

# Board of Trustees in brief

2013-05-28



*Highlights from the May 10-11 meeting of the Board of Trustees*

## **Update from the chair**

Chair Barb Palk congratulated Daniel Woolf on his reappointment as principal and vice-chancellor. She then offered her sincere thanks to the following individuals who are retiring from the board:

George Anderson  
Sarah Jane Dumbrille  
J. Blair Erskine  
Tony Gkotsis  
Eric Haythorne  
Rosemary Jolly  
Lauren Long  
Dean McKeown  
Bruce H. Mitchell  
John Nesbitt  
Peter D. Taylor

Chair Palk announced results of the recent University Council elections to the Board: Mary Wilson Trider was elected and Innes van Nostrand was re-elected, both for three-year terms. Chair Palk noted that the council recently voted to adopt new bylaws and enact a series of reforms, including a reduction in its alumni membership to 40 elected councillors by 2017. Board and Senate members are no longer ex-officio members of council. She expressed her appreciation to the council's Reform Planning Group, chaired by Alison Holt (Artsci'87), for their successful work.

The chair also reported that the board has established honorary chair emeritus and trustee emeritus designations to recognize the exemplary service of past trustees.

## **Principal's strategic update**

Principal Woolf gave a progress report on his 2012-13 goals. Highlights from the report include:

- The principal and other executives have been working to further increase their engagement with the Queen's community through several task forces and advisory committees.
- The principal thanked student executives for working so hard with him and the administration to make needed reforms to the non-academic discipline policy and to complete a review and implementation of the university's alcohol policy. The 2013-14 budget has been developed under the new budget model. Communications around its implementation will continue.
- The Initiative Campaign enjoyed a successful, high-profile public launch, and Queen's exceeded its fundraising targets for 2012-13. The principal paid special tribute to one of Queen's foremost benefactors, Alfred Bader, who recently celebrated his 89th birthday.
- The groundwork for the return of Homecoming has been laid, and work continues as the university prepares for two Homecoming weekends in October. Ensuring the safety and success of Homecoming is paramount for all those involved in organizing its activities.
- Reform, in all three Queen's governance bodies, has been very productive over the past year.
- The planning has been set in place to increase Queen's international profile. One aspect that has already seen significant positive change is international student recruitment - both visa applications and offers of admissions are much higher than last year.

Principal Woolf discussed the recent report of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), *Quality: Shifting the Focus*, which follows the submission of strategic mandate statements by Ontario universities and colleges. Queen's expects these submissions to ultimately result in strategic mandate agreements between the province and individual institutions.

### **Provost's report**

Provost Alan Harrison updated the board on a number of items, including:

- Construction of the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts is progressing well and is on track for substantial completion by the end of 2013. Jerry Doiron, the centre's director, will begin at Queen's on June 17.
- Susan Mumm, currently Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Humanities and Social Science at Massey University, New Zealand, has been appointed dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. William Flanagan has been reappointed dean of the Faculty of Law and David Saunders has been reappointed dean of Queen's School of Business.
- The Queen's National Scholar program was reintroduced this year and three submissions have advanced to the second phase of the competition. Two winning submissions will be selected. The call for submissions for the second year of the program will take place in the fall.

- The Limestone District School Board and Queen's have agreed to develop a bridging program for international students who wish to complete high school in Kingston and then attend Queen's University.
- The provost noted Senate's approval of the university's enrolment targets for 2013-14 and 2014-15, as well as the adoption of new terms of reference for the Aboriginal Council.

### **Campaign progress report**

Tom Harris, Vice-Principal (Advancement), gave a presentation on the campaign. The university has surpassed its \$60-million fundraising target for the fiscal year, with 14,326 benefactors contributing a total of \$67.3 million. Overall, the Initiative Campaign has raised \$342.5 million towards its \$500 million goal. Vice-Principal Harris paid special tribute to the generosity of the Baders, whose recent giving includes a significant gift of fine art and the establishment of the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. He also noted that this year marks the 20th anniversary of the Bader International Study Centre.

### **SGPS report**

Iain Reeve, the new president of the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS), thanked the principal for warmly welcoming the new SGPS executive. He expressed concern over the City of Kingston's recent electoral redistricting and mentioned that the SGPS and the Alma Mater Society (AMS) are investigating the possibility of an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board. Mr. Reeve reported on a recent Campus Master Plan vision workshop he attended, stating that it was an engaging session that gave participants from Queen's and Kingston the opportunity to discuss the future development of Queen's campus.

### **Rector's report**

Rector Nick Francis reported that students are actively involved in the Campus Master Plan process, as well as the Library and Archives Master Plan (LAMP). He thanked University Librarian Martha Whitehead for presenting the LAMP project recently to the AMS assembly, and for seeking students' feedback. He also highlighted the Tricolour Awards, which honour students who have shown exemplary service to Queen's through non-athletic extracurricular activities. This year will see eight students inducted into the Tricolour Society.

### **AMS report**

Eril Berkok, in his first report to board as AMS president, introduced his fellow executive members: Nicola Plummer, Vice-President (Operations), and Thomas Pritchard, Vice-President (University Affairs). Mr. Berkok expressed the need for continued consultation with students and the university community around any future enrolment growth, especially with regard to the capacity of our services to

handle increased enrolment. He also commented that the new budget model may not yet be well understood by students, but he thanked the provost for presenting on the new budget to the AMS Assembly.

## **International rankings**

Jim Lee, Vice-Provost (International), gave a presentation on international university rankings. Specifically, he addressed the three most prominent: the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), the QS World University Rankings, and the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings.

ARWU ranks the top 500 universities in the world entirely on a selection of research indicators, and is very science-centric. Over the past five years Queen's has placed within the 200-300 band of the ARWU rankings. QS ranks the top 700 universities based on a number of institutional metrics, and 50 per cent of the ranking is determined by a reputational survey of peers and employers. Over the past five years Queen's has normally ranked in the 117-175 range. THE also uses a reputational survey, weighted at about one-third of the overall score, with the balance consisting of research and teaching indicators. Over the past five years Queen's has placed in the THE's 201-225 range.

Dr. Lee noted that reputational surveys are highly unreliable indicators of quality, and that overall rankings are still controversial because they are strongly research-oriented, do not include teaching quality, and demonstrate very high volatility, such that universities can move significantly in the rankings from year to year.

To improve overall rankings, research intensity and research impact have to increase significantly; improving the university's reputation on an international level may also help. However, he cautioned that trying to increase our rankings should never be a goal in itself, as no ranking utilizes Queen's strengths. Instead, he said that Queen's should focus on promoting its strengths in providing a high-quality student experience within a research-intensive environment – a unique characteristic among all Canadian universities. Overall, he said, it is important to remember that Queen's is reliably ranked in the top 1-2 per cent of the world's universities.

## **Senate report**

Senator David Bakhurst provided an update to the board. He noted that Senate had received a notice of motion regarding the mandate for the Queen's University Planning Committee, which is a joint Board-Senate committee. The motion would see that committee play a greater role in the budget development process. He also noted that Senate approved enrolment targets for 2013-14 and 2014-15, and that Senate deferred motions regarding the Report to Senate on Recommended Procedures Concerning the Temporary Suspension of Admissions to Academic Programs. Senator Bakhurst reported that Senate had received the report on

virtualization and online learning from the Senate Academic Planning Task Force and that Senate had ratified the renewal of the SNOLAB trust agreement for a further five years.

### **Finance committee**

The board approved:

- The 2013-14 university budget
- Tuition fees for 2013-14
- Residence fees for 2013-14
- Student activity fees for 2013-14
- SNOLAB Institute five-year renewal, as approved by the Senate on April 30, 2013.

Provost Harrison gave a presentation on the budget. The \$457-million budget is balanced and is the first prepared under the new activity-based budget model, which allocates revenues directly to the faculties and schools that generate them, and in turn attributes indirect costs, such as shared services, to those units. The budget reflects advice received from the Provost's Advisory Committee on the Budget, as well as broad consultation with the university community.

### **Pension committee**

The board approved an amendment to the investment policy to permit the pension fund to invest five per cent of assets in real estate and five per cent of assets in infrastructure funds.

### **Other business**

The board approved naming dedications and ratified Senate's approval of two items: the establishment of the Allied Nevada Professorship in Surface Mine Planning & Design in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and changes to the William C. Leggett Graduate Fellowship.

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