

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

Thursday, March 13, 2025
Senate Chamber Room 1079
3:30 – 5:15 p.m.

Members – I. Agoston, A. Alexander, E. Dampson, J. Henley, J. McKay - CHAIR, T. Morrison, P. Mullins, G. Payne, G. Stewart, T. Whitcombe

Regrets: A. Beswick, D. McIntosh, J. Martin (VICE-CHAIR)

Absent: I. Lakhani

Governance: K. Howitt (University Secretary), A. Parent (Governance Officer – Recording), J. Unnuth (Governance Coordinator)

Administration: B. Owen (Interim Vice-President Academic & Provost), R. Somani (Vice-President Finance and Administration), P. Wood-Adams (Vice-President Research and Innovation), A. Lucarelli (Executive Director – Strategy and Staff)

The meeting commenced at 3:44pm

Acknowledgement of Territory

For thousands of years, Indigenous Peoples have walked gently on the diverse traditional territories where the University of Northern British Columbia community is grateful to live, work, learn, and play. We are committed to building and nurturing relationships with Indigenous peoples, we acknowledge their traditional lands.

The Prince George campus is situated on the unceded traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, part of the Dakelh (Carrier) peoples' territory.

1. Acknowledgement of Territory

The Chair acknowledged the First Nations territories on which we work and live.

2. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

• **Declarations of Conflict**

The Chair asked if on reviewing the agenda, if any member of the Board believes they may have a conflict with any item that it be declared. No conflicts were declared.

The Chair reported that elections for student representatives on the Board of Governors will be held next week, with 4 undergraduate candidates and 3 graduate candidates.

The Chair acknowledged that it was the last Board meeting for student representatives Eric Dampson and Iliyan Lakhani.

The Chair reported on the alumni Order in Council positions. Recommendations are pending from the Alumni Council. We currently have one vacant position and one set to expire in July 2025.

- **Correspondence Received**

Universities Canada's 2025 reaffirmation process

A letter from Universities Canada was received regarding the reaffirmation process. The Universities Canada Board of Directors request that all institution members reaffirm their adherence to the criteria for membership in the association every five years. In 2025, members will be asked to reaffirm their adherence to the criteria for membership until 2030.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.01 (T. Morrison/P. Mullins)

That the Agenda for the Public Session of the March 13, 2025 meeting of the Board of Governors be approved as presented.

CARRIED

4. Approval of Minutes

Public Session Minutes of January 30, 2025

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.02 (A. Alexander/G. Stewart)

That the Public Session Minutes of the January 30, 2025 meeting of the Board of Governors be approved as presented.

CARRIED

5. Report from the Closed Session of the Board

a. November 28, 2024

- Presentation on Communications and Marketing at UNBC
- President's Contract Approved
- Governance Action Items Discussed
- Board Attendance Reviewed
- Enrolment Management Discussion
- Engagement of Public Relations

b. January 30, 2025

- Board Evaluations
- Engagement of Public Relations

6. Business Arising from Previous Public Session Minutes

a. Budget for PhD in Chemistry Update - B. Owen

The Interim Provost reported that a template and sample budget was created for new programs. The PhD in Chemistry was approved pending submission of the budget information to the Audit & Risk Committee. The template will be included in future program approvals.

7. Reports of Committees and Related Motions

(i) Audit and Risk Committee – G. Stewart, Chair

Written report received. Updates were provided on Cybersecurity and Enterprise Risk Management.

a. Audit Plan by KPMG Audit Representatives (For Information) – R. Somani

The Audit Plan was received. C. Naphtali reported that there were no particular highlights or departures from previous years to note.

b. **UNBC Accessibility Plan Report and Update** – R. Somani

Written report received. The Board discussed the need to continue to raise awareness around accessibility and address attitudinal resistance within the organization. The Board discussed the need to prioritize actions.

(ii) **Finance and Investment Committee** – A. Beswick, Chair

Written report received.

a. **2025/26 Consolidated Budget** – R. Somani

Materials were received and discussed. The Vice President Finance and Administration and the Director Finance presented to the Board on the Budget 2025-26 and Projection for 2026-29. The Board discussed strategic holdbacks and fiscal management practices.

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.03 (G. Stewart/P. Mullins)

That on the recommendation of the Finance and Investment Committee the Board of Governors approves the 2025/26 Consolidated Budget, as presented.

CARRIED

b. **Scholarships, Bursaries & Awards** – P. Woods-Adams

Materials were received.

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.04 (G. Stewart/P. Mullins)

That on the recommendation of the Finance and Investment Committee the Board of Governors approves the scholarships, bursaries and awards as recommended and approved by the UNBC Senate, for the period of November 2024 to January 2025, as presented.

CARRIED

c. **UNBC Endowment Investment Statement & Policy (SIGP)** – R. Somani

Materials were received. Items 7 (ii) c. i. and ii. were moved as an omnibus motion.

i. **Updates to Statement of Investment Policies and Goals (SIPG) Section 4.0 Asset Allocation Guideline (Permitted Ranges)** – R. Somani

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.05 (P. Mullins/G. Stewart)

That on the recommendation of the Finance and Investment Committee and the Investment Advisory Committee the Board of Governors approves the UNBC Endowment Statement of Investment Policies and Goals as presented.

CARRIED

ii. **Recommendation to hold spending rate at 3.5%** – R. Somani

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.06 (P. Mullins/G. Stewart)

That on the recommendation of the Finance and Investment Committee and the Investment Advisory Committee the Board of Governors approves the that the spending rate (3.5%) remain unchanged for 2025/2026.

CARRIED

d. **UNBC process for approving new academic programs – proposed enhancements -**

B. Owen (verbal)

The Interim Provost reported that the proposed enhancements to the approval process for new academic programs were discussed at committee. UNBC will be working through these changes and processes within the university community.

e. Q3 Financial Forecast (For information) – R. Somani

The written report was received and discussed.

(iii) Governance and Human Resources Committee – J. McKay, Chair

Written report was received.

a. Market Differentials – B. Owen

i. Market differential for the School of Business

The Interim Provost reported that the School of Business has requested higher market differentials, broken down by rank.

MOTION: 2025BP03.13.07 (A. Alexander/I. Agoston)
That the Governance and Human Resources Committee recommends to the Board of Governors the approval of the Market Differential stipends for the School of Business as follows:

A market differential amount which varies across the rank and employment category as summarized in the table below. The recommended duration is for a period of five years, commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2030.

CARRIED, 8 in favor, 2 opposed

Rank	Current Market Differential	Requested Market Differential	Difference
Full Professor	\$29,853.29	\$46,000.00	□ by \$16,146.71
Associate Professor	\$27,151.37	\$43,000.00	□ by \$15,848.63
Assistant Professor	\$39,062.00	\$42,000.00	□ by \$2,938.00
Senior Instructor I to III	\$9,451.00	\$9,451.00	No change
Lecturer Senior Lab Instructor I to IV	\$18,902.00	\$18,902.00	No change

b. Board of Governors Code of Ethical Conduct and Annual Signing – J. McKay

Materials included in the meeting package.

c. Quarterly Board of Governors Appointment Delegation Policy Report (for information) –R. Somani

Report was received. Th Vice President Finance and Administration reported that on the Boards request this item has been reported on quarterly with the goal to transition to an annual report, covering the period from July to June. Before making it annual, a 6-monthly report will be presented at the September meeting. The annual report will include the HR Dashboard for a comprehensive view of the HR situation.

d. Annual Schedule of Board Meetings – J. McKay

Materials included in the meeting package.

8. Mandatory and Standing Reports – Public Session

a. Report of the President – G. Payne

- **Regular Report**
Written report received. The President reported on key priorities, the search for new Provost and VP Academic and the focus on budget and budget mitigation efforts.
- **Senate Update**

- Regular Senate meetings were held on January 22 and February 26, 2025
- A Joint Board and Senate Session was held January 30, 2025. Topics discussed:
 - *Strengthening partnerships with local industries, governments, and communities to co-create solutions addressing regional challenges*
 - *Ways can UNBC integrate challenge-based learning and transdisciplinary research into its programs to enhance societal impact*
 - *Strategies for UNBC adopt to serve as a catalyst for regional economic growth and innovation*
- Senate continues with its usual business, including the approval of the following:
 - Course revisions, new course approvals and other academic and calendar updates;
 - Recommendations for new and revised scholarships, awards and bursaries;
 - January 2025 list of graduate and undergraduate graduands;
 - A list of candidates for the Honorary Doctor of Laws Degrees;
 - Professor Emeritus/a
- Senate also
 - Received the Program Reviews for School of Engineering and Anthropology;
 - Received a presentation on the *UNBC Budget 2025/26 and Protections for 2026-29*;
 - Received and discussed a report on Enrolment – Historical Dual Credit Data;
 - Received and discussed 2025 Winter Add/Drop Enrolment Update;
 - Received Community Development Institute Annual reports;
 - Considered and discussed Formative Assessment Prior to Academic Withdrawal;
 - Discussed and considered the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Secretary of Senate;
 - Received information on a pilot Student Experience of Learning Instrument from the Center of Teaching and Learning;
 - Received verbal reports and discussed regional activities and planning; and
 - Received updates from the President, Interim Provost and Registrar.

The next regular meeting of Senate is on **March 26, 2025.**

b. Public Reports of the Vice-Presidents, written

- Interim Vice-President Academic and Provost – B. Owen
Written report received. The Interim Provost reported on the refreshed academic plan and the new WWN agreement that is moving through the approval process.
- 2025 Winter Add/Drop Enrolment Update was received. The Interim Provost reported on efforts to improve student retention from winter to fall or summer courses and working with the team on retention strategies. The Board discussed strategies to incentivize returning students.
- Vice-President, Finance and Administration – R. Somani
Written report received. The Vice President, Finance and Administration reported that the first introductory communication has been sent to the university community, introducing shared services and the reconfigured leadership team.
- Vice-President, Research and Innovation – P. Wood-Adams
Written report received. In addition, the Vice-President Research and Innovation reported on the first Faculty Writing Retreat, Youth Engagement Activities, Innovation and Entrepreneurship events.

The Board discussed the need for improved field safety measures. Senior Leadership emphasized a shared responsibility for safety across the institution.

9. Other Business
None

10. Upcoming Events

- *Faculty of Business and Economics Dinner- March 14*
- *Convocation Main (Prince George) Campus- May 30*
- *Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI) Campus Celebration-June 2*
- *Northwest (Terrace) Campus Celebration- June 3*
- *Northeast (Fort St. John) Campus Celebration – June 6*
- *South-Central (Quesnel) Campus Celebration- June 11*
- *2025 Northern BC Research and Quality Conference- October 23*

For more UNBC events, please visit www2.unbc.ca/events

11. Primary Focus for May Meeting –2025 Board of Governors Meeting

- Mandate Letter/Minister Letter
- Audit Findings Report
- Presentation and Approval of Financial Statements
- FTE Audit Report to March 31
- Executive Compensation Disclosure

12. Adjournment

MOTION: 2025BC03.13.08 (T. Whitcombe) <i>That the Board Closed meeting be adjourned.</i> CARRIED
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The meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm.