



BOARD OF DIRECTORS – MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date	January 28, 2026	Time	2:30pm
Meeting Title	Board Meeting	Type	Regular
Meeting Chair	G. Wu	Location	UCC 301
Recording Secretary	J. Higgins	Call to Order	2:42pm

Attendees		Regrets
Board	G. Wu, Board Chair B. Yu, Vice Chair & HR Committee Chair M. Haas, Governance Committee Chair S. Sunner, Finance Committee Chair K. George D. Khandelwal H. Yang S. Nar K. Henricus, USC President	
Management	J. Oware, Finance Manager G. Pimlatt, Senior Manager Student Support K. Pacheco, Senior Manager, People & Development J. Armour, Chief Operating Officer	
Guests	K. Hyles, Observer	

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

4. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION – S. Sunner motioned to adopt the agenda. K. George seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.

5. Comments from the Chair: G. Wu welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2026. She appreciated everyone making the effort to travel in for the meeting on a cold and snowy day.

6. USC Mission Moment: K. Henricus provided two mission moments. The first item she spoke to was beginning preparations for transition and working with the staff team to best prepare the incoming president for success. She also spoke to the Cofe Café opening, and how the operation has seen huge success over the opening weeks, which has been well beyond expectation.

7. Approval of Minutes:

7.1.	December 10, 2025
Motion to approve the minutes from the December 10th, 2025 meeting. B. Yu motioned to approve. S. Nar seconded the motion. The motion was approved.	

8. Reports for Information:

8.1.	Executive Report	K. Henricus
<p>K. Henricus summarized and provided highlights on the items included in the Executive Report.</p> <p>The strategic planning process has begun, led by her alongside J. Armour and senior managers, using census data and current student feedback to refine aims while keeping the organization’s values and focus areas intact. A draft will move through governance bodies next cycle. She stated that work is also underway on an Affordability and Accountability Framework to formalize the USC’s not-for-profit principles and provide long-term guidance alongside existing frameworks.</p> <p>She stated that budget planning continues, with fee bill approvals progressing and proposals aligned to student-identified investment areas.</p> <p>Student Support services are operating smoothly, including the return of the grocery shuttle and strong progress in new portfolios like professional development.</p> <p>Advocacy has been active, particularly around LTC’s 2026 service plan, informed by student outreach and ongoing work with city staff and councillors ahead of next year’s municipal election. Provincially, the USC is authoring OUSA’s AI Policy Paper update, while Council focus groups advance work on Teaching, Learning & Assessment and Accessibility.</p> <p>Engagement with university administration remains high, addressing academic priorities such as AI use, assignment processes, and absence policies. The USC also met with Western International College leadership to outline service provision as their partnership with Navitas expands. The USC is also partnering closely with Western and student groups to support strong student participation in the university’s first standalone Responsible Investment Policy consultation—a positive sign of growing administrative collaboration.</p> <p>Finally, hiring cycles are underway across the organization—including VPs, coordinators, volunteers, and OUSA delegates—with enhanced promotional outreach ahead of Western hosting the next GA in early March.</p> <p>In student engagement and collaboration, the USC recently held a well-attended Clubs Town Hall, fulfilling a key platform and executive roadmap commitment to create more accessible opportunities for students to share feedback without needing formal meetings. The Vice President Student Engagement, Student Services, and Clubs team jointly led this initiative. USC Day saw high turnout, with strong traffic through atrium and integration of ongoing campaigns, including LTC advocacy.</p>		

In student life, January has been highly active with the throwback Soft Pub event, ongoing interviews for next year's Orientation teams, the upcoming Pathways to Politics (PIP) event, and preparations for the return of Women in House, a program designed to introduce women and gender-diverse students to political leadership at Queen's Park. Planning is also underway for Valentine's programming, Purple Finale, and new end-of-year events aimed at offering students a memorable send-off.

D. Khandelwal requested clarification on what LTC surveys they were running during USC Day. K. Henricus stated that it's a survey called "Bring Back the 10" which advocates for a service which was rerouted off campus this year. D. Khandelwal continued to inquire who at the LTC makes those decisions. K. Henricus stated that it is the LTC full-time staff who decide.

K. George inquired for more information on the Pathways to Politics event. K. Henricus stated that the event offers students an opportunity to learn about careers in politics through discussions with politicians, staffers, and alumni working in government at various levels. This year's approach broadens beyond last year's women-focused Breaking Barriers event, pairing PIP with the upcoming Women in House program to ensure a wide range of engagement opportunities. Interest from political guests has been strong, with confirmed attendees including MP Amandeep Sodhi and several local representatives such as Peggy Sattler and Terence Kernaghan, along with invited guests from the Premier's Office and Minister Quinn's office. The event will also feature alumni working in provincial and federal politics and in government relations. The USC has seen increased student interest in political engagement and advocacy this year—particularly following the heightened activity around Bill 33—so expanding political programming responds directly to this demand. The team will collect CPD feedback afterward to help guide future initiatives.

8.2.	COO Report	J. Armour
<p>J. Armour summarized the COO Report. The main points he highlighted were the elections changes, hiring and transition and the postponement of the NLE Choppa concert.</p> <p>He stated that the Elections Governance Board (EGB) is operating far more efficiently this year, largely due to the addition of a dedicated lawyer, John McNair, who can provide immediate guidance and triage complaints. This has eliminated previous delays caused by legal uncertainty and has ensured that issues outside the EGB's scope are redirected appropriately. Early feedback indicates that the student members are performing exceptionally well, supported by strong training from J. McNair, who will present a full debrief and recommendations at the April board meeting.</p> <p>J. Armour took a moment to speak to the operations which continue to run smoothly thanks to strong management and effective training that keeps staff supported and workplaces safe.</p> <p>He stated that hiring and transition planning is a top priority and is progressing with lessons learned from past years.</p>		

H. Yang inquired on the status of the postponed NLE Choppa concert. J. Armour stated that the postponement was due to severe weather in Tennessee, where a state of emergency has disrupted travel, but the performer fully intends to reschedule.

G. Wu inquired on how the workload on the student EGBMs has been. K. Pacheco couldn't speak to the exact breakdown, as it has depending on their availability, but J. McNair has spoken very highly of them and their skill level.

9. Reports from Committees:

9.1.	Governance Committee	M. Haas
<p>M. Haas summarized the Governance Committee Report. He stated that the committee has been reviewing numerous club policies and asking detailed questions to ensure we fully understand how each process works before approving any changes. Staff have been extremely helpful in addressing all inquiries, and we're pleased with the progress so far. We anticipate having material ready for the board's consideration in the next cycle. We also examined an early draft of the identity management policy, which reflects previous board discussions and continues to evolve based on that input. While there is nothing to present formally today, the work underway is promising, and we look forward to bringing forward updates next month. There were no questions.</p>		

9.2.	HR Committee	B. Yu			
<p>B. Yu reviewed the HR Committee Report.</p> <p>He stated that the committee reviewed several policies with Andrea Klooster, who joined us from the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee and collaborated with the union representative in the review. The motion outlines which policies are presented for approval and which are provided for information. Board Development Day has been confirmed, and during the session, we will plan the winter retreat and draw on everyone's experience to improve it further.</p> <p>M. Haas inquired for clarification on new language in the harassment policies stating that investigations will proceed even without a formal complaint. B. Yu stated that this reflects updated provincial legislation requiring employers to act proactively, and the committee confirmed that the change aligns with those requirements.</p> <p>H. Yang inquired on where the changes in definitions came from. K. Pacheco stated if a policy hasn't been updated for a long time it may be updated to be consistent with other policies or due to legislation.</p>					
9.2.1.	Policy Review	B. Yu			
<p>BIRT the Board of Directors approve the updates made to the Continuous Improvement Policy, Discrimination, Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy, Discrimination, Harassment and Violence Prevention Procedure, Health and Safety Policy, Schedule of Posted Health and Safety Materials and Gap Analysis Procedure.</p>					
Moved	B. Yu	Second	M. Haas	Approved	Unanimous

9.3.	Gazette Publications Committee	H. Yang			
<p>H. Yang summarized the GPC Report. The Editor-in-Chief reported that coverage is currently focused on the elections and that collaboration with the EGB has been positive, with strong responsiveness on both sides. A minor question was raised about how final election results will be communicated internally, but it is not expected to be a significant issue. The Editor Support Manager noted continued strong readership and addressed a potential conflict involving a candidate who is a former student, expressing confidence that the Gazette will disclose any relevant conflicts and maintain objective reporting.</p> <p>The Gazette also received a \$15,000 USD donation from an anonymous donor, which will support internship expansion and staff development. Due to the donor’s U.S. status, the funds were routed through Western Foundation and then transferred to the USC Foundation—an arrangement that previously posed challenges but now appears workable and beneficial for future donor flexibility.</p> <p>An updated unpublishing policy was presented following revisions to align it with USC policy structure and clarify vague language. The board also considered a recent unpublishing request from an individual involved in multiple campus demonstrations; the request was denied as it did not meet criteria such as factual error, safety concerns, or a court order. Despite the requester having been a minor at the time, the Gazette determined that her participation in public events and clear awareness of media presence constituted valid consent.</p>					
9.3.1.	Gazette Unpublishing Policy	H. Yang			
BIRT the Board of Directors approve the Gazette Unpublishing Policy.					
Moved	G. Wu	Second	M. Haas	Approved	Unanimous

9.4.	Finance Committee	S. Sunner			
<p>S. Sunner reviewed the Finance Committee Report. The committee reviewed the F2026 second-quarter financial performance, noting \$4 million in student revenue from Western and \$487,000 in general revenue. Operating expenditures totaled \$5.2 million, supported by strong turnout at student events and a \$130,000 positive variance from the hospitality department. The investment balance grew to \$16.2 million after an additional \$5.3 million contribution, with year-to-date gains of \$608,000, and the cash position remains solid at \$6.9 million. The variance between F2025 and F2026 reflects the \$9.3 million moved into investment tranches. Looking ahead to Q3, the Cove has launched, the Rippling HRIS system will roll out next quarter, and tranches 4 and 5 of student fees are expected from Western. Future tranche updates will be provided quarterly and included in BOCO training for incoming directors.</p> <p>During discussion, staff explained that Western distributes student fees in multiple deposits throughout the year due to opt-outs, enrollment changes, and reconciliation processes, which previously created operational cash-flow challenges but now help inform the USC’s own tranche-based investment strategy.</p>					
9.4.1.	F2026 September and October Financial Statements	S. Sunner			

BIRT the Board of Directors accepts the F2026 November Financial Statements					
Moved	B. Yu	Second	K. George	Approved	Unanimous

9.5.	PurpleCare Trust	B. Yu
<p>B. Yu reviewed the PurpleCare Trust Report. The Trust reviewed staff benefits utilization and student dental, health, and virtual care claims, noting no concerns. The primary discussion focused on introducing a Student Assistance Program (SAP), modeled after an Employee Assistance Program, offering short-term counseling and support services. This option emerged in response to gaps in Western’s current system, including limited availability, in-person registration requirements, and insufficient crisis-response capacity. Trustees considered three paths: not pursuing an SAP, phasing in two consecutive 7% increases to the My Virtual Doctor fee to avoid a referendum, or sending the full increase to referendum. The Trust ultimately recommended a 7% increase this year, alongside the routine 2% dental and 7% health fee increases. The conversation acknowledged the political nature of choosing between referendum and phased increases, especially given the optional nature of My Virtual Doctor and the campus need for crisis-response support. Additional discussion covered referendum logistics, recent outcomes such as the failed CASA referendum, and the importance of student education and value communication. Trustees also clarified that a future board could still choose a referendum, and that early preparation would be essential if that path is taken.</p>		

Motion to accept the reports provided by the Executive, COO, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, HR Committee, PurpleCare Trust and Gazette Publishing Committee.					
Moved	S. Sunner	Second	H. Yang	Approved	Unanimous

10. Confidential Session

Motion to go in camera.			
Time	3:56pm	Return	4:28pm
Moved	K. George	Second	S. Sunner

11. Inquiries and Other Business:

12. Motion to adjourn at 4:29pm. M. Haas motioned to adjourn. B. Yu seconded the motion. The motion was approved.