



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

November 8, 2024

The meeting was held at 1:33 at the Somerville House, Great Hall

SENATORS:

A. Agyapong	J. Garland	A. Meyer
C. Alcantara	J. Gemson	M. Mills
S. Bahadoor	L. Graham	I. Namukasa
M. Bassnett	R. Graham	A. Nocilla
S. H. Beatty	M. Green-Barteet	V. Parsa
G. Beckett	C. Hall	I. Paul
J. Beecroft	N. Harney	P. Pexman
B. Begg	A. Hearn	G. Philip
K. Bertrand	K. Henricus	A. Puvirajah
J. Birkinshaw	J. Herrera	L. Rehmann
A. Botterell	J. Ijam	W. Ritchie
A. Bryson	J. Jin	D. Robinson
J. Campbell	M. Joannis	B. Rubin
B. Cheadle	E. Kamimura	M. Sanita Lima
K. Choi	M. Kim	S. Schmid
A. Christie	H. Kirk	L. Shaw
B. Chronik	D. Kotsopoulos	A. Shepard
M. Cleveland	D. Laird	K. Siddiqui
N. Coates	J. Lamarche	A. Simon
K. Coley	L. Lingard	Z. Sinel
A. Cooke	G. Little	F. Strzelczyk
E. Da Costa	A. Liu	X. Wang
S. D'Arcy	A. Lukawski	J. Yoo
L. Davis	T. Mantler	N. Zaban
M. Davison	O. Matthews	A. Zecevic
M. El-Sakka	M. McGrath	
D. Ferri	D. Meister	

Observers:

C. Bressette, R. Chelladurai, C. Chung, J. Doerksen, E. Kalaydjian, N. Keyghobadi, S. Lewis, M. Medapati, O. Oloya, S. Roland, V. Sarkany, J. Scott, C. Waugh, J. Weststar, M. Yenson

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

H. Kirk offered a Land Acknowledgement.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

ITEM 2.0 – Minutes of the Meeting of October 11, 2024

It was moved by E. Da Costa, seconded by P. Pexman,

That the minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2024, be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

In addition to the written report provided with the agenda, A. Shepard, President and Vice-Chancellor, highlighted several past and upcoming campus events, including Fall Convocation and Fall Preview Day.

A. Shepard continued his report by encouraging Senators to explore on-campus conference opportunities for the upcoming year and to actively engage with their colleagues to foster collaboration and dialogue.

A. Shepard announced a call for applications for the Sustainability Impact Fund, with the deadline of November 18, 2024.

A. Shepard acknowledged the recent passing of Elder Dan Smoke, Murray Sinclair and Amanda Kennedy.

REPORT OF THE PROVOST

F. Strzelczyk, Provost & Vice-President (Academic) opened her remarks by informing Senate that Mark Daley, Chief AI Officer, was appointed NSERC Scholar in Residence for Artificial Intelligence for a two-year term.

F. Strzelczyk continued her report by highlighting Western's numerous successes, including the opening of the Ronald D. Schmeichel Building for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, launch of the Canadian Severe Storms Laboratory (CSSL) and the creation of the Fields-Western Collaboration Centre.

F. Strzelczyk continued her report with a presentation on the Budget Planning Process and Fiscal Environment (Appendix A), addressing both the internal and external context, planning for the short to medium term, and providing comparisons with other Ontario universities. Additionally, the Provost invited Senators to participate in the budget Town Halls planned for later in November.

REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT (RESEARCH)

P. Pexman, Vice-President (Research), presented her report, which included information regarding recent events, funding opportunities, and the upcoming visit from the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) for an interim assessment.

P. Pexman also advised that Dan Lizotte was appointed for a five-year term as the Director of the Rotman Institute of Philosophy.

P. Pexman concluded her report by acknowledging the unprecedented number of grant applications submitted through Western Research.

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PLANNING (SCUP)

ITEM 10.1 – Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan

O. Oloya, Associate Vice-President (Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) and L. Oliver, EDI Specialist presented the EDIDA Strategic Plan for recommendation to the Board of Governors.

O. Oloya outlined the plan's development process, explaining each stage from initial conception to the finalized version. He also emphasized the valuable input gathered through an extensive consultation process, which involved engaging various stakeholders. O. Oloya emphasized that there will be a phased approach to implementation of the plan with tentative timelines outlined for each stage. He also identified how the key objectives could be achieved.

It was noted that once approved, each unit will receive a copy of the EDIDA Action Plan. In phase one, each unit is invited to select a set of strategies from the list of strategic priorities. These strategies should be chosen based on the specific needs and priorities of the unit, ensuring actionable implementation of the Strategic Plan.

L. Oliver described the steps and timeline for implementing the Strategic Plan across the University in phase one.

Following the presentation of the Strategic Plan, an extensive discussion ensued. Members raised several questions including in respect of:

- the budgetary implications for implementing and maintaining the plan, as well as resources to be allocated.
- accountability of the EDI Office and support that could be provided.
- how the data collected through the survey and the feedback received were incorporated into the Strategic Plan.
- a lack of reference to religious inclusion and diversity in the plan.
- clarification regarding the structure of the implementation committee.

O. Oloya addressed the questions, emphasizing that the focus is not on prescribing specific actions but rather on allowing units the flexibility to discuss their perspectives on the selected strategies. Also, it was noted that this work aims to create a safe and inclusive space where

everyone feels a sense of belonging. He emphasized the importance of engaged dialogue where every person is valued and has the opportunity to contribute meaningfully, rather than prescribing actions within the plan. Additionally, O. Oloya reassured Senate of strong support from the Office of EDI.

F. Strzelczyk addressed the questions related to budget planning, advising that units while discussing their budgets should be mindful of the EDIDA Strategic Plan.

It was moved by M. Cleveland, seconded by M. Sanita Lima,

That Senate recommend the approval of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility (EDIDA) Strategic Plan to the Board of Governors.

CARRIED

REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BOARD (URB)

On behalf of the University Research Board, P. Pexman briefly commented on the topics discussed at the October URB meeting, including a presentation on the activities of the Western Institute for Earth and Space Exploration. She commented on the recent successes of the Institute and future areas of research focus.

P. Pexman concluded her report with an update on Horizon Europe research funding opportunities. In addition, she announced an upcoming workshop for researchers aimed at providing more information about the program.

REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC COLLEAGUE

The Report of the Academic Colleague was presented for information.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONS / AGENDA COMMITTEE (OAC)

ITEM 13.1(a)(i) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of the Operations/Agenda Committee, Senate approve that effective November 8, 2024, the terms of reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy be revised as shown in Item 13.1(a)(i).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEM 13.1(a)(ii) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Curriculum and Awards (ACA)

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of the Operations/Agenda Committee (OAC), Senate approve that effective November 8, 2024, the terms of reference of the Senate Committee on Academic Curriculum and Awards (ACA) be revised as shown in Item 13.1(a)(ii).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEM 13.1(a)(vii) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Review Board Academic

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of the Operations/Agenda Committee, Senate approve that effective November 8, 2024, the terms of reference of the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) be revised as shown in Item 13.1(a)(vii).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Information Items Reported by OAC on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.1(a)(iii) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on Undergraduate Academic Courses (SOC).
- ITEM 13.1(a)(iv) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Administrative Subcommittee to Review Scholarships (SRS).
- ITEM 13.1(a)(v) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on Program Review – Graduate (SUPR-G).
- 13.1(a)(vi) – Senate Committee Terms of Reference Review: Revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on Program Review – Undergraduate (SUPR-U).

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY

ITEM 13.2(b) – Revisions to the Policy on “Convocation; Graduation Diplomas and Certificates

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, Senate approve that effective November 8, 2024, the policy on “Convocation; Graduation Diplomas and Certificates” be revised as shown in Item 13.2(b).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEM 13.2(c) – School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Revisions to the Policy on “Registration”

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Academic Policy, Senate approve that effective November 8, 2024, the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies policy on “Registration” be revised as shown in Item 13.2(c).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Information Items Reported by Policy on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.2(a) – Correction to the Policy on “Adding and Dropping Courses”.
- ITEM 13.2(d) – School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Revisions to the Procedure for Thesis Examinations and Final Submission.

REPORT FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC CURRICULUM AND AWARDS (ACA)

ITEM 13.3(a) – Faculty of Social Science, Department of History: Withdrawal of the Honours Specialization in History (Brescia), Specialization in History (Brescia), Major in History (Brescia), and Minor in History (Brescia)

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2025, admission to the Honours Specialization in History (Brescia), Specialization in History (Brescia), Major in History (Brescia), and Minor in History (Brescia), offered by the Department of History in the Faculty of Social Science, be discontinued, and

That students currently enrolled in the modules be permitted to graduate upon fulfillment of the module requirements by August 31, 2028, and

That the modules be withdrawn effective September 1, 2028.

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEM 13.3(b) – School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Major Modification to the Master of Engineering (MEng) in Civil and Environmental Engineering

It was moved by G. Little, seconded by J. Ijam,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective May 1, 2025, the Master of Engineering (MEng) in Civil and Environmental Engineering be revised as shown in Item 13.3(b).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Information Items Reported by ACA on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.3(c) – Report of the Subcommittee on Program Review – Graduate (SUPR-G): Cyclical Review of the Graduate Program in Economics.
- ITEM 13.3(d) – Undergraduate Sessional Dates (2025-26).

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PLANNING (SCUP)

Information Items Reported by SCUP on Unanimous Consent:

- ITEM 13.4(a) – McIntosh Gallery Annual Report.

DISCUSSION AND QUESTION PERIOD

The full text of the questions submitted in advance of the meeting was posted in the Agenda at Item 14.0 prior to the meeting. The questions and responses are summarized below:

A Senator raised a question about the plans to maintain a safe, bias- and harassment-free environment on campus in light of the US elections and the increase in misogynistic rhetoric and the surge of hateful language towards the 2SLGBTQ+ community in the US. A. Shepard reassured Senators of Western's unwavering commitment to supporting human rights and fostering a safe environment for all individuals. Additionally, the President outlined several pathways for reporting any violations.

Western's hiring process:

In response to a question of clarification regarding Western's policy on interviewing and hiring processes, F. Strzelczyk confirmed that Western is committed to fair, transparent, and competitive hiring practices in compliance with Canadian employment laws. Additionally, she commented on the importance of clear criteria, noting that each candidate is assessed based on their qualifications, experience, and suitability for the position.

The Undergraduate Curriculum Planning Framework:

S. Lewis, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs), responded to questions regarding the guidelines for minimum enrollment in undergraduate courses, as outlined in the Undergraduate Planning Framework. She clarified how these guidelines are applied to balance resource allocation with

student demand and noted that this strategy is aimed at mitigating the need for late course cancellations. S. Lewis explained that the framework uses a balanced approach to course sizes, with both large introductory courses and smaller upper-level courses for specialized subjects. Moreover, Deans have flexibility to run courses that fall below the minimum enrollment threshold.

[Secretariat Note: The Undergraduate Curriculum Planning Framework has now been posted under Curriculum Development: https://vpacademic.uwo.ca/Plans_Priorities.html].

It was moved by P. Pexman, seconded by G. Little,

That Senate approve that Sergio Rodriguez and Dave Ghantous be granted speaking rights at the November 8, 2024, Senate meeting.

CARRIED

Reduction of the Microsoft storage capacity:

D. Ghantous, Director, Infrastructure Services, addressed several questions and concerns raised by Senators and Official Observers in response to the recent announcement of a significant reduction to Microsoft storage allocations. He advised that these changes were driven by Microsoft's decision to implement significant revision to its storage policies for educational institutions around the world. D. Ghantous noted that the storage is still available, and the only change anticipated is the incremental cost for purchasing additional storage that exceeds the limits. However, a grace period will be provided, during which these expenses will be centrally funded. Additionally, it was mentioned that guidelines for securing additional space and details about the transitional period will be published.

S. Rodriguez, Director, Client Services, addressed a question concerning the implications of eliminating OWL Sakai as a means of managing and sharing data along with the proposed reduction in Microsoft storage. He shared information regarding an ongoing pilot project for Western researchers to address all needs and find alternative solutions.

It was moved by J. Ijam, seconded by N. Zabian,

That the discussion and question period of the Senate meeting be extended by 15 minutes.

CARRIED

Student Identification in OWL Brightspace:

S. Lewis addressed a question regarding the possibility to integrate student ID numbers as the primary identifier in OWL Brightspace and explained that the decision to eliminate its use was based on privacy concerns related to sensitive data. However, work to mitigate the issues outlined in the question is still ongoing.

Brescia Library Integration:

In response to a question regarding the former Brescia Library and access to materials, G. Little, Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian, outlined the process of relocation of the physical materials, as well as the measures in place to minimize any inconvenience during the transitional period. Regarding the study space, it was mentioned that work is underway around the campus to meet the growing demand for study spaces. F. Strzelczyk commented on the plans for the space that was the Beryl Ivey Library.

Graduate student funding:

R. Chelladurai, Associate Vice-President (Institutional Planning & Budgeting), addressed the questions regarding graduate student funding and the financial health of the University. R. Chelladurai described the budget planning process as well as the external and internal context that all Ontario educational institutions face. Additionally, he advised that it is standard procedure during budget planning to review expenditures at the Faculty level, including reconsideration of graduate funding allocations. A. Shepard addressed a follow-up question regarding the funding sources for the capital projects on campus and explained the difference between the capital and operating budgets along with the strategic priorities for Western.

MAPP Policy 1.1 Consultation Process:

In response to a question regarding plans for the consultation on the revisions to MAPP Policy 1.1, J. Doerksen, Vice-Provost (Students), informed Senate that the first phase of the consultation process has started, and session for Senators would begin immediately following the Senate meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

A. Shepard
Chair

A. Bryson
University Secretary

Update on Planning Process and Fiscal Environment

Senate

November 8, 2024

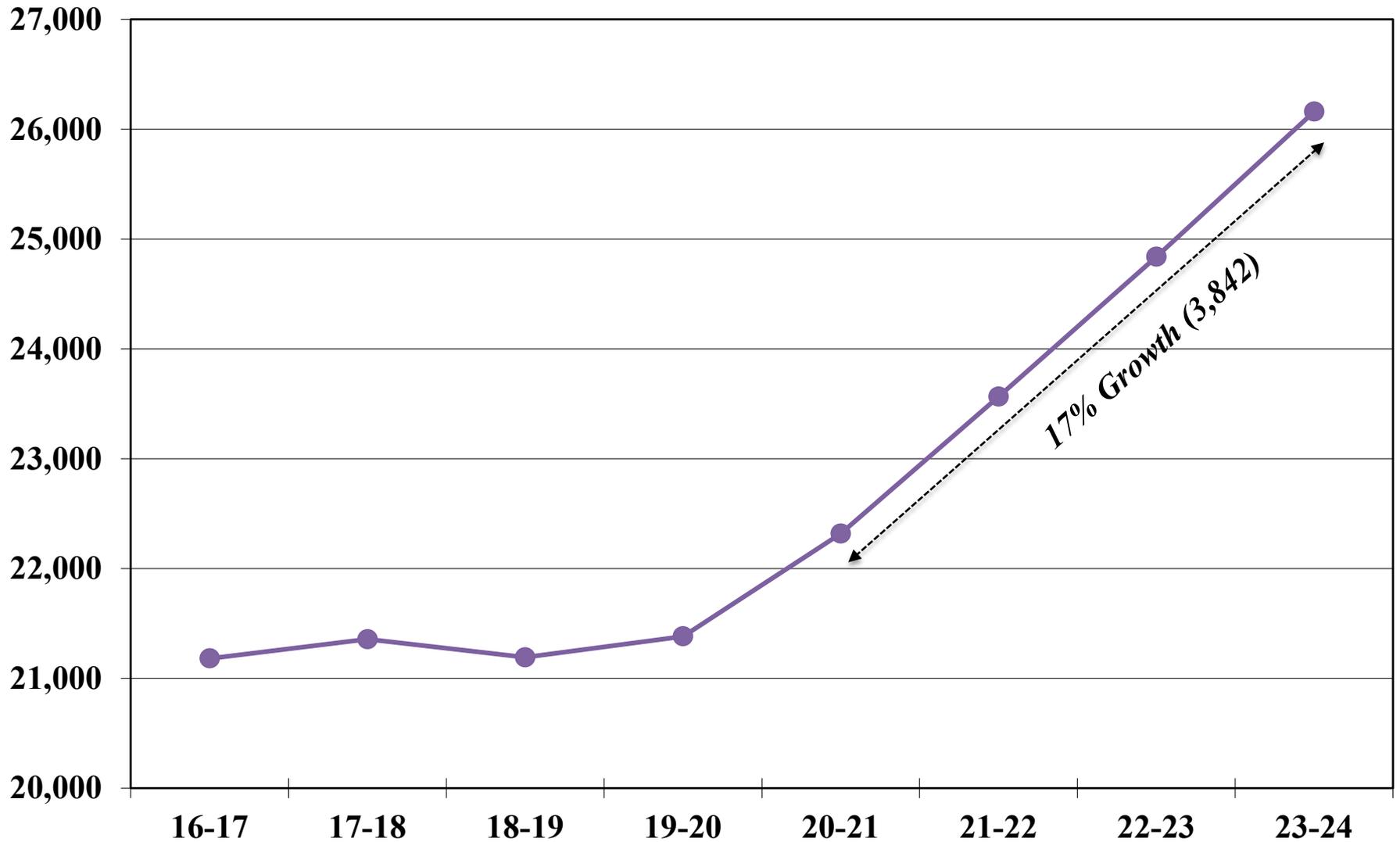
- Provincial Base Grant **frozen at 2016-17 level** (Block Grant)
- Domestic Tuition Rates
 - Rolled back 10% in 2019-20 and **frozen through 2026-27**
 - Some flexibility with Out-of-Province Tuition and Undergraduate Computer Science / MOS
- Cap on International Student Study Permits
- Modest One-Time Government Funding recently announced
- Fall 2024
 - Strategic Mandate Agreement Renewal (SMA 4)
 - Greater portion of frozen Base Grant to be linked to Performance

Context: Internal

- Moving to the Final Year of our 3-Year Plan
- Budget Approach/Structure remains unchanged
- Enrolment-related Revenue Sharing remains in place (such revenues are declining)
- Fiscal Situation will make it difficult to increase Base Expenditures
- Focus on Strategic Priorities and Core Activities

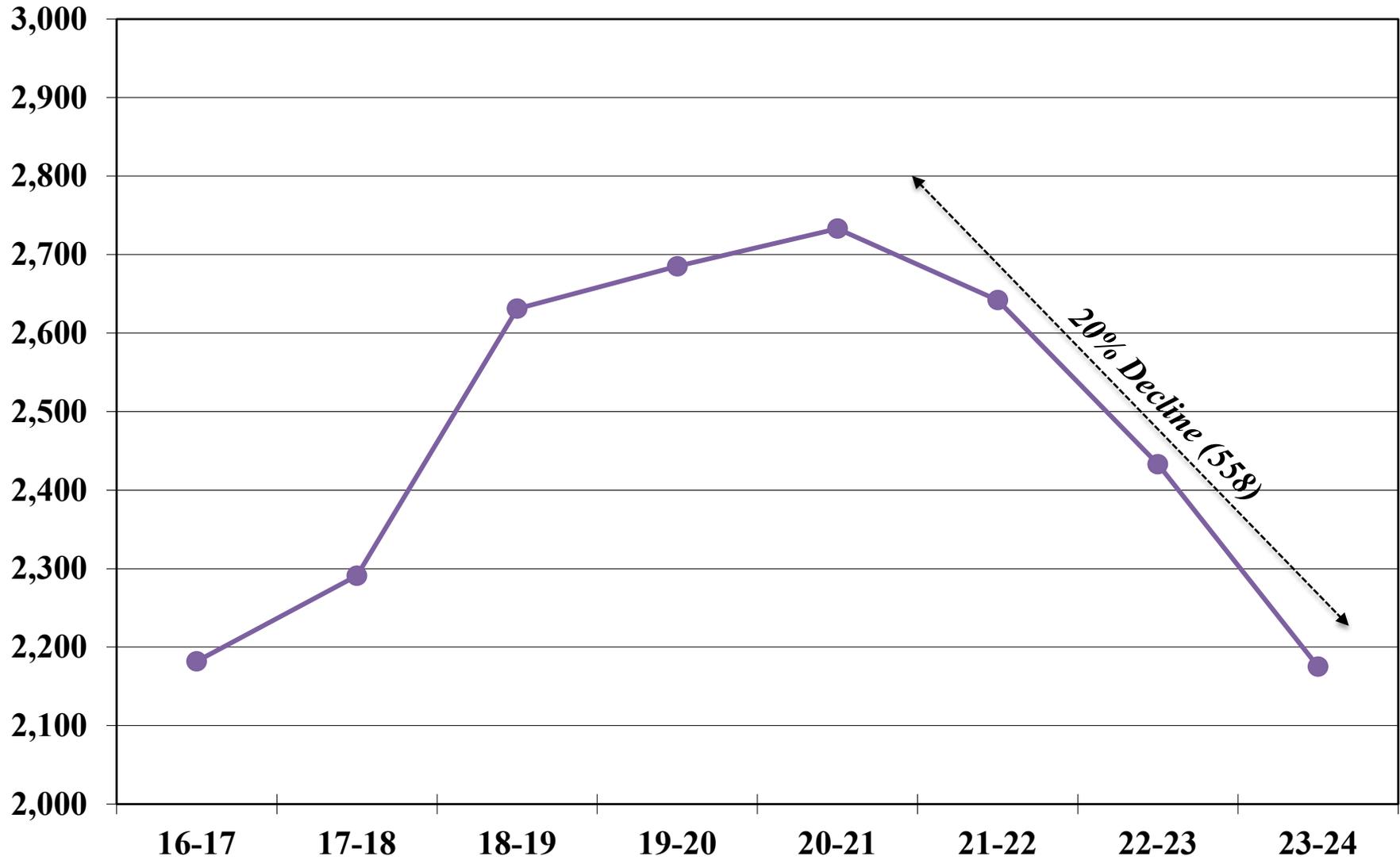
Total # of Undergrad Domestic Fee-Paying Students

Appendix A

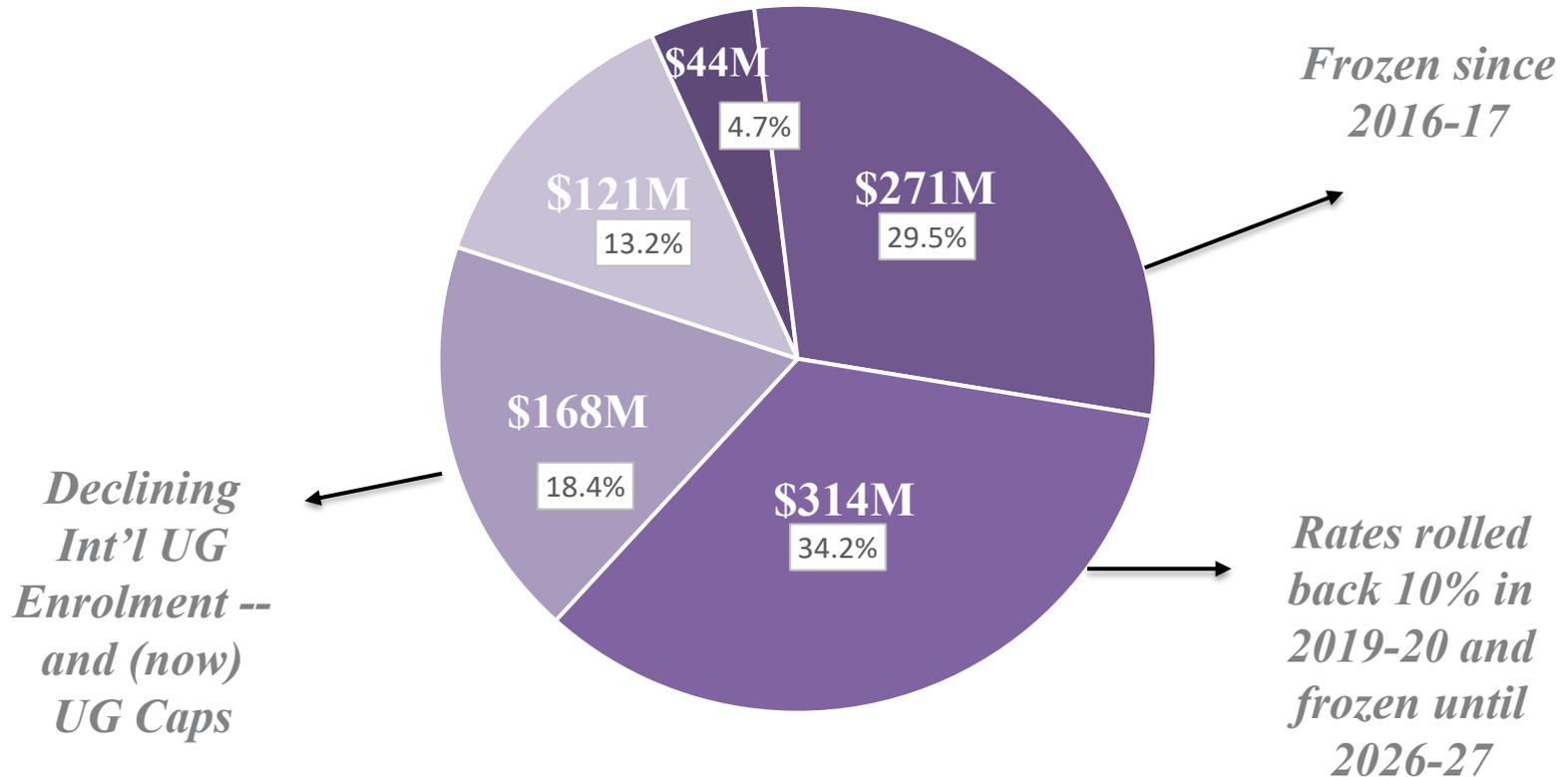


Total # of Undergrad International Fee-Paying Students

Appendix A



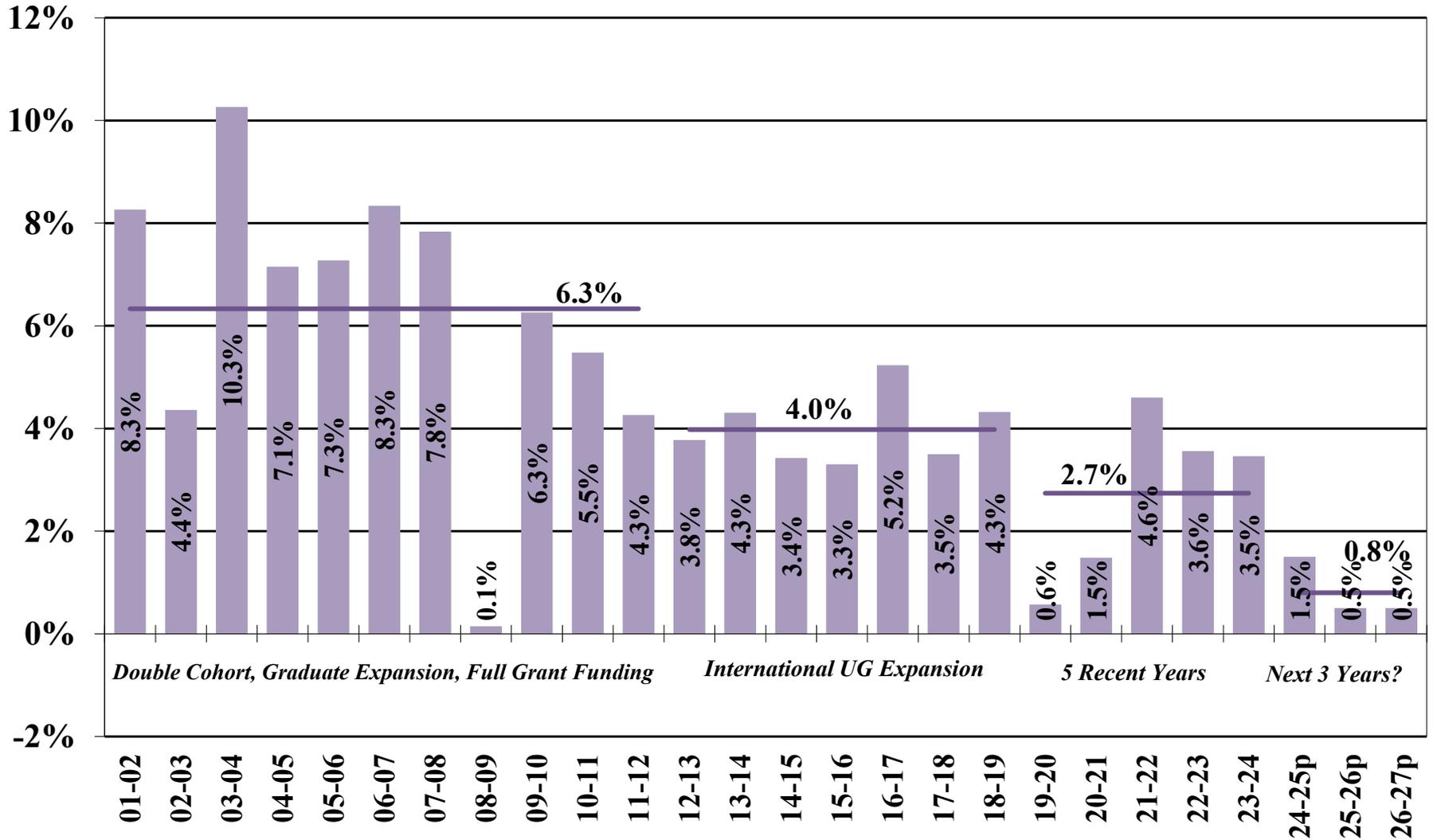
Distribution of 2023-24 Operating Revenues (\$918M)



■ Special Purpose/Targeted Grants ■ Core Operating Grants ■ Domestic Tuition ■ Int'l Tuition ■ All Other

Operating Revenues: Annual % change – 2001-02 to 2026-27

Appendix A



Planning for the Short-to-Medium Term Appendix A

- Fiscal Outlook
 - Less than 1% Annual Revenue Growth
 - Costs continue to increase in the 4%+ range
 - Including Employee Compensation
 - If we're not pro-active,
 - Revenue and Expense Lines will cross
 - Resulting in a structural deficit

Budgets at Other Ontario Universities Appendix A

- 2024-25 Budget Deficits

Univ A	\$90.8M	Univ B	\$26.5M
Univ C	\$26.8M	Univ D	\$74.5M
Univ E	\$32.3M	Univ F	\$35.7M
Univ G	\$18.9M		

Actions taken by these Universities

Additional cuts	Curriculum/course streamlining	Hiring Freezes/pauses
Reduce non-salary spending	Shared services / eliminate duplication	Pause/cancel capital projects
Increase overhead contributions from all revenue lines/sources	Retirement programs	Staff reduction through attrition

Planning for the Short-to-Medium Term ^{Appendix A}

- We need to be Proactive with Optimizing Resources
 - Academic Efficiencies need be High on our Priority List
 - Small Classes
 - Small-enrolment Modules