



## OISE COUNCIL

MINUTES of the OISE COUNCIL meeting held on **October 29, 2025**, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 12-199

**Present:** Prof. Erica N. Walker (Dean), Prof. Carly Manion (Chair), Sarah Allen, Prof. Anne-Claude Bedard, Mike Berg, Mackenzie Blanchett, Gela Bolandpour, Prof. Elizabeth Buckner, Prof. Becky Chen (Assoc. Dean, Research, Partnership, and Innovation), Prof. Jody Chong, Prof. Yiola Cleovoulou, Prof. Todd Cunningham, Haley Dinel, Prof. Sameena Eidoo, Prof. Laurie Faith, Prof. Beyhan Farhadi, Prof. Joseph Flessa (Assoc. Dean, Programs), Prof. Julie Garlen, Tatjana Grabeljsek, Dr. Sheldon Grabke (Registrar & Sr. Director Stu. Services), Dr. Marie Green, Prof. Abby Goldstein (Chair, Applied Psychology and Human Development), Prof. Chloe Hamza, Helen Huang (Chief Administrative Officer), Doreen Kajumba, Prof. Grace Karram, Dr. Jacqueline Karsmeyer (President, OISE Alumni Assoc.), Prof. Arlo Kempf (Chair, Research Committee), Irene Kibor, Prof. Lore/tta LeMaster, Prof. Michelle Lui, Meagan Muscat, Chaeeun Park, Alireza Parsai, Prof. Angela Pyle, Prof. Dirk J Rodricks, Dr. Jennifer Sparks, Prof. Creso Sá (Vice-Dean), Latifa Soliman, Ahmet Su, (President, OISE Graduate Students Assoc.), Madeleine Taylor, Viel Tolentino, Prof. Angela Vemic, AV Verhaeghe, Prof. Marcelo Vieta (Chair, Leadership, Higher and Adult Education), Li Wan, Jenaya Webb, (Director of OISE Library), Esther Yu, Michaela Young, Dr. You Zhang, Peilun Zhang

**Guests:** Rushain Abbasi, Alexander Alkhaddam, Tessa Barclay, Ai-Ri Brown, Lara Cartmale, Chloe Jones-Westgarth, Sim Kapoor, Azeem Khan, Josie Lalonde, Denise Makovac, Prof. Doug McDougall, Máiri McKenna Edwards, Prof. Kiran Mirchandani, Leah Scherk, Dr. Jesse Sims, Madelaine Panoulias, Jenifer Tucker

**Secretariat:** Biljana Cuckovic (Secretary of OISE Council), Madison Seymour, Doug Ullrich

**Regrets:** Malak Almuzaini, Melissa Arasin, Prof. Abigail Bakan, Prof. Joshua Barker, (Dean, School of Graduate Studies), Prof. Megan Boler, Prof. Lydia Cao, Prof. Alexandre Cavalcante, Prof. Charles Chen, Prof. Katherine Entigar (Chair, Equity Committee), Omar Elfarseisy, Jasmine El-Hacha, Prof. Rubén Gatzambide-Fernández (Chair, Social Justice Education), Prof. Jen Gilbert (Chair, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning), Prof. Tara Goldstein, Dr. Pushpa Hamal, Prof. Linda Iwenofu (Vice-Chair), Prof. Jennifer Jenkins (Director, Dr. Eric Jackman ICS), Prof. Feng Ji, Perry King, Prof. Rishi Krishnamoorthy, Prof. Amal Madibbo, Indira Quintasi Orosco, Fatema Rashed, Dr. Elisabeth Rees-Johnstone (Exec. Director, Continuing & Professional Learning), Prof. Vidya Shah (Chair, Academic Programs Committee), Prof. Tracy Solomon, Prof. Njoki Wane, Prof. Melanie A. Woodin (President), Prof. Trevor Young (Vice President and Provost), Prof. Terezia Zorić

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### *Acknowledgement of Traditional Land*

Dean Walker welcomed members and guests to the Council's first meeting of the year and read the land acknowledgement.

#### **1. Review of Agenda**

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed and accepted.

#### **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the April 30, 2025, meeting of OISE Council were approved.

### **3. Executive Committee – Call for Nominations from the Floor**

Dean Walker noted that, each year, new members of the Executive Committee are elected by and from among Council members at the first meeting. She then called for nominations from the floor for the position of Chair of Council. On a motion duly made, seconded and carried:

- Professor Carly Manion was elected as Chair of Council.

Dean Walker congratulated and thanked Professor Manion for taking on the role of Chair and invited her to chair the remainder of the meeting. Professor Manion thanked members of Council for the vote of confidence and stated that she is looking forward to serving the community in this capacity. She then proceeded to call for nominations from the floor to fill the remaining positions on the Executive. On motions duly made, seconded and carried:

- Professor Linda Iwenofu was elected as Vice-Chair of Council
- Professor Elizabeth Buckner was elected as the representative of teaching staff
- Dr. Marie Green was elected as the representative of other academic appointees
- Viel Tolentino was elected as the representative of administrative staff
- Ahmet Su was elected as the representative of graduate students

### **4. Dean's Report**

Dean Walker welcomed new and returning students as well as new faculty and staff who joined OISE since the beginning of 2025-2026 and began her report by expressing concern and sympathy with people of Jamaica and other countries in the Caribbean facing unprecedented threat from the category five hurricane Melissa. She then highlighted the OISE community's compassion and enthusiasm, which was evident at the fall convocation ceremony that took place on October 28, 2025 – a day before the Council meeting, when 284 graduates graduated. The Dean acknowledged Professor Becky Chen who commenced her term as Associate Dean, Research, Partnership, and Innovation (RPI), effective July 1, 2025. She also acknowledged new student leaders, Ahmet Su, President of the Graduate Students Association (GSA), and members of the GSA Executive team Carolyn Oei, Matida Daffeh, Yuou Shen, and Melin Ma.

An update on the Academic Plan's implementation was provided. The Dean reminded members that the Plan was approved by OISE Council at its previous meeting on April 30 and moved through the University of Toronto governance in May, 2025. Since the approval of the plan, OISE's academic leadership has had extensive conversations regarding implementing the Plan's goals and priorities including connecting its three core themes to ideas for advancement, faculty development, and growth of OISE programs and research. The Plan will be implemented through a series of OISE-wide initiatives such as the session for faculty on principles, strategies, and resources that support positive supervisory relationships hosted by the Associate Dean, Programs, Professor Flessa, on September 15, 2025. To implement the Plan's immediate priorities, two strategy groups will be established, one on AI for Education chaired by Professor Becky Chen, Associate Dean, RPI; and the second one on OISE's professional programs – Master of Education, chaired by Professor Joseph Flessa, Associate Dean, Programs. The Dean will keep the community informed about these and other academic plan implementation initiatives.

Turning to awards and honours, the Dean acknowledged faculty who received promotion and/or tenure effective July 1, 2025. Faculty who achieved tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor include Professors: Claudia Diaz-Rios of the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education (LHAE); and Kaja Jasinska and Mark Wade of the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development (APHD). Professor Carly Manion of the Department of LHAE was promoted to the rank of

Associate Professor. Faculty who achieved promotion to the rank of Professor include Amal Madibbo of the Department of Social Justice Education (SJE); Rob Simon of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (CTL); and Stephanie Waterman of the Department of LHAE. Faculty who achieved promotion to the rank of Professor, Teaching Stream, include Leslie Stewart Rose of the Department of CTL; and Jennifer Sumner of the Department of LHAE. The Dean then highlighted three OISE faculty recent award winners including Professor Cassie Brownell of the Department of CTL who received the 2025 National Council of Teachers of English Media Literacy Award; Professor Sameena Eidoo of the Department of CTL who was awarded one of the 2025 Women who Inspire Award by the Canadian Council of Muslim Women; and Professor Amal Madibbo of the Department of SJE who received the 2025 Outstanding Contribution Award by the Canadian Sociological Association.

Turning to faculty searches, the Dean noted that, in 2025-2026, OISE will launch three searches for new tenure stream faculty members including: (1) Associate Professor in Clinical and Counselling Psychology in the Department of APHD; (2) Associate Professor in Critical Adult Education and Community Development in the Department of LHAE; and (3) Assistant Professor in Indigenous Studies and Social Justice Education in the Department of SJE. These opportunities will be advertised on the “Working at OISE” website, and the U of T careers page. The Dean acknowledged all those supporting the searches, whether as a search committee member, support staff, or helping to spread the word.

Turning to advancement, the Dean reported on the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study’s (JICS) centennial celebrations including a homecoming event held on October 18, 2025, that brought together over 400 guests including alumni, faculty, staff and friends providing an opportunity for multiple generations to reconnect with the Institute and witness its continued innovation in education, research, and child development. The Dean then informed members that OISE stands \$1.1 million away from its ambitious \$25 million Defy Gravity campaign goal, which illustrates the confidence of OISE’s diverse community of supporters in the Institute’s transformative potential. The campaign’s strategic focus has been student-centred with nearly 30% of support dedicated to enhancing student experience and another quarter strengthening programs and research. In closing, the Dean expressed gratitude to all Institute supporters including donors, alumni, and friends, as well as to faculty, staff and librarians for their contributions to OISE’s continued success.

A question was raised regarding the timeline for the Defy Gravity Campaign. It was explained that this University campaign was launched in 2021 and is at its midpoint, and that OISE is on track for surpassing its goal with over 95% of funds raised towards it. Another question was raised regarding progress towards a more degree compatible Final Oral Exam (FOE) process for OISE’s Doctor of Education – EdD programs. The Dean responded that OISE is working with the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to launch a Pilot for a revised structure of the FOE for the EdD starting in the winter term with one of the Departments. This will allow OISE to implement an innovative Dissertation in Practice defence format that further differentiates the EdD as a distinctly practice-oriented degree. Another question was raised on enrolment and political climate regarding international students. It was explained that these pressures are university-wide and sector-wide and that the University leadership is engaged in discussing the implications of changes to study permits allocations, and related regulatory changes on enrolment and budgets. As a top ranked and highly respected faculty of education, OISE continues to do fairly well in terms of need and demand for its programs including from prospective international students; however, OISE may need to rethink its recruitment strategies and program structures to ensure sustainability.

## **5. Reports from Standing Committees**

**A. Research** – Prof. Arlo Kempf, Chair of the Research Committee, reported on the Committee’s first meeting held on October 8, 2025.

Prof. Kempf reported that the Committee has a full slate of membership representing faculty, students and staff from all OISE departments. At its first meeting of the year, the Committee elected the Chair – Prof. Kempf, and Vice-Chair – Merva Hutchinson, doctoral candidate in the Department of LHAE. The Committee members were pleased to meet Prof. Becky Chen in her role as new Associate Dean, RPI, and to hear her vision for the portfolio. In addition to reviewing its mandate, the Committee discussed possible topics for future meetings including, for example, strategies to support postdoctoral fellows and students, and OISE’s approach to generative AI and its implications for policies, practices, and resources for research. The Committee discussed updating the OISE statement on open access, which will be drafted by Jenaya Webb, Director of OISE Library, and presented to the Committee for consideration at one of the upcoming meetings. The Committee also discussed mobilizing resources for data collection regarding diversity of students. The next meeting will feature a presentation from the Office of Associate Dean, RPI, on research partnerships strategy.

A question was raised regarding supports for faculty on applying for research funding. It was noted that the Office of RPI supports faculty with establishing their research programs and also supports applications for targeted research funding opportunities. The Committee will hear more about this at the upcoming meeting as part to the RPI Office presentation.

**B. Equity** – On behalf of Prof. Katherine Entigar, Chair of the Equity Committee who was absent from the meeting, Chloe Jones-Westgarth, Graduate Assistant supporting Committee initiatives, provided the Committee report.

At its first meeting of the year held on October 14, 2025, the Committee elected Prof. Entigar as its Chair. Members expressed appreciation to the Dean’s designate Helen Huang, CAO, and the Committee Secretary, Madison Seymour, for their support and knowledge sharing during the academic year. The Committee reviewed its mandate, which is to identify, discuss and advise Council on issues of equity, diversity and accessibility, and make recommendations to Council on best equity practices and strategies as they pertain to teaching, learning and research activities at OISE. The Committee’s work and initiatives from the previous year were reviewed, and goals for 2025-2026 were discussed including specific initiatives for advancing the dialogue and supporting capacities for EDI within OISE, such as the annual Equity Symposium sponsored by the Committee.

**C. Academic Programs** – On behalf of Prof. Vidya Shah, Chair of the Academic Programs Committee who was absent from the meeting, Prof. Joseph Flessa, Associate Dean, Programs, provided the Committee report. The Committee’s first meeting of 2025-2026 was held on October 9, 2025, at which Professor Vidya Shah of the Department of LHAE was elected as Chair. The Committee also approved one major program modification now recommended to OISE Council for a final approval.

**FOR APPROVAL:** New Combined Degree Program – University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) Honours Bachelor of Arts, Major in Music, and Master of Teaching, OISE.

Prof. Flessa introduced the proposal noting that Professor Leslie Stewart Rose, Associate Chair, Teacher Education in the Department of CTL was involved in its development. Since Professor Stewart Rose was not in attendance, Dr. Sheldon Grabke, Registrar and Senior Director Student Services, presented the proposal to Council. A brief overview of the Combined Degree Programs (CDPs) as a program category was provided including a history of their development since OISE’s transition to an all-graduate Institute. Dr. Grabke noted that, two years ago, OISE updated admission requirements for all CDPs linked with the MT program to align with the SGS requirements for OISE’s graduate teacher education programs and to improve access to CDPs. It was further highlighted that this new CDP builds on OISE and UTSC’s longstanding collaboration in teacher education. In light of this proposal, UTSC undertook a review the Major in Music program requirements including identifying the performance-based courses that CDP student will be asked to complete as part of their undergraduate degree to ensure that they meet the teaching subject prerequisites for Music – Instrumental, or Music – Vocal. In closing, Dr. Grabke

highlighted this CDP is slated to diversify music teachers in the school system while further strengthening OISE's relationship with UTSC.

On a motion duly moved, seconded and carried, IT WAS RESOLVED,

THAT the establishment of the Combined Degre Program: Honours Bachelor of Arts, Major in Music, and Master of Teaching, BE APPROVED effective September 1, 2026.

Of 45 members present and voting, all were in favour, none abstained, none opposed.

In the context of the proposal, Prof. Flessa reported that the Committee emphasised admission requirements and how they are helping OISE to diversify the student population. He added that, when faculty bring forward program changes such as a new field within an existing program, a new Collaborative Specialization, or a change to program admission requirements, the Committee will be looking closely at the admission requirements section of the proposals with a view to removing barriers and enhancing the diversity of students at OISE. In closing, Prof. Flessa noted that, at the October 9, 2025 meeting, the Committee also reviewed several minor course changes approved at the departmental level.

## **6. OISE Council and Committees Orientation**

Biljana Cuckovic, Secretary of OISE Council, and Professor Doug McDougall, provided an orientation on OISE governance. An overview of the Council's mandate, composition, organization, and duties of members was provided. The meeting process including motions, discussions, and voting was described, as well as the distinction between the governance and administration. Professor McDougall spoke about OISE and the U of T governance and reflected on his extensive experience as a former member of the Governing Council and Chair of several of its boards and committees including the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, the Academic Board, and the Agenda Committee.

Following the presentation, a member expressed appreciation for an informative orientation session. A question was raised if ex-officio members may second motions that are brought forward to Council. It was explained that Bourinto's Rules of Order guide Council's meetings in general principles only and to the extent to which they are applicable to OISE's context. Given the supportive and engaging nature of the OISE community all members are welcome to indicate their support by seconding motions and often more than one individual is ready to second motions.

## **7. Adjournment**

The formal part of the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m. and transitioned into a reception for members and guests of Council.