

Board of Governors  
Open Session Minutes

Friday, October 11, 2024  
Council Chamber, 2-100 University Hall  
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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**ATTENDEES:**

Voting Members:

Kate Chisholm	Appointed Chair, General Public
Guy Bridgeman	Appointed Vice-Chair, General Public
Haseeb Arshad	Appointed Member, Graduate Student
Chris Ashdown	Appointed Member, University of Alberta Alumni Association
Zarina Bhambhani	Appointed Member, General Public
Ross Bricker	Appointed Member, General Public
Darren Durstling	Appointed Member, General Public
Bill Flanagan	Appointed Member, President and Vice-Chancellor
Lisa Glock	Appointed Member, Undergraduate Student
Ryan Hastman	Appointed Member, General Public
Ange Kadima	Appointed Member, University of Alberta Senate
Adrien Lam	Appointed Member, Undergraduate Student
Janice MacKinnon	Appointed Member, General Public
William Morrish	Appointed Member, Non-Academic Staff (NASA Nominee)
Thomas (Tom) Ross	Appointed Member, General Public
Rakesh Saraf	Appointed Member, General Public
Miles Safranovich	Appointed Member, General Public
Robert Seidel	Appointed Member, General Public
Nizar Somji	Appointed Member, Chancellor
Venkata Vemana	Appointed Member, General Public
Diane Wheatley	Appointed Member, General Public
Paul Whittaker	Appointed Member, General Public
Kate Young	Appointed Member, University of Alberta Alumni Association
Lillian Zenari	Appointed Member, General Public

Non-Voting Officials Appointed by the President:

Todd Gilchrist	Vice-President (University Services and Finance)
Brad Hamdon	General Counsel
John Lemieux	University Secretary
Elan MacDonald	Vice-President (External Relations)
Verna Yiu	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Juli Zinken	Board Secretary and Manager of Board Services

Regrets:

Sett Policicchio	Appointed Member, General Public
Aminah Robinson Fayek	Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
Dilini Vethanayagam	Appointed Member, Academic Staff (GFC Nominee)

Presenter(s):

John Lewis	Professor, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, Department of Oncology
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Staff:

Erin Plume, Associate Board Secretary (University Governance)
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The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and welcomed members and guests. She delivered a land acknowledgement, noting the University's strong commitment to working in good relations with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples.

### **CEREMONY**

*Presenter(s):* Francis Whiskeyjack

The Chair welcomed Elder Dr Francis Whiskeyjack and offered him protocol to start the meeting in a good way. He performed a song and a cleansing smudge while teaching Board members about the significance of ceremony. The Chair thanked Elder Dr Whiskeyjack for sharing learnings with the Board as they begin their academic year.

### **IN CAMERA SESSION OF GOVERNORS ONLY**

Governors met *in camera* at the start of the meeting.

### **WELCOME**

#### 1a. Opening Remarks

*Presenter(s):* Kate Chisholm

The Chair welcomed a number of new members to their first Board of Governors' meeting, including Chancellor Nizar Somji; Ange Kadima, Senate nominee on the Board; and William Morrish, Non-Academic Staff Association nominee on the Board. She also welcomed Kevin Kane, nominated by the Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta to serve on the Board, who was observing the meeting while awaiting his appointment by Ministerial Order.

#### 1b. Approval of Open Session Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Kate Chisholm

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the Board of Governors approve the Open Session agenda, as presented.
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**CARRIED**

#### 1c. Conflict of Interest - Opportunity for Declaration

*Presenter(s):* Kate Chisholm

The Chair invited members to declare any conflicts of interest related to the open session agenda. Seeing no conflicts, the Chair declared the question asked and answered.

#### 2. Research Learning Moment

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* John Lewis

#### *Discussion:*

At the request of the Chair, J Lewis provided a learning moment on his research, including strategies to detect and block cancer metastasis and the development of a blood test to determine a patient's risk for prostate cancer and potentially avoid further invasive testing.

J Lewis responded to questions and comments from Board members, including: the potential for preventative mechanisms and vaccines; what brought him to the University of Alberta; future opportunities for nanotechnology; and the impact of uncertain prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests.

### **DISCUSSION / DECISION ITEMS**

#### **3. Report of the President**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Flanagan

*Discussion:*

President Flanagan provided verbal updates on the start of the academic year, including student orientation activities in early September; a \$10M donation from Mike Petryk and his family and the renaming of the School of Dentistry in his honour; recent travel, including to Cambridge Bay to further the university's northern strategy, and to the Times Higher Education World Academic Summit in Manchester, United Kingdom; continued government advocacy on the Provincial Priorities Act (formerly Bill 18) and the Real Property Governance Act (formerly Bill 13); and the launch of the search for a Vice-President (International and Enterprise).

The Chair acknowledged an article from *Inside Higher Ed* that the President shared with her earlier in the week and requested that it be distributed to the Board.

*Secretary's note: "Institutions Across the World Share Common Challenges" - by Josh Moody, Inside Higher Ed, October 11, 2024, was distributed to Board members following the meeting and is appended to these minutes as Attachment 1.*

#### **Report of the Human Resources and Compensation Committee**

*Presenter(s):* Tom Ross

#### **4. People Strategy**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Todd Gilchrist; Verna Yiu

*Discussion:*

T Ross introduced the item and reviewed the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee's engagement with the strategy and its measures over the past year. V Yiu outlined the strategy's goals, alignment with *Shape* and its underlying plans, and planned launch date on October 22, 2024. T Gilchrist then reviewed the strategy's consultation path and development process, as well as the proposed performance measures.

The motion was moved and seconded.

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee and General Faculties Council, approve the People Strategy, as set forth (in the form as was before the Board).

**CARRIED**

#### **Report of the Finance and Property Committee**

*Presenter(s):* Rakesh Saraf

5. Financial Update

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Todd Gilchrist; Verna Yiu

*Discussion:*

T Gilchrist provided a financial update, including a current fiscal update with a forecasted annual operating deficit of \$70.1M, higher than the budgeted deficit of \$46.2M; an operating fund deficit of \$19.9M in Q1 compared to an operating deficit of \$50.2M in the same quarter of fiscal year 2023-24, due to the timing of Targeted Enrolment Expansion grants (received earlier in the current fiscal year), higher investment income returns, and increased tuition fees; and 2025-26 budget planning, with more information to come from the Government of Alberta.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

6. Approval of Consent Items

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kate Chisholm

The items were moved and seconded in an omnibus motion.

6a. Open Session Minutes of June 14, 2024

THAT the Board of Governors approve the Open Session minutes of its June 14, 2024 meeting.

**CARRIED**

6b. 2023-24 University of Alberta Annual Report

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Board Audit and Risk and Board Reputation and Public Affairs Committees:

- a) approve and adopt the draft 2023-24 University of Alberta Annual Report ("**Annual Report**"), as set forth (in the form as was before the committee); and
- b) authorize the Vice-President (External Relations), to amend the Annual Report without need for further approval from the Board of Governors if such amendment is (a) solely for the purpose of clarification or is of an inconsequential, editorial, or formatting nature, and (b) does not change the substance of the Annual Report.

**CARRIED**

6c. Program Approval Delegations to GFC

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Board Learning, Research and Student Experience Committee, delegate to General Faculties Council ("**GFC**") the approval of non-substantial Academic Programs, as defined within Sections 7.1(a) and 7.2b of the GFC Programs Committee Terms of Reference.

**CARRIED**

6d. Updated Financial Policies

THAT the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Board Finance and Property Committee, approve the University Fund Policy, as outlined (in the form as was before the Board).

**CARRIED**

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

There were no requests from members to discuss the information items listed below.

- 7a. Action Arising from Previous Meetings
- 7b. Report of the Audit and Risk Committee
  - Health, Safety and Environment Quarterly Report
  - “Culture of Care” Quarterly Implementation Report
  - University Emergency Response to Overdoses
- 7c. Report of the Finance and Property Committee
- 7d. Report of the Governance Committee
  - 2024-25 Annual Events and Engagement Calendar
- 7e. Report of the Human Resources and Compensation Committee
- 7f. Report of the Investment Committee
- 7g. Report of the Learning, Research, and Student Experience Committee
- 7h. Report of the Reputation and Public Affairs Committee
- 7i. Chancellor’s Report
- 7j. Alumni Association
- 7k. Students’ Union
- 7l. Graduate Students’ Association
- 7m. Association of Academic Staff – no report
- 7n. Non-Academic Staff Association
- 7o. General Faculties Council
- 7p. Board Chair Report

## **CLOSING SESSION**

### 8. Other Business

Presenter(s): Kate Chisholm

There was no other business.

### 9. Adjournment

Presenter(s): Kate Chisholm

The Chair adjourned the Open Session at 9:05 a.m.

October 11, 2024

# Institutions Across the World Share Common Challenges

The World Academic Summit offered insights on business challenges, global collaboration and research innovation despite Oct. 7 protesters.

By [Josh Moody](#)



The World Academic Summit was held at the University of Manchester from Oct. 7 to 9.

Josh Moody/Inside Higher Ed

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**M**ANCHESTER, U.K.—Spread across three days, the [World Academic Summit](#) drew global leaders from far and wide to discuss the complexities of higher education in a changing world.

The event, put on by *Times Higher Education* (*Inside Higher Ed*'s parent company), featured more than 40 sessions on a wide range of issues including business challenges, global partnerships and research innovation. Based on observations from various panel sessions and conversations with academic leaders, CEOs and students, it's clear that despite geographic differences, institutions around the world are grappling with similar challenges.

## Shaky Business Models

While many U.S. institutions are reeling from financial challenges due to declining enrollment, a Tuesday panel comprised of leaders from Canada, England and Japan noted that pressures on university business models are widespread and often driven by factors outside their control.

### Most Popular

**Cornell president accused of violating academic freedom**

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**Howard expects to gain R-1, with other HBCUs soon to follow**

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**What's become of the presidents who testified to Congress?**

Bill Flanagan, president of the University of Alberta, said that shortly after he stepped into his role in 2020, his institution was hit with steep funding cuts from the provincial government. Flanagan had to scramble to find roughly \$84 million (in U.S. dollars) worth of cost savings.

The university was forced to restructure, he said, making cuts over a period of two years in a process that emphasized the retention of faculty and academic staff jobs. But given the depth of the challenge, “there was no service at the university that was not touched,” he said.

He also cited the impact of the loss of international students, now that Canada has restricted the number it is allowing into the country. Flanagan suggested that “Ottawa [the capital] is doing everything it can to drive away” such students, a matter he chalked up to political tensions over migration and housing shortages in Canada. Those bitter conversations, he said, will ultimately harm higher ed’s bottom line.

While raising tuition is one option to offset financial issues (and a lever the University of Alberta pulled), it comes with its own challenges.

At the University of Tokyo, a roughly \$654-a-year tuition hike for undergraduate programs was met with student protests and media scrutiny when it was announced this fall, executive director and vice president Kunihiro Ohta said.

## **Global South’s Growing Influence**

Does the future of international partnerships lie in the Global South? Duncan Ivison, president and vice chancellor of the University of Manchester, which hosted the summit, believes so.

In a main-stage interview on Monday, Ivison said the next wave of entrepreneurs and scientists will likely hail from Africa and Southeast Asia, noting that they are navigating global challenges “with a fraction of the resources” that Western nations have to respond to crises.

Because of such innovation and resilience, Ivison said, he is eyeing partnerships in Africa and the Middle East.



“My hunch is that we’re going to learn more from engaging with the global universities of the South, frankly, than we will ... by signing yet another agreement with Harvard or MIT,” he said.

## **Editors' Picks**

**How the WWE Shaped Linda McMahon**

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**Campuses Advise International Students to Return by Inauguration Day**

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**MIT Bans Distribution of Student-Run Pro-Palestine Zine**

Iverson also expressed concern that governments may take what he cast as shortsighted positions on collaborative partnerships with institutions in countries that have been historically antagonistic or in competition with one another, arguing that universities needed to have a “long view.”

In a panel discussion on Tuesday, European research leaders discussed the future of the bloc’s influence as a research superpower. Evelyn Welch, the president and vice chancellor at the University of Bristol, mentioned the institution’s partnership with the University of South Africa to coordinate the African Charter, a coalition of signatories across the continent and Europe, North and South America that aims to create equitable research partnerships with institutions in the Global South.

Imposing a medical model of a university is “problematic for new or young higher education sectors,” Welch said. “We should be open to the challenge of finding new

ways to do research and teaching. Saying everyone should occupy the same space as Paris in the 14th century isn't right.”



Phil Baty, *THE's* chief global affairs officer, and Duncan Ivison, vice chancellor of the University of Manchester. Ivison said the conflict in the Middle East has impacted people in the city and across the U.K.

Times Higher Education

## Campus Tensions Have No Borders

Campuses across the world have been roiled by pro-Palestinian protests, and Manchester's was no different. The first sessions hadn't even begun Monday when protesters blocked access to the event's registration, holding a banner that read, "1 year of Gaza Genocide" and "Israel out of academia." They also disrupted a main-stage conversation with U.K. Department of Education skills minister Jacqui Smith and demonstrated outside receptions and other gatherings of conference attendees.

The first day of the conference, Monday, Oct. 7, marked the one-year anniversary of Hamas's attack on Israel.

With dozens of universities from more than 30 countries in attendance, pro-Palestinian protesters saw an opportunity to address multiple institutions, one student told *Inside Higher Ed*.

Police officers fell to the ground in a tussle with protesters on the first day, but the scene ended without arrests. In one instance, students were allowed roughly 10 minutes to speak before being removed by campus security.

Some attendees told *Inside Higher Ed* the tolerance for protests was a function of British academia, with demonstrators being given time to make their points before being removed.



Students briefly blocked access to a venue where the World Academic Summit was being held on Tuesday.

Some attendees were visibly frustrated, while others voiced their support for the protesters.

“What’s happening in Gaza is atrocious,” Tyrone Pretorious, rector and vice chancellor of the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, told *Inside Higher Ed* as he observed a protest.

Numerous speakers also referenced the protests during speeches and panels, often highlighting the importance of engaging in hard conversations as a foundational tenet of academia.

“It is a very difficult day in our community for many people,” Ivison, the Manchester vice chancellor, said at one session. “The intensification of the conflict in the Middle East has impacted thousands, not only in the Middle East, but in our city and in our country. So I just wanted to acknowledge that the pain and suffering that’s been felt by all sorts of members of our community is real. We all, I think, hope for peace.”

Ivison added that protest is an outlet for those struggling on a painful anniversary.

“I’m grateful for your patience, but today is a day that many people are hurting and suffering,” Ivison said Monday.

## **Written By**

Josh Moody