



**NORTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Board of Governors**

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

**Monday, November 16, 2020
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Via Teams Meeting**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Laura Jo Gunter (Chair)	Sue Fitzsimmons	alison lewis	Stewart Cook	Jen Crothers
Garry Wilson	Max Arevalo	Dong Ye	Annemarieke Hoekstra	Steve Chattargoon
Mark Schneider	Kelly Hobbs Bruzzese	Jamie Corfield	Alexis Sieben	Alessandra (Alley) Medeiros
Karen Guasca	Jordan Augustin	Kody Shwaga		

GUESTS: Matthew Lindberg Stacy Oslund Lynda Robertson

REGRETS: Tara Chahl Jerilyn Kotelniski

RESOURCES: Sandy Timmer (recorder)

1. OPENING

1.1 Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Laura Jo Gunter welcomed Academic Council members and called the meeting to order.

There were no conflicts of interest declared by Academic Council members. No changes were made to the agenda.

Moved by Stewart Cook that the Agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

1.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 21, 2020

Moved by Annemarieke Hoekstra that the Minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2020 be approved as presented.

Carried

1.3 Business Arising from the Previous Meeting

1.3.1 Academic Council Constitution and Bylaws – revisions

Sue Fitzsimmons reviewed the Academic Council Constitution and Bylaws with redlined changes based on comments made at the last Academic Council meeting with the group. The changes recommended now align with the *Post-secondary Learning Act*.

Academic Council members reviewed and discussed the changes with some further friendly amendments. The recommended changes were accepted.

Moved by Garry Wilson that Academic Council adopts the revised Constitution and Bylaws and recommends review by the Governance Committee.

Carried

2. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ms. Gunter provided a brief overview on the number of cases of COVID-19 on campus but noted that none of the cases are linked so risk to the campus is low. It was advised that Alberta Health Services (AHS) has just recently added some further restrictions on social gatherings and sporting activities. These new restrictions do not directly affect NAIT. We will continue to monitor advice from AHS. AHS is also no longer able to do contact tracing so it is essential that anyone coming on to campus completes the on-campus attendance form so we can do our own contact tracing if needed.

Ms. Gunter touched on the two campaigns running at NAIT regarding COVID-19: “Stay Home if You are Sick” and our “Kindness” campaigns. Both are intended to keep everyone aware of the health, safety and mental wellness of our fellow staff and students.

Ms. Gunter also updated the group on the progress of the Alberta 2030 post-secondary system review. She advised that roundtables have been held with various stakeholder groups and a meeting with the Minister, Board Chairs and Presidents of PSIs is scheduled for November 20th.

Executive Management Committee will be embarking on the beginning stages of drafting a new strategic plan for NAIT in the coming weeks. We will be including our Mission, Vision, Values and input into these areas was also provided from the Board of Governors at their retreat on October 17th.

As development of this draft proceeds, we will be looking for input from our internal and external stakeholders. Ms. Gunter noted that the Board of Governors strongly supports polytechnic education, our strong ties to industry, and ensuring we consider what is core to NAIT.

3. ADMINISTRATION

Sue Fitzsimmons introduced Stacy Oslund to speak to the proposed program changes being recommended for Academic Council’s consideration.

3.1 Medical Transcription Termination

Ms. Oslund discussed the recommendation for the Medical Transcription Certificate program termination. She advised that the program is currently suspended, and no new students have been

accepted into the program. The program is being recommended for termination as there have been changes in technology in this program and there are fewer employment opportunities for students. There are two remaining students in the program, and they will complete at the end of April 2021. The program is being recommended for termination effective July 1, 2021. Ms. Oslund noted that this is not an accredited program.

Academic Council members discussed the termination with Ms. Oslund and did not raise any concerns.

Moved by Sue Fitzsimmons that the Medical Transcription Program (certificate) be recommended for termination by the Board of Governors effective July 1, 2021.

Carried

3.2 Nanotechnology Systems Name Change

Ms. Oslund reviewed the reasons for the recommended name change for the Nanotechnology Systems Diploma program. The new name recommended is: Nanosystems Engineering Technology.

This new name aligns with other post-secondary institutes who offer a similar program. The program has recently been accredited by Technology Accreditation Canada so that it can use “Engineering Technology” in the program. Ms. Oslund noted that with adding “Engineering Technology” to the program name, the original Nanotechnology Systems will be condensed to “Nanosystems” which more accurately represents the scope of the program.

Academic Council members briefly discussed this new name change and agreed with the recommendation.

Moved by Sue Fitzsimmons that Academic Council accepts the name change for the Nanotechnology Systems Diploma program be changed to “Nanosystems Engineering Technology” and recommends approval by the Board of Governors.

Sue Fitzsimmons thanked Ms. Oslund for her report on these two programs and Ms. Oslund departed the meeting.

3.3 Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy and Procedures

The Policy and corresponding Procedures were in the package for review and Alison Lewis briefly discussed the documents. It was noted that there were very few changes to the Policy and Procedures as they are largely working as intended.

The general changes are:

1. Changed all reference to Student Resolution Officer to Student Resolution Office to indicate the office and not a person for safety reasons.
2. Current policy and procedures refer to the Threat Assessment Team. This has been replaced by the Behavioural Intervention Support Team (BIST). If that policy and procedure are not approved by December, it will refer to Threat Assessment Team.
3. Added the definition of ‘complaint’ to several of the documents.

4. Removed General Principles from procedures to align with revised template. In most instances this information was added to Purpose/Background section.

Ms. Lewis advised that stakeholder consultations were held to ensure the changes were as needed.

In the Policy under item 4.1.11, it is being recommended that the right to appeal be added into the policy and recommends that that stay in the policy.

Moved by alison lewis that the Student Rights Policy and Procedures be accepted by Academic Council and recommended for approval by the Executive Management Committee.

Carried

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Diploma to Trades – Briefing and request for special meeting of Academic Council the week of November 23rd

Matt Lindberg, Dean of the School of Skills Trades, was introduced by Ms. Fitzsimmons as he has been involved in the development of the Diploma to Trades programs. Ms. Fitzsimmons indicated that an overview of the programs will be done today, and a Special Meeting of Academic Council has been called for Tuesday, November 24th for Academic Council to review the final proposals and make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

Mr. Lindberg was pleased to advise that four new programs are being recommended for Diploma to Trades. They were chosen as these are larger programs and they are also compulsory trades, and the new programs can provide a pathway for students to earn a diploma as well as earning their journey person's status. Mr. Lindberg noted these programs are also beneficial for international students.

The four new programs proposed are:

- Welder Trade Professional Diploma
- Plumber Trade Professional Diploma
- Automotive Service Technician Trade Professional Diploma
- Electrician Trade Professional Diploma.

Mr. Lindberg advised that these programs were created as a result of a large number of student inquiries, opportunities to leverage existing infrastructure and resources, and creating new pathways for a wide range of students now and into the future.

Discussion with Council ensued with Mr. Lindberg on pathways and opportunities. It was noted that these programs can ladder into additional pathways that standard apprentice programs may not open. As changes to apprenticeship registrations have occurred due to Alberta's slowing economy and now the global pandemic situation, we are continuing to look for opportunities to expand our program offerings for apprentices. It was noted that WIL would be embedded into the programs and would provide an opportunity to engage with our industry partners. Pathways and transferability with other institutes was also discussed.

Further discussion on the programs will take place on November 24, 2020 at the Special Meeting of Academic Council.

5. PRESENTATION

5.1 The impacts of health and safety and duty to accommodate legislation on NAIT's approach to relaunch

Ms. Fitzsimmons introduced Wendy Marusin, Colleen Caldwell and Dan Daerendinger who provided a presentation to Council on health and safety and duty to accommodate regarding personal protective equipment (PPE) as we all manage our way through this global pandemic.

It was advised that the pandemic brought to light the relationship between the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHS) and the *Alberta Human Rights Act* (AHR). With this new unusual situation with COVID-19, we have to find a reasonable balance to accommodate and provide a safe workplace at the same time. It is NAIT's protocol that anyone coming on to campus must wear a mask or face-covering as a measure to help prevent the spread of the virus, as well as safe social distancing and hand sanitization.

From the lens of the AHR, the duty to accommodate is a shared responsibility amongst all stakeholders. The accommodation does not require that academic or non-academic standards are lowered, nor does it relieve the accommodated individual the responsibility to develop essential skills or competencies. There should not be undue hardship on any party.

The Supreme Court of Canada developed a legal test on accommodation and there are three parts:

- 1) Is the policy, rule or standard rationally connected to its objective?
- 2) Did the post-secondary institution (or Employer) adopt the policy, rule or standard with an honest and good-faith belief that the policy was necessary to accomplish its service-related purpose?
- 3) Is the policy, rule or standard reasonably necessary for the post-secondary institution (or Employer) to accomplish its purpose?

Undue hardship could include: financial costs that affect the viability of the service, program or institution; students cannot meet the requirements for entering or completing a program; significant interference with the rights of other students; and, health or safety concerns.

NAIT endeavours to ensure our campus is safe and healthy for anyone coming on to campus and finding the balance with health, safety and accommodation is essential. All options are considered for the continuity of education/employment and the maintenance of health and safety.

It was advised that a COVID and Duty to Accommodate Working Group was formed early on to deal with potential concerns. A mask exemption process was recommended to the Relaunch Advisory Committee and Relaunch Coordination Team to ensure that mask exemption requests are assessed and validated.

Academic Council members discussed the matter with the presenters.

Sue Fitzsimmons thanked Ms. Marusin, Ms. Caldwell and Mr. Daerendinger for their informative presentation. They then departed the meeting.

6. NEXT MEETING – Monday, February 1, 2021 at 2:00-4:00 p.m. via MS Office Teams

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Sue Fitzsimmons that the meeting be adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Carried