



# MINUTES – APPROVED

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS — OPEN SESSION

Thursday, February 5, 2026  
2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.  
MS Teams

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### ATTENDANCE:

<b>Board Members:</b>	Saanvi Bhat, Student-elected Board Member Ashley Chung, Student-elected Board Member Brenda Crabtree, Board Member Alla Gadassik, Faculty-elected Board Member Mimi Gellman, Faculty-elected Board Member Trish Kelly, President + Vice-Chancellor Steve Kinsey, Board Member Mary Macaulay, Board Member Lorcan O’Melinn, Acting Board Chair Harv Phandal-Dhanda, Board Member Eduardo Rodriguez, Employee-elected Board Member Natasha Tony, Board Member Sung Van, Board Member
<b>Regrets:</b>	Carleen Thomas, Chancellor
<b>Guest Presenters:</b>	Justin Kramchynsky, Emily Carr Students’ Union (ECSU) representative Linda Riestra, ECSU representative Lori McDonald, Executive Director, ECSU
<b>Employee Resources:</b>	Diyan Achjadi, Vice-President, Academic + Provost Mark Douglas, Interim Vice-President, Finance + Administration Natasha Himer, University Secretary Kathryn Verkerk, Registrar + Executive Director of Enrolment Kayla Stuckart, Executive Director, Communications, Marketing + Public Affairs Adrian Tees, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources Alexander Muir, Technical Support
<b>Recorder:</b>	Bessie Chow, Recording Secretary

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With quorum present, the Acting Board Chair, L. O’Melinn, called the meeting to order at 2:27 p.m.

The Acting Chair acknowledged that Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECU) is situated on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

## **2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Board members were invited to disclose any conflicts of interest related to the agenda items. No conflicts were disclosed.

## **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

The following resolution was moved, seconded, and **CARRIED:**

**THAT the Board of Governors approve the items included under the Consent Agenda, as circulated.**

### **3.1. Agenda**

### **3.2. Minutes of the Board Open Session held on December 4, 2025**

## **4. BUSINESS AND PRESENTATION**

### **4.1. Acting Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Acting Chair welcomed all to the Open session Board meeting.

He noted that the provincial post-secondary review is underway and remarked on the challenging time for the sector.

The Acting Chair welcomed representatives of the Emily Carr Student's Union (ECSU), Linda Riestra and Justin Kramchynsky, to the meeting.

### **4.2. Emily Carr Students' Union Presentation**

The ECSU representatives delivered a presentation on the current state of student finances, highlighting the relative burden of tuition compared with essential living costs (food, housing, and medical care). They outlined student advocacy efforts, including in Victoria, addressing underfunding across the sector and noted concerns that mandatory fees could increase barriers for low-income students. The ECSU requested that the Board vote against the proposed tuition and fee increases.

During discussion, questions and comments were offered on:

- Rising cost-of-living pressures and bringing attention to broader social, economic, and other considerations faced by students.
- Student advocacy in Victoria and the broader provincial funding context.
- The importance of affordability and support for students facing financial barriers.
- Improving communication to ECSU students regarding available financial and non-financial supports.
- The ECSU feels there has been active engagement on the budget this year and with senior Administration but welcome further opportunities for earlier and broader engagement with students in future consultation cycles.

- Suggestion that a high-level synthesis of short- and long-term student priorities could be shared with the Board in future.

The Acting Chair thanked the students for their presentation to the Board.

#### **4.3. Tuition + Fees**

The following resolution was moved, seconded, and **CARRIED**, with nine (9) in favour, one (1) opposed, and three (3) abstentions:

**THAT, on the recommendation of the Audit + Finance Committee, the Board approves proposed tuition and fees according to the fee schedule attached and marked “Schedule A.”**

M. Douglas, Interim Vice-President, Finance + Administration, and D. Achjadi, Vice-President, Academic + Provost, delivered a presentation on the proposed tuition and fee adjustments. A financial update was included in the meeting materials, and the 2026/27 Budget will be presented for Board approval at the March meeting.

Presentation highlights included:

- Tuition and fee adjustments support student success, student experience and institutional sustainability.
- Comparative studies, engagement with the community, and student consultation informed the recommendations.
- A new Tuition and Fees Committee did considerable research and the Committee’s recommendations guided the proposed changes.
- A holistic approach has been taken to student supports, including financial assistance, space, and food access.

During discussion, questions and comments were offered on:

- Whether student support fees will be restricted to student supports or could be applied towards the University’s deficit; it was noted that the fees are intended to fund student supports, and will include areas identified by students as needing investment, and are monitored by the Ministry to ensure funds are directed to the intended services.
- Potential impacts of tuition and fee adjustments on student recruitment; it was noted that the University operated under a tuition transparency framework; acceptance letters include information about potential tuition and fee adjustments.
- Broader challenges faced by the University community and the opportunity to continue collaboration between students and the Board, particularly on advocacy efforts.

#### 4.4. Academic Schedule Policy

The following resolution was moved, seconded, and **CARRIED:**

**THAT, on the recommendation of the Governance Committee and the Senate, the Board approves the new Academic Schedule Policy, as presented.**

The University Secretary, N. Himer, described the governance and regulatory background for the Academic Schedule Policy, noting that it has gone through extensive consultation with Senate and faculty members and is aligned with the *University Act*.

K. Verkerk, Registrar + Director of Enrolment, reviewed key provisions of the new policy.

During discussion, a question was raised about whether the Spring semester schedule includes sufficient preparation time for faculty and students. It was confirmed that the policy formalizes a preparation break at the beginning of the Spring semester. The Board noted that any shift in semester start dates affects subsequent dates, including for graduation and student exhibitions.

### 5. REPORTS

#### 5.1. President + Vice-Chancellor's Report

The President, T. Kelly, mentioned highlights from her written report, as included in the meeting materials.

No questions or comments were offered.

#### 5.2. Vice-President, Academic + Provost's Report

D. Achjadi reported that ECU received approximately 1,500 undergraduate applications and 250 graduate applications, representing an increase of approximately 400 applicants over the previous year. The residency of ECU alumnus and University of California faculty member Salar Mamani at the Libby Leshgold Gallery was also noted.

No questions or comments were offered.

#### 5.3. Interim Vice-President, Finance + Administration's Report

M. Douglas reported that preparations for the 2026/27 budget will continue, with the proposed budget to be presented for Board approval on March 26, 2026. Work and planning for the annual external audit is also underway. M. Douglas advised that additional detail regarding facility statistics is available in the Interim Vice-President, Finance + Administration's written report.

No questions or comments were offered.

## **6. CLOSING REMARKS**

Prior to the Acting Chair's closing remarks, a Board member requested that the Board consider a resolution to suspend the introduction of any new mandatory fees for the next four years. The intent is to mitigate the financial impact of the current fee increase on incoming and current students and their families, and to provide assurance to prospective domestic students that they will not face similar unexpected increases during a typical degree timeline.

The Acting Chair directed that the proposal be referred to the Audit + Finance Committee to be taken up in due course, noting any such proposal should be carefully considered including pending outcomes of the sector review.

The Acting Chair then thanked Board members, members of the the ECSU, the Administration, and community members for their participation and attention.

**[Secretary's Note:** Subsequent to the meeting, the Board member provided the University Secretary with the specific wording of their proposed resolution, as follows: that the Board investigate a resolution not to approve any further *new* mandatory fees for the next four years, to mitigate the financial impact of today's fee increase on incoming and current students and their families; additionally to mitigate the financial risk of losing prospective domestic students by providing some assurance that they will not experience a similar unexpected hike to their education cost at ECU during a typical degree timeline.]

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was confirmed as scheduled on March 26, 2026.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

With no further business, the Open Session of the February 5, 2026 Board of Governors meeting concluded at 3:40 p.m.