

The Board of Governors acknowledges and respects the Algonquin First Nation, on whose traditional territory the Carleton University campus is located.

Minutes of the 646th Meeting of the Board of Governors
Tuesday, April 29th, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.
Richcraft Hall Room 2440R

PRESENT:	B. Creary (Chair)	J. Devoe (Virtual)	D. Maseko (Virtual)
	C. Tessier (Vice-Chair)	P. Dion (Virtual)	S. Mingie
	W. Tettey	G. Farrell	G. Morris
	H. Babb	K. Furlong (Virtual)	J. Muthukumar (Virtual)
	Y. Bizuneh	D. Greenberg (Virtual)	L. Newton Miller (Virtual)
	L. Breen (Virtual)	J. Greenberg	J. Nelson
	J. Camelon	L. Grussani	B. O'Connor (Virtual)
	J. Carr	N. Laporte	J. Simpson
	A. Chan	M. Main (Virtual)	P. Wolff
REGRETS:	Y. Baltacioğlu	A. Hamdani	J. Taber
	M. Shea	A. Tremblay	
STAFF:	M. Bright (Virtual)	R. Goubran	D. McNair
	S. Blanchard	C. Khordoc	A. Mullin
	E. Chezick (Virtual)	P. Leland	P. Rankin
	T. Frost	A. Marcotte	K. Solomon
	C. Hobin	N. Macdonald	A. Urquhart (Virtual)
	A. Goth (R. Secretary)	J. Mihalik	

OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER AND CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm and welcomed governors and attendees to the fourth meeting of the 2024/25 Board year. She acknowledged the Algonquin First Nation territory on which Carleton University is located and provided a land acknowledgement. She welcomed Board members, management, and guests to the meeting and reviewed the meeting protocols for members and observers in person and virtually.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Chair asked for any declarations of conflict of interest from the members. None were declared.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was circulated in advance.

It was moved by A. Chan and seconded by S. Mingie that the open agenda of the 646th meeting of the Board of Governors be approved, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were circulated in the open consent agenda for approval: Open Session Minutes from the 645th Board Meeting, Board Award for Outstanding Community Achievement Recipient, Founders Award Recipient, Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures for the Retirement Fund, Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures for the Non-Endowed Funds, *Bill S-211 Fighting Against Forced Labour & Child Labour in Supply Chain Act*, Investment Committee Terms of Reference, Capital Planning Policy, Endowment & Non-Endowment Funds Responsible Investing Policy, Retirement Fund Responsible Investing Policy, 2025/2026 Miscellaneous Administrative Fees, and 2025/2026 Student Association Fees.

The following items were circulated in the open consent agenda for information: Coordinated Accessibility Strategy Annual Report, Update on University Financial Accountability Framework/Action Plan, Capital Renewal (Deferred Maintenance) Plan for 2025/2026 Kinàmagawin Strategy Progress Update, Department of University Communications Update, Advancement Strategy 2024/2025 Update, Government Relations Update, and minutes from Senate.

It was moved by H. Babb and seconded by J. Nelson that the items in the open consent agenda be approved, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

5. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

5.1 2025/26 Tuition Fees

An executive summary and presentation were circulated in advance.

S. Mingie, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee, advised that the domestic tuition fees were constrained under the Ontario Tuition Framework. Upon review, the Finance Committee was satisfied that the executive team had taken into consideration the financial position of the University and ensuring that they were balanced compared to other universities.

P. Rankin, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), advised that Carleton's flexibility on domestic fees was restricted by ongoing Provincial Government policy on domestic tuition for Ontario residents. The policy was implemented in 2019/20 and the University was informed that the framework would remain in place until 2027. The framework allowed for a 5% increase in out-of-Province domestic students. For 2025/26, Carleton

proposed a 5% increase for out-of-province domestic students and noted that tuition adjustments were available for select anomaly programs where tuition was 15% below similar programs. For 2025/26, the tuition anomalous programs would be raised by the maximum of 7.5%. There were no new increases proposed for international students as the Board approved a two-year framework for international tuition in 2023/24, which would continue for 2025/26.

Full cost recovery program tuition was proposed for programs to which the provincial tuition framework did not apply, noting that these programs were not Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) eligible and had higher tuition to offset the regular grant revenue. A list of the full cost recovery programs for 2025/26 was shared. The programs were all at the graduate level and increases were based on market comparisons and input from the Deans.

The meeting was interrupted by demonstrators and the meeting resumed after an approximately 10-minute delay.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, it was moved by S. Mingie and seconded by J. Camelon to approve domestic tuition for 2025/26, as per the 2025/26 Ontario Tuition Framework, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, it was moved by S. Mingie and seconded by J. Camelon to approve the proposed increases to the Full Cost Recovery program fees as presented for 2025/26, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

5.2 2025/26 Operating Budget

An executive summary, report, and presentation were circulated in advance.

S. Mingie introduced the item, advised that Carleton's 2025/26 operating budget reflected the considerable efforts of the executive team and wider University community to manage costs in a difficult financial climate. She acknowledged that the budget was not balanced but emphasized that it aligned with current expectations. She also noted that a long-term strategy, consistent with the University's mission, would be developed moving forward.

P. Rankin provided a presentation on the 2025/26 operating budget in the context of financial uncertainty. The projected actuals for the 2024/25 operating budget were shared with a net operating deficit of \$54 million, driven primarily by lower tuition and higher salaries and benefits. Investment income was expected to be \$20 million to \$30 million higher than the budget, reducing the deficit. The major drivers of the 2024/25 deficit included a higher than projected decline in international student enrolment, the retroactive salary increases related to the repeal of Bill 124, salaries and benefits, and the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program (VRIP) payout.

The 2025/26 revenue assumptions were shared, anticipating a decrease of 50% in international undergraduate and 10% international graduate student enrolment resulting in \$3.4 million of lost revenue. Domestic tuition fees were expected to remain flat with undergraduate enrolments stable and a slight increase in graduate enrolments. New programs and program renewal were expected to have a material impact on enrolment projections. There was a need for the investment equalization fund to manage market volatility and reserves may be required to address the cash needed to absorb budget deficits until stability is reached. There had been a limited response from the Provincial government regarding funding. Overall, expenditures were planned to decrease in 2025/26 due to the net effect of the spending reduction campaign launched in 2024/25 against obligatory cost increases and investment decisions. Salaries and benefits continued to be the largest expense and staffing levels would be examined; however, it was noted that collective agreements limit flexibility. Plans to review capital and IT needs would be reviewed with short-term adjustments and the undergraduate scholarship grid would also be reviewed, with reductions anticipated in 2026/27.

Details of the proposed 2025/26 operating budget were shared with a \$32 million structural base budget deficit and a \$23 million operating base budget deficit on the fiscal side. The base operating deficit was projected to remain flat from 2024/25 to 2025/26, despite the efforts made to cut \$24 million from the base budget for the coming year. The major drivers of the 2025/26 included the continued impacts of international student intake decline, the ongoing increases to staffing costs, increased government operating grant, and the University's spending reduction campaign. A position review committee was being created and would effectively freeze hiring at the University except for mission-critical roles. The interventions to the operating budget were shared including the previously noted VRIP, vacant position claw back, adjusted class sizes and offerings, general and administrative cuts and cost recovery from non-operating sources for a total base budget reduction of \$30.3 million. With allocations to programs and position requests, a net base budget reduction of \$24.2 million was expected.

D. McNair, Vice-President (Finance and Administration) provided an update on the status of the reserves, as at April 2024 (\$404 million), April 2025 (\$326 million), and projected for April 2026 (\$294 million), split out by available, potentially available, and committed reserves. He noted the drawdown on the reserve towards the operating budget in 2024.

P. Rankin reviewed the key risks presented by the current financial projections to operational, human capital, strategic risks for innovation, reputation, and potential increased government oversight and influence over the University's operations. Carleton was working to mitigate those risks with enhanced communication with the community. Without intervention, the base budget deficit could increase to over \$90 million by 2029/30. There were several unknowns for the institution as management prepared the long-term financial forecast, including uncertainty around international recruitment trends, a lack of clarity regarding the government's operating grants, and whether

changes to domestic tuition would be permitted after the current Tuition Fee Framework expired at the end of 2026/27 fiscal year.

A taskforce had been convened to plan and implement projects within the Financial Accountability Framework including developing recommendations for service level and spending reductions and completing the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES) Efficiency and Accountability Review. The position review committee continued to implement a hiring freeze, except for mission-critical roles. A cross-functional international enrolment strategy working group was established with the mandate of regaining international student market share. The guiding principles for decision-making were shared.

MCURES mandated an Efficiency and Accountability Review of Carleton's operations and the third-party for the review had been selected for the following areas: governance, administrative and student services, academic programming, physical assets and facilities, collaborative procurement opportunities, and revenue-generating opportunities. The timeline for review deliverables to the Ministry and the Board from April 2025 to December 2025 was shared.

A member asked if there would be an obligation by the University to implement all the recommendations from the Efficiency and Accountability Review. P. Rankin responded that Carleton would need to implement the plan, and they were looking for a consulting firm with deep experience with the higher education sector.

The member also asked if there was an increase in international students from the United States. S. Blanchard advised that there had not been an uptick in applications from the United States but added that there may be more next year, given the timeline for applications and acceptances.

A member commented that the Chairs of Finance and Audit and Risk Committee provided management with support in the process of selecting the consulting firm and they found the briefing helpful.

A member noted that there were a number of universities that were in the middle of the review and asked if they were able to communicate about that process. P. Rankin responded that there were 12 universities that had already gone through the process and Carleton was one of five for 2025. Carleton was in weekly communication with those other institutions.

A member commented on the statements that Carleton would need to "do less with less" and that being true across the sector and asked what the new normal would be. P. Rankin responded that a culture shift would be needed for both academics and administration. The member followed up asking if there was a target number of students over the medium term. P. Rankin responded that it is not just about the number of students but also ensuring that there is the structure to support those students' learning experience.

On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, it was moved by S. Mingie and seconded by H. Babb to approve the 2025/26 Operating Budget, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6.1 Report from the Chair

The Chair noted that May is Asian Heritage Month, and a time to reflect on and celebrate the diverse contributions of Asian-Canadians to the Carleton Community and Canada more broadly.

She reminded Board members of the upcoming spring convocation ceremonies to be held from June 16 to 20, 2025 and invited members to attend to celebrate the achievements of Carleton's students. W. Tetley would be installed as the 17th President and Vice-Chancellor at the 9:00 am ceremony on June 16th. Other upcoming campus events included the third Carleton Challenge Conference on May 13, 2025, which would focus on Artificial Intelligence, and the Council of Ontario University Chairs would be hosting a virtual workshop on June 19, 2025.

6.2 Report from the President

A written report was circulated in advance.

W. Tetley, President and Vice-Chancellor, began his report by providing some event highlights since the March 2025 meeting of the Board, including the 6th Annual Kinàmàgawin Symposium and the April 28, 2025 Townhall with the President and a focus on the budget.

He spoke to Carleton's commitment to sustainability, which remained a key focus for the University, with a recent \$1.6 million funding announcement to replace a natural gas steam boiler with an electric boiler. This upgrade was expected to reduce emissions by over 2,900 tonnes by 2030. Additionally, the opening of the Abilities Living Lab marked a milestone in accessibility research, providing an interdisciplinary environment for co-creation and experimentation aimed at fostering an inclusive Canada.

W. Tetley highlighted a number of recent appointments including that H. Nemiroff appointed Dean of the Sprott School of Business effective July 1, 2025 and that J. Clements would be starting as the new Associate Vice-President (Facilities Management and Planning) (AVP FMP) on June 2, 2025. He thanked P. Leland for taking on the role of interim AVP FMP during the search.

Carleton's faculty, staff, and students continued to excel, and he highlighted community achievements such as the Future Learning Innovation Fellowship, Optica's Robert E. Hopkins Leadership Award, and the SPIE Maria Goeppert Mayer Award in Photonics. The University also welcomed four new Canada Research Chairs, focusing on areas such as multigenerational trauma, accessibility, and net-zero energy systems. He reiterated Carleton's commitment to accessibility with the refreshed Student Support Certificate and the new Guide to Understanding and Dismantling Ableism. The Therapy Dog Program had expanded, providing vital mental health support to students through over 300 campus visits.

Carleton had raised over \$35 million through philanthropic gifts, sponsorships, and research partnerships. With the Campus Community Campaign concluded, W. Tettey thanked the Carleton community for its support. Since the last campaign, 490 gifts were made through FutureFunder.ca with 175 of those providing ongoing support through monthly donations. The Ravens women's basketball team had an outstanding season, finishing with an undefeated record and winning the U SPORTS silver medal. Other sports teams and individual athletes also achieved significant successes, contributing to Carleton's vibrant student life.

Enrolment and recruitment efforts had seen positive results, with a slight increase in total applications and successful events like open-houses and high school visits. These initiatives helped prospective students, and their families, connect with the Carleton community and explore the University's offerings.

6.3 Committee Chair Updates

6.3.1 Advancement and University Relations Committee

K. Furlong, Chair of the Advancement and University Relations Committee, advised that the Committee met on April 22, 2025. The Committee recommended the nominations of Artur Estrela da Silva for the Board Award for Outstanding Community Achievement and Edward Bruggink for the Founders Award, which were included in the Open Consent materials. She spoke to the strong pool of candidates for both awards. Both recipients would be honoured at Convocation. She thanked the juries for their work in the selection process.

The Committee received a number of items for information including updates on the Kinàmàgawin Progress Report, Department of University Communications, Department of University Advancement, and Government Relations.

The Board Chair thanked K. Furlong for serving as Advancement and University Relations Chair as she would be retiring from the Board at the end of the board year.

6.3.2 Building Program Committee

H. Babb, Vice-Chair of the Building Program Committee, advised that the Committee met on April 14, 2025. The Committee reviewed the 2025/26 Capital Renewal Plan, emphasizing the need to update aging infrastructure to reduce risks and costs from unexpected failures, ensuring support for future needs, and academic programs, speaking to the importance of addressing deferred maintenance. Ongoing Projects, Capital Projects, and Deferred Maintenance projects totaled over \$255 million currently underway, with forecasted expenditures of \$107 million. Notable project updates included the decarbonization incentive and electric boiler replacement, the generator replacements of the Central Heating Plan, grading of the P9 Parking Garage post-demolition, and mechanical projects. A brief update was provided on the new student residence move-in dates, which was expected to open in August 2025 and the Loeb Building remediation project.

The Capital Planning Policy was reviewed and approved by the Committee, with a focus on the Board's oversight role in the process for projects over \$5 million.

6.3.3 Finance Committee

S. Mingie, Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee, advised that the Committee met on April 14, 2025 with 10 items for approval and two items for information. Approved items included the 2025/26 Tuition Fees (domestic, and out-of-province domestic), Miscellaneous Administrative Fees, and, Student Association Fees.

The majority of the meeting was dedicated to the 2025/26 Operating Budget and the Financial Accountability Framework update, presented in detail earlier at the meeting. The 2023/24 Financial Accountability Framework Report was received and Carleton remained in the "Medium" action category, with performance issues attributing to the University's financial position. A third-party advisor would be hired to assist in a review and developing an action plan and next steps were outlined.

Other items for approval included Private Equity Investments for the Retirement Plan, the Investment Committee terms of reference, and the Responsible Investing policies.

7. **OPEN-OTHER BUSINESS**

There was one item raised under other business.

J. Greenberg advised that the 2025 Bell Lecture with the Hon. L. Raitt, hosted by the Faculty of Public and Global Affairs, would be taking place on May 6, 2025 at the Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre and he invited members to attend.

8. OPEN-QUESTION PERIOD

No additional questions were brought forward.

9. END OF OPEN SESSION AND BRIEF NETWORKING BREAK

There being no further business, the Open Session of the Board of Governors was adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.