

**Nipissing University**  
**Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting**  
**November 17, 2023**  
**2:30 p.m.**  
**Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference**

**Members Present:**

K. Wamsley (Chair), A Graff, C. Sutton, B. Law, G. Raymer, D. Walters, D. Iafrate

L. Chen, H. Earl, R. Gendron, A. Hatef, G. McCann, J. Murton, S. O'Hagan, G. Phillips, S. Renshaw, S. Srigley, T. Smith, N. Stevens, D. Tabachnick, L. Thielen-Wilson, R. Vernescu, A. Weeks, R. Wenghofer, S. Winters, H. Zhu

A. Adler, S. Cairns, K. Ferguson, C. Greco, D. Hay (Deputy Speaker), T. Horton, P. Millar, A. Schinkel-Ivy, T. Sibbald (Speaker), M. Sullivan, J. Thornborrow, R. Vanderlee, V. Williams

C. Irwin, O. Pokorny, L. Sinclair

F. Couchie

R. Hehn

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

**Absent With Regrets:**

N. Black, J. Barker, R. Davis, T. McParland, J. Muterera, S. Fiddler, P. English

The Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

**Approval of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of: November 17, 2023**

Motion 1: Moved by S. Winters, seconded by R. Gendron that the agenda of the Senate meeting of November 17, 2023 be approved with amendments that the Vice-President, Finance and Administration and the COU Academic Colleague will provide oral reports.  
CARRIED

**Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of: October 13, 2023**

Motion 2: Moved by R. Wenghofer, seconded by R. Hehn that the minutes of the Senate meeting of October 13, 2023 be adopted.  
CARRIED

### **Business Arising From the Minutes**

The Deputy Speaker provided clarification on the process of the program merger vote undertaken at the last meeting of Senate on October 13, 2023, noting that a procedural error occurred.

The Speaker advised that as per Robert's Rules, Article 23, a point of order or a question of order can be raised promptly after a breach occurs. No point of order was raised, so the voting results will stand.

The President provided a response regarding communication guidelines for issuing public statements in follow up to a question raised at the October 14, 2022 Senate meeting. A set of guidelines that the University uses for the issuing of public statements is included in the agenda package. He advised that all internal and external statements pass through the Board Chair first and then the Board of Governors. It was noted that at any time, in any place, there can be many conflicts and human suffering. Difficult decisions are made as to how this might affect our members and our community. As always, feedback is welcome.

Dr. Armenakyan (guest) thanked the President for his response noting that it is important that we have clear guidelines that are shared with the NU community as we are comprised of researchers that do international work and scholars that study genocide. More empathy reflected in official communications would be appreciated.

In response to communication received regarding the authority of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic (PVPA) to suspend enrollment and admission to programs and the establishment of guidelines and processes, the PVPA drew Senators attention to the Nipissing University Act for guidance. Whereas the Act provides powers to Senate to make recommendations to the Board of Governors respecting establishment, maintenance, modification, or termination of organizational structures including faculty, schools, institutes, departments and Chairs, it does not delegate authority to Senate for operational considerations which do not alter the structure of a degree. The suspension of enrollment of programs provides the time needed to retool a degree program without simultaneously supporting new students in a program where changes are necessary. In the absence of posted guidelines, a formal process and guidelines are now under development with input from the Deans, Chairs, and Registrar's Office.

In follow up to a request for an update on the recommendations and responses to the Auditor General's report from November 2022, the Vice-President, Finance and Administration (VPFA), advised that a presentation including the 2023 fiscal year end financials will be provided following the Senate Budget Advisory Committee Report.

An election for four (4) tenured or tenure-track faculty members from either faculty to be elected by Senate to sit on the Chancellor's Selection Committee was included in the October 13, 2023 Senate agenda. Dr. Gillian McCann (A&S), Dr. David Tabachnick (A&S) and Dr. Rick Vanderlee (EPS) were acclaimed. Following the Senate meeting, an email was sent to Senators requesting nominations for one (1) tenured or tenure-track faculty member from either faculty. Dr. Kristin Lucas (A&S) was acclaimed.

### **Reports From Other Bodies**

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

The PVPA provided an oral report. She thanked everyone who was able to participate in the recent Open House. It was a great success in animating the campus and demonstrating to students and their parents that our faculty are committed to their academic journey. The official launch of both the Academic Plan and the Operating Plan took place on November 16. The goal of the process is to come up with a harmonized plan that defines operating decisions and priorities.

The PVPA provided an update on the Teaching Hub, advising that the institution is committed to keeping the Hub. The position of Director of the Teaching Hub will be posted shortly. When the Teaching Hub was initially created, one of the priorities in the terms of reference was involvement with the Institutional Quality Assurance Protocol (IQAP). While the Hub contributed to the development of program self-studies, it did not lead the process. Support for the IQAP and program renewal will be pulled into the Provost's office, where a manager will be hired whose goal will be to assist faculty with their IQAP documents and processes, and with program renewal development and program structure enabling greater creativity as to how we design and deliver our programs moving forward.

The PVPA reminded Senate that we are undergoing a full IQAP audit beginning in September 2024. An interim audit of identified concerns took place in 2018-19. A full audit of all processes and implementation plans and all responses to these documents by all programs takes place every eight years.

The PVPA advised that she had been remiss in congratulating and expressing her appreciation to Dr. Graydon Raymer for taking on the role of Interim Dean of Education and Professional Studies, as well as Dr. Karey McCullough for taking on the role of Interim Associate Dean in the School of Nursing. She was also pleased to announce and congratulate Dr. Steven Cairns for being awarded an advanced clinical practice fellowship in the amount of \$15,000 from the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, as well as researchers Dr. Nancy Stevens and Dr. Rosemary Nagy, for being awarded a Partnership Engage Grant valued at \$24,829 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to further their research into available supports for Indigenous survivors of sexual assault.

The VPFA provided an oral report, advising that the terms of reference for the Senate Budget Advisory Committee have been finalized which should lead to more rigour and regular reporting to Senate. In response to interest expressed in the Auditor General's Report, the Blue Ribbon Panel, as well as review of last year's financial results and this year's preliminary budget, information sessions for all employees will be provided. She also noted that the Assistant VP Finance and Infrastructure will provide a full presentation following the Senate Budget Advisory Committee Report.

The Council of Ontario Universities, Academic Colleague acknowledged her appreciation of the efforts of the PVPA and the PVPA's office to answer questions regarding data collection and accountability to funding agencies. She advised that at a recent meeting, conversations were held on how to have a safer campus and ideas were shared on data collection for the purpose of assessment as well as a needs assessment. She would like to share this information with Senate as to how it relates to the data NU collects to assess diversity. She also reported that at the Joint meeting of Academic Colleagues and Academic Heads, conversations were held on student discourse, safety measures and creating a safer space, how to build stronger curriculum and engagement in curriculum reform to provide a true liberal arts education across the board.

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

## **Question Period**

Senator Earl expressed her appreciation to NUSU Director of Communications, Sarah McGowan, for her assistance in facilitating a field trip to Ottawa and the Holocaust Museum. She encouraged faculty to reach out to Sarah to discuss other events that could be developed, as she would like to see this good work continue.

Senator Earl thanked the President for providing an update on the Macleans' report. She asked how the ratio of 1 faculty member to 23 students was calculated, noting that there seems to be no differentiation between the programs. She suggested that smaller class sizes be recognized and highlighted.

It was noted that an article was recently published indicating that funding for Ontario universities is at 30% which is "outrageously low." This is the time to push the narrative that more funding is needed. The article also stated that 8 out of 23 universities are in the red right now, so it's not only a northern problem.

In response to a question regarding long-range academic planning and how the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC) fits in with plans for program renewal, development, and analysis, the PVPA advised that academic planning is an ongoing activity which does not exist parallel with the academic planning process. She will be working in a consultative process with all stakeholders to provide a document that will deliver a 5-year vision of short, medium, and long-term goals. Senate will take on the responsibility to provide oversight and govern the University's ongoing attempts to meet the objectives as defined in the plan. She advised that she would be happy to continue the conversation should further information be required.

A Senator asked to which degree programs will the University invest in for the upcoming academic year. The PVPA advised that the Deans have received a new faculty hiring request form to complete. Once the number of positions required for next year is calculated, the positions will be selected based on a ranked recommendation of the Deans.

In follow up, the question was posed as to whether the PVPA will make a determination of need for positions independent of the process of making a request (by a "top-down approach"). The PVPA advised that there is no parallel process for allocation of positions. Deans will be able to help facilitate this process.

It was noted that advertisements for faculty positions used to be posted in the fall. The PVPA advised that the expectation is that the ads for perspective new positions will be advertised in September. She also reported that hiring is underway now for tenure-track positions approved in the last budget, and the announcement of the new hires should take place soon.

A concern was expressed that the Academic Planning convening meetings are a different process than in the past and they are not minuted. The PVPA advised that the responsibility of the convening group is to ensure that what is drafted resonates with what is being heard through the processes of broad consultation.

## **Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils**

### **Senate Executive Committee**

Motion 3: Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded by G. McCann that the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated November 9, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

**Academic Curriculum Committee**

Motion 4: Moved by A. Graff, seconded by N. Stevens that the Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated October 16, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

**Faculty of Arts and Science**

Motion 5: Moved by D. Walters, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve that the program requirements for the Spanish Minor be changed as outlined below:

**New Requirements:**

A Minor in Spanish consists of a minimum of 18 credits of Spanish, with a maximum of 6 credits at the 1000 level. Students must achieve a minimum 60% average in the 18 credits presented for the Minor in Spanish and a maximum of 6 credits at the 1000 level.

**Old Requirements:**

A Minor in Spanish consists of a minimum of 18 credits of upper year Spanish. Students must achieve a minimum 60% average in the 18 credits presented for the Minor in Spanish.

**Rationale:**

Currently students are not permitted to count first year Spanish courses toward a Spanish Minor, requiring some students to take 24 credits of Spanish to earn a Minor in Spanish. The Senate of February 2022 changed this requirement for the French Minor but not for the Minor in Spanish. This change will eliminate this inconsistency and bring Spanish into line with requirements in other Minors at Nipissing University.

CARRIED

Motion 6: Moved by D. Walters, seconded by R. Wenghofer that Senate approve that the program requirements for the French Minor be changed as outlined below:

**New Requirements:**

A Minor in French consists of a minimum of 18 credits of French, with a maximum of 6 credits at the 1000 level. Students must achieve a minimum 60% average in the 18 credits presented for the Minor in French.

**Old Requirements:**

A Minor in French consists of a minimum of 18 credits of French, with a minimum 60% average in the 18 credits presented for the Minor in French.

**Rationale:**

When Senate changed the requirement for the French Minor to allow first year courses to count toward a French Minor it did not explicitly limit first year courses to a maximum of six credits. This change will make the French Minor consistent with Nipissing University's policy on Minors.

CARRIED

**Graduate Studies Committee**

Motion 7: Moved by B. Law, seconded by H. Earl that the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated September 25, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

Motion 8: Moved by B. Law, seconded by H. Earl that the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated October 18, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

### **Research Committee**

Motion 9: Moved by B. Law, seconded by H. Earl that the Report of the Research Committee dated September 21, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

Motion 10: Moved by B. Law, seconded by G. McCann that the Report of the Research Committee dated October 23, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

### **Senate Budget Advisory Committee**

Motion 11: Moved by A. Graff, seconded by R. Wenghofer that the Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated October 30, 2023 be received.  
CARRIED

The Assistant Vice-President Finance and Infrastructure was recognized by the Speaker and provided a presentation including summarized highlights from the October 30, 2023 Senate Budget Advisory Committee meeting. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

### **Elections**

- Notice of election for a Deputy Speaker of Senate

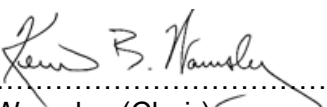
### **Announcements**

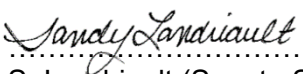
The Associate Vice-President, Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies (AVPRIGS) was pleased to announce the following recipients of the ARSCA awards for 2023-2024:

- Ali Hatef - Study and Optimization of Nano-Photo-Dynamic-Thermal Therapy based on Smart Phase Transition Nanoparticles
- April James - New Discovery-based Initiatives in Catchment Hydrology and Water Quality in the Sturgeon River-Lake Nipissing-French River Basin
- Alex Karassev - Topological Data Analysis (TDA) of Textual Data

### **Adjournment**

Senate was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

  
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K. Wamsley (Chair)

  
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S. Landriault (Senate Secretary)

## **Guidelines for Issuing Public Statements**

The purpose of these guidelines is to affirm the values and standards for issuing institutional Public Statements on local, regional, global, or national events, activities, or issues originating beyond Nipissing University.

The University, as an institution, may issue a Public Statement on political, social, or policy issues, or matters of individual rights, when the external issue/ event directly affects members of the Nipissing University community specifically in their role as students, faculty, and staff of the University, or when our immediate, local community is directly affected by issues/events.

In other, more indirect, circumstances of national or world events affecting segments of the Nipissing community, but falling outside of these criteria, the University shall exercise a personalized and discretionary approach to outreach and providing resources to members of the Nipissing community affected by those events.

Honouring the principles of academic freedom, faculty members may issue opinions or statements as individuals, and when doing so, these should not be represented as Public Statements made on behalf of the University or any of its units.

Administrative Units within Nipissing University, including non-academic divisions, departments, offices, programs, or other units are considered extensions of the University and expected to share University institution-level messages in circumstances where the Administrative Unit wishes to disseminate a Public Statement.

The following guidelines outline a set of factors to consider when determining Nipissing University's response to public, external tragedies or world events. While each situation should be considered individually, the purpose of these guidelines is to ensure a consistent set of criteria is applied when determining a response to a given scenario.

The following factors should be considered:

### **Relationship to Nipissing**

- Does the tragedy involve an individual, institution, or organization with official ties to Nipissing? Does it impact a peer or partner institution?

### **Impact on Nipissing Community**

- Have Nipissing students, staff or faculty expressed fear or emotional distress as a result of the tragedy? Does the university need to show support and provide information about available services?

### **Scale of Event**

- Is the event of particular regional, national or international significance? Does the extreme nature of the tragedy merit a response due to heightened media attention?

### **Relationship to Higher Education**

- Did the tragedy explicitly involve students, faculty, or institutions in higher education?

## **Proximity**

- Has the event occurred in North Bay? On a case-by-case basis, events occurring in Ontario and Canada may also be considered in “close proximity”.

## **Operational Steps**

The Director of Advancement & External Relations and/or the Sr. Manager, Marketing & Communications will:

- Identify any world events or tragedies that the university may wish to consider responding to in a public manner
- Use the above criteria to make a recommendation to the executive team regarding if and how to respond or communicate with the campus and/or broader community (e.g. a recommendation may include issuing a formal statement from the President via email, website, and social media)

The executive team will:

- Consider the recommendation from the Director of Advancement & External Relations and/or Sr. Manager, Marketing and Communications in order to arrive at a final decision on how to proceed
- Provide direction to the Director of Advancement & External Relations and/or Sr. Manager, Marketing & Communications on how to proceed



## **President's Senate Report 17 November 2023**

Good afternoon Senators. I have a few items to report on today and I look forward of course to Question Period, should anything arise.

As you know, we are in the process of creating the operational part of our Strategic Plan and the Academic Plan as well, with thanks to Ann-Barbara and Cheryl for leading these efforts and I encourage the entire campus to get involved with shaping our institution's priorities. Our operational plan is designed to reflect a strategy of accountability and it is built upon the strengths of activities that we are already doing, leading to the aspirations that we identified in our Pathways document. The first stage is collecting this information – all faculty and staff members have been asked to identify the current activities that they are engaged in that reflect our new strategic plan – we are calling this a green, yellow, red light process. We are collecting submissions of initiatives that have recently been completed or they are underway, what they are, what stage they are in, and who is responsible for them. We will apply a green light to completion and a yellow light for underway, and a red light for the new activities which emerge out of the strategic plan. We are currently editing more than 200 pages of submissions and we will post this working document on the Strategic Planning website. We are finalizing an update for the Board of Governors next week, so if your submissions aren't in, not to worry; they can be submitted at any time. There is a tremendous breadth and depth of activities currently happening that support the aspirations of our Pathways plan. I want to thank everyone for these submissions and we should all be proud of the work that is going on at Nipissing University.

As you are all aware, the Blue Ribbon Panel report was released publicly on Wednesday of this week. Our university has been audited several times, has reported extensively on cost-saving measures, has reported on the unintended consequences of a model of frozen tuition, and on the problem of unfunded students and a failure to renegotiate our corridor funding, and so many times we have raised the issue of the inequities of Northern Grant distribution to the Province. So, you can imagine my response to the Report is that there are no real surprises in there. I think that the Report does carry some weight, that the public nature of the report will have an impact, and that the Minister will be forced to act, to a certain extent. I do not believe that this is the time for us to analyze the document or to make calculations – we do not have any idea of how the Province will respond. We do appreciate that the Report makes a case for special attention to the Northern institutions – but only insofar as to suggest for more collaboration and sharing of services, and perhaps a Maple League of Universities approach to course offerings – and no mention of reallocating the Northern Grant. Recommendation 1 speaks to increasing tuition and the government grant – and to corresponding attention to grants and loans. Recommendation 2 is more specific to altering corridor funding – some clarity lacking there. Recommendation 3 pertains to having some flexibility to adjust to market demands; Recommendation 4 is all about fiscal responsibility, reporting, financial ratings, and risk management; and, recommendation 5 is about providing some oversight and assistance to institutions at risk and attending to local labour markets. We have continued to schedule meetings with the Province and will continue to advocate for measures that we believe will make us sustainable. With that in mind, we are forced, like the other institutions to await the government response to the report. When that happens, we will make the calculations and model our financial outlook for the next few years. In the meantime, we will be prepared to state our case for the appropriate levels of support, to model financial situations where that support is not forthcoming, while at the same time advocating for our autonomy and stating our willingness to work with other institutions.

I understand that Macleans' magazine has provided information on Nipissing University that could be inaccurate or incomplete. We will verify this information and ensure that it is corrected.

I want to extend my gratitude to NUSU for continuing to organize a vast program of events for our student body and for hosting events which include faculty and staff members. Most recently I attended the Diwali event on Sunday evening and it was a tremendous success, sold out, approximately 185 people, with a full program of entertainment and food. Congratulations.

In our strategic planning process, you told us that harmony and care needed to be an important part of our future. You also told us that food and refreshments were an important part of campus culture. So you may have noticed that there has been a slate of social activities reintroduced to campus – barbecues, coffees, social gatherings – the UT opening, Koffee Klatches with the Provost – we will be introducing Family Nights for some of our athletic events, and some Christmas celebrations – I encourage you all to catch this wave of sociability and to come out, even briefly to talk to people you normally don't get to see.

**Thank you NUFA and NU Faculty**

NUSU is grateful for the recent monetary and physical donations provided by NUFA and Nipissing University Faculty for our emergency Student Food Bank. Their continued support is helping students across our campus battle food insecurity. NUSU continues to work hard to provide an emergency Student Food Bank service. NUSU accepts physical and monetary donations, please visit the front desk at NUSU to make a donation, we appreciate all support!

**Diwali Dhamaal 2023**

Diwali Dhamaal 2023 was a celebration that will be remembered! We are so glad to have continued this tradition for our second year! Diwali is a time to celebrate light over darkness and the event certainly shines bright on our campus! We hope that it brings good wealth and positive vibes for all our students, staff, faculty, and community members. The event had a prayer ceremony, full Indian buffet, minute-to-win-it games, henna booth, and an open dance floor!

Thank you to our distinguished guests who attended, and to all of our campus groups that helped put together the event, Students of Colour United, International Student Support, and The Equity Centre. NUSU is so happy at the turnout of over 170 people and we hope to see everyone out next year for Diwali Dhamaal 2024!

**NUSU Day of Action Discussion Panel**

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

2:00pm - 4:00pm EST

NUSU Student Centre, 221 College Dr., North Bay, ON, P1B 0G1

Open to everyone!

NUSU is hosting a Discussion Panel during the Canadian Federation of Students' National Day of Action on November 8, 2023. The panel is to discuss free and accessible education for all and why post-secondary students need it *now*. The panelists are Dr. Kevin Wamsley, Nipissing University President & Vice-Chancellor; Dr. Natalya Brown, NUFA President and Professor in Economics; Rob Boulet, OPSEU L608 President; and Riley McEntee, NUSU President.



For more information on NUSU's Day of Action Discussion Panel, please reach out to Riley McEntee at [president@nusu.com](mailto:president@nusu.com).

For more information on the Canadian Federation of Students' National Day of Action, please go to <https://www.cfs-fcee.ca/fight-the-fees>.

### **Ottawa & Toronto Trips**

NUSU collaborated with Dr. Stephen Connor, Dr. Hilary Earl, and Professor Anna Pearson for two weekend trips on November 11th and 12th.

On November 11th, students journeyed to Ottawa to visit the Canadian War Museum and the National War Memorial. Dr. Stephen Connor, Riley McEntee, and Captain Tim Feick also accompanied the group.

On November 12th, Dr. Hilary Earl, Professor Anna Pearson, and Sarah McGowan accompanied students to the Toronto Holocaust Museum in Toronto. We would like to extend our gratitude to Rachel Libman, the museum's curator, and her team for an extraordinary day. Students not only had the opportunity to engage in a VR experience but also had the privilege of hearing directly from Pinchas Gutter, a Holocaust survivor who currently resides in Canada. Pinchas survived six concentration camps, and his testimony left a profound impact on the students.

We strongly advocate for the university to create more immersive learning opportunities like these. By providing such experiences for our students, we enhance the quality of education and offer memorable moments that enrich their academic journey.

### **Wellness Week**

NUSU's Wellness Week takes place on November 27th - December 1st. This is a full slate of programming promoting student wellness and health during their academic studies. A few events we have on are handing out goodie bags, running yoga, trivia, video game tournament, karaoke, and much more! We hope that students get an opportunity to unwind and practice mindfulness as they start their preparations for finals.

### **Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) National General Meeting**

CFS will be hosting their National General Meeting from November 24th-27th in Toronto. NUSU will be representing the Nipissing University student body at this



**NUSU Student Centre**

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meeting. This meeting will review the events that have taken place this past year and talk about next steps from the National Day of Action that took place on November 8th, 2023.