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Minutes of the Meeting of the University Planning Committee
Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 10:30 AM, Gilmour Hall Room 111

PRESENT:	Steve Hranilovic, Lindsay Bolan, Catherine Clase, Ruth Chen, Amber Dean, Saher Fazilat, Lauren Fink, Lena Kahn, Mayu Nishimura, Michael Noseworthy, Gianni Parise, Mahmut Parlar, Michelle Zheng (*Associate University Secretary*), Sherri Keene (*Assistant University Secretary*)
CONSULTANTS:	Ehab Kamarah, *Associate Vice President & Chief Facilities Officer*
OBSERVERS:	Kim Dej, *Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning* Matheus Grasselli, *Deputy Provost* Louis Schmidt, *McMaster University Faculty Association* Sean Van Koughnett, *Associate Vice-President, Students*
INVITED:	Rob Morrallee, *Director, Parking Operations* Bram Rochwerg, *Associate Professor, Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact* Marjan Alavi, *Assistant Professor, W Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology* Deborah DiLiberto, *Director of Education, Mary Heersink School of Global Health & Social Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences* Sarah Symons, *Director, School of Interdisciplinary Science (Acting)* Christine Greshem, *Director, Donor Relations* Susan Wright, *Senior Director, Advancement Campaign*
REGRETS:	Hfsa Awan, Karen Bird, Dina Brooks, Lili Litwin, Maureen MacDonald, Pamela Swett, Susan Tighe

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Maureen MacDonald could not attend the meeting, Steve Hranilovic assumed the role of Chair.

OPEN SESSION

1. Notice of Meeting - March 11, 2026

The notice of meeting was circulated on March 11, 2026.

2. Approval of Agenda

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the University Planning Committee approve the agenda for the meeting of March 25, 2026.

The motion was **Carried**.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – February 4, 2026 (Open Session)

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the University Planning Committee approve the open session minutes of the meeting held on February 4, 2026, as circulated (or amended).

The motion was **Carried**.

4. Business Arising

There was no business arising.

5. Chair's Comments and Update

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. Report from Parking Services

Rob Morrallee, *Director, Parking Operations*, presented the Report from Parking Services.

The Committee discussed proposed changes to parking access and payment models, including the use of transponders for faculty and staff, the treatment of visitor parking, and the designation of specific lots. Members discussed the shift toward a digital first and cashless environment, raising concerns about accessibility for international visitors and individuals with varying socio-economic circumstances. R. Morrallee noted that cashless parking has been in place for several years, that debit and credit card options remain available at pay stations, and that alternative access options exist for those unable to use mobile or digital options. Members also discussed feedback related to parking availability, waitlists, onboarding of new staff, and the need for improved

outreach and communication, noting broader concerns about parking capacity as the campus continues to grow.

This item was for information.

7. Establishment of New Research Centres and Institutes (RCI)

Approval

Bram Rochwerg, *Associate Professor, Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact,* provided an overview of the item.

A member raised concerns regarding the Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine (SEGM), noting that it has been identified as anti-trans and designated a hate group. Concerns were expressed about accepting funding sources from SEGM given that they restrict access to gender-affirming care, and the member asked how the Centre will address the involvement of individuals connected to this issue. B. Rochwerg confirmed that the Centre is aware of these concerns and the individuals involved and emphasized that the Centre aims to provide collective oversight and engagement on complex ethical issues like this. While individual actions cannot be fully controlled, Centre members will be held to McMaster University's standards, and the Centre may serve as an additional layer of oversight. B. Rochwerg added that these concerns would be brought forward to the Centre's executive leadership for awareness and discussion.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that the University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to the Senate and Board of Governors, the establishment of the Evidence Synthesis and Support Institute (ESSI), as circulated.

The motion was **Carried.**

8. Report from Graduate Council

Approval

1. Graduate Academic Certificates - W Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology

Marjan Alavi, *Assistant Professor, W Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology,* provided an overview of this item.

A member asked about the anticipated enrolment for the proposed courses. M. Alavi noted that demand is expected to be cohort based, with

approximately 20 participants per offering. Members discussed interest from external organizations like Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) seeking to enroll groups of employees, with some demand exceeding current capacity. M. Alvani explained that student participation would be employer funded and that course offerings may be staggered due to budgetary constraints, limiting the ability to deliver all courses simultaneously.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to the Senate, the following Graduate Academic Certificates for inclusion in the 2026-2027 Graduate Calendar:

a. Graduate Academic Certificate in Rail Electrification and Signaling
b. Graduate Academic Certificate in Rail Infrastructure and Operations
c. Graduate Academic Certificate in Railway Systems and Assurance

The motion was **Carried.**

2. Graduate Academic Certificates, Diplomas and Academic Microcredentials in Social Medicine and Entrepreneurship

Deborah DiLiberto, *Assistant Professor, Medicine and Director of Education, Mary Heersink School of Global Health & Social Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences,* provided an overview of the item.

The Committee asked about pathway opportunities for the courses, and D. DiLiberto confirmed the offerings can be combined and stacked. Members also discussed delivery models for fully online asynchronous learning, raising questions about precedent and academic engagement in this format. D. DiLiberto noted that similar models already exist, with asynchronous delivery incorporating regular interaction through weekly discussions and ongoing faculty engagement, ensuring that students remain connected despite the online format.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to the Senate, the following graduate credentials for inclusion in the 2026-2027 Graduate Calendar:

a. Graduate Academic Certificate in Social Medicine and Social Entrepreneurship

b. Graduate Academic Certificate in Social Medicine Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation
c. Graduate Diploma in Social Medicine and Entrepreneurship
d. Microcredential in Social Medicine Ecosystems and Social Entrepreneurship

The motion was **Carried**.

3. Graduate Academic Certificate in Science Communication

Sarah Symons, *Director, School of Interdisciplinary Science (Acting)*, provided an overview of the item.

A member commented on the availability of the offering to students beyond the Faculty of Science, expressed support for broader interdisciplinary participation and noted potential opportunities for collaboration with Humanities. S. Symons welcomed future connections while acknowledging the practical challenges of establishing cross faculty teaching arrangements. The discussion also highlighted strong support for the stacking framework as a positive feature of the program design.

It was duly moved and seconded,

that University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to the Senate, the Graduate Academic Certificate in Science Communication, for inclusion in the 2026-2027 Graduate Calendar, as circulated.

The motion was **Carried**.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.