



Council of the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering Minutes of the Meeting of December 18, 2024

MEMBERS: Jun Nogami (Speaker), Chris Yip (Dean), Samin Aref, Philip Asare, Carla Baptista, Jason Bazylak, Evan Bentz, Anthony Bowman, Helen Bright, Markus Bussmann, Hai-Ling Margaret Cheng, Alan Chong, Shai Cohen, Stark Draper, Salma Emara, Natalie Enright Jerger, Greg Evans, Ramin Farnood, Marianne Hatzopoulou, Kat Jia, Dawn Kilkenny-Rochelleau, Deepa Kundur, Katy Kwong, Antonio Liscidini, Ethan Mao, Kasra Modares, Emily Moore, Hani Naguib, Vladimiro Papangelakis, Milos Popovic, Mark Rittinger, Jonathan Rocheleau, Lisa Romkey, Jonathan Rose, Benjamin Sanchez, Kimberly Seaman, Tess Seip, Marisa Sterling, Hamid Timorabadi, Chirag Variawa, Belinda Wang, Elizabeth Whitmell, Edmond Young, Daifei Zhang, Yu Zou

SECRETARIAT: Caroline Ziegler (Secretary), Alex Schroen (Moderator), Silvia Delgado (Governance Administrative Assistant)

GUESTS: Ariel Gaitan, Sherry Lin, Jenny Mo, Estelle Olivia-Fisher, Asthma Pathan, Rocky Petinak, Dan Pettigrew, Zeeshan Rayees, Nefeteria Wickham, Ivan Zhuo

1. Speaker's Welcome and Approval of Agenda

Speaker Jun Nogami called the second Faculty Council meeting of 2024-2025 to order at 12:10 pm, welcoming new Council members in GB202 and online.

The Speaker acknowledged the land on which the University of Toronto operates and reviewed protocols for the hybrid meeting.

The Speaker also addressed ongoing challenges faced by the Indigenous community, including calls for inquiries into the deaths of nine Indigenous people in police interactions and the remains of two Indigenous women found in landfills. The charity *No More Silence* was also discussed for its role in raising awareness and advocating for Indigenous rights.

The agenda and reports were distributed on December 4. There was no discussion and on a regular motion duly moved, seconded and carried, the agenda was approved.

2. Introduction of New Faculty Members

New faculty members Samin Aref of the Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering and Daifei Zhang of The Edward S. Rogers Sr. Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering were introduced by their respective chairs.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of Previous Meetings

No errors or omissions were noted in the minutes of the October 24, 2024 Council meeting and on a regular motion duly moved, seconded and carried, the minutes were approved.

4. Report of the Dean

Dean Chris Yip welcomed members to the Faculty Council meeting. He shared that yesterday's Shared Services party was a fun event and extended holiday wishes to all. The Dean also acknowledged that the exam period is currently underway, and wished all students the best of luck.

a) International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) Toronto

The University of Toronto's iGEM team placed in the top 10 in the undergraduate category at the annual event held in Paris, competing against 400 teams from 48 countries. Congratulations to all who participated.

b) National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

The Dean also mentioned the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, held on December 6th, and thanked all those who participated in the memorial event to mark the 35th anniversary.

c) Congratulations to our New Research Chairs

Congratulations to our new Canada Research Chairs: Deepa Kundur (ECE) for her Tier 1 CRC in Cybersecurity of Critical Infrastructure, Azadeh Kushki (BME) for her Tier 2 CRC in Neurodiversity and Personalized Health, Enid Montague (MIE) for her Tier 2 CRC in Human-centred Automation, and Yu Zou (MSE) for his Tier 2 CRC in Materials and Manufacturing in Extreme Environments. Seven Engineering Researchers also had their CRC appointments renewed.

Dean Yip acknowledged Deepa Kundur, Ali Dolatabadi and Milos Popovic for their inductions as EIC 2025 Fellows. Furthermore, the EIC Médaille Julian C. Smith award was presented to alumnus John Bianchini. The EIC ceremony will take place on April 5 in Ottawa.

d) Administrative Staff Awards Program

Nominations are now being accepted for the Faculty's 2025 Administrative Staff Awards, with a submission deadline of February 7.

e) FASE Flu and Covid Vaccine Clinic was held November 26

The FASE Flu and COVID Vaccine Clinic took place in the Bahen Centre on November 26, with over 20 attendees. Thank you to everyone who participated.

f) Travel Update

The Dean met with alumni and fellow deans during his recent travels to New York, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. At their meeting in Australia, deans discussed the challenges they are facing, particularly regarding government funding cuts and other financial difficulties. The Dean also acknowledged the strong alumni presence in Sydney, made possible through connections facilitated by Chirag Variawa, and highlighted the potential for future collaborations with alumni in New Zealand.

g) Iron Ring Anniversary

The 100th anniversary of the Iron Ring is coming up. Plans are in place for an alumni event to celebrate the milestone, with events scheduled for San Francisco this fall and Hong Kong afterward.

h) Applications

The Faculty has seen a 13 percent increase in applications for the upcoming session and is working with the Provost to secure better credit for students and funded units, as they are currently classified as unfunded domestics due to surpassing their targets.

In closing, Dean Yip wished everyone a happy holiday.

The Speaker thanked the Dean for his report. There were no questions.

The following items were endorsed by the Executive Committee of Faculty Council at its November 19 meeting and are recommended for Council's approval by regular motion, requiring a simple majority of members present and voting to carry.

5. Study Break and Winter Reading Week Regulations

Edmond Young, chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, presented Report 3767 Revised, which looks to implement uniform regulations across departments and Engineering Science to explicitly prohibit assignments scheduled and assessments being made due during Study Break and Winter Reading Week and the weekends immediately after. Since the creation of the Fall Study Break in 2020, and the Winter Reading Week before it, it has only been common practice to avoid scheduling work then.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the following regular motion was moved and seconded –

THAT the Fall Study Break and Winter Reading Week regulations, as described in Report 3767 Revised, be approved effective immediately.

Council members discussed the definition of "assignment," clarifying that it refers to any task with a grade or mark attached, and it may be further specified in the calendar if necessary. It was confirmed that assignments can be given on the Monday or Tuesday following the final weekend of reading week, as the policy applies only to the last Saturday and Sunday. There was

also a discussion about including accessibility services under accommodations. A request was made to explicitly add "and accessibility services" to the proposal.

A motion to amend was moved and seconded –

THAT the wording “and accessibility services” be included under accommodations in Report 3767 Revised.

The motion to amend was carried.

The original regular motion, as amended, was on the floor –

THAT the Fall Study Break and Winter Reading Week regulations, as described in Report 3767 Revised, be approved with the addition of “and accessibility services”, effective immediately.

The motion was carried.

6. Major Curriculum Changes for the 2025-2026 Academic Year

Edmond Young, chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, presented Report 3777 Revised, which summarizes course changes proposed for the next academic year.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the following regular motion was moved and seconded –

THAT the proposed curriculum changes for the 2025-2026 academic year, as described in Report 3777 Revised, be approved.

There was no discussion and the motion was carried.

7. Information Reports

The following items were approved by the Executive Committee of Faculty Council at its November 19 meeting and are recommended to Council to receive for information.

a) Inclusion of Certificates in the University of Toronto Sustainability Scholar Program

Dionne Aleman, associate dean of Cross-Disciplinary Programs, presented Report 3772, a proposal to include the Certificate in Electric Vehicle Design and the Certificate in Renewable Resources Engineering in the U of T Sustainability Scholar Program. These inclusions will result in a transcription notations for students, but no actual changes to the certificates.

There was no discussion and the report was received for information.

b) Admissions Update

Alan Chong, chair of the Undergraduate Admissions Committee, presented Report 3773, which provides a summary of the committee's activities for the period of November 1, 2023 to November 1, 2024.

During discussions, concerns were mentioned about immigration and international students. While FASE has not seen a reduction in international spaces, there is concern about how Canada is perceived as a study destination. Total applications were up, with significant domestic interest across all programs, and a notable rise in early applications from Ontario. This may require rethinking the early admissions strategy. More offers were made this year in anticipation of a slightly lower yield. Registered numbers have increased, though international yield remains a challenge due to perception issues. To address this, strategic communications, recruitment efforts, and events are being planned. There are also ongoing efforts to diversify gender applications.

Several topics related to admissions and gender diversity within the engineering faculty were discussed. Efforts to increase female representation in departments with lower percentages, such as Civil & Mineral Engineering and Materials Science & Engineering are ongoing, but specific departmental strategies were not clearly defined.

Regarding graduate admissions, concerns were raised about the drop in female applicants, though it was clarified that graduate admissions are decentralized and not within the scope of the Undergraduate Admissions Committee.

Members discussed the effectiveness of the current admission criteria, especially considering high school grade inflation. Questions were raised about the Broad-Based Admissions (BBA) process. However, it was emphasized that BBA is not a negative aspect of the admissions process and was integral to identifying high-quality future engineers, as academic performance alone – even with 98 percent averages – did not always reflect the best candidates. The possibility of implementing an entrance exam was discussed but deemed impractical. Some members suggested exploring the idea of a province-wide exam, similar to practices in Alberta.

Also mentioned are the challenges posed by the negative perception of U of T Engineering among international students, particularly due to immigration rhetoric. Strategic Communications aims to counteract negative perceptions through student-led social media campaigns among other efforts. Survey data shows that the main reasons international students declined offers were a lack of scholarships and the high cost of living in Toronto.

Finally, female enrollment at 40 percent was seen as a positive milestone, though there are no immediate plans to increase this further by the committee.

The report was received for information.

c) Pilot of Chemistry Requirement Change for A Level Applications

Alan Chong, chair of the Undergraduate Admissions Committee, presented Report 3775, a proposal to offer admissions to candidates that only have IGCSE/GCE/O-level Chemistry without the condition that they present Ontario Grade 12 Chemistry. This will be a time-limited pilot for up to a maximum of four years.

Combined sciences at the O-level was discussed, with some concerned that offering this option would be considered an equity measure. It was explained that the motivation behind this proposal is to encourage students to apply, though it is uncertain if these students will succeed academically. The approach is aligned with other schools, and success will be evaluated over time. The decision to allow combined sciences will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with a review of the O-level qualifications.

The report was received for information.

d) Engineering Graduate Education Committee Update

Lisa Romkey, chair of the Engineering Graduate Education Committee, presented Report 3776, which lists new courses approved in AER, APS, BME, CIV, ECE, MIE, MSE and TEP, as well as minor modifications approved in APS, CHE, and MIE.

There was no discussion and the report was received for information.

e) Formalize “Magic File” to Conditional Decision Regulations

Vlad Papangelakis, chair of the Undergraduate Assessment Committee, presented Report 3778, which proposes to formalize the “Magic File” by renaming it a “conditional decision” and incorporating it into the petition system. This change will improve transparency and ensure fairness and will be documented in the committee’s operating manual.

There was no discussion and the report was received for information.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Graduate Diploma in Engineering Leadership

Emily Moore, professor in the Institute for Studies in Transdisciplinary Engineering Education & Practice, presented on a proposed Graduate Diploma in Engineering Leadership.

The diploma’s focus on technical leadership rather than finance sets it apart from traditional Executive MBA programs. It will incorporate team-based learning, with students engaging in employer-based projects and learning pods for case studies and skill development. It targets engineers working in technical industries and will match them with traditional management roles. It is designed to be approximately 50 percent of the cost of an Executive MBA, with plans to secure 50 percent of student sponsorships from industry.

The program is undergoing rigorous review and is being evaluated by an external marketing firm. Feedback from employers and students has been positive. The proposal will return at a future Council meeting for approval.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next Faculty Council meeting is on February 24, 2025.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:49 pm.

Revised 2/26/2025 3:46 PM