

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS – SPECIAL MEETING

OPEN SESSION

April 8, 2020

The Open Session of the special Board of Governors meeting was held on Wednesday, April 8, 2020, at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom Remote Conferencing.

Members Present: Tom Palangio, Board Chair
Karen Barnes
Marianne Berube
Paul Cook
Fran Couchie
Mitchell Crown
Mike DeGagné
Hilary Earl
Donna Forget
Ryan Hehn
Stuart Kidd
Toivo Koivukoski
Denyse Lafrance Horning
Joanne Laplante
Hannah Mackie
Karl Neubert
Bobby Ray
Judy Smith
Tayler Sullivan
Stephen Tedesco
Rick Vanderlee
Kathy Wilcox

Regrets: N/A

Invited Guests: Cheryl Sutton
Arja Vainio-Mattila
Casey Phillips
Jim McAuliffe
Pavlina Radia
Carole Richardson
Debra lafrate
Charlotte Foster
Maggie Daniel
Christine Dowdall (University Secretary)

Observers: N/A

Recording Secretary: Abby Blaszczyk (Executive Assistant, President's Office)

1. Call to Order/Land Acknowledgment

Following roll call, the meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m. The Board Chair offered a traditional land acknowledgement.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The Board Chair called for conflicts of interest concerning any of the agenda items. No such declarations were made.

3. Use of Recording and/or Broadcasting Devices

The Board Chair reminded everyone that only pre-approved methods of recording and/or broadcasting devices may be used during the meeting. Disseminating any information during the meeting is prohibited.

4. Adoption of Open Session Agenda

Resolution 2020-04-01: ***That the Board of Governors adopt the agenda for the Open Session of the April 8, 2020, special meeting as circulated.***

*Moved by Stuart Kidd; seconded by Karen Barnes.
Carried.*

5. Chair's Remarks

No remarks.

6. President's Remarks

- COVID-19 Response – Update

The President reported that regular discussions continue with the Council of Ontario Universities and Universities Canada, including talks regarding international students, perspectives on summer and fall semesters, and some positive announcements around emergency support for post-secondary institutions.

Dr. DeGagné turned the floor over to the Vice-Presidents to provide some detailed updates from their specific areas.

7. Vice-President's Remarks

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic & Research (PVPAR) spoke to her written report which was circulated with the agenda. She highlighted a number of items, including the efforts put forth by faculty and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conversations with our international recruitment partners in India and a focus on converting offers to acceptances through Recruitment. The PVPAR also spoke about the decision to shift all spring/summer courses to an online format, stating that discussions regarding the fall term are ongoing.

A question was raised regarding summer education programs for Indigenous students and the issue of accessibility due to the necessary shift to online delivery. The Dean of Education and Professional Studies noted that discussions have taken place with First Nations communities regarding what types of technology students already have access to and what they might require in order to be successful. It is expected the programs will need to be extended in order to accommodate all students.

Several other questions were addressed, including an inquiry on whether or not additional resources will be dedicated to converting courses to an online format. To date, Learning Systems Technologists have been remobilized for assistance, and as the budget is developed, we continue to prepare for a number of possibilities for course delivery.

The Vice-President, Finance & Administration (VPFA) provided a high-level listing of a variety of ongoing activities within the administration as well as a detailed timeline of the institutional response to the COVID-19 pandemic as the University has now shifted to a business continuity phase. She expressed her gratitude to the University Management Group for the level of calmness, collegiality and leadership displayed during this time.

The VPFA also spoke to a number of government announcements, including a crisis relief fund for post-secondary institutions and the formal delay of the Strategic Mandate Agreement 3 (SMA3). In response to a question regarding the delayed SMA3s and the funding model that will be used for the 2020-21 school year, the VPFA responded that the University expects funding will remain as is for the foreseeable future.

A discussion surrounding scenario planning for the fall semester followed. The President spoke to the importance of taking an incremental approach to decision making as reliable information becomes available.

The Assistant Vice-President, Students provided a detailed overview of all departments within Student Services and how they have adapted to alternative work environments in order to continue to provide services to students. These include a continuation of counselling services, ensuring any accessibility needs are being met, and addressing any complex mental health cases as they transition to home environments. The AVP, Students also addressed international initiatives, which has seen all but two of our outgoing exchange students return to Canada. Four of our incoming exchanges remain, and all international degree students have remained in North Bay. In order to support students, the student foodbank has been moved from the main campus to Chancellors House for easier access.

The AVP, Students also spoke to the Student Emergency Fund, which will provide financial assistance to those students who are unable to meet immediate, essential and basic needs. The Nipissing University Alumni Association Board has made a significant contribution to this initiative, and the website for applications will be launched shortly.

8. Question Period

A Board member raised a question about the institution's decision to postpone convocation and whether that will prevent students from graduating. It was noted that graduation and convocation are two separate entities, and upon approval at Senate, those eligible to graduate will receive their degrees.

9. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

10. Next Meeting Dates/Adjournment

The Board will continue to hold meetings, when and if necessary, throughout the spring and summer.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Governors is scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.

Resolution 2020-04-02: ***That the Open Session of the Board of Governors' special meeting now adjourn.***

*Moved by Marianne Berube; seconded by Karen Barnes
Carried.*

Open session adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

President & Vice-Chancellor/Secretary of the Board

Board Chair

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY BOARD OF GOVERNORS

SPECIAL MEETING

OPEN SESSION

April 8, 2020

1:30 p.m. – Zoom Remote Conferencing

AGENDA

Zoom Connection for Virtual Attendance: <https://zoom.us/j/681220961>

Roll Call

1. Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement

“As we begin this 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 meeting on these lands with all our relatives.”

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

3. Use of Recording and/or Broadcasting Devices

“Only pre-approved methods of recording and/or broadcasting devices (such as today's Zoom connection) may be used. Disseminating any information during the meeting is prohibited.”

4. Adoption of Open Session Agenda

Resolution: *That the Board of Governors adopt the agenda for the Open Session of the April 8, 2020, special meeting as circulated.*

5. Chair’s Remarks

6. President’s Remarks

- COVID-19 Response – Update

7. Vice-President’s Remarks

- Provost and Vice President, Academic & Research
- Vice-President, Finance & Administration
- Assistant Vice-President, Students

8. Question Period

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting Date/Adjournment

Resolution: *That the Open Session of the Board of Governors' special meeting now adjourn.*

Time: _____

Board Update 8th April 2020

Arja Vainio-Mattila

Goal: Nipissing remains open, delivering on its programmes and associated learning outcomes.

- Many functions of the university continue on schedule, for example, Senate and its committees, quality assurance reviews (4 underway), promotion and tenure processes, Chancellors awards, Teaching Chairs, research supports, institutional planning and research, Faculty Council (A&S).
- Many other functions have adjusted, and are continuing with new ways of doing things, for example, applications, admissions, offers, transcripts, degree audits, student advising, recruitment for both undergraduate and graduate students
- Focus is on communication with students regarding their programmes.

Recruitment, Admission, and Advising:

- Recruitment is focusing on virtual conversion opportunities for prospective students, including live tours, virtual mock lectures and live Q&A sessions.
- All admission offers are up to date and continue to be processed
- The academic advising team continues to support students remotely, including creating workshops to help prepare 1st year students moving into 2nd year
- To help support our students during this time we've extended the academic deadline to withdrawal from a course to May 3rd (from March 6th). This gives students the opportunity to withdraw from a course without a negative impact their GPA.
- Unlike most of our provincial counterparts our spring/summer term will begin as scheduled, most courses, 141 out of 155, were scheduled to be offered online. The Deans are working with the faculty to move the remaining course to remote delivery.
- Our managers are meeting regularly with provincial counterparts to ensure we're making the appropriate provisions and accommodations for our students. This includes how we can make admission decisions when students may not have completed their final year of high school, delay in submitting grades and considering extending the June 1st deadline to accept an offer.

Our admission #'s:

- Applications are down 9% vs. same time last year
- Offers are also down 11% vs. same time last year
- Acceptances are down 14% vs. same time last year

Although our numbers are down from last year and it's difficult to anticipate the impact the pandemic will have on admissions we continue to focus on conversion. We're proud to say that conversion (offers to acceptances) has increased in the following programs: Biology, Nursing, Business, Math & Computer Science, English, Geography, and Sociology & Anthropology

Teaching:

- Winter term was finalized through alternative delivery, i.e. remote or online delivery, redesign of assessments, prorating of grades. All classes were cancelled for March 16th and 17th to allow for preparation, with alternative delivery beginning on March 18th. Support through the Teaching Hub was announced for Faculty to move on-site courses to on-line environments. (Communicated on March 12th). Workshops on using Blackboard Learn and Blackboard Collaborate were run March 13th, 16th, and 17th. More than 40 Faculty attended.
- All on-site exams were cancelled (Communicated on March 17th)
- Communication re placements in various programmes initiated between students and programmes in mid-March, remains an ongoing concern.
- SS academic programmes will all be remote delivery (Communicated March 30th)
- Extended deadline to withdraw without academic penalty to after receiving grades, giving students the choice to keep a grade or re-take the course. (Communicated April 1st)
- Blackboard Learn (our Learning Management System) migration was supposed to take place in May, new dates in June and August are being discussed in order not to disrupt continued on-line delivery.
- Working with OII, SDS, and UTS to see whether we can secure iPads with sim-cards (or similar) for students in indigenous programming during summer (Indigenous Summer Institute, Indigenous Teacher Education Programme, Classroom Assistant Programme, and Language Teacher Programme).
- Deans working with SDS to resolve emerging accessibility issues caused by movement to alternative delivery.
- Nursing students are being advised about clinical placements differently depending on their year in the programs and the program. We are working to accommodate in as many ways as possible as our Blended students are RPNs and are dealing with the crisis in their workplace.
- We are awaiting a decision from the Min of Ed in order to move forward with planning for our graduating BEd students both with regard to practicum and with regard to the MPT.
- Good news: Our Data Science programme has received Quality Council Approval, and preparations to offer the programme are underway.
- The Dean of Teaching has engaged with Ontario Universities Council on eLearning. Attended a number of roundtable discussions, and is pleased to announce we're doing well, and are ahead of the curve on many issues.
- The Dean of Teaching, as well as UTS and LST staff, attended MCU Technical Briefing with the Minister on eProctoring services being offered through eCampus Ontario (March 26th). These services are opt-in, but come too late to assist us with FW exams, and may duplicate our existing licences.
- A&S Dean attended a virtual meeting with the Deans of Sciences (CCDS) to discuss how other universities have transitioned science courses, labs in particular, to on-line delivery; also participated in the discussion of forward plans for the fall should the online instruction continue into the fall

- Planning for Fall term has started

Research

- Annual Undergraduate Research Conference was one of many events that had to be cancelled. Nipissing continues to celebrate undergraduate research by creating a virtual conference. When you go to the link (<https://osf.io/vgtbf/>) you'll see that Dr. Justin Carré, Assistant Dean of Research, created 3 folders (Art Installations, Research Posters, Research Talks). Enjoy the presentations and posters!
- Graduate student defenses are proceeding remotely as scheduled (e.g. by using Zoom)
- Research Office is consolidating externally funded pandemic related research opportunities to be shared with Faculty
- Working on creating supports for research responsive to community needs in the post-pandemic world
- Research office creating FAQs to advise our researchers specifically about grant/project management in the pandemic context.
- Call for Proposals on Research relating to COVID 19 Impacts in North Bay and Surrounding Area: We have invited Nipissing Faculty from all disciplines to participate in research, scholarship, and creative activity projects addressing immediate needs of the community relating to COVID-19 (during and after the pandemic). The invitation is to explore the implications of COVID 19 across educational, professional, industry, and community sectors. The funding for this research is made possible by COVID-19 related funding from the Province of Ontario. This research will contribute to regional recovery.

Community

- Nipissing has donated all PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) from its labs to the hospital, and together with Canadore also contributed a ventilator.
- Nipissing has established a partnership in order to share facilities, such as residences, with the Hospital.

Library

- Staff continue to monitor voice and email, and respond to library users with requests for assistance accessing materials and any other questions related to library use.
- Interlibrary loan services (ILL) are still suspended...as is the case at all other libraries
- Working with instructors to ensure that ways in which they use information resources in their online courses is copyright compliant.

Briefing Note: Board Update – COVID-19 Activities
Submitted by: Vice-President, Finance & Administration
April 8, 2020

During this crisis, the University remains open and continues to deliver on its programmes and associated learning outcomes. In support of that mission, the Administrative team has been engaged in the following activities, the vast majority of them being handled remotely:

- Finance
 - Accounts payable: bills are being paid; vendors, staff and students encouraged to sign up for EFT;
 - Student Financial Services & Financial Aid: respond to student inquiries, processing refunds, processing payments through EFT;
 - Purchasing: upcoming RFP's and purchasing assistance to departments;
 - Budgets: budget review and refinement;
 - Shipping & Receiving: employees are attending the campus intermittently to ensure that mail is being circulated.

- Human Resources
 - Health & Safety: continuing to support employees who are working remotely; assisting Facilities with decisions around access to building;
 - Recruitment & Selection: work continues on some key positions;
 - Payroll & Benefits/Pension: payroll being processed, assistance to employees on pension and benefit matters.

- External Relations
 - Assisting with a variety of communications both internally and externally;
 - maintaining updates on website;
 - assisting and coordinating work to support our community in a variety of ways;
 - updating social media channels; and
 - supporting the communication efforts of the Executive Team.

- University Technology Services
 - Continuing to support all employees in their transition to remote work (In the **past three weeks**, UTS has processed approximately 500 tickets using the new ticket tracking system which includes a self-service ticketing portal and a knowledge base);
 - Support video conferencing via Teams, Zoom and Google meet;
 - Support the continued migration to MS365, departments are now more than ever anxious to convert to support virtual meetings, etc.;
 - To further increase the security of data and systems, working on the roll-out of multi-factor authentication for anyone accessing files.

- Facilities
 - Coordination of campus building custodial duties to accommodate ongoing essential services;
 - Manage residence building restoration after student departures with mixed staffing;
 - Oversee remaining contractors for site access;
 - Evaluate requests to access the site in partnership with HR and manage site access for all NU students, staff, and faculty members;
 - Liaise with Canadore College Security Services and Facilities to ensure efforts are coordinated and aligned.