

Nipissing University
Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting
April 24, 2026
2:30 p.m.
Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference

Members Present:

K. Wamsley (Chair), 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, G. Phillips (Deputy Speaker), T. Smith, K. Srigley (Speaker), S. Srigley, T. Stewart, L. Thielen-Wilson, R. Vernescu, H. Zhu

A. Adler, J. Allison, C. Anyinam, S. Cairns, C. Greco, R. Hoffman, T. Horton, D. Jarvis, A. Kociolek, A. Leblond, P. Maher, P. Millar, A. Nkurunziza, C. Ricci, A. Schinkel-Ivy, M. Sullivan, I. Tavares, J. Thornborrow, V. Williams

O. Pokorny,

F. Couchie

R. Hehn

J. Martin, N. Botham

Absent With Regrets:

C. Richardson, H. Earl, H. Texiera, C. Irwin, R. Kasperavicius, O. Remillard, D. Lamirande

The Deputy Speaker of Senate offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

Adoption of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of: April 24, 2026

Motion 1: Moved by N. Black, seconded by J. Allison that the agenda for the Senate meeting of April 24, 2026, be adopted as amended to include, under Other Business, a motion that was inadvertently omitted from the January 16, 2026, Senate Agenda.
CARRIED

Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of: March 27, 2026

Motion 2: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by T. Smith that the minutes of the Senate meeting of March 27, 2026, be adopted.
CARRIED

Reading and Disposing of Communications

At the request of the former Chair of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee, the Deputy Speaker read out the Chair's letter of resignation, included below, from both the Chair position and membership on the Senate Budget Advisory Committee:

Madame Speaker,

I'm writing to you to communicate to Senate that I can no longer continue either as Chair of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee or as a member of that committee. I have come to this decision because of the way that important information about the allocation of the university's scarce financial resources was kept from the Committee as well as Senate more broadly for an entire year, a year during which we as an institution grappled with significant issues related to the university's precarious financial position.

As a result, effective immediately I hereby submit my resignation as Chair of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee and as a member of that committee.

Yours truly,

Dr. Robin Gendron
Professor of History
Nipissing University

The Deputy Speaker advised that the following two Faculty Senators, one from each Faculty, were acclaimed to participate in the small-group conversations with candidates for the Provost and Vice-President, Academic (PVPA) position:

- Dr. Gyllie Phillips, Faculty of Arts and Science
- Dr. Aaron Kociolek, Faculty of Education and Professional Studies

Senators were invited to forward any questions or concerns they wished to have included in the discussions to Senators Phillips and Kociolek.

Reports From Other Bodies

The President's report, appended to the minutes, provided updates on the province's new funding framework; significant changes to the Bachelor of Education (BEd) program; the search for the Provost and Vice-President, Academic; the ParriagGroup report and EDI initiatives; the Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) policy review; lockdown procedures; and the new outdoor classroom.

The Vice-President, Finance and Administration, provided an oral report noting that the institution is approaching fiscal year-end and thanked colleagues in advance for adhering to the deadlines for p-card submissions and expense claims, which will assist the Finance team in completing year-end processes. As previously reported by President Wamsley, financial projections for the current year remain favourable. Work is also underway on the 2026–27 budget, with a presentation to be provided at the next Senate meeting, consistent with past practice.

A report from the Alumni Advisory Board was provided. The report is appended to the minutes.

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

Question Period

In response to questions raised at the March Senate meeting regarding campus bulletin boards, doorstops, and classroom door locks, President Wamsley advised that the issue of doorstop removal has been resolved, while discussions regarding bulletin boards are ongoing. Several questions raised over the past two Senate meetings will be addressed through updated procedures, with follow-up information to be communicated and made available over the summer months.

The Deputy Speaker encouraged Senators to attend the upcoming Community Forum in May and noted that operational questions of this nature may also be directed to Human Resources, the Joint Health and Safety Committee, and the Facility Services Department, allowing Senate to focus more time on its academic mandate.

In response to questions regarding examination policies for online courses within on-campus programs, the Registrar thanked the Senator for providing the questions in advance and advised that while such arrangements are possible, several considerations must be addressed. These include the diverse student cohort in courses (e.g., online students enrolled in electives and graduating students no longer residing on campus) and the need to accommodate varying circumstances.

The Registrar noted that a consistent, institution-wide approach is required to manage scenarios where online courses may offer both in-person and online assessments. While scheduling evaluation times for asynchronous courses may be feasible, questions remain regarding appropriate assessment methods and the integrity of learning outcomes, particularly in the context of online assessments and the use of AI. Given the complexity of these issues, the Registrar recommended that the matter be referred to the Teaching and Learning Committee for further discussion.

In response to questions regarding the Fall 2025 ParriagGroup Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Audit Report, President Wamsley advised that, of the report's nine recommendations, including the establishment of a Human Rights and Equity Office, Human Resources has struck a committee to advance this work. Three members of the previous taskforce have been invited to participate, and both faculty and staff are represented. The committee held its inaugural meeting and is currently developing the position description. With respect to the remaining recommendations, President Wamsley noted that progress is ongoing. Addressing questions related to access and belonging for faculty and staff, he indicated that this work is expected to be led by the incoming Director, with initiatives anticipated to begin as early as the fall term. President Wamsley was thanked for his continued commitment to advancing EDIA initiatives at Nipissing University.

In response to questions regarding opportunities for faculty input into the Provost and Vice-President Academic (PVPA) search process, concerns were raised about the limited number of faculty representatives involved in candidate engagement and the extent to which diverse faculty perspectives would be communicated to candidates and shared more broadly. President Wamsley advised that the appointment of two Faculty Senators to participate in the small-group conversations represents one component of a broader and comprehensive search process. He noted that all community members were invited to contribute input through a survey administered by the search firm, Boyden, and that a representative hiring committee, including faculty members from both Faculties, has been actively engaged in the review and selection process.

The President emphasized the depth and rigour of candidate evaluation, including extensive review of application materials related to teaching, research, EDIA, and leadership, as well as engagement with constituent groups during campus visits. He highlighted the importance of maintaining candidate confidentiality and noted that public presentations are not feasible in such searches.

President Wamsley expressed confidence in the consultation undertaken to date and in the ability of the appointed representatives and committee members to reflect the best interests of the university community. He thanked Senators for the opportunity to clarify the process and encouraged continued trust in the established governance and selection procedures.

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 April 16, 2026, be received.
CARRIED

Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)

Motion 4: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated April 10, 2026, be received.
CARRIED

Motion 5: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by D. Iafrate that Senate recommend to the Board of Governors the establishment of the Department of Social and Cultural Studies.
CARRIED

By-laws and Elections Committee

Motion 6: Moved by K. Srigley, seconded by T. Horton that the Report of the By-laws and Elections Committee dated March 24, 2026, be received.
CARRIED

Senate Research Committee

Motion 7: Moved by B. Law, seconded by N. Black that the Report of the Senate Research Committee dated March 18, 2026, be received.
CARRIED

Senate Budget Advisory Committee

Motion 8: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by F. Couchie that the Report of the Senate Budget Advisory Committee dated March 27, 2026, be received.
CARRIED

Other Business

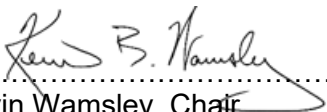
Due to an oversight, a motion for the removal of the War, Atrocity, and Genocide (WAG) minor, associated with a significant curriculum revision in History, went through the curriculum process but was not transcribed from the ACC report to the January Senate agenda. All other motions associated with this proposal were passed during the January Senate.

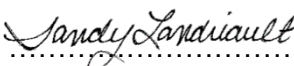
Rationale: Since its creation in 2020, no student has completed the requirements for the WAG minor.

Motion 9: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by R. Gendron that Senate approve the removal of the War, Atrocity, and Genocide (WAG) minor from the academic calendar.
CARRIED

Adjournment

Senate adjourned at 3:20 p.m.


.....
Kevin Wamsley, Chair


.....
Sandy Landriault, Secretary to the Senate

24 April 2026
University Senate
Report of the President

Good afternoon, Senators. I hope that you have all experienced a good end of term and look forward to the conference and focused research cycle of this time of year, for some of our members. With respect to my office, this has been a year focused upon government relations and dealing directly with the Ministry offices on funding for fiscal 2025-26 and 2026-27. I have reported in the previous Senate that the province has introduced a new funding framework, and we have had several meetings to discuss this framework and how it affects Nipissing – but the Ontario Presidents have also been meeting with the government to discuss the distribution of funds and how that affects sustainability. At this point, we know that we are in a balanced position for this year and projecting a balanced position for next year. We do not expect to have precise terms until the summer.

No doubt you have all heard that the province is introducing major changes to our BEd degree once again. Bill 101, Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026, has reached first reading in the Ontario Legislature. When passed, it will establish the authority of the Ontario College of Teachers to set new regulations regarding the accreditation of teacher education programs in the province of Ontario.

We do not know precisely what the Ontario College of Teachers intends to do, but this is what has been communicated to us this far, and therefore these are the basic assumptions are making with respect to our new BEd program:

The new BEd program will be 12-months, taught over 3-consecutive terms.

The change will take effect for all BEd programs in Ontario for May 2027.

We do not yet know the number of practicum days in the new program.

Applications for the 12-month Consecutive Program to start May 2027 will open across the province in the fall.

Consecutive Education students who have already been accepted to start the program in September 2026 have a secure spot, and they will complete the 2-year/4-term BEd as the final cohort of this program model.

Concurrent Education students who have finished year 4 and will progress to start year 5 in in September 2026 have a secure spot, and they will complete the 2-year/4-term BEd as the final cohort of this program model.

Concurrent Education students who finish year 4 in April 2027 or later will progress to the new 12-month BEd program.

We expect that students accepted into the final cohort of the 4-term program in September 2026 will make a decision that is best for them, that is whether they would withdraw and reapply for the May 2027 start. It is still too early to tell if that number will be significant, as tuition deposits

are not due until June 1 and understandably students will want to wait for more information to make an informed decision. The Government has indicated the possibility of one-time transition funding to cover tuition losses from an enrollment drop, but we do not yet know what the amount of this funding will be. We have had a dedicated group, led by our Provost and Dean of EPS, working on these changes, in addition to our office of Institutional Planning analyzing the impacts on our finances.

Following some well-timed and useful questions at Senate about our lockdown procedures, I report that we have been working with Canadore to arrange drills on our campuses for lockdown, probably testing the system at some point in June and then again when the students return in the Fall. Please send any questions that you may have to Michelle or Matt.

With respect to the search for our new Provost, I am pleased to report that we have conducted a full assessment of all applications, that we have participated in a long list interview stage, and that we are preparing for a series of in-person interviews for the finalist candidates. The process has been moving along very well to this point, with thanks to our hiring committee for their time and efforts.

Yesterday, I received a request for an update to Senate on our follow up to the ParriagGroup Report and EDI activities. I do not have a comprehensive report, but I do have some updates for you. I am pleased to report that the committee met yesterday and has reviewed the job description, and we should be posting it early next week. Once the Director is hired, they will begin work on what is needed for support/resources. We have also earmarked a support position in the budget to be hired in the department, but this work will occur after the Director has been hired. In response to the Report's recommendation to 'reorient understanding of disability & accessibility,' we have established the Access and Belonging unit, headed up by Linds Sullivan. The Access and Belonging team officially launched this past fall, and it brings together Sexual Violence Prevention and Education, Student Support Navigation, the Access and Belonging Coordinator, and working with International Student Supports. Since its launch, the team has advanced key equity audit and student priorities through coordinated programming, partnerships, and access-oriented supports that address barriers to inclusion, strengthen students' sense of belonging, and respond to systemic challenges related to lived experience, race, identity, and socioeconomic status.

This work included anti-racism and awareness initiatives, culturally grounded engagement, and enhanced supports such as the Care and Connect space and food security initiatives, through which over 3,500 essential items were distributed. The team remains progressive and committed to learning from students and one another as priorities evolve year to year, and welcomes ongoing feedback, ideas, and collaboration.

The Report also recommends that we 'solidify leadership as stewards of change' and we have started this work with the senior leadership group. While performing a type of 360 review, the process will determine where related skills are needed to be developed. The purpose of this program is to help us understand where our collective leadership strengths are today and where we may benefit from further training, coaching, and development. By taking a clear, research-based look at our leadership behaviors, we can identify the skills that are already

serving us well and the areas where focused growth will elevate our impact as a team. This is about building a stronger, more aligned leadership culture—one that supports our people, our strategy, and the future we're working toward.

Another of the recommendations is to revitalize and formalize Indigenization and decolonization and there is ongoing work through the office of Patty Chabert. We have undertaken senior leadership training in these areas, and this will continue through our management group this spring. The Provost has established a committee to work on a process or policy related to Indigenous affirmation which also will tie into the recommendation around data collection.

And I can report that Indigenization, reconciliation, and decolonization have factored in as priorities in our Provost search, with the requirement that candidates were specifically required to demonstrate both experience and competence in these areas.

As an update on our policy review, the team from HESA was onsite last week to get to know us better and what our policy challenges are. We look forward to working with them and getting ourselves onto a path of common language, common approach, and overall consistency in our Nipissing U policy framework.

I am, finally, able to announce to you that the outdoor classroom is completed and ready to go – please feel free to walk over and have a look. We will be having our grand opening in June, when everything is dry. We look forward to that space entering our inventory of classroom space and as event space for our community.



Nipissing University Alumni Advisory Board report to Academic Senate April 2026

Best of Luck, Lakers!

NUAAB wishes all Lakers good luck on exams and a happy end to the winter semester.

NUAAB Annual Retreat

NUAAB's annual retreat is scheduled for Saturday, May 9th. We're excited to come together to review the past year's activities and prepare for what's next. Students, faculty, and staff who would like to share feedback on our engagement initiatives are invited to email their thoughts to alumni@nipissingu.ca.

NU Perks Platform

Attention Nipissing Alumni – over 850 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!

North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament

Nipissing Alumni is proud to be the title sponsor for the annual North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament coming up on Thursday, July 9th. This tournament is a wonderful opportunity for NUAAB and the alumni team to engage with local businesses to promote what is happening at the University, and to engage with Nipissing Alumni in the community!

Save the Date – Homecoming 2026

We are happy to announce that our annual Homecoming weekend will be taking place from September 18-19th, 2026! Please hold the dates to join us on campus to celebrate the Laker community and stay tuned to find out what events we have programmed throughout the weekend.

NUSU Academic Senate Report: April 2026

End of Academic Year

As we approach the end of the academic year, many of NUSU's regular events and programming are beginning to wrap up. It has been a busy and engaging year, and we are proud of the opportunities and support provided to students throughout both semesters.

Exam Period Support – Night Owls

During the exam period, NUSU has continued to support students through our Night Owls initiative, providing food and resources to assist students during late-night study sessions. This program remains a well-received support as students prepare for their final exams.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

NUSU will be hosting our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 13. All students are encouraged to attend, engage, and learn more about NUSU's operations, initiatives, and future direction.

Student's Exams

NUSU would like to wish all students the best of luck as they complete their exams. We hope students have had a successful academic year and look forward to a well-deserved summer break.

Transition to New Executive Team

With the conclusion of the academic year, NUSU will be transitioning into a new term. The incoming Executive team for the 2026–2027 academic year will officially begin their roles. The new Executive team is as follows:

- **Vice-President Campus Relations:** Logan Lloyd
- **Vice-President Governance & Services:** Nicholas Botham
- **Vice-President Communications & Awareness:** Jaden Martin
- **Vice-President Student Life:** Owen Remillard

We look forward to the work ahead and continuing to support students in the upcoming academic year.