



## MINUTES

### Victoria College Council Meeting

November 27, 2023, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Alumni Hall

**Attendance:** Y. Ali, H. Barseghyan, K. Bartlett, C. Battershill, M. Cichosz, S. Dowling, A. Esterhammer (Chair), P. Gooch, J. Hamilton-Diabo, E. Istrate, S. Joy, M. Kavalier, G. Kim, S. Lee, C. Lewis, J. Papayiannis, S. Ross, M. Scarci, L. Sherlock, A. Sol, N. Terpstra, H. Ulfig, A. Urbancic, I. Williams, D. Wright

**Regrets:** J. Berkovitz, K. Castle, W. Cecil, S. Cui, L. Dacome, B. Davidson, J. Duncan, B. Havercroft, A. Komaromi, L. Magnusson, R. McEwen, A. Moritz, R. Muscant, A. Walkden

**Guest:** L. Williams-George

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by the Chair, A. Esterhammer.

**1. Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks (A. Esterhammer)**

Principal Esterhammer greeted VCC members and began the meeting with a land acknowledgement.

**2. Minutes of the Meeting of September 26, 2023 (attached)**

**MOTION:** To accept the minutes without changes.

The motion was moved by A. Urbancic and seconded by E. Istrate. The motion was passed *nem. con.*

**3. Report of the Principal (A. Esterhammer)**

Principal Esterhammer provided the following report:

- 1) **Review of Victoria College:** A. Esterhammer indicated meetings of the Review Committee, convened by the President's Office, were scheduled and external reviewers (Prof. Robert Gibbs and Prof. Charlie Keil) will subsequently prepare their report. Times have been scheduled between November 28 and December 7 for faculty, Fellows, Associates, students, and staff to provide input on the current and future direction of the College.
- 2) **Visiting Lectures and Special Events:** A. Esterhammer shared with members the annual Pelham Edgar Lecture took place on November 22, 2023, in the form of a wonderful conversation between writer and director Sarah Polley and Prof. Claire Battershill. Lebanese-Canadian writer and photographer Rawi Hage will be visiting from Montreal on November 29, 2023, as Vic One plenary speaker; he will be at Vic throughout the Winter semester as Shaftesbury Creative Writer-in-Residence. The speaker for the inaugural Coxford Lecture at Victoria College will be Mark Carney; his lecture will take place in the Bader Theatre during the Vic One plenary timeslot on January 31, 2024, at 4:00pm.

- 3) **Pecha Kucha Faculty Research Day:** A. Esterhammer reminded all members that on January 19, 2024, Vic faculty and Fellows together with Emmanuel College faculty will have a chance to hear about one another's research in a day of short presentations. The President's Office is organizing this event; more information will be circulated shortly to those colleagues who signed up to present their research and others who are interested in attending as audience members.
- 4) **Academic Programs:** A. Esterhammer announced that course and program planning for 2024-2025 were well underway. The Literature and Critical Theory (LCT) program will be reviewed in 2023-2024 as a bundled University of Toronto Quality Assurance (UTQAP) cyclical review with the graduate program in Comparative Literature. Three external reviewers will be visiting campus on February 7-8, 2024. More specifically, on Thursday, February 8, 2024, faculty and students in LCT will have an opportunity to meet with the reviewers. A. Esterhammer noted that the Creativity and Society Major program proposal remains in suspension while other relevant conversations occur, including an Academic Programs Working Group convened by Vice-Provost Susan McCahan that will focus on academic programs in the three Federated Colleges. Meanwhile, the Minor program has a new foundational course CRE201H Introduction to Creativity & Society that is offered for the first time in 2023-2024 and is taught by Prof. Adam Sol. A. Esterhammer stated program faculty were brainstorming about other ways to amplify the many forms of creative output and research creation that take place at Victoria College programs. Further developments are expected in the new year.
- 5) **Scholars-in-Residence (SiR) 2024:** The largest number of faculty proposals ever were submitted for SiR 2024. The Advisory Committee will be meeting on November 28, 2023, to discuss the line-up of projects for next May, and information about next year's program will be available to students in early January when the student application period opens.

#### 4. **Guest Speaker Presentation (L. Williams-George)**

Lesa Williams-George introduced herself as Victoria University's inaugural Director of Equity, Inclusion & Transformative Practices in the Office of the President. She started in her position at the end of August 2023. She previously worked 24 years in the education sector as a school principal, instructional leader, and presenter. She completed her undergraduate degree at Victoria College and completed her graduate degree at OISE. L. Williams-George provided a brief overview of her plans for the 2023-2024 academic year, which will involve leading the strategic direction of the University's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives and leading the implementation of engagement and outreach strategies. Her key responsibilities will be to communicate and collaborate with the Senior Management Team, support programs and departments in Victoria and Emmanuel College, serve on various committees and groups, and to liaise with the Office of Human Resources to develop and facilitate training. She can be reached at [lesa.williams.george@utoronto.ca](mailto:lesa.williams.george@utoronto.ca).

#### 5. **Report of the Registrar (Y. Ali)**

Y. Ali provided enrolment data. The total enrolment for 992 new students was reported on November 1, 2023 (not including non-degree students or students returning to Victoria College to pursue a second undergraduate degree). The student enrolment for 2023-2024 in November was a total of 4,112 students, representing 13.7% of the Faculty of Arts & Science (FAS) population. Y. Ali indicated Victoria College has 63% female (versus FAS at 56% female). International students came predominantly from China, India, and the USA. The study abroad high participation rates were due in

part to efforts made by the Victoria College Office of the Principal. Victoria College represented 18.6% of the FAS students on outbound exchange during Fall-Winter-Summer 2022-2023 and 21.5% of FAS students who went on Summer 2023 abroad. Of the domestic out-of-province students (n=353), the largest number came from British Columbia (n=192), with Alberta in second place (n=79). Y. Ali reported the top two academic programs were Statistics minor (science program) and Economics major (Arts program). Vic students represented 19% of all Dean’s List students in FAS. Most students last year completed their degrees in four years although about 20% students surveyed stated they plan to study longer than four years. Y. Ali also provided a post-pandemic snapshot for academic advising with increased demand for academic advising and increased number of petitions.

**Discussion:** A brief discussion occurred related to students who transfer out of Victoria College. Y. Ali commented that UofT is approved for federal funding for US students; however, Victoria University is not. As a result, incoming US students cannot receive federal funding unless they transfer to another college at UofT. Last year this impacted approximately 40 students. Y. Ali will be meeting with the UofT Student Recruitment Office to address this. Another question was asked regarding what student demographic information is collected. In the future, students may be asked to voluntarily self-report family income, race, etc.

**6. Report of the Academic Committee (E. Istrate)**

E. Istrate reported on UofT plans to align sessional dates across undergraduate faculties and campuses. The 2024-25 harmonized dates will be:

Fall Term 2024		Winter Term 2025	
Labour Day	Monday Sept 2	New Years Day	Wednesday Jan 1
Start of Fall Term	Sept 1	Start of Winter Term	Jan 6
Start of Fall Classes	Tuesday, Sept 3	Start of Winter Classes	Monday, Jan 6
Fall Break	October 28 - Nov 1	Winter Break	Feb 17-21
End of Fall Classes	Tuesday, Dec 3	End of Winter Classes	Friday, April 4
Flex days/study days	Dec 4-5	Flex days/study days	April 7-8
Start of Fall Exams	Dec 6	Start of Winter Exams	Apr 9
End of Fall Exams	Dec 23	End of Winter Exams	Apr 30
End of Fall Term	Dec 23	End of Winter Term	Apr 30

At the FAS Curriculum Committee meeting in November 2023, minor modifications and five new Victoria College courses were approved:

EDS355H1	Social Justice in Education
CRE373H1	Archives and the Art of Memory
CRE345H1	Evidence-Based Approaches to Creativity
MCS336H1	The Material Culture of Wine
REN245H1	Race and Power in the Renaissance

It is anticipated that additional program and course changes will be submitted at the next FAS Curriculum Committee meeting, including splitting a year-long course in Renaissance Studies into two half-courses; converting two successful special topics courses into permanent courses; and proposing more new courses in various upper year programs (Creativity and Society; Science, Technology, and Society; Material Culture and Semiotics).

**7. Report of the Research Committee (A. Urbancic)**

A. Urbancic reported a total of 21 grant applications (9 Conference, 7 Research, and 5 Publication) were received. Of the 21 grant applications, 15 (8 Conference, 3, Research, and 4 Publication) were approved. The Research Committee awarded \$19,594.30 for conference and research grants and \$27, 424.81 for publication grants. The Spring round of grant applications will be due April 1, 2024.

Conference Travel Grants	Fall 2023
Grants Requested	9
Grants Awarded	8
Amount Requested	\$12,962.54
Amount Awarded	\$11,462.54

TOTAL GRANTS Fall 2023	
All Grants Requested	21
All Grants Awarded	15
Amount Requested	\$ 64,699.11
Amount Awarded	\$ 47,019.11

Research Grants	Fall 2023
Grants Requested	7
Grants Awarded	3
Amount Requested	\$19,331.76
Amount Awarded	\$ 8,131.76

TOTAL GRANTS Remaining 2023-2024	
Conference and Research Grants	
Amount Available	\$ 45,000.00
Amount Granted	\$ 19,594.30
Amount Remaining	\$ 25,405.70
Publication Grants	
Amount Available	\$ 50,000.00
Amount Granted	\$ 27,424.81
Amount Remaining	\$ 22,575.19

Publication Grants	Fall 2023
Grants Requested	5
Grants Awarded	4
Amount Requested	\$32,404.81
Amount Awarded	\$27,424.81

**8. Report of the Victoria University Students' Administrative Council (VUSAC) (S. Joy)**

S. Joy reported on VUSAC Fall 2023 activities, which included a new printing policy for students, an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) working group meeting, annual holiday-themed activities, onboarding newly elected members, an annual retreat for all members of council, the signing on to the Blue Communities Project and the Okanagan Charter, Semi-Formal, and Caucus meeting. VUSAC released a statement expressing its solidarity with students affected by violence in the Middle East. S. Joy also highlighted VUSAC's upcoming collaboration with the Office of the Dean of Students and VOICES, an organization supporting survivors of sexual violence on campus, for the December 6th National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women event.

**9. Report of Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies (M. Kavalier)**

M. Kavalier reported on a recent acquisition of a 1592 illustrated version of Renard the Fox. The CRRS also acquired engravings by Philips Galle and Jan Collaert with texts written by Cornelis Kilian. The engravings depict images of illustrious women from the Old Testament. M. Kavalier announced Stephen J. Campbell from Johns Hopkins University is the CRRS Distinguished Visiting Scholar and will lecture on Leonardo in March 2024.

**10. Other Business**

A. Urbancic requested the slide from the Research Committee be included in the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.