Innis College Council
315th Meeting
Friday 8 March 2019 at 10:30 am
Innis Residence Events Room

Minutes

Present: Elspeth Arbow, Ennis Blentic (assessor), Donald Boere (assessor), Sarah Burley Hollows, James Chapman (guest), Jannie Chien, Andrew Choi, Corinn Columpar, Lucas Granger, Didier Ha, Joyce Hahn (assessor), Kate Johnson, Paul Kaita (designate of Sarah Chocano), Charlie Keil, Daniel Li, Brandon Liu, Annie Liu, Merle McMurray, Tony Pi, Daniela Pirraglia, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, Ashlee Redmond, Samuel Reimer, David Roberts, Tyler Schilz, Bart Testa, Ben Weststrate (secretary), Ethan Wong (designate of Dianthi Fernando), Paxton Wong, Nancy Zhao

Regrets: James Cahill, Rita Chen, Sharon English, Dianthi Fernando, Ethan Kim, Stephanie Kroone, Varun Malik, Steve Masse, Janelle Palmer, Roslin Pan, Jean-Luc Pullano, Roger Rendeau, Ishan Sharma, Joanne Uyede, Caroline Wrobel, Andrew Zhao

1. SPEAKER'S REMARKS
Student speaker Ashlee Redmond chaired the meeting and wished Council members a Happy International Women’s Day.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5 DECEMBER 2018
Click here to view the Minutes (PDF).
A Motion to approve the previous Minutes was moved (Redmond), seconded (Pirraglia), and carried.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES
None reported

4. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT
A. Guest Speaker: Greg Evans
Principal Keil welcomed guest speaker Greg Evans, chair of the Expert Panel on Undergraduate Student Educational Experience (USEE) and professor of chemical engineering and applied chemistry.

Evans reviewed the draft USEE vision (previously circulated to Council) and described its impetus. Discussion ensued.

Ramkhalawansingh observed an excess of jargon in the vision, indicating that it too closely resembles a business plan. She added that “cultivating students’ curiosity” is a priority that should be more explicit.

Granger recommended the inclusion of the word “respect” to the following line: “Allow them to understand and appreciate Indigenous peoples, histories and perspectives.” Evans acknowledged that the Panel is scrutinize that point as well. Li noted that the statement related to Indigenous Peoples stands out as the least intrinsically linked to classroom experience, calling for elaboration on how this idea is applied in that context. Evans acknowledged the high-level nature of the vision, indicating the Panel’s intent to provide operational ideas for its application/translation at a later stage in the rollout process.
Roberts asked where evaluation mechanisms factor into this process. Evans reiterated the high-level, aspirational nature of the vision and assured that a specific evaluation plan is forthcoming.

Burley Hollows emphasized the importance of experience outside of the classroom and expressed that the language around this type of learning is underrepresented in the vision.

Evans closed by inviting further feedback from the University community. Weststrate noted that the feedback website URL had been circulated to Council members.

B. Guest speaker: Meredith Strong

Principal Keil welcomed Meredith Strong, director of the Office of the Vice-Provost & Student Policy, back to ICC to discuss how the University is managing the recent provincial government changes to non-tuition fees. Strong provided an overview of the timeline, beginning with the Ministry announcement in January and summarized the two areas affected by the announcement: OSAP and non-tuition fees. Regarding the latter, Strong explained that this “Student Choice Initiative“ requires opt-out provisions for non-essential non-tuition fees.

The Office of the VP & Student Policy must interpret the Ministry announcement to differentiate the essential and non-essential. Strong reported little communication from the Ministry to clarify this rubric. A framework is expected this month.

In the meantime, the University is analysing fees across 45 student societies, on a case-by-case basis, excluding the federated colleges. They are attempting to unbundle any consolidated fees. Consistency across divisions is going to be critical moving forward.

The opt-out process must be online and in place by mid-July (i.e., prior to when students begin paying 2019/20 fall/winter fees). Strong’s office is also focussed on the logistics of the opt-out process, including provisions for later “opt-ins.” To this end, they are with EASII on the web interface where students will be presented with the ability to selectively opt-out. This may include space for fees to be explained (i.e., contextualized).

Discussion ensued in which Strong clarified the following issues:

- Fees that cover overhead/operational costs, such as staff pay, are expected to be classified as essential—if the impending Ministry framework allows for it.
- Student societies’ access to membership lists, in order to differentiate fee-paying and non-paying students, are limited due to privacy rights. Her office is looking at this issue.
- On the web interface, a given student will have to make an active and conscious decision to opt-out (e.g., checking a box) versus it being the default.
- The government will set up a complaint mechanism (e.g., snitch line) for students to appeal whether a given fee should be classified as non-essential.
- Work is being done at the divisional level to secure corporate donations to proactively offset the impacts.

Redmond called for the development of a cross-University forum for divisional student leaders to discuss these changes, and to collaborate on managing the fall-out, namely loss of revenue.

Burley Hollows indicated that the Office of Student Life (OSL) and ICSS are having conversations about opportunities to convey the benefits of certain fees to incoming students, prior to the opt-out date (e.g., summer messaging, academic orientation).

Principal Keil stated that it is imperative for college principals to advocate for, subsidize and otherwise
minimize the impact upon students. A primary function of a college is to support its students; student government is a critical way to do this. Principal Keil requested clarity on the extent to which college administrators can subsidize student groups without running afoul of policy provisions (i.e., do an “end run”). At present, he cannot determine what we can and cannot do, and time is sensitive.

Strong acknowledged this position and confirmed that it is another priority of her Office.

Principal Keil thanked the guest speakers.

C. Revitalisation and expansion project update

Principal Keil reported that he and CAO Joyce Hahn will be part of a meeting on March 19 to select from the shortlisted architecture proposals. Two possible paths will emerge from this decision:

- If incumbent firm Montgomery Sisam is selected they will proceed from where they left off.
- If a new firm is selected, there will be a step back in the overall process to re-facilitate input from the College community. This path will require extra haste, to compensate for this additional step.

A committee of 24 “student ambassadors” for the project has been assembled. It is a diverse group, representing the many facets of the student community. Ambassadors are nominally “on-call” to disseminate information about the project to various constituencies (e.g., fellow students, alumni, prospective donors).

Keil reported nearly unanimous enthusiastic uptake from the students invited to participate.

The proposed student levy, which will face referendum during the ICSS General Elections in late March, will not be affected by the impending changes to non-tuition fees (i.e., will be a mandatory fee). ICSS President Brandon Liu reviewed the terms of the levy (See Appendix 1). Liu noted that the ICSS is working with the ambassadors to ensure that students can make informed decisions about the levy, including a discussion at the Democracy Night event on March 14.

Keil clarified that the intent behind the 25-year, accelerated fee structure (i.e., increasing in phases) is to increase the cost for those students who will directly enjoy the new space.

D. Award Recipients:

Principal Keil congratulated the following award recipients, noting that in his tenure as principal these are the highest recipient numbers Innis College has seen.

- **Student Engagement in the Arts Award**: Ethan Kim, Jess Stewart-Lee, and Chiao Sun. They will be formally recognized at a March 19 ceremony.

- **Gordon Cressy Student Leadership Award**: James Chapman (Innis Herald, U of T New Democrats, HIF, Varsity, IRC, ICSS); Akil Abrar Chowdhury (Economics Students’ Association, Model UN, Muslim Students’ Association); Ethan Kim (IRC, Innis College Choir, ICC, WINDS); Stephanie Kroone (Innis OSL, ICSS, Orientation, Rotaract Club, Commuter Communications Committee); Lucy Lu (Innis OSL, FLC, InSIGHT); Ashlee Redmond (ICC, HIF, ICSS, IRC, Innis Herald); Jess Stewart-Lee (Innis Herald, Varsity, CINSSU); and Victoria Wilson (IRC, Fit Club, Canadian Conference on Student Leadership, Residence don). These recipients will be recognized at an April 22 ceremony.

Council members applauded these well-earned achievements.
5. BOARD REPORTS

A. Academic Affairs (AAB)

Redmond, on behalf of Board moderator Sharon English, indicated that AAB had not met since the last ICC meeting. However, one decision was made, via email, to approve the two minor course changes, which had January 15 deadline.

- Create a 300H “shell” course for a Writing Rhetoric “Special Topics” course, which the program currently doesn’t have. In 2019/20, the course will be “The Rhetoric of Health and Medicine,” taught by Dan Adleman.
- Change name of INI304H to “The Illusion and Reality of Evidence” to better reflect course content and distinguish it from another course.

B. College Affairs

Board moderator Kate Johnson indicated that the Board has not met since the last ICC meeting.

C. Community Affairs (CAB)

Weststrate reported the following highlights on behalf of CAB moderator Caroline Wrobel, from a December 10 meeting. Click here to view the Minutes.

- Third issue of the Innis Alumni & Friends Magazine was distributed in early January to 7500 alumni and friends (e.g., donors, volunteers). Click here to view the digital version.
- The recently revived Innis alumni e-newsletter series is scheduled for dissemination in late March. Advancement Office work-study student Louisa You is commended for her editorial work on this.
- The fifth cycle of the Alumni Mentorship Program launched on October 23, 2018 with ~25 pairings.
- The Advancement Office delivered 20 events since the last CAB meeting. Another six are slated for the winter term, including:
  - A reprisal of the regional reunion in London, UK, hosted by alumnus Rob Hain on Jan 16;
  - Four Canadian Film Forum screenings: “The Woman Who Loves Giraffes” with film subject and daughter of Harold A. Innis, Anne Innis Dagg, on Jan 24; “Octavio Is Dead!” with Sook-Yin Lee and alumna Chandler Levack on Jan 31; “Brown Girl Begins” with alumna Sharon Lewis on Feb 14; and “Giant Little Ones” with alumna Allison Black on Mar 19;
  - A public lecture with alumnus Phil Howard on Mar 28
- Later Life Learning successfully piloted a “Books and Beyond” discussion group in the fall that is continuing in the winter term. The targets of their “Week of Giving” fundraising campaign, later this month, are the Innis College Admission Scholarship for Indigenous Peoples Fund and Refugee Student Fund.
- The Harold Innis Foundation’s annual lecture on November 8 featured author-biographer Charlotte Gray. The 2019 lecture will be delivered by poet-novelist Dionne Brand on November 14.

Boere noted that the Registrar’s Office has started the call for applications for the newly revised Harold Innis Prize, which recognizes off-campus leadership. He encouraged Council members to help spread the word.
6. STUDENT AFFAIRS (SAB)

Board moderator Lucas Granger reported the following highlights from a March 6 meeting. Click here to view the Minutes.

- The Recruitment, Admissions, and Awards Committee (RAAC) met on March 4 and discussed the future of the expendable Innis College “Kitchen Sink” Award Fund. Further discussion around its potential rebranding and finding new donation sources is required, in collaboration with the Advancement Office. RAAC also strategized how to best promote leadership award applications and reviewed its adjudication method for merit-based admission awards.

- SAB reviewed draft copy, prepared by the registrar, for web content that describes the First-Year Foundations (FYF) pilot program.
  Boere thanked SAB members for the valuable input. Once implemented, the Board will be solicited for further feedback.

Principal Keil added the following FYF updates:

- 13 A&S departments have agreed to participate, and the respective instructors and courses are confirmed.
- If any upper-year students are willing to provide testimonial about the value of a seminar-style course, please let the principal or registrar know.

Principal Keil thanked Boere and the registrarial staff for their full cooperation and hard work to develop this pilot program on such a compressed timeline. Principal Keil expressed his belief that the program will be of great benefit to future Innis students.

Office of Student Life (OSL): Burley Hollows reported that the OSL will host its annual IN2U Transition leadership conference on March 30. Work-study and casual employment hiring for 2019/20 is underway. The OSL is supporting the development of a Memorandum of Agreement between the ICSS and Innis’s WUSC Committee. OSL staff are available to talk to any student with concerns about the non-tuition fee policy.

Residence Life: Schilz reported that the number of dons in the Residence will increase to 11 for 2019/20. This change will improve the don:resident ratio, bringing it close to 1:30. There will be two dons per House, excluding First House.

ICSS: Nancy Zhao, VP–Internal, reported a healthy number of nominations for the upcoming ICSS General Elections thus far, and she outlined the election schedule (e.g., nominations, campaign, voting).

7. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Redmond reported the following from a February 13 meeting:

Student Services Fee/Committee: The Committee discussed the potential implications of the new non-tuition fees policy on the Student Services Fee, and by extension the Student Services Committee. The Office of the Vice-Provost & Student Policy informed Principal Keil that this fee is being closely reviewed (i.e., will potentially be deemed non-mandatory). Redmond reviewed the 1997 Memorandum of Agreement between the College and ICSS, which initiated the levy to subsidize a “student centre renovation.” Redmond speculated that, given its facilities-related origin, the Student Services Fee may qualify as essential (i.e., mandatory).

Keil suggested that, while the fee has historically benefitted facilitates-related projects in practice, we may need to revise the terms of the Memorandum and the SSC to make this explicit. Such an amendment would not affect how the money has been spent, but it could safeguard it from a non-essential, non-mandatory
classification.

Redmond added that parity is essential for votes to pass on SSC, which guarantees that student voice is reflected in funding decisions. Boere echoed the value of parity on SSC and suggested that, moving forward, in light of the College expansion project, the initial purpose of the Student Services Fee could re-surface.

**Art Committee:** The Executive Committee recommended re-constituting the currently unplaced (a.k.a., orphaned) “Art Committee” under the Community Affairs Board (CAB). That Motion will be put forth at the next CAB meeting.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Crosswalk petition:** Daniel Li informed Council that the IRC has begun collecting signatures for a petition to improve pedestrian safety at the St. George Street-Sussex Avenue crosswalk. The petition was circulated to ICC members. (See Appendix 2)

- **Urban Studies Program events:** Roberts noted four upcoming events: “Right to Walk TO” on March 26; “Future-Proofing Toronto’s Employment Lands” with City of Toronto chief planner and Innis alumnus Gregg Lintern on April 2; “Reimagining and Reclaiming Ontario Place” with alumnus David Stonehouse on April 4; and “Addressing Anti-Black Racism” with the City of Toronto on the anniversary of the 1992 Yonge Street Uprising on May 4.

- **Congratulations:** Corinn Columpar congratulated Principal Keil on being awarded the 2019 Pedagogy Award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS)—the largest and most prominent cinema-focused academic society. Keil will receive this award next week at the SCMS Conference in Seattle.

- **Leadership awards:** Redmond informed Council members that applications for Innis College student leadership awards are being accepted until April 22. She encouraged all student representatives to consider applying.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved (Testa), seconded (Arbow), and carried.
APPENDIX 1: REFERENDUM QUESTION

Founded in 1964, Innis College has a proud tradition of student involvement, best represented by a parity governance model unique within the University of Toronto. A decade after the College’s founding, it moved into its current location at the corner of Sussex and St. George. The current College building, constructed in 1974, was widely praised as an architectural innovation, combining new construction with a pre-existing Victorian house at the west end of the site. At the time of the College building’s opening, the student population was 800. With the number of Innis students now over 2,000, the College administration is planning a reimagining of the west wing that focuses on student needs. This project will create an array of new spaces in a light-filled, environmentally-responsive expansion that respects the College’s architectural past while providing opportunities for the future. Central to the plans are a larger commuter lounge; expanded spaces for Innis student government, student clubs, and the Innis Herald; an extensive network of new study and lounge spaces; and a reconceived student resource hub that will combine the functions of the current library, writing centre, and related student services. This is an exciting project that will give all students at Innis the spaces that they deserve. The Innis College Student Society (ICSS) is seeking consent from its members for the creation of a special project levy. Beginning in Fall 2019, Innis College students shall contribute $5 per session for 5 years or until the opening of the new wing, whichever occurs first. Upon opening of the new wing, for a period of 4 20 years, Innis College students shall contribute $15 per session. This levy shall only be collected in the fall and winter sessions. Funds collected as part of this levy will contribute solely to the cost of building student co-curricular spaces, such as the expanded café, commuter lounge, student activity space, and offices for student organizations and clubs, including the ICSS and Herald.

Are you in favour of the establishment of a special project levy as outlined above?

Yes, No, Abstain

APPENDIX 2: CROSSWALK PETITION

Make St. George Street More Pedestrian-Friendly

TO the City of Toronto

The crosswalk located at St. George Street and Sussex Avenue does not sufficiently ensure the safety of the hundreds of pedestrians using the space every day. The poor design and lack of visual signals have put both drivers and pedestrians at risk of injury and death.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, urge the City of Toronto to make pedestrian-friendly changes to the crosswalks located at the intersection of St. George Street and Sussex Avenue.

We propose any of the following changes:

a. Moving the crosswalks approximately 2 metres closer to each other
b. Increased signaling for vehicles to stop
c. Making clearer indication of a pedestrian crosswalk, i.e. adding white painted lines
d. Addition of a speed table