



**Victoria College Council
Minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2022
4 – 6 p.m. on Zoom**

Attendance: A. Esterhammer, Y. Ali, C. Battershill, J. Berkovitz, L. Dacome, B. Davidson, S. Dowling, J. Forgie, P. Gooch, E. Istrate, C. James, E. Jennings, E. Jia, E. Jones-Imhotep, P. Kutasi, J. Leblanc, S. Lee, M. Liu, R. McGill, H. Murray, M. Nyquist, J. Papayiannis, W. Robins, N. Rodriguez, L. Sherlock, A. Sol, M. Solovey, N. Terpstra, A. Urbancic, I. Wells, D. Wright, R. Wu

Regrets: K. Bartlett, K. Castle, B. Havercroft, M. Kavalier, L. Magnusson, S. Ross, A. Slater, J. Raguindin

Guests: A. Bailey, H. Ulfing

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm by the Chair, A. Esterhammer.

1. Welcome and opening remarks (A. Esterhammer)

The Chair thanked everyone for joining the first council meeting of this year.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of November 29, 2021 (attached)

The minutes of November 29, 2021, were accepted.

MOTION – Moved by E. Istrate and seconded by E. Jennings. Passed *nem com*.

3. Report of the President (W. Robins)

The President reported the following to the Council:

President Robins thanked all faculty, students, and staff for their creativity, resilience, kindness, and understanding during the few months with Omicron circumstances.

COVID-19 update: The University is tracking changing guidelines. Some of the restrictions brought in with Omicron are gradually loosening. Residence and classes are different from other public spaces. The university will communicate university-specific updates as rules and guidelines change. For example, U of T now includes surgical masks among the recommended masks. March will be a period of transition as the in-person classes and internal events resume. Most staff will be back on campus in April, and external events will resume, building a strong sense of community and inspiring space as Victoria University's strategic plan states.

The roads around Queen's Park were closed the last two weekends due to the protest, but it has not been disruptive to what's happening on our campus.

The budgeting for next year had significant shortfalls from last year due to COVID-19. In addition, the lack of rentals of our space has affected the operating and academic budget.

Since the last VCC meeting, there has been no update on the Northrop Frye Hall redevelopment.

The new Principal search at Emmanuel College is well advanced at the interview stage.

The new director of communications, Sally Szuster, started on January 30, 2022. She was the Vice President of communications at the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Before that, she oversaw media relations at Mount Sinai Hospital. Sally was able to deal with communicating the concerns of the sudden protest during her first week. W. Robins welcomed Sally to the Vic community and invited members to join in welcoming her.

4. Report of the Principal (A. Esterhammer)

The Principal reported the following to the Council:

A. Esterhammer reiterated the President's thanks to students, faculty, and other Vic offices, including the Office of the Registrar and Academic Advising, the Dean of Students' Office, and the Pratt Library for continuing to show resilience, flexibility, and patience in adapting to pandemic conditions.

There are many exciting curricular and co-curricular events going on in our academic programs:

1. Shaftesbury Creative Writer-in-Residence: Canisia Lubrin is organizing several events for students in the Creative Expression & Society program and for the wider Vic community. These include a panel discussion on creative citizenship; a public reading with several award-winning international poets; and a reading that will feature her own work-in-progress together with the work of student writers. Despite pandemic conditions, the Shaftesbury Creative Writer-in-Residence program has been wonderfully enriching during its first year.

2. Research Day: Undergraduate Research Shaun Ross is organizing the annual Research Day to showcase research by Vic undergraduates in all fields. It will take place on Monday, March 28, consisting of an interdisciplinary online conference with student presentations from 11:00 to 4:00. Some in-person sessions are also planned. Like last year, sessions will be recorded and made available via a Quercus site for anyone who is not able to attend on the day.

3. Faculty updates – promotion: Congratulations to Prof. Emanuel Istrate who has been awarded a continuing appointment and promotion to Associate Professor, Teaching Stream effective July 1, 2022. Prof. Istrate is a specialist in optical sciences who taught at the Impact Centre (now the Centre for Entrepreneurship) for several years before joining Victoria College full-time. He has taught in the Schawlow Stream of Vic One since its inception. Emanuel has expertise in science pedagogy and the social aspects of science and technology, including optical technologies such as holography and photography. He is also working in the emerging field of Creativity in the Sciences – the title of a

course that he taught for the first time last fall, cross-listed between two Vic programs: Creative Expression and Society, and Science, Technology, and Society.

4. Northrop Frye Centre Acting Director: Director Bob Davidson will be off on a well-deserved research leave next academic year; Prof. Sherry Lee has agreed to serve as Acting Director in 2022-23 during Bob's leave. Sherry is Associate Professor of Musicology and former Associate Dean – Research in the Faculty of Music. Prof. Lee's research and teaching interests focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including music and culture in fin-de-siècle Vienna, opera, and music and technology. Her research is richly interdisciplinary, informed by literary and critical theory, gender studies, philosophy, and aesthetics, and she has been extensively involved with the Jackman Humanities Institute as well as with the NFC. Sherry teaches innovative courses in the Creative Expression and Society program, including a capstone seminar that gives students experience in field recording and sonic-environmental sampling.

5. Two-year faculty appointment in Literature and Creative Writing: Because upcoming research leaves and retirements in the next couple of years will leave us short-handed in the Vic One and Creative Expression and Society programs, we are planning to make a 2-year faculty appointment in Literature and Creative Writing. The hiring process will take place over the next few weeks. There may need to be adjustments to modality depending on pandemic conditions, but we expect that there will be opportunities for faculty and students to hear talks or readings from the short-listed candidates in March.

6. Vic International Internships: This program is made possible by a four-year, government-funded grant to facilitate outbound mobility for undergraduate students, especially for underrepresented groups of students who might not otherwise have access to international opportunities for financial reasons or because of other barriers. Many kinds of experiential learning qualify, such as internships, placements, research-intensive experiences, or fieldwork, and the trip can range in length from a week to an academic year. The Omicron variant has delayed international travel again, so we now expect student mobility to begin in fall 2022. Events Coordinator Amelia Bailey has been seconded to this project and she has been putting together a database of information about eligible U of T courses and developing a website where students can find that information. Later this month, Diane Barbaric will be rejoining the Principal's Office staff to work on Vic International Internships and support this year's Scholars-in-Residence program. Diane was with us last year to prepare a preliminary study on outbound student mobility at Victoria College.

7. Jackman Scholars-in-Residence: The student application period for SiR is open until the end of this month (February 28). Twenty-six in-person projects are slated to take place across the three UofT campuses, with the organization centered, as always, at Victoria College. This May we also plan to expand the SiR program by offering a separate session consisting of five online-only projects in the hope that this additional option will increase the accessibility of SiR and the potential for undertaking research with an international scope, where students, faculty, and/or research partners may be participating from international locations.

8. Major in Creativity and Society: The formal proposal has been drafted and we are now entering a stage of consultations with many groups including cognate units such as English, Music, Art History, Drama, and Comparative Literature, as well as students and faculty in the CES program. The VCC Academic Committee will be invited to provide their input in the coming weeks and we expect to bring the full proposal to Council at the April meeting. The further steps include a visit by external

reviewers this fall and a series of formal approvals by various levels of university governance and the Ontario Quality Council, in preparation for a start date of September 2023.

Discussion:

M. Solovey announced **the Sixth International Undergraduate Research Conference on Science, Technology, Medicine, and Society** on March 24-25, 2022, sponsored by the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, Arts & Science Student Union, the History and Philosophy of Science Undergraduate Society, and Victoria College. The conference will be hosted virtually. The call for papers went out internationally, solicited papers on the history, philosophy, social studies of science, medicine, technology, and engineering. The conference program will be ready soon for sharing. This is the first year U of T is hosting, and we will consider hosting next year's conference again if this year works out.

5. Report of the Dean of Students

W. Robins reported to the Council on behalf of K. Castle:

Residences are operating close to full COVID capacity, around 80%. Some students delayed their return until in-person classes resumed. The protests in the past two weeks did not result in any significant disruptions. The gradual return to in-person classes increased the Goldring Student Center traffic and it will continue to grow, especially after Reading Week.

The Dean's Office will be hiring new teams of residence dons, commuter dons, international mentorship, and commuter mentorship positions over the next month. In addition, the applications for all student leadership positions doubled from the last year, which indicates a shift in students thinking toward a return to normal in the fall.

Theatre for Thought and Humanities for Humanity programs have done well despite being online. In the fall, there were 60 or more student mentors and community participants for Humanity for Humanities. The Theatre for Thought program was full again, where they showed documentaries and short films instead of the physical performances.

Vic Ready is rolling out its a la carte standalone session this month, preparing students for the next steps, including careers and summer work mentorship opportunities. Students are exhausted with online offerings, so that larger commitments are less appealing, but they respond very well to the smaller size options. Vic Ready Boot Camp will start after Reading Week for first-time students in the program, coming together with students who have already completed a year.

The sixth annual Campus Reconciliations conference will take place on March 31, 2022, from 9 am until 4 pm. It will be free, a hybrid online and in-person event. In recognition of and reflection on Canada's first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, our keynote speaker will be Phyllis Webstad, a Northern Secwepemc author from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation and the creator of Orange Shirt Day. The Victoria Campus Reconciliations conference was created in 2017 to reflect on the university's role in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and providing an interactive and engaging space to listen to Indigenous leaders and students speak

about their research reflections and experiences. Elena Ferranti at the Dean's Office will have more details and pre-registration information.

6. Report of the Academic Committee (I. Wells)

The Chair reported the following to the Council:

I. Wells highlighted some of 21 course modifications that went through the Arts & Science governance process, including:

- Significant revisions to the calendar copy
 - REN241 Renaissance Icons and Afterlives
 - CRE235 Innovation in Society
- Re-title of Vic One Course VIC108 Belonging, Imagination, and Indigenous Identity
- Introduction of two new LCT Special Topics courses at 200 and 300 levels.

All this resulted in program modifications in every program. This was the product of significant work and consultation from the academic committee members. I. Wells especially thanked the program coordinators for all the work during this round of governance changes.

The University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) is underway for the Literature and Critical Theory program. Student surveys are currently collected. The other parts of the review will start more intensively in the fall. I. Wells thanked Professor Shaun Ross for taking the lead on the UTQAP review process.

The new Creativity & Society Major proposal will be available soon. This week, a draft proposal will be circulated to cognate units and external stakeholders. The next Academic Committee meeting will focus on the proposal on March 1, 2022.

7. Northrop Frye Centre update (B. Davidson)

B. Davidson reported to the Council:

NFC's upcoming events include:

- NFC Doctoral Fellow Lectures:
 - Nattapol Ruangsri "Lessons from Environmental Narratives in Post-WWII Italy" on Feb. 15, 2022
 - Filippo Sposini "From Persons to Cases: The Global History of Lunacy Certificates 1850s to 1890s" on March 9, 2022
- Northrop Frye Centre Lecture on March 17, 2022
 - Ursula Heise (UCLA) "Beyond Apocalypse, Climate Change and Urban Narrative"
- Vic Research Day on March 28, 2022

B. Davidson extended thanks to Sherry Lee for agreeing to take the Interim Director position next year.

As the Fellows Committee chair, B. Davidson promoted upcoming events:

- Fellows Lunch Colloquium Series, all on virtual, 12-1 PM:
 - Christien Garcia, "The Queer Things Rooms Do" on Feb. 16, 2022

- Shaun Ross "Against "Critical Thinking: Some Reflections on Pedagogy" on Feb. 28, 2022
- Elise Burton "Trans-Asian Histories of Scientific Collaboration: The Case of Human Genetics in Iran" on March 9, 2022
- Ira Wells "Norman Jewison's Nat Turner and the Perils of Anti-Racism" on March 14, 2022.
- Victoria University Book Launch on March 29, 2022, 4-6 PM

B. Davidson thanked Amelia and Harim for their help in making NFC work, especially Amelia.

8. CRRS Update (M. Kavalier)

A. Esterhammer reported on behalf of M. Kavalier:

On March 4 at 3:30 pm, Andrea Walkden will be presenting a Friday Workshop: "Lyric Margins and the Early Modern Shore"

From March 10-12, CRRS and the Department of Art History will co-host an international online conference: "The Miniature" reviewing miniature artifacts across time.

9. Other Business

None.

MOTION to adjourn – Moved by S. Dowling.

Meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.