BOARD OF GOVERNORS – OPEN SESSION
Approved Minutes

Tuesday, May 26, 2026
1:00 p.m., W646 & Zoom

Present:	K. Reid (Chair), S. Davis, T. Boulet, B. Burton, B. Chapman, B. Cummins, A. Dymond, T. Fox, D. Gonci, D. Jayas, C. Kuzyk, O. Legg, M. Lockett, A. Mercader, J. Oldfield, D. Westwood, T. Whitehead, S. Zielke
Regrets:	N. van Mulligen, M. Kawchuk, A Figueroa, C. Crane
Other:	J. Gallais, M. Helstein, D. Lucas, D. McMartin, R. Schiff, M. Whipple, J. Westers, C. Kanashiro, L. Svenson, B. Bullock
Guests:	

Oki, and welcome to the University of Lethbridge. Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.

The Chair welcomed new members Chad Kuzyk, Alumni Association representative, and Orion Legg, ULSU Vice-President Operations & Finance. Congratulations were also extended to Alejandro Figueroa and Jade Oldfield on their reappointments to one-year terms ending April 2027.

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1. CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL

1.1. Approval of the May 26, 2026 Open Agenda

1.2. Approval of the April 16, 2026 Open Minutes

MOTION: opn.2026.05.01

Davis/Chapman

That the Board of Governors approve the May 26, 2026 Consent Agenda, as amended.

Motion: Carried

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2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

K. Reid noted that this item has been added as a standing agenda item for reminder purposes only, to reinforce good governance practices and the Board's responsibilities under the Post-Secondary Learning Act and the Board's Code of Conduct.

3. BOARD CHAIR REMARKS

K. Reid highlighted the following:

- Recent engagement in a variety of university and community activities, including the Arts & Science Abbondanza fundraiser, sector conferences, meetings with government representatives, and campus events and receptions.
- Noted the importance of maintaining strong relationships with community and post-secondary partners and continued regular check-ins with D. Jayas.
- Looking ahead, K. Reid will participate in Spring Convocation and related events, recognition dinners, community engagements, and meetings with external partners.
- Board members were invited to reach out with any questions.

4. PRESIDENT REMARKS

D. Jayas highlighted from his attached report:

- Reported that the academic year had progressed well overall and noted the positive feedback received from both internal and external stakeholders.
- Advised that annual performance reviews of executive leaders would be conducted in June.
- Expressed appreciation to the Executive Team for their hard work and contributions throughout the year.
- Provided an update on the implementation of the Mintz Panel recommendations, including work related to institutional neutrality and the development of a corresponding policy. He noted that it remains unclear whether forthcoming government legislation will be prescriptive or directive in nature.

5. CHANCELLOR REMARKS

- Congratulated the organizers of Vibe Fest and Abbondanza, noting the significant growth and success of both events compared to the previous year.
- Highlighted the university's Long Service Awards and recognized the contributions of employees being honoured.
- Reported that the Grove First Dig event was well attended and successful.
- Attended the World of Choices mentorship day in partnership with Junior Achievement, engaging with high school students exploring career and educational opportunities.
- Noted that Convocation Week was underway, including four ceremonies and the Chancellor's Dinner.

6. ITEMS FOR ACTION

6.1. 2025-2026 Year End Financial Statements

Draft 2024-25 Financial Statements

• Management & Discussion & Analysis

• Understanding Financial Statements

• Analytical Review

MOTION: opn.2026.05.02

Gonci/Oldfield

That the Board of Governors approve the 2025-2026 Consolidated Financial Statements.

Motion: Carried

D. Gonci presented the 2025-26 Financial Statements and noted a minor typographical correction. Members commended administration on the quality and timely completion of the statements.

D. Lucas provided an overview of the financial results, highlighting stronger-than-normal investment income, ongoing efforts to diversify revenue sources, and a decline in enrolment revenue from the previous year. She emphasized the importance of maintaining stable enrolment, managing largely fixed operating costs, and preserving appropriate reserve levels to support long-term financial sustainability.

D. Jayas noted that while the university remains financially sound, continued strategic decision-making will be required to address ongoing financial pressures. He also expressed appreciation to the Finance team for their work in preparing the statements.

Members discussed the university's reserve and viability ratios and the impact of strong investment returns on those measures. Administration explained that recent investment gains were unusually high and included significant capital gains that cannot be relied upon for future budgeting. It was also noted that reserve balances have been supported by operational savings, including compensation costs that will be fully reflected in future years.

6.2. 2026-2027 Proposed Fees & Rates

MOTION: opn.2026.05.03

Gonci/Dymond

That Board of Governors approve the proposed fees and rates for the Bachelor of Engineering and the Master of Clinical and Counselling Psychology for 2026-27, with the fees and rates for 2027-2028 to 2029-2030 be approved in principle.

Motion: Carried

D. Gonci presented the proposed fees and rates for approval and provided an overview of the recommended changes and committee discussion.

Members discussed the inclusion of fees associated with a program that has not yet been implemented. Administration advised that the Board may approve the proposed fees in advance to support planning and budgeting processes.

Administration explained that approval "in principle" provides guidance on anticipated fees for future years while recognizing that adjustments may be required as circumstances change. It was noted that future revisions may be necessary in response to changes in government policy or other factors affecting the university's operating environment.

6.3. 2026-2027 Budget

MOTION: opn.2026.05.04

Gonci/

That Board of Governors approve the 2026/2027 Budget and approval in principle of the 2027/28 and 2028/29 budgets.

Motion: Carried

D. Gonci presented the Consolidated 2026-27 to 2028-29 Budget for approval and introduced C. Kanashiro, who provided an overview of the proposed budget and consultation process, including review by GFC prior to Board consideration.

Administration highlighted key revenue and expenditure trends, noting the university's increasing reliance on non-government revenue sources, ongoing enrolment pressures, and the continued impact of declining international student numbers. Members were advised that salaries and benefits remain the largest component of expenditures and that hiring restraint, vacancy management, and cost-saving measures continue to support financial sustainability.

The proposed budget reflects a cautious approach focused on addressing the structural deficit, monitoring enrolment trends, advancing strategic initiatives, and supporting future priorities, including Engineering and South Campus development. Administration also noted that government approval had been received to utilize reserve funds for strategic priority positions, Future State Project positions, and retroactive salary payments arising from collective bargaining settlements.

Members discussed the potential long-term implications of demographic and post-secondary sector trends highlighted at the Board retreat and the extent to which those considerations inform institutional planning. Administration noted that sector research and enrolment data continue to inform planning while recognizing the importance of considering the university's unique context and strategic priorities.

D. Jayas advised that the budget had been presented to General Faculties Council and that no significant concerns were raised during its review.

6.4. School of Engineering

MOTION: opn.2026.05.05

Davis/Mercader

That Board of Governors approve the creation of a School of Engineering, within the Faculty of Arts and Science, effective immediately.

Motion: Carried

S. Davis presented a recommendation to establish the proposed School of Engineering within the Faculty of Arts and Science for Board approval. Members were advised that the program has been under development for several years, that the curriculum has been approved by GFC, and that final external approvals are being completed. Establishing the School is required to support governance and accreditation requirements.

It was noted that, following establishment of the School, GFC will bring forward a proposal

for a School Council, including its structure, roles, and responsibilities, once leadership for the School has been appointed.

Members discussed the status of external approvals and the implications should approval not proceed as anticipated. Administration indicated that approval is expected and that establishing the School at this stage supports readiness for program implementation.

The recommendation had previously been considered by GFC and recommended to the Board for approval.

6.5. Progress & Achievement Report Metrics 2025-26 UofL Strategic Plan

MOTION: opn.2026.05.06

Cummins/Chapman

That Board of Governors approve the attached Progress and Achievement Report Metrics 2025-2026, UofL Strategic Plan.

Motion: Carried

B. Cummins introduced the Progress & Achievement Report Metrics 2025-26, noting that the report provides a high-level overview of progress and accountability across the university's four strategic directions. He advised that the report is developed collaboratively across the institution, with metrics reviewed through governance processes, and that a more comprehensive report will be presented to the Board in September.

Members discussed several of the reported metrics, including student participation in Indigenous-focused initiatives and student satisfaction with teaching quality, and noted the value of the report in demonstrating areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Questions were raised regarding the sources of the data and whether information from the report is shared externally. Administration advised that the report draws on a variety of internal and external data sources, which are identified within the report, and noted that while the report is primarily an internal accountability document, information may also be shared externally as appropriate.

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

None.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

8.1 Strategic Directions Joint Report

B. Cummins presented the Strategic Directions Joint Report, noting that it highlights activities and achievements related to the university's four strategic directions and replaces the former Vice-President reports. He advised that additional updates continue to be shared regularly through UWeekly.

Members highlighted several notable accomplishments, including the successful SPARK Teaching Conference, continued efforts to enhance the student experience through the Gove initiative, progress in leveraging external funding opportunities, and a successful Canadian Council on Animal Care assessment. Discussion also recognized innovative initiatives aimed at normalizing conversations about research setbacks and supporting researcher development.

Members received an update on preliminary discussions with Kainai Nation regarding potential partnership opportunities and noted emerging considerations related to research security and Indigenous knowledge. Highlights were also provided on the Dome partnership announcement, which received strong participation from students, employees, community members, and media representatives.

D. Jayas noted that the Strategic Directions Joint Report, together with the Progress & Achievement Report Metrics, provides the Board with a comprehensive overview of progress on the Strategic Plan and encouraged members to continue following institutional updates through UWeekly.

9. REPORTS

9.1. Board Member Reports

B. Chapman congratulated local Grade 12 and university graduates and recognized the Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign for its support of community programs.

O. Legg reported on the transition to the incoming ULSU Executive and noted strong engagement within General Assembly. He also advised that A. Figueroa was attending the CASA Conference and that he would represent the ULSU at Convocation.

J. Oldfield provided an update on Senate member onboarding and recruitment efforts to fill remaining vacancies.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: opn.2026.05.07

Oldfield/Whitehead

That the Board of Governors Open Session meeting of May 26, 2026 be adjourned.

Motion: Carried