Call to Order & Dean’s Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. by the Dean, David Cameron, who also thanked everyone present for giving their time and service to Arts & Science Council.

Memorial Resolutions

The Dean called for the reading of memorial resolutions for three Arts & Science faculty members who had recently passed away. The memorial for Robert Craig Brown, Professor Emeritus from the
Department of History, was read by Prof. Nakanyike Musisi, Department of History. The memorial for Joseph Boyle, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Philosophy, was read by Prof. Randy Boyagoda, Principal and Vice-President of the University of St. Michael’s College. The memorial for Jack McLeod, Professor Emeritus of the Department of Political Science, was read by Prof. Louis Pauly, Chair of the Department of Political Science. A minute of silence was observed after all the resolutions were read, and their text is included in these minutes at the end of the document.

**Election of Officers for Council for 2016–17**

The Dean called upon Thomas MacKay, Director, Faculty Governance & Curriculum Services, to facilitate the election of Officers for Council for 2016–17. The Agenda Committee of Council did put forward nominations for some Proctors (the first to be elected), the Chair, and the two Vice-Chairs. The Council agreed to continue the tradition of having two Vice-Chairs, one a staff member, the other a student member. Council also approved the ongoing tradition that the three elected members of the Agenda Committee reflect, respectively, Administrative & Technical Staff, Teaching Staff, and Students.

The full slate of elected officers is below – all were acclaimed.

- **Proctors:** François Pitt, Cheryl Shook, Bogdan Smarandache, Sydney Vennin
- **Chair:** Derek Allen
- **Vice-Chairs:** Mary Pugh, Jina Aryaan
- **Agenda Committee:** John Di Marco, Nathan Taeback, Shahin Imtiaz

Once the elections were concluded, Derek Allen took the Chair’s seat to continue the meeting of Council.

The Chair then asked Council to approve a change in order of Agenda items, that item 7, concerning the approval of a new concentration within the Master of Science in Applied Computing, be allowed to change order with item 6 concerning Transfer Credit Policies for CEGEP II students, since representatives related to item 7 had to leave early. Motion was approved.

**Approval of Minutes of the April 20, 2016 Meeting of Council**

The Chair called on a motion to approve the minutes, which was carried. There was no business arising from these minutes.

**Arts & Science Elections Update**

Thomas MacKay, Director, Faculty Governance & Curriculum Services, briefly updated Council on the elections that had just taken place in the Fall, elections both to elect first year student representatives to Council, and to fill, wherever possible, unfilled seats among student representatives. He reported that while the voter turnout continues to be quite small, the enthusiastic number of candidates meant several positions were contested, and all student positions were filled, except one seat for a part time student remained unfilled.
Voting membership on Council representing the many academic units of Arts & Science remains scattered, with many seats unfilled. The Governance unit will continue to encourage such representation, and build towards even better representation in the following year.

**Orientation for Council Members**

Thomas MacKay continued into the next item to give a brief overview of Council and its role, distinguishing the items under its jurisdiction (academic policy and standing) as distinguished from the Dean’s role within the Faculty, acting effectively as “Chief Executive Officer”. He also reviewed the Standing Committees of Arts & Science Council and the mandates of each.

A question arose concerning the relationship between the School of Graduate Studies and Arts & Science Council, especially around governance. Joshua Barker, Vice Dean, Graduate Education, clarified that Arts & Science is responsible for UTQAP (University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process), processes for putting forward and proposing new programs and changes to programs or curriculum, along with other responsibilities including graduate funding.

Another question asked whether members of Standing Committees were taken from members of Council. Thomas indicated that this was sometimes but not often the case. For student members, only the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) takes its student members directly from graduate students elected to Council; student membership in all other Standing Committees are elected as separate positions. Academic representation – Chairs, Directors etc. – overlap naturally between Council and Standing Committees concerned with curriculum. The Committee on Admissions, Committee on Standing, and Academic Appeals Board having their teaching staff membership nominated and ratified by the Agenda Committee.

Finally, there was a question concerning the challenge of engaging the membership of Council beyond what might seem to be “rubber stamping” proposals that have already been vetted, and which may require a level of familiarity and expertise not present in the membership. This was acknowledged as a concern, but other members noted that items are presented with materials and introduction in order to engage the membership without presuming expertise. That said, high level items do come with many issues already resolved. There was a renewed committee to focus on items for Council that would engage, solicit feedback, and/or provide valuable informational updates on the state of the Faculty as a whole.

**Report from the Dean**

The Dean briefly updated the Faculty on new Vice-Deans and their new portfolios, which had been introduced in broad terms in April 2016. Prof. Penelope (Poppy) Lockwood was formally introduced as Vice-Dean, Academic Planning & Strategic Initiatives, and her portfolio was sketched out briefly especially as it concerned strategic thinking and taking a role in the approval processes of significant items of curriculum, including program changes. Prof. Pamela Klassen was introduced as the new Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, who will focus on undergraduate curriculum approval, and many projects concerning improving and innovating undergraduate teaching.
Approval of New Concentration within the Master of Science in Applied Computing (MScAC) (Major Modification)

Joshua Barker, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education and Program Reviews, spoke to this item, a proposal for a new concentration in the MScAC for September 2017, a joint endeavor with Computer Science and Applied Statistics, revolving around data analytics. The new concentration was highlighted as filling an ongoing need within industry, and leveraged the strengths of both Departments.

He also introduced another motion, which was to close ten fields of study currently attached to the MScAC. These were dormant, and were established under previous rules, and were effectively rendered unneeded with the creation of the concentration.

Notice of Motions

a) THAT the proposed new concentration, Data Science, within the Master of Science in Applied Computing, as described in the attached proposal, be approved effective for the academic year 2017–18.

b) THAT the proposed closing of ten fields of study within the Master of Science in Applied Computing, as described in the attached proposal, be approved effective for the academic year 2017–18.

Both motions were moved and seconded, and the Chair opened the floor for discussion. There was no discussion, and so, on the vote, both motions were carried.

Approval of Admission and Transfer Credit Policies for CEGEP II Students Intending Entry into the Bachelor of Commerce

Pamela Klassen, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, introduced this item. She began by sketching the complex context that created the need these motions addressed: that CEGEP II students from Quebec, treated as post-secondary students transferring into the Faculty (as opposed to “direct entry” students from high school) did not have access to the Rotman Commerce program, which only takes direct entry students.

There were two motions: the first to create a specialized status for new CEGEP II students to allow them access to courses with other first year, direct entry students in the Rotman Commerce pre-program stream; the second motion was to allow special flexibility around forfeiting transfer credits for those CEGEP II students who were admitted successfully to Rotman Commerce, to mitigate the retroactive impact of differential fees, which would otherwise be in retroactive effect to a CEGEP II student’s very first semester as a student in the Faculty.

Notice of Motions

a) THAT the proposed policy concerning the admission of CEGEP II students from Quebec into a Rotman Commerce admission stream, as described in the attached proposal, be approved effective for admissions into the 2017–2018 academic year.
b) THAT the proposed policy concerning transfer credit forfeiture for CEGEP II students admitted into the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) program, as described in the attached proposal, be approved effective for admissions into the 2017–2018 academic year.

Both motions were moved and seconded, and the Chair opened the floor for discussion.

The first question concerned the prospect of “rubber stamping” a proposal that demanded expertise that members could not be expected to have. Prof. Klassen emphasized that the items were presented understanding the complicated details may require further explanation, and any questions would be answered in good faith.

Further questions asked if the Department of Economics would be taking on this new admissions policy, and it was confirmed that this only applied to CEGEP II students hoping to enter a Rotman Commerce undergraduate program. A question also asked about how students would be counselled around this process with several important decisions, including forfeiting transfer credits; it was affirmed that counselling was not only going to be available, but mandated.

Further to the issue of forfeiting courses as a way to mitigate retroactive fees for students who may enter a Rotman Commerce program, a question about incentive came up – whether the loss of credits will be worth the trade off? Deborah Robinson emphasized these changes were to meet demand, and that students would have to consider the trade-off as per their own situation and needs.

There was a question about CEGEP II students and the language requirement to enter the Faculty; it was confirmed English facility remains an admission requirement. Lastly, a question was asked about what numbers of CEGEP II students might be expected; there was no clear prediction. The expectation was that it would not be a high number, but, for Rotman Commerce, a boost from the current number – which is zero.

On the vote the both motions were carried.

**Update on the Business Process Re-engineering of Undergraduate Admissions**

The Dean started discussion with some introductory comments about the exhaustive and important process this undertaking has been and will be, allowing for wide consultation and intense, collaborative analysis of how admission are currently done and how they can be reimagined. He also emphasized that this item was an item of general information to update Council, with more details to follow.

Melissa Hill and Nelson De Melo then introduced the BPR by way of the decision to undertake such a long and detailed process. They emphasized that the admissions process, for students, is incredibly complicated, and the experience of that process belies U of T’s strong reputation. The admissions process has even been called “character building”.

A key goal of the BPR was to make the process easier. For students, this meant making sure they are aware, at all times, of what they are applying to, why, and what their options are. Students also needed
to have a clear sense of timelines, especially decisions, and streamlining the process so that it is both timely and avoids redundant information gathering.

The process began with assembling a large team with wide, relevant backgrounds, and it included laying out a strict timeline that would include research, brainstorming, consolidating a report and implementation planning. The research included hosts of one-on-one interviews to get needed feedback and information.

The principles that were in play at all times were:

- Make the approach student-centred;
- Make sure at all time’s a student’s status is clear, the information sent to the student is clear, and reasonable information is asked of the student.

The ensuing conversations covered a huge swath of topics, and revealed an existing appetite in the Faculty to change how admissions worked, with evidence of local projects that had been initiated to try to deal with similar concerns.

In broad strokes, the recommendations looked into key areas:

- Time and place (admissions timeline, technology support)
- Academic path (helping students around what they want to study and what options exist)
- Finding community (making easier connections with Colleges, residences etc.)

Questions arose about the level of detail to absorb and particularly about whether Colleges were consulted. Nelson responded that there was a great deal of College consultation, and support, as the issue was not about changing the locus of decision-making around admissions, but how parties could collaborate to make it smoother. Melissa affirmed the process was not about admissibility, it was about efficiency of process. A follow up asked if students currently go to Colleges for information and admission help; this, it was discussed, is really in tandem right now. Students are admitted to the Faculty first then choose a college, but often reach out to Colleges early as well for information. This process of ranking Colleges was an item of concern and will be part of the recommendations – but the whole process affirmed how important Colleges are to student identity and community.

There was request for further comment on the declining update of Humanities/Social Sciences. Melissa confirmed a wide trend with sciences taking a larger share of candidates. This is of relevance to this process – how to better market these sectors.

A question then went out to ask about the worst admission experiences students had. It came to many repeated questions from students: what do I do, when do I do it, whom am I talking to, what am I admitted to – overall, how do I get admitted to this place? Students indicated feeling burdened with extra information and milestones that obscured the sense of direction and even progress. Students did not always feel wanted. The BPR looks at student experience, but the system, which is complicated with streams and needed information for other decisions, like scholarships.
The Dean concluded this item with thanks again for the enormous hard work of the team, an undertaking that makes a mandate for major reform.

**Graduate Funding**

Joshua Barker, Vice-Dean, Graduate Education, then presented to Council an update on major developments from the summer around graduate funding. The Faculty undertook significant steps around graduate student funding to address issues of graduate student morale and need, steps that were preceded by extensive consultation across many groups. These meetings involved vigorous discussion and debate, but always proceeded with a shared recognition of the importance of the work. Two items or issues dominated: professionalism, and a funding increase.

Degree completion remained a continued area of needed support, with identifying milestones in the degree process that need support, and also identifying pathways where students may be supported with knowledge and skills around pursuing academic and non-academic careers. Teaching & Learning will launch in Winter 2017 discipline-specific workshops in collaboration with the School of Graduate Studies, with funding announced already. This enterprise expands the Teaching & Learning portfolio at the Dean’s Office to include graduate students.

Regarding funding, the goals of the Faculty were student welfare; recruitment; to increase the proportion of fellowship income (vs. employment income) to help with time-to-degree; to increase transparency around funding/decision-making, and to rebuild trust. The increase to fellowship funding roles out over three years: in year one, a 10% bump in base funding commitment to $16,500 ($17,000 for the Sciences), ultimately rising in year three to $17,000 ($17,500 for the Sciences). The initiative also created program-level fellowship “pools” which units could use; the pools were calculated based on $500/student in the funded cohort, so it would scale with unit size. This would allow units delegated, discretionary allocations of funds to address local issues of importance for their students, but with the condition that units develop clear and transparent criteria, with their student communities, on how their local funds will be allocated.

Some graphics were shown indicating how this change would impact sectors. The base funding for students in the humanities and social sciences are fairly standard, so the base funding increase is easy to see. The sciences sector has a huge variety of funding scenarios and so the impact can vary wildly, but the increase will be felt and is standardized.

The initiative will be evaluated by the Graduate Advisory Committee after three years and every three years, looking at funding, graduate student experience, time to degree, and consider any further needed changes.

A question came concerning how the landscape of funding compares to the Faculty of Medicine, but Joshua indicated there was no comparison possible. Arts & Science is the first division to put forth a major increase in funding, but other divisions are likely considering similar options. Another question asked about whether certain departments in the humanities or social sciences did better in terms of funding ranges than other departments in those sectors; philosophy and classics were both identified as
having the same base funding, but that the upper range of funding packages did go higher. Finally,
clarification was requested regarding the allocation to units, and it was reaffirmed that the “pool” that
would go to units was calculated at $500/student in the unit in the funded cohort, allowing it to scale
accordingly.

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.