
The Board of Governors of Grant MacEwan University Mandate and Roles Document

Preamble

This Mandate and Roles Document for the Board of Governors of Grant MacEwan University (“MacEwan University” or “The University”) has been developed collaboratively between the Minister of Advanced Education (“Minister”) and the University. This document is in furtherance of the parties’ legal obligations under the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA) to reflect a common understanding of respective roles and responsibilities in governance of the University.

1. Mandate

The University’s mandate is set out in the Investment Management Agreement entered into by the University and the Minister.

Grant MacEwan University is a board-governed, public post-secondary institution operating in Alberta as an Undergraduate University under the authority of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA). Established in 1971, the institution is known for delivering exceptional undergraduate learning and has a rich history in its growth from a community college. The University was officially named Grant MacEwan University by an Order in Council in 2009 and was rebranded MacEwan University for communications and marketing purposes in 2013.

The Board of Governors of Grant MacEwan University (Board) operates and manages the University in accordance with its mandate by carrying out duties and responsibilities legislated by the PSLA and the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA). The Board works with the Minister to support and to promote the adult learning system’s principles of accessibility, affordability, quality, coordination, and accountability. The role of the Board and its operations are outlined in its Bylaws. The Board carries out some of its duties and responsibilities through its standing committees. The terms of reference of standing committees set out the responsibilities, membership, and authority of each committee.

The General Faculties Council (GFC) is MacEwan University’s senior academic governance body. The GFC is responsible for academic integrity, policies, programs, and standards, as well as for oversight of scholarship, understood to include both research and creative activity. The role of the Council and its operations are outlined in its Bylaws. The University President is chair of Council and acts as a conduit between GFC and the Board.

MacEwan University is Edmonton’s downtown University, located in the municipal ward O-day/mln, and its commitment to place informs the choices it makes. MacEwan serves the capital region, as well as central and northern Alberta, by collaborating with other post-secondary institutions to respond to the needs of business, industry, government, and society as a whole. Over 85 percent of MacEwan University graduates live and work in Alberta, contributing to the vitality and resilience of our province.

MacEwan University emphasizes a student-centered approach to delivering its academic programs and services. This approach is rooted in the interaction between academic staff and students, blended modes of course delivery, experiential learning opportunities, an emphasis on critical thinking, and high-quality student support. The University’s focus on community-based learning introduces students to a range of Albertans in their cities and towns and connects our programming with the development of competencies in demand across the province.

Through the delivery of its mandate, MacEwan University seeks to:

- Ensure student success through a focus on high-quality teaching from academic staff whose emphasis is on the student experience in the classroom and beyond it;
- Provide an undergraduate educational experience enriched through research and creative activity that informs our faculty's approach to pedagogy, engages students in their skill development, creates and applies knowledge, and supports economic development;
- Ensure that students develop the background to engage fully the economic and social challenges of a changing world; and
- Provide graduates the opportunity to advance their careers and further their education through flexible program delivery in a wide range of credentials.

MacEwan University focuses on four primary types of programming:

- Baccalaureate degrees that prepare students for employment and for graduate studies;
- Certificate, diploma, post-diploma, and post-baccalaureate credentials that prepare students for employment and for continued study in other credential areas;
- University transfer programs that prepare students for degree completion at partner institutions; and
- Preparatory (foundational) programming that readies students for credentialed post-secondary studies.

MacEwan University offers a wide range of certificate, diploma, and degree programs. The University offers programs in business, communications, community and human services, design, fine and performing arts, health, humanities, natural science, nursing, public safety, and social science. Program areas that flow into degree offerings include business, community and human services, fine and performing arts, and nursing. MacEwan has programs distinctive to central and northern Alberta, including those in health, natural science, and public safety.

MacEwan University offers transfer programs and actively participates in the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfers to facilitate student mobility within the province and across Canada. Members of the University's senior administration participate with their provincial counterparts to coordinate programming and services and enhance access for students. Partnerships outside Advanced Education include other post-secondary institutions and government departments, municipalities, not for profit organizations, business, and industry. In the spirit of reconciliation, efforts are being made to expand partnerships with Indigenous post-secondary Institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and amiskwaciy Academy. Collaborations and partnerships facilitate expanded opportunities for students, faculty, and staff in areas such as undergraduate degree programming access, work-integrated learning, experiential learning, student-based research, and student supports and services.

In recognizing that students need choices in delivery modes to accommodate life circumstances or learning preferences, MacEwan University offers online, hybrid, and face-to-face course delivery. The University's commitment to flexible program delivery and to a range of credentials maximizes opportunities for graduates to advance their careers and further their educations. Student's learning

journeys are not always linear, and MacEwan's programming serves as building blocks in a creative, multi-disciplinary education. MacEwan University provides unique opportunities for prospective and current students enrolled in a range of credentials to access seamlessly and to progress in baccalaureate programming, including:

- Laddering opportunities from certificate and diploma programs to different degree options at MacEwan University, facilitating progression so students can further their education and skill development; and
- Stackable credentials that allow students to pause and exit formal education to enter the workforce, leaving a degree program after two years with a diploma or leaving a diploma after one year with a certificate. Students can return to pursue additional education when needed, through to complete of a degree.

Scholarship at MacEwan University thrives in a culture of research and creative activity that enriches undergraduate education by informing faculty members' approach to pedagogy, engages students in their skill development, creates and applies knowledge, and supports economic development. The broad campus community undertakes scholarly enquiry that benefits the city, the region, the province, the country, and the world beyond. The University aims to provide students and academic staff the background to help address the social, economic, and environmental issues we face in a changing world. Scholarship is guided by the oversight of a standing committee of General Faculties Council. MacEwan seeks to build upon existing strengths across all our Faculties and Schools, as well as scholarship rooted in the early work of faculty members who helped the Institution emerge as a University, bolstered further by new colleagues whose appointments across campus feed a culture of teacher-scholars committed to research and creative activity inside and outside the classroom. What MacEwan University offers is in demand from the next generation of post-secondary students, from business and Industry, and from the community. In identifying future research directions, MacEwan is mindful of government priorities for advances to be made in the environment, health, and resource management. MacEwan University provides a student-centered undergraduate experience focused on student success, including the success of those students who are typically underrepresented in post-secondary education. Through a wide array of learning opportunities, and strategic partnerships in the community, the University seeks to expand students' cultural awareness by engaging the diversity of downtown Edmonton and supporting the individuals who come to MacEwan from around the world. Short-term education abroad programs for students, teaching exchanges, and study tours for academic and non-academic staff provide further opportunities to engage with other cultures.

MacEwan University offers a safe, inclusive, and welcoming campus to a diverse group of qualified students. They are supported from recruitment and admission through graduation and employment and to their return to the University as alumni. MacEwan is committed to expanding its capacity and reputation for accessibility. Faculty members work closely with the community to open doors and to encourage the transition to postsecondary education for traditionally underrepresented students, including first-generation students, Indigenous students, international students, and students with disabilities. Efforts are ongoing to improve inclusiveness, increase affordability, and remove all barriers to student success in an undergraduate learner-centered setting.

A wide array of services is provided to support student success and student wellness. Student services provide early intervention strategies and anticipate and remove barriers for students. Specialized services are offered, including services through the kihêw waciston Indigenous Centre, MacEwan University Health Centre, Access and Disability Resources, the Human Rights Office, and the Office of Sexual Violence and Prevention Education and Response.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board

The Board manages and operates the institution in accordance with its mandate and carries out the other duties and responsibilities legislated by the PSLA.

The Board sets strategic direction and monitors implementation.

The Board participates with the Minister in setting its long-term objectives and short-term targets, if any.

Board Members

All board members, regardless of the manner of their appointment, have the fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of the institution.

Board Chair

The Chair is the interface between the University and the Minister and provides leadership to the Board.

President and Vice-Chancellor

The President has general supervision over the direction of the operation of the institution and has other powers, duties, and functions that are assigned to the President by the Board.

Minister of Advanced Education

The Minister is responsible for the performance of all public agencies under Advanced Education, including the University.

The Minister's responsibilities as legislated by the PSLA and APAGA include:

- appointing, or recommending the appointment of, the Board members and the Chair;
- monitoring whether the institution is acting within its mandate and achieving its long-term objectives and short-term targets;
- advising the institution respecting any government policies applicable to the institution or its activities or operations; and
- reviewing the mandate and operations of the institution at least every seven years.

Department of Advanced Education

The Department supports the Minister and University in meeting their legislated responsibilities.

Subsidiaries

The University has no subsidiaries.

3. Accountability Relationships of the Public Agency

The flow of accountability relationships at the agency is as follows:

- The President is accountable to the Board.
- The Board is accountable to the Minister through the Chair.
- The Chair is accountable to the Minister for the mandate and conduct of the public agency.

4. Process for Administering the Code of Conduct

The University's Code of Conduct is reviewed and approved by the Ethics Commissioner, and the Board ratifies and makes public the Code of Conduct. Updates to the Code of Conduct are submitted to the Ethics Commissioner for review. The Chair administers the Code of Conduct for board members. In the event of an allegation that the Board Chair has breached the Code of Conduct, the Code Administrator is the Board's Audit and Risk Committee chair or the Governance and Human Resources Committee chair, depending on the nature of such allegation.

5. Mutual Expectations – Communication, Collaboration, and Consultation

The relationship between the University and the provincial government is an important one. Boards are accountable to the Minister, who has primary responsibility for the PSLA.

The Minister oversees strategic planning and direction setting for Alberta's advanced learning system, policy development, funding for general operations and specific purposes, and the promotion of transparency and accountability. The Minister is responsible for providing clear mandate direction to boards, establishing clear expectations for oversight and accountability, and for participating in an ongoing dialogue with boards on important issues.

The Board has a governance oversight role in relation to the institution it governs. Because the chair serves as the voice of the Board, and is directly accountable to the Minister, the relationship between the Minister and the chair is critical.

Other officials, such as the Deputy Minister who oversees the operations of Advanced Education, will typically be in closer contact with institution presidents and vice-presidents. Similarly, department staff may be in regular contact with staff of the institutions on areas of mutual interests.

6. Committee Structure

Committees of the Board include:

- **The Audit and Risk Committee** provides objective advice and recommendations to the Board on the adequacy and functioning of the University's integrity and accuracy of the University's annual financial statements; internal and external audit functions, related policy, control frameworks and processes; safe disclosure policy and frameworks; risk management; as well as legal and regulatory compliance.
- **The Finance, Property and Investment Committee** advises the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities for the financial affairs of the University including the establishment and monitoring of sound financial strategies, budgets, and policies which ensure long-term financial sustainability. The Committee also makes recommendations to the Board which ensure that property and

facilities development is aligned with University policies, principles and strategies, and advises on how to enhance the University's investment position and/or portfolio performance.

- **The Governance and Human Resources Committee** focuses on governance and people resources. The Committee assesses and makes recommendations to the Board regarding the Board's effectiveness; provides direction regarding on-going Board member development; and education and leads the process for recommending Board member criteria to the government for consideration when appointing new members. The Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its obligations relative to human resource and compensation matters, and its oversight of the recruitment and performance of the President.
- **The Strategy and Stakeholder Relations Committee** provides oversight, monitoring, objective advice, guidance, and recommendations to the Board regarding the development of the University's foundational and transformational planning documents. In addition, the Committee provides oversight with respect to the University's brand and reputation; fundraising goals and strategies; broadening the University's understanding of potential partnerships that align with its strategic plan; and deepening the University's connections to government, community, alumni, and others within the University community.

7. Financial, Staffing, and Administrative Arrangements

The University receives funding from the Government of Alberta via its Operating and Program Support Grant.

The Auditor General is the auditor of the University.

The University is subject to sections 1, 2(5), 5, 6, 7, 13(3), 57.1, 80, and 81 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

While the *Post-secondary Learning Act* gives the Board of Governors broad authority to appoint employees, the President is the only employee that reports to and is directly accountable to the Board.

For Alberta's public post-secondary institutions, positions that are defined as "designated executives" by the *Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions (Post-secondary Institutions) Compensation Regulation*, are subject to the compensation framework and limits on total remuneration established thereunder.

8. Planning and Reporting Requirements

The Board is required to enter into an Investment Management Agreement with the Minister that includes

- the mandate of the institution,
- performance metrics for the institution, and
- anything else determined by the Minister.

Annually, the University provides the Department with a Capital Plan and a Budget Plan.

Each year the Board must prepare and submit to the Minister a report that includes the audited financial statements for the preceding year.

The Board is also required under the PSLA to submit to the Minister any reports or other information required by the Minister.

9. Administration

Three Year Renewal or Revision

The Mandate and Roles Document must be reviewed and renewed, amended or replaced within three years after the day on which the document or the most recent amendment to the document was signed.

Transparency

Copies of the Mandate and Roles Document will be filed with the Minister and the Public Agency Secretariat. This document will also be made publicly available on the Board's website and the Government of Alberta's website.

His Majesty in right of Alberta, as
represented by the Minister of Advanced
Education



Minister

The Board of Governors of Grant MacEwan
University



Carolyn Graham
Board Chair

March 26, 2024

Date

February 15, 2023

Date