Innis College Council
316th Meeting
Tuesday 16 April 2019 at 2:30 pm
Innis Residence Events Room

Minutes

Present: Elspeth Arbow, Ennis Blentic (assessor), Donald Boere (assessor), Jannie Chien, Sarah Chocano, Andrew Choi, Corinn Columpar, Sharon English, Dianthi Fernando, Lucas Granger, Didier Ha, Joyce Hahn (assessor), Kate Johnson, Charlie Keil, Daniel Li, Brandon Liu, Annie Liu, Steve Masse (assessor), Merle McMurray, Josie Meza-Silva (guest), Daniela Pirraglia, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, Ashlee Redmond, Roger Riendeau, David Roberts, Tyler Schilz, Bart Testa, Joanne Uyede, Ben Weststrate (secretary), Paxton Wong, Caroline Wrobel, Carol Ye (designate of Rita Chen), Nancy Zhao, Andrew Zhao

Regrets: Sarah Burley Hollows, James Cahill, Rita Chen, Ethan Kim, Stephanie Kroone, Varun Malik, Janielle Palmer, Roslin Pan, Tony Pi, Jean-Luc Pullano, Samuel Reimer, Ishan Sharma

1. SPEAKER'S REMARKS

Speaker Joanne Uyede chaired the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 8 MARCH 2019

A motion to approve the Minutes was moved (Pirraglia), seconded (Boere) and carried.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Testa inquired about the status of the expected provincial government framework for assessing mandatory vs. non-mandatory student fees. Keil explained that a slightly more detailed framework arrived, which the Provost's Office is presently interpreting.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- Mental health forum: Principal Keil introduced ICC student representative Annie Liu, to speak about a local event addressing student mental health. This initiative emerged amidst recent outpouring of desire from students across the University on the subject.

  Liu described the two-hour student forum on Mar. 29 that she co-organized, which aimed to create a space for the student community to generate discussion and actionable goals toward addressing student mental health on campus. Three primary goals were articulated: create a “mental health commissioner” position who would serve as a designated and accessible resource provider for students at the College; develop a peer-to-peer support network; and increase awareness of Innis’s on location advisor from Health & Wellness. Other themes discussed at the forum included integrating intersectionality, inaccessible support for marginalized communities, generational gaps in
understandings of mental health, and inadequacy of on-campus resources. Liu also noted a consensus that commuting students feel less supported than on-campus residents, with regard to mental health, and concluded that increasing commuter students’ connection to the College is of critical importance. Liu added that University and Woodsworth Colleges have instituted mental health directors (i.e., there is precedent).

Ramkhalsingh expressed concern over the Mar. 28 Letter to students, faculty and staff from President Gertler on student mental health at U of T, finding it insufficiently robust and unclear—particularly with respect to support at the academic departmental level. Liu echoed the concern, indicating enhancing college-based support could have a ripple effect across the broader university.

Principal Keil endorsed the framework, employed by Caroline Rabbat, director, Critical Incidents, Safety & Awareness that assesses mental health support across three factors: cultural, structural, resources.

Masse noted that on location advisors (i.e., the divisionally embedded counsellors), from Health & Wellness, were instituted in response to this overarching need at the University. He applauded the systems-based approach taken by Liu and her peers, which complements available resources and works to develop support structures at the College.

- **Accessibility services:** Guest speaker, Sara Abura, Innis’s on location advisor from Accessibility Services, described the function of her office, broadly, and her role at the College. The On Location Advisor model was recently expanded to included Accessibility Services in an effort to decrease barriers for students attempting to accessing their services (e.g., to mitigate wait times) and to provide a local resource for college faculty and staff. Of the 4000+ students registered with Accessibility Services, mental health-related requests for accommodation are the most frequent. Such accommodations are individualized, and formal diagnoses are not required.

A. Liu indicated that, at the above-mentioned Mental Health Forum, participants reported inconsistency among professors acknowledging student’s mental health issues. Abura linked this to a broader pattern in higher education and noted that, once registered, her office is able to advocate for the student, help the student work around perceived barriers, and help the instructor find specific accommodations. A. Zhao inquired about any additional, specific outreach programs to faculty members by Accessibility Services. Abura acknowledged this issue as a current priority for her office.

Abura clarified that through the On Location model students are still required to register through the central intake process, but that drop-in appointments with her are a more immediate option for less intensive cases. The presence of a local advisor is of further value as it enhances the connection between Accessibility Services and college-based staff, and it affords the former a clearer, more individualized understanding of the college landscape.

Abura described the required “intake certificate” as a bureaucratic barrier to registration with Accessibility Services. Chocano added that this is especially true for international students, whose documentation may not be in English and may need to be obtained from overseas. Abura explained that her office is required to provide interim accommodation until legal documentation can be acquired. It also assists students, including subsidizing associated expenses, in obtaining such documentation. In urgent cases, Abura encouraged students to seek help as soon as possible. Her
office can support with retroactive accommodation. Abura added that international or cross-cultural barriers to seeking accommodation can be circumvented during an intake appointment, where focus is placed upon the student’s narrative versus medical documentation.

Because the On-Location model launched only two months prior, Accessibility Services is still amassing data with which to assess the pilot program. Pirraglia attested to the value felt by the Registrar’s Office, particularly the direct, individual contact between Abura and registrarial staff.

- **Renewal and Expansion project update:**
  - Principal Keil acknowledged the ICSS’s, led by Brandon Liu and Sarah Chocano, successful referendum to institute a student levy in support of the capital project. The outcome represents a symbolic and substantive collective student contribution. Principal Keil thanked Masse and Hahn for their support in this effort.
  - Planning is now in an advanced phase. Carla Muñoz, project manager, University Planning, Design & Construction, is newly assigned to lead the project.
  - Montgomery & Sisam (M&S), the architecture firm responsible for the concept design and feasibility study phase, was selected to bring the project to fruition. There have already been two meetings with M&S, and a consultation with students is planned for Apr. 26.

- **First-Year Foundations pilot program update:**
  - Principal Keil summarized the pilot program, noting that incoming Innis students will have priority access to 14 specific first-year seminars for a limited period. The pilot will run for two years at Innis to generate sufficient data for assessment. The necessary policy to make participation mandatory will not be in place for Fall 2019 (i.e., technically non-mandatory this year).
  - 13 of these courses will be held within the College. Principal Keil thanked Tony Pi for managing the classroom allocations. Hosting the seminars locally is especially important for instructors to access local resources (e.g., Innis College librarian).

- **Congratulations** to fourth-year Innis student Alisha Stranges, recipient of a prestigious 2019 UTAA Scholarship (i.e., a Moss Scholarship finalist). This marks the first time in seven years that an Innis student has received the honour. Graduating Innis student Taylor Irvine has been awarded a 2019 3M Fellowship, U of T’s only recipient this year. Urban Studies Program instructor Emily Paradis received a 2019 Superior Sessional Instructor Award from the Faculty of Arts & Science.

- **Farewell to Roger Riendeau**, who retires from Innis College after 43 years of service as a Writing & Rhetoric instructor and vice-principal. Roger was the backbone of ICC, serving as secretary for approximately 20 years. Council members applauded Riendeau on this tremendous milestone.

5. **BOARD REPORTS**
A. **Academic Affairs**
The Board had not met since the last council meeting and, therefore, had nothing to report.

B. **College Affairs**
Board moderator Kate Johnson reported the following highlights from an **Apr. 8 College Affairs meeting**:

- With student input (i.e., online survey and focus group), the **Innis Residence common room renewal** project is underway. The Residence is exploring **laundry service modernization** to move from coin operation to TCard+ integration.
- The CAO expects to fill the **business services coordinator** position, with an expanded portfolio, by the fall. A new Business Services email address has been instituted for non-confidential inquiries (e.g., maintenance, invoices, payroll time sheets): [businessservices.innis@utoronto.ca](mailto:businessservices.innis@utoronto.ca).
- AV coordinator **Sean Rogers** is on parental leave from May to Dec. 2019. Innis Town Hall **livestreaming** capabilities will be restored in the summer.
- The College **website(s) redevelopment** project is in a planning phase. A visioning exercise with stakeholder groups (e.g., staff) will be held soon.

C. **Community Affairs**
Board moderator Caroline Wrobel reported the following highlights from an **Apr. 10 Community Affairs meeting**:

- **Communications**: The third issue of the **Innis Alumni & Friends Magazine** was distributed in early Jan. Planning for the fourth issue has begun, in which the overarching theme is change/transformation. The alumni e-newsletter (semi-annual) series was re-launched on Mar. 26.
- **Alumni programming**: Another robust event series in 2018/19, including 6 Canadian Film Forum screenings, 4 regional reunions, and the inaugural “Innis Alumni Lecture” featuring Prof. Phil Howard on Mar. 28.
- **Harold Innis Foundation**: The Foundation celebrates its 50th anniversary next year. The annual lecture will be delivered by poet-novelist Dionne Brand on Nov. 14.
- **Later Life Learning**: At the semi-annual “Week of Giving” fundraising drive, LLL members collectively gave over $40,000—plus an additional $26,500 from the LLL Board—toward the Innis College Refugee Student Fund and Admission Scholarship for Indigenous Students Fund. The College is extremely grateful for this ongoing generosity.
- Alumnus Dr. Alan Bernstein will receive an **honorary degree** at this year’s Innis College convocation ceremony on June 11.
- The **Art Committee** will be reconstituted under CAB in the fall. The Board approved the terms of the committee.
D. Student Affairs
Board moderator Lucas Granger reported the following highlighting from an Apr. 11 Student Affairs meeting.

- **ICSS**: There was a marked increase in voter turnout at the Mar. 20-21 general election. ICC member Nancy Zhao is the incoming president.

- **IRC**: Josie Meza-Silva was elected as the incoming president.

- **Student Services Committee (SSC)**: SSC approved a motion to contribute up to $4000 of Student Services Fund money toward the purchase of a third table for the East Atrium Lobby.

- The Board discussed the expected implications of the Ministry-mandated opt-outs for non-mandatory student fees.

- The dean of students and the principal are discussing the development of a Pre-Arrival Orientation Program in Shanghai for incoming Chinese students. A student focus group will be conducted.

- A series of three Innis Residence forums was held to generate feedback about all aspects of the residence experience. Student input has already informed changes to the guest policy and incited conversation around waste management.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

- A motion to award discretionary authority to the Registrar’s Office to adjudicate awards, during the summer session, until the Recruitment, Admissions and Awards Committee reconvenes in the fall term was moved (Boere), seconded (Arbow), and carried.

- A motion to re-elect Weststrate as ICC secretary for the 2019/20 governance cycle was moved (Johnson), seconded (Chien), and carried.

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved (Uyede) and carried.