



# Innis College

## Innis College Council

### 322<sup>nd</sup> Meeting

Friday, March 5, 2021 at 12 pm

## Minutes

**Present:** Yona Anderson, Srijita Banerjee, Jannie Chien, Lauren Cramer, Jason Daye (guest), Lucas Granger, Nancy Green, Elijah Gyansa, Tony Hu, Kate Johnson, Paul Kaita, Charlie Keil, Binseong Kim, Claudia Li Tang, Annie Liu, Ella Ma, Steve Masse (assessor), Josie Meza-Silva, Miriam Moren, Tony Niu, Michelle Nurse, Mukti Patel, Emma Paulus, Tony Pi, Amisha Punja, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, David Roberts, Nicole Rodriguez, Noel Simpson, Kenny Trinh, Joanne Uyede, Dexter Voisin (guest), Ben Weststrate (secretary), Andrea Williams, Carol Ye, Michelle Zhang

**Regrets:** Donald Boere, Ennis Blentic, James Cahill, Madi Frost, Joyce Hahn, Sharon English, Breanna Lima Martinez, Bart Testa, Rolla Tahir, Lina Yan

### 1. Speaker's remarks

Speaker Joanne Uyede chaired the meeting.

### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

A motion to approve the [December 3, 2020 meeting minutes](#) was moved (Ramkhalawansingh), seconded (Gyansa), and carried.

### 3. Business arising from the minutes

None reported

### 4. Principal's Report

#### A. Guest speaker

Principal Keil introduced Dexter Voisin, co-chair, U of T Anti-Black Racism Task Force, and dean, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, to speak to council about the work of the Task Force.

Voisin described the aims of the Task Force, namely, to review policy and procedures and address areas for Black inclusion at the University. [Click here to view the terms of reference.](#) It has been soliciting broad and targeted input from the U of T community over several months and produced a list of recommendations. Central to these recommendations is combatting the myth around Black

intellectual inferiority and exclusion. They aim to address the culture around anti-Black racism in academic settings. Voisin then reviewed some of the actions that have already stemmed from the recommendations.

Ramkhalawansingh, chair of the Innis College Black Student Experience Working Group, thanked Voisin for his work and inquired how the Task Force is addressing the undergraduate student experience.

Voisin clarified that the Task Force is comprised of three subgroups, one of which focusses on student experience. Voisin himself sits on the faculty-focussed subgroup. Student-focussed recommendations should be finalized by the end of the month, after which they will become publicly available.

Roberts inquired about work being done with respect to “campus climate” (i.e., community conditions). Voisin pointed to a deficiency in data about the demographic composition of the student body. Intersectional analyses of Black identity plus other marginalized identities reveal disproportionately higher levels of exclusion. Further study is required.

Gyansa described the importance of taking the time to ensure that the University’s responses are lasting solutions, and not temporary reactions. Voisin noted that the Task Force has been taking a system-level perspective versus a tokenistic one.

Ramkhalawansingh called for administrative (i.e., U of T) accountability measures in the implementation of the Task Force’s recommendations. Voisin noted that accountability and public transparency have been integral to the process.

On behalf of the council, Uyede thanked Voisin for his important work and for his time.

## **B. Black Student Experience (BSE) Implementation Group update**

Keil described the origins and composition of the College’s BSE Working Group, which produced a set of 24 recommendations during summer 2020.

Masse, who oversees the BSE report implementation process, described the structure of the Implementation Group: staff and student representatives from all sectors of the College; organized into six distinct subgroups that align with the six categories of recommendations. There have been three meetings of the Implementation Group plus one to two subgroup meetings to date. The intention is to present implementation actions at the next ICC meeting.

Masse echoed Voisin’s observation that we lack demographic, college-level data on who our Black students are. A data-focussed “Research & Data” Subgroup, led by Joe Minichini, is addressing just that.

Punja recommended the inclusion of programming in 2021 student orientation (e.g., a panel discussion) to discuss BIPOC student experience. Masse noted that the BSE “Connection & Belonging” Subgroup is currently addressing this idea.

Keil noted that the Implementation Group is still establishing its relationship with the original BSE Working Group in order to evaluate its plans.

Ramkhalawansingh noted that the original 24 recommendations represent a moment in time. There will be a need to revisit and expand this list in the future.

Regarding accountability, Keil reported that the College's Website Redevelopment Committee is discussing an online progress tracker and will work with the BSE Research & Data Subgroup.

Keil suggested that council invites a guest speaker from the student-focused branch of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force to the next meeting.

### C. Staffing changes

Keil reported recent staffing changes:

- **Teaching staff:**
  - **Wesley Attwell**, sessional instructor, Urban Studies; teaching *Racial Capitalism, Settler Colonialism, Urban Infrastructure*
  - **Diana Sanchez**, sessional instructor, Cinema Studies Institute; teaching *Global Screen Worlds*
  - **Carolyn Whitzman**, sessional instructor, Urban Studies; teaching *Studies in Contemporary Urban Problems*
  - Cinema Studies Institute is currently search for a tenure-stream faculty member under the banner of "Film Historian of the Global South."
- **Administrative staff:**
  - **Henry Harris**, client care specialist, began February 22, offering front-line IT support at the College
  - **Sana Imran**, assistant dean—community wellness, begins on March 22
    - Masse added that, in this new role, Imran will: survey student mental health at the college-level; promote mental health supports among students, staff, and faculty; assist in navigating resources; and manage additional health and wellness-focussed programming through the Office of Student Life. The role is not a clinical practitioner though Imran's background is.
  - **Joyce Hahn**, CAO, leaves the College for a position at the Provost's Office on March 15 after two and a half tireless and productive years.
  - Several additional positions are in the midst of being hired (e.g., CAO; finance & operations assistant).

### D. Renewal and Expansion update

Keil reported that fundraising efforts continue. He and Ennis Blentic will be meeting with the Campaign Cabinet on March 30.

### E. Website redevelopment update

IT coordinator Jason Daye reported that the copy writing and editing process for the College's new website is now complete. We are in an eight- to ten-week development stage. Once COVID-19-related restrictions are lifted, photo and video shoots can begin. A testing phase will follow

development. Keil acknowledged the complex and time-consuming nature of the process but commended its inclusivity with college stakeholders.

## F. New publications from *The Spectatorial* and *The Innis Herald*

Keil encouraged council members to see the latest issues of two college-based student publications and remarked at the quality of the work:

- Eighth issue of *The Spectatorial* published January 21:  
[https://issuu.com/thespectatorial/docs/the\\_spectatorial\\_volume\\_viii\\_-\\_final](https://issuu.com/thespectatorial/docs/the_spectatorial_volume_viii_-_final)
- March issue of *The Innis Herald*:  
[https://issuu.com/theinnisherad/docs/page\\_v3\\_innis\\_herald](https://issuu.com/theinnisherad/docs/page_v3_innis_herald)

## 5. Board Reports

### A. Community Affairs Board

Board moderator Hu reported the following highlights from a [December 10, 2020 meeting](#):

- A [new edition of \*Innis Alumni & Friends magazine\*](#) was published at the end of the term.
- A robust slate of virtual events has been hosted by the Advancement Office, using Zoom and Vimeo platforms.
- LLL has successfully transitioned to a fully virtual format.
- The Harold Innis Foundation hosted a highly successful annual lecture with alumnus Jesse Wentz on November 9.
- The Art Committee was re-struck, supported by \$11,000 in funding from the Student Services Committee. It will convene before the end of term.

A motion to approve the report was moved (Hu), seconded (Kaita), and carried.

## 6. Other Business

### A. [Innis leadership awards](#)

Application period for Innis's leadership awards is open until April 19.

### B. Innis Alumni Lecture on March 18

The Innis Alumni Lecture will be delivered by **Tzeporah Berman** (BA '92 Innis) and moderated by **Thomas Homer-Dixon**. The lecture is titled "Pipelines, politics, and power: the future of fossil fuels in a world on fire." Registration is open: <https://alumni.innis.utoronto.ca/event/tzeporah-berman>.

### C. UTSLA

Hu extended congratulations to Innis's 2021 U of T Student Leadership Award recipients:

- Eva Gajic
- Lucas Granger

- Paul Kaita
- Jasmine Kara
- Breanna Lima Martinez
- Megan Pham-Quan
- Hayley Vlcek
- Michelle Zhang

## **7. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved (Uyede) and carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.