

Academic Colleagues Report
Council of Ontario Universities
292nd Meeting of Council
Toronto, ON
October 14, 2011

Council met on Friday, October 14 in COU headquarters at 180 Dundas Street West in Toronto. The meeting was chaired by Sheldon Levy, President of Ryerson University and Chair of COU. Bonnie Patterson, President of COU, reported on the impact that the recent provincial election and the new minority Liberal government might have on the post-secondary education sector in Ontario. Funding is expected to be in line with campaign commitments, including a \$1600 tuition reduction grant for students. The Premier is seen as the sector's best political advocate, but his government will be striving for better results and administrative efficiencies. Under a minority government, public opinion will matter more than ever in government decision making.

Paul Davidson, President of AUCC, reported on the expected impact of the federal Conservative majority government on universities in Canada. Cabinet is considering 5% and 10% budget cuts for every government department, and the granting councils (NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR) will not be spared from this. AUCC intends to switch its narrative from what universities need to what universities contribute to Canada. AUCC will be celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

Academic Colleagues presented a discussion paper, "Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness: Considerations for Ontario Universities" written by Mary Kelly, Academic Colleague for Wilfrid Laurier, and a "mini" discussion paper, "What is a University?" Both papers stimulated lively discussion around the Council table.

Council passed an amendment to the COU Constitution to increase the normal term of appointment of Academic Colleagues from 2 years to 3 years. Every university senate is expected to implement this change in accordance with their own procedures for electing the Academic Colleague.

On the evening of Thursday, October 13 the David C. Smith Award was presented to Peter George at a reception and dinner held in the Arcadian Court on Bay Street. Peter George was recognized for his leadership and advocacy in shaping provincial and national strategies in support of Canada's postsecondary sector. He is the former President of McMaster University (1995-2010), and also served a term as president of COU (1991-1995).

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for April 12, 2012 at Laurentian University.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Louise Hill, Alternate COU Academic Colleague for Lakehead University