

MEETING MINUTES

University Council

Date: September 25, 2025

Time: 2:30-4:30 pm

Location: Convocation Hall (PMB 120) and Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:31 pm.

The Chair, Dr. Vicki Squires began with a Land Acknowledgement.

No members of the media identified themselves.

The Chair reminded members there are no unauthorized recordings of Council meetings.

1. AGENDA

1.1. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: (Augusta/Dobson): *That the agenda be approved as circulated.*

CARRIED

2. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS- Dr. Vicki Squires, Council Chair, College of Education

Chair Squires opened the first University Council meeting of 2025–2026 with reflections on recent campus energy, leadership changes, and the passing of Dr. Beth Bilson, a pioneering academic and leader. The Chair addressed concerns about academic freedom in the U.S., emphasized the importance of protecting Canadian university values, and encouraged participation in Truth and Reconciliation events before proceeding to the meeting's agenda.

3. MINUTES

Motion: (Finnie/Dutchyn): That the minutes of June 12, 2025 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. COUNCIL WELCOME AND GOVERNANCE REFRESHER- Dr. Julian Demkiw, University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer

Secretary Demkiw provided members with a review of the Council structure and responsibilities. Meeting protocols and virtual attendance were reviewed.

[Slides are attached.](#)

5. BUSINESS ARISING

5.1 CASPer Testing Update

Deputy Provost Patti McDougall provided an update to the questions. This item will go back to APC for discussion.

Question: Is neurodivergence being considered in the evaluation of the tool? Dr. McDougall replied that the committee is looking at the data that has been gathered and asking if the information being collected is valid and will bring this up to the committee.

5.2 Eligibility to Apply for, Hold and Administer Research Funding Policy Changes

Deputy Provost Patti McDougall provided an update of the changes that went forward to the Board of Governors for approval. The next steps are to work on the implementation of this with VP Academic and VP Research.

Questions: A member questioned the use of the word “normally” which was part of the revisions. Dr. McDougall explained that “normally” is commonly used in such contexts and emphasized that this is a three-year pilot. The process will be monitored to ensure individuals are supported and fulfilling their duties. Approximately 120 individuals fall into this category, though only a small subset is expected to pursue this route.

Dr. McDougall noted that individuals with and without term wanting to pursue this route would have to be agreed upon within their letter. A member asked if the letter can be revised after the fact. It was noted that the letter will be looked at as part of implementation.

A member expressed appreciation for the changes but noted that Section 3.1 still feels restrictive. They asked if future amendments would be possible. Dr. McDougall responded that amendments are always possible, and this change provides a foundation to begin.

6. REPORTS

6.1 President

President Stoicheff welcomed Council members to a new academic year and acknowledged the upcoming internal reconciliation forum, marking almost ten years to the day since the Truth and Reconciliation report was released. The forum was created as a way for USask to continue our work as outlined by the report.

President Stoicheff welcomed new Council members, committee chairs, and student representatives, and congratulated Vince on his final Council meeting before becoming the next president. He also recognized Patti McDougall's transition to Interim Provost and Loleen Berdahl's appointment as Deputy Provost.

Stoicheff expressed concern about attacks on universities in the U.S., and noted that while Canadian universities are more supported, they still face threats to evidence-based research. He highlighted the financial pressures on Canadian universities, which can indirectly affect institutional autonomy, though Saskatchewan has not experienced these reductions in autonomy. He reaffirmed the university's commitment to responsible

stewardship of public funds and the importance of maintaining public and governmental trust to preserve autonomy.

6.2 Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic

Interim Provost Bruni-Bossio echoed several of President Stoicheff's remarks acknowledging that he is recognized as a thought leader across Canada.

Deputy Provost Patti McDougall updated members on the work of the 'think tank' aimed at exploring initiatives to strengthen USask's short-term and long-term financial health through strategic financial planning.

6.3 Graduate Students Association (GSA)

GSA President Palah Roy presented the GSA report noting that the GSA has had their non-profit status reinstated. The GSA is currently working on an initiative to share graduate student experiences as well as advocacy continues on childcare and campus safety.

The full report can be found in the agenda package.

6.4 University of Saskatchewan Student's Union (USSU)

USSU President Emma Wintermute presented the USSU report to Council, highlighting the new student leaders and the successful launch of student groups for the academic year. Tuition and affordability remain key concerns, noting a pay equity forum is scheduled for October 1st. The USSU is also focusing on strengthening collaboration with the Prince Albert (PA) campus and is looking forward to welcoming a student counsellor from PA.

The full report can be found in the agenda package.

7. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Paul Jones, Chair of APC presented the committee's item as outlined in the agenda package.

7.1 Request for Decision: Masters Admission Category for Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D) Program Information is in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

Motion (Jones/Dobson): It is recommended by the Academic Programs Committee that Council approve the master's degree admission category for the D.M.D program, effective for the 2027-2028 application cycle.

CARRIED

8. PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

Christian Willenborg, Chair of PPC presented the committee's items as outlined in the agenda package.

8.1 Request for Decision: Business Research Integration and Development Group (BRIDGE) Knowledge Centre

Information is in the agenda package. There were no questions.

Motion (Willenborg/Dick): It is recommended by the Planning and Priorities Committee that Council approve the establishment of the Business Research Integration and Development Group (BRIDGE) Knowledge Centre effective immediately.

CARRIED

8.2 Item for Information: Provisional Centre for Entrepreneurship

Information is in the agenda package. There were no questions.

8.3 Item for Information: Disestablishment of the Centre for the Study of Science and Innovation Policy

Information is in the agenda package.

A member asked why the disestablishment of a Centre does not come to Council for a vote? Secretary Demkiw noted that it is in the Centres Policy; however, the Governance Office will look further into the rationale.

9. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Susan Detmer, Chair of Governance, presented the committee's item.

9.1 Notice of Motion: College of Medicine Faculty Bylaws

Information is in the agenda package.

A member asked for clarification on the faculty and who is eligible to sit on Council. Dr. Detmer replied that this will be reviewed.

An individual asked for the rationale given as to why the Dean of CGPS changed from voting to non-voting member. Dr. Detmer noted that this will also be looked into.

The Chair also mentioned that there is a vacancy on the Nominations committee for a Council member.

10. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Reza Fotouhi, Chair of Nominations, presented the committee's items.

10.1 Request for Decision: Council Committee Vacancies

Information is in the agenda package. There were no nominations from the floor or questions.

Motion (Fotouhi/Patrick): That Council approve the nominations described in the attached report, effective September 25, 2025.

CARRIED

10.2 Request for Decision: Search Committee for Global Institute for Food Security Executive Director

Information is in the agenda package. There were no nominations from the floor or questions.

Motion (Fotouhi/Patrick): It is recommended by the Nominations Committee that Council approve the nomination for the following senior administrator to serve on the Search Committee for the Executive Director, Global Institute for Food Security, effective September 2025.

CARRIED

11. JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHAIRS AND PROFESSORSHIPS

11.1 Item for Information: Joint Committee on Chairs and Professorships (JCCP) Annual Report 2024-2025

The report was in the agenda package. This item will be brought back to the October meeting under business arising.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There were none.

13. Question Period

Pre-submitted Questions:

Can University Council get a more detailed explanation of the outage of our campus alert systems and apps, and any extra steps the university is taking to protect faculty, students, and staff on campus given recent events and safety issues for large open campus such as ours.

Greg Fowler, Chief Administration Officer and COO explained to members that USask has an external vendor who runs the app which went out nation wide on September 12th. USask has a contingency plan in place with the City of Saskatoon. If an incident occurred during the outage, an alert would have been issued by the City to the campus community. USask is working with the vendor to ensure notification more timely in the future.

With the city making active transport a priority, how is USask keeping up with the changes to how our community arrives on campus? I am particularly interested in the addition of an active transport link using Munroe, from 14th to College, and connecting with the pedestrian-controlled crossing of College at Munroe. From the north side of this crossing, the connection to campus is along the sidewalk on College. The need to navigate Wiggins Road, Health Science, and the Wiggins traffic is a safety concern. There is much about the off-loading of active transit users on College Dr from Cumberland to University Bridge that encourages pedestrians and cyclists to cross Wiggins Road against traffic: a perilous adventure.

Mr. Fowler explained that USask has been collaborating with the City throughout the summer to improve the four major campus crossings on College Drive. These upgrades are part of the broader changes associated with the [Link Transit System](#). The plan includes enhancing safety at turns, widening pedestrian corridors, and removing the existing sky walkway. Since the Link will run down the center of College Drive, the roadway will be narrowed and speed limits reduced, with the goal of improving safety at all crossings.

How will the campus network mirror the work that the City is doing?

Construction of the Link Transit System is scheduled to begin in 2026. USask is currently developing a campus plan to align with this project and will be engaging the campus community through consultations in the near future.

14. Adjournment

(Jones): The meeting was properly adjourned at 4:00pm

4. Council Welcome and Governance Refresher

Dr. Julian Demkiw, University Secretary and Chief Governance Officer

USask Shared Governance



Board of Governors
Financial Oversight



University Council
Academic Oversight



Senate
Public Voice

USask is atypical – but not unique – because we have *three* governing bodies, not the standard two.

Role of the Governance Office

The Governance Office is the **link** between the executive leadership and the governing bodies (Board, Council, Senate) of the university.



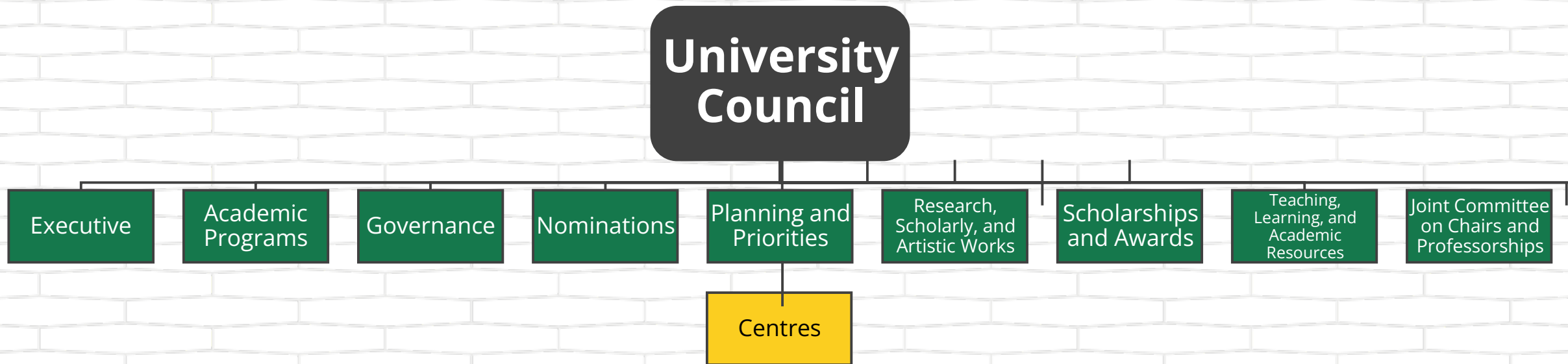
University Council – Responsibilities

University Council has oversight of the academic affairs of USask. Some duties of Council include:

- Granting degrees, diplomas and certificates
- Grants scholarships, prizes, and bursaries.
- Approving new academic programs, deleting existing programs, and modifying programs.
- Authorizing the Board to establish new colleges, schools, departments, and centres.
- Sets methods and rules for evaluating student performance.
- Disciplines students for academic dishonesty and hears appeals on academic decisions.
- Sets standards for admission.
- Makes recommendations on physical and budgetary plans for the university.

Did you know that all members of Council are part of the Academic Appeal Board?

University Council – Committees



Rules of Order

Council is regulated by:

- *The University of Saskatchewan Act, 1995*
- Council Bylaws
- Guidelines and procedures approved by Council
- Proceedings regulated by Kerr & King (approved by Council in 2004)
 - Currently under review
- Presided by the chair, who maintains decorum and a neutral position
- Members must direct questions to the chair

Summary of common Kerr & King procedures located in the
[Governance PAWS Channel](#)

Council Meetings

- Council meetings are held monthly (no meeting in February, July, August)
- Participate by Zoom, if needed
 - Members are strongly encouraged to attend in person where possible
 - every effort will be made to accommodate those connecting remotely, please note that we are unable to completely duplicate the experience of attending in-person.
 - Zoom link will be posted on the meeting Agenda

Meeting Protocols

Zoom Protocols

- Ensure your **full name** is written on your screen- unidentifiable attendees will be removed from the meeting.
- For motions and questions members in attendance will be called on first; Zoom participants will be called on second.
- If you wish to pose a question or make a comment type the words “question” or “comment” in the chat and you will be called on accordingly. ***Turn on your video when*** the chair calls on you to speak.
- No unauthorized video or audio recordings of the meeting are permitted.

In Person Protocols

- Voting members can be seated in the front rows at the tables
- A voting card will be used at each meeting to identify voting members. Ensure to pick up and drop off your cards each meeting.
- If you have a question on an agenda item or during question period- go to the microphone and the Chair will call on you.

Other Protocols and Practices

- **Motions** will be posted approximately ten days in advance of each meeting on the [Council Website](#).
- **Agenda and materials** will be posted seven days in advance of each meeting (with potential of some items being forthcoming)
- Members are invited, but not required, to submit questions on matters relevant to Council or on any agenda item in advance of a meeting.
- All Council members can submit motions, agenda items, and questions to the Executive for consideration via **governance.office@usask.ca**.
 - o The deadlines for submission can be found on the [Executive Committee](#) page from the Council website.

Meeting Minutes Tools

We would like to begin using Zoom to record audio of the meeting for the purpose of taking minutes and want to check-in with Council members about questions or concerns with the approach.

- Recordings would be used and viewed by Governance Office team only;*
- Once minutes are approved at the next meeting, recordings would be deleted*
- Continue to follow current practice of minute taking as per Kerr and King (s114) including:*
 - o "A summary of significant points raised during the debate of motions but not a verbatim account of speeches"*
 - o "Any commitments made by officers or others present at the meeting"*

Questions or concerns can be sent to Chair or Secretary and will be discussed at the Executive Committee.

Resources

Governance PAWS Channel

- Add the channel to “Favourites” for easy access.
- Easily find resources and information for governing bodies.
 - Agendas
 - Key documents
 - Contact information

Governing Bodies' Resources

Find information for the following:

- **Meetings** - schedule, agenda, minutes
- **Committees of Council** - SharePoint sites, membership, Terms of Reference
- **Elections** - nominations
- **Bylaws**
- **and more**

[Senate](#)[Board](#)[Council](#)

Key Governance and Institutional Resources

-  [Introduction to Governance](#)
- [University of Saskatchewan Act, 1995](#)
- [USask Organization Structure](#)



Governance Office

Your USask Governance Office team is always willing to lend a hand or answer your questions – just reach out to governance.office@usask.ca.