

Board of Trustees Report to the Senate Highlights from the September 2024 Meeting

Agenda: www.queensu.ca/governanceportal (select September 27, 2024 on the calendar)

The Chair welcomed new [Trustees](#) Samantha Cheung, Linda Mantia, Noor Rahemtulla, and Rebecca Manley to their first quarterly Board of Trustees meeting. He extended a special welcome to [Shelagh Rogers](#), the 16th Chancellor of Queen's University, who is also attending her first meeting.

The Chair noted that Monday, September 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The university will mark this day by a suspension of academic activities and numerous events, including a [sacred fire ceremony](#). He invited members to visit the newly installed [Survivors' flag](#), located at the Indigenous Plinth between Douglas Library and Ontario Hall, to honour residential school survivors and serve as a reminder that committing to advancing truth and reconciliation is a year-round endeavour.

Attendees observed a moment of silence for the passing of Trustee Emerita Karyn Brooks, a proud Queen's alumna who served on the Board of Trustees from 2007 to 2014.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair David Court denounced the actions taken by some members of the community at Senate when a member of that governing body was assaulted. He encouraged dialogue to deal with issues on campus and reiterated the Board's full support of the senior leadership team.

On the recommendation of the Governance and Nominating Committee, the Board approved:

- [Amendments to the Board's Code of Conduct and By-Law 3.19.1.](#)

The **Audit and Risk** received the following report for discussion and information:

- [2024 Consolidated Financial Statements.](#)

The **University Culture Committee** received the following reports for discussion and information:

- [Sexual Violence Report](#) (May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024); and,
- [Non-Academic Misconduct Annual Report.](#)

The Board also received verbal reports from the Chairs of the Audit and Risk; External Relations and Development; Finance, Assets, and Strategic Infrastructure; Investment; Governance and Nominating; and University Culture Committees.

Principal's Remarks

Principal Deane informed those present that the last week has been difficult for the university, with increasing tension in the university community related to issues such as Queen's financial challenges and geopolitical events. He noted that these concerns are not unique to Queen's University and that all universities across the country are facing similar challenges.

Principal Deane shared information on recent events relating to the beginning of the academic year, such as the welcoming ceremony for all undergraduate students at Richardson Stadium. While speaking to these attendees, Principal Deane was reminded of the continuing importance of the institution in the eyes of young people in Canada. He recognized the work behind the organization and logistics of orientation and residence move-in weekend and praised all those involved in their planning and execution.

Principal Deane reflected on the institution's deficit in the context of ongoing financial constraints in the post-secondary sector, noting that the total deficits across universities in Ontario is approximately \$370 million. The federal government recently announced further changes to Canada's immigration system in the context of international students, including an additional 10% reduction to the cap on student visas, the inclusion of Master's and PhD students in the cap, and that 12% of the national cap will be reserved for graduate students.

Principal Deane provided those in attendance with an overview of his goals for the academic year, which include increasing the university's financial stability and strategically thinking of ways to protect the institution against inflation and ongoing constraints imposed by government. The challenges are considerable, and they will require a consolidated effort from the community to work in an atmosphere of respect and peaceful debate.

Student Reports

Rector

In addition to her written report, Rector Boytchuk-Hale included her thoughts on campus discussions related to the Queen's Graduate Award (QGA) and its proposed elimination. She encouraged the administration to examine the overall impact of the measure, notably on Queen's reputation, diversity, and students. She noted the ongoing increase in food insecurity faced by students, as well as the rising cost of housing and its scarcity in Kingston.

Alma Mater Society (AMS)

Owen Rocchi emphasized the importance of student consultation in administrative decisions. He mentioned student leaders' desire to increase the opportunity for more peaceful dialogue on campus to ensure consultation and transparency in decisions that will impact students.

Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS)

Emils Matiss emphasized the importance of the graduate student experience at Queen's to the university's success. He acknowledged the challenges currently being faced by the university and expressed a wish for increased conversation with senior leaders. President Matiss shared that the SGPS has received communications from more than 350 students, faculty, staff, and alumni regarding the proposed discontinuation of the QGA. He emphasized that graduate students are significant contributors to research and not solely learners, and noted that many PhD students completed a Master's degree at the university.

Kana Ogawa, Graduate Student Trustee, informed the Board that she has received many messages from students concerned for their finances should the QGA be eliminated. Most concerns came from equity deserving students, first generation students, and international students.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is December 6-7, 2024.