UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

ARTS AND SCIENCE COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCE COUNCIL held on Monday, November 10, 2014, at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Simcoe Hall

Present
David Cameron (Dean)               Rodney Haddow
Glenn Loney (Secretary)             Michael Hager
Derek Allen (Chair)                 Adrienne Hood
Mounir AbouHaidar                   Peter Hurley
Claresta Adityani                   Brad Inwood
Donald Ainslie                      Danièle Issa-Sayegh
Ben Akrigg                         Helen Lasthiotakis
Sharon Bang                         Meng Lim
Charly Bank                         Ben Liu
Dwayne Benjamin                     Kim Luke
Rachel Barney                       William Magee
Dwayne Benjamin                     Lanor Mallon
Donald Boere                        Kristen Moore
Christer Bruun                      Theresa Moritz
Ray Carlberg                        Mirella Pasquarelli-Clivio
Jia Chen                            Jay Pratt
Deborah Cowen                       Maina Rambali
Hilary Cunningham                   Jeffrey Schulman
Joe Desloges                        Jane Seto
David Reid Dobell                   Abdullah Shihipar
Margaret Ebifegha                   Ricardo Sternberg
Harry Fox                            Suzanne Stevenson
Susan Froom                         Michael Thompson
Ming Yang Gao                       Emily Tsui
Dina Georgis                        Rinaldo Walcott
Elaine Gold                         Alena Zelinka
Corey Goldman                       Kai Wen Zhou

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

1. Approval of the minutes of the October 16, 2014 Arts & Science Council meeting

   Approved

2. Business arising

   There was no business arising.
3. **Report from the Dean**

Dean Cameron informed Council that Professor Mark McGowan, Senior Academic Advisor to the Dean, International would have a presentation and discussion on the undergraduate international student experience at the December 1 Council meeting.

4. **Undergraduate and Admission and Enrolment Update**

Dr. Glenn Loney informed Council that there have been changes in the application numbers from Ontario and outside Ontario, which aligns with the Faculty’s priorities at this time. He indicated that the pool of graduating high school students began to shrink this year, and that this decrease is expected to continue for the next 5 to 6 years. However, applications from non-Ontario students have increased. Since one of the Faculty’s priorities is to increase international activity in the Faculty, including increasing the number of international students, this trend has worked well for us. Dr. Loney reminded Council that all students, both Ontario and non-Ontario, domestic and international students are admitted to the same academic standards. Achieving our objectives is done by recruiting more applicants rather than by differential admission standards.

With regard to applicants by stream – a reflection of demand – Commerce has seen a decrease in applications, likely due to a new video profile which may have deterred some students. Applications to Computer Science, Math and Physical Science, and Social Sciences have all increased. Those to Humanities decreased this year again for domestic applications, while Life Sciences remained steady.

The Faculty’s number of enrolled students (headcount) is down very slightly but the total number of FCEs (courses enrolled) is almost exactly the same as last year.

5. **Graduate Admission and Enrolment Report**

This item was postponed until the December 1 A&S Council meeting.

6. **Three Priorities: A Discussion**

President Meric Gertler attended Council to explain and discuss his three priorities. He informed Council that he had identified these priorities in his installation address last year and since then he has developed these priorities and shared them with various groups across the University. These priorities are:

1. Leverage our urban location more fully, for the mutual benefit of university and city.
2. Strengthen and deepen key international partnerships: well-defined strategic focus.
3. Re-imagine and re-invent undergraduate education.

These priorities should been seen as a way to achieve the goals set in *Towards 2030* which were also reaffirmed in the *View from 2012*, in particular to enhance the University’s standing as a leader in research-intensive undergraduate education, as a
leader in graduate education, and as a globally ranked research powerhouse. These are the objectives that the institution is focused on and the three priorities are a way of helping us to achieve them while recognizing that many things have changed since Towards 2030 was released in 2008.

The intent now is to move these conversations forward by providing more details on these priorities and to invite comments and suggestions. This is an opportunity for us to build consensus amongst our stakeholders: faculty, students, staff, alumni and governors. As these conversations take place in a very public way, it allows us to signal our intent to our key partners: government, donors and community partners.

President Gertler stated that the first priority of leveraging our location is important because the fate of the University and the fate of the city are intertwined. In the recruitment of students, staff and faculty, the city is one of our best assets. President Gertler’s experience while in the Arts & Science Office of the Dean was that being in one of the world’s most diverse and harmonious city regions was a huge attraction in the recruitment of faculty. This issue is one of enlightened self-interest – by helping the city, we are also helping ourselves.

This is an opportunity to improve our reputation as a city-builder and now is a good time to be doing this. In the past we have been seen as an institution that has had its back to the city. This description is less accurate with respect to the Mississauga and Scarborough campuses and thus gives the St. George campus the opportunity to learn from them. It is important for our government partners to see that the University takes its social responsibility seriously. The better our image is as a city-building institution that cares about the health of the city around us, the easier it will be for our government partners to do the right thing, whether being generous with their support or seeing that we get our building permits in a timely fashion.

President Gertler explained some of the elements of an urban strategy for the University. The research we do on things urban is distributed widely among all divisions and all three campuses. Our teaching is quite diverse and spread across many parts of the University and there are many outreach programs underway. These are examples of things we are doing but much of it is invisible therefore there is a need to better document them and communicate the existing activities more effectively both internally and externally. Finally, there is the literal city-building goal in the construction of new buildings. Currently there are approximately $500 million capital projects underway across all three campuses and these provide an opportunity to improve the built environment and the quality of the city.

President Gertler identified the University’s goals for strengthening international partnerships. Many of the challenges we face in our scholarship and teaching are global in scope and it makes sense to work with our international partners for mutual benefit. There is an opportunity to improve our global reputation which has many benefits to attract and retain faculty, staff and students. By enhancing the global fluency of our students, we increase their ability to work in many different places and to cross both
political and cultural boundaries. We can also learn valuable lessons about how universities around the world are leveraging their city locations.

Key elements of an international strategy would start with thinking about the partnerships in which we would like to invest. We need to consider what criteria should be used when deciding on what partnerships to focus on. Student mobility is a key part of this and there is an interest in enhancing the numbers of both incoming and outgoing students. There are still a relatively small number of our students travelling abroad and perhaps we need to be more creative about how to work around the obstacles that may be preventing this. Strengthening our relationships with international partners will help with recruitment activities as it increases our profile in key marketplaces abroad. This is a chance to have discussions on how we raise our international presence. Other universities have built campuses abroad and while U of T does not have the resources to do this, there are many other ways we can achieve the same goals. In order to do this, the University needs to coordinate its activities across divisions.

President Gertler informed Council that the goals of the final priority of enhancing undergraduate education were to better prepare our students for lifelong success, to rethink the liberal education model, and to anticipate disruptive changes in modes/mechanisms for education and knowledge production.

President Gertler outlined what an undergraduate education strategy would look like. The President noted much of it has already been done, that is, playing to our strengths as a research intensive powerhouse. Similarly there is a lot of interest in service learning, internships and other experiential learning opportunities. We need to think about internationalizing our student’s learning experience. Though many students will not have an opportunity to go abroad, we should ask how we take advantage of the presence of the international students we do have on campus. With regards to new learning technologies, hybrid and inverted classrooms offer an intriguing opportunity. We need to look at student transitions and how do we help them to start thinking about what comes next and having them reflect on the skills and competencies they have gained in their undergraduate education.

President Gertler stated that he sees the three priorities as being closely linked. One can see the connection between the local and international partnerships. Both urban and international partnerships have potential to enhance, reinvent undergraduate education. The President stated that any questions or comments could be sent to three.priorities@utoronto.ca.

A member asked if the international inflow and outflow of students would they be through agreements with partner institutions and how would we account for the differences in tuition. President Gertler replied that exchange agreements are generally the best way to go as we can set up specific terms of agreement and expectations with our partners. Students taking part in exchanges with partner institutions normally pay tuition to their home university and would be responsible only for their travel and living costs.
A member expressed a concern that the increase in international students might close the door to domestic students. President Gertler stated that it is up to each division to decide what the best mix is for them with regards to international and domestic students and in terms of total enrolment. Whether an international student comes here as a degree student or as part of an exchange, their presence creates a positive situation for everyone.

A member asked if the President had encountered other universities abroad that were rejuvenating and connecting in large urban settings, particularly publicly-funded institutions. Is there a model out there or someone who has already been through it or does the President see U of T as a leader? President Gertler replied that he saw U of T as already being a leader in this respect. While there are many great experiments taking place in other locations, they are not as ambitious or on as large of a scale as U of T. He noted that Presidents from other institutions have contacted him to learn how we do what we do. They are struck by how we are so highly ranked across so many divisions and that although we are large, we are still accessible and open and in comparison to many other institutions around the world, we are still affordable.

A member asked how the President envisions the St. George campus more successfully embedding itself in the community around us as has been done by UTM and UTSC. President Gertler replied that there a variety of different ways. Many courses already involve students in community-based projects or place students into the community as part of the course. Our Centre for Community Partnerships is a tremendous asset and we need to make sure we are telling people about our involvement in these types of activities. Many research opportunities for both faculty and students that are political, environmental, social, economic, or health related are available on our doorstep. We have opportunities to use our physical spaces to invite the city in, for example, as a place for hosting and convening conversations.

A member asked how the President envisions incorporating research-based and experience-based learning into undergraduate education and will they become mandatory? President Gertler replied that we already have some examples of this in the 299, 399 and 499 series of courses which are a fantastic start but would like to see these opportunities multiply. One of the challenges of our breadth and size is getting the word out effectively and keeping track of things centrally. The Arts & Science Dean’s Office, in partnership with the Arts and Science Students’ Union, created the Undergraduate Research Fund which is an initiative the President would like to see emulated elsewhere in the University. There are occasions where partners in the community come to us to ask for student or faculty assistance with research. Whether or not becomes mandatory is up to each division.

A member asked if there are any threats or constraints that might be encountered in trying to achieve these goals. President Gertler replied that the reaction so far has been positive with regards to the first priority of engaging the city and University. There is a large interest from the Toronto region for U of T to assume its place in its proper role as a city-building entity. Reactions to the international strategies have also been positive although a challenge here would be to figure out who we want to build partnerships
with and how we overcome financial barriers to help more students go abroad. Innovations such as the International Course Models have worked very well and shown how these things can be done in a very cost effective way. With regards to undergraduate education, we have already proven we can do many creative things without a lot of money. The University has been working very hard with the government to increase BIU funding. A research-based undergraduate education is not inexpensive and we would therefore like to see more support from the provincial and federal governments.

A member asked about the St. George campus’ current relationship with its neighbours. President Gertler stated that it is improving. Last December the President met with the executives of surrounding resident’s associations to discuss their aspirations and irritations and was a first step in a mutual understanding. The University would like to make sure its major construction projects address the needs and concerns of its neighbours and have a strong consultative process. At the same time we want to educate them on why the success of the University of Toronto is important to the success of the city.

7. Other business
   There was no other business.

8. Adjournment

   The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.