NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

Meeting Book - Academic Senate - Friday, October 24, 2025

Senate Agenda

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1. Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory
As we begin this Nipissing University Senate meeting, I would like to acknowledge that we are in the territory of the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850 and that the land on which we gather is the Nipissing First Nation Traditional Territory and the traditional territory of the Anishinabek. We respect and are grateful to hold this event on these lands with all our relations.

Senate Speaker

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2. Approval of the Agenda
That the agenda of the October 24, 2025, Senate meeting be approved.

Motion 1

Senate Speaker

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3. Adoption of Minutes
That the minutes of the Senate meeting of September 12, 2025, be approved.

    i. September 12, 2025 DRAFT Senate Minutes and Reports.pdf

Motion 2

Senate Speaker

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4. Business Arising from the Minutes
Oral report on Academic Misconduct Cases

Senator Iafrate

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5. Reading and Disposing of Communications

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6. Reports from Other Bodies

    i. President
    oral report

    ii. Provost & Vice-President Academic
    oral report from the President

    iii. Vice-President Finance and Administration
    oral report

    iv. Board of Governors
    report attached

        a. Board Report to Senate - October 2025.pdf

    v. Alumni Advisory Board
    no report

    vi. Council of Ontario Universities (Academic Colleague)
    no report

    vii. Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance
    no report

    viii. Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU)
    oral report

    ix. Other

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7. Question Period

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8. Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty Councils

i. Senate Executive Committee   Motion 3
That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated October 16, 2025, which includes for information:
a) the 2025-26 Graduate Studies Committee Work Plan;
b) the 2025-26 Senate Research Committee Work Plan; and
c) the 2025-26 Teaching and Learning Committee Work Plan.

   a. Senate Exec Report & Work Plans 16Oct25.pdf

ii. Graduate Studies Committee   Motion 4
That Senate receive the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated September 24, 2025, which includes for information:
a) Project Integrate - Graduate Report

   a. GSC Report to Senate & Integrate Strategy Sept 2025.pdf

iii. Senate Research Committee   Motion 5
That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Research Committee dated September 19, 2025.

   a. SRC September 2025 Report to Senate.pdf

iv. Teaching and Learning Committee   Motion
That Senate receive the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated September 18, 2025.

   a. TLC Report to Senate 20250918 (2).pdf

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9. Other Business   Senate Speaker

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10. Amendments of By-Laws

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11. Elections

i. Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance
Elect one (1) faculty Senate representative to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance for a three (3) year term effective immediately to June 30, 2028.

ii. Senate Budget Advisory Committee
Elect two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee for a three (3) year term effective immediately to June 30, 2028.

iii. Interim Deputy Speaker
Elect one (1) faculty Senate representative to serve as Interim Deputy Speaker of Senate for a three (3) year term effective immediately to June 30, 2028.

iv. Council of Ontario Universities
Elect one faculty Senate representative to serve as the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Academic Colleague (Alternate) for a three (3) year term effective immediately to June 30, 2028.

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12. New Business   Motions 7-9
Motion 7: That Senate consider receipt of the Report on Graduation Applicants dated October 17, 2025.
Motion 8: That Senate receive the Report on Graduation Applicants dated October 17, 2025.
Motion 9: That Senate grant approval to graduate the students listed in the Report on Graduation Applicants dated October 17, 2025.

13. Announcements

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14. Adjournment

Nipissing University

Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting

September 12, 2025

10:30 a.m.

Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference

<u>**Members Present:**</u>	K. Wamsley (Chair), A. Graff, R. Hacquard, B. Law, N. Colborne, G. Raymer, D. Iafrate, N. Black
	R. Davis, R. Gendron, A. Hatef, S. Kariuki, K. Lucas, G. McCann, P. Nosko, M. Owens, T. Smith, K. Srigley (Interim Speaker), T. Stewart, L. Thielen-Wilson, H. Zhu
	A. Adler, J. Allison, C. Anyinam, S. Cairns, C. Greco, T. Horton, D. Jarvis, A. Kocoilek, A. Leblond, P. Maher, A. Nkurunziza, C. Ricci, A. Schinkel-Ivy, M. Sullivan, I. Taveres, J. Thornborrow, V. Williams
	C. Irwin, R. Kasperavicius
	R. Hehn
	J. Martin, N. Botham
<u>**Absent With Regrets:**</u>	H. Earl, G. Phillips, S. Srigley, H. Texiera, R. Vernescu, O. Pokorny, P. Millar, F. Couchie, M. Suszter, O. Remillard

The Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

<u>**Adoption of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of:**</u> September 12, 2025

Motion 1:   Moved by J. Allison, seconded by R. Gendron that the agenda of the Senate meeting of September 12, 2025 be adopted.
CARRIED

<u>**Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of:**</u> June 6, 2025

Motion 2:   Moved by N. Black, seconded by V. Williams that the minutes of the Senate meeting of June 6, 2025 be adopted.
CARRIED

<u>**Reports From Other Bodies**</u>

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

The Provost and Vice-President Academic (PVPA) provided a report. The report is appended to the minutes.

The Vice-President, Finance and Administration (VPFA) provided an oral report and began by expressing appreciation to all departments for contributing to a successful fall startup. She highlighted recent infrastructure developments, including the renovations to the front entrance and updates to classrooms across campus.

The VPFA advised that she will be providing a budget update to the Audit and Finance Committee on Monday, noting that the fiscal year ended very close to projections, with the current budget tracking on target, aside from a few minor variances. She also mentioned that the institution is hopeful to receive additional grant funding, particularly in support of Nursing and Teacher Education.

The Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board (NUAAB) provided a report. The report is appended to the minutes.

The Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU) provided a report. The report is appended to the minutes.

Question Period

A question was raised regarding the University's current relationship with the government, asking whether there has been any pushback and how the relationship is being maintained.

The President emphasized the need to maintain a constructive relationship with the government, noting that while some pushback exists, universities are deliberative institutions that make thoughtful decisions. He reaffirmed strong support for the bicameral governance model, underscoring the roles of Senates in academic matters and Boards in fiduciary oversight. The University has made its best efforts in this area, but no specific feedback or direction has been received from the government to date.

In response to a request for further details on academic misconduct incidences, including those involving artificial intelligence (AI), the Registrar advised that the Registrar's Office is currently finalizing a new workflow process. Further information and a detailed report on academic misconduct cases from the previous year will be included in the October Senate agenda.

Concerns were raised regarding low student response rates to course evaluations and the effectiveness of the current online tool. The TLC Chair acknowledged the low participation (around 5%) and emphasized the committee's intent to prioritize improved communication with students and faculty. Integration with Blackboard remains a focus, though concerns about privacy and server control were noted.

The University Secretary clarified that all data must remain on Canadian servers in accordance with privacy laws.

While reverting to paper evaluations was discussed, it was noted that completion rates were also inconsistent in that format. The committee reviewed data from the pilot project and found the results consistent with sector norms. The TLC is confident in the five evaluation questions currently used, which were selected after consulting external sources and approved by Senate in 2023.

Questions were raised about the usefulness of the data collected and the lack of feedback to students about how their input is used. The TLC Chair confirmed that ongoing evaluation of the

tool is in the committee's workplan and invited further input, including a possible motion at the October Senate meeting.

In follow-up to the request for an update on the Director of Teaching and Learning search, the Provost confirmed that an offer has been extended, and a response is pending.

A concern was raised that the $133,000 allocation to the Faculty of Arts & Science, less than half a percent of the overall budget and a third of its previous level, is insufficient to support academic programming and student experience. It was noted that only 3 of 7 tenure-track Biology positions are currently filled, raising sustainability concerns.

In response, the VPFA emphasized that the Integrated Budget and Planning Committee operates through consultation. The Provost clarified that the $133,000 figure does not reflect the full operating budget for A&S, as it excludes staffing costs. She, as well as the Dean of A&S, would be happy to meet to discuss further.

A request was made for an update on concerns raised at the January Senate meeting regarding the absence of a formal policy for program closures. The Provost advised that the AQAPC faculty working group has met, with another meeting scheduled, and will provide an update at the October Senate meeting.

In follow up to a request for further details from the Provost's Report regarding review of the EAF Implementation - Governance Recommendations, the Provost advised that the Senate Executive and By-laws & Elections Committees have been identified as best positioned to carry out the review, aiming to align Senate practices with the recommendations and, where necessary, with the Board. There is no set timeline; the process will unfold over the year. It was also noted that the Board is conducting a similar review. In response to a question about the Joint Committee's involvement, the Provost clarified that its role is better suited to resolving disputes as the scope of the two bodies is different.

The Interim Speaker welcomed feedback and confirmed the first meeting will focus on planning the approach.

In response to a question about Bill 33 and increased provincial oversight of education, the President confirmed ongoing discussions and expressed strong opposition to government involvement in admissions, student fees, and scholarships.

A question was raised regarding the academic home of the new Bachelor of Community Planning program. The Provost confirmed that the program will be housed in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Further clarification was requested about the absence of an academic writing requirement or reference to the ACAD program in the curriculum. The Provost advised that, upon mapping the prescribed courses to the university's degree-level expectations, it was determined that the learning outcomes, including writing skills, are addressed through other courses within the program.

A concern was expressed about whether this approach circumvents a previous Senate motion to remove ACAD courses from the Faculty of Arts and Science without identifying a replacement, potentially undermining the intent of that decision. The Dean of Arts and Science responded that the learning expectations are still being met through alternative courses and pathways, as reflected in the program's curriculum mapping.

Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils

Senate Executive Committee

Motion 3:   Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded by N. Colborne that the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated June 26, 2025 be received.
CARRIED

Motion 4:   Moved by K. Wamsley, seconded N. Colborne that Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated September 4, 2025, which includes for information:
  a) the 2025-26 Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC) Work Plan
  b) the 2025-26 Honorary Degrees Committee Work Plan
CARRIED

Academic Curriculum Committee

Motion 5:   Moved by A. Graff, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated June 4, 2025 be received.
CARRIED

Motion 6:   Moved by A. Graff, seconded by D. Iafrate that Senate approve, for the purposes of publishing the University's Academic Calendar, the Academic Curriculum Committee (ACC) may accept motions for the upcoming academic year up until December 1. Any submissions to the ACC after this date will not take effect until the subsequent academic year.
CARRIED

Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)

Motion 7:   Moved by A. Graff, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated June 20, 2025 be received.
CARRIED

Motion 8:   Moved by A. Graff, seconded by N. Colborne that Senate receive the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated August 22, 2025, which includes for information:
  a) the Biology and Chemistry (BSc Biology, BSc Environmental Biology and Technology) IQAP Two (2) Year Post Cyclical Program Review Monitoring Report
  b) the Bachelor of Social Work IQAP Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan (FAR/IP)
  c) the Bachelor of Community Planning New Undergraduate Program Proposal for information
  CARRIED

Motion 9:   Moved by A. Graff, seconded by M. Owens that Senate receive the attached Annual Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated August 29, 2025.
CARRIED

Teaching and Learning Committee

Motion 10:   Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by V. Williams that the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated April 28, 2025 be received.
CARRIED

Motion 11:   Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by M. Sullivan that Senate receive the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated July 2, 2025.
CARRIED

Motion 12:   Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by M. Sullivan that Senate remove the survey item ("I would recommend this course to other students") from the list of optional questions which instructors may choose from in the Student Course Experience Survey.
CARRIED

Motion 13:   Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by M. Sullivan that Senate approve the Student Course Experience Survey to move out of 'pilot' mode for the start of the Fall 2025 semester.
CARRIED

In response to a question regarding the use of data collected during the Student Course Experience Survey (SCES) pilot, Senator Raymer advised that the use of such data is governed by the provisions outlined in the Collective Agreement. He also noted that in May 2024, the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) reviewed a report on the SCES. Based on this review, the TLC was satisfied that the survey tool was functioning effectively, and that relevant data had been successfully collected. As a result, the SCES continued in pilot mode for the 2024–25 academic year. It was also noted that information related to the survey had been communicated to faculty by Faculty and Administrative Support Services (FASS). The PVPA added that the Provost's Office will inform FASS of any changes to the survey process going forward.

Motion 14:   Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by M. Owens that Senate receive the Annual Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated August 29, 2025.
CARRIED

Elections

The following positions required elections for terms commencing July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028:

- One (1) faculty Senate representative to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance
- Two (2) faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee
- One (1) faculty Senate representative to serve as Deputy Speaker of Senate

No nominations were received for any of the above positions. The Interim Speaker emphasized the importance of faculty representation on Senate and on Senate Standing Committees and encouraged Senators to consider putting their names forward for these roles. The elections will be included in the October 24, 2025 Senate meeting agenda.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Senate was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

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K. Wamsley (Chair)   S. Landriault (Senate Secretary)

12 September 2025
President's Senate Report

Good afternoon Senators, welcome to the 2025-26 academic year, which we started off in a good way with our 20th annual pow wow. I am very pleased to be entering my 5th year as President. I want to thank you all for your work and ongoing contributions which made 2024-25 a very successful year for Nipissing University. In today's report, I will discuss our ongoing relationship with the provincial government, provide updates on some of our ongoing reviews and processes, and highlight some of the important upcoming events and activities.

With respect to long term sustainability, the government is examining the funding model directly. They have said at this point that they are not looking at tuition. I did have a few meetings with them over the summer, but we do not have an inclination on what directions they are leaning. We also had meetings with them over the summer on the issue of governance. They see how nimble the college system is in its decision-making and its response to market, and they perceive the university as operating at a much slower pace and they are looking for ways to influence change at universities. We have been unequivocal in our support for the bicameral model of governance – it can always be improved, and we will be improving it, but we are not in need of government assistance in university governance. We unanimously supported the role of University Senates and their capacities for quality assurance and the governance of academic issues, and we supported the work of our Boards in making good decisions within their fiduciary responsibilities. Again, we have no indication of the directions they will be taking or considering at this point.

On the issue of our Board and Senate governance and the recent report on governance, we will be considering the recommendations and consulting on these issues. Our Senate governance work will be co-led by our Interim Senate Speaker, Dr. Katrina Srigley, and our Provost, Dr. Ann-Barbara Graff. Our Board governance work will be co-led by me and by our Board Secretary, Abby Blaszczyk. On the issues of our efficiencies review, we will be working through the NOUS recommendations as our budgets permit in order to improve university operations. These exercises will be situated within a full campus policy review over the next year. We will be conducting a full policy review with a mind towards ensuring consistency of language, due process, and clarity. All to be approved in due course by the appropriate authorities.

Our outdoor classroom contractor has been selected and has been ready to proceed but we are waiting on timber delivery. More updates to come as construction proceeds.

Homecoming is happening next weekend – please come out a support our student athletes.

Many of us will be attending the universities fair in Toronto in two weeks' time, and our Fall Open House will be happening on Saturday, October 25.

Provost's Report to Senate
September 12, 2025

Welcome and welcome back to new and returning staff, students and faculty. The upcoming academic year promises to be exciting and full of opportunities. Please join me in recognizing new staff and faculty. At this time, I am able to announce the following new appointments:

Academic Leadership and Administration
Sarah Batley - Director, Athletics
Patty Chabbert, Director, Office of Indigenous Initiatives
Robb Fenton - Manager, Intercollegiate Sports
Dr. Kirsten Ferguson, Interim Associate Dean, Education,
Scott Fitzgerald, Program Manager, School of Nursing
Dr. Ann Fox, Interim Associate Dean, Business
Lindsay Sullivan, Manager, Access and Belonging
Emma Summilas, Manager, Projects and Planning, Provost's Office
Director of Teaching and Learning, in progress

Faculty
Dr. Kristen Beck, Tenure-Track, Biology, Chemistry, Geography and Geology
Dr. Hannah Chestnutt, Tenure-Track, Schulich School of Education (Curriculum and Assessment)
Dr. Christine Lalonde, Tenure-Track, CHFS/PSYC
Dr. Alyssa Leblond, Tenure-Track, School of Criminal Justice
Dr. Abhijeet Singh, Tenure-Track, School of Business (Administration/Management)
Emily Sprowls, Tenure-Track, Schulich School of Education (Environmental Science)
Ines Ferreira Dias Tavares, Tenure-Track, School of Criminal Justice

Limited Term Appointments
Dr. Rosa Azami - Faculty of Arts and Science, Computer Science
Dr. Elizabeth Patrick – Faculty of Education & Professional Studies, School of Social Work
Dr. Jonathan Pitt - Faculty of Arts and Science, Indigenous Studies
Dr. Marc Plamondon – Faculty of Arts and Science, English Studies
Chris Stevens – Faculty of Education & Professional Studies, School of Nursing

Postdoctoral Researchers
Dr. Fatemeh Ameli until December 31, 2025 (Dr. David Zarifa)
Dr. Carmen Culotta until March 31, 2027 (Dr. Brenda Bruner)
Dr. Erwin Racasa until August 31, 2026 (Dr. Colin McCarter)
Dr. Meredith Schertzinger until December 31, 2025 (Dr. Mark Bruner)

Over this academic year, we will have the opportunity to work together to respond to the audits commissioned by the Province on efficiency and governance. What was heartening about the efficiency audit was that it directed our collective attention to much of the work detailed in APOP. For the governance audit, we have been asked to reflect on how to make our bicameral system more demonstrably effective. The deputy speaker, Dr. Katrina Srigley, will co-chair the governance audit response with me. The executive committee of Senate along with the by-laws committee will be charged with the review of 7 recommendations (attached).

As well, the Academic Program Reviews have been completed. I thank every program for taking the process seriously and for providing us with an entrée into a conversation about program health. The Academic Program Reviews and decanal responses will go to AQAPC and to Senate this Fall.

We await the final report from the Quality Council on Nipissing University's regular cycle quality assurance audit completed in March 2025.

Enrollment Projections 2025-26 at September 5, 2025
As you know, enrollment is dynamic over this part of the term. We will report firm numbers on November 1; however, early enrollment data suggests we are maintaining domestic enrollment and have not yet recovered our international enrollment from its peak.

Head Count:
Domestic - 6170 vs. 6107 (total for 24/25)
International - 167 vs. 458 (total for 24/25)

FFTE:
Domestic - 4607.65 vs. 4523.34 (total for 24/25)
International - 107.53 vs. 396.37 (total for 24/25)

The BEd, Nursing and CHFS were the only programs that met SEM recruitment targets this year. There has been a lot of activity over the summer in support of recruitment activities: a new CRM has been implemented which will allow for better lead collection and support through admission; a new future students website is in development; and, the university's website is being migrated to Drupal 11 from Drupal 8 which along with WordPress will allow for better content management.

20th Annual Welcome Powwow
Thank you to all members of the Nipissing University community who attended the powwow today. Participation is a meaningful way to welcome students back to campus, honour Indigenous culture, traditions, and community, and demonstrate your commitment to Reconciliation in action.

EAF Implementation – Governance Recommendations

1. Develop Governance Training & Onboarding Programs

- **Develop Training Programs:** Create comprehensive training modules covering the shared governance system, roles, duties, and expectations of Board and Senate members. Prepare workplan for the development of training modules (from orientation, onboarding, through active service, and exit) with expectation that it is delivered and maintained by Secretariat.
- **Training Opportunities:** Design a schedule for mandatory and optional training sessions, including robust financial training for all Board Members and Senate Budget Advisory Committee members. Open to all senators. Aligned to TOR of Senate governance committee.
- **Assess & Maintain Skills Matrix:** Regularly define, evaluate and refine the Skills Matrix to ensure appropriate representation on governing bodies and committees. Update the Matrix. Aligned to TOR of Senate governance committee.

2. Establish Clear Committee Frameworks and Conduct Governance Evaluation

- **Governance Template Development:** Create a standardized committee template for both the Board of Governors and Senate that includes purpose, authority areas, membership and required skills, and specific responsibilities within authority areas.
- **Annual Work Plan Implementation:** Develop an annual work plan for each committee that aligns with the Terms of Reference. Establish a reporting mechanism for committees to report on progress to the Board and Senate at the end of each governing year.
- **Committee Restructuring and Governance Alignment:** Initiate a formal review of the Board and Senate committee structure and adjust committee names and responsibilities in accordance with the *External Review of University Governance for Nipissing University.*
- **Reduce the number of Senate meetings to no more than 9**

3. Adopt a University-wide policy framework

- o **Develop a Policy of Policies:** Direct the Secretariat to develop a University-wide policy framework including template, timelines, proliferation protocol, and a central repository of policies.

4. Develop a Senate Evaluation System

- o **Reframe Senate's Role and Responsibilities:** Facilitate a strategic planning session to redefine the Senate's role as a governing body responsible for educational policy oversight. Incorporate this governance perspective into Senate orientation materials and ongoing professional development.
- o **Senate Evaluation System:** Design and implement a Senate self-evaluation tool, including individual senator contributions, committee effectiveness, and overall Senate performance. Evaluations should be conducted annually, with results used to inform improvements in governance and meeting effectiveness. The Evaluation should be reviewed and refined often based on feedback and evolving governance needs.

5. Clarify Labour Relations & Senate Governance

- o **Clarify Senate's Governance Role:** Consider a by-law amendment to explicitly state that Senate's focus is on governance, not labour relations. The distinction between governance and labour relations should be communicated broadly through training and orientation materials.
- o **Address Conflicts of Interest in Membership:** Explore a mechanism to preclude officers or leaders of university labour associations (e.g. NUFA Executives) from serving on the Senate or the Board of Governors.
- o **Reform Pre-Senate Caucus Practices:** Discontinue or reconceive current Pre-Senate Caucus practices that exclude non-faculty Senators. Develop an inclusive, educational forum open to all Senators for pre-meeting briefings or Q&A sessions. Assign a facilitator or governance officer to support Senators in understanding complex materials in advance.
- o **Encourage Advance Submissions:** Establish a formal process for submitting questions or motions in advance of Senate meetings. Promote this practice through reminders in meeting notices and orientation materials.

- **Training and Evaluation:** As noted above, incorporate governance training into Senate onboarding, including roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest, and the difference between governance and labour relations.

6. Seek clarity on the Role of Senate Officers

- **Legal and Governance Clarification:** Seek a legal opinion on the Senate By-Law provision that limits the President's role as Chair of Senate and determine if the provision is valid under The Act. If invalid, revise the by-law to reflect the President's role as Chair and redefine the Speaker's role accordingly.
- **Define the Role of the Secretary of Senate:** Differentiate the elected Secretary of Senate which exists in the Act/bylaws from the Secretariat staff. Assign the Secretary of Senate as Chair of a Committee responsible for Senate By-Laws and governance or replace with governance professional.
- **Model Exploration and Common Practices:** Examine structures like Dalhousie University and consider adapting elements such as academic quality committee reporting through vice-chairs. Incorporate best practices into Nipissing's Senate governance framework.

7. Review and Design the Secretariat Model

- **Design a Secretariat Model:** The model should be independent and serve both the Board and Senate and should be functionally aligned with best practice in university governance.
- **Governance Officer Recruitment:** Develop a job description and hiring plan for a Governance Officer to support the Secretariat Office.
- **Clarify Reporting Relationships:** Establish a dual reporting structure for the University Secretary with an administrative reporting relationship to the President and a dotted-line reporting relationship to the Board Chair and the Sr. Senate leader.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Allocate a dedicated training budget for Secretariat staff.
- **Standardize Governance Documentation:** Create standardized templates for meeting minutes, approvals and signing processes. A consistent minuting practice should be implemented across all governance bodies with an accessible digital repository for documents and records. Senate agendas should also be reordered to prioritize substantive work and motions at the beginning of meetings and procedural

items later in the agenda. An omnibus consent agenda should also be introduced for routine matters.

- o **Establish a Short-term Secretariat Resource:** Contract a governance expert to support policy and by-law drafting. Use this resource to initiate structural reforms and build internal capacity.
- o **Focus on Governance Health:** Define the Secretariat's core mission as supporting the health and effectiveness of the University's governance system.

**Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board report to Academic Senate
September 2025**

Welcome Back, Lakers!
The Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board is thrilled to welcome students and faculty back for the fall semester! We hope this year brings exciting opportunities for learning, discovery, and connection. As you engage in your studies, teaching, and campus life, know that the Alumni community is here to support you and to celebrate your accomplishments now and in the future.

Homecoming 2025
Homecoming Weekend is right around the corner! Join us September 19-20 as we welcome students, alumni, staff, faculty, and community members for a vibrant weekend of events. From gallery hops to sports games to opportunities to connect, there's something for everyone. Visit events.nipissingu.ca/homecoming for details and to register today!

NU Perks Platform
Attention Nipissing Alumni – over 650 Lakers are already enjoying the benefits of the NU Perks App! This platform is your one-stop shop for exclusive perks, the latest University news, event updates, and contests.

Join the community today at nuperks.ca!

NUSU Academic Senate Report: September 2025

Welcome to the 2025–2026 Academic Year

On behalf of NUSU, we'd like to extend a warm welcome to all students, staff, and faculty as we begin a new academic year. September is always an exciting time on campus, filled with fresh energy, new opportunities, and the return of our vibrant student community. We're looking forward to a year of connection, growth, and celebration. We're excited to continue working alongside you to make this a memorable and engaging year for Lakers.

Transition to Campus Trust – Effective September 1, 2025
As of September 1st, NUSU has officially transitioned from WeSpeak to Campus Trust as the new provider for the student health and dental plan. Students may opt out or add dependents (spouse/children) between September 1st and September 22nd. We are happy for this change, as it both saves students money and enhances access to essential services.

Bay Bistro Closure
As of September 1st, the Bay Bistro has officially closed. While the restaurant will no longer operate, NUSU will continue to provide catering and food production for events and programming. Additionally, we will be continuing bar nights, projected at one per month, to maintain community and social opportunities for students.

Conferences & Development
Over the summer, NUSU Executives and staff attended several professional development conferences, including:

- COCA (Canadian Organization of Campus Activities) Conference
- Ontario Skills Development Symposium
- AMICCUS-C Conference
- PBAS (Prudent Benefits Administration Services) for the new health plan

These opportunities allowed us to learn from student unions across the country, gain insights into student engagement, governance, and services, and return with fresh ideas to implement here.

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION

NUSU Student Centre
221 College Drive, North Bay, ON. P1B 0G1
Telephone: (705) 474-3450 ext. 4801
Website: www.nusu.com

OWLS Week 2025
Planning is in its final stages for OWLS Week, and we are excited to welcome our new students to campus. This week will be filled with events, programming, and opportunities for students to build connections and feel at home in the Nipissing community.

Homecoming 2025
We are also looking forward to celebrating Homecoming this fall. NUSU will be hosting some activities at the Student Centre and participating in campus-wide HOCO events. This is always a great opportunity to celebrate school spirit, reconnect with alumni, and show our Lakers pride.

Board of Governors Report to Senate – October 2025

Board of Governors Meeting
September 25, 2025

The Board of Governors met on Thursday, September 25, 2025, In the President's Boardroom and via Zoom remote conferencing.

The Chair welcomed new members, Dr. Denyse Lafrance Horning, Dr. Tyson Stewart, Robin Tonna and Frank Miscio. He also welcomed back Joe Sinicrope and Stacie Fiddler after receiving notice of their LGIC reappointments during the summer months.

The Board reviewed the Audited Financial Statements in detail for the year ended April 30, 2025, and approved them as presented. The Financial Statements are available to view on the University's website.

The Board of Governors next meets on December 4, 2025.

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

REPORT OF THE SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

October 16, 2025

A meeting of the Senate Executive Committee took place in person and by Teams conference on October 16, 2025.

The following members participated:
K. Wamsley (Chair), B. Law, G. Raymer, D. Iafrate, K. Srigley (Interim Speaker), J. Allison, S. Landriault (Recording Secretary, n-v)

Regrets: N. Colborne, K. Lucas, J. Martin

The meeting was convened to set the agenda for the October 24, 2025 Senate meeting.

Under business arising from the minutes, Senator Iafrate confirmed that she would address the report on academic misconduct cases and respond to any questions.

Reports and work plans from the Graduate Studies Committee, the Senate Research Committee and the Teaching and Learning Committee were received for inclusion in the Senate agenda.
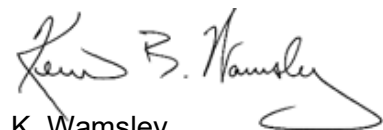
As no nominations were received at the September 4 Senate meeting, the following elections will be included again in the Senate agenda:
- One faculty Senate representative to serve on the Joint Committee of the Board and Senate on Governance;
- Two faculty Senate representatives to serve on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee;
- One faculty Senate representative to serve as Interim Deputy Speaker of Senate.

All positions are for three-year terms, effective immediately through to June 30, 2028.

The Senate Executive Committee approved the October 24, 2025 Senate agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Wamsley
Chair, Senate Executive Committee

Motion 1:   That Senate receive the Report of the Senate Executive Committee dated October 16, 2025.

Graduate Studies Committee Workplan
2025 - 2026

Policies, Procedures and Regulations

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Graduate Studies Governance (GSC Terms of Reference)	R									
Graduate Studies Faculty Membership Policy (Renewal December 2024)			R	V						
Visiting Graduate Student Researcher Policy		R	V							
OCGS Regulation for Undergraduate Courses - Process										
External Examiner Policy (Renewal May 2025)			R	V						
Thesis Defence Regulation (Renewal July 2027)										
Graduate Studies Awards Funding Model (annually in December)		R		V						
Review Graduate Student Awards management plans		R								
Thesis template for creative works			R		V					
Terms of Reference for Awards & Funding Committee		R								
Distinction Policy - Graduate										

Graduate Program Review and Revisions

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Review internal regulations/policies for individual graduate programs										
Review graduate program admissions policies										

Graduate Curriculum

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
On-going curriculum mapping, reviews and updates										
Review Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Vision and Mission Statements										
New program proposals; curriculum changes										

Reports

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Review of Annual Report on Graduate Studies' Activities									R	
Time to Completion Requirements & Adherence										
Project Integrate - Graduate					R					
Review of Annual Graduate Program Review Template						R				

Awards and Nominations

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Review nominations from internal graduate awards committee (for information, review, or approval as required by award criteria)										

For Information

R = review; V = vote, O = overdue

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
SMA4 & SEM targets										
AI guidelines – Teaching & Learning; Research										

R = review; V = vote, O = overdue

SRC Version Workplan 2025-26 `priority`

Content	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	
Research Planning & Support										
Strategic Research Plan	Process Plan			Draft			Voting			
Research Data Management Strategy Implementation			For info							
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Research Month (UGRC, NU360, 3MT)		For Info				For Info				
Research Rendezvous								Discussion		
Research Policies & Process										**Review Year**
Intellectual property policy (renewal)					Vote					2025-2026
Commercialization policy (renewal)						Review	Vote			2025-2026
Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan		Process Plan							Vote/Review	2025-2026
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Research Administration policy										
Research Space Management			For Info							2025-2026
Fee for Use Policy (External Users)										
Policy & Process Map					For Info					2025-2026
Infrastructure Operating Fund Management Plan/Process										
General Research Fund Management Plan/Process										
Responsible Conduct of Research (renewal)										
CRC Management Plan										
REB & ICEP Updates										
SRC Terms of Reference	For Info									
External Granting Agencies										
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Report on annual external grant submissions & success rates			For info			For info			For info	
CRC Search/Hiring				For info				For info		
CFI-JELF Competition		For info					For info			
Internal Funding Applications										
ARSCAs: Recommendation for recipients			Voting							
Internal Research Grants (IRG) competition								Voting		
SSHRC SIG competition						Voting				
USRA competition								Voting		
Student Research Opportunities Fund										
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Reports										
Annual Report (Senate)									Voting	
AI in Research (new working group)										
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Annual Commercialization Reporting		Deadline								
International Research Relationships Disclosure										July Deadline
Education/Presentations										
FOR INFORMATION/CONSULTATION ONLY										
Strategic Mandate Agreements & Research Support Fund										Presentation - timeline TBD
Research Security										Presentation - timeline TBD

Work Plan: Teaching and Learning Committee
2025-2026

	20250918	20251028	20251125	20251219	202601	202602	202603	202604
Discuss and Report to Senate								
Library Services				X				X
Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness						X		
Instructional Development		X						
Other Matters Related to Teaching and Learning								
Interprofessional Education							X	
Professional Suitability Policy		X						
Policy and Process Review								
Digital Learning and Field Trips Policy			X					
Academic Integrity								X
The Costs of Educational Materials			X					
Student Course Experience Survey	X							X
Artificial Intelligence							X	
Matters Assigned by Senate								
Record of Student Development (APOP #32)				X				

Nipissing University
Graduate Studies Committee Report
September 24, 2025

The Graduate Studies Committee met on September 24, 2025.

Members in attendance: B. Law (Chair), N. Black, K. Clausen, N. Colborne, K. Greer, S. Hansen, D. Iafrate, B. Kelly, J. Murton, T. Vassilev. Regrets: G. Raymer.
Guests: H. Brown, A. McCarthy, D. Walters
Recording Secretary: L. Snoddon

Reports from the Office of Research, Innovation & Graduate Studies were distributed prior to the September 24 meeting. Updates included:

- MCURES has granted the first consent through the PEQAB review process for colleges to offer a master's level degree. Two degree programs have been approved to date.
- CAGS conference will run November 4-7, 2025 in Ottawa with the theme, *Graduate Education as a Public Good.*
- Graduate TA training modules have been launched via Blackboard for current TAs.
- Graduate student handbook is in development.
- Recruitment and marketing will provide reports to GSC to facilitate communication and cooperation related to graduate student recruitment.

Discussions Included:

- Spring Retreat Debrief
- Orientation Debrief

New business included:

- Review of the Graduate Studies Committee's Terms of Reference
- Election of GSC Vice-Chair for 2025-2026: K. Clausen acclaimed.
- Approval of the GSC 2025-2026 Workplan
- Project Integrate – Graduate Report
- Graduate Program Internal Policies and Procedures
- GTA Training Modules

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Law

B. Law
Chair, Graduate Studies Committee

MOTION 1: That Senate receives the report of the Graduate Studies Committee, dated September 24, 2025, which includes for information:
a) the Graduate Studies Committee 2025-2026 Workplan; and
b) the Project Integrate – Graduate Report.

PROJECT

INTEGRATE
GRADUATE STUDIES

MARCH 2025

INTEGRATE ˈɪn.tə.ɡreɪt

To form, coordinate, into an effectively functioning or unified whole

This document will lean on three of the six commitments in the Nipissing University Strategic Plan as it goes over the findings and recommendations based on available data and the numerous discussions, interactions with faculty, staff and students at Nipissing University (NU):

1. Inspiring Innovative Growth
2. Development Embodying Harmony and Care
3. Building Sustainable Futures

At a time when NU is planning some profound changes through its Strategic Plan, Academic Plan, and Project INTEGRATE to the way it serves it students, this document calls for reshaping graduate education for a bold course through an uncertain future in a sustainable manner.

The findings have been categorised into various topics with recommendations that follow each of the topics from an operational point of view.
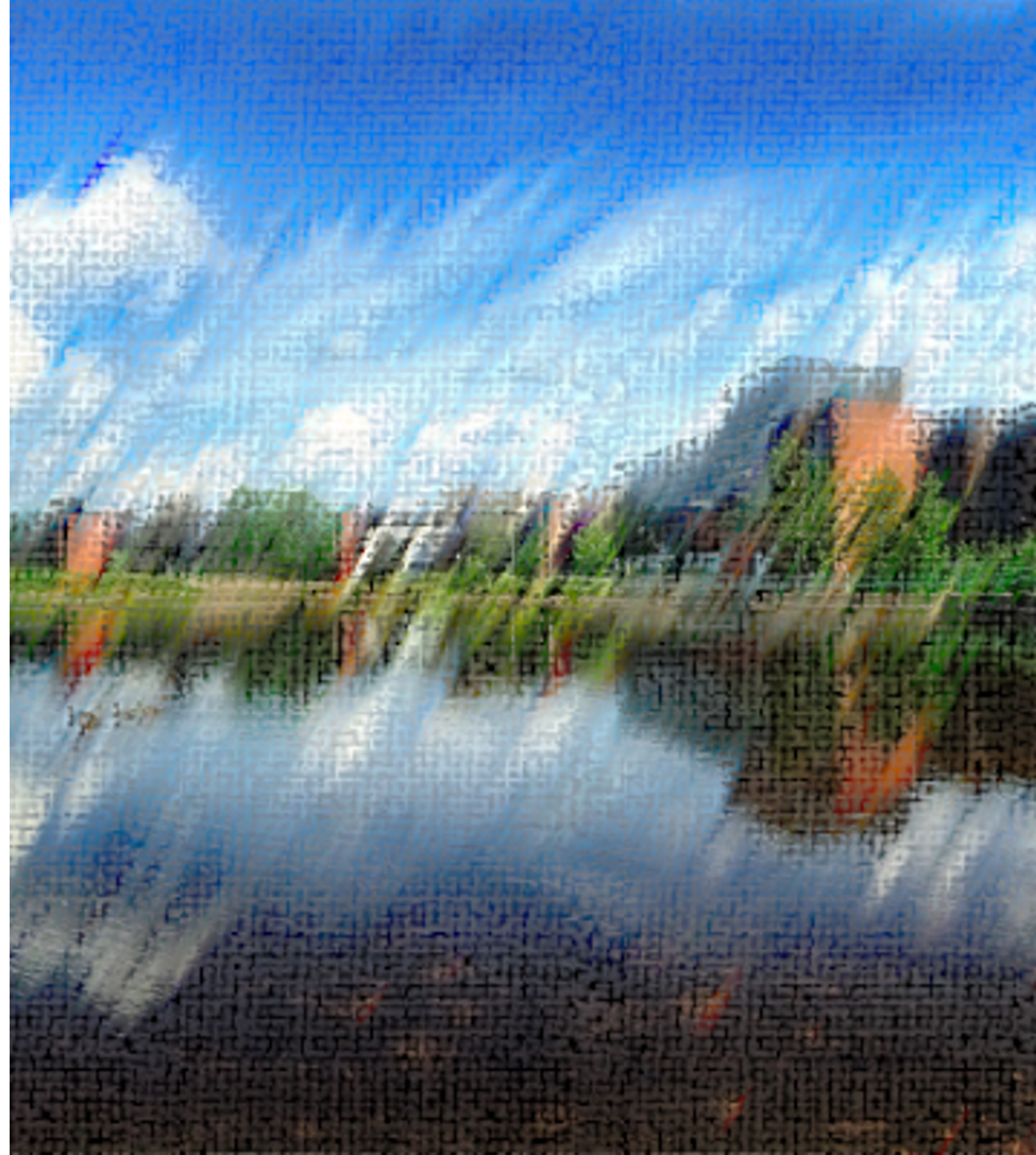
A priority for Nipissing University to grow it graduate division will be develop a vision that includes defining the Research and Innovation Enterprise at Nipissing with a mission that is embedded with not only goals and aspirations, but also includes the contribution of graduate research to this enterprise as one of its key parts. As with all initiatives, these goals and aspirations have to considered with the institution's commitments to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. The plan should be designed with metrics for enrolment, revenue, research funding, and community outreach while benchmarking the growth in each of these areas against other graduate schools in Canada.

All of this can only be achieved with an institutional commitment to alignment with the strategic and academic plans, expanding global and indigenous outreach, and a marketing strategy that is timely - aligned with the annual recruitment and outreach cycles for every stakeholder.

The move to defining the Research and Innovation Enterprise at Nipissing should be part of establishing a brand for the graduate school tied to a broader brand revitalization that has been suggested in Project Integrate that includes the web, recruitment collateral, a commitment of service to everyone – students, faculty and staff, that is uniquely Nipissing with an overarching culture of inclusivity and care.

1. Finance and Data
2. Graduate Recruitment and Marketing
3. Admissions Processes and Policies
4. Graduate Student Funding
5. Supervision and Culture
6. New Program Development and Curricula
7. Alignment With Strategic and Academic Plans
8. Revenue
9. Reporting Structure
10. Retention
11. Collective Agreement

1. FINANCE AND DATA

Discussion Topic: The most glaring challenge we found in exploring the operations, efficiencies, profitability and viabilities of graduate programs was the availability of relevant data. NU operates with divisions as a cost centre, and this makes it challenging to review the fiscal efficacy of each program.

Recommendation 1: Establish each program as a cost centre and allocate the staffing, resource and faculty costs, and all associated cost and revenue lines accordingly both at the undergraduate and graduate levels to be able to accurately evaluate each program on its own. This will have direct and meaningful impacts on efficiencies in the annual budgeting and goal setting process, with increased participation from all the departments and complete visibility into the formula for institutional success at all levels.

Discussion Topic: The absence of a marketing and a graduate recruitment strategy built on the unique benefits and needs of each program, market trends, both national and global, university goals, and resources is a gap that needs to be addressed. The same can be said for the NU brand. Currently the graduate recruitment goals seem to be driven primarily by the gaps in corridor funding, which although important, should not be the biggest, if not the only driving factor in the annual goal setting process and eventually the goals set for recruitment. It is important that marketing play a vital role in every aim articulated below, creating awareness not only internally, but making it part of establishing the NU brand and identity.

Recommendation 2: Create a recruitment plan that is supported by marketing and the following broad guidelines consistent with institutional and budgetary goals.

Trends: Analyse recruitment and marketing data to see if NU receives a large applicant pool from specific institution/s or area/s of the country, internationally? Are certain applicants not committing to your program? Examine, regional and national trends to see if other institutions are experiencing something similar.

Program Strengths: Develop at least three regionally focused benefits of each program to use in recruitment. These may include faculty strengths, research access, student funding, location, job prospects, campus, or student engagement to name a few.

Website: Ensure the website also reflects this information, is easy to find, navigate, and is continually updated to reflect any changes. All ongoing program events, faculty profiles, research highlights, and program associated news etc., are proactively updated including basic content guiding prospective students on how to find a supervisor

Responsiveness: Set benchmarks for responses to inquiries, application acceptance, student funding allocations, student communications and ensure that these continue through post-admission into the enrolment stage in keeping the student engaged.

Discussion Topic: Graduate recruitment and admissions at NU is currently handled by the admissions and recruitment team collaborating with graduate faculty, graduate division leadership and the graduate coordinators. Decisions are made on acceptance/rejection using all paper based legacy methods that may compromise the confidentiality, and equity afforded to each applicant. In addition to this, exceptions that may be needed for certain applicants tend to lack process or supporting policy that delays the acceptance process. The "quality" of information given to inquiries from prospective students and to newly accepted students from a recruitment and admissions point of view seems to be lacking. There are no set expectations provided to applicants with regards to acceptance timelines and delays are a regular part of the acceptance process.

Recommendation 3: Broaden the scope of the proposed CRM under Project INTEGRATE to include graduate admissions and adjudication.

Recommendation 4: Ensure the educational requirements for a Graduate Recruiter is a Master's degree at minimum and bring the graduate admissions process to the Office of Graduate Studies when the application volume justifies this switch. The recommendation for a Graduate Studies Coordinator, and Graduate Academic Advisor to have the same requirements will ensure that recruitment, admissions, advising, and retention are activities that never stop with all graduate inquiries, applicants, students with an offer, and ones that have accepted.

Recommendation 5: The Office of Graduate Studies should collect all known rules and regulations regarding admissions and evaluate whether they remain relevant, efficient or necessary.

Recommendation 6: The AVP of Graduate Studies should manage the exceptions for admissions in compliance with policy and regulations set by the office of the Registrar. Graduate Studies should investigate whether there is a need or value for associated graduate faculty to have access to this information about admissions exceptions and if so, develop a process to collect and share that data without delaying or disrupting the efficiency of the process.

Discussion Topic: Currently NU graduate acceptances are sent out once the funding for each accepted student is established. This has resulted in significant attrition of accepted students due to the delayed nature of this process. Budget allocations to Graduate Studies seem to be unclear at best based on a year over year analysis relative to the enrolment and the growth needed for the University.

Recommendation 7: Decouple the admissions/acceptance process from the funding allocation process. Send offer letters to the student once the student has met the requirements for the program and have a separate deadline/timeline for funding allocations. The period in between these two deadlines is an opportunity to engage with the student from all fronts and ensure the funding package is aligned with their needs and maximizes acceptance of the offer.

Recommendation 8: Allocate funding to Graduate Studies from all applicable avenues at the beginning of the year, enabling meaningful goal setting for all activities including recruitment, marketing, scholarships, bursaries etc. An example would be funding that is not specified for graduate or undergraduate students can be allocated on a percentage basis to Graduate studies at the beginning of the year and adjusted based on utilization during the year. Develop funding models that are equitable, that scale with the regional cost of living, and competes with universities in the area.

Discussion Topic: The supervision of Graduate Students can be one of the most rewarding, and challenging, responsibilities of a faculty member. Generally speaking, there seems to be no strong culture or desire to supervise at NU. Teaching loads, lack of awareness, experience are some of the obstacles indicated when it comes to supervision. Supervision is also not seen as a designated responsibility and is not clearly defined in terms of the workload that a faculty member carries. More than a quarter of the graduate students at NU are overdue or beyond their time to completion, although a direct relationship with supervision has not been examined by this study.

Recommendation 9: Review policies and practices around supervision both at the institutional level and in the collective agreement. Define the obstacles to supervision while developing a framework to foster supervision not only by removing some of these obstacles and perceptions but developing a culture where faculty members are seen as a basic pillar of university education and program development while stressing the fact that despite being a very complex responsibility, it is one of the most important factors that impact student progress in research.

Recommendation 10: Examine the reasons for graduate students going beyond their time to completion and take the necessary steps to address those causes. Mentorship and supervision are highly recommended as suggested solutions in addition to examining relevant policies and application of these policies.

Discussion Topic: Historically, graduate degrees have been associated with a high level of specialization, typically pursued immediately after completing an undergraduate program, aiming for a specific and stable career path, whether it is research, academia or industry. However, a significant number of graduate degree holders now change careers at least once, making their specialized training less relevant. The disconnect between workforce needs and higher education offerings, has been evidenced in multiple academic and industry studies and in almost all cases encourages universities to reimagine graduate education. This reimagined approach suggests that NU equip students with both broad and deep knowledge, enabling them to excel in careers that may not yet exist. It calls for educational innovation that adapts to the ever-evolving market demands for versatility and "intellectual mobility," urging a focus on the future needs of students rather than prioritizing their contribution to the university's teaching and research missions.

Recommendation 11: Pursue a robust portfolio of graduate programs at the degree, certificate and course levels. Develop appropriate metrics for assessing all existing graduate programs, looking for value and relevance, with a strategic consideration of the NU's overall program offerings and its competitors, marketplace, student and workforce needs, and emerging directions.

Recommendation 12: Strengthen NU's current interdisciplinary efforts and strategically target the growth of interdisciplinary opportunities with program revisions and new program development. Close attention to the balance of breadth and depth of course offerings will be important to maximize fiscal efficiency.

Recommendation 13: Extend the reach and breadth of NU's program delivery, specifically with online delivery and partnerships. NU's ability to meet changing demands for how, when, and where students learn is critical to sustaining and growing NU's educational reach from North Bay and to serve underserved communities and people. Increase offerings of certificates and other course offerings and explore ways to leverage existing programs and degrees.

Recommendation 14: Take proactive measures to make graduate studies attractive to undergraduate students. Consider accelerated Master's programs by exploring 3+2 and 4+1 formats as part of a strategy to encourage undergraduate students to continue graduate studies at NU.

Discussion Topic: The current NU Strategic Plan leans very heavily towards indigenous culture, practices and collaboration and there is a lack of evidentiary information that points to the operationalisation of this plan. The risk to the institution and its image is quite substantial if the operationalisation of the plan is perceived as minimal or lacking in effort. Graduate Studies is positioned well to deliver indigenisation at NU by ensuring there is meaningful indigenous content in the graduate program curricula.

Recommendation 15: Develop and embed indigenous content and courses in new and existing programs. Teach diversity and inclusion, ensuring NU graduates, staff, faculty are culturally literate, understand systemic discrimination and how to combat it, and are prepared to be good partners on campus and in a diverse workplace and society.

Discussion topic: Program revenue and program health is always a key part of leadership discussions at NU. As mentioned earlier, the lack of accurate cost allocations by program makes it a discussion that lacks teeth, making all calls and actions for increases in revenue, enrolment, program suspensions challenging to implement given the inaccurate and/or lack of data to make these crucial decisions.

Recommendation 16 : In conjunction with recommendation 1, NU should develop a set of metrics and measurables for program health, that include revenues, costs, funding, enrolment, staffing, to name a few. Macro for annual reviews, and micro for institutional strategic planning and provincial program/federal funding reviews. The macro metrics should allow for continuous improvement throughout while the micro measurements provide the big picture for the institution to make key decisions and to ensure robust reporting to the provincial and federal bodies. From a work culture point of view, it is suggested that larger discussions be under program health, where revenue is one part of a large discussion that involves all of the metrics designed as part of this goal.

Recommendation 17: Develop and offer revenue focused courses through Graduate Studies with existing and new content that are in demand by industry locally, nationally and globally in online and on campus delivery modes. Develop the online delivery model as you go and introduce graduate programs that can be delivered online.

Recommendation 18 : Develop revenue sharing partnerships with international universities to foster faculty and student exchange, curriculum sharing, shared research opportunities and local faculty led online delivery with international partners.

Recommendation 19: Set goals for Advancement in alignment to meet the Graduate Studies' student funding and needs as part of the budget setting process. Graduate studies to reciprocate with lending expertise in fundraising meetings in a planned and proactive basis to help achieve and exceed these goals.

9. REPORTING STRUCTURE

Discussion Topic: The current reporting structure in the Office of Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies is not student centric as there are no distinct lines of reporting with various functions like advising, coordination, supervision to the RIGS office, thus creating a disconnect that leads to ineffective accountability and inefficiencies in how students are served. A study of the current administrative roles also point to mixed and conflicting responsibilities especially to do with the functions above. The current coordinator role seems to be heavily burdened with the workload associated with serving 173 graduate students.

Recommendation 20: Restructure the Associate Dean role to a Dean of Graduate studies. This allows a more meaningful reporting hierarchy where the Associate Deans, Graduate coordinators at the program level have a partial reporting line to the Dean for matters relating to functions and accountabilities directly related to graduate studies and graduate students.

Recommendation 21 : Evaluate the job descriptions for Graduate Coordinators at the program level to ensure the roles are defined with purpose and accountability and that they align meaningfully and functionally with the RIGS Graduate Coordinator role while ensuring it is weighted to one course release in terms of workload. This will allow for increased efficiencies, accountability, student service, and continuity planning and result in an equitable workload for the current coordinator and the proposed advisor role.

Recommendation 22: Create a partial reporting line for the Graduate Recruiter (direct line to the Office of the Registrar) to the Office of RIGS with the eventual goal of transitioning this role completely to RIGS with growth in new student intake volumes.

Recommendation 23: Create a Graduate advisor role with the RIGS office not only to serve students more effectively, but also to create equity in terms of the workload. It is also highly recommended that this role require a graduate degree as a minimum qualification.
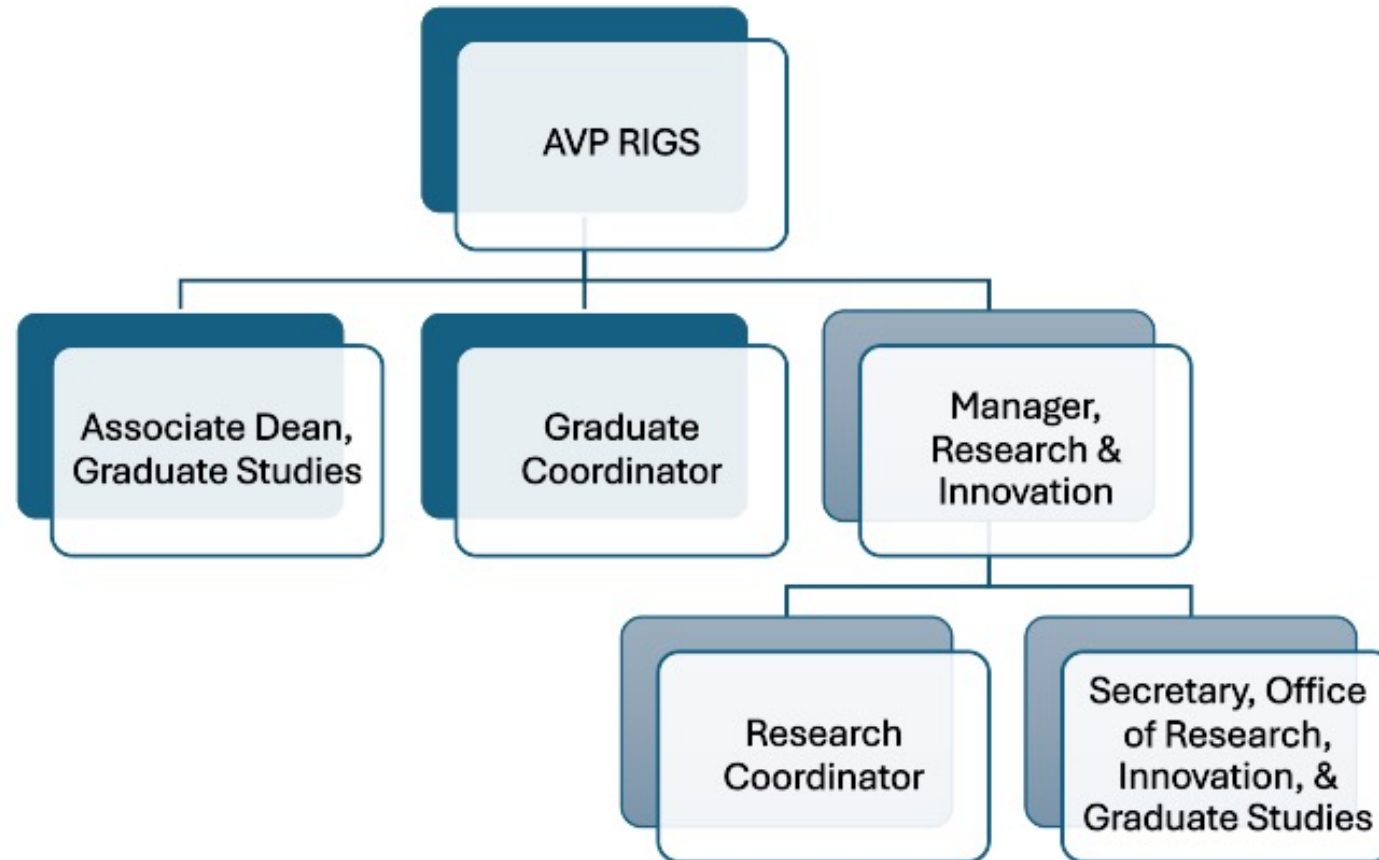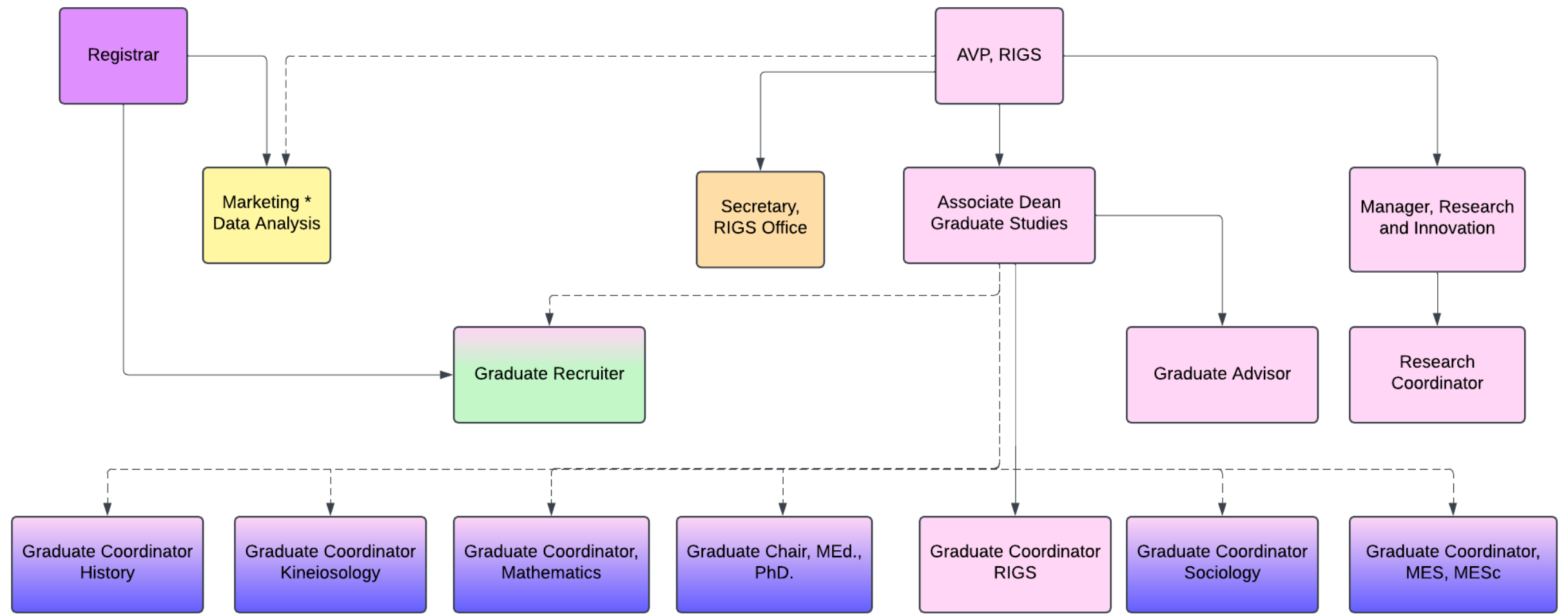
Discussion Topic: Retention efforts start with recruitment and continues to graduation and beyond and is a shared responsibility for everyone at Nipissing University. It is generally believed that the smaller the institution, the greater the collaboration needed to achieve the goals set by the institution including how students, faculty and staff are served. Current gaps in succession and continuity planning with the movement in staff positions have resulted in inefficient team structures and workloads ad should be one of the baseline priorities as it heavily impacts how everyone is served.

Recommendation 24: Develop an onboarding process for students that sets a stage for continuous engagement with the student at every step starting with the inquir**y.**

Recommendation 25: Develop succession and continuity plans in staffing within graduate studies to ensure continuity in service, equity in workloads, and to promote growth and opportunities within the workplace.

Discussion Topic: As NU works with the recommendations in this document, it is crucial that challenges with the collective agreement be considered and weighed against the benefits to the students, the institution, the union, and its members. The changes that are needed can make an accelerated impact with a collaborative environment of transparency and solution/benefit-based discussions.

Recommendation 26: Develop list of priorities and the challenges faced in implementing these priorities specific to the collective agreement. Engage with the union and the to explore specific solutions that maintain the current spirit of the agreement while moving forward in implementing the changes.

Given the above discussion, following is a set of slides that can serve as a roadmap in developing an overall graduate strategy that can first be tailored at an institutional level with broad institutional goals and subsequently populated at each program level with factors that are unique to each program and deliverables that become meaningful for the stakeholders of each program.

The plan is structured under four major pillars with multiple goals under each pillar. For ease of customization and implementation, there are suggested activities listed under each goal. These activities have to be fluid for them to be effective and be owned by their respective stakeholders. Feel free to remove, add, amend these goals at the Graduate Studies division level while maintaining continuity with the institutional goals.

GOALS

1. DEVELOP THE NU GRADUATE SCHOOL IDENTITY

2. DEVELOP A MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN AROUND THE IDENTITY THAT INCLUDES A DISTINCT WEB PRESENCE FOR THE GRADUATE SCHOOL.

3. INCREASE THE GRADUATE STUDENT POPULATION AT NU

4. PROVIDE QUALITY PROGRAMMING, RESEARCH, AND INSTRUCTION.

5. REEXAMINE POLICIES AND PROCESSES TO CREATE ALIGNMENT WITH GOALS AND STRATEGY.

6. DEVELOP DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMPONENTS IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF AND FACULTY AND MENTORING PROGRAMS

STRATEGIC PILLARS

A. Planning, Recruitment and Persistence
B. Professional Development and Mentoring
C. Organizational Transformation
D. Leadership

A₁

CREATE GRADUATE RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND PERSISTENCE PLANS

- Identify goals
- Create, communicate and implement annual recruitment plan
- Admissions and Recruitment training for all graduate divisions and programs
- Develop international recruitment plan/marginalized groups

A₂

RECRUIT AND ENROL A BROADER AND MORE DIVERSE RANGE OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Develop a holistic graduate admissions process
- Identify and eliminate barriers to entry related to eligibility, admissions, access, funding and persistence
- Establish admissions and funding practices that promote equity
- Review criteria in the funding awarding process.

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

A₃

EXPAND GRADUATE STUDENT PIPELINE WITH THE AIM OF CLOSING GAPS IN ACADEMIC OUTCOMES.

- Develop bridge programs with undergraduate programs
- Develop outreach and recruitment strategies to identify and encourage students into graduate programs
- Expand opportunities to attend graduate school early for prospective and current students, and encourage faculty to cultivate undergraduate interest in graduate programs
- Identify and implement financial support practices that promote equity in graduate education.

A₄

IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS STUDENT BASIC NEEDS AND PERSISTENCE.

- Reevaluate and develop an effective student onboarding, orientation and communications process.
- Incorporate culturally relevant and accessible service and advising models. These models should include resources and services within the graduate division for all graduate students
- Identify and address challenges associated with extended continuation. These can include policy reviews, financial support practices, equity related topics, learning challenges, disabilities, mental health concerns.

A5

ESTABLISH A GRADUATE CENTRE AT NU.

- This can include resources, services and spaces that are accessible to all graduate students.
- Space can be utilized to promote interdisciplinary interaction and collaboration and to foster a sense of belonging.
- Increase awareness and visibility of all services available to graduate students.
- Hire a dedicated graduate recruiter that is embedded within the graduate school team reporting to the Associate Registrar Recruitment.

B₁

CREATE MENTORING PROGRAMS AIMED AT ENHANCING EFFECTIVE FACULTY-STUDENT MENTORSHIP

- Develop a faculty mentor training program to enhance mentorship skills, promote equity and inclusion, and foster positive and enriching relationships between mentors and mentees.
- Encourage the establishment of extensive mentorship networks, enabling graduate students to connect with mentors from diverse backgrounds.
- Position Graduate Studies as a leader in faculty-graduate student mentorship and create a centralized hub for sharing best practices.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING

B₂

CREATE AN EXPANDED PORTFOLIO OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES THAT FOCUS ON A DIVERSE RANGE OF CAREER OUTCOMES FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS.

- Promote a cultural shift in academia that equally values all career paths for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.
- Collaborate with campus and community partners to identify internship and job opportunities for graduate students.
- Offer students chances for service learning and community-based learning experiences.
- Incorporate diversity components into professional development programs.
- Collect and publish data regarding graduate career outcomes.

B₃

CONNECT WITH THE GRADUATE ALUMNI COMMUNITY BY DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS THAT EMPHASIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

- Boost the number of alumni participating as active volunteers, advocates, and board members, while enhancing ongoing relationships through improved volunteer engagement.
- Formulate a strategy to maintain alumni involvement in the years following their graduation.
- Establish mentorship networks that connect current students with alumni, fostering a stronger sense of community and providing clearer insights into career pathways.
- Create a pipeline to prepare alumni, donors, and prospective donors for contributions to key areas of graduate education.

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

B₄

DEVELOP NEW DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION COMPONENTS IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING PROGRAMS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROGRAMS AND CAMPUS PARTNERS.

- Incorporate diversity and bias training into faculty mentoring programs.
- Offer resources focused on culturally aware and inclusive mentoring practices.

C₁

ENHANCE THE ORGANIZATIONAL EMPHASIS OF GRADUATE STUDIES ON SERVICE, INCLUSIVITY, WELLNESS, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

- Cultivate a culture of staff development and retention within Graduate Studies by ensuring that leaders at all organizational levels receive training in management skills and cultural competency.
- Enhance assessment and accountability for recruitment outcomes at both the administrative and academic department levels, holding leaders accountable for their hiring decisions and for effectively communicating those decisions to candidates.
- Diversify hiring committees to incorporate a range of perspectives and voices in the evaluation of applicants, thereby promoting excellence in diversity and inclusion within recruitment and hiring practices.
- Proactively employ assessment tools such as exit interviews and turnover metrics to gain insight into employee turnover and take informed actions based on the findings.

C₂

EMBED DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INTO EVERY FACET OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND GRADUATE EDUCATION.

- In partnership with campus stakeholders, decolonise curricula, programs, events, and policies aimed at eliminating racial bias in graduate education and training.
- Provide resources and incentives to support both new and existing departmental and program-based multicultural and anti-racist organizations.
- Drive internal staff development initiatives that cultivate an environment where every individual feels accountable for fostering diversity and inclusion excellence.

C₃

ENHANCE THE PROCESSES, RESOURCES, AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AIMED AT PROVIDING SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE TO GRADUATE PROGRAM STAFF AND FACULTY.

- Establish and sustain comprehensive faculty and staff development programs that focus on sharing best practices in recruitment, program administration, mentoring, and student support.
- Streamline and simplify the existing Graduate Studies funding model to facilitate multi-year financial planning for campus partners.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the internal funding review and disbursement process.
- Strengthen collaboration with academic programs and the Office of Research and Innovation to create resources that aid graduate students in their funding applications and grantsmanship.

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

C₄

ASSIST THE CAMPUS IN ITS INITIATIVES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT NEW PROGRAMS., UG AND GRAD

- Collaborate with other campus units to recommend updates to campus policies and procedures related to program proposals.
- Facilitate and participate in campus committees that support the development of course based, self-supporting and online degree programs.
- Offer consultation to new programs regarding best practices in recruitment, admissions, and financial support.
- Advocate for policy changes that create a more streamlined and efficient program development and review process.

C₅

DRIVE THE CREATION OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT ENHANCE AND ADVANCE OPERATING PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES TO BETTER SERVE THE NEEDS OF NU's STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING STUDENTS, PROGRAM FACULTY, AND STAFF.

- Provide tools that facilitate remote engagement and enhance access to essential support areas, including academic services, advising, financial assistance, and employment/labour, by eliminating constraints related to in-person processes (e.g., approval, receipt, signing, verification), thereby ensuring equitable support for students in various instructional formats (e.g., hybrid and online).
- Generate operational insights to identify and resolve process bottlenecks, improving and optimizing student and business services.
- Utilize new technologies to lessen the administrative workload on faculty and staff in Graduate Studies and graduate programs while maintaining academic oversight.

D₁

ESTABLISH OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS, POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS, FACULTY, AND STAFF TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVE DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY.

- Organize regular town hall meetings and open houses for students, faculty, and staff.
- Work together with the Student 's Union, Student Advisory Committee, and other student organizations.
- Establish channels for the community to provide feedback and request support.

D₂

PUBLICLY ADVOCATE FOR THE NEEDS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS, FOCUSING ON CHALLENGES SUCH AS HOUSING, FOOD SECURITY, MENTAL HEALTH, DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS, RACIAL INEQUITY, CASE MANAGEMENT, AND FUNDING.

- Partner with alumni to expand opportunities for graduate students to work alongside legislators and other community leaders.
- Partner with Marketing &Communications, Government and Community to participate in community-university partnerships, and regional, and global multi-sector consortiums.
- Create Graduate Research Advocacy Day.
- Address the challenges associated with the existing academic employment, funding, and payment schedules.

D₃

ESTABLISH NU GRADUATE STUDIES AS A FRONTRUNNER IN GRADUATE STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, FACULTY-STUDENT MENTORSHIP, COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

- Author and publish articles in academic journals and higher education outlets.
- Showcase innovations at both regional and national higher education conferences.
- Collaborate with Marketing & Communications to enhance the promotion of NU's strengths and unique features to both the campus community and the public. Boost the reach and presence of NU stories in campus, provincial, national, and international media.
- Optimize NU's internal and external communication strategies to strengthen the Graduate Studies brand and enhance awareness of the division and graduate education.

D₄

SECURE PHILANTHROPIC FUNDING TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE OF PROVIDING COMPETITIVE X -YEAR FUNDING FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS.

- **Create a Comprehensive Fundraising Strategy Focused on Student Support**: Develop a detailed plan that outlines specific fundraising goals, target audiences, and outreach methods aimed at enhancing student support.
- **Highlight Success Stories of Fellowship Recipients**: Increase awareness and engagement by sharing impactful stories from recipients of philanthropic fellowships, showcasing how their experiences and achievements have made a difference.
- **Establish Stewardship Plans for Donors**: Design and execute tailored stewardship plans for both individual and corporate donors to ensure they feel valued, informed, and connected to the impact of their contributions

D 5

SEEK OUT AND SECURE ADDITIONAL REVENUE SOURCES TO FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MENTORING, DIVERSITY INITIATIVES, AND GRADUATE PREPARATORY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES.

- **Identify And Pursue Grants:** Actively seek and apply for grants that will fund the expansion of programs.
- **Expand The Donor Pipeline**: Broaden NU's network of potential donors to increase funding opportunities.
- **Train Graduate Studies Team Members**: Provide training on development and fundraising best practices to key members of the Graduate Studies team.
- **Engage Staff And Faculty In Philanthropy**: Educate staff and faculty on the importance of philanthropy and involve them in fostering a culture of giving.
- **Enhance Donor Retention**: Implement focused donor relations and stewardship strategies to improve donor retention rates.

D₆

COLLABORATE WITH CAMPUS LEADERSHIP, GRADUATE GROUP CHAIRS, COORDINATORS, AND FACULTY TO TACKLE FUNDING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION CHALLENGES FACED BY GRADUATE GROUPS.

- **Strengthen partnerships with leaders in all areas at NU**: Continue to build partnerships with leaders, the Business Intelligence and Analytics team, and others to enhance awareness of resources available for graduate groups and their requirements for success.
- **Facilitate discussions on graduate group Needs**: Lead and facilitate conversations to assess the teaching and operational needs of graduate groups.
- **Collaborate with the Office of Research and Innovation**: Work together with the Office of Research and Innovation and other campus leaders to address and enhance funding models for graduate students.

THANK YOU

AARK GLOBAL INC.

Nipissing University
Senate Research Committee Report
September 19, 2025

The SRC met on September 19, 2025.

Members in attendance: B. Law (Chair), S. Arnocky, N. Black, C. Byers (non-voting), C. Cho, K. Sarginson (non-voting), M. Sullivan. Recording Secretary: L. Snoddon, Regrets: H. Zhu. Absent: N. Botham.

Reports from the Office of Research, Innovation & Graduate Studies were distributed prior to the September 19th meeting. Updates included:

- The Alliance of Canadian Comprehensive Research Universities (ACCRU) has a new website and online newsletter to share news relevant to small and mid-sized universities
- Universities completed the second annual mandatory disclosure of international research partnerships to the province in July 2025.
- NU's Research Support Fund (RSF) for 2025 is $433,100, a decrease of $35,602 from 2024. The value of the RSF is based on Tri-Agency funds received by NU.
- Funding received through the CRC EDI program allowed ORIGS to offer The Fundamentals of OCAP® training course to interested faculty and graduate students.
- The Research Rendezvous schedule for 2025-26 can be found on the ORIGS website. The October session will be a primer on Internal Research Grant offerings.

New Business included:

- Review of the Senate Research Committee Terms of Reference
- Election of Senate Research Committee Vice-Chair for 2025-2026 – C. Cho acclaimed.
- Approval of SRC Workplan 2025-2026

Discussion topics included:

- Strategic Research Plan updates
- Institutional Research Data Management Strategy implementation process
- Student Research Opportunities Fund framework feedback

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Law

B. Law
Chair, Senate Research Committee

Motion 1: That Senate receives the report of the Senate Research Committee, dated September 19, 2025, which includes for information:

a) Senate Research Committee 2025-2026 Workplan

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

REPORT OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

September 18, 2025

Attendance: Graydon Raymer, Nancy Black, Trevor Smith, Steve Cairns, Derek Neal

Guests: Charles Anyinam

Recording Secretary: Stephanie Young.

Regrets were received from Louela Manankil-Rankin

The minutes of the meeting held on July 2nd, 2025 were unanimously adopted. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

The Dean reported that preparatory activities for the outdoor classroom are underway, including site clearing and ground preparation. Timber delivery is expected, with further information to be provided by Facilities. The interview process for the position of Director of the Teaching Hub has concluded, and an offer has been extended to a selected candidate. The Ad Hoc committee on The Use of Generative AI in Instructional Settings, chaired by Graydon Raymer due to the absence of a Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), was formed based on recommendations from APOP. This committee is working to provide recommendations to Senate and related committees this year.

2025-26 Work Plan
The work plan for 2025-2026 for the Teaching and Learning Committee will be updated after scheduling winter meeting dates. The work plan will be submitted to the Senate Executive Committee for Senate transmission. The work plan was approved unanimously .

New Business
SCES Discussion and Question Bank Validation
Questions were raised at Senate regarding the internal consistency, reliability, and validation of the Student Course Experience Surveys (SCES), especially when student response rates are low. Questions were raised about whether the tool accurately measures intended feedback. It was noted that Nipissing University adopted the validated core questions from the University of Toronto. It was emphasized that student experience is only one measure of teaching effectiveness. Suggestions included modularizing the tool, updating questions and prompts, and improving communication to faculty and students to enhance data accuracy.

NICE Conference (Steve Cairns)
Steve Cairns reports the NICE Conference had between 74 and 78 attendees last year, with interest in continuing the event. Institutional support is desired, with Steven Cairns serving as Chair of the committee. The conference is partnered with Laurentian University, Cambrian College, and the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College in Toronto. Promotion efforts will include sharing information with EPS faculty and schools.

Chair Elections
There were no nominations for Chair

Vice-Chair Elections
Pat Maher self-nominated for Vice-Chair and was acclaimed to the position.

Adjournment and Next Meeting
The meeting was adjourned with the next meeting scheduled for October 28th, 2025 .

Respectfully submitted,

G. Raymer
Dean, Faculty of Education and Professional Studies

MOTION 1: That Senate receive the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated September 18, 2025, which includes for information:
   a) the Teaching and Learning Committee 2025-26 Work Plan