

**Nipissing University**  
**Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting**  
**February 27, 2026**  
**2:30 p.m.**  
**Room F210 & Zoom Videoconference**

**Members Present:**

K. Wamsley (Chair), C. Richardson, R. Hacquard, B. Law,  
N. Colborne, G. Raymer, N. Black

R. Davis, H. Earl, R. Gendron, A. Hatef, G. McCann, P.  
Nosko, M. Owens, G. Phillips, T. Smith, K. Srigley (Interim  
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

C. Irwin, O. Pokorny,

R. Hehn

J. Martin, N. Botham

**Absent With Regrets:**

D. Iafrate, K. Lucas, S. Kariuki, H. Texiera, R.  
Kasperavicius, D. Hemsworth, F. Couchie, O. Remillard, D.  
Lamirande

The Senate Speaker offered a Traditional Territory acknowledgement.

**Adoption of the Agenda of the Senate Meeting of:** February 27, 2026

- Motion 1: Moved by H. Earl, seconded by R. Gendron that the agenda of the Senate meeting of February 27, 2026 be adopted with the following amendments:
- Motion 9 be revised to indicate that Senate approve not receive the proposal to remove the Indigenous Studies program from the Department of Gender Equality & Social Justice, Indigenous Studies, and Religions and Cultures, Faculty of Arts and Science; and join the Department of History, Anthropology, Ancient Studies, and Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Arts and Science.
  - The addition of an election for one (1) tenured faculty member to be elected by Senate to serve on the Committee for the Search/Appointment/Reappointment of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic
- CARRIED

**Adoption of the Minutes of the Senate Meeting of:** January 16, 2026

- Motion 2: Moved by V. Williams, seconded by N. Botham that the minutes of the Senate meeting of January 16, 2026 be adopted with the following revisions to the non-substantive History course title and course description in November 24, 2025 ACC Report:
- HIST 4815 “Canada in the Twentieth Century” be revised to read to HIST 4185
  - HIST 4815 “Seminar in Canadian History” be revised to read HIST 4185
- CARRIED

**Reports From Other Bodies**

The President’s report highlighted a stable financial outlook with an expected balanced budget for 2025–26, supported by stronger-than-expected domestic enrolment and government grants for program expansion and Northern funding. Staff were recognized for maintaining smooth operations while advancing strategic initiatives, policy updates, governance reviews, and early budget planning for 2026–27. Recent provincial funding changes may allow tuition increases and provide higher program funding weights and increased grants, which are expected to positively impact finances over the next three years, although exact allocations are not yet known. The important work of the academic departments responding to the ever-changing environment was also recognized. The university is also reviewing OSAP changes affecting students with financial need and will evaluate Professor Emeritus/Emerita nominations this year while considering updates to the policy. The full report is appended to the minutes.

The Provost and Vice-President Academic (PVPA) advised that the Annual Program Reviews Report 2024–25 will be presented for discussion at the next Senate meeting. Updates were provided on several academic initiatives and upcoming activities, including the Dave Marshall Leadership Awards and the Centre for Teaching and Learning’s ongoing support for feedback on the Ad Hoc Committee on GenAI in Teaching and Learning recommendations, as well as several IQAP processes. In March, CTL will also focus on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) in collaboration with Denyse Lafrance-Horning.

Quality Assurance program review site visits are scheduled for March 19–20 for the on-campus 4-year BScN, 3-year RPN to BScN Bridging, and RPN to BScN Blended Learning programs, and March 24–27 for the BEd, MEd, PhD, and ITEP programs. An enrolment update was also shared, noting that while the Ontario university sector is experiencing a 2.2% year-over-year increase, the university has seen a 9.9% increase. Upcoming recruitment activities include the March Open House and the online BEd Expo.

The Provost also highlighted Research Month, which features events such as NU360, RDS Canada’s Living Library, the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition, and the Undergraduate Research Conference, with keynote speaker Dr. Stephen Connor. Updates were provided on progress related to the Academic Plan and Operational Plan (APOP), including the completion of a review and updated inventory of research labs and infrastructure, the hiring of a Director of Indigenous Initiatives, and the completion of a comprehensive EDIA Audit to support actions related to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism. Implementation of the APOP will continue through coordinated work across university units with ongoing monitoring and reporting. The full report is appended to the minutes.

The Council of Ontario Universities Academic Colleague provided a report. The report is appended to the minutes.

Senator Martin, NUSU VP Advocacy and Awareness, provided a report. The report is appended to the minutes. Senator Martin noted that the report did not include students' concerns regarding proposed changes to OSAP. She advised that NUSU is working closely with the Canadian Federation of Students to provide information and support to ensure students are well informed and indicated that protests may occur in response to these changes.

She also referenced a recent article in the North Bay Nugget regarding a group of students who were removed from the Harris Learning Library while creating signs to protest the Government's planned cuts to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). She emphasized that students have the right to express criticism and engage in protest and stated that it was discouraging to see students asked to leave the Library. She added that the university community should be prepared for the possibility of further demonstrations.

### **Question Period**

The following question was forwarded for inclusion in the minutes:

Will the report of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Audit be brought forward to Academic Senate for substantive discussion and the development of a concrete, time-bound action plan?

Of particular relevance to Senate's academic oversight role, the audit highlights a critical institutional moment:

"With a large portion of faculty nearing retirement, NU can rebuild with greater diversity, but only if it reforms hiring, selection, and onboarding processes."

This finding has direct implications for academic staffing, collegial governance, workload equity, and the future composition of the professoriate. Without deliberate reform, the audit cautions that existing inequities will simply be reproduced.'

The President advised that a series of recommendations from the Parriage Report have been accepted and that efforts are underway to establish a steering committee to monitor changes at the university and ensure that the recommendations are implemented in due course. The university is committed to providing a dashboard and annual progress reports to both Academic Senate and the Board of Governors.

The President noted that the committee will be established shortly, and that a call for nominations for the Equity Access Steering Committee will be issued in the coming weeks to invite participation. Some recommendations have already been implemented, and progress is underway. The President also emphasized the institution's commitment to hiring practices that support a diverse workforce. Regular updates, including an annual report, will be provided to Senate.

A Senator noted that, while recognizing the challenges involved in preparing the Senate agenda, it would be beneficial for Senators to receive the agenda more than three days in advance of meetings to allow sufficient time for review and consideration.

The Provost acknowledged that this matter has been discussed previously and suggested that moving the date of the Senate Executive Committee meetings earlier may help facilitate earlier distribution of the agenda. Stricter adherence to Senate report submission deadlines will be required, and reports received after the deadline may not be included. The timeline will be reviewed and backward planning will be implemented. Efforts will be made to put this approach into practice.

A Senator expressed concern about the risk of school shootings in Canada, referencing the recent incident in Tumbler Ridge. She noted that after reviewing the university's policy and

instructions, she had not observed any active shooter training or drills during the current academic year. She further indicated that the policy states it should be updated annually, yet the most recent update appears to have occurred in 2018. She asked what actions have been taken to address this issue from both a policy perspective and in terms of physical or architectural considerations (e.g., door access and classroom furniture), and whether future plans are in place.

President Wamsley acknowledged the importance of the question and noted that the issue also came to the forefront following the attack at the University of Waterloo, prompting reviews of campus procedures. He indicated that this serves as an important reminder to review university policies and procedures in collaboration with Campus Security and the North Bay Police Service regarding responses to active shooter situations both on campus and in the surrounding community. He added that such reviews can also serve as an educational opportunity for faculty, staff, and students regarding appropriate responses in emergency situations. He thanked the Senator for raising the matter, noting that the issue is both timely and relevant and that it is appropriate to undertake a review.

A Senator noted that students have expressed concerns about the lack of a consistent schedule for recreational sports on campus. It was also noted that some outdoor trails are not groomed for skiing or snowshoeing. While varsity teams are active, students have indicated a desire for more intramural opportunities to support physical activity and wellness.

The President advised that when he arrived at the university following the pandemic, many activities had been suspended. He noted that the recently appointed Athletics Director, Sarah Batley, has a mandate that includes expanding and developing intramural sports programming. Currently, some intramural activities are offered on a weekend basis, and additional staff have recently been added at the Surtees Centre. He also noted that the Monastery trails are being used and are packed down for winter activities. The President thanked the Senator for raising the issue.

The NUSU Vice-President, Advocacy and Awareness (VPAA) added that the Athletics Department typically organizes two intramural sport activities per semester. Recent offerings include pickleball and basketball, as well as weekend volleyball tournaments. While there are opportunities for students to participate in sports on campus, demand is high and spaces can be competitive. The VPAA expressed support for expanding these resources and increasing awareness among students. Information about activities is available on the bulletin board at the Athletic Centre, through gym schedules, and on the Athletics social media channels. It was also noted that snowshoes are available for loan to students and staff from the university and Canadore College.

A Senator inquired about the progress of the student course experience surveys, noting that previous surveys included neutrally phrased open-ended questions allowing students to comment on both positive and negative aspects of courses and instructors. The current required survey only asks what can be improved, which may not capture what students value or what is working well. The Senator asked about the rationale for this change and whether an additional question could be included.

Senator Raymer reported that this concern was raised at the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC). The committee reviewed the survey framework, which was developed by the University of Toronto. While there were questions regarding response rates, the committee is satisfied with the tool as designed for gathering student experience information. He noted that the TLC is also considering broader recommendations from the Joint Committee on the

Assessment of Teaching and Learning, which emphasizes that the survey is only one tool for evaluating effective teaching and that alternative sources of evidence such as peer review should also be considered. The TLC, with support from the Director of TLC, is exploring additional methods, and further updates will be provided in the coming months.

The Senator added that, based on personal experience, alternative tools beyond the surveys are needed to fully capture student perspectives.

Another Senator commented that student surveys focusing on likes and dislikes do not measure learning outcomes or teaching effectiveness. Citing research from Ryerson, he emphasized the need for valid and reliable tools, and shared that he developed a course-specific tool to assess student learning. He recommended that the TLC ensure all survey tools accurately evaluate teaching effectiveness.

In follow-up to Senator Martin's comments in NUSU's Senate Report regarding students being removed from the Harris Learning Library, a request was made for Senator Black, Executive Director of Library Services, to provide further information.

Senator Black described the incident as unfortunate and regrettable, attributing it to confusion and a lack of prior communication. Students arrived later in the evening to create signs protesting the Government's planned cuts to OSAP. While libraries are public institutions, there are established parameters, guidelines, protocols, and expectations for holding events. Had Library staff been informed in advance, they could have determined how to accommodate and support the activity. She clarified that students were not forcibly removed but were politely asked to leave, and that students were understanding, though the message conveyed could have been handled better. Senator Black extended an invitation to NUSU to engage in conversations to restore mutual understanding.

Senator Martin expressed appreciation for the clarification, noting that the event was not sponsored by NUSU and that she had no prior knowledge. She indicated that future events will be communicated in advance and looks forward to meeting with the Executive Director of Library Services to understand procedures and ensure shared understanding of Library policies.

Senators discussed concerns about recent Provincial Government funding announcements, noting disappointment at the low level of support for students. In response to a question as to how effectively the university can track student reliance on OSAP and whether students in professional programs can still be exposed to the Social Sciences despite the Premier's comments minimizing support for these fields, the Vice-President Finance and Academic noted that a group is being formed to examine student needs and that further information will be provided.

The Provost highlighted that Quality Assurance processes help address these issues, as external reviewers assess professional programs' self-studies, engage in discussions with faculty, and provide recommendations through the Deans and Provost. When asked about broader plans, including how many Humanities and Social Science courses students are required to take, the Provost explained that the university currently does not have specific requirements, but degree programs include breadth requirements set by individual units.

It was noted that the NDP has raised these concerns in the House of Commons. The President confirmed that he recently spoke with the Minister regarding challenges arising from the OSAP changes.

### **Reports of Standing Committees and Faculty or University Councils**

**Senate Executive Committee**

- Motion 3: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Colborne that Senate receive the report of the Senate Executive Committee dated February 19, 2026 which includes for information:
- a) Senate Governance Review Report
  - b) 2025-26 By-laws and Elections Committee Work Plan
  - c) Revisions to the Professor Emeritus/Emerita Policy
- CARRIED

**Academic Curriculum Committee**

- Motion 4: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by J. Allison that the Report of the Academic Curriculum Committee dated January 14, 2026, be received.
- CARRIED

**Faculty of Arts & Science****Sociology**

Non-Substantive:

That the prerequisite for SOCI 2126 'Sociological Research Methods' be changed as outlined in the proposal above.

**Religions and Cultures, Gender Equality and Social Justice and Indigenous Studies**

Substantive:

- Motion 5: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by S. Srigley that Senate approve that the program-level learning outcomes for Indigenous Studies be revised with as outlined in the proposal above.
- CARRIED

**Political Science, Philosophy and Economics**

Substantive:

- Motion 6: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Botham that Senate approve that SOCI 2126 'Sociological Research Methods' and SOCI 2127 'Quantitative Research Methods' be cross-listed with Political Science as outlined in the proposal above.
- CARRIED

**Political Science, Philosophy and Economics**

Non-Substantive:

That SWLF 3266, Religion and Social Welfare, and POLI 3506, Religion and Politics be anti-requisites as outlined in the proposal.

**Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (AQAPC)**

- Motion 7: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Colborne that Senate receive the Report of the Academic Quality Assurance and Planning Committee dated January 30, 2026., which includes for information:
- CARRIED

- Motion 7(b) Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Colborne that Senate approve the Provost's recommendation for suspension of admission to the Major Art History and Visual Studies (AHVS) Stream in the BA (Fine Arts) program.
- CARRIED

The following points were raised:

- A concern was raised that there should be a space for Senators to comment once Senate has received a report.
- The Provost noted that the suspension of admission had been approved at the previous Senate meeting, during which Senators had the opportunity to raise questions or concerns; none were expressed. This update informs Senate that the Provost has accepted the recommendation and that proper process was followed.
- The Speaker clarified that under Senate By-law 8.4, Senate has the right to receive a report but not approve any substantive decisions in the report although the report has been received. Any substantive decisions should be presented as motions from the floor and Senate can discuss the merit of the action in the motion.
- The Speaker also noted that the January 16, 2026, Senate Minutes indicate that the motion was received, not approved. A broader discussion regarding terminology, policy, and process will occur under the Governance Review.
- A friendly amendment to add a second motion for Senate to approve the Provost's recommendation to suspend admission to the Major Art History and Visual Studies (AHVS) Stream in the BA (Fine Arts) program was approved.
- The importance of following proper procedures was emphasized.

Motion 8: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by T. Horton that Senate receive the proposal for suspension of admission to the Social Welfare and Social Development programs, Faculty of Arts and Science.  
CARRIED (following a request to record the vote: 18 in favour - 16 against)

Motion 9: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by T. Stewart that Senate ~~receive~~ **approve** the proposal to remove the Indigenous Studies program from the Department of Gender Equality & Social Justice, Indigenous Studies, and Religions and Cultures, Faculty of Arts and Science; and join the Department of History, Anthropology, Ancient Studies, and Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Arts and Science.  
CARRIED

Motion 9(b): Moved by R. Gendron, seconded by H. Earl that Senate recommend to the Board of Governors that the Indigenous Studies program be removed from the Department of Gender Equality & Social Justice, Indigenous Studies, and Religions and Cultures, Faculty of Arts and Science; and join the Department of History, Anthropology, Ancient Studies, and Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Arts and Science.  
CARRIED

The Speaker noted that our present procedure for this kind of transfer is forwarded to the Board of Governors automatically. The President also noted that the Provost has the responsibility to bring forward recommendations of new and closed programs from Senate to the Board of Governors.

Motion 10: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by B. Law that Senate approve the new Visiting Graduate Student Policy.  
CARRIED

Motion 11: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by B. Law that Senate approve the revised External Examiner Policy.  
CARRIED

**By-laws and Elections Committee**

- Motion 12: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Botham that the Report of the By-laws and Elections Committee dated February 9, 2026 be received.  
CARRIED

**Graduate Studies Committee**

- Motion 13: Moved by B. Law, seconded by M. Sullivan that the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated December 18, 2025 be received.  
CARRIED
- Motion 14: Moved by B. Law, seconded by N. Botham that the Report of the Graduate Studies Committee dated January 23, 2026 be received.  
CARRIED

**Research Committee**

- Motion 15: Moved by B. Law, seconded by T. Stewart that the Report of the Research Committee dated January 21, 2026 be received.  
CARRIED

**Teaching and Learning Committee**

- Motion 16: Moved by G. Raymer, seconded by M. Sullivan that the Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee dated December 19, 2025 be received.  
CARRIED

**Other Business**

The President introduced the proposed Community Planning Program, asking Senate to support its creation in principle, with all courses to be approved by Senate in the future. The program will prepare graduates for professional planning careers across Canada, with a focus on Northern regions, rural municipalities, and Indigenous communities.

Developed in response to a provincial shortage of approximately 800 planning program seats in Ontario, the program builds on the university's Environmental Science and Geography strengths. The initiative was developed within four months by an academic team led by April James and an organizational team led by Robin Gibson, with key contributions from Nathan Colborne, Ann Barbara Graff, Kirsten Greer, and others. Following Senate Executive Committee approval, the proposal was submitted to the Quality Council and received provincial approval last fall. The university has been designated the "Planning School of the North," selected over larger institutions.

Funded through tuition revenues, the program aims to enroll 60 first-year students in September 2027, reaching 240 students across four years by 2030–31. Provincial start-up funding has also been secured to support hiring, course development, and student services, without impacting existing budgets. The program is expected to strengthen enrolment in related electives and contribute to the university's long-term sustainability.

- Motion 17: Moved by N. Colborne, seconded by N. Botham that Senate approve the Nipissing University Community Planning Program. *(approved by AQAPC on June 20, 2025 and by the Senate Executive Committee on June 26, 2025)*  
CARRIED



**Elections**

- Elect one (1) faculty Senator to serve as Speaker of Senate for a three-year term effective now until July 1, 2028.  
**ACCLAIMED:** Dr. Katrina Srigley
- Elect one (1) faculty Senator to serve as Deputy Speaker of Senate for a three-year term effective now until July 1, 2028.  
**ACCLAIMED:** Dr. Gyllie Phillips
- Elect one (1) tenured faculty member to be elected by Senate to serve on the Committee for the Search/Appointment/Reappointment of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic (to replace Dr. Glenda Black).  
**ACCLAIMED:** Dr. Cindy Peltier (EPS)

**New Business**

- Motion 1: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Colborne that Senate consider receipt of the Graduation Applicants dated February 18, 2026.  
CARRIED
- Motion 2: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by M. Sullivan that Senate receive the Report of Graduation Applicants dated February 18, 2026.  
CARRIED
- Motion 3: Moved by C. Richardson, seconded by N. Botham that Senate grant approval to graduate the students listed in the Report on Graduation Applicants dated February 18, 2026.  
CARRIED

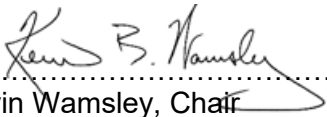
The Deans read the list of February 18, 2026 graduands by Faculty and degree and extended congratulations to the students and faculty members on their achievements.

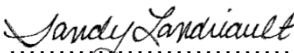
**Announcements**

The Executive Director of Library Services was pleased to announce that Erin Moorhead has been appointed to the position of Scholarly Communication and Research Data Management Librarian. Ms. Moorhead will commence her duties on June 8, 2026.

**Adjournment**

Senate was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

  
.....  
Kevin Wamsley, Chair

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

27 February 2026

## **University Senate**

### **Report of the President**

Good afternoon, Senators, we are more than halfway through our Winter term. I begin with some overview statements on university finances given last week's announcement. The announcement has no bearing on this current year; however, the financial report for 2025-26, the year in progress is solid. We are still predicting a balanced budget. The situation has not changed for international enrolment but we have a stronger than expected domestic enrolment for the current year, so that is assisting us on the positive side of this year's budget, in addition to the government grants that we received which have serviced expansion in both Nursing and Education and an increase to our Northern Grant. Before I comment on the government announcement, I want to commend our small staff for its work on running the university and its regular cycles for students, staff, and faculty very smoothly. This in addition to the significant changes that we are working on in processes, policies, efficiencies, and the learning and working environments. Work which is related to the Strategic Plan is clearly evident, particularly through our operational and academic plan and associated changes, the governance reviews, the efficiencies reviews, the policy review, and continued attention to the Auditor General's recommendations and on top of that it is budget season, so we have heard and received the first round of budget submissions from all of our units for 2026-27. I also want to recognize the important work that the academic departments are doing to respond to our everchanging environment. There are so many levels of changes occurring at the university and I am comfortable concluding that we are making progress in all areas – albeit slowly and methodically in some areas and much faster in others.

All in all, we are in a good position – a stable financial position and insisting upon careful and strategic spending and continuing to advocate for fair funding and investing in our programs. We have spent years meeting with the Province and providing input to the distribution of funds and the weighting of funds and the inequities for Northern and smaller institutions. It is evident that they listened and that all of this work by our staff really meant something.

So, what does last week's announcement mean for Nipissing University. As of today, I can characterize the funding generally and offer details on the types of changes that will be happening. But, I cannot put a dollar figure on it because we have not been given the precise formulas or the specific allocations. We will not have the final information on that until the summer, according to the Province, and we will probably not know the precise

financial picture until the Fall term. Here's what we know to date: tuition may increase 2% per year for the next 3 years. Unless inflation falls below 2%. Out of province tuition may be increased by up to 5% for these next three years. Grants for programs will increase by weight, meaning that the dollars per student in certain programs will increase. Pertinent to us are Nursing, Education, Physical and Health Education, Social Work, Fine Arts, Mathematics, and Science. There will also be a base funding increase for all students over the next two years. There will be increases in the Northern Grant and in the Indigenous Student Success Grant. We believe that this announcement will have a positive effect on our finances for the next three years.

At the same time, we recognize that the changes to OSAP will have an impact on those students in the most financial need. We are reviewing the impacts of these changes on our students and evaluating the support that we provide to students in financial need.

With respect to the professor emeritus/emerita policy, we will be evaluating the nominations for this year based on the current criteria. However, Senate Executive will be recommending a new Senate subcommittee to the By-laws and Elections Committee, with the change to be brought to Senate for approval. New honorees will be celebrated at this year's convocation ceremonies in June.

#### Upcoming Events:

Research Month – the Provost will speak to

North Bay Polar Plunge - March 7

March Break Open House - March 14

RDS Canada – March 10

Nipissing Softball Club – Junior Lakers

Hosts to the Ontario Special Olympics – snowshoeing on our campus at the Monastery trails in February 2027



## Provost's Report to Senate

February 27, 2026

### Student Development and Services

- The Dave Marshall Leadership Awards are happening Thursday, March 12. We hope to see everyone there to celebrate our wonderful student leaders!

### Centre for Teaching and Learning

- CTL is supporting the Ad Hoc Committee on GenAI in Teaching and Learning recommendations feedback process and with several IQAP processes.
- March will bring a focus on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) in collaboration with Denyse Lafrance-Horning.

### Quality Assurance

- The site visit for the BEd, MEd, PhD and ITEP programmes will take place from March 24-27.
- The site visit for the on campus 4-year BScN, the 3-year RPN to BScN Bridging and the RPN to BScN Blended Learning programmes will occur from March 19-20.

### Office of the Registrar

KPI Snapshot (Year-over-Year)

| Metric       | As of Feb 11, 2026 | As of Feb 11, 2025 | YoY % | YoY # | Notes                           |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|---------------------------------|
| Applications | 6,194              | 5,766              | +7.4% | +428  | 389 of the YoY increase are BEd |
| Offers       | 3,037              | 2,934              | +3.5% | +103  | 1,636 BEd offers issued Feb 1   |
| Acceptances  | 257                | 242                | +6.2% | +15   |                                 |

Sector context (OUAC Ontario HS, Jan 17): Sector +2.2%, we are +9.9%

### Upcoming Events (Conversion-Focused)

- March Open House: Saturday, March 14 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- BEd Expo: Friday, February 13 from 2 - 4 p.m. (online.this.year.recording.to.all.offered.students)

## Research Month Activities

Research Month highlights the breadth, quality, and impact of research and creative activity at the university through a series of events engaging faculty, staff, students, and the broader North Bay community.

- NU360 (Wednesday, March 4 at 6:00 p.m., NUSU Centre): Six faculty members will present their research in six-minute talks designed for a general audience. Come out and support your colleagues
- RDS Canada – A Living Library - Living Stories: A Moment with Rare Dementia (Tuesday, March 10, all day): Join RDS Canada for a day of conversations and art that explore rare and young onset dementia.
- Three Minute Thesis (3MT): Thursday, March 26 at 4:30 p.m. in A246 (Small Cafeteria)
- Undergraduate Research Conference (UGRC) (March 27–28). This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Stephen Connor, presenting *There Is No Later. This Is Later: History Without Distance*. Faculty are encouraged to promote student participation, as the conference depends on undergraduate registrations.

## Academic Plan and Operational Plan (APOP)

Steady progress has been made across multiple areas of APOP. A significant portion of action items are currently in progress, reflecting active implementation across academic, operational, and community-focused initiatives.

### Academic.Planning?Enrolment?and.Student.Success

Progress in this area includes continued advancement of a coordinated set of action items focused on strengthening academic planning, enrolment management, and student success.

### Research.Capacity.and.Academic.Infrastructure

Work has been completed to review and update inventory of research labs, spaces, and related infrastructure, to improve institutional understanding of research capacity and to support future planning.

### Indigenous.Knowledge?Reconciliation?and.Indigenization

Progress has been made on advancing Indigenous knowledge, Reconciliation, and Indigenization. A key milestone has been the hire of the Director of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

### Equity?Diversity?Inclusion.and.Accessibility.and.Anti\_Racism.Plan.(EDIA\_AR)

Several APOP actions related to EDIA-AR (2,6, and 44) have been supported by the completion of a comprehensive EDIA Audit. While the audit itself is not an APOP item, it provides an important base to inform and guide implementation of these APOP commitments.

## Looking Ahead

Implementation of APOP will continue through coordinated work across academic and administrative units. As additional updates are received from action item leads, progress tracking will continue to be refined and reported through regular reporting processes.

Report to Academic Senate  
Council of Ontario Universities (COU) – Academic Colleagues Meeting  
February 10–11, 2026  
Hybrid Format

I attended the meeting of Academic Colleagues of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) held February 10–11, 2026, in hybrid format.

## **February 10—Future of Postsecondary Education**

The evening session focused on the outline of COU's draft paper on the *Future of Postsecondary Education*. The President and CEO of COU joined the discussion to seek sector input.

A central theme of the discussion was that universities must articulate their own identity and purpose in a time when external actors—government, industry, and other stakeholders—are increasingly shaping public narratives about higher education. Participants emphasized the importance of defining the university proactively rather than reactively.

In part, there was discussion around sustainability and it was framed broadly across three interconnected dimensions:

- Equity and social sustainability—Universities as institutions that promote access, inclusion, and community well-being.
- Economic sustainability—The role of universities in generating new knowledge, driving innovation, developing talent, and contributing to economic growth and new industries.
- Environmental sustainability—The responsibility of universities in research, operations, and leadership related to environmental stewardship.

Colleagues also reinforced that universities are,

- Communities of learning and inquiry;
- Sites of original research, knowledge creation, and new industries;
- Institutions that balance public accountability with academic independence.

Input provided during the session will inform further development of the draft paper.

## **February 11—Quality Assurance and Sector Matters**

The morning meeting included information sharing across institutions and a discussion of future agenda topics.

A substantive update was provided on Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). Key points included:

- The Quality Council operates at arm's length from both universities and government.
- The framework was designed by universities for universities, reinforcing institutional autonomy within a shared accountability structure.
- Established in 2010, the Quality Council includes:
  - An Appraisal Committee responsible for reviewing and approving new programs.
  - An Audit Committee responsible for reviewing institutional quality assurance processes and cyclical program reviews.
- Cyclical program review was highlighted as a core mechanism for continuous improvement and accountability, focusing on the evaluation and enhancement of existing programs.

The discussion underscored the balance between institutional autonomy, public accountability, and continuous quality enhancement across the sector.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

- Academic Colleagues: April 14–15, 2026 (hybrid)
- COU Members: April 16, 2026 (virtual)

Respectfully submitted,  
Carlo Ricci  
COU Representative  
Nipissing University

## **NUSU Academic Senate Report: February 2026**

### **Executive, Director, and Student Senator Elections**

NUSU recently concluded our Student Executive, Director, and Student Senator elections. The official results are 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
- **Directors:** Matthew Quinn, Michael Lampkin
- **Student Senators:** Dakota Lamirande, Hilda Konadu

We appreciate the students who put their names forward and the engagement shown throughout the election period. To ensure full director representation, NUSU will be proceeding with a by-election to fill any remaining vacancies. Details regarding nomination timelines and voting dates will be communicated to students in the coming weeks.

### **Student Health and Dental Plan**

The winter opt-out period for the student health and dental plan concluded last month. The plan continues to perform well this academic year, with consistent usage and positive feedback from students. We are currently reviewing coverage and utilization data and are exploring opportunities to enhance benefits for the upcoming policy year to better reflect student needs.

### **Special Olympics Qualifier Event**

NUSU will be hosting a Special Olympics qualifier event on campus. We are proud to support this initiative and to welcome athletes, families, and community members to Nipissing University for this important event.

### **Events & Campaigns**

Campus programming and events have also been running smoothly, with steady participation from students. Academic Week in January was well attended and provided students with engaging academic and community-building activities. In addition, NUSU has been working with various Nipissing University departments on stigma-breaking initiatives, as well as continuing to strengthen community outreach and collaborative programming to support student wellbeing and engagement.