



College Council Notes

Thursday September 19th, 2024
9:00am-12:00pm
ZOOM

Attendance

Present

Allan Thomson	Centre for Continuous Learning
Anna Bartosik	Centre for Preparatory and Liberal Studies
Ayush Dara	Director of Communications, SAGBC
Babak Dadvar	People Enablement and Experience
Bryan Mulveney	Centre for Construction and Engineering Technology
Chadd Pirali	General Counsel
Charlene Dunstan	Centre for Health Sciences; Centre for Community Services; Early Childhood and Education
Cindy Gouveia	Vice President, Global Partnerships & President of George Brown College International
Colin Fitzsimons	Provost's Office
David Wolfman	Presidential Appointee
Donald Many	People Enablement and Experience
Eileen De Courcy	Vice President, Academic
Erica Saunders	Finance
Gervan Fearon	President
Hauwa Dogonyaro	Centre for Business
Janene Christiansen	Registrar & Associate Vice President, Strategic & Enrolment
Jason Inniss	Past Chair
Jennifer Lamarre	Centre for Health Sciences; Centre for Community Services; Early Childhood and Education
Jim Edwards	Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts
Joana Pina Couto	Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts
Joanne Badida	Centre for Business
John Peco	Associate Deans
Katherine Friesen	Centre for Business
Katrina Lagace	Centre for Preparatory and Liberal Studies
Kizzy Rodney	External Relations, Communications and Real Estate Development
Kervin Ho	Finance
Laraine Hale	Student Success
Leslie Quinlan	Senior Vice President, People Enablement and Experience
Michael Herrera	Senior Vice President Institutional Planning & Chief Financial Officer
Michael Thomas	External Relations, Communications and Real Estate Development
Michelle McCollum	Vice President, Facilities and Sustainability
Mona Modaresi	Chief of Staff
Muhammad Usman	Director of Education and Equity, SAGBC
Patricia Ramos	Centre for Preparatory and Liberal Studies
Paul Armstrong	Associate Vice President, Strategy, Planning and Risk
Pietro Ferrari	Centre for Construction and Engineering Technology
Rosalyn Miller	General Manager, SAGBC
Steve Camacho	People Enablement and Experience
Sue Fleming	Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts
Sumi Shanmuganathan	External Relations, Communications and Real Estate Development
Susan Bowrah	Vice President, People & Culture
Susan Toews	Dean, Centre for Preparatory & Liberal Studies
Tara Montgomery-Ferguson	Chair
Terry McQuaid	Associate Vice President, Student Success
Thomas Dong	Centre for Arts, Design, and Information Technology
Toni Allen	Centre for Arts, Design, and Information Technology
Wojtek Kawczynski	Centre for Arts, Design, and Information Technology

Regrets

Tom Orman	Centre for Construction and Engineering Technology
-----------	--

Guests

Margrit Talpalaru
Munisha Basiram

Professor of English & Communication
Project Director, Government Relations

1.0 Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Tara Montgomery-Ferguson, Chair of College Council, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year. She also offered the land acknowledgement. Reflecting on this, she noted that as we approach Orange Shirt Day, and acknowledge this day of reflection, education, and remembrance, which is dedicated to acknowledging the experience of indigenous children who are taken from their families and placed in residential schools, we must honor the enduring connection to this land and recognize the ongoing impact of colonialism. We must commit to listening, learning and supporting the indigenous communities within our college community, and also our neighborhood areas, as we work towards a more just and equitable future.

2.0 Take 5 for Anti-Racism

Tara then led a reflection on the Take 5 for Anti-Racism. As September is the start of the academic year, a clean slate with real, earnest optimism present, she chose Point #4 – Identify as the focus of today's reflection. Focus on identifying gaps: where racism could exist, internal biases, views on ability, thinking about good intentions and how they do not guarantee an unbiased outcome, what outcomes result from certain policies and processes and whether those need to change.

Tara noted that, going forward, the Land Acknowledgement and Take 5 for Anti-Racism will be led by a volunteer from College Council's members.

3.0 New Chair & Members Introductions

Tara acknowledged the service of Past Chair Jason Inniss and thanked him for his efforts as Chair of College Council.

Jason thanked all members for this recognition and welcomed new members to Council, saying that this is a great opportunity to represent departments across the college, for members to have insight into new and developing policies, concepts, and ideas, and a place for members to not only share back Council discussions with their departments but also to bring concerns to Council for discussion and potential action.

Tara introduced herself as the Associate Dean of the Chef School, where she first started in 2019 as a part-time faculty member, and invited members to contact her with any concerns or additions to the monthly meeting agenda.

4.0 President's Remarks

Gervan Fearon, President of George Brown College, addressed Council. He highlighted the importance of Council's role in the overall operations of the College, noting that Council provides a unique forum to share and exchange knowledge and information back and forth

together. He views all members of Council as colleagues with a shared mission of contributing to the college, our students, and the communities we serve. He noted that he has had the opportunity to work with several Chairs of College Council and has been amazed by the work they do. The members of Council, too, represent a complete cross-section of the College – from every department and division, and from those who are new to GBC to those who have been at the College for decades. To those who are just joining Council, know that your voice truly does matter. You will find that every member here feels the same way.

The time set aside for the President's remarks each month is spent on updates from the President's office as well as an opportunity for Council members to ask questions.

The President noted that this academic new year feels particularly energized. An enrolment update is coming later, but as a preview our enrolment numbers are pretty good and are starting to fall in line with what was envisioned as part of Vision 2030. We are in the midst of updating this to Vision 2040, which includes a refresh of the GBC Values – something which reflects, and affects, the College's culture as a whole.

We're not necessarily through enrolment levels recovery, and as it relates to all of our programming, but we are on a good trajectory. Between COVID aftereffects and the changes to IRCC rules we are still grappling with some of the implications of the policy changes. There is a lot being done in terms of government policy adjustments related to economic changes and postsecondary rules. We are still focusing on excellence in postsecondary education, in meeting the goals of our learners and of meeting labour market need.

All of our programs meet labour market needs, but we have to be thoughtful about the decisions we make. The President will come to Council with some of these decisions to get feedback from representatives across the College.

Question from Laraine Hale: Does the College have an emphasis on Indigenous recruitment strategy embedded in its recruitment plans in the coming years?

Dr. Fearon: Part of Vision 2026 was the inclusion of equity as a foundational principle, expressed in tangible ways through the College's faculty and staff hiring strategy as well as student recruitment strategies. Many universities – not so many colleges – have done cluster hires, which the President would be open to and had actually suggested some years ago. This is something that can be actioned and that we will hopefully hear about more in the coming years.

Eileen De Courcy: Following on that response, the course for Vision 2040 is currently being mapped out. The recruitment strategy for Indigenous recruitment will include working with an Indigenous recruiter directly with Indigenous communities. We also deliver programming in collaboration with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, which is a very valuable relationship that we will continue to build on.

Pietro Ferrari: When can we expect a GBC plan of action for the move to Limberlost place so that we at the School of Architecture can start planning?

Dr. Fearon: Likely in January we will be at phase I of completion with phase II to follow. It's difficult for me to predict the move-in dates. I suggest that we invite the team to come to College Council and give an update on the status of this project.

5.0 New Member Introductions

New members provided brief introductions in a round table.

6.0 Academic Congress 2025 Update

Dr. Margrit Talpalaru: The planning team engaged the steering committee to develop the theme of Congress 2025, including a survey that went out to all employees at GBC on what pressing issues are top of mind for employees, key speakers that folks would like to see, and what the goals of this Congress should be. Responses to the survey included many responses that mentioned climate change, technology, social isolation, and global polarization. The theme will be launched officially on October 1st as it has just been finalized with the Federation, but a preview of the theme was shared with Council: Reframing Togetherness.

Munisha Basram: The GBC team has been assembled and a relationship has started to be built between the College and the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. October 1st there will be the first Operational Planning Meeting, where the GBC team will be meeting with the Federation senior leaders, providing campus tours at St. James and Waterfront campuses (the areas where Congress will largely take place) as well as The George residence, which will be used to house attendees. A networking lunch will be followed by a series of presentations and meetings involving key stakeholders, and the day will end with a reception hosted by Dr. Fearon. A common question is, how will Congress affect my teaching schedule? Further information and processes will be shared as they are developed.

GBC employees wishing to participate in Congress (including by signing up to be a Local Area Coordinator) can reach out to Margrit Talpalaru Margrit.Talpalaru@georgebrown.ca. LACs should participate in an area related to their field, though note that they are not required to be subject matter experts.

7.0 Enrolment Update

Janene Christiansen: Enrolment numbers as of day 10 of the new semester show that the college has met 99% of its updated enrolment budget, which was modified after the IRCC announced the expected changes to international enrolment. The Letter of Acceptance (LOA) Verification Portal was launched December 3rd 2023, followed by a change to the financial requirements for study permits on January 1st 2024, the announcement on January 22nd of a 35% reduction in study permits to be issued across Canada, the Letter of Enrolment (LOE) Verification Portal launch on January 31st, and completion of the study permit allocation and distribution process on March 27th. GBC then reworked its internal enrollment planning in light of the permits issued.

Student Success engaged with international students as part of their offer letters to ensure that housing supports were offered and accessible to those students requiring advisement and/or the provision of housing so that students were assured of their housing plan before committing to GBC. The college has not received a directive related to any reduction in the number of hours students may work on an off-campus work permit.

On September 18th, further reductions to the number of study permits were announced: a further 10% reduction from the 2024 target for the 2025 target, then stabilizing the intake cap for 2026. The Post-Graduate Work Permit rules will be changing as well.

When the initial reduction in study permits was announced, GBC mapped its programs to the ministry's codes for the labour market programs, knowing the directive was that the college's international student intake could exceed the cap if those students were enrolled in a labour market program. The ministry has indicated that an announcement will come in October or November that only international students enrolled in a labour market-mapped program will be issued a study permit. The ministry has also clarified that only spouses of Masters students will be eligible for work permits.

Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) conducted a survey of international students studying in Canada which yielded results that may be familiar to those who have been watching what is said in the media and by political actors regarding international students. Media portrayal of international students as problematic have had a direct impact on feelings of acceptance and wellbeing; there have been increased reports of discrimination and hate speech both on and off campuses; 19% of international students have considered leaving due to "feeling unwelcome in Canada;" there has been a 79% decline in students intending to stay in Ontario following graduation; and Canada's net promoter score ("would you recommend") is in sharp decline. The full results of this survey will be released later in September. CiCan also reports that 72% of Canadians who responded to a recent poll thought that immigration levels are too high, reflecting a 100% increase in the rate of this response within the past four months.

The impact of the cap has led to significant enrolment drops and financial consequences. International application rates have already fallen to about 50% because of the series of announcements made over the past nine months, and because of how Canada is now seen by prospective international students. International graduation will be tied to labour shortages via the Post-Graduate Work Permit policy changes. An update is still required on the number of hours students may work off-campus on a study permit.

Currently, applications to GBC are down for the Winter 2025 term compared to Winter 2024. Applications are being processed as quickly as possible so that international students can accept their offer and begin the study permit process as soon as possible. GBC is going to continue to focus on domestic recruitment, looking at the indigenous population and other populations at the school. An equity admissions policy is also currently being drafted. New program development will continue, as well as an academic program review, the development of a student retention plan, and the continued support of the International Student Hubs located at all GBC campuses.

8.0 Closing Remarks

Tara Montgomery-Ferguson: Thank you to everyone for your valuable contributions today. Looking forward to the coming term of Council, to continuing to share upcoming events and opportunities, to building relationships and trust across Council and across the college. Collaboration is our greatest strength, and together we can make a significant impact.