

Senate Minutes
April 26, 2025, 9 am – 4 pm
Exeter Room, Marquis Hall

1. Welcome

1.1. Meeting Opening and Greetings

Chancellor McCreath called the meeting to order. She provided a land acknowledgement and expressed gratitude for the presence of all attendees. She then introduced Elder Roland Duquette to start off the meeting.

Chancellor McCreath thanked Elder Roland Duquette and for his contributions to Senate and the university. She also highlighted the success of the previous evening's reception at Opus, commending University Secretary Demkiw and his team for organizing a beautiful and informative event.

Chancellor McCreath introduced new members who were attending their first meeting:

Appointed:

- Kristen Marcia, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce

Ex Officio:

- Salome Ries, Acting University Registrar

Chancellor McCreath also acknowledged and thanked outgoing Senate members for their contributions.

Elected:

- Colleen Matthews, District 14
- Barb Gustafson, District 11
- Darlene Clarke, District 4
- Nathalie Atanasova, Member-at-Large
- Brooks DeCillia, Member-at-Large

Students:

- Selim Bytyqi
- Abhineet Goswami
- David Ohene-Amoako
- Nishtha Mehta
- Brock Neufeldt
- Ritu Patel
- Celeste Nunez Valdivieso

2. Agenda and Minutes

2.1. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION – (Goswami/Robertson) - That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

2.2. Approval of the Minutes from October 26, 2024

MOTION – (Siqueira/Walsworth) - That the minutes be approved as circulated.

CARRIED.

A senator suggested that USask Senate consider adopting a formal declaration of conflict of interest at the start of meetings, similar to practices on other boards, to enhance transparency given members' diverse backgrounds. The University Secretary agreed it was good governance practice, encouraged voluntary declarations during meetings, and supported discussing the addition of a formal declaration item with the Chair and Senate Executive Committee.

3. President's Address

3.1. President's Report to Senate

President Stoicheff opened his remarks by thanking Senate members for their service and acknowledged Elder Roland Duquette for his longstanding role as Convocation Elder. He praised outgoing student leaders for their exceptional contributions and highlighted the importance of student leadership at the university. He also paid tribute to Chancellor McCreath, recognizing her as the most engaged and passionate Chancellor in the university's history, as she chaired her final Senate meeting.

President Stoicheff emphasized the need for senators to actively promote the University of Saskatchewan's value, particularly in light of growing global skepticism toward higher education. He highlighted the university's critical role in training professionals across Saskatchewan, its research excellence, and its economic contributions. Senators were encouraged to serve as ambassadors in their communities and professions, sharing these strengths and helping to build public trust in the university's relevance and impact.

He also urged senators to support the university's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), which is embedded in institutional policy rather than centralized in a single office. This approach, he noted, has helped the university avoid some of the backlash seen elsewhere. Stoicheff called on senators to foster respectful dialogue, advocate for inclusive values, and help reinforce the university's essential role in supporting democratic society.

Questions

A senator asked how the university is responding to the broader political climate, particularly in light of some Canadian universities stepping back from EDI initiatives. President Stoicheff explained that USask has embedded EDI into institutional policy rather than centralizing it in



a single office, which has helped avoid backlash. He reaffirmed the university’s strong commitment to EDI and emphasized the importance of measured, consistent action.

Another senator referenced a CBC story about a professor declining to attend a U.S. conference due to political tensions and asked how the university could better support public advocacy by faculty and staff. President Stoicheff responded that while media traction is limited, third-party support—especially from industry and community leaders—is a more effective way to amplify the university’s value proposition. He encouraged senators to use their voices and networks to advocate for the university.

A senator inquired about the impact of U.S. political dynamics on USask’s relationships with American universities. President Stoicheff noted that while there has been no significant disruption yet, the university is monitoring the situation, particularly regarding U.S. research funding. He also mentioned that USask is exploring opportunities to attract Canadian academics currently working in the U.S.

A follow-up question asked how the university would fund new talent from the U.S. if Canadian institutions already face funding challenges. President Stoicheff acknowledged the concern and emphasized the importance of increasing federal research funding to support both domestic and international talent.

University Relations Report

Vice-President of University Relations, Cheryl Hamelin, presented virtually from Calgary, reporting that the university’s fundraising campaign had reached \$497.5 million, nearing its \$500 million goal. She projected a final total of \$530–550 million by the campaign’s conclusion on June 18. She highlighted major gifts and upcoming events and introduced a “campaign impact” card distributed to senators.

4. Senate Committee Reports

MOTION – (Goswami/Burshtyn) – That Senate move *in camera*.

CARRIED.

4.1. Honorary Degrees Committee

4.1.1. Approval of Honorary Degree Recipients

4.1.2. Amendments to Honorary Degree Guidelines

4.2. Joint Nominations Committee for the appointment of Chancellor

MOTION – (Gough/Mossier) – That Senate move out of the *in camera* session.

CARRIED.

4.3. Executive Committee

Secretary Demkiw introduced the two items for decision.

4.3.1. Nominations to the Nominations Committee



MOTION – (Sorensen/Delbaere) – That Senate approve the recommendation of the Senate executive committee and appoint the following Senate members to the Senate nominations committee for one-year terms beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. Aaron Genest, Kyle Drever, Karen Mitzel, and Robert Henderson (Chair).

CARRIED.

4.3.2. Senate Engagement Committee and Education Committee

MOTION – (Henderson/Drever) – That Senate approve amending the Senate Bylaws such that:

- The Engagement Committee, as described in this report, be established,
- The Round Table on Outreach and Engagement be formally deleted, from the Senate Bylaws, and
- The changes to the terms of reference for the Education Committee as outlined in this report be made.

CARRIED.

4.4. Nominations Committee

Rhonda Gough, chair of the Nominations Committee, introduced this item and highlighted the process for nominating senators to the various committees of Senate. She encourages Senators to put their names forward as elected and appointed senators are required to fill the various committees.

4.4.1. Nominations to Senate standing committees and appointment to other committees

MOTION – (May-Melin/Luc) – That Senate approve the appointments to Senate committees as indicated in the attached schedule for 2025-2026, effective July 1, 2025.

CARRIED.

4.5. Membership Committee

Tamara Buckwold, chair of the Membership Committee, presented the report, confirming all organizational members remain unchanged. A new policy was adopted to prioritize regulatory authority over professional associations when both seek membership. The committee is also working on a bylaw amendment to recognize Indigenous governments with continuing membership status.

No questions were received for this item.

4.6. Education Committee

Robert Henderson, chair of the Education Committee, reported on four admissions changes approved by the committee and noted the committee's expanded academic role following recent bylaw amendments.



No questions were received for this item.

5. Governance and Administrative Reports

5.1. Report on Undergraduate Student Activities

USSU President Krupal Chavda presented a comprehensive report reflecting a year of advocacy, awareness, and alliance-building. Key initiatives included academic misconduct policy reform, food security programs, mental health awareness, and civic engagement events. The USSU also strengthened relationships with university administration and all levels of government and joined the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations to amplify student voices nationally. The year concluded with a successful executive election and increased student engagement.

5.2. Report on Graduate Student Activities

GSA President David Ohene-Amoako highlighted achievements such as the largest-ever fall orientation, emergency financial support totaling \$110,000, and initiatives like free clothing drives and bread distribution. The GSA transitioned to digital financial systems, advocated for a daycare facility, and launched a leadership circle for executive continuity. They also celebrated national recognition with David's election to the Canadian Federation of Students executive. The GSA emphasized equity, inclusion, and community engagement through events like Black History Month and the Ubuntu Festival.

5.3. Report on Board of Governors Activities

Board member Mike Marsh highlighted the board's active engagement with internal and external stakeholders over the past year, including strategic meetings with University Council chairs, deans, and executive directors to align institutional priorities. The board also strengthened provincial outreach by holding its April meeting in Regina, where members connected with government officials, industry leaders, and alumni, and toured the College of Medicine's regional programs. Ongoing collaboration with provincial ministers reinforced the university's alignment with Saskatchewan's innovation and education goals. Additionally, the board is advancing a comprehensive and inclusive presidential search process, reflecting its commitment to strong leadership and institutional continuity.

A senator questioned why the Senate was not consulted on the decision to demolish 114 Seminary Crescent, emphasizing the Senate's role as the university's public voice and suggesting that earlier involvement might have mitigated public criticism and concerns about transparency. In response, Board of Governors representative Mike Marsh acknowledged the concern and explained that the Board had paused the demolition process in December to allow time for alternative proposals, though none were deemed viable. He affirmed the importance of Senate input and noted that the Board is reflecting on how to improve consultation and engagement with Senate and other stakeholders in future decisions of similar significance.

5.4. Report on University Council Activities



Note: This item was presented for information.

5.5. Strategic Enrolment Management Report

Acting Provost Bruni-Bossio introduced the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) report as a comprehensive year-end snapshot covering student numbers, diversity, and graduation data. He noted that while the April meeting focuses on reviewing the past year, the October session will shift toward strategic planning and development of the university's multi-year enrolment framework. Dr. Jerome Cranston presented a detailed overview of enrolment trends. Total student numbers remained stable, with slight shifts in undergraduate and graduate populations. The report highlighted a modest decline in international student enrolment due to federal policy changes, and a small increase in Indigenous undergraduate enrolment. Retention and graduation rates were discussed, with a focus on improving support systems and aligning enrolment goals with institutional capacity and diversity targets.

A senator raised concerns about the lack of gender-based enrolment data by college, particularly questioning a perceived drop in female representation in engineering. Dr. Cranston acknowledged the issue and emphasized the role of families in shaping career choices, committing to improve data reporting on the dashboard. Dr. McDougall clarified that the figures referenced were from graduate programs and that undergraduate female enrolment in engineering had not declined. It was noted the potential for future focused sessions on enrolment equity based on Senate interest.

6. Education and Engagement Sessions

Acting Provost Bruni-Bossio opened the Education and Engagement Sessions by emphasizing USask's commitment to evolving academic programming that meets both global aspirations and the specific needs of Saskatchewan communities. He framed the sessions on flexible learning and entrepreneurship as examples of how the university demonstrates its value to society, especially in addressing what he called a "trust deficit." He highlighted Senate members as vital connectors between the university and the broader public and encouraged them to share these stories as champions of USask's mission. He then introduced Dr. Patti McDougall to present the first initiative on flexible learning.

6.1. Flexible Learning at USask

Dr. McDougall introduced the Flexible Learning Initiative, emphasizing expanded access through varied delivery modes (in-person, hybrid, online), locations (including regional campuses), and pacing options. Key developments include micro-credentials, blended programs, and universal design for learning. The goal is to support lifelong learning and ensure that students can access education in ways that suit their lives, while maintaining high-quality, student-centered experiences.

A senator asked how faculty are being supported to adopt flexible learning, given the time demands and limited recognition in evaluations. Dr. McDougall responded that teaching is a key part of tenure and promotion, and emphasized making innovation easier through strong



support systems, training, and tools. She noted that while not all faculty will adopt new methods, many are well-prepared and supported to do so effectively.

A senator asked about expanding credit transfer and articulation agreements with institutions like SaskPolytech. Dr. McDougall confirmed ongoing efforts and noted that while progress has been made, the transfer process remains complex. She also highlighted interest in two-way credential stacking to support flexible academic pathways.

A senator asked whether flexible learning has led to increased engagement from northern and Indigenous communities, noting the importance of remote options for accessibility. Dr. McDougall responded that while USask has 500 students in Prince Albert and active partnerships with northern institutions like Northlands College, expanding access remains complex. She emphasized the university's commitment to working with regional colleges, school boards, and Indigenous partners, while acknowledging the challenges of meeting diverse student preferences and ensuring financial sustainability.

6.2. Entrepreneurship at USask

Dr. Vince Bruni-Bossio introduced Dr. Marjorie Delbaere, Acting Dean of the Edwards School of Business, highlighting her leadership in advancing entrepreneurship as a strategic priority at the college. He praised her as a program builder and problem-solver and noted her impact as a mentor and innovator. He also introduced her co-presenters: Andrés Carillo, a third-year finance student leading the entrepreneurship summer camp, and Dr. Jolina Leeder, an assistant professor and managing director of the Bridge Knowledge Centre, who teaches entrepreneurial thinking and innovation.

Dr. Delbaere opened with a humorous story about babysitting, linking it to leadership skills. She then introduced Andres Carrillo, a student who would help present entrepreneurship initiatives at Edwards. Instead of a long lecture, she explained they'd lead a hands-on design thinking activity, with Dr. Jolina Leader facilitating.

Andres, a third-year finance student at Edwards School of Business, shared a student's perspective on entrepreneurship education at the University of Saskatchewan. He highlighted how entrepreneurship drives innovation, job creation, and economic resilience in Saskatchewan. He outlined the structure of the business program, which includes foundational theory, major-specific courses, practical applications, and experiential learning. Andres emphasized the value of hands-on experiences like the Entrepreneurship Summer Camp, where students teach business basics to youth, and courses like Venture Development and Entrepreneurial Thinking. He also showcased student-led initiatives such as Enactus and discussed emerging trends like ESG investing and certified B Corporations. Finally, he celebrated successful Edwards alumni entrepreneurs, including the founders of AGT Foods, 320 Modular, and Skip the Dishes.

Dr. Delbaere proposed a new Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Saskatchewan to support innovation across all colleges. Focused on creativity, community, and knowledge,



the center aims to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, support students and faculty, and strengthen the university's role in driving economic growth.

Dr. Leader led an interactive session on design thinking, a human-centered approach to innovation. Participants explored three key steps: empathizing with users, defining problems using "How might we..." statements, and brainstorming creative solutions. The session emphasized collaboration, real-world problem solving, and the value of entrepreneurial thinking in education.

Senators worked at their tables, and online, to work through the exercise presented by Dr. Leader.

7. Closing

7.1. Other Business and Question Period

Chancellor McCreath delivered heartfelt closing remarks reflecting her deep personal connection to the University of Saskatchewan. She shared her story of arriving in Canada 75 years ago as a child with her academic parents, who later earned graduate degrees from the university. With 27 degrees in her extended family, she emphasized how intertwined her life has been with USask. Chancellor McCreath expressed immense gratitude for her role as chancellor, calling it the best job on campus, and praised the university's leadership, faculty, staff, and students. She thanked the Senate for their dedication and celebrated their shared passion and commitment to the university community.

7.2. Adjournment

Chancellor McCreath thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting was properly adjourned at 3:55 pm.

Senate attendance, April 26, 2025

Appointed Members		District Members		Ex Officio Members	
A.J. Fox	Z	Eric Wilmot	R	Jane Alcorn	Z
Aly Bear	A	Wade Hainstock	P	Angela Bedard-Haughn	Z
Amanda Lepage	A	Alishia Beach	Z	Brett Vandale	A
Amee Joshi	Z	Darlene Clarke	P	Michael Bradley	A
Andrew Loken	P	Karen Mitzel	P	Danielle Brittain	P
Andy Allen	P	Sebastian Prost	Z	Vince Bruni-Bossio	P
Bev Dubois	Z	Dion Martens	A	Debby Burshtyn	P
Beverly Balaski	Z	Faith Nash	P	Jerome Cranston	P
Blair Cummins	A	Garfield Hnatiuk	P	Marjorie Delbaere	P
Brenda Mishak	A	Cathy Wheaton	A	Salome Reis	Z
Darryl Bazylak	P	Barb Gustafson	Z	Blaine Favel	A
David Mandeville	P	Walter Smith	A	Sarah Forgie	Z
David Schleich	P	Karen Mosier	P	Greg Fowler	R
Dean Weninger	P	Colleen Matthews	P	Cheryl Hamelin	Z
Dean Zimmer	P			Robert Harasymchuk	Z
Elizabeth Rackow	P	Members at Large		William Harrison	A
Gail May-Melin	P	Aaron Genest	R	Angela Jaime	P
Hélène Grimard	P	Audrey Hestand	P	Iain Luke	P
Jane MacLeod	P	Brooks DeCillia	Z	Richard Manley-Tannis	R
Jodie Mirosovsky	P	Bruce Richet	P	Jeromey Martini	A
Johanna Bergerman	Z	Jessica Luc	P	Grit McCreath	A
Kathy Gable	P	Jordan Robertson	P	Patti McDougall	P
Kent Peterson	P	Kyle Drever	P	Peggy McKercher	A
Keshia Caplette	Z	Lorne Vanin	P	Louise Michaud	R
Kimberly Greyeyes	A	Nathalie Atanasova	Z	Brooke Milne	Z
Kirsten Marcia	P	Rhonda Gough	P	Gillian Muir	P
Laurianne Gabruch	A	Robert Henderson	P	Julia Paulson	P
Letitia Russell	P	Scott Gust	Z	Michael Pawelke	R
Pamela Meiers	A	Tamara Buckwold	P	Vera Pezer	A
Rebecca Newson	Z	Zsuzsa Papp	P	Martin Phillipson	A
Richard Côté	P			Meghna Ramaswamy	Z
Roberta Gallagher	P	Student Members		Solina Richter	P
Rod Amaya	A	Abhineet Goswami	P	Roy Romanow	A
Rory Picklyk	Z	Brock Neufeldt	A	Baljit Singh	A
Sandeep Sharma	A	Celeste Nunez Valdivieso	A	Walter Siqueira	P
Shankar Das	P	David Ohene-Amoako	P	Charlene Sorensen	P
Sharon Garratt	P	Nishtha Mehta	R	Carl Still	Z
Terry Lebiel	P	Ritu Patel	P	Peter Stoicheff	P
Twyla Bergstrom	A	Selim Bytyqi	P	Scott Walsworth	P
		A = Absent P = Present R = Regrets Z = Zoom		Ken Cheveldayoff	A
				Non-Voting Member	
				Julian Demkiw	P