Date: Friday, January 14, 2011  
Time: 2:30pm – 5:00pm

PRESENT: Mr. Ahmed Abou Gharam, Dr. Philip Adamson, Dr. Imran Ahmad, Dr. Yunbi An, Dr. David Andrews, Dr. Robert Arnold, Dr. Abdul-Fattah Asfour, Mr. Abdel Babker, Dr. Vladimir Bajic, Dr. Ram Balachandar, Prof. Jeffery Berryman, Dr. Robert Boucher, Dr. Lori Buchanan, Ms. Samantha Clarke, Mr. Ian Clough, Dr. Allan Conway, Dr. Gordon Drake, Ms. Gwen Ebbett, Dr. Jamey Essex, Dr. Bob Gaspar, Dr. Martin Girash, Dr. Leo Groarke, Dr. Alan Hall, Dr. Paul Henshaw, Dr. Kai Hildebrandt, Dr. Leslie Howsam, Dr. H. Jacobs, Dr. Arunita Jaekel, Mr. Tony James, Dr. Jennifer Johrendt, Dr. Ed King, Dr. Dietmar Lage, Dr. Anna Lanoszka, Mr. Marty Lowman, Dr. Charles Macdonald, Mr. Greg Marcotte, Ms. Laine McGarragle, Dr. Kevin Milne, Dr. Pamela Milne, Ms. Sharon Munro, Ms. Zeina Nassereddine, Dr. Bob Orr, Ms. Kim Orr, Dr. Edwin Tam, Dr. Wansoo Park, Dr. Jagdish Pathak, Dr. Linda Patrick, Dr. Alan Phipps, Dr. Katherine Quinsey, Dr. Dale Rajacich, Ms. Ayesh Raza, Dr. Pat Rogers, Ms. Stephanie Saad, Ms. Mary Schisler, Dr. Kara Smith, Dr. Robert Schurko, Dr. Frank Simpson, Dr. Jang Singh, Dr. Clayton Smith, Dr. Bruce Tucker, Dr. Mike Weis, Dr. Alan Wildeman (Chair), Prof. Larry Wilson, Dr. Nader Zamani, Dr. George Zhou.

REGRETS: Dr. Talal Al-Hayale, Dr. Brent Angell, Dr. Ranjana Bird, Prof. Bruce Elman, Dr. Jim Frank, Dr. Cecil Houston, Dr. Marlys Koschinsky, Dr. Brent Lee, Dr. Roman Maev, Ms. Erin Plumb, Dr. James Winter.

ABSENT: Prof. Emir Mohammed, Rev. Dr. Paul Rennick, Mr. Birendra Sapkota, Ms. Gayathri Sivakumar.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms. Krystal Chan, Dr. James Higginson, Ms. Dayo Kefentoe, Mr. Stephen Willetts, Ms. Renée Wintermute and Ms. Alison Zilli (University Secretariat).

1 Report of the Senate Steering Committee  
1.1 Approval of the agenda (Unstarring agenda items)

MOTION: That the agenda be approved.  
Boucher/Drake  
CARRIED

2 Minutes of the meeting of December 10, 2010

MOTION: That the minutes of meeting of December 10, 2010 be approved.  
King/Bajic  
CARRIED, as amended

A minor editorial correction was made.

3 Business arising from the minutes
Nothing to report.

4 Outstanding Business/Action Items
Nothing to report.

5 Reports/New Business
5.1 Report from Student Caucus (UWSA, OPUS, GSS)
University of Windsor Students Alliance (UWSA)
Senators were informed that the UWSA is currently working with the Environmental Committee regarding student bus passes.

Organization of Part-Time University Students (OPUS)
Given that many part-time students, whose work, finances, and family commitments often control their schedules, opt to take three-year General degrees, it was noted that the University should continue to retain and offer three-year degree programs that would be of interest to part-time students. It was
further noted that one-third of the 2000 part-time student population are enrolled in general three-year degree programs.

Graduate Students Society (GSS)
It was noted that there are new tenants for the Grad House restaurant (located on Sunset Ave). It was also noted that GSS is offering scholarships to graduate students who are in financial need and in good academic standing and that any donations from Faculties and Departments to support the scholarship program would be greatly appreciated.

Senators were informed that concern has been raised by many Graduate Assistants whose work hours are being significantly reduced. GSS is working towards determining how to better this situation.

5.2 Report of the President
Members were informed that overall, there has been a 2.2% increase in applications in Ontario which seems to be a growing trend over the past few years. It was noted that although application reports are in the initial phase of the cycle, it appears that student applications to Windsor are .6% higher than a year ago.

A review of University Advancement has been undertaken with a view to determining how the area can be strengthened. It was noted that the VP, University Advancement recently resigned from his position and it is important to continue the fundraising initiatives that the VP was integral in initiating.

Over the last five years the percentage of alumni engaged in giving has continued to drop from 8000 to 5500. This downward trend is concerning and represents a significant challenge for Alumni Affairs that the University will need to work towards reversing.

It was noted that the provincial government is launching a campaign that education is affordable which has generated discussion regarding student support and student access guarantee. Currently about 40% of students are graduating with significant student loan debts.

5.3 Report of the Academic Colleague
(See document Sa110114-5.3 for more details.)

The document was received for information.

*5.4 Program Development Committee
*5.4.1 Program/Course Changes
*a) Engineering
(See document Sa110114-5.4.1a for more details.)

MOTION: That the Engineering - Program/Course changes be approved.*

*Subject to approval of expenditures required.

*CARRIED

*b) Nursing
(See document Sa110114-5.4.1b for more details.)

MOTION: That the Nursing - Program/Course changes be approved.*

*Subject to approval of expenditures required.

*CARRIED

*c) Science
(See document Sa110114-5.4.1c for more details.)

MOTION: That the Science - Program/Course changes be approved.*

*Subject to approval of expenditures required.

*CARRIED
5.4.2 Request for Waiver of Course Deletion
(See document Sa110114-5.4.2 for more details.)

MOTION: That the Request for Waiver of Course Deletion (89-434, Polymers) be approved.*

*Subject to approval of expenditures required.

*CARRIED

5.4.3 Request for Waiver of Course Deletion - (89-450, Welding Engineering)
(See document Sa110114-5.4.3 for more details.)

MOTION: That the Request for Waiver of Course Deletion (89-450, Welding Engineering) be approved.*

*Subject to approval of expenditures required.

*CARRIED

5.4.4 Summary of Minor Course and Calendar Changes
*a) Business
(See document Sa110114-5.4.4a for more details.)

The document was received for information.*

*b) Engineering
(See document Sa110114-5.4.4b for more details.)

The document was received for information.*

5.5 Academic Policy Committee
Nothing to report.

5.6 Senate Student Committee
Nothing to report.

5.7 Study Group - Discussion

The purpose of Study Group discussion is to provide Senators the opportunity to give feedback and seek responses to outstanding questions relating to forthcoming Faculty-driven degree completion proposals.

Representatives from the Odette School of Business, the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the Faculty of Science provided an overview of the rationale as to why the prospective areas are bringing forward the Study Group Degree Completion programs. It was expressed that Study Group provides another pathway for recruiting international students to the University of Windsor as the programs are tailored to meet the specific needs of this group of students, including English language skills and cultural acclimatization, which will aid in student recruitment to specific programs at the University. Study Group prepares these students academically, culturally and socially for University studies, thereby improving their chances of success once they enter university. The forthcoming degree completion programs reflect the fact that the Departments agree that the modules in the Study Group Diploma Foundation programs will lead to the attainment of the equivalent of the first year learning outcomes in specified programs at the University of Windsor. Members were reminded that degree completion programs are based on the matching of learning outcomes upon the completion of the diploma program. The departments that have decided to partner with Study Group are confident that there are significant quality assurance mechanisms built-in to the proposal and the University has a variety of ways to be fully involved in all aspects of the Study Group programs and process. At the request of the program areas, Study Group students can be required to complete the final examination of the equivalent University of Windsor courses and University faculty members will have access to the examinations and will be able to mark or audit the marking of the exams. Academic Administrative Units have already worked closely with Study Group to develop Study Group’s diploma programs. Course outlines and Learning Outcomes have already been given to Study Group from
some of the areas as a measure of ensuring that Study Group’s course offerings are equivalent to those taught during first year at Windsor. A lengthy discussion ensued.

In response to question raised regarding approvals, it was noted that the forthcoming degree completion proposals (for undergraduate students) have been approved by the appropriate Departmental Councils and Faculty (Coordinating) Councils. It was also noted that degree completion programs will not require approval by the new Quality Council.

Although the Simon Fraser University and Navitas agreement documented that 75% of the international students came from China, it was noted that Study Group would be recruiting about one-third of the students from China and the rest from other international locations in order to ensure greater demographic and international diversity.

In response to concern raised regarding the issue that the hiring of educators on contract to offer a diploma program would not ensure sound pedagogy, it was noted that instructors will be hired locally from a pool of qualified candidates (i.e., sessional instructors, graduate students, etc.). It was further noted that extensive training will be given to the instructors who will already have expertise in a specific discipline. There was some concern that the University (for sessional instructors) and Study Group (for its instructors) would be competing to hire from the same pool of candidates. It was also noted that more information on the training provided by Study Group would be helpful.

It was expressed that since Study Group is owned by an equity firm lead by marketers, rather than educational institution, it was argued that the partnership may not be favourable. In response, it was stressed that Study Group is a reputable organization that is educationally driven and is experienced in the field of recruitment and retention and in addressing the needs of international students. This will be particularly important when preparing students academically and culturally for transition into studies at the University of Windsor. The cultural aspect of creating a ‘sense of community’ for these international students is critical as students may initially have difficulties adjusting to leaving their home and families, living in a new environment and, adapting to a different language and culture. Through Study Group, students will be immersed in a supportive environment in which they are taught English as a second language within the context of their discipline. It is anticipated that the Study Group program will be housed in currently unused space in Laurier Hall, on the Windsor campus. Members were informed that the English Language Improvement Program (ELIP) is a good example of a program that has been successful in assisting students in learning English Language proficiency skills (whose first language is not English) while also instilling a ‘sense of community and belonging’ amongst students in the program. It was noted that students in the advanced part of the ELIP program are able to take a University of Windsor course. Study Group goes one step further by having students work on language acquisition through their studies. This immersion method (simultaneously offering languages teaching through the teaching of program specific content) has proven to be successful. This, along with the social and cultural integration, will help increase the retention rate of students once they enter University.

Members noted that there was a lack of scholarly literature, statistics and data available that would demonstrate Study Group’s good track record of placing and graduating strong students. In response, it was noted that universities that have partnered with Study Group have spoken favourably on the partnership, reporting that the retention rate of the international students that come through Study Group exceeds 80%. Members wondered whether there was data on Study Group’s retention rate.

It was noted that the Navitas External Review at Simon Fraser University hardly seems positive in light of the recommendations within it particularly with regard concerns with false advertising. In response, it was noted that according to the documentation, the Provost at Simon Fraser University commented that the review was “a positive and constructive assessment” which is important because it is the first assessment with recommendations within a Canadian context that provides insight into the working relationship between Simon Fraser and Navitas. The external review measures the overall qualitative and quantitative success of the program over the first five years of its operation and is one of the most comprehensive reports on such partnerships.

In response to a question raised regarding whether the Study Group students will be competing academically with other Windsor students, it was explained that successful completion of the degree completion programs with requisite grades will be recognized as appropriate for entry to specified
degree programs with advanced standing into second year. Students would receive 'credits' on their transcript (not marks) which acknowledges that they have attained the equivalent of the first year learning outcomes in specified programs by completing their Study Group Foundation year. However, once students have been accepted into the second year of a program, at Windsor, then they will need to meet the same program requirements as any other UWin student to obtain a degree.

Study Group Foundation Diploma graduates will not be competing for first-year spaces with domestic students, since they would be admitted into second year. The University of Windsor is not obligated to accept Study Group graduates into second year who do not meet the admissions requirements of the University. Therefore, progression through the program does not guarantee admission any more than it would be guaranteed through the University’s other degree completion program or articulation agreements.

Concern was raised regarding the issue of the University having to be accountable if the proposed partnership is unsuccessful and ends up damaging the reputation of the institution. Concern was also raised regarding the issue that Windsor should be targeting international recruitment and retention issues internally rather than contracting them out to a company that will be essentially teaching “Windsor” courses. In response, it was noted that it is possible to look at this partnership from a positive perspective particularly given that degree completion programs have a five year window and Windsor can terminate the Study Group agreement after two years, if Study Group does not meet its responsibilities.

It was expressed that although it is often difficult for people to embrace or take the lead in new initiatives, a venture such as this could be well worth it. It was noted that it is possible that an external company may know more about international recruitment than an educational institution and that partnering with them to create a new international student recruitment and retention model could lead to increased enrolment, enhanced reputation for diversity and a strong cohort of students promoting international engagement for the University.

The University will continue to have an agreement with Higher-Edge and will continue to recruit internationally for direct entry into its programs.

The view was expressed that if we do not know the reasons for losing international students at the end of their first year of study, then we are presenting Study Group, or anyone else, who might undertake the level-one instruction of international students, with "a mission impossible". Have we learned anything new, since the previous discussion about why the retention of international students beyond level one is poor? In response, it was noted that the matter is currently under investigation. It is encouraging that retention has improved greatly, compared to several years ago.

As with any other program proposal, Senate’s role is to review and assess proposals based on their academic merits, and to ensure that they fit within the academic mission and vision of the University. Senate will not be reviewing the legal contractual agreement between the University of Windsor and Study Group.

The document submitted to Senate for approval will be changed from that reviewed last year in that quality assurance provisions will be clarified, including the provision that AAUs may require Study Group students to complete the final examination(s) of the equivalent University of Windsor course(s). However, no changes have been made to the degree completion programs as originally approved and submitted by the departments and the Faculties.

5.8 Report of the Provost
Members were reminded that requests for funding for the 2011/2012 Strategic Priority Fund are due by January 17, 2011.

5.9 Report of Vice-President, Research
Nothing to report.

6 Question Period/Other Business
Nothing to report.
7 Adjournment

MOTION: That the meeting be adjourned.

Drake/Abou Gharam
CARRIED