

**February 16, 2023**

The meeting was held at 1:32 p.m. via Zoom.

SENATORS:

|                    |                     |                |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| M. Adler           | M. Kim              | S. Powell      |
| P. Barmby          | K. Kirkwood         | A. Pyati       |
| A. Baxter          | D. Kotsopoulos      | C. Robinson    |
| J. Binoy           | J. Lacefield        | S. Roland      |
| M. Bordignon       | Y. Laforet-Fliesser | H. Samson      |
| A. Bryson          | D. Laird            | M. Sanita Lima |
| S. Burke           | L. Latif            | A. Shepard     |
| C. Burucúa         | C. Lengyell         | D. Smith       |
| K. Choi            | D. Lee              | C. Steeves     |
| M. Cleveland       | A. Liu              | L. Stephenson  |
| K. Coley           | L. Logan            | F. Strzelczyk  |
| G. De Viveiros     | D. Malloy           | J. Sutton      |
| D. Ferri           | C. Marshall         | D. Tempesta    |
| L. Frederking      | M. McMurrin         | J. Toswell     |
| R. Forrester-Jones | M. Milde            | J. Watson      |
| A. Fremeth         | L. Miller           | J. Welch       |
| J. Garland         | J. Minac            | S. Whitehead   |
| B. Gillies         | K. Mooney           | J. Yoo         |
| T. Granadillo      | I. Namukasa         |                |
| A. Haque           | B. Neff             |                |
| N. Harney          | A. Nelson           |                |
| L. Henderson       | C. Nicholls         |                |
| A. Hodgson         | T. Orchard          |                |
| M. Joannis         | T. Peace            |                |
| T. Joy             | K. Pollock          |                |

Observers: C. Bressette, R. Chelladurai, J. Doerksen, D. Facca, E. Gardner, J. Hussain,



the student housing issue has become an increasing challenge over the last year due to the high cost of living expenses and inflation. Some senior leaders recently met with representatives of the Society of Graduate Students (SOGS), which advocates on behalf of graduate students. The Provost acknowledged the substantive SOGS' Report on housing and food insecurity (Appendix A).

To address the questions that were received prior to the meeting from graduate student Senators, F. Strzelczyk presented slides with information regarding Western's efforts on graduate student funding, comparison across the U15 and the further steps planned to be taken in order to handle the affordability issue (Appendix B).

F. Strzelczyk announced the launching of the SOGS Bursary Fund with over \$500,000 for the next 3-year cycle to address the urgent needs of graduate students. She also advised that SOGS's membership fees can be redirected to other important graduate students' issues.  
The Provost

A Senator raised the concern regarding possible issues with delivery of the required number of instructional days and scheduling classes. They noted that procedures for aligning an additional non-instructional day on Monday with the academic schedule for the term should be elaborated by the Senate. A Senator asked whether a non-instructional day could be considered last Friday of September to prevent its potential impact on the scheduling of classes and labs.

F. Strzelczyk, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) acknowledged the importance of observing for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Jayne Garland, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, noted that the enrolment numbers for health specializations that are not mandated by the government reflected the current provincial

That students currently enrolled in the modules/certificate be permitted to graduate with the old name of the module/certificate on their diploma until August 31, 2026, upon request to the Office of the Registrar.

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

S.23-30 **ITEM 12.2(b) – Ivey Business School and Faculty of Social Science, Department of Political Science: Revisions to the Program Requirements of the HBA / Honours Specialization in Political Science Combined Degree Program**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by C. Steeves,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2023, the program requirements of the HBA / Honours Specialization in Political Science combined degree program be revised as shown in Item 12.2(b).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

S.23-31 **ITEM 12.2(c) – Faculty of Engineering: Revisions to the Admission Requirements of the Biomedical Engineering Options**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by C. Steeves,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2023,



time registration option be introduced for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs in the Faculty of Engineering as shown in Item 12.2(e)(v).

CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

S.23-37 **ITEM 12.2(f) – Revisions to the Articulation Agreement for the Admission of Graduates of the Business-Finance Diploma Program at Fanshawe College into the Major in Economics or Major in Financial Economics**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by C. Steeves,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective February 16, 2023, the



conflict of interest between voting and non-voting ex-officio members of the Honorary Degrees Committee. A Senator further suggested that the Associate Director of Convocation should be a non-voting member.

Amy Bryson, University Secretary, advised that the Honorary Degrees Committee discussed the procedures for the rescission of an honorary doctorate, and it was decided that due to the extraordinary circumstance, any issues would be handled on a case-by-case basis.

It was decided that the revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Honorary Degrees Committee be tabled and sent back to the Honorary Degrees Committee for consideration.

**ITEM 12.2(d) – Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry: Revisions to the Progression Requirements of the MD Program**

It was moved by M. Milde, seconded by C. Steeves,

That on the recommendation of ACA, Senate approve that effective September 1, 2023, the Progression Requirements of the MD Program in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry be revised as shown in Item 12.2(d).

CARRIED

A Senator requested this item be removed from the Consent Agenda as they had em [JJE]

In response to questions regarding the report, M. McGlynn, Vice-Provost (Academic Planning, Policy & Faculty), clarified various metrics, including probationary teaching scholars, equity issues, retirements, limited-term appointments, presented data broken down by workload proportion and the increasing number of clinical faculty that reflect the clinical demand. In her comments, M. McGlynn stated that at this point it is too early to estimate the impact of COVID.

S.23-41 **DISCUSSION AND QUESTION PERIOD**

The full text of questions submitted in advance of the meeting were posted in the Agenda at Item 14.0 prior to the meeting. The questions and responses are summarized below.

Following a request for further information regarding the efforts and plans of the University to support graduate students, F. Strzelczyk, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) addressed this question during her report.

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## Executive Report from Society of Graduate Students 2022-2023

The leadership team of the [Society of Graduate Students](#) (SOGS) ran a survey to the membership from October 31, 2022 to November 15, 2022 to get an idea of the scale and scope of housing and food security challenges faced by current graduate students. This survey was an opportunity for the Society to identify service gaps and financial support needs amongst the current (2022-23) graduate student population at Western University, and to bring these gaps and needs to the attention of stakeholders and leadership partners on campus.

Unique Qualtrics survey links were sent to graduate students enrolled at Western University in November 2022. All information from this survey was anonymized. The SOGS Vice-President of Student Services, SOGS Governance and Policy Manager, and SOGS Communications Promotions Manager were the only people with access to the raw data.

: 1429 respondents: 62% domestic and 38% international. 77% of respondents were in the first 2 years of their graduate degree reflective trends of current and incoming graduate students at Western University.

76% of respondents faced challenges with finding housing in London, Ontario with affordability ranked the highest challenge. 46% of respondents pay over \$1000 in rent/month. Students reported opting for the following to keep rental costs within the scope of affordability: virtual studies, live with parents, commute, live with roommates, and/or rely on family or spouse's income.

44% of respondents identified as food insecure. Within this pool of respondents, 41% were PhD students and 25% were Master's thesis students

55% of students cannot afford essential items (i.e., hygiene products, clothing, sanitary products, etc). Within this pool of respondents, 46% were PhD students and 20% were Master's thesis students

This raises concerns of equity, diversity and inclusion where socioeconomic status of a student and/or their family will be the primary determinant of their ability to pursue higher education at Western University.

# Demographics

**A** We received a total of \_\_\_\_\_ which is approximately \_\_\_\_\_ of respondents identified as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ students.

Overall, \_\_\_\_\_ of respondents indicated they were in a \_\_\_\_\_ program while \_\_\_\_\_ indicated they were in a \_\_\_\_\_ program. Furthermore, \_\_\_\_\_ of respondents were enrolled in \_\_\_\_\_ degree w \_\_\_\_\_ degree. Since research-intensive deg

# Housing

A A of respondents had experienced  
Of the challenges ranked, of respondents ranked  
as the while and  
were given a , followed by accessible: bus routes, houses, and childcare in  
ranked order of challenges faced when looking for housing in London, Ontario (Figure 3)

↳

A Approximately of respondents  
Included values from "others." This indicates that according to a 12-month lease, majority of  
graduate students at WesternU could be expected to pay approximately \$12 000/annually  
in rent (Figure 4).

B

A

A

A

of respondents

and

Graduate students that pay approximately \$750/month display variation in the number in the number of roommates. This can reflect proximity to campus increased number of roommates for the same price and reduction in roommates further from main campus (Figure 5).

Note: For simplicity, this number excludes responses from "other." However, this is to give an estimate of rent prices graduate students at WesternU could be expected pay per unit.



AB

There were several mentions in "other" that further elaborated the challenges experienced with finding housing in London, Ontario.

- students had to opt for due to challenges with finding affordable housing.
- were unable to find for their needs.
- Several students had to from or for financial support to meet their housing needs.
- Furthermore, some rent rates may not include essential amenities for students such as electricity, internet, rental insurance etc.

A

A

Key highlights from our findings are:

1. 76% of respondents experienced challenges with finding adequate housing.
2. □

# Food Insecurity

of respondents identified as

A

Within in this pool of respondents, were and were

Furthermore, of respondents reported that they to purchase

; of these respondents and

This appears to suggest a trend among funded students (Figure 6).

↳

A A

who were in the

of their graduate degree reported

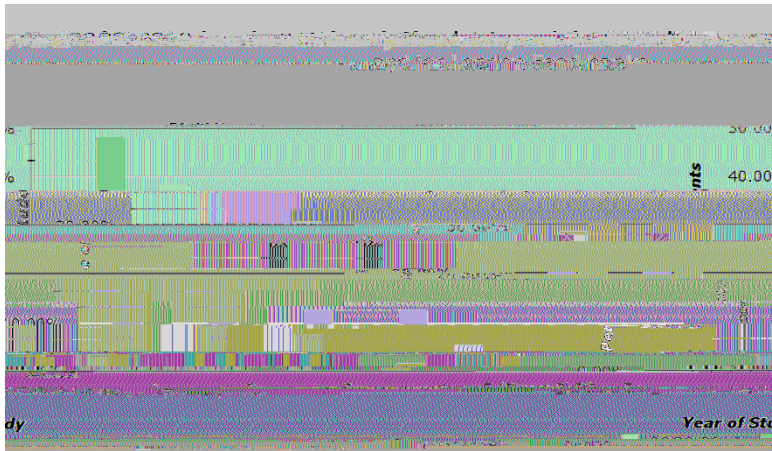
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and

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BA A reported use of the A B with the and students. of these respondents were in the of their (Figure 8).

reported use of the to meet their food insecurity needs with identifying as and as students. of these respondents were in the of their



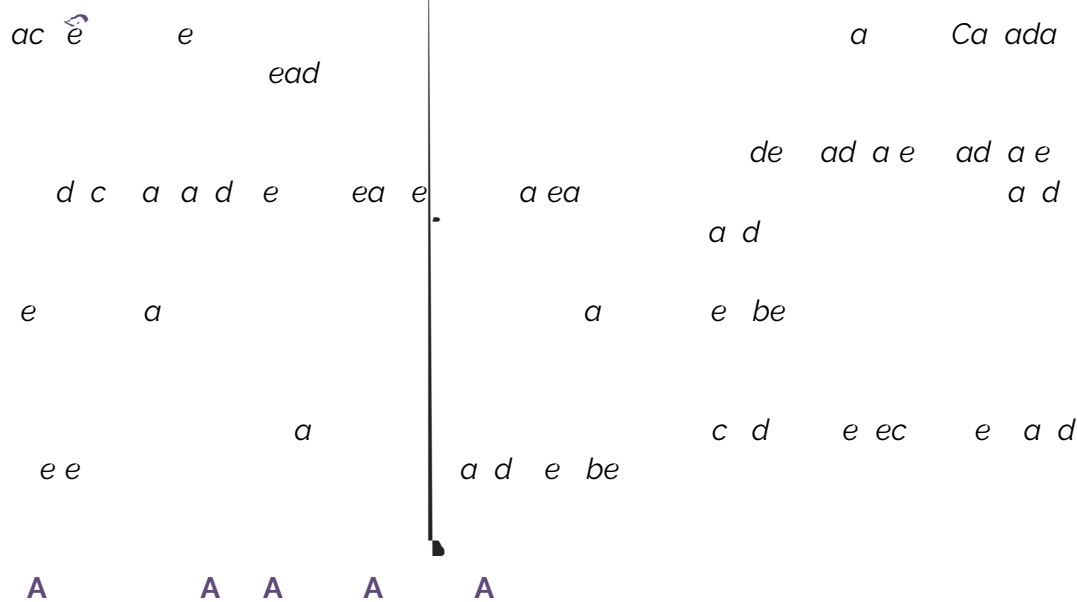
- A
- Key highlights from our findings are:
1. 46% and 55% of our respondents identified as being food insecure and unable to purchase essential items respectively.
  2. Within this pool, 80% of the respondents are within the first 2 years of their graduate degree reflecting the expected challenges of incoming, current and future students.
  3. Within this pool, 66% of the respondents were PhD or Masters thesis students indicating a trend among funded students

Overall, respondents identified that the majority of their challenges with food security were due to the , followed by and for their respective graduate program.



# Connecting with WesternU's Strategic Plan for 2030

According to the goal of the goal, we need to identify the key elements and the impact of the goal on the organization. The goal is to increase the number of students who are engaged in the learning process.



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# SOGS Initiatives

The Society's operational budget is solely supported by mandatory membership fees, with no financial or material contribution from WesternU to better support graduate students. Supporting approximately 6,800 students with unique challenges, the Society's mandate has always been to fill in the service and support gaps that the university has failed to acknowledge (i.e., funding packages do not reflect the cost of living) or take responsibility for (i.e., turning on-campus grad student housing into undergraduate only housing). The Society has launched several financial aid programs to support students in extenuating circumstances, such as the food bank program as well as the childcare and UHIP subsidies.

**A**      **BA**

In 2017, SOGS created the           **A**      **B**           to support members in extenuating financial circumstances who were facing food insecurity. To date, the SOGS Non-TA Food Bank has **A** . The Food Bank program is open to all non-TA graduate students (approximately **B** ), designed to recognize the additional challenges students when they do not have an income stream coming from a funding package (i.e., a TAship). Over the last 5 years **B** to better support the growing food insecurity experienced by graduate students.

Our current Food Bank funding model involves providing **A** with an additional **B** (spouse and/or children). SOGS

of \$100 per successful application in order to not only make the program more equitable,



- A [redacted]

5) AFEA I ALI E A I ALI A I G AD A E A EG L G E

- A A To provide A A along with for incoming international students to ensure they have a safe transition from their point of arrival in Canada to when they move into secured housing spaces within the London community.
- A [redacted]

6) L I HA ED CA G AD A EH I G L G E

- A A To accommodate A A , ensure accommodate the in housing. are in place to
- A for incoming graduate students that is [redacted]



# PROVOST UPDATE

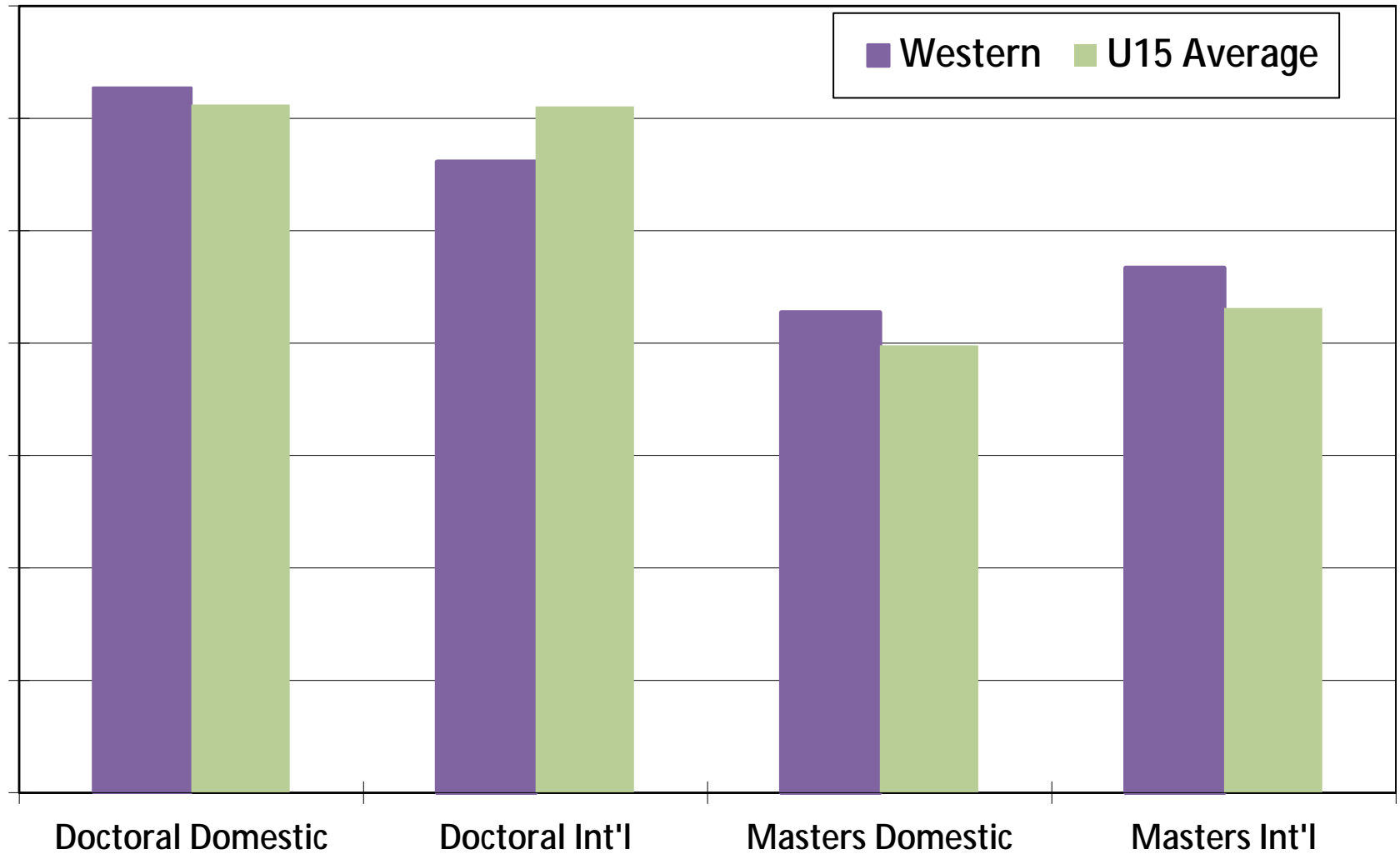
## Graduate Student Funding





# Graduate Student Funding: 2020-21

## Western compared to the U15



# Next Steps:

- 1.