

**Innis College Council  
319th Meeting  
Monday, February 24 at 4:30 pm  
Innis Residence Events Room**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Ennis Blentic (assessor), Donald Boere (assessor), Jannie Chien, Kimlin Chin, Lauren Cramer, Anica Dang, Joyce Hahn (assessor), Kate Johnson, Paul Kaita, Charlie Keil, Daniel Li, Annie Liu, Steve Masse (assessor), Merle McMurray, Daniela Pirraglia, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, Ashlee Redmond, Noel Simpson, Tara Suri, Bart Testa, Joanne Uyede, Ben Weststrate (secretary), Carol Ye, Louisa You, Andrew Zhao

**Regrets:** Aliza Aziz Lakho, Maria Bon, Shauna Brail, James Cahill, Winston Chan, Grace Choi, Mira Chow, Sharon English, Angelica Fenner, Lucas Granger, Didier Ha, Eyan Logan, Daria Mancino, Mynt Marsellus, Josie Meza-Silva, Mukti Patel, Tony Pi, Jeffrey Ye, Nancy Zhao

### **1. SPEAKER'S REMARKS**

Joanne Uyede chaired the meeting.

### **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

A motion to approve [the minutes of the previous meeting](#) was moved (Ramkhalawansingh), seconded (Testa), and carried.

### **3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None reported

### **4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Principal Keil reported the following:

- **Staffing changes:**
  - Newly hired sessional teaching staff:
    - Urban Studies: **Dylan Simone** (PhD, Geography & Planning)
    - Cinema Studies Institute: **Izabella Füzi** (Visiting lecturer, Hungarian Studies Program, CERES)
  - **Sarah Burley Hollows** left the assistant dean, Student Life, position on January 17, for an opportunity at York University.
  - **Arabelle Arcaina** was hired as acting student life coordinator, following Burley Hollows' departure.
  - **Miriam Moren** will assume the newly reworked financial services officer position on March 9.

- **Review of the Role of the Colleges on St. George Campus**

Principal Keil described a [comprehensive provostial review of the colleges](#) that is currently underway. The provost leads a six-person steering committee, of which Principal Keil is a member, that oversees five working groups. Innis Registrar Donald Boere sits on the Recruitment, Admissions, and Enrolment Planning working group. Council members were invited to utilize Principal Keil as a conduit for (written) input to the steering committee. He will report on the review process at future council meetings.

## 5. BOARD REPORTS

### A. Academic Affairs

Did not meet

### B. College Affairs

Did not meet

### C. Community Affairs

[Click here to view the minutes of a December 11, 2019 meeting of the Board.](#)

Li reported the following highlights on behalf of board moderator Mancino:

- The **Renewal and Expansion fundraising campaign** is in a “quiet phase” and will become more public once the halfway fundraising goal is met (i.e., \$5 million)
- The **Alumni Mentorship Program** saw a significant increase in participation this year.
- The second annual **Innis Alumni Lecture** is on March 30 with historian Jeremy Adelman (BA '84 Innis).
- The College thanks **Later Life Learning** for its cumulative ~ \$20,000 donation from the Fall 2019 “Week of Giving” campaign. An additional \$2,000 was raised at the annual Refugee Student Benefit Concert on December 6.
- The 2019 **Harold Innis Lecture** with Dionne Brand was well attended and well received. Jesse Wente (BA '96 Innis, Cinema Studies) will give the 2020 lecture.
- The Board approved the establishment of an **Art Committee** to facilitate the selection and installation of student art in the College. Interested artists should contact Mancino or Weststrate.

### D. Student Affairs

Did not meet. The Student Services Committee is scheduled to meet on March 5 at 2:30 pm.

## 6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

No report

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

## A. Guest speaker: Caroline Rabbat, director—Critical Incidents, Safety & Health Awareness, Faculty of Arts & Science

Principal Keil introduced guest Caroline Rabbat, who was invited to discuss [the Presidential and Provostial Task Force Report on Student Mental Health](#).

Rabbat described her role on the task force as an outreach and engagement co-lead. In this role, she gathered feedback through in-person sessions with students, staff, and faculty and an online forum. The process followed a four-part mandate ([see Report, p. 3](#)). Rabbat pointed to two dominant, emergent themes: how U of T culture plays a role in student wellness; and how academic policies can act as barriers for students. The consolidated feedback was reported to the Task Force in Fall 2019 and, Rabbat noted, is reflected in the Report's 21 recommendations.

Council discussion ensued. Rabbat added and clarified the following.

The notion of decoupling “academic rigor and competition” emerged from the outreach process, where “excellence” needs to be expanded beyond grades and research production; it should be achieved through balance. Liu concurred, adding that the idea of lack of self-care has become so ingrained in the U of T student identity it is even joked about.

Loneliness, difficulty connecting with others, and feeling that no one cares were prevalent in the feedback. For U of T's largely commuting student population, this points to increasing student space. Creating a supportive community across multiple facets of the university is a shared responsibility. Community is not found in a singular place.

Student members of council supported Rabbat's observation that a problematic “culture of perpetual busyness” is experienced, wherein students feel compelled to shed other interests, hobbies, and activities to focus on academics.

Rabbat is working with the dean to identify strategic, relevant priorities at the faculty level. Education and training is one priority. Numerous Identify/Assist/Refer and SafeTalk sessions have been offered since September. Resource navigation support for students and for faculty (e.g., switchboard operator) is a second priority. The Faculty assembled an advisory committee with majority student representation. Community-building efforts are underway (e.g., welcome back event with the dean). To foster dialogue, A&S is looking to launch a podcast with faculty and students, sharing lived experiences about mental health. Rabbat invited direct feedback on how to best deliver this initiative.

A&S Council approved a special committee on academic policy; the call for nominees just began. ASSU monthly meetings with the dean are another effective channel to convey student feedback.

Keil pointed to small-class first-year learning experiences as a policy-driven way to combat anonymity and generate a culture of caring, adding that students will look within the classroom

to find community support in lieu of their college.

Boere noted that CR/NCR and 6.0 100-level maximum course policies are being reviewed. He added that Registrar's Offices often act as gateways to mental health support and inquired about the pathways for staff to refer students to the Faculty.

When a student encounters an in-class policy infringement by a professor (e.g., will not accept a late assignment), Rabbat indicated that the Dean's Office should directly receive such reports. Regarding verification of illness procedures, the Faculty should not handle such confidential information but should turn to the college registrars. Boere observed that some students wait a week to be seen by their registrar.

Rabbat emphasized the need for members of the community to bring infringements to the attention of college leadership as soon as possible (e.g., principal, registrar, dean's office).

In response to Hahn's inquiry about resource allocation to fund service (e.g., counselling) increases, Rabbat stated that increasing collective support from services (e.g., Multifaith Centre) beyond the number of psychologists is necessary.

## **B. Academic Motivation Sessions**

The Innis Registrar's Office is reprising its workshop series, [\*What Motivates You?\*](#), on March 10, 13, 16, and 18.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved (Pirraglia), seconded (Johnson), and carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm.