The 535th Meeting of the Trent University Senate

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Zoom

Minutes

Present: Senators Cathy Bruce (Chair), Suzanne Bailey, Laszlo Ban, Liana Brown, Craig Brunetti, Siobhan Cadigan, Michael Chan-Reynolds, Cristine De Clercy, Kelly Egan, David Firang, Ihor Junyk, Heather Klyn-Hesselink, Whitney Lackenbauer, Lawrence Lam, Hugo Lehmann, Sanela Martic, Michele McIntosh, Kristiina Montero, Eugene Morin, Marina Morgenshtern, Van Nguyen-Marshall, Heather Nicol, Kate Norlock, Abeer Omar, James Parker, Karleen Pendleton Jimenez, Steven Rafferty, Quazi Rahman, Catalina Sagarra, Mark Skinner, Mickayla Simpson-Carty, Vincent Sun, Emily Tufts, Wlio Wang, Xiaoying Wang, Shaun Watmough, Sarah West, Susan Wurtele, Brentajah Young. Official Visitors: Dwayne Collins, Heather Crowley, Chioma Ifeanyichukwu, Connor Koch, Brandon Remmelgas, and Syed All Rahi Zarif. University Secretary Brenda Blackburn, Associate University Secretary Richelle Hall, and Governance Officer Taylor Edwards.

Regrets: Senators Tana Allen, Nadine Changfoot, Terry Humphreys, Lauren Irwin, Dan Longboat, Lewis MacLeod, and Lina Panagopoulou.

Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda. The agenda was approved as presented**.**

Closed Session

Academic Planning & Policy Committee. Senator Skinner presented the report which included a proposal for a new academic program.
Senate approved this program proposal for submission to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council).

Open Session

Chair's Remarks and Announcements.
The Chair welcomed Senators to the first meeting of the year and thanked everyone for their understanding for the location change of this meeting due to the watermain break on the Symons campus.
Reconciliation Reflection – The Chair advised that, moving forward, Senate meetings will begin with a Reconciliation Reflection rather than a Land Acknowledgement, to support more active engagement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, while preserving the significance of the Land Acknowledgement. The updated practice was informed by consultations with local Indigenous leaders and organizations, and feedback from the President's Task Force on Indigenous Education. The President reflected on the condolence cane that is always present at Senate and Convocation, highlighting its symbolism of the interconnectedness of the University

community, the pursuit of justice, equality, and peace through knowledge, and the enduring influence of Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and governance on Trent's values and academic mission.
Institutional Strategic Priorities – Building on the recently renewed vision, mission, and values of Trent, the President will be leading the development of the University's next five-year strategic priorities. Engagement and development of these priorities will be brought forward to key bodies throughout the University, including Senate as the special discussion topic in November. These discussions will also inform the work of the provost in developing the University's Academic Priorities, coming forward to Senate for consultation.
Senate Orientation – The Chair thanked Senators who joined this year's orientation session and noted that the orientation materials are available on the Senate Portal for viewing at any time.
Special Discussion Topics – As special discussion topics were well-received last year, it was recommended they continue for 2026-27. These sessions focus on education and discussion regarding academic topics that are beyond the scope of committee reports. Senators are invited to submit topic suggestions to the Chair or Secretariat office. Two topics proposed for this year are the Institutional Strategic Priorities, and a Provost Forum on Artificial Intelligence.
Honorary Degrees – Call for Nominations – The Chair drew the attention of Senators to one document included in the Senate package for information—the call for nominations for 2027 honorary degrees. She asked that faculty and academic departments consider submitting nominations for honorary degrees to the University Honours Subcommittee.

2025-26 Decanal Awards
Dr. Fergal O'Hagan, Associate Dean for the Centre for Teaching and Learning, announced the winners of the 2025-26 Decanal Awards for Teaching Excellence and Outstanding Graduate Mentorship:
Decanal Award for Teaching Excellence in Education is awarded to Stefanie Cole.
Trent Durham GTA Award for Teaching Excellence is awarded to Dr. Jessica Moore.
Decanal Award for Teaching Excellence in Nursing is awarded to Ruth Kellar.
Decanal Award for Teaching Excellence in the Humanities and Social Sciences is awarded to Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard.
Decanal Award for Teaching Excellence in the Sciences is awarded to Dr. Liana Brown.
School of Graduate Studies Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship for Senior Mentors is awarded to Dr. James D.A. Parker.
School of Graduate Studies Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship for New Mentors is awarded to Dr. Graham Raby.

Minutes and Business arising Meeting of May 12, 2026. The minutes were approved as presented.

Academic Planning & Policy Committee. Senator Skinner presented this report which included a proposed Trent Launch Program; a full-time, credit-bearing progression pathway for students who may not meet traditional admission requirements. This program will be delivered over three consecutive terms and upon successful completion, students will progress into their chosen

undergraduate program. This program will differ from the already existing Trent Bridge program, by providing a full-time course delivery and directly introducing students to support services on campus. After one year, an analysis will take place to evaluate the demand and effectiveness of this program. The report also included an updated Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy. Revisions to this document reflected evolving legal requirements, updated roles and responsibilities, and an emphasized focus on a more proactive, accessible approach to student accommodations. Senators inquired about the parameters of the "duty to inquire" section in the policy, and how to adhere to these requirements while also respecting AODA obligations. Staff from the Student Affairs office offered to hold workshops and Q&A session at both campuses to provide further clarification on this section and other aspects of this updated policy.
Senate approved this report as presented.

Undergraduate Studies Committee. Senator Chan-Reynolds presented the report which included one major modification and one minor modification.
Bachelor of Education – Senate considered the proposal to transition the Bachelor of Education program from a two-year model to a 12-month model effective May 2027, in response to new Ontario Ministry of Education requirements. While Senators supported the program changes and commended the School of Education for maintaining program quality under a compressed timeline, concerns were raised about the impact of provincial regulation on institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and academic governance.

A proposed amendment to approve the program "under duress" was debated but ultimately defeated. A motion to refer the matter back for further committee discussion was also defeated. The Chair proposed an alternative amendment to the motion as "Senate approves the USC recommendation that the Bachelor of Education program move to a 12-month model effective May 2027 and that Senate commends the work of Faculty and Staff in the School of Education in maintaining academic excellence of the Bachelor of Education program while working under significant constraints due to new legislation." This motion to amend was approved, as was the amended motion.

French Studies, Study of Canada – New course – FREN2238H. Senate approved this modification as presented.

Draft 2026-27 Senate Workplan. A workplan for the 2026-27 Senate year was presented. The plan shows the cycle of Senate activities and may be updated as priorities arise.
Senate approved the workplan.

Any Other Business. There was no other business at this time.

Adjournment.
The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

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