

The 529th Meeting of the Trent University Senate

Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.
A.J.M. Smith Room

Minutes

Present: Senators Cathy Bruce (Chair), Suzanne Bailey, Craig Brunetti, Gary Burness, Shutao Cao, Michael Chan-Reynolds, Neil Emery, Jonathan Greene, Stephen Hill, Holger Hintelmann, Ihor Junyk, Heather Klynn-Hesselink, Lawrence Lam, Erick Laming, Hugo Lehmann, Byron Lew, Mowei Liu, Lewis MacLeod, Paul Manning, Jennifer Moore, Marina Morgenshtern, Van Nguyen-Marshall, Heather Nicol, Naomi Nichols, Kathryn Norlock, Fergal O'Hagan, David Patton, Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, Emma Perratt, Catalina Sagarra, Mark Skinner, Aaron Slepko, Emily Tufts, Sarah West and Susan Wurtele. Official Visitors and junior student members: Alma Barranco-Mendoza, Laszlo Ban, Heather Crowley, Moira Howes, Esther Kambale, Connor Koch and Brandon Remmelgas. Associate University Secretary (Senate) Tara Harrington and Coordinator, Board and Senate Support Taylor Edwards.

Guests: Tariq Al-idrissi and Marilyn Burns

Regrets: Senators Iyiola Alade, Liana Brown, Anthony Coulter, Gold Jegede, Michele McIntosh, Vincent Sun, Joshua Syneko, Mrunmayee Vichare, and Robert Wright.

Welcome and adoption of the Agenda

The meeting opened with a welcome to the traditional territory:
We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the treaty and traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishinabeg. We offer our gratitude to First Nations for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and relations. May we honour those teachings.

Closed Session

Nominating and Governance Subcommittee Report. The Chair provided Senate with a review of the Chancellor search process that N&G had conducted over the autumn. That search was now complete, and the committee had submitted its recommendations. Senate approved the recommendations as presented.

Financial Review. The Chair reported on the Efficiency and Accountability Review that the university had participated in noting that this had been a Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES) initiative.
She also provided an update on the university's financial situation.

Open Session

Chair's Remarks and Announcements.

The Chair noted that there would be a report from the Presidential Task Force on Indigenous Education coming forward in the winter term as well as a report from the Provost on the Indigenous Education Council. She remarked on the upcoming break and thanked Senators for their contributions during 2025.

Minutes and Business arising Meeting of November 11, 2025. The minutes were approved as presented.

Undergraduate Studies Committee Report. Senator Chan-Reynolds presented the report which included two major modifications and twelve minor modifications.

Biology – New Specialization-Specialization in Nature History.

Business – New articulation agreement that would allow qualified graduates of Loyalist College's Business Accounting diploma program to enter Trent's BBA program with advanced standing.

Anthropology – New course-ANTH 3852Y.

Biology – Change program requirements for the BSc Honours in Conservation Biology and Conservation Biology Co-op.

Business – Change program requirements for the Specialization in Economics.

Cultural Studies – New courses-CUST 4552H (cross-listed with Political Studies) and CUST 4558H.

Indigenous Studies – New courses – INDG 3430H and INDG 4780H (cross-listed with Anthropology).

Kinesiology – Change admission requirements.

Philosophy – New courses PHIL 2210H, PHIL 3303H and PHIL 3360H (cross-listed with Computer Science and Media Studies).

During discussion Senators noted that the format of the USC report had changed and that the structure of the new format made it easier to identify the nature of the modification being proposed. Senate approved the proposals as presented.

Graduate Studies Committee Report. Senator Brunetti presented the report which included four major changes:

M.A. in Cultural Studies – New course CUST-ENGL 5530H.

Educational Studies M. Ed. – New courses EDUC 5330H and EDUC-CSID 5400H.

Interdisciplinary Aging Studies M.A. – Introduce part-time option.

Senate approved the proposals as submitted.

Cyclical Program Review Committee Report. Senator Bailey presented the report which included notification of the completion of the cyclical review process for the BA Communications and the Final Assessment Report (FAR) and Implementation Plan – Executive Summary- Forensic Science degrees (BSC Forensic Science, BSc Forensic Chemistry, BSc Forensic Biology and MSc Forensic Science).

Senate received the report as information.

Discussion – Student Core Competencies. Senator Skinner said that the mission and vision renewal process had sparked discussions about Trent’s academic, and non-academic, outcomes for students. This led to questions about what skills, capacities and knowledge our students acquire while at Trent. He noted that each program/degree has clearly articulated expectations but asked whether these identified Trent’s unique outcomes.

Senators broke into groups to address the question “What are the key “take-aways” from a Trent education” with some common themes emerging:

- Cultural competence (the ICR was identified by several of the groups).
- The opportunities that Trent’s emphasis on interdisciplinarity offers.
- Leadership opportunities for students.
- A campus small enough that students get to know their professors.
- Opportunities to develop presentation/speaking skills.
- Mentorship from faculty and staff.
- A flattened hierarchy.
- Opportunities for undergraduate students to do research.
- Constructive (critical) and creative thinking.

During the round-table discussion that followed the group presentations it was noted that it would be difficult to measure the extent to which we succeed at some of these. The Provost indicated that we need further discussions with students about this question.

Any Other Business. A discussion was held on the financial update, uncertainties and transparency. It was noted that Senators have received a number of updates about enrolment figures and the subsequent financial challenges that we face but these have not removed some of the uncertainties. Faculty with questions about the budget were encouraged to speak with their department/program chair and/or their dean.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 4:07.

Dr. C. Bruce, Chair
T. Harrington, Secretary