CURA Welcome Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 9, 2026, 11:30am -1:00pm

1. Welcome Remarks

Shibu welcomed all members and introduced David Hornsby.

2. **Provost's Update –** David Hornsby was represented Pauline Rankin

Financial Sustainability

- Carleton began the year with a deficit of approximately $32M in a combined operating and ancillary deficit. This deficit reflects several pressures over time including domestic tuition revenue, changes to international enrolment, inflation and rising operating costs.
- Recent provincial funding changes and increased flexibility around domestic tuition provide some improvement, but do not eliminate the underlying challenge.
- We need to go beyond simply managing costs by being disciplined about spending and workforce planning, while also rebuilding the revenue-generating capacity through enrollment, new programming, partnerships, advancement and other forms of diversification.
- The goal should be a sustainable operating model over the next several years, rather than closing a one-year deficit.

Enrolment and Internalization

- Enrolment is central to recovery and there are encouraging signs. Domestic undergraduate demand has strengthened, with increases in both applications and confirmed first-year students. In comparison to previous years, there has been an 8.3% increase in applications for the 1st year and a 15.8% increase in confirmed new 1st year students.
- International enrolment remains a challenge. The changes to federal immigration and study-permit policies have fundamentally changed the environment, and we can't assume that this will return to previous levels.
- Our approach needs to be more diversified and deliberate. While we have strengthened recruitment and introduced greater tuition predictability (including freezing international graduate tuition for 2026-27 and 2027-28), we need to continue diversifying both markets where we recruit and how international students can access a Carleton education.
- Our international strategy can no longer be based predominantly on bringing international students to Ottawa. We require international partnerships, mobility, pathway arrangements, joint programming and carefully selected transnational education opportunities that can complement traditional recruitment.

Research Strength

- Carleton currently reports approximately $155.4 M in sponsored research funding. This represents an 186% increase since 2017, with more than 1,000 research projects underway.
- Our advancement and research partnership revenue is $39M. This summer, Carleton researchers secured $7.5M through three SSHRC Partnership Grants.
- These numbers demonstrate increasing research capacity and reputation in areas with significant societal relevance such as cybersecurity, democratic governance, international trade, sustainability, connectivity, health and emerging technologies.

Academic Portfolio

- While our academic mission remains strong, our academic portfolio must continue to evolve in response to changing student needs and expectations, labor market changes, societal priorities and the broader higher education environment that is changing rapidly.
- Artificial intelligence is changing teaching, learning and work. Governments and families are asking increasingly direct questions about the value and outcomes of a university education.
- Our academic portfolio must not remain static. Senate has approved new programs including the Bachelor of Entrepreneurship and Systems Security Engineering, and this fall we are launching the Masters in Mineral Exploration and Resource Management while other programs have been closed or restructured.
- Going forward, we need a more systematic approach to portfolio renewal:
  i. Identifying areas of strong demand and distinctive Carleton capability;
  ii. Investing selectively in programs with potential for growth;
  iii. Strengthening experiential and work-integrated learning
  iv. Being prepared to redesign, consolidate or discontinue offerings where demand and academic rationale no longer support the existing model.
- This is not about replacing academic values with market considerations. It is about ensuring that our academic mission remains relevant, distinctive and financially sustainable.

How we Operate

- We are entering a period of significant organizational change. The transition toward a fuller Provostial model, along with strengthened capacity in areas such as planning, analysis, decision support and advancement, provides an opportunity to think differently about how the university operates.
- The important question is not simply where functions sit on an organizational chart, but how effectively the institution works across traditional boundaries.

- Enrolment, academic planning, student success, internationalization, research, advancement and financial sustainability are increasingly interconnected. Thus, we need to use this time to improve coordination, clarify accountability, make better use of institutional data, simplify processes and reduce duplication.

Towards Carleton@100

- The themes of teaching and learning, student experience, research and scholarly impact, community engagement, international partnerships and institutional health and sustainability reflect many of the choices before us.
- Ultimately, the strategy needs to answer a more fundamental question: *What should be distinctive about Carleton as we enter our second century?* We need to identify where Carleton can differentiate itself – through our academic programs, research, student experience, relationship with Ottawa and Canada, and international connections. We then need to align our resources behind those choices.

Priorities for 2026-27

- Strengthening enrolment and student success, particularly by building on domestic demand and diversifying our international enrolment.
- Ensuring financial sustainability through both responsible cost management and new opportunities for revenue growth.
- Renewing our academic portfolio so that Carleton continues to respond to changing student, societal and workforce needs while building on areas of strength.
- Improving how the university operates, with greater coordination, accountability and effective use of resources.
- Building on Carleton's strengths and reputation nationally and internationally – particularly our research, our evolving academic portfolio, our position in the national capital region, our alumni and our partnerships.

Summary

- The year ahead will require difficult choices, but we should be careful not to define Carleton by the challenges of the moment.
- Carleton has a strong academic foundation. We have growing research impact and are seeing encouraging signs in enrolment.
- Our task is to bring these pieces together and continue building a stronger and more resilient Carleton.

3. President's Report – Shibu Pal

- **Executive Committee**

President – Shibu Pal	Vice-President - Andrew Brook
Past President – Peter Watson	Treasurer – Irwin Reichstein

Secretary – Susan Jameson Members at Large – Bruce Winer (CURAC Rep), Michael McNeil (replacing Ela Kesik), Susan Nesrallah – Webmaster, and Wendy Wynne Jones. Shibu thanked Ela for her participation on the executive committee.

- **Activities**

Shibu asked for members to provide ideas on what types of activities they would like to participate in. This past year there was a trip to Upper Canada Village, 2 Dinner with Speaker events, the Pension Plan update, trip to the Vanier Sugar Shack and the Annual General Meeting last spring. Upcoming events will include a historic walking tour in downtown Ottawa, and a Dinner with Speaker with Linda Duxbury.

4. CURAC and Affinity Partners Update – Bruce Winer

Bruce noted that the link to the CURAC website is available on the CURA website. The annual conference this year was held in Vancouver hosted by the Simon Fraser University Retirees Association. The 2027 conference will be held in Hamilton, hosted by McMaster University Retirees Association. Bruce also spoke about CURAC's Affinity Partners who offer discounts in several areas. They include: Hearing Life, Specsavers, Belair Insurance, Collette and Trip Merchant (travel). You can see the full list and details at: Member Benefits — CURAC.

5. Treasurer's Report – Irwin Reichstein

Irwin reported as of yesterday that the bank balance is $11,815. Approximately $8,000 is from proceeds when Carleton hosted the CURAC Conference in 2017. $1,000 was donated to the newly established CURA Scholarship.

6. Life-Long Learning – Peter Watson

Peter reported that 18 months ago, Carleton cancelled, without any notice, the Life-Long Learning Program. A Committee was established and after discussions with senior management, a new program has been established. The launch is September 10 at the Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre who will be managing the program going forward.

7. CURA Scholarship – Mike Brklacich

Mike noted that this scholarship was launched last year and thanks to 36 members whose donations reached the goal of $25,000. The funds will be invested, and the first award should be in September 2027.

Thank you everyone for attending!