seeing and the students who have identified themselves as attending in September. If students don't have housing that number could potentially be at risk.

The Council of Ontario Universities Academic Colleague shared the following link to COU's public report – *Plan for Prosperity: Ensuring the Financial Sustainability of Ontario's Universities*. [A Plan for Prosperity: Ensuring the Financial Sustainability of Ontario's Universities - Ontario's Universities \(ontariosuniversities.ca\)](https://www.ontariosuniversities.ca)

NUSU provided a written report. The report is attached to the minutes. Senator McEntee also read out a statement on student housing. The corrected statement is attached to the minutes.

Question Period

It was noted that, a few years ago, as an institution, the faculties of teaching and faculties of research and graduate studies were created. As we no longer have Deans in these positions, but the faculties are still in existence, will we see motions brought to Senate to address the issue of the reorganization of these faculties?

In response, the Provost advised that the Dean of Teaching position has been disestablished, while the Teaching Hub continues to operate. We are taking time to reflect on the functions of this administrative unit and how best to re-structure it within the institution. Once that analysis is complete and consultation is broadly conducted, we will bring a report to Senate to discuss our findings. In terms of structure, it is up to the Board to determine which faculties exist. Senate will be engaged respecting its role and authorities within the governance structure. With respect to the Office of Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies, it is not anticipated that there will be an immediate need to restructure unless in our ongoing review we need to address administrative inefficiencies in the distinct demands of graduate studies and research. These would be ongoing dynamic conversations that would be brought forward to Senate should this question become pertinent.

In follow up to the President's report, questions were asked as to whether the staff that are responsible for looking after international students renting and finding housing have a background or education in landlord and tenant rules, particularly in the context of finding a room within a house or connecting with resources such as the North Bay legal clinic. Senator Wamsley acknowledged all the great work that NUSU undertook this past year particularly their social media campaign to make students aware of their rights and responsibilities as tenants in North Bay. He advised that a task force will be established to deal with the education of all students on their rights and responsibilities, and that any staff that deal with the housing situation will also be educated to identify and address concerns.

A suggestion was made that conversations be held with the City of North Bay, Canadore College and the NBRHC to strategize for long-term planning of housing in North Bay.

It was noted that the province has put universities in a difficult situation. With infrastructure lacking, to be financially sustainable we need to attract international students. Such great work has been done to attract students and take care of them, but we don't have the infrastructure to deal with the influx of students, keeping in mind that we must also do right by our domestic students in traditional catchment areas.

Senator Wamsley reported that last year at this time we had a decrease of 200 FTE's, had a cohort of 83 international students and we were able to assist them to find housing. It is his philosophy that a primarily undergraduate university should have an international complement of 12-13% as it is good for academic programs, campus culture and good for North Bay. We are taking the approach to manage the enrollment expectations and move us into a reasonable rate of acceptance to move along in the next 3-4 years until we have the capacity on campus. The province will not assist in paying for residences, so we are looking at other options. We are not on an accelerated trajectory to take on a large number of international students and are planning on modest increases year over year. It is very expensive for international students to attend university. We have the lowest number of international students in the province and we have the second lowest tuition rate in Ontario.

It was noted that there is a need to acknowledge and clarify the responsibility of Senate to make recommendations to the Board on academic structure, and it is incumbent on Senate to deal with these issues substantively rather than just receiving reports.

Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils

Senate Executive Committee

Motion 4: Moved by D. Hay, seconded by R. Gendron that the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated August 3, 2023 be received.
CARRIED

Other Business

Motion 5: Moved by D. Hay, seconded by R. Gendron that, pending the recommendation of the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance, Senate moves that the entire merger process in the Faculty of Arts and Science be paused and the status quo as of June 30, 2023, remain in effect.

In regard to the above motion, the Provost advised that the motion was out of order. The motion dictates a change to structure and suggests that Senate will be unwilling to accept any result of the Joint Committee. Secondly, according to Robert's Rules, Senate cannot move, change, or pause a process that has already been undertaken. She suggested a friendly amendment speaking to Senate By-law 1.0(a) which stipulates that Senate has the power to make recommendations to the Board with respect to any academic matter of concern to the University. She noted that on questions of structure, it is the Boards purview to make decisions and recognizes that the Joint Committee has already been asked to speak to the procedural questions that have been raised by the amalgamation of units in Arts and Science.

CARRIED

After the vote, some Senators raised concerns about the process followed, questioned the legitimacy of the new structures, noted the responsibilities of the Board and Administration

towards bicameral governance, and how some faculty members have been affected, and a concern about the vulnerability of Indigenous Studies.

Elections

- Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance for three-year terms effective July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026.

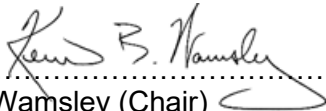
ACCLAIMED: D. Hay & H. Earl

Announcements

Senator McEntee announced that NUSU has launched a North Bay-themed colouring book. The books are \$10, and all proceeds go to the NUSU Student Food Bank. Copies are available today or can be purchased at the NUSU Student Centre.

Adjournment

Senate was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



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K. Wamsley (Chair)



.....
S. Landriault (Senate Secretary)

**University Senate
11 August 2023
President's Report**

Good morning Senators. A brief report today as the 2023-2024 term is at our doorstep. I hope that you have all had an enjoyable summer and enjoyed some rest.

I do not have an exact date, but I understand from the Council of Ontario Universities that the Blue Ribbon Report will soon be submitted to the Ontario government. I would be pleased to report details to Senate as soon as I am able to.

The Equity Action Planning Task Force has continued to meet and is working on the request for proposals.

Look for an announcement of the launch of our Strategic Plan in late September and also for the beginning of operational planning in September as well, as we take steps to put our Plan into action, while at the same time working on our Academic Plan, both to be completed by the end of June 2024.

We continue to monitor the housing issue for both domestic and international students. We have formed a task force committee to deal directly with student housing, as we sift through our numbers to gather information on how many students will be arriving in the coming weeks and how many still do not have housing. We will be assigning a staff member to work directly with the students and deal directly with landlords, potential landlords, and North Bay citizens who wish to open a room to a student. At the same time, we will prepare for emergency housing and transition housing at local hotels.

I am very pleased to announce that we have a signed contract with Sodexo to be our food services provider. They will be making alterations to the main cafeteria and will also be the service provider for Canadore's operations. Our thanks to Associate Vice President Renee Hacquard for her work on this file.

We have two administrative hiring processes underway, one for Director of Nipissing International and for the role of Assistant Vice President Students, both of which we hope to fill as soon as possible.

Academic Senate Report August 11th, 2023

Communities In Bloom

NUSU was one of the stops for the Communities In Bloom judges. We were able to tour them around our building, host a luncheon, show off our bee hives and welcome them to “The Secret Garden: A Community Tapestry” art exhibit.

Within this art exhibit are four features:

1. Astorville’s École élémentaire catholique Saint-Thomas d’Aquin students’ intricate paper flowers around the border
2. Empire Living Centre residents’ delicate pressed flower art
3. Poetic brilliance and captivating short stories from talented Nipissing University students: Riley Piche, Emma Nason, Jillian-Rae Picco, and Natasha Castilloux
4. Heartwarming glimpses of community projects, including The Gathering Place, North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce, Clean, Green, Beautiful North Bay, and TP North Bay, with NUSU playing a key role.

The exhibit harmoniously blends generations, uniting diverse backgrounds and preserving cultural traditions and values. Its interdisciplinary approach intertwines visual art with literary masterpieces, creating an immersive and enchanting experience for all visitors.

Thank you to everyone who participated, especially to Sav Searle and Emi Pines who curated the exhibit.

The exhibit is open at the NUSU Student Centre until August 9th. All are welcome!

Orientation Week: OWLS Week

Orientation Week (formerly known as Frosh Week) has been renamed to OWLS Week for four main reasons:

- It stands for Orientation Welcome Learning & Social. We want students to realize there is a balance between social events and educational components.
- Since removing the word “Frosh” from our t-shirts and adding the word “Owl” (example: High School MusicOWLS”), we are signally the university’s insignia.
- It will be clear to faculty, staff and students what we mean by OWLS week so they’re not confused with other orientations (such as New Student Orientation (NSO), International Orientation, Residence Orientation Weekend, and B.Ed Orientation).

- It is cyclical and connects everyone. By having students start off their university experience during OWLS Week, they will graduate with an owl on their degree.

The week will take place from Tuesday, August 29th to Saturday, September 2nd. Thank you to Sarah McGowan for bringing this forward to have united messaging for our students.

Colouring Book

NUSU launched a North Bay-themed colouring book featuring iconic scenes and landscapes, this book is perfect for all ages. The books are only \$10 (incl. tax) and all proceeds go to the NUSU Student Food Bank.

Copies can be purchased at the NUSU Student Centre (Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm).

Thank you to Sarah McGowan, who came up with this idea, and to our graphic designer, Madison Turner, who did a great job. The printing is done within Print Plus so we would like to also thank them for working with us on this venture.

Welcome BBQ

NUSU will be hosting a Welcome BBQ on September 20th at the Athletics Centre from 11am to 2pm. Details will be sent out ahead of time.

Thank You, Pat!

NUSU would like to extend a thank you to Pat in his time as Dean of Teaching. Under his leadership the Teaching Hub received accolades including:

- 2020 D2L Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning (Denyse Lafrance-Horning)
- 2021 Blackboard Catalyst Award for Student Success
- 2022 MCU Award of Excellence (Gemma Victor)
- 2022 OE Global Award for Best OER - *Liberated Learners* team
- 2022 3M National Student Fellowship (Shandon Ashitei)
- 2023 3M National Student Fellowship (Sarah Pecoskie-Schweir)
- 2023 3M National Teaching Fellowship (Laura Killam)
- 2023 Anthology Catalyst Award for Teaching and Learning.

Pat and his team were also able to secure either direct funds, or funding for partnered projects, of over \$1 million. They also partnered on the ESDC grant led by Outward Bound Canada to create an *Outdoor Training Academy* (total grant \$7.5 million; 2022-2025).

We wish Pat all the best in his future endeavours as a professor.

**NUSU Student Centre**

221 College Drive, North Bay, ON P1B 0G1

Tel: (705) 474-3450 ext. 4801 Fax: (705) 474-7732

Web: www.nusu.com**On The Rocks**

The Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU), Nipissing University and Sodexo are pleased to announce the upcoming grand opening of the highly anticipated On The Rocks nightclub located within the NUSU Student Centre (221 College Drive).

The official opening will take place on Friday, September 15 at 10 p.m. In general, the nightclub will be open on Fridays to Nipissing University students only ("Lakers Night") at a cost of \$5 per person, and Saturdays ("Escape Saturdays") to the general public at a cost of \$10 per person. It will also be open to all on Homecoming Weekend, September 22-24, 2023 for \$10 per person.

Bus transportation will be provided to patrons on both nights and will have pick-up and drop-off sites at Nipissing and Canadore residences, as well as stops along McKeown Avenue and Gormanville Road. With the safety and well-being of patrons being the top priority, Campus Security will be working with GardaWorld to ensure a secure and enjoyable environment.

A calendar of bar nights and events will be released prior to September on social media.

Employment opportunities and other information can be viewed at https://linktr.ee/ontherocks_nb.

For information on booking the space for events, visit <https://booking.nipissingu.ca>.

To all recipients of this letter,

North Bay is facing yet another year of a student housing crisis. On Tuesday, August 8th, Residence confirmed that there were 190 students on the Residence waitlist. On Thursday, August 10th, International Student Support confirmed that of the 136 international students who have completed their Arrival Forms, 101 are yet to find accommodations. While we acknowledge that the residence waitlist might decrease over time, we are apprehensive about the prospect of potentially having close to 300 students without housing on their first day of orientation or classes. This number significantly surpasses last year's projected number of unhoused students, and the circumstances have remained largely unchanged since then. This is also not including Canadore students.

As a community, it's imperative that we break away from the status quo. We must take a series of proactive measures, combining new strategies with ongoing efforts, to effectively tackle the pressing student housing crisis. While we acknowledge the nationwide scope of this housing challenge, it has been exacerbated by the expansion of academic programs catering to international students. Notably, programs like the Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Health & Social Impact, which received Senate approval in September 2022, have added to the complexity of the housing situation. It is worth highlighting that this approval came even after the university was already aware of the existing housing crisis.

In NUSU's September 2022 Senate Report we stated, "As a student union, we do not understand how the university has recently accepted 60 applicants for the Post-Bacc Environmental program in January. With the housing crisis looming over not just North Bay, but Ontario, we are concerned that there is a lack of foresight, support and care."

As a community, it is imperative that we no longer persist in our current trajectory. A comprehensive set of actions, both novel and continuous, must be undertaken to effectively confront the prevalent student housing crisis.

These actions encompass a range of strategies, including but not confined to:

- Community engagement and education
- Advocacy for government assistance
- Rent subsidies for eligible students
- Investments in affordable housing
- Commitment to new Nipissing residence buildings
- Flexible payment alternatives
- Textbook and material support
- Enhanced scholarships and grants
- Support for NUSU Student Food Bank
- Effective Good Neighbour Committee and partnerships

These challenges have persisted over the course of several years. It is crucial to note that one of the proposed "solutions" cannot involve advising international students to postpone their

education for a year or refrain from coming to Canada altogether. The rationale behind this lies in the significant financial investments these students and their families have made in terms of paperwork, visas, flight arrangements, and other related expenses. Moreover, these students encounter substantial pressure from their families to ensure their academic success and make the most of their time studying in Canada.

We recognize that this student housing crisis is not unique to North Bay; however, this does not absolve Nipissing University of their moral implications in increasing international student enrolment while knowing that North Bay is entering another consecutive year of a housing crisis.

Sincerely,
The Executive Committee

Riley McEntee
Em Cooke
Harikesh Panchal
Preston English

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Below is a list of articles highlighting all the same concerns NUSU has raised in the past:

- [Hundreds of post-secondary students in Calgary hunting for housing as campus residences full](#)
- [Broken promises from Ontario colleges take a toll on mental health, international students say](#)
- [International student living under a bridge in Toronto helped by strangers](#)
- [Indebted: The growing weight of Canada's education system is crushing international students](#)
- [As record numbers of foreign students come to Canada, experts urge to rethink of the program](#)
- [Ontario needs to better protect international students](#)
- [International students face exploitation in Canada and abroad](#)
- [Dozens of International Students are Dying in Canada. The Federal Government Isn't Doing Anything](#)
- [OUSA Habitats: Students in their Municipalities](#)
- [Would you share a single room with 3 other people? Why student housing is in a crisis](#)