

DATE: 30 March 2016
TO: ALL MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
FROM: Glenys Sylvestre, Executive Director and University Secretary
RE: **WINTER MEETING OF COUNCIL AGENDA**

A meeting of Council will be held on Thursday, April 14, 2016 from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. in the Education Auditorium, ED 106, as follows:

2:30 p.m. – Council Registration Opens

3:00 p.m. – Call to Order

AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting 9 December 2015– *circulated with the Agenda*
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
 - 4.1 Motion to Destroy Ballots – Item 5.2 of 9 December 2015 Minutes
5. Report from the Chair of Council
6. Items for Discussion from the Council Agenda Committee
 - 6.1 Report from Council Member, E. Eaton – Ethical Investment Policy, Appendix I, p. 2
 - 6.2 Report from Council Member, M. Spooner – Measuring Student Outcomes, Appendix II, p. 3
7. Items for Information from the Council Agenda Committee
 - 7.1 Report from the Council Committee on Academic Mission, Appendix III, p. 6
 - 7.2 Report from the Council Committee on Budget, Appendix IV, p. 8
8. Adjournment

Note: Council members have access to all minutes and agendas of Executive of Council at <http://www.uregina.ca/president/governance/council/eofc-meetings.html>

Item for Discussion at Council Meeting, April 14, 2016

For Discussion:

The purpose of this item is to begin a discussion about whether Council would consider recommending to the President the creation of an Advisory Committee on Divestment and Ethical Investment Policy.

Universities across Canada are now considering a variety of divestment and ethical investment policies in response to growing student, faculty, staff and civil society concern for global warming and global militarism. The UofR has a relatively small investment portfolio compared to universities with large endowments, but the University does administer a large pension fund and holds other investments. As a public institution that is proudly committed to community, and newly focused on sustainability (a key theme in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan) the University should ensure that its investments align with its strategic goals and values.

In response to a 2014 petition, an advisory committee was struck by the president of the University of Toronto and recently reported on fossil fuel divestment. The report argued for "targeted and principled divestment from companies in the fossil fuels industry" and can be found at <http://www.president.utoronto.ca/secure-content/uploads/2015/12/Report-of-the-Advisory-Committee-on-Divestment-from-Fossil-Fuels-December-2015.pdf> At the same time coalitions of students, faculty and staff have been pushing fossil fuel divestment at universities such as McGill and UBC.

Emily Eaton

Item for Discussion at Council Meeting, April 14, 2016**For Discussion:**

Harvey Weingarten, President and CEO of Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario [HEQCO], third visit to campus in less than a year and the potential use of entrance and exit exams for university graduates. The discussion might focus on two broad areas: 1) appropriate means and measures to assess the competencies of our students, and 2), what data or metrics we might collect on student learning and future outcome upon graduation and beyond.

As background reading for Council from CCAM discussions:

Entry 1: Supposed Skills Gap

March 16, 2016

Tomorrow's public lecture by Harvey Weingarten, President and CEO of Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario [HEQCO], will mark his 3rd visit to our campus in less than a year (he previously addressed our Board of Governors in December, 2015, & our Deans' Council in June, 2015).

His name may ring a bell from his recent calls for entrance and exit exams for university graduates. These tests are typically called upon "to close the largely mythical 'skills gap,'" (see Ward below) of our grads and become coercive end runs around our collegial governance structures, professionalism, and academic freedom.

Exit exams and similar calls for re(de)forms in higher education have been appropriately characterized as the "The high-schoolization of the university" & "No Child Left Behind Goes to College". I invite you all to read this wonderfully lucid rebuttal by Steven C. Ward on our CAUT's American counterpart, AAUP Sept/Oct. blog:

Here is the link:

No Child Left Behind Goes to College

The impact of public school "reform" on colleges and universities.

By Steven C. Ward

<http://www.aaup.org/article/no-child-left-behind-goes-college#.Vum8teIrLcs>

Here's a brief apercu of Ward's rebuttal:

"The high-schoolization of the university can be observed in the increased reliance on standardized curricula and syllabi; in standardized modes of "content delivery" and testing sold by textbook companies or provided by various online providers; in the never-ending assessments of courses, professors, and programs; and in the growing use of "student data analytic programs" like MapWorks and Signals to monitor the activities of students and professors. These developments parallel the growing reliance of universities on contingent faculty, who are often too busy commuting between universities to have time to design their classes, much less do research or student advising. The new metrics-driven "managerial university" is increasingly

composed of many “knowledge managers” (formerly known as university administrators) and many disempowered part-time faculty forced to scurry from place to place to make ends meet.

The high-schoolization of the university can also be observed in the growing fascination with student learning outcomes (SLOs) and competency-based education—ideas both drawn from largely discredited primary, secondary, and vocational school reform efforts of the past. Like advocates of high-stakes testing and value-added measures in public schools, proponents of these ideas contend that if only we can precisely define what students need to know, it will then be possible to measure their learning through standardized assessment. Such assessment would allow universities to be more tightly managed and education to be “self-paced” as students check off various knowledge areas and skills and receive corresponding credentials or badges. Students could be educated without or with few professors or books, as is currently done at Western Governors University, at Southern New Hampshire University’s College for America, in Kaplan’s Open College, and in Capella’s FlexPath program. In this new system, the remaining professors become “product managers” or “course mentors” (in WGU’s warm and fuzzy framing) who develop standards for the competencies."

BUT WAIT there's more:

Dr. Weingarten, through HEQCO, also publishes a ranking of Canadian universities: Canadian Postsecondary Performance: Impact 2015

<http://postsecondaryperformance.ca/default.aspx?lang=en>

Yet another attempt to reduce our scholarship, teaching, and universities to a simplistic series of "league tables" akin to the football stats found in the sports pages of our dailies.

Make no mistake, these are not about quality, but rather reflect poorly-thought-out, ideological, one-size-fits-all easily quantifiable performance indicators that ultimately reduce the academy and our scholarship to competitive rankings, and coercive benchmarkings.

It is as though, somehow, the reams of research documenting the utter disaster occurring under higher education audit culture in the UK, NZ, and Australia have slipped the authors' awareness.

I invite you to look at their rankings and indicators for yourselves; for example, under the broad Category of "Value to Society" - there you will find "engaged citizens" as measured by "voting, volunteering, donating".

One could not imagine a more status quo, classist (and racist) manner by which to conceptualize engaged citizenship. In fact, if one thinks of our own Strategic Plan where Indigenization is front and centre, these couldn't be more counterproductive. Are we really going to allow ourselves to be ranked poorly because our Indigenous students didn't vote (and justifiably so) in another nation's elections? Do we give any credence to a ranking scheme where participation in movements like Idle No More doesn't even count at all as being the actions of an engaged citizen? Where it counts not that our graduates question inequitable societal structures, critique, and call for structural change rather than merrily giving to charities when they know charitable aid does not prevent the next person from needing the very same services that the charity just provided?

Turn now for a moment to how their performance report measures "Research Impact" - by only considering the simplest of tabulations: research dollars, H-scores, and citation counts. Here again we see a great disservice to the diverse array of forms and formats research "outputs" and impact may take. What of the vital critical and creative scholarship of so many of my esteemed colleagues? What of our own Strategic Plan, again, which values and calls for community-engagement, participatory, and Indigenous forms of research and knowledge production? These simply do not count in their rankings.

[I will stop here for length and empathy!]

BUT permit me to end with this:

We cannot allow ourselves to simply value what is easily measured, jettisoning in the process that which we deeply value.

We must denounce these ideological, simplistic, and coercive attempts at limiting our academic freedom and the wide array of citizenship engagement and scholarship our community, and our collective future, so desperately needs.

Entry 2: On the matter of exit exams, competencies, and the supposed quality of our grads

It is interesting to me that we would hold so much doubt and suspicion in our own and our colleagues' competence and professionalism. If a full-complement of literacies, subject-matter specific knowledge, and creative & critical thinking skills are course requirements outlined on our syllabi, and we teach and provide assignments to assess these, why the doubt?

Why would we rather place our trust in some one-size-fits-all, easily quantified, out-of-context, test?

If we truly hold doubt in our own, or our colleagues', pedagogical abilities, then let us provide the support and development opportunities needed, not some costly, ill-conceived surveillance tool. Redirect the funds that are apparently potentially available for a testing program towards properly funding our Centre for Teaching and Learning and provide ample collaborative assistance options.

Last, if industry feels it is looking for a specific set of particular skills and training, they can bear the cost of providing applicant screening and/or workforce development.

A few thoughts,

Marc Spooner, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
Council

Item for Information

Subject: CCAM report to Council, 14 April 2016

Status Update:

From January through March 2016, the Council Committee on Academic Mission reviewed for recommendation six proposals for new programs, four undergraduate and two graduate. At its April meeting, CCAM is currently scheduled to review four additional new programs. This seems an unusually high number of proposals to the members on the committee finishing three-year terms. Perhaps we're seeing a temporary glut, an anomaly, or perhaps we're seeing a trend. CCAM will monitor the number of new programs being proposed and will report to Council any development that causes the committee concern.

CCAM is preparing to receive self-studies and review committee reports from Philosophy and Classics, Physics, and the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy in our first round of reinstated Academic Unit Reviews (AURs). The committee is currently clarifying and finalizing what will be its own process: how it will respond immediately to the AUR documents, how it will report and track support for (from the administration) and progress on (by the unit) recommendations and goals raised in these documents, and how and when it will meet and consult with representatives of the administration and units in the first year and subsequent years after the reviews are completed. CCAM will do everything in its power to ensure unit reviews remain active and important documents informing discussions around resource allocation and institutional academic supports as well as around the accountability of individual units and their overall importance to the academic mission of our university.

Still on the subject of AURs, CCAM reviewed a motion brought before Council at the 9 December 2015 meeting. Dr. Ann Ward had moved a slight change to the list of invitees to a working dinner held to welcome members of external review committees to the university. The current wording, found at the CCAM website, is below (emphasis mine):

Typically, the review team's time will provide opportunities for consultation within the academic unit (faculty, staff and students); members of the University administration; and other individuals inside and outside of the University who influence or who are influenced by the activities of the unit and graduates of the program. Particular efforts must be made to ensure student participation. **The on-site consultations commence with a working dinner hosted by the University administration and end with an exit interview with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), the Vice-President (Research), the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Dean of the Faculty.**

Dr. Ward moved "that the third sentence in the second paragraph [. . .] be changed to, 'The on-site consultations commence with a working dinner hosted by the University administration **which includes but is not limited to at least one faculty member from the academic unit being reviewed, in departmentalized faculty normally the Head or the Head's faculty designate,** and end with an exit interview with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), the

Vice-President (Research), the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Dean of the faculty.”

The committee carefully considered this proposed change but decided to keep the process as approved by CCAM at its 5 November 2014 meeting. CCAM intends, however, to review the current process after the first round of AURs (2016). It will consult with units reviewed and ask them for their concerns and recommendations.

Finally, CCAM has struggled at times to reach quorum since January 2016. Currently there is no policy allowing for replacement of council committee members (on CCAM, CCB, CCUAS, CCR) who resign or who are on leave. CCAM has suggested to the university secretary that we need some procedure to allow for temporary or permanent replacements.

Dr. Leanne Groeneveld on behalf of CCAM

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
Council

Item for Information

Subject: Council Committee on Budget, Council update

Status Update:

The Committee has met seven times this year. It is finding its way. Most of the elected members are new to the committee, with only one elected member carrying on from last year.

The first two meetings involved familiarizing members on previous work of the committee. We thank the previous members of the committee for their efforts in engaging with a very difficult and complex subject that has many moving parts.

In the last five meetings we have reviewed and recommended seven programs, revisions or proposals, to the next stage in the process. In addition we have spent a considerable amount of time to develop an understanding of the budget structure within the institution, including the regular transfer of funds between accounts as described in the financial statements.

The 2016-2017 budget process is about to begin. The more we understand about how allocations and information flow, the better we will be able to articulate our questions and interpret the answers. Through our learning and the experience of the budgeting process we hope to develop suggestions to improve transparency within the institution.

MARCH 22, 2016