



SENATE MINUTES

Hybrid Meeting – SBC, Waterloo
Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Present: D. MacLatchy (Chair), A. Acharya, W. Arshad, M. Barua, J. Blair, T. Britz, T. Brookfield, J. Cairns, C-A. Cait, M. Cantalini-Williams, L. Chu, K. Clarke, V. Collis, J. Coolman, A. Davis, L. Dawe, D. Dee, S. Doherty, K. Dowler, G. Edwards, M. Emery, A. Essaji, G. Foster, S. Gillies, D. Gray, L. Habtemichael, A. Hansra, D. Henderson, A. Herman, S. Hu, D. Hunt, P. Ironstone, C. Johnston Turner, L. Keeping, D. Kelly, M. Kelly, D. Kojutek, S. Lachapelle, J. Lavery, K. Lund, P. Mallet, D. Maoz, D. Martin, C. Matheson, K. McCrae-Bristol, R. McGowan, T. McLaren, R. McLeman, R. Monaghan, K. Murray, J. Newman, S. Perry, V. Philip, J. Popham, S. Poynter, S. Risavy, J. Rusin, C. Shiamptanis, M. Skop, J. Straub, D. Thomas, D. Van Nijnatten, M. Wiebe, B. Wolfe, M. Woodford

Absent: J. Crowell, G. Dilworth, A. Domurath, T. Gibson, A-R. Mawlood-Yunis, E. Mazaheri, G. Yun

Regrets: S. Chan, I. Hamza, L. King, N. Patel

Secretariat: K. Jack, A. Kornobis, P. Marfisi, B. Norwich

Open Session

1. Call to Order

a. Land Acknowledgement

Following the land acknowledgment, the chair welcomed the new alumni Senator, Donald Hunt to Senate.

b. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

c. Approval of the Consent Agenda

No concerns were expressed following the chair's request to amend the agenda to include a brief confidential session during the discussion of the budget under agenda item 5.b. due to an embargo by the province on some details.

Motion (P. Ironstone/S. Lachapelle): that Senate approve the Consent

items listed for approval under item 11.a. **Carried, as amended.**

2. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

There was no business arising.

3. Leadership Update

a. Report of the President

D. MacLatchy provided a brief update on recent and coming activities, including: the February 15 Brantford Campus Purple and Gold Party welcomed more than 1,400 community members to family-friendly activities; the 9th annual International Women's Day luncheon will be held this Friday in partnership with the International Women's Forum Waterloo Chapter, focusing on strengthening education from kindergarten through university and featuring Dean Maria Cantalini-Williams and two Laurier alumni as panelists. In her government relations update: provincially, the government announced a new long-term postsecondary funding and tuition framework, including increased operating funding, tuition increases, and changes to OSAP, with Laurier reviewing impacts through the 2026/27 budget process; a financial information session will be held in late April; the university welcomed more predictable funding but noted concerns about the potential impact of OSAP changes on students with financial need and will continue monitoring and enhancing institutional supports; federally, recent announcements signal an increased focus on defence research and artificial intelligence investment, which Laurier will continue to monitor; municipally, Laurier is working with the city and Waterloo Regional Police Service to discourage unsanctioned St. Patrick's Day street gatherings through coordinated operational planning and student outreach.

In response to a question, Mike Emery, assistant vice-president: enrolment services and registrar spoke to some of the financial supports available to students.

b. Report of the Interim Provost and VP Academic

T. McLaren briefly reported on consultations with the province about merit-based admissions and ancillary fees coming out of Bill 33, and she spoke to some of the things Laurier has in place already. She advised that the Senate *ad hoc* Academic Structure Subcommittee will bring its draft guiding principles for its work to the April meeting for discussion and feedback and the guiding principles will return in May for approval. There were no questions.

c. Report from the Board of Governors

L. Chu provided Senators with a brief review of the February meeting of the Board of Governors. There were no questions.

Reports and Recommendations from Standing Committees

4. Senate Academic Planning Committee

a. Embargoed: Faculty of Law

T. McLaren reminded Senators of the discussion at the last meeting and she offered some commentary to frame the context of the proposal and outline next steps. In discussion: if the regulatory bodies approve Laurier offering a JD, a full proposal for the Faculty of Law including financial details will follow through the usual governance processes; clarification that a recommendation by Senate to recommend the Board of Governor endorse the creation of a Faculty in principle will demonstrate to external parties support by the University's highest governance bodies; some details about demand.

Motion (A. Essaji/T. Brookfield): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate recommend that the Board of Governors endorse in principle the creation of a Faculty of Law, contingent on the approval of the Juris Doctor program by the relevant regulatory authorities. **Carried.**

b. Course Drop Dates

D. Van Nijnatten introduced the proposed changes and asked for a friendly amendment to remove reference to the Graduate Academic Calendar. Jason Roy, associate dean, Faculty of Arts provided members with further details about why they are being recommended.

In discussion: some of the considerations contemplated in making this recommendation including impacts on instructors and students; that the date the request is submitted will be used as the drop date; students should seek advice about potential impacts on OSAP funding; no potential pressure points of concern have been identified; a financial penalty will be incurred, but the change will alleviate other pressures faced by students; making the change will align Laurier with many provincial colleagues; agreement to look into not using course evaluations from students who drop courses in instructor evaluations.

Motion (D. Van Nijnatten/J. Straub): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes in the 2026/2027 Undergraduate Academic Calendar to establish two distinct drop dates: 1. A course drop date for a possible tuition adjustment (at course rate), and 2. A course drop date without failure. **Carried, as amended.**

c. GPA-Only Withdraw Decisions

D. Van Nijnatten briefly introduced the proposed changes and Jason Roy spoke to some of the details driving them, including that Laurier is one of only four Ontario universities with such a rule, the administrative burden that will be

lightened, and most importantly, that students who are doing well will not be harshly penalized for early poor performance.

In discussion: if approved, the change will be implemented immediately, and recently affected students may petition for its application.

Motion (D. Van Nijnatten/S. Lachapelle): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes in the 2026/2027 Undergraduate Academic Calendar, to reflect GPA-only withdraw decisions, effective immediately. **Carried.**

d. Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

B. Wolfe offered introductory comments before each submission. There were no questions.

- i) Major Modification, Graduate Diploma in Applied Expressive Arts and Psychotherapy, Martin Luther College

Motion (B. Wolfe/D. Maoz): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the creation of a Type 2 and Type 3 Graduate Diploma in Applied Expressive Arts and Psychotherapy. **Carried.**

- ii) Major Modification, Master of Applied Politics

Motion (B. Wolfe/S. Lachapelle): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the creation of a Type 1 Graduate Diploma in Applied Politics. **Carried.**

- iii) Major Modification, PhD in Religious Studies

Motion (B. Wolfe/S. Lachapelle): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the name and requirements of the PhD in Religious Studies, along with the deletion of the Religious Diversity in North America graduate field. **Carried.**

e. Faculty of Arts

S. Lachapelle introduced each item and in response to a question noted that the new certificate in 4.e.i. is open to all students.

- i) Certificate in Ethics, Philosophy

Motion (S. Lachapelle/D. Van Nijnatten): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the creation of a new for-credit Certificate in Ethics. **Carried.**

ii) Major Modification, History

Motion (S. Lachapelle/T. Brookfield): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the deletion of the Digital Humanities Option. **Carried.**

iii) Major Modification, History

Motion (S. Lachapelle/D. Van Nijnatten): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the closure of the Public History Minor. **Carried.**

f. Faculty of Science

R. Monaghan provided members with an overview of the proposed changes and Senate heard the three items as an omnibus motion. [Secretary's Note: subsequent to the meeting it was noted that the items were mistakenly described as from "Geography and Environmental Studies" but were instead from "Environmental Studies".]

i) Major Modification, Environmental Studies

Motion (R. Monaghan/L. Dawe): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the program requirements for the Honours BSc Environmental Science program. **Carried.**

ii) Major Modification, Environmental Studies

Motion (R. Monaghan/L. Dawe): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the addition of five concentrations for the Honours BSc Environmental Science program. **Carried.**

iii) Major Modification, Environmental Studies

Motion (R. Monaghan/L. Dawe): that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the deletion of the Environmental Science Research Specialization. **Carried.**

5. Senate Executive and Finance Committee

a. 2025-2026 6-Month Fiscal Update

Z. Danis spoke to an abbreviated version of the presentation distributed with the agenda, highlighting: budget to actuals variance for May 1 through October 31; the consolidated operating and ancillary fund Q2 results; the operating fund and forecast; the current positive results and that ongoing monitoring will continue as usual. There were no questions.

b. 2026-2027 Budget Development Update

D. Martin and H. Northwood spoke to their presentation, highlighting: the budget context; this year's budget details; some early considerations about the budget's building blocks; reserves; next steps, including the hope that the budget will move through for consideration and approval in April.

Members discussed some of the considerations related to faculty ratios and heard from the chair that long term stability and sustainability remain the goals.

Senate heard a motion to move *in camera*.

Motion(A. Essaji/M. Woodford) : that the committee move to *in camera*.
Carried.

6. Senate Committee on Research and Publication

J. Newman commented on the proposed changes to the two policies and Senate heard the two motions as an omnibus motion.

a. Policy Revision: 11.1, Establishment, Operations and Review of Research Centres

Motion (J. Newman/B. Wolfe): that on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Research and Publication that Senate approve the proposed changes to Policy 11.1, Establishment, Operations and Review of Research Centres, effective immediately. **Carried.**

b. Policy Revision: 11.2, Contract Research

Motion (J. Newman/B. Wolfe): that on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Research and Publication that Senate approve the proposed changes to Policy 11.2, Contract Research, effective immediately. **Carried.**

7. Matters from the Consent Section of the Agenda

None.

8. Other Business

b. President and Vice-Chancellor Nominating Committee Consultation

A. Kornobis reminded Senators about the formation of the committee tasked with identifying Laurier's next president and vice-chancellor. She advised that part of the process includes consultations with the Laurier community and external partners and an in-person consultation is being planned to take place in Waterloo before the April 8, 2026 Senate meeting with details and an invitation to follow soon.

c. Pre-submitted Questions

Senators heard that Senator P. Ironstone submitted questions in advance of the meeting and she was invited to share them. Members heard that her questions are the result of several conversations with colleagues and relate to digital sovereignty. She read her questions which are summarized in the following statement: *In light of increasing geopolitical tensions and policy shifts affecting US-based digital platforms and services, what strategic plans and risk assessments does the university have in place to address potential volatility in reliance on platforms such as Microsoft 365, particularly regarding questions of data sovereignty, security, surveillance, and intellectual?* Senator Ironstone further clarified that she was inquiring about what considerations are in place regarding the storage location of data, whether contingency plans exist in the event of a need to change systems, about metadata usage, and about legal requirements.

At the chair's invitation, Matt McKarney, acting general counsel and Nela Petkovic, chief information officer in turn offered relevant commentary. M. McKarney summarized the legal perspective; clarified that the University takes reasonable efforts to ensure that data is stored in Canada, but that it is not a legal requirement to do so; and spoke to some ways these issues are managed in contracts. N. Petkovic spoke to the use of privacy and security impact assessments; technical controls; that data at rest resides in Canada, but there is less control over data in transit, but that it is encrypted; ongoing conversations with Canadian colleagues to monitor developments; and that similar to their work in Europe, local solutions are being sought by vendors.

9. Q&A

There were no questions.

10. Adjournment

Senate adjourned by consensus.

11. Consent Items

a. Items for Approval

- i. Agenda
- ii. Draft Minutes of the January 26, 2026 Senate Meeting
- iii. Substantive Minor Modification, Youth and Children's Studies
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes in program requirements for the Honours BA Youth and Children's Studies, Honours BA Youth and Children's Studies in Combination with another Honours BA Program, the Youth and Children's Studies Minor, and the general BA Youth and Children's Studies, including the editorial minor changes, as presented.

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- iv. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Applied Politics; MA in Communication Studies; MA in Cultural Analysis and Social Theory; MA in English and Film Studies; MA in History; MA in Global Justice, Religion and Culture
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the admission requirements to the Master of Applied Politics and the Master of Arts in the following programs: Communication Studies; Cultural Analysis and Social Theory; English and Film Studies; History; Global Justice, Religion & Culture.
- v. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Arts in Communication Studies
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the re-introduction of an oral examination as part of the MA degree in Communication Studies.
- vi. Substantive Minor Modification, PhD in English and Film Studies
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve a change in degree requirements for the PhD in English and Film Studies to remove the second language requirement.
- vii. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Education
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the program requirements of the Master of Education, Student Affairs field.
- viii. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Science in Mathematics
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the admission requirements of the Master of Science Mathematics.
- ix. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Arts in Psychology
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the program requirements for the MA in Psychology - Social Psychology field.
- x. Substantive Minor Modification, PhD in Psychology
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the course changes and changes to the program requirements of the PhD in Psychology - Social Psychology field.
- xi. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Finance/ Master of Science in Management Analytics (double-degree) Program
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the change in program requirements for the MFin/MMA Double Degree program.
- xii. Substantive Minor Modification, Master of Business Administration
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes in program requirements for the Master of Business Administration program.
- xiii. Substantive Minor Modification, Bachelor of Education
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning

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- Committee, the Senate approve the change to progression requirements for the FSL Program within the Bachelor of Education.
- xiv. Substantive Minor Modification, History
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the changes to the Public History Specialization.
- xv. Substantive Minor Modification, Global Studies in collaboration with the International Education Studies Program in the Faculty of Education
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the removal of the GS 394 course as a program requirement in the Honours Bachelor of Arts, International Education Studies (IES) program.
- xvi. Substantive Minor Modification, Women and Gender Studies Program
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the addition of WS101 (new course) to the required courses for HBA Women and Gender Studies, HBA Women and Gender Studies in Combination, and the Women and Gender Studies Minor.
- xvii. Substantive Minor Modification, Chemistry & Biochemistry
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes to program requirements Honours BSc Biochemistry and Biotechnology.
- xviii. Substantive Minor Modification, Chemistry & Biochemistry
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes to program requirements Honours BSc Biochemistry and Biotechnology with Thesis.
- xix. Substantive Minor Modification, Chemistry & Biochemistry
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes to program requirements Honours BSc Chemistry.
- xx. Substantive Minor Modification, Chemistry & Biochemistry
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve changes to program requirements Honours BSc Chemistry with Thesis.
- xxi. Substantive Minor, Kinesiology and Physical Education
Motion: that on the recommendation of the Academic Planning Committee, the Senate approve the removal of 96 hours of leadership experiences from the program requirements of the Honours Bachelor of Kinesiology program.
- b. Items for Information
- i. Reports of the Senior Executives
 - ii. Winter Enrolment Report
 - iii. Early Career Researcher Awards