

SENATE MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES

March 26, 2025
3:30 – 5:00 PM
Senate Chambers

Present: C. Brown, D. Brown, R. Camp II, D. Casperson, B. Danesh, B. Deo, R. Fonda, K. Fredj, T. Fyfe, M. Groulx, N. Hanlon, J. Hirt, C. Ho Younghusband, A. Jamwal, T. Klassen-Ross, N. Koper, A. Kranz, M. Lolariya, L. Lakhani, M. Mandy, S. MacKay, N. Neufeld, R. Noonan, D. Nyce, B. Owen, A. Parent (Recording Secretary), M. Parkes, G. Payne (Chair), K. Rennie, K. Read (Secretary of Senate), D. Roberts, R. Singh, V. Sharma, R. Somani (non-voting), P. Siakaluk (non-voting), K. Stathers, M. Tavares, T. Watters, P. Wood-Adams, S. Wilson,

Regrets: J. Bankole, C. Barreira, J. Crandall, M. Gehloff (Vice Chair), C. Hofsink, S. Iftikhar, H. Kazemian, D. McIntosh, D. Litz, P. Prince, R. Ramzan, F. Tong, T. Whitcombe,

The Senate Meeting began at 3:35pm.

The Chair reported the following Acting Officers:

Armaan Jamwal, Acting Officer for the NUGSS President

The Chair reported that we have 2 Faculty Senator vacancies for a Faculty Member from the Faculty of Indigenous Studies, Social Science and Humanities.

The Chair reported on the Student Senator elections for September 2025 - (Term September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026). The following Senators have elected or acclaimed.

- Cheri Brown- Student Senator for the Faculty of Indigenous Studies, Social Sciences and Humanities- Acclaimed
- Chaitanya- Student Senator for the Faculty of Business and Economics
- Maria Tavares- Student Senator for the Faculty of Environment
- Francisco Gaspar- Student Senator for the Faculty of Human and Health Science
- Divjot Kaur- Student Senator for the Faculty of Science and Engineering
- Araiya Bernard- Student Senator – Undergraduate Student
- Dhaniella Dela Rosa- Student Senator – Undergraduate Student
- Alireza Noory- Student Senator - Graduate Student - Acclaimed
- Rana Kidwai- Student Senator - Graduate Student- Acclaimed

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh and welcomed other Senators to acknowledge the ancestral and traditional territories of their locations.

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.

1.0

S-202503.01

Approval of the Agenda

Hirt

That the agenda for March 26, 2025, Open Session of Senate be approved as presented.

Add under Item 12.0 Information

12.1 Reaffirmation to Universities Canada

CARRIED AS AMENDED

2.0

Presentation: Budget 2025-26 and Projection for 2026-29

Somani

Vice President Somani and Director of Finance Kullar presented the approved UNBC Budget for 2026. A link to the UNBC Budget 2025-25 and projections for 2026-29 were included in the meeting package.

Key Presentation and Discussion items:

- The full budget document is available on the website, detailing historical perspectives, key assumptions, challenges, and landscape.
- The budget is predicated on assumptions related to student enrollment, both international and domestic.
- UNBC relies heavily on provincial grant funding (around 60-62% of revenue), with student tuition contributing around 21%.
- Declining numbers in the K-12 system impact post-secondary enrollment.
- Federal policies are affecting international student enrollment.
- The university has achieved budget stability, allowing for strategic decisions rather than just cutting costs.
- Forecasted to end with a \$2.5 million surplus, primarily due to lower employee costs and non-utilization of budgeted contingency.
- 2026 Budget: Approved with a \$2.5 million deficit, reflecting higher IT infrastructure costs, increased student scholarships, and spending on academic programs and indigenous initiatives.
- Future Projections: Deficits projected for 2027 and 2028, with a slight surplus expected in 2029.
- Enrollment Trends
- Course Enrollment Analysis
- Revenue and Expenditure Trends
- Management Practices including:
 - Vacancy Management
 - Budget Holdbacks
 - Monitoring salary, operating, and capital expenses separately.
 - Carry Forward Management: Surplus distribution based on policy.

Senator Casperson asked how does the changing age profile of the faculty complement factored into employee cost calculations? Vice President Somani reported that the changing age profile of the faculty complement is factored into employee cost calculations by considering the current complement of faculty members and the profile of vacant positions. The budget reflects the salaries of the current full-time employed faculty members. The budget also includes the profile of vacant positions, considering the expected salaries of new employees. This approach ensures that the budget accurately represents the real costs associated with the current faculty complement and any changes due to new hires

Senator Casperson asked if we are assuming the current complement carries forward into 2027? Vice President Somani indicated that, yes, the budget assumes that the current complement of faculty members carries forward into 2027.

Senator Mandy asked if we are incurring a deferred maintenance deficit? Are we funding our maintenance adequately? Vice President Somani reported that the University is not currently in a critical situation regarding deferred maintenance. The University receives routine capital funding from the province for maintenance and updates. Some maintenance items are included in the capital planning budget and submitted for provincial

funding. The University has baseline resources for maintenance, specific issues can be addressed as needed, and major renovations are expected to be funded by the province.

3.0 Approval of the Minutes

S-202503.02

Approval of the Minutes

Camp

That the Minutes for February 26, 2025, Open Session of Senate be approved as presented.

CARRIED AS AMENDED

Corrections to the minutes noted:

- Page 1 “Mehrdad Mohammadifar” correction to name
- Page 5 Senator Hanlon’s name
- S202502.09 – Course number should be SOCW 623.

Appendix I - 2025 Winter Add/Drop Enrolment Update

4.0 Business Arising

4.1 ‘Parking’ of Graduate Course

Owen

The Interim Provost reported that this discussion item at the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs and will be brought forward to the May or June meeting for discussion.

5.0 President’s Report

Payne

5.1 Report from the March 13, 2025 Board of Governors

- Budget for PhD in Chemistry Update
- Audit Plan presented by KPMG Audit Representatives
- UNBC Accessibility Plan Report and Update
- 2025/26 Consolidated Budget
- Scholarships, Bursaries & Awards
- UNBC Endowment Investment Statement & Policy (SIGP)
- Discussion on UNBC’s process for approving new academic programs – proposed enhancements
- Q3 Financial Forecast
- Market Differentials for the School of Business
- Individual Faculty Market Differentials
- Board of Governors Code of Ethical Conduct and Annual Signing
- Quarterly Board of Governors Appointment Delegation Policy Report
- Annual Schedule of Board Meetings
- Cyber-Security Update
- UNBC Land Trust – Approval of the Agreement to Lease
- President’s Recommendation for Tenure & Promotion
- Discussion on Enrolment Management

The President reported on the following:

- Joint Senate and Board Meeting
- A Northern Post-Secondary Presidents Meeting
- The RUCBC Budget Debrief
- Aboriginal History Week
- Faculty Business Economics Dinner
- Green Day Opening
- Downtown Rotary Speech to discuss the future of post-secondary education
- Universities Canada, the International Committee, focusing on international student discussions

- Alumni Engagement

6.0 Report of the Interim Provost

Owen

The Interim Provost acknowledged:

- Dr. Jennifer Hyndman, who received the Tate Lecture Award
- Dr. Heather Smith, who received an international teaching award within her discipline
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The Interim Provost reported on:

- The Vice Presidents' Academic and Research Meeting
- Enrollment Initiatives
 - The team has been working on new and enhanced initiatives to address enrollment challenges.
 - Efforts are aimed at positively impacting the budget by the end of the year.

7.0 Report of the Registrar

Read

The Registrar reported on:

- The proposed New Academic Dates for the fall 2025 and winter 2026 semesters include the implementation of a fall mid-semester break.
- The consultation on Formative Assessment:
- The Draft Academic Schedule is underway, with the final draft expected by the end of the week.
- The International Strategy, mandated by the government.
- Graduation and Convocation

8.0 Report on Regional Activities

Owen

The Interim Provost reported on the formation of the Regional Council. Terms of Reference for the Council are being drafted. Membership will include individuals with broad expertise and regional distribution. The Council will have an academic focus and will also provide broader regional strategy and direction.

9.0 Question Period (10 minutes)

9.1 Questions in advance

- 9.1.1** It has come to the attention of faculty that UNBC has had at least two CRC Tier II positions unfilled for the last three years. The total amount of money that has been 'left on the table' by the University over this time frame may be \$600,000 at a minimum. More importantly, CRC positions typically yield a 2x return on investment (i.e., a CRC Chair typically can leverage additional funds from their position) and so more research funds and research opportunities are being missed.

Can the VPRI:

1. confirm how many CRC positions are not presently filled, and the duration of the gaps for each of these vacant positions,
2. provide an explanation on why these positions were not filled in light of UNBC promoting itself as a research-intensive university, and
3. provide an update on when each of the positions are expected to be filled?

(Senator Hanlon)

Vice President Wood-Adams reported that there are currently two Tier II CRC positions unfilled. One position has been vacant since January 2020 and the other position has been vacant since late 2018. The unfilled positions have resulted in approximately \$1.1 million in missed research funds. And the primary challenge in filling these positions has been the assignment of faculty slots to research chairs.

Senator Hanlon noted that there were efforts by an advisory group and internal applicants to fill these positions, but these did not progress.

Vice President Wood-Adams reported that a new proposal for research chairs is being implemented, aiming to fill the open chairs within the next 12 to 18 months. Currently consultations are being done.

She presented a proposal for a suite of research chairs under the theme "Northern Futures: Resilience in the Face of Uncertainty." on 'Northern Futures: Resilience in the Face of Uncertainty' and invited feedback.

- 9.1.2** Between the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 undergraduate academic calendars, there was a change to regulation 24 related to 'Minors, Areas of Specialization, and Areas of Focus'. This change removed language indicating that areas of specialization "are recorded on a student's official transcript". The change has impacted programs across the Faculty of Environment.

- What was the rationale for removing the language?
- Are areas of specialization currently listed on students' official transcript?
- What consultation requirements does a change of this type carry?
- If areas of specialization are not currently listed on students' official transcript, can the clause be reintroduced to reinstate this practice?

(Senator Groulx)

Registrar Read reported that there was no clear rationale documented for why the language indicating that areas of specialization "are recorded on a student's official transcript" was removed. The exact date and authority behind the removal are unknown. Currently, no, areas of specialization are listed on students' official transcripts, and they have never been. Although the wording was added to the calendar in September 2013, it was never implemented and cannot be done quickly. The Registrar committed to working on this project with the goal of implementing specializations on the transcript by Fall 2026. Regular updates will be provided to ensure progress is tracked.

9.2 Questions from the floor

No questions.

10.0 Committee Reports

10.1 Senate Committee on Student Appeals

Klassen-Ross

Senator Klassen-Ross reported that the committee currently has one appeal has been resolved and one appeal under preliminary review.

10.2 Senate Committee on Academic Affairs

Owen

Senator Casperson asked to have item .03 removed from the Consent agenda.

"For Approval" Items:

S-202503.03

Change(s) to Course Prerequisites – ENSC 312-3, Biometeorology

Hirt

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, the change to the course prerequisites for ENSC 312-3 *Biometeorology*, on page 242 in the 2024/25 undergraduate PDF calendar, be approved as proposed.

Effective Date: September 2025

CARRIED; 2 Opposed

Proposed revision with changes underlined and deletions indicated clearly using “~~striketrough~~”:

ENSC 312-3 Biometeorology This course focuses on the principles of weather and climate at micro-, local, and meso- scales. It discusses the processes associated with transfers of heat, mass, and momentum, and the resulting climates near the surface. Other topics include ~~fog~~, urban and forest climates, bioclimatology, local winds, ~~as well as~~ transport and dispersion of air pollution, ~~and fog~~.

Prerequisite(s): ENSC 201-3 ~~and 100-level MATH or PHYS~~

S-202503.04

Change(s) to Course Prerequisites – ENSC 454-3, Snow and Ice

Hanlon

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, the change to the course prerequisites for ENSC 454-3 *Snow and Ice*, on page 243 in the 2024/25 undergraduate PDF calendar, be approved as proposed.

Effective Date: September 2025

CARRIED

Proposed revision with changes underlined and deletions indicated clearly using “~~striketrough~~”:

ENSC 454-3 Snow and Ice This course focuses on the physical processes involving snow and ice that influence the hydrometeorology of ~~N~~orthern British Columbia and the rest of Canada including: snowpack, permafrost, lake, river and sea ice,; ~~and~~ glacier formation and ablation processes; and the characteristics of snow and ice, ~~and~~ as well as how ~~they~~ these evolve with climate change. Students conduct an extensive snow survey in the field.

Prerequisite(s): ~~ENSC 201-3~~ 60 credit hours

Preclusion(s): ENSC 654-3

S-202503.05

Course Reactivation – HHSC 370-3, Occupational Health

Casperson

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, HHSC 370-3 be re-activated with the same course description as when it was deactivated.

Effective Date: September 2025

CARRIED

HHSC 370-3 Occupational Health This course introduces students to the scientific basis of occupational health, specifically the relevant principles and concepts of injury prevention, disability management, ergonomics, toxicology, wellness and the general concepts of healthy workplaces. The nature of common occupational health hazards and their effect on humans is examined. Examples of common preventative and protective measures and controls are also reviewed.

Prerequisite(s): Upper-level standing in the BHSc program, or permission of the instructor

S-202503.07

Memorandum of Understanding - Yamagata Prefectural University of Health Sciences and UNBC
Wilson

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, the UNBC Senate approves the Memorandum of Understanding between Yamagata Prefectural University of Health Sciences and the University of Northern British Columbia as presented.

Effective Date: Upon signing of the agreement
CARRIED

Senate discussed the criteria

Presentation of the READY Roadmap: Academic Plan 2025-2031

Owen

The Interim Provost present the READY Roadmap: Academic Plan. The objective of the plan is to build on the 2017 Academic Action Plan and align it with the Strategic Plan, Ready. Academic priorities highlighted were:

- Driving strategic enrollment growth and impact
- Empowering indigenous knowledge at UMBC
- Transforming curriculum
- Earning pedagogical innovation
- Importance of regional engagement

S-202503.08

READY Roadmap: Academic Plan 2025-2031

Camp

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs, the READY Roadmap: Academic Plan 2025-2031 be approved as proposed

Effective Date: September 2025
CARRIED

Action: Annual Reports on the Academic Plan are to be brought to Senate

“For Discussion” Items:

i. Degree program reviews

Owen

As per the [Degree Program Review Policy](#), procedural articles 5.7 through 5.9, the Responses to the External Review of Degree Program Report and Action Plan and the Executive Summary from the External Review of Degree Program Report are presented to the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs for review, and to Senate for discussion and advice in an open session.

The Degree Program Self Study and appendices, and the External Review of Degree Program Report are presented to the Senate Committee on Academic Affairs in a closed session for information and to Senate, only on the recommendation of SCAAF or the request of Senate, in a closed session for information.

The Dean considers the advice of SCAAF and Senate and amends the Action Plan if necessary.

ii. Political Science

Owen

- External Review of Degree Program Report Executive Summary was included in the meeting package.
- Responses to the External Review of Degree Program Report and Action Plan were included in the meeting package.

“For Information” Items

i. Research Ethics Board Annual Report

Wood- Adams

Report received.

At 5:24 pm, **Motion to Extend Senate**, moved by Senator Deo CARRIED

10.3 Steering Committee of Senate

Payne

“For Approval” Items:

S-202503.09

Change(s) to the Senate Committee on Student Appeals Terms of Reference and Senate Handbook Deo

That on the recommendation of the Steering Committee of Senate and the Senate Committee on Student Appeals, the Terms of Reference for the Senate Committee on Student Appeals and subsequently changes to the Senate Handbook be approved as presented.

Effective Date: September 2025

CARRIED

Senator Mandy asked about what process the Formal Review would review. Senator Klassen-Ross indicated that the review could be policies or procedures within a program, department or a decision-making process that was involved in an appeal.

“For Discussion” Items:

i. Joint Session for Board and Senate Summary

Payne

Summary was received.

10.4 Senate Committee on Nominations

Gehloff

S-202503.09a

Recommendations of Senate Committee Members

C. Brown

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Nominations the following candidates, who have met all eligibility requirements to serve on Senate committees as indicated, be appointed as proposed.

Effective date: Upon approval of Senate

SENATE COMMITTEE POSITION TO BE FILLED

CANDIDATE

(except as otherwise noted, all terms begin immediately)

Senate Committee on Indigenous Initiatives

Faculty Representative

July 1, 2025 to March 31, 2027

CARRIED

Tina Fraser

10.4.1 Senate Committee Vacancies

A list of Senate Committee Vacancies was included in the meeting package.

10.5 Senate Committee on Curriculum and Calendar

Read

A verbal report was received. Registrar Read reported that there are a large number of motions moving through the approval process.

10.6 Senate Committee on Admission and Degrees

Read

No report

10.7 Senate Committee on Indigenous Initiatives

Payne

A verbal report was received. The President reported that the WWN Agreement is expected to be on the April Senate Agenda.

10.8 Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and Special Forms of Recognition

Payne

A verbal report was received. The President reported that the Student Senate Leadership Award Nominations are currently under review.

10.9 Senate Committee on Scholarships and Bursaries

Wood-Adams

“For Information” Items

SCSB20250226.03 *(approved)*

Bioeconomy Award

That the new Terms and Conditions for the Bioeconomy Award be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.04 *(approved)*

Judith Robertson Student Award

That the new Terms and Conditions for the Judith Robertson Student Award be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.05 *(approved)*

UNBC Faculty of Business and Economics Dinner Award

That the new Terms and Conditions for the UNBC Faculty of Business and Economics Dinner Award be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.06 *(approved)*

UNBC International Merit Award

That the new Terms and Conditions for the UNBC Merit Award be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.07 *(approved)*

Raven International Scholarship

That the new Terms and Conditions for Raven International Scholarship be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.08 *(approved)*

Donaldson Heaney Bursary

That the proposed revisions for the Donaldson Heaney Bursary be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.09 *(approved)*

Graduate Entrance Research Scholarship (GERS) Procedures

That the proposed revisions for the Graduate Entrance Research Scholarship (GERS) procedures be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.10 *(approved)*

Knights of Columbus Council #8927 Bursary

That the proposed revisions for the Knights of Columbus Council #8927 Bursary be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

SCSB20250226.11 *(approved)*

President’s Silver Anniversary Award for Excellence in Leadership

That the revised terms and conditions for the President’s Silver Anniversary Award for Excellence in Leadership be approved.
Effective: 2025/2026 Academic Year

10.10 Senate Committee on University Budget

Gehloff

No report.

11.0 Approval of Motions on the Consent Agenda

Payne

S-202503.10

Approval of Motions on the Consent Agenda

Hanlon

That the motions on the consent agenda, except for those removed for placement on the regular agenda, be approved as presented.

Effective Date: Upon the approval of Senate

CARRIED

12.0 Information

- 12.1** Reaffirmation to Universities Canada – A letter from Universities Canada was received with a request to reaffirm our commitment to ensure that the institution continues to meet the membership criteria, which is seen as a mark of Canadian higher education quality around the world.

13.0 Other Business - none

14.0 S-202503.11 (10 minutes)

Move to the Closed Session

Hanlon

That the meeting move to Closed Session

CARRIED

15.0 S-202503.15

Adjournment

Deo

That the Senate meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:41pm.