



NORTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Board of Governors

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Monday, September 21, 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
Jerilyn Kotelniski	Karen Guasca	Jordan Augustin	Kody Schwaga	

RESOURCES: Sandy Timmer (recorder)

GUESTS: David McDine Josh Bowen

REGRETS: Tara Chahl

1. OPENING

Laura Jo Gunter welcomed everyone to the first full meeting of Academic Council for the academic year (after the Orientation meeting last week) and called the meeting to order. Laura Jo advised that Sue Fitzsimmons would speak to the business arising item from the Academic Council orientation meeting under Other Business.

Laura Jo asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare.

alison lewis raised the fact that she and Stewart Cook were in a personal relationship. Sue Fitzsimmons advised that alison is being added in as a new member to Academic Council and Stewart is replacing Malcolm Haines as a Dean representative on Academic Council. This disclosure is being made for transparency and follows NAIT's protocol. It was stipulated that alison and Stewart would not sit on the same sub-committee of Academic Council. There were no objections raised by Academic Council members.

1.1 Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Sue Fitzsimmons that the Agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

1.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of April 20, 2020

Moved by Sue Fitzsimmons that the Minutes of the meeting of April 20, 2020 be approved as presented.

Carried

1.3 Business Arising from the Previous Meeting

This will be dealt with under Other Business on the agenda.

2. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Laura Jo Gunter was pleased to say that this was the first official meeting of Academic Council and her first official Board committee meeting. Laura Jo commented that NAIT was welcoming approximately 5900 students on campus and although we are still doing the majority of classes online, there are some classes that are blended which require students to attend on campus for shop or labs. We are following all of our COVID protocols. Laura Jo wished to thank our Relaunch Advisory Committee and the Relaunch Coordination Team who have done an outstanding job to have our campus ready for these students and staff to be here.

We will be moving from a “relaunch” to “operating” once we know we are in a steady state. For now, we will be in relaunch mode.

Laura Jo noted that the Alberta 2030 Review is underway which is the Government’s review of Alberta’s post-secondary system. There have been several roundtables held virtually with various attendees including presidents, students, and other stakeholders. At these roundtables, we are ensuring that the polytechnic viewpoint is heard.

3. ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Academic Council Constitution and By-laws (annual review)

Sue Fitzsimmons led the discussion on the annual review of the Constitution and Bylaws of Academic Council. It was noted that we will ensure the Bylaws align with the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) for better clarity for membership and naming. Sue will provide a track-changed copy of the Bylaws to members for their review. After members have reviewed it, any comments can be provided to Sue and we will bring the revised Bylaws back to the next meeting for final approval.

Sue noted that the Executive Committee of Academic Council consists of the President and CEO as Chair, the Vice President Academic and Provost, the President of NASA, and the President of NAITSA. The Executive Committee meet in advance of the next meeting of Academic Council to plan the agenda. These meetings are somewhat informal and there are no minutes taken. Sue

is proposing to amend this section of the Bylaws to remove the formality of sections 4.3 and 5.1.5.

As well, sections 7.2.4 and 7.7.2 should be reviewed if it is necessary to keep; Provost's Council should be removed as there no longer a Provost's Council. The final Academic Council agenda can be posted on the NASA and NAITSA websites prior to the meeting. Sue will circulate a redline copy of the Bylaws to Council members. She will ask for a recommendation for the distribution of the agenda and minutes from NASA, NAITSA and AUPE.

3.2 Sub-Committees of Academic Council Membership, Timelines and Objectives

Sue Fitzsimmons reviewed the sub-committees of Academic Council and requested Chairs for each of the sub-committees. Members of each of the sub-committees will also be provided subsequent to this meeting if not provided today.

3.2.1 Faculty Emeritus Sub-committee

The Faculty Emeritus awards are to recognize retired faculty members for their exceptional work with students.

Garry Wilson will chair this committee. Two representatives from each of NASA and NAITSA to be named to the committee. They will be provided subsequent to this meeting.

The Terms of Reference should be reviewed for this committee this year.

3.2.2 Honorary Degree Sub-committee

This award honours individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the community through their work or personal lives and have a connection to NAIT.

As the Honorary Degrees recipients were not awarded their Degree at Convocation this past May due to Convocation being postponed, we still have these individuals who could receive their Honorary Degrees at Convocation 2021. These nominees were advised in April that Convocation would be postponed and that we would get in contact with them once we had a better idea of what Convocation 2021 would look like.

Max Arevalo agreed to chair this committee. Members of the committee will also include:

- Stewart Cook
- Kelly Hobbs Bruzzese
- Annemarieke Hoekstra

There will also be a member of our Advancement department sitting on this committee.

The Terms of Reference of this committee should be reviewed this year for accuracy.

3.2.3 Instructional Excellence Sub-committee

This is a student-nominated award to instructors who they feel have excelled as instructors. The nominations are then reviewed by this committee.

Sue Fitzsimmons advised that Natasja Saranchuk, our director Academic Excellence, will chair this committee.

Three members from Academic Council will be added to this committee. Additional student members from NAITSA and NASA staff members will be added (there should be 40% students on the committee). Volunteers for this committee so far are:

- Karen Ruge
- Mark Schneider

It was noted that any nominated instructors who sit on this committee would not be reviewing their own nomination.

The Terms of Reference should be reviewed for this year as well.

It was advised that the Faculty Emeritus and Instructional Excellence awards will now take place in June rather than in January as in previous years.

3.3 Policy Committee

3.3.1 Membership

Sue Fitzsimmons advised that the Policy Committee has 2 NASA, 2 NAITSA and 1 AUPE member from Academic Council on this committee to ensure that any academic policies have the appropriate level of representation from Academic Council. These members are already identified on the Policy Committee Terms of Reference. Those are:

- Garry Wilson (NASA)
- Steve Chattargoan (NASA)
- Alexis Sieben (NAITSA)
- Alley Medeiros (NAITSA)
- Jamie Corfield (AUPE)

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Sue Fitzsimmons reviewed the shared themes that were discussed at the Orientation session. The Academic Council Executive Committee will review these themes for inclusion on future Academic Council agendas.

These themes are:

1) Innovation & Future Strategic Directions

- Innovation at NAIT and what it looks like in the future
- Blending face-to-face and online learning
- Micro-credentials and post-pandemic vision
- Simulation pedagogy and its role in polytechnic education
- Overall post-secondary education trends and do we agree with what is being said

2) COVID-19 Learnings and Opportunity to Build on What Worked and Didn't Work

- Evaluating and understanding what services were essential to students
- Apprenticeship learning during the pandemic
- Transitioning what we learned and created into long-term learning resources to support innovation
- How we ensure students with different learning preferences/styles were addressed
- Support for students/instructors in remote locations with insufficient internet capability
- Perceived gains and lessons learned with online learning
- Build on the strengths of instructors

3) NAIT Program Mix and Pathways

- NAIT's program mix - what are indicators of a healthy mix
- How NAIT makes decisions about programs
- Create sound pathways for students to transition between NAIT programs.

4) Alberta 2030 Review

- Alberta's system review

5) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- The relationship with the recruitment of staff and students

6) Industry Solutions and NAIT Educational Programming

- The relationship between NAIT's Industry Solutions and educational programming and curriculum

7) NAIT Board of Governors

- The role of the Board of Governors

4.1 Update on NAIT Student Survey on Instruction (NSSI)

Sue Fitzsimmons welcomed David McDine to speak to Academic Council on the NAIT Student Survey on Instruction (NSSI).

David advised that the survey was halted in March due to the campus closure. It was started again for the spring/summer term. Since then, it has recently been refreshed to better understand

student perceptions for the fall term. The feedback from the survey is used to make positive change and to support a continuous improvement process for instructors and more globally (e.g. program, department, school, institution roll-ups) at NAIT.

David noted that there are three new questions with the issuance of this survey that link to student engagement:

1. The course activities (e.g. readings, videos, forums, live sessions, assignments) supported my learning.
2. My interaction with other students in the course supported my learning.
3. My course instructor supported my learning.

We continue to gather NSSI data to see how recent months have impacted student learning. David noted that student engagement does not require physically being on campus and that it's important to be intentional about connecting with students in an online environment. David read an excerpt from Sue's [recent blog](#).

Academic Council discussed the survey and its contents with David. David noted that the results have not shifted much from earlier in the year and that they are, on average, very positive. The institutional results are available at staff.nait.ca/nssi.

Sue thanked David for the overview and David then departed the meeting.

4.2 Update on COVID Planning

Sue Fitzsimmons welcomed Josh Bowen, the Director of the Relaunch Coordination Team (RCT), to the meeting. Sue noted that the Relaunch Advisory Committee (RAC) is being led by alison lewis.

Josh discussed NAIT's relaunch activities to date. Josh advised that the RCT is comprised of many representatives from across NAIT for a broad overview of what is needed. He noted that plans from all departments were submitted to the RCT and these were then streamlined for duplication and efficiency.

The priorities of the RAC was first and foremost the health and safety of NAIT's staff and students. Signage was put up across campus and appropriate PPE was acquired for staff who need to be on campus. Josh noted that where needed, clear masks for instructors with students in their class/labs who are hard of hearing are supplied.

The Council members discussed the activities undertaken for staff and student health and safety on campus. Josh commented that overall, there has been excellent support from students and staff on what NAIT has done for the relaunch.

Sue Fitzsimmons thanked Josh Bowen for all of his work in this area and he then departed the meeting.

5. PRESENTATION

Sue Fitzsimmons advised that there was no presentation for today's meeting.

6. NEXT MEETING – Monday, November 16, 2020 at 2:00-4:00 p.m. via MS Office Teams.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Garry Wilson that the meeting be adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

Carried