

MINUTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS – REGULAR SESSION

Thursday, April 23, 2020, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Via Zoom online platform.

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members:

Kim Peacock	Keith Kerrigan
Gillian Siddall	Esther Rausenberg
Geoff Plant	Emma Somers
Alex Phillips	Keith Reynolds
Scott Hawthorn	Sonny Assu
Bill Tam	Randy Lee Cutler
Selina Huang	

Regrets: Shauna Bryan, Sanya Arora

Guests: Trish Kelly, Michael Clifford, Kevin Bird, Lori MacDonald, Jacob Brennan

Support: Philippa Mennell, University Secretary, Carina Clark, EA to the President

Land Acknowledgement.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1. Call to Order – Kim Peacock called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm.
2. Adoption of Agenda. A Board member requested an in camera session at the end of the meeting. Board Senate member representative was also added to the Agenda.
Moved/Seconded to approve the updated Agenda. Carried.
3. Approval of the Regular Session Minutes of February 20, 2020. A Board member asked for an update on programs and support for international students. Kevin Bird, Executive Director, Student Services + Registrar reported that all international students have been contacted, and are being fully supported.
Moved/Seconded to approve the Regular Session Minutes of February 20, 2020. Carried.

II. BUSINESS

1. FOR APPROVAL: Ministry Mandate Letter 2020-21.

The Mandate Letter from the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training is provided to all public post-secondary institutions on an annual basis and communicates key priorities, statutory requirements and performance expectations for the post-secondary system in the upcoming fiscal year.

The Board is required to acknowledge receipt of the Mandate Letter each spring by returning a signed copy to the Ministry. The University then reports on its achievements and goals with regard to the Mandate Letter through the annual [Institutional Accountability Plan and Report](#) published in the fall.

This year, the Board Chair is required, upon resolution of the Board, to sign the Mandate Letter to acknowledge government's direction to the institution. The signed Mandate Letter is to be posted publicly on the institution's website in spring 2020.

Moved / Seconded that the Board of Governors approves signing of the 2020/21 Mandate Letter by the Board Chair. **Carried.**

III. REPORTS

1. Chair's report – there was no report.

2. Finance + Audit Committee Report – Geoff Plant, Chancellor and Chair of the Board Finance + Audit Committee, reported on discussions held at the meeting on April 7, and referred to circulated committee minutes. The annual audit will be completed by KPMG on May 11. The Board Finance + Audit Committee will meet next on May 14. Michael Clifford, VP Finance and Administration, reported on the budget. Kevin Bird reported on current summer registrations, and student fall deposits to date. A Board member reminded the VP, Finance + Administration of the request for statistics on Administrative personnel going back 5 years. The VP, Finance + Administration confirmed that the exercise has been completed, and the information will be forwarded soon.

3. President + Vice-Chancellor's Report – Dr. Gillian Siddall referred to the circulated Covid-19 timeline. Convocation, scheduled for May 2, was cancelled in mid-March as per Provincial Health Guidelines restricting group gatherings due to Covid-19. A survey on options for acknowledging graduating students was circulated and results showed a general preference for a fall convocation. Discussions are ongoing about how to celebrate graduating students later this year, considering Covid-19 impacts. A web page for graduating students will be published on May 2.

Transitioning the remaining Spring Term classes quickly online required a massive effort by faculty and IT. Dr. Siddall acknowledged all faculty, who took on the challenge in a spirit of innovation and excellence. Dr. Siddall noted that all students have been amazing, engaged and resilient throughout the transition to online classes. Dr. Siddall commended the extraordinary work performed by Dr. Trish Kelly, VP, Academic + Provost, the Deans, and faculty in planning for online summer curriculum and fall curriculum, which will include online and, if possible, hybrid delivery, the latter in accordance with public health and government recommendations.

An extraordinary Senate meeting was held on April 1. A motion to extend the Voluntary Withdrawal Deadline from March 6 to April 6 was approved. Senate also approved a motion for “Pass” (“P”) grades to be available as a grading option for all courses offered during the Spring 2020 term.

Dr. Siddall reported on regular meetings with her team, the President’s Executive Committee (PEC), the Ministry, British Columbia Association of Institutes and Universities (BCAIU), Universities Canada (UC), Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD), the Faculty Association President and the CUPE Chief Steward.

Questions from Board Members:

A Board member reported that faculty and CUPE staff are concerned about possible layoffs, due to the campus lockdown. Dr. Siddall reported that there are no immediate plans for layoffs, but that ECU is following all Ministry directives.

A Board member raised concerns about the Student Services plan to hire students for calling prospective and returning students. Kevin Bird reported that this type of Student Ambassador outreach is common practice, but agreed that the initiative should be discussed with Human Resources, to ensure proper process in line with policy and the collective agreement.

A Board member asked about faculty involvement in the planning for delivery of online courses. Dr. Trish Kelly confirmed that there is faculty representation on the newly formed Online Continuity Working Group.

A Board member inquired about the impact, due to Covid-19, on student completion and withdrawals.

ACTION: Kevin Bird will report statistics on completion and withdrawals to the Board at the next meeting in May.

- IV. OTHER BUSINESS** – There was discussion regarding the currently vacant position of Board-appointed representative to Senate. It was noted that Geoff Plant, Chancellor, is a member of Senate. Mr. Plant will attend the upcoming Senate meeting and report back to the Board. The Board-appointed representative on Senate will be further discussed in the fall.

ACTION: A summary of Senate activities will be included in the next President’s report to the Board.

- V. UPCOMING meetings:** May 14 – Board Committee meetings

May 28 – In Camera and Regular Board meetings

- VI. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm.

An in camera session without management present commenced at 2:07 pm and ended at 2:33 pm.