



VICTORIA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

MINUTES

Victoria College Council Meeting

Nov. 28, 2022, 4 pm - 6 pm

Alumni Hall

Attendance: A. Esterhammer (Chair), Y. Ali, H. Barseghyan, C. Battershill, C. Bruun, M. Cichosz, J. Hamilton-Diabo, L. Ingallinella, S. Joy, M. Kavalier, G. Kim, J. Leblanc, A. McQuibban, C. Miranda-Radbord, A. Moritz, J. Rogers, D. Shah, L. Sherlock, A. Sol, M. Solovey, N. Terpstra, H. Ulfig, A. Urbancic, M. Vicedo, I. Wells, I. Williams, D. Wright, D. Zhang

Regrets: K. Bartlett, J. Berkovitz, W. Cecil, L. Dacome, S. Dowling, J. Forgie, B. Havercroft, E. Jagoe, I. Kalmar, A. Komaromi, S. (Sherry) Lee, S. (Sooyeon) Lee, R. McEwen, A. Motsch, M. Scarci, E. Swenson

Guests: M. Attar-Zadeh

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 pm by the Chair, A. Esterhammer.

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

Principal Esterhammer welcomed everyone to the first in-person VCC meeting since February 2020 and opened the meeting with a land acknowledgement.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of October 3, 2022 (attached)

Prior to approving the minutes from the previous meeting, C. Miranda-Radbord asked if all the student representative positions for VCC standing committees have been filled. A. Esterhammer indicated that G. Kim from the Office of the Principal will follow up to check to see whether all the student positions on standing committees have been filled.

MOTION: To accept the minutes without changes.

The motion was moved by A. Urbancic and seconded by S. Joy. The motion was passed *nem. con.*

3. Report of the Principal (A. Esterhammer)

A. Esterhammer provided the following report:

Staff announcement: Emily Fu has joined the Principal's Office in a term position as Academic Events Coordinator. Emily is a former Victoria College student who graduated from UofT with an Honours B.A. in Art History; she also took LCT and Renaissance Studies courses and participated in the Jackman Scholars-in-Residence program. Emily holds a Masters' degree in Curation from the University of Edinburgh and she has worked for museums and galleries including the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery and the Ontario Museum Association.

Academic co-curricular events: Highlights in the events calendar since the last VCC meeting include the installation of President McEwen and of Principal HyeRan Kim-Cragg of Emmanuel College; a special Vic One plenary that commemorated Blake Goldring’s honorary doctorate from Victoria University in 2021 and Al Moritz’s retirement from full-time teaching earlier this year; a reception and exhibition at the Pratt Library marking the 75th anniversary of the publication of Northrop Frye’s *Fearful Symmetry*; a “welcome back to campus” reception for Victoria College Fellows; Victoria College Fall Convocation; and the annual Judy LaMarsh plenary celebrating women in leadership. This is in addition to biweekly Fellows Lunch Colloquia and numerous lectures and colloquia organized by the CRRS and the NFC. There is much more to come, including the next installment of the Faculty Reading Series with Bob McGill and Mary Nyquist reading from their fiction and poetry respectively (29 November); the President’s Holiday Tea (7 December); and a special graduation celebration for 2020 and 2021 Victoria College grads (15 December). Planning for next semester’s events is also well underway, beginning with a Mentoring Tea for faculty mentors and student mentees and the Victoria University Book Launch in January 2023, through to a Vic One 20th anniversary celebration in mid-April.

Faculty appointments: Victoria College is involved in two joint appointments with Arts & Science departments. Interviews are underway for a tenure-stream Assistant Professor hire in the Archaeology of the African Diaspora; this appointment will be in the Department of Anthropology with a potential 25% cross-appointment to Material Culture and Semiotics. Secondly, we have the opportunity to make a joint appointment with the Department of English for a tenure-stream Assistant Professor in Creative Writing: the closing date for applications is today and the first meeting of the advisory search committee takes place next week. Campus visits for the short-listed candidates are expected to take place starting in February.

Working group on EDI in the curriculum: We are preparing to launch a student-focused working group on diversifying and decolonizing the curricula of Victoria College academic programs, in order to ensure that student ideas are fully heard and that the process of academic change, while necessarily complex, is as transparent as possible. The working group will include student representatives from each of the Vic programs and from VUSAC as well as other students who have expressed interest. It will begin meeting early in the new year.

Vic Global: The *Vic International Internships* initiative has seen a recent re-branding as *Vic Global*, and Maral Attar-Zadeh is coordinating it this year as one of the projects in her portfolio as Special Projects Coordinator. Maral will give a brief presentation on the many facets of Vic Global and how faculty and students can draw on the resources it provides.

4. **Guest Speaker Presentation: Vic Global Internships (M. Attar-Zadeh)**

M. Attar-Zadeh introduced new funding for domestic Victoria College students provided through the Government of Canada’s Global Skills Opportunity Program. The main objective of this program is to increase access for international experiential learning, especially for students from underrepresented groups who would not typically consider learning and working abroad as part of their undergraduate studies. The amount of funding will be calculated based on duration of time, destination, and category of student group. The Global Skills Opportunity Program includes wraparound services for students before, during and after their internships. Alumni of the Vic Global internship program are also invited to work as Work Integrated Learning Ambassadors to act as mentors to students before they start their internships. There is the opportunity to fund a full class or cohort. For example, all domestic Education and Society students going to Branksome Hall Asia for international teaching placements will be funded. There are also placements in Israel with our Creative Expression and

Society program. Another opportunity is students can enroll in a half-course VIC396 *Vic International Internships* as an independent study to enable students who have their own project. Other for-credit internships include Kwasei Gakuin University/Cross-Cultural College (a Japanese partner university), and other student-led internships/placements arrangements. M. Attar-Zadeh will be meeting with representatives at UofT Student Life, Accessibility Services, and Indigenous House. Faculty who have questions or would like to learn more can contact M. Attar-Zadeh at maral.attar.zadeh@utoronto.ca.

Discussion: A question was asked if students who are graduating in the spring are eligible for funding. The funds are designated only for international experiential experiences as part of a credit course. If a graduating student is taking a credit course, approvals for funding would be on a case-by-case basis. Another question requested clarification for what underrepresented student groups are identified in the Global Skills Opportunity Program. M. Attar-Zadeh noted the underrepresented student groups are low-income students, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students.

5. Report of Academic Committee (I. Wells)

The Chair of the Academic Committee (I. Wells) reported the development of three new courses. The Faculty of Arts and Science Council curriculum committee meetings occurred in mid-November, and Victoria College proposed:

- Two new creativity-themed courses—specifically, CRE201 *Introduction to Creativity*, and CRE375 *Histories of Creativity*. These courses reflect the growing student demand for courses in the College’s popular Creative Expression and Society Minor.
- One new Renaissance Studies course, REN340H *The Global Renaissance*. This offering reflects the teaching interests of our new faculty member, Prof. Ingallinella, and centers non-western and marginalized writers by turning toward a “global” understanding of the Renaissance.

One more new course proposal will be included in the second and final round of curriculum changes—a new Vic One Hundred course called *Renaissance Queens* which promises to explore “representation of historical and fictional queens, empresses, and other influential female rulers in Renaissance Europe and the early modern world.” This, too, is a course devised by Prof. Ingallinella, which will strengthen pathways between our first-year offerings and our Renaissance Studies program. This proposal, along with minor modifications which are largely a matter of housekeeping, will be before FAS curriculum meetings at the end of January.

I. Wells ended his report with two additional items:

- Renaming our Creative Expression and Society Minor program to “Creativity and Society.” The next step will be student consultation with a survey that will go out later in the week or the following week.
- In consultation with the Communications department, work will begin on new program-specific promotional videos for our website for more engaging web presence for our programs. The first video will feature Science, Technology and Society.

6. Report of the Research Committee (A. Urbancic)

As Chair of the Research Committee, A. Urbancic reported on the number of grants that were awarded for Fall 2022. There are three types of grants awarded - conference/travel, research, and publication. In total 20 eligible applications were reviewed by committee members. Of the six travel grants, six were awarded almost the full amounts of the requests. Of the seven research grants requested, six were awarded. Of the seven publication grants, five were awarded. Another competition will occur in the spring.

Discussion: It was noted publication grants had the greatest disparity. A. Urbancic advised faculty who may be considering an application for a publication grant to carefully review the guidelines. A question was asked if any data was collected on the race and gender for who applied and were awarded grants. A. Urbancic indicated that although demographic data is not collected on the demographics of the faculty applying for grants, there appeared to be a fair distribution of the backgrounds of applicants and the types of projects that were supported.

Conference Travel Grants	
Grants Requested	6
Grants Awarded	6
Amount Requested	\$ 7,734.00
Amount Awarded	\$ 6,734.00

TOTAL GRANTS Fall 2022	
Grants Requested	20
Grants Awarded	17
Amount Requested	\$ 61,039.83
Amount Awarded	\$ 37,039.83

Research Grants	
Grants Requested	7
Grants Awarded	6
Amount Requested	\$ 20,500.00
Amount Awarded	\$ 17,500.00

TOTAL GRANTS Remaining 2022-2023	
Conference and Research Grants	
Amount Available	\$ 45,000.00
Amount Granted	\$ 24,234.00
Amount Remaining	\$ 20,766.00
Publication Grants	
Amount Available	\$ 50,000.00
Amount Granted	\$ 12,805.83
Amount Remaining	\$ 37,194.17

Publication Grants	
Grants Requested	7
Grants Awarded	5
Amount Requested	\$ 32,805.83
Amount Awarded	\$ 12,805.83

6. Report of VUSAC (S. Joy)

The President of VUSAC, S. (Sooyeon) Lee was unable to attend the VCC meeting. S. Joy provided the VUSAC report in her place. VUSAC continued to host events for students to connect with each other, including a holiday market and mental wellness sessions. VUSAC also voiced their support of a recent open letter calling on UofT to terminate the employment of a UTM professor, Prof. Robert Reisz, for his misconduct. Members of VUSAC would like to work with the Principal’s Office to ensure all classrooms contribute to students’ growth and learning. At a recent feedback session, President McEwen made a statement that efforts are beginning and that Victoria College administration will be forming an EDI working group to make changes to promote safe spaces. VUSAC will prioritize making meaningful changes to the academic environment at Victoria College and call on educators and decision makers to practice some reflection to address students’ concerns.

7. Report of the Registrar (Y. Ali)

Y. Ali presented two reports – the Nov. 1 enrollment count (handouts provided) and a second report on the work of the Office of the Registrar and Academic Advising (ORAA).

Enrolment highlights:

- Total student enrolment increased from last year, reflecting overall growth in Arts & Science
- In 2022-2023, 3,982 total number of students (1,041 new students)
- In 2021-2022, 3,786 total number of students (978 new students)
- Student participation in study abroad/exchanges was low last year with only 8 students
- The summer abroad numbers for 2022 were better with 50 students
- 32.3% of new Vic students registered as international students
- International students were from China, India, USA, South Korea, Indonesia, and the Philippines
- Vic One admissions was slightly down from the previous year (195 in 2022 versus 237 last year)
- Vic College upper-year programs saw an increase in the CRE, Education & Society, and Science, Technology & Society programs resulting in overall growth (644 students in 2022, 588 last year)
- The number of students (n=18) who transferred from another college to Vic was consistent from previous years
- There was a considerable number of students taking more than four years to complete their undergraduate degrees (22.2% for 5 years, 3.4% for 6 years, and 4.2% for more than 6 years to complete their degrees)

Report on ORAA activities:

Y. Ali reported that the ORAA provides front-line services, academic advising, and specialized advising (transition to university, transition to life after graduation, financial aid, accessibility accommodation, and learning support). The ORAA also manages social media accounts (Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook) along with publishing a student e-newsletter and initiating targeted email campaigns. Over the last two years, staff needed to respond to ongoing unpredictability as service delivery shifted from in-person to on-line and then the return to on-site work. For Fall 2022, there was demand for more half-hour one-on-one appointments (in-person and online), more biweekly drop-ins for incoming students, and more phone calls and emails. Petitions are formal requests for exception to Faculty of Arts & Science regulations. This includes withdrawals without academic penalty, extension on assignments, extension for tests/exams, deferred exams, and other. Until recently, the ORAA coordinated the Writing Centre's activities; this was moved to the Office of the Principal. Additional support to students is available through a full-time on-site Advisor from Accessibility Services, a Learning Strategist, and Peer Tutors.

Discussion: A question was asked about the collection of demographic data on applicants to ensure adequate representation of diverse backgrounds. Y. Ali noted that the ORAA now collects data for students to identify if they are Black, Indigenous, or a person of colour as well as data is collected on students' financial need. Additional funding is available as opportunity awards.

7. Report of the Northrop Frye Centre (M. Attar-Zadeh)

Acting Director of the Northrop Frye Centre, S. (Sherry) Lee sent her regrets. The NFC report was provided by M. Attar-Zadeh as Special Projects Coordinator in the Office of the Principal who supports the NFC as one of her special projects. The NFC doctoral fellow lecture series began this fall with two NFC doctoral fellows presenting their research. These lectures were offered in a hybrid format. Online delivery alongside in-person gatherings increased access to NFC events. NFC undergraduate fellows also gathered this fall for an informal reading series, including a set of Victorian gothic-themed readings for Halloween. A silent film screening also occurred in the NFC and Junior Fellows were invited to join. Two more doctoral fellows presentations are scheduled in 2023. The annual Northrop Frye lecture speaker will be Dr. Napolin. She will visit for two days in mid March. As well, Dr. Peattie, Associate Professor of Music from the University will be this year's Northrop Frye Centre Visiting Fellow. A lecture seminar event with him will be announced in the coming months.

8. Report of the CRRS (M. Kavalier)

M. Kavalier's report for the Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies (CRRS) noted that this year's activities involved engaging other Renaissance centres. The CRRS co-hosted a global renaissance roundtable event with the University of Warwick's Centre for the Study of the Renaissance. This included five speakers – two from UofT (N. Terpstra and L. Ingallinella) and three from the University of Warwick (D. Lines, N. Din-Kariuki, and B. Brazeau). The event was successful with over 100 people attending over zoom. In January, Dr. Ingallinella will host a Friday workshop on the forgeries of female petrarchism in renaissance Italy. In February, the Distinguished Visiting Scholar, Dr. Traub from the University of Michigan will present a lecture on racializing subjectivity in 17th century erotic narrative. M. Kavalier highlighted recent library acquisition of rare books, including a series of law books, two books on Old Testament themes, and a copy of Erasmus' apology with notations in Latin and Spanish throughout the book, showing an immediate response to the Erasmus publication. All were invited to CRRS holiday party.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

Concluding Remarks: A. Esterhammer encouraged VCC members to stay behind in Alumni Hall at the end of the meeting to socialize and re-connect with colleagues.

The meeting ended at 5:42 pm.