

Open Board of Governors

Algoma University - Board of Governors
CC 201 - SSM Campus / Virtual
Apr 25, 2024 4:30 PM - 5:05 PM EDT

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1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories

As per the schedule, the following Governors will provide personalized land acknowledgements at the corresponding meetings: April 25, 2024 - Bruno, Cecilia
May 30, 2024 - Battisti, Rob June 20, 2024 - Moraca, Mike

1.2. Chair's Opening Remarks

1.3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

2. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION : That all items listed under the 'Consent Agenda' be approved as recommended.

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3. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

The President has allocated the time for her President's Report in Open Session to the Vice President Nyaagaaniid for a presentation on decolonization efforts underway.

4. PRESENTATIONS

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5. BUSINESS ARISING - N/A

6. ITEMS FOR DECISION / DISCUSSION - N/A

6.1. Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy.....30

MOTION : That the Board of Governors approve the Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy as presented on the recommendation of the Risk and Finance Committee.

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7. NEW BUSINESS - N/A

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8.1. Correspondence:

**8.1.1. COU Response to Regulatory Registry Proposal Bill 166 – Strengthening
Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024 (March 2024).....36**

COU Response to Regulatory Registry Proposal Bill 166 - Strengthening
Accountability and Student Supports Act 2024.pdf.....36

8.2. Questions on Information Items

9. MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

MOTION : That Board of Governors move into the Closed Session.

10. Break Between Open and Closed Sessions

All guests and members of the media will be excused. Any questions can be referred to Erin Morrison, Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications, via email at erin.morrison@algonau.ca.

11. Dinner

Governors in person for the Board meeting will have dinner between the Open and Closed Sessions. It is anticipated that the Closed Session will start at 5:30pm.



Open Board of Governors Minutes

Algoma University - Board of Governors
Mar 27, 2024 at 4:30 PM EDT
@ SSM / Virtual

Attendance

Present:

Members: Arjun Batra (remote), Sonja Kosuta (remote), Kelli-Ann Lemieux (remote), Rose Linklater, Mike Moraca, Dionisio Nyaga, Paul Quesnele (remote), Shannon Taylor, Asima Vezina, Isaac Withers

Guests : Mohamed El Kahlout, Michele Piercey-Normore, Kramer Rousseau

Secretariat: Shannon Kelly, Nadya Ladouceur

Absent:

Members: Robert Battisti, Cecilia Bruno, Paul Dupuis, Elaine Pitcher, Taylor Sayers, Mario Turco

Guests : Shannon Brooks, Craig Fowler, Mary Wabano-McKay

1. Delayed Start Time

The start time of the Board meeting was delayed until 5:30pm.

2. Dinner

Governors joined in person for dinner in advance of the Board meeting.

3. CALL TO ORDER (Presenters: Mike Moraca)

3.1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories

Governor A. Batra provided a personalized Land Acknowledgement.

3.2. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair thanked Governors for their ongoing dedication and commitment to the continued success and growth of Algoma University, highlighting the importance of the collective expertise and collaboration of Board members, management team, and employees.

3.3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

None.

4. CONSENT AGENDA (Presenters: Mike Moraca)

Motion:

That all items listed under the 'Consent Agenda' be approved as recommended.

Motion moved by Rose Linklater and motion seconded by Dionisio Nyaga.

Carried.

4.1. OPEN Agenda for Board Meeting

4.2. OPEN Minutes for Previous Meeting

5. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT (Presenters: Asima Vezina)

The President reminded Governors that as Algoma is embarking on a journey to implement the new 3-year strategic plan, it is in a very strong financial position which allows the university to reinvest in new and current academic programming such as new graduate level programming; community-based local and international research and innovation initiatives; the new strategic enrollment management strategy; the focus on supporting the City of Sault Ste. Marie with their feasibility study specific in expanding the presence of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine University (NOSMU) and highlighting the potential for new collaborative programming elements with the Ontario Mental Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute that will be located in Makwa Waakaa'igan and at 145 Queen Street East in Brampton. The university will also continue to focus on decolonization and as part of that work, A. Vezina highlighted that the construction of the Makwa Waakaa'igan anticipated to start this fall. As she continued her report, the President updated the Board on the continued development of the University partnership with Unity as Canada's centre of excellence in immersive technology as well, highlighting progress to date on the development of a new campus master plan for Brampton and the emergence of an office-based strategy for Sault Ste. Marie (SSM).

The President proceeded to highlight a few elements of her report. Under priority 1 - Algoma University is now the second largest issuer of scholarships and bursaries in Canada. Supporters and funders were recognized at a recent academic award event where the university issued more than 6,500 bursaries and scholarships to students. Under Priority 3: Sharing Our Stories, the President highlighted the work of Dr. T. Robinson-Smith and his team as they launched The Algomian, a journal where students, community members, faculty, and staff can contribute stories about Algoma. Under Priority 4, the report illustrates the focus on decolonization, the launch of the Teaching and Learning Centre as well as the work done on the EDI strategy.

The President concluded by mentioning the current work on the strategic priorities for the next fiscal year, applying budget and resources to priorities identified.

Governors inquired about the recent NOSMU announcement to which the President responded that NOSMU recently attended a meeting called by the City to discuss the potential for expansion. The city reaffirmed their commitment to the Mental Health and Addiction Research and Training Institute and the Mayor will lead a feasibility study funded in part by the hospital to develop a business case for an expanded medical school presence in the community. The President reassured Governors that Algoma University is part of the conversation.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. 2024-25 Budget Planning Update (Presenters: Kramer Rousseau)

K. Rousseau provided an update on the 2024-25 budgeting process indicating that management is following overarching principles and guidelines. The key variable that goes into their analysis is the IRCC announcement and how the province of Ontario is translating that into the university's potential intake enrollment. Management is reviewing other historical trends and variables in developing scenario analysis, and indicated plans to continue investments in people and processes to support the growth experienced over the last few years and to provide funding for new developments. He provided an overview of the four key variables built into budget scenarios, including student retention rate, average class size, new hire vacancy rates, and execution of key operating initiatives. He further highlighted the key items in the capital planning, including the continuance of previous items such as the Makwa Waakaa'igan, the SSM Space Improvement plan, the Master Campus plan for Brampton, the five-year technology modernization and upgrade plan, and the deferred maintenance plan.

K. Rousseau outlined the next steps in the budget development processes, including the alignment to the strategic priorities, analysis of internal debt and reserve management policies, and risk assessment and mitigation strategies prior to the budget being brought forward to the Board for final approval.

Governors requested clarification on the percentage spent on staffing to which K. Rousseau indicated that management uses analytics to ensure that hiring practices are sustainable. Governors inquired about hosting town halls related to the budget, to which management replied that there will be a presentation to Senate as well as an institution-wide town hall. Governors further asked for clarification on how the responsibility centered management model (RCM) informs the budget and next year's operations. Management indicated that it is

the first year that the results of the RCM model will see projects being executed in this budget. This will reduce the RCM pool of funds but they will see how much will be replenished with this year's actuals and what is included in the budget. Management also indicated that the model will allow for increased levels of detail with respect to program specific financial data. Governors further inquired about how the performance based model of allocation was received, to which management responded that the changes were being felt on the academic side as the amount accumulated in that fund, based on their actual performance, is reinvested in initiatives reviewed by an overall committee and that this provides incentive to reinvest in initiatives.

6.2. Office of the Secretariat Overview (Presenters: Asima Vezina, Paul Quesnele)

This item was deferred to an upcoming Board meeting.

7. BUSINESS ARISING - N/A

8. ITEMS FOR DECISION / DISCUSSION - N/A

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Departing Governor: Shannon Taylor (Presenters: Mike Moraca)

The Chair acknowledged S. Taylor's invaluable experience and unwavering dedication to Algoma University over the years as an External Governor which have been foundational to the development of a stronger focus on risk at Algoma University. The Chair noted that S. Taylor's contribution to risk management not only improved the institution's resilience, but also increased the ability of each Board member to play their role well. The Chair praised her strength, resilience, determination and courage to manage through adversity and extended his appreciation for her exceptional service and positive, lasting contributions to Algoma University before presenting Governor Taylor with a gift on behalf of the Board of Governors.

Governor Taylor thanked the Board for her time at Algoma University, advising that stepping back was a difficult decision although she felt that the University has the right people in place and is pleased that risk management is now ingrained in the Board's practice. Governor Taylor wished everyone the best and thanked them for the relationships and the learning she gained over the years.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

10.1. Correspondence for the Board's Review

10.1.1. MCU: College and University Board Chair Term Extensions - 07 Mar 2024

The Chair thanked Governor Pitcher and Secretary Quesnele for their work and efforts that led to regulatory changes which impacted not only Algoma University but the university sector in Ontario.

11. MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION (Presenters: Mike Moraca)

Motion:

That Board of Governors move into the Closed Session.

Motion moved by Shannon Taylor and motion seconded by Isaac Withers. Carried.

Overview of the Office of the Secretariat

Presentation to the Board of Governors
April 25, 2024

Good Governance is about enabling fulfilment of Algoma's mission, purpose, and strategy

- University governance is complex and rests on concepts and principles that are unique to the sector.
- At Algoma, the Board and Senate alone involves over 60 people and there is regular turnover. Each body also has numerous committees.
- Good governance requires that those participating in governance understand the roles of the governing bodies, their committees, and their own individual roles. This requires ongoing training and education.
- Good governance requires communication between all of those participating and the broader university community and public.
- Good governance requires the development and maintenance of frameworks for policy to ensure compliance.
- Good governance requires all this and more, and therefore ...

Governance Journey

In Spring 2023, the University made investments into various functional units, one of which was the establishment of an Office of the Secretariat (also referred to as the Secretariat) to support good governance across the University.

Did you know that

100%

of Ontario universities
have an Office of the
Secretariat?

Secretariat Mandate

The Secretariat serves as the corporate secretariat and office for the Board of Governors and Senate. The Secretariat carries the responsibility for oversight and facilitation of the activities of the Board of Governors, Senate and their various committees, to **ensure the effective and efficient operation of the university's bicameral system of governance**. It also has the responsibility to **develop and maintain the institutional policy and privacy frameworks**.

Under the leadership of the University Secretary, the Secretariat is responsible to the entire University community for the provision of **timely, accurate, and objective** advice, information, interpretation and application of legislation and policy as it relates to access to information and protection of privacy, the Algoma University Act, and University governance.

Secretariat Mandate Continued

The Secretariat embodies a welcoming, inclusive and safe space for all members of the University community with **the goal of creating the conditions for the emergence and strengthening of good governance.**

The Secretariat has a strong commitment to, and understanding of, Algoma University's Special Mission, commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, all of which guide the work of the Office of the Secretariat.

Secretariat Functions

- Support the effective functioning of the University's bicameral governance system:
 - Board of Governors & Board Committees
 - Senate & Senate Committees
- Develop, implement and provide guidance on the Institutional Policy Framework
- Develop, implement and facilitate the Institutional Privacy and Compliance Framework

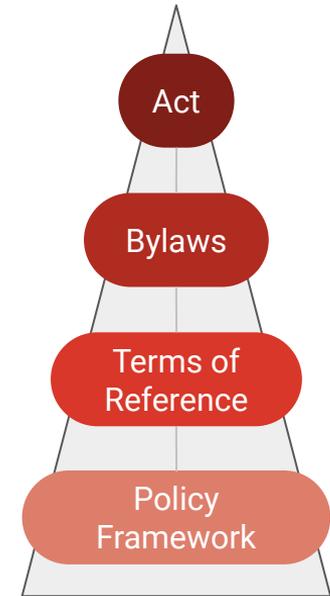
Support to Bicameral Governance (Board & Senate)

The Secretariat Office supports efforts to preserve the University's autonomous governance structure as set out in legislation through good governance practices, by providing:

- Interpretation of, and compliance with, the University's governing documents (i.e. University Act, By-Laws, policies, procedures, etc.)
- Professional development and training with respect to university governance
- Management, coordination and facilitation of Board of Governors and Senate activities

Institutional Policy Framework

- Provide the institutional framework, oversight and governance that guide the development, review, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies through collaborations with functional unit policy owners.
- Guidance and advice on interpretation of university policies.
- Communication and training to ensure policy development and management aligns with standardized best practices.
- Development and oversight of compliance and monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance with policies and procedures.



Institutional Privacy & Compliance Framework

- Provide the framework for safeguarding privacy and handling personal information ethically within the University.
- Develop, implement and maintain privacy policies and procedures ensuring compliance with laws and regulations.
- Provide training to promote privacy awareness and policy compliance among the University community.
- Handle access to information requests and privacy incidents.
- Guidance and advice on privacy matters such as best practices and regulatory changes.

Meet the Secretariat Team



Paul Quesnele
University
Secretary

- Oversight of Secretariat Office
- Board Secretary



Shannon Kelly
Associate University
Secretary

- Primary support to Senate (academic governance)
- Deputy University Secretary



Faviola Graceni
Policy and Privacy
Manager

- Primary support and leadership for institutional policy and privacy activities



Nadya Ladouceur
Governance
Lead

- Coordination and support for Board and Senate activities
- Primary support for governance elections and nominations



Samantha Giuliani
Secretariat
Officer

- Primary support for Secretariat Office operations
- Event coordination

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARIAT



Good Governance

Supporting the governance leadership and members to be effective in fulfilling their mandates, facilitating the continuation and emergence of good governance.



Compliance & Protecting Institutional Autonomy

Safeguarding compliance with relevant legislation and governing documents. Reducing risk and protecting autonomy.



Guidance and Expertise

Bringing forward current and relevant best practices, and providing expertise to support governance structures.



Communication

Aiding in the facilitation of effective communication in a complex governance system with respect to governance decision making.

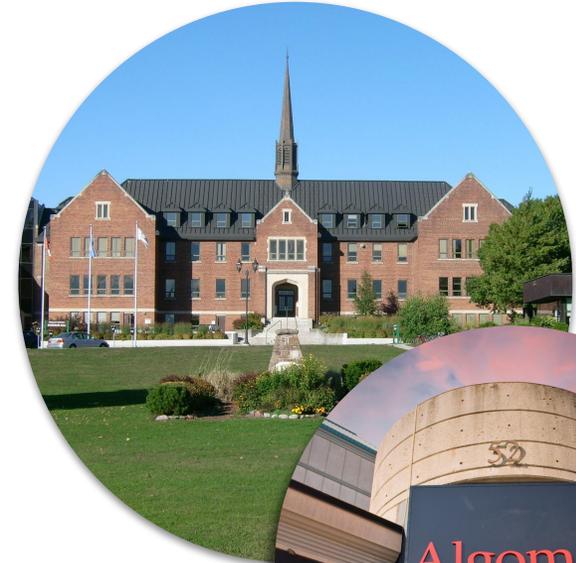




A Leader in Cross Cultural Excellence

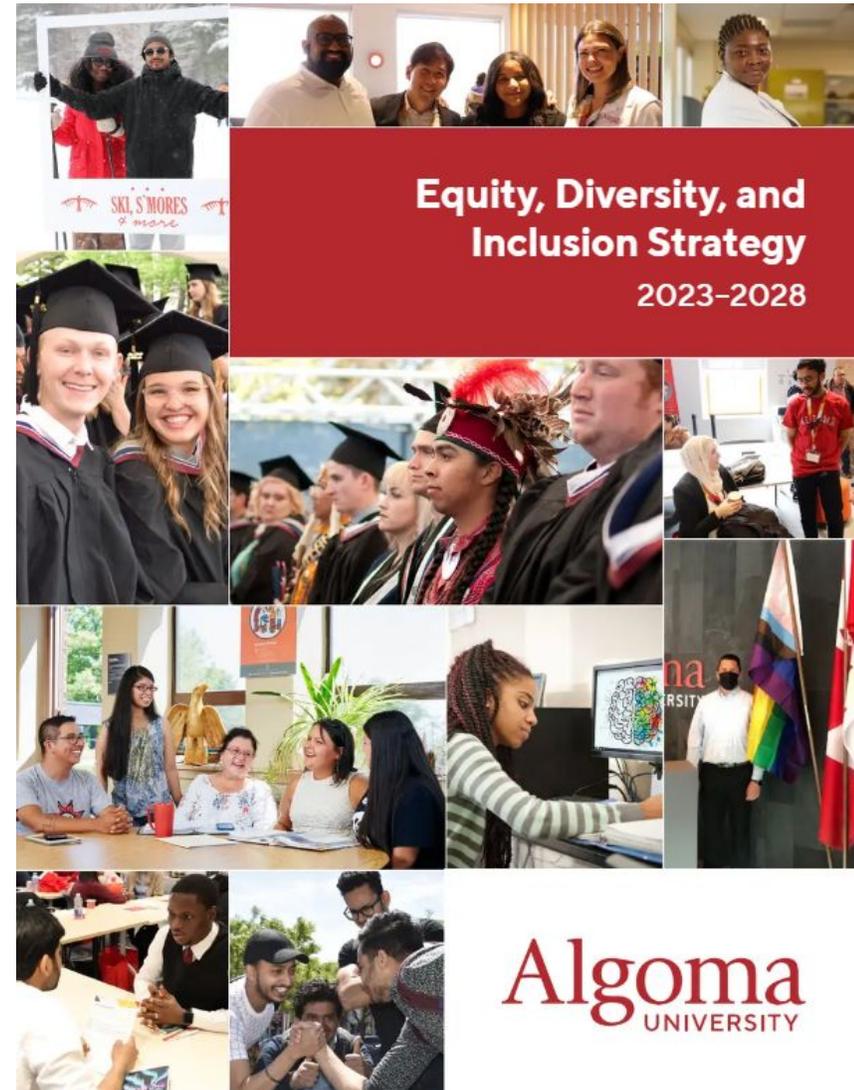
Who we are

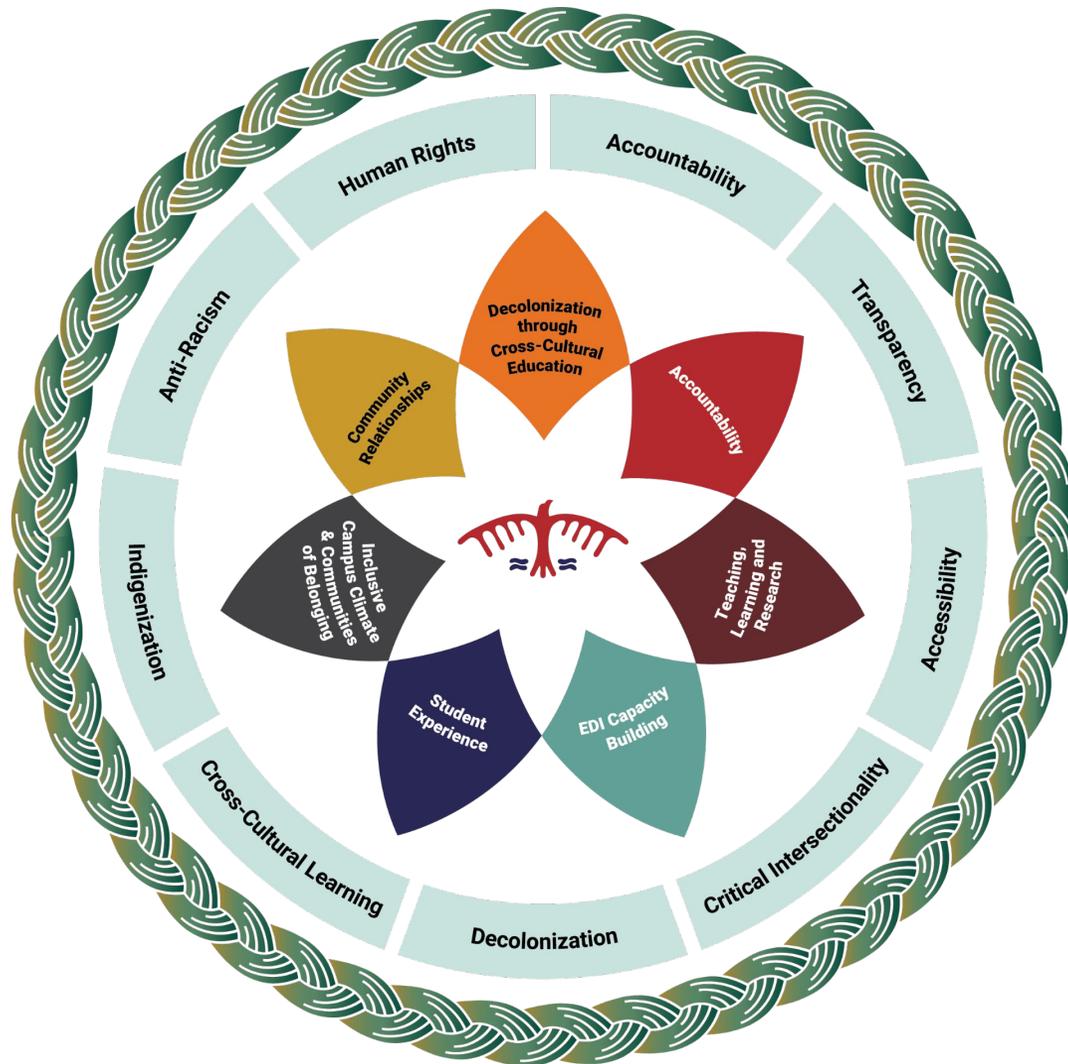
- An institution committed to **decolonization, Indigenization** and **EDI** underpinned by Indigenous traditions and values
- A special mission to **cross-cultural learning and teaching** and shared vision of creating understanding and respect for each other and for the planet
- Committed to growth in local and global research and innovation



EDI Strategy (2023-2028)

AU's Braided Path: A Framework Approach to Understanding EDI





- 1: Braiding Decolonization with the Special Mission
- 2: Accountability
- 3: Teaching, Learning, and Research
- 4: EDI Capacity Building
- 5: Student Experience
- 6: Inclusive Campus Climate and Communities of Belonging
- 7: Community Relationships

Our Approach

Create an Indigenous voiced framework of Indigenization, decolonization and cross-cultural learning

- within unique scope of the Special Mission
- respecting history of Shingwauk Residential School
- leading reconciliation across the post-secondary education landscape
- Creation of governance model to advance this work in a meaningful capacity



Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Lab

Anishinaabe led systems thinking and complexity science hub – the intersection of social innovation and Anishinaabe worldviews

Dr. Goodchild



Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Lab

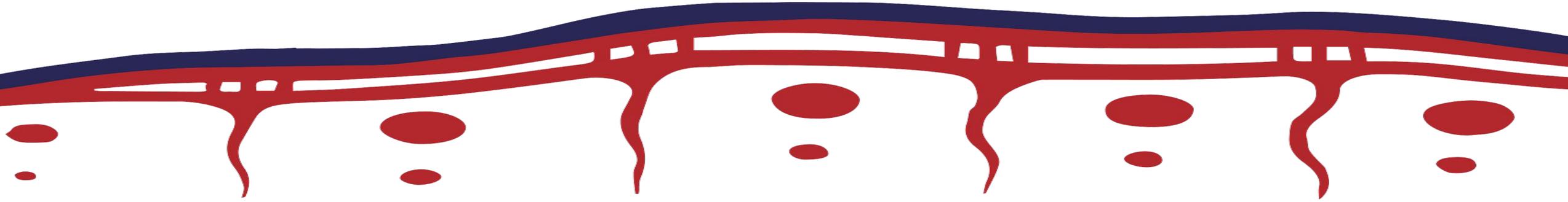
Hosted by Makwa Waakaa'igan & led by Dr. Melanie Goodchild and Joel Syrette

A platform that...

- embraces the systemic and complex nature of society, and
- showcases how Anishinaabe worldviews and value systems are leading the creation of generative social fields to tackle complex problems on a global scale.



Strategy Timeline 2024 - 2025



May 2024

IKS Launch
Indigenous
governance model,
increased internal
capacity over two
years

May - October 2024

Decolonial
institutional
research, policy and
quality framework
Engagement,
education and
learning
opportunities across
the university

August 2024

APC Local
Councils
established

November 2024

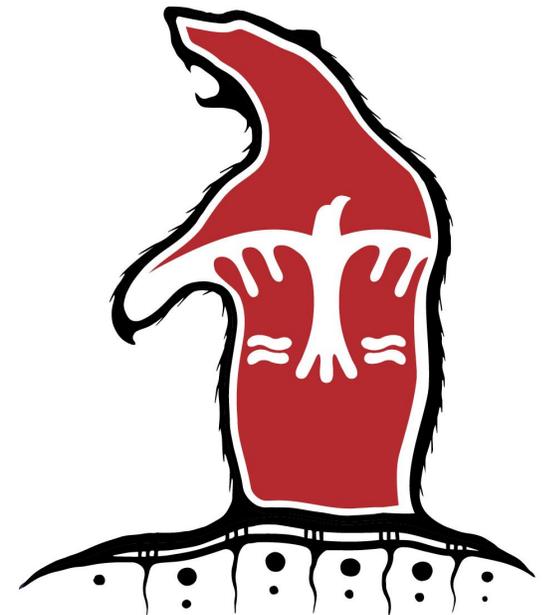
Decolonization
Strategy Launched

Beyond 2025

Indigenous
governance
model,
integration of
IEDI in quality
assurance
framework

National Centre of Excellence

- Makwa Waakaa'igan serves as a National Centre of Excellence in Indigenous leadership and cross-cultural learning
- Decolonization, Indigenization and EDI are lifelong commitments, accountability across the university, at individual, departmental and institutional levels





**Thank you ~
Chi-Miigwetch**

Algoma
UNIVERSITY

Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy

Closed Agenda: 25 Apr 2024

PURPOSE:

PREPARED BY:

Approval Discussion Information

Colin Wilson, Director Strategic Advancement

Craig Fowler, VP of Growth, Innovation and External Relations

1.0 ACTION

MOTION: That the Board of Governors approve the Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy as presented on the recommendation of the Risk and Finance Committee.

Considerations:

- The Board is asked to provide any feedback (as necessary) in consideration of the revised policy in meeting the needs of the University.
- The Board is asked to consider the reputational risks associated and confirm that the revised policy outlines appropriate mitigation strategies for such.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the Strategic Advancement and Alumni Affairs Department's objectives is to strengthen and engage the Algoma University internal community by fostering a culture of giving. In an upcoming pilot lottery initiative, the department aims to expand its network of donors and connections, while creating new giving opportunities. As the department prepares for future capital projects and campaigns, it recognizes the importance of building a culture of giving with its internal community.

As a requirement of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario [Lottery Licensing Policy Manual - Article 2.6.3](#), Algoma University must establish a dissolution policy detailing the implications of lottery-generated revenues and assets. In compliance with this mandate, the university has formulated the required policy being proposed for approval. We are noting that a separate dissolution framework and policy will be developed by the Office of the Secretariat for all non-lottery generated assets and revenue, as part of the ongoing bylaw review process. This additional policy will be presented to the Risk and Finance Committee by the University Secretary at a later date. While the overarching dissolution framework and policy, once developed and approved, will not replace the current policy, they will be managed in tandem.

3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

This item is aligned with the following Strategic Direction(s) from the [2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#):

#4: Continue to Build Inclusive and Inspiring Teaching, Learning, and Working Environments ▾

This policy is being recommended in alignment with the priority to invest and refine our systems and processes to support the growth of the University.

4.0 ANALYSIS

Staff and Faculty Engagement Lotteries are a proven strategy amongst other Universities and charitable organizations. In the past, Algoma University has not been able to take advantage of this fundraising strategy through lottery licenses. We are now in a position of growth and able to pursue this opportunity.

While alternative options for engaging the internal community have been considered, growth metrics remain flat.

To measure the effectiveness of holding an internal lottery, the following factors will be considered:

- Participation rate
- Number of tickets sold
- Net proceeds raised
- Engagement rate after participating in lottery (*through other events and future fundraising appeals*)

5.0 RISK IMPLICATIONS

To be issued a lottery license from the Cities of SSM, Brampton and Timmins, it is a requirement of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario [Lottery Licensing Policy Manual - Article 2.6.3](#) to have a Dissolution Policy.

The revised policy has been reviewed by members of the Senior Executive, Legal Counsel and Management. We do not foresee any major risk implications.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

7.0 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (OPTIONAL)

There is no required communications strategy.

8.0 ATTACHMENTS

Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy (DRAFT)

Dissolution & Lottery-Generated Assets & Revenue Policy

Category:	Board of Governors
Number:	TBD
Responsible Officer:	Vice President of Growth, International & External Relations
Responsible Office:	Board of Governors
Last Update:	New Policy coming in effect April 25, 2024
Approval date:	April 25, 2024
Review & Amendments:	To be reviewed by the VP of Growth, International and External Relations every two years in February. This policy may be amended also as circumstances or legislation warrant.
Disclaimer:	If there is a Discrepancy between a written copy held by an individual and the electronic version of the policy posted on Algoma University website, the electronic version prevails.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To further enhance the University's objectives, Algoma University may conduct fundraising initiatives throughout the fiscal year. Occasionally this may require a lottery license from the Cities of Sault Ste: Marie, Brampton and Timmins or the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.
- 1.2. The University is committed to ensuring transparency, accountability, and compliance with legal obligations in the management and disposition of lottery-generated revenues and assets during the dissolution process. This policy serves as a framework to guide decision-making and actions in alignment with the University's values and regulatory requirements.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. In the event of Algoma University's dissolution, this policy governs the proper handling,

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distribution, and allocation of revenue and assets acquired from licensed lottery events conducted by Algoma University, in compliance with the [Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario Lottery Licensing Policy Manual - Article 2.6.3](#) and [Ontario Not-for-Profit Act \(ONCA\) - Sections 150 and 167](#). It outlines procedures for identifying eligible charitable organizations in Ontario that can receive such assets from the University, should Algoma University dissolve and have the need to distribute in accordance with applicable laws its lottery-generated revenues and assets.

- 2.2. This policy applies to all lottery-generated revenue and assets only and excludes revenues and assets that were not lottery-generated. It also applies to all individuals, be they employees, Board of Governors or other University agents, who manage revenues and assets acquired from licensed lottery events conducted by the University and manage the articles and procedures for the dissolution of the University.

3. DEFINITIONS

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): the Canada Revenue Agency is the revenue service of the Canadian federal government and most provincial and territorial governments. The CRA collects taxes, administers tax law and policy, and delivers benefit programs and tax credits.

Fundraising: refers to a strategic and organized process of soliciting and collecting voluntary contributions, typically financial, from individuals, businesses, foundations, or other entities to support a specific cause, an organization, a project or an initiative.

Dissolution: the act or process of officially breaking up an organization or institution, or of formally ending a parliament.

Lottery Licensing: the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) is responsible for administering the charitable lottery licensing program in the province. Municipalities and the AGCO are responsible for issuing lottery licenses to eligible charitable and religious organizations. Eligible charitable and religious organizations may raise funds through provincially or municipally licensed lottery events (typically, these may include bingos, raffles, break-open tickets and special occasion gaming events). Each raffle (or similar lottery) requires a separate license which is acquired through an application process.

Lottery-generated revenue & assets: all revenue and assets generated from licensed lottery events

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conducted by Algoma University, including proceeds deposited into lottery trust accounts and assets purchased or acquired using lottery-generated funds.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. In the event of the University's dissolution, assets and property held or acquired from the proceeds of licensed lottery fundraisers or events, including specific lottery accounts or property/assets purchased with lottery proceeds, shall be distributed to charitable organizations eligible to receive lottery proceeds in Ontario. The distribution of proceeds and assets will be subject to the approval of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.
- 4.2. In the event of the University's dissolution, the Board of Governors by resolution will determine the following:
- 4.2.1. eligibility criteria for receiving organizations, which may include but are not limited to:
- alignment with Algoma University's mission and values;
 - organizations that demonstrate a track record of effectively using funds for benefiting communities
 - other educational institutions
 - organizations dedicated to serving the communities where Algoma University operates
 - organizations that are eligible to receive lottery proceeds in Ontario
- 4.2.2. process for how eligible charitable organizations to receive such assets will be identified;
- 4.2.3. who shall have the responsibility and authority to identify potential receiving organizations and who shall ensure approval from the Gaming Commission is received for those selected to receive such assets;
- 4.2.4. procedures for how revenue and asset allocation decisions will be made and by whom, including but not limited to whether all revenues or assets for distribution will go to one (1) organization only or will they be distributed based on the needs and priorities of eligible organizations;
- 4.2.5. the team responsible for managing the distribution process, including but not limited to who will notify eligible organizations, the application/proposal process

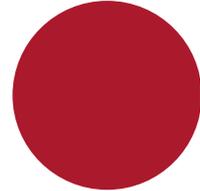
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to be followed for eligible organizations to be considered for the revenues/assets, and the timelines to be set for the process

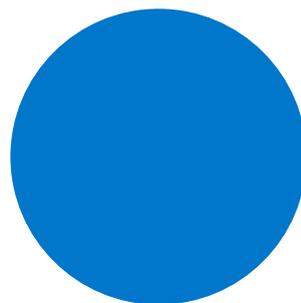
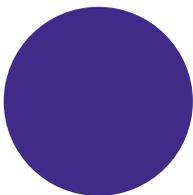
- 4.2.6. the team responsible for document keeping, reporting, communication and public relations required during the process
- 4.2.7. how lottery-generated revenue and assets will be inventoried as acquired so that such a list is available and can be used in the event of dissolution.

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COU Response to Regulatory Registry Proposal Bill 166 – Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024

March 2024



Introduction

With a shared goal to build a healthy and student-centred postsecondary education system, Ontario's universities welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' proposed legislation.

Universities are steadfast in their commitment to meet the ever-changing needs of students through wraparound supports, services and resources. They spend nearly \$1.6 billion annually on student services – a spending increase of 27 per cent over the past five years, with universities spending an average of 14 per cent of their operating fund on student services.

In fact, many of the policies, frameworks and cost transparency that Bill 166 seeks to develop are already in place at universities.

While Ontario's universities support the overall intent of the proposed legislation, the lack of provincial funding for these activities, during a time when universities continue to face mounting financial pressures – coupled with the fact that these activities will be administered through Ministerial directives when there are already existing legal and statutory requirements – ultimately undermines the objectives of Bill 166 and the institutional autonomy of universities. Furthermore, a new directive will only duplicate existing efforts, while increasing red tape, costs and administration.

The sector appreciates the proposal's acknowledgment that this legislative amendment might result in increased administrative costs for institutions. With more than a decade of declining provincial grants, increasing demands on universities, a 10 per cent cut to tuition and now an eight-year long tuition freeze, Ontario's universities are at a breaking point.

The one-time investments into the postsecondary sector announced by the Minister is a first step in providing much-needed financial support. However, the funding announcement fell far short of what the sector needs to be financially sustainable.

Even after factoring in the \$100 million in STEM funding for 2023-24 and the one-time funding of \$700 million over three years for both colleges and universities, at least eight universities are still forecasting operating deficits in 2023-24 for a combined deficit of \$152 million. This number increases the following year to at least 12 universities projecting operating deficits in 2024-25 for a combined total of \$293 million.

Ontario's universities remain committed to working with the province to ensure universities have the resources in place to continue to foster student success and well-being, and look forward to continued conversations with government on these directives, as well as on a longer-term financial sustainability package.

Recommendations:

- Provide long-term, sustainable funding to universities to ensure they can continue to provide critical resources and supports to students.

- Set the directives within the proposed legislation through the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC), rather than through Ministerial directives, recognizing the institutional autonomy of universities.

Please see the sector's response and recommendations for each of the three areas of the proposed legislation below.

Student Mental Health Policy

Ontario's universities are committed to the mental health and well-being of students and community members. To help ensure students receive timely, accessible, culturally relevant and flexible mental health care, universities provide health and wellness education, programs and initiatives; work in partnership with key stakeholders to strengthen a whole-of-community approach; and act as a primary health-care partner. Universities are also consistently updating their approaches to incorporate best practices and embed considerations of student mental health at all levels.

This commitment to student mental health and well-being, along with the resources universities provide, are publicly available and detailed on the sector's [Supporting Student and Community Resilience through Mental Health and Programming](#) page.

The broad range of mental health services offered by universities are designed to meet the diverse needs of students. They allow each student to access the care they need when they need it and maintain systemic capacity for higher level interventions where necessary. This is critical as many students primarily rely on the supports available at their universities due to challenges accessing community mental health services off campus.

In addition, universities have student mental health strategies, action plans and frameworks in place, which are publicly available on their individual websites. These are under a continuous process of review and evolve with the needs of students. Through regular engagement, universities work closely with their campus communities to enhance their mental health strategies and ensure they remain responsive to the real needs of students, staff and faculty.

Ontario's universities share the government's goal of ensuring Ontario's students have access to, and awareness of, the programs, policies, services and supports available at universities. However, as the number and complexity of mental health concerns continue to grow on postsecondary campuses, the \$23 million over the next three years for colleges and universities, of which only \$8 million is expected to flow directly to institutions, falls far short of meeting the exceeding needs of students.

Recommendations:

The sector recommends the government:

- Provide increased, multi-year direct base funding to universities for postsecondary student mental health.
- Allow flexibility in how institutions can use funds to ensure they are responding most effectively to the unique needs of their students, while helping universities keep pace with growing demand.

- Collaborate with the sector in the development and implementation of any new mental health strategy to ensure optimal outcomes for students, universities and communities.

Policies and Rules on Racism and Hate

Ontario's universities employ a variety of methods to help create safe learning, teaching and working environments for students, staff and faculty, as well as to address hate speech, harassment and discrimination. In fact, university policies and procedures are much broader than the areas covered under Bill 166 and are in compliance with existing legal and statutory obligations.

They include clear and comprehensive non-discrimination/harassment policies that explicitly outline the university's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment and prohibiting all forms of harassment and discrimination, as required by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, both of which already regulate workplace harassment and discrimination. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain responsive to the legislative landscape and the university community.

Furthermore, universities have strong processes in place to create safe, inclusive learning and working environments that are underpinned by the right to free speech and academic freedom where applicable.

Universities provide educational programming to help foster environments free of discrimination and harassment, such as workshops, seminars and online resources for students, faculty and staff, and raise awareness about discrimination, bias and harassment.

In addition, institutions are working to promote civil and constructive dialogue on their campuses. Conversations that promote understanding and respect among different cultural and identity groups are encouraged to help foster an open dialogue about equity, diversity and inclusion on campus.

By taking these and other steps, universities work towards creating an environment that upholds inclusive principles and fosters a sense of belonging for all members of the university community, while protecting academic freedom, where applicable, and free speech, within the limits of the law.

Recommendations:

To truly support the efforts underway at universities, the sector recommends the government:

- Helps fund the current initiatives and student services in place to address hate speech, harassment and discrimination.
- Avoids duplicative legal and statutory requirements being issued by Ministerial directives that undermine institutional autonomy.

Directives regarding Costs

Ontario's universities are driven to ensuring student success. With Ontario university graduates experiencing higher employment rates compared to other postsecondary institutions, as noted

in the province's Blue-Ribbon Panel report, the high return on investment is clear. In fact, the number of Ontario high school students applying to an Ontario university has increased by 11 per cent since 2020, which is a testament to the high quality of education provided to Ontario students.

As part of our commitment to these students, universities are empowering students to make informed decisions on career options and the costs of their education. For example, all universities provide detailed information on tuition, ancillary fees and other educational costs. This ongoing commitment to transparency upholds the sector's dedication to accountability, while maintaining trust with students and helping illustrate the importance of investing in their future.

Universities recognize that student expenses can vary across institutions and programs, which is why they already provide students with financial information on publicly available websites in a clear manner.

In addition to tuition and ancillary fee transparency, supports include resources to improve financial literacy and budget calculators to help students plan in advance for their postsecondary studies, including estimates for educational materials such as textbooks.

To further support student access to a university education, Ontario's universities also provide more than \$1.3 billion in non-repayment grants, scholarships and bursaries. This amount exceeded the entire Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) budget in 2022-23.

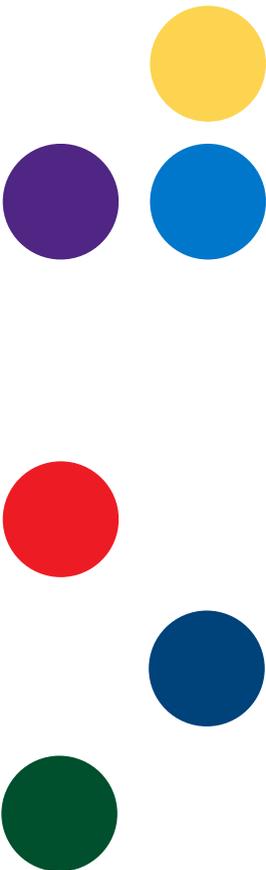
For even greater transparency and ease of reference, the sector has aggregated this public information for each institution. [Transparency of Tuition & Ancillary Fees for Ontario University Students & Applicants](#) provides a complete list of ancillary fee breakdowns, tuition fee schedules, fee estimators and budgeting tools at Ontario's universities.

Conclusion

Ultimately, while supporting the spirit and intent of Bill 166, Ontario's universities oppose unnecessary and duplicative legislative intervention without the associated funding.

As universities have student mental health and anti-hate policies, frameworks and action plans in place, as well as provide the requested financial transparency around tuition and ancillary fees, this new directive would duplicate existing efforts, add more red tape in the form of additional reporting and lead to additional costs and administration.

A longer-term financial sustainability package would help support universities in their mission to foster student success and well-being. An investment in universities is not just an investment in higher education. It is an investment in our collective future.



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