

Council of Ontario Universities
Academic Colleagues Report
October 2016

Academic colleagues met on Wednesday evening, October 12, for a working dinner in the COU offices in Toronto. We reviewed the Council meeting agenda and discussed faculty perspectives on developing a highly skilled workforce, in preparation for the Council meeting the following day.

On Thursday morning, October 13, Peter Gooch (COU) updated Academic Colleagues on current issues involving COU and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD). The Ministry is finalizing recommendations for Cabinet on a new funding model for universities that would be implemented during the next few rounds of Strategic Mandate Agreements. The proposed model is based on enrolment, differentiation, student success, and special funding.

The Council Meeting was held at mid-day with a working lunch in the COU offices. The meeting began with a presentation by Academic Colleagues on the faculty role in developing a highly skilled workforce, a discussion framed by the recent report “Building the Workforce of Tomorrow”, by the Premier’s Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel. This report is featured in the new mandate letter for every ministry in Ontario.

In the President’s Report, David Lindsay spoke about COU’s communication strategy to engage the public in a conversation about university education in Ontario. The initiative was launched in September at the Ontario Universities’ Fair. Members of the public are encouraged to go online to take a brief survey on how they feel about the future and how universities might help make it better. The survey can be found at www.ontariosuniversities.ca.

After the Council meeting, Academic Colleagues met again to hear reports from Colleagues who serve on various COU committees.

A reception was held on Thursday evening, October 13, at the Windsor Arms Hotel in Toronto to present Dr. Bonnie Patterson with the 2016 David C. Smith Award in recognition of her many contributions to higher education.

The next meeting of Council will be held at McMaster University on April 6, 2017. Academic Colleagues will meet in Toronto on December 6 and 7, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Louise Hill
COU Academic Colleague for Lakehead University