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**UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR BOARD OF
GOVERNORS:
ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENT OF
TOM PORTER ***

Prepared for:

Standing Committee of
Government Agencies

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INTRODUCTION

This document was prepared to assist Members participating in the Committee’s review of the Order-in-Council appointment of Tom Porter to the Board of Governors of the University of Windsor. It describes the role and operations of the Board; provides an overview of the university; presents information about the appointee, and suggests possible lines of questioning.

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

Enabling Statute	Responsible Ministry
<i>University of Windsor Act, 1962-63, As Amended, C. 194, S. 18(4) (Private Act)</i>	Ministry of Colleges and Universities
Agency Type	Most Recent Annual Report
N/A	2018-19
Activities of the Agency	
The Board of Governors is responsible for the oversight of all operational aspects of the university, including (but not limited to): approving strategic directions; operating and capital budgets; property acquisition and construction; and establishing appropriate controls and accountabilities for the university’s financial, human, and physical resources.	
Board Membership	
Statutory Number of Members: 32 Appointed by Cabinet: 4 Current Members: 31 Term of Office: 3 years and eligible for reappointment; no member shall serve more than 3 consecutive terms. Remuneration: None	
Position Requirements	
The board meets on the second Tuesday of each month, except in July and August. Each member is assigned to a committee which requires on average one meeting a month.	

OVERVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY

One of 20 publicly-assisted universities in Ontario, the University of Windsor was originally established in 1857 as Assumption College before being incorporated in 1963 as a non-denominational autonomous degree-granting university.

The University of Windsor describes itself as a “regionally focused, globally connected comprehensive university” which is “an engine of labour force vitality, economic diversification, and urban and regional vitality, and a catalyst for

change and innovation.”¹ The university is the largest employer in the city of Windsor and says it “plays a critical direct role in regional prosperity.”²

Offering 190 undergraduate programs, 65 graduate programs, and 6 professional programs, the university now has more than 500 faculty members and more than 16,000 undergraduate and graduate students.³

With an emphasis on experiential learning, the university collaborates with more than 250 companies to provide students with co-op and internship opportunities in Ontario as well as nationally and internationally.⁴

The university’s research shows that 71% of first-year students come from the Windsor-Essex region, and 80% of the university’s students “identify financial pressures as obstacles to success. They work more, and spend more time shouldering family-care responsibilities, than peers elsewhere.”⁵

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The university has a bicameral governance structure with the Board of Governors providing oversight of operational matters and the Senate providing oversight of academic matters.

Role and Responsibilities of the Board of Governors

The role and responsibilities of the Board of Governors are to

- appoint the President;
- review the President’s goals and performance;
- retain overall accountability for the performance of the university;
- provide oversight to ensure that university actions support the mission, vision, values and strategic goals of the University;
- monitor the university’s performance against specific performance measures related to the Board’s mandate;
- ensure that appropriate financial and administrative controls, policies and agreements are in place for the university’s financial, human and physical resources;
- grant approvals of university actions that fall within the mandate of the Board, including approval of tuition fees, operating expenditures and one-time funding and expenditures; and

¹ University of Windsor, “[Strategic Mandate Agreement, 2020-2024](#).”

² University of Windsor Secretariat, “[About Us](#).”

³ University of Windsor, “[Fast Facts](#)” and “[Strategic Mandate Agreement 2020-24](#).”

⁴ University of Windsor, “[Experiential Learning](#).”

⁵ University of Windsor, “[Strategic Mandate Agreement, 2020-2024](#).”

- assess the performance of the Board and its members, and facilitate Board renewal.⁶

FUNDING

The university's **operating revenue** for 2020/21 was budgeted at \$305.7 million, an increase of \$13 million (4.7%) over the previous year.⁷

In January 2019, the Province announced a **new tuition framework** with a 10% tuition reduction for 2019-20 and 2020-21. The university reported in 2019 that the tuition reduction resulted in "approximately \$10 million in lost revenue ... one of the largest budgetary adjustments the University has had to face in its history."⁸

In April 2019, the Ministry introduced a **new performance-based accountability and funding model** for the province's 45 publicly-assisted universities and colleges to be phased in over three years. Some funding would be tied to performance metrics at individual institutions such as employment and graduation rates, the amount of research and industry funding the institutions receive, and the demonstrated skills of their students.⁹

Each publicly-assisted postsecondary institution has its own multi-year **Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA)** with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities setting out institutional priorities as well as planned enrolment growth and financial sustainability.¹⁰

In August, the University of Windsor signed a new [Strategic Mandate Agreement](#) for 2020-25. (This is the third round of SMAs, referred to as SMA3.)

In the preamble to the SMA3, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities notes that "given the uncertainty regarding future impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on the SMA3 metrics, the Ministry will delay the planned activation of performance-based funding for two years."¹¹

RECENT NEWS

In September 2020, a University of Windsor researcher received provincial funding to study how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the mental health of children in Windsor and Essex County.¹²

⁶ University of Windsor, "[Role and Responsibilities of the Board and Members](#)."

⁷ Office of the President, "[University of Windsor Operating Budget 2020-21](#)," April 8, 2020.

⁸ Office of the President, "[University of Windsor Operating Budget 2019-2020](#)," May 1, 2019.

⁹ Joe Friesen, "[New metrics for Ontario university and college funding include employment and graduation rates](#)," *Globe and Mail*, April 16, 2019.

¹⁰ Ministry of Colleges and Universities, "[Strategic Mandate Agreements](#)."

¹¹ Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the University of Windsor, "202-2025 Strategic Mandate Agreement," p. 2.

¹² University of Windsor, "[Pandemic research into children's mental health gets provincial funding boost](#)," *Daily News*, September 28, 2020.

A team of University of Windsor researchers received funding in November 2020 through the federal Canadian Foundation for Innovation for an initiative “testing sewage as an early warning system for the community spread of COVID-19.”¹³

Also in November, the President’s Working Group on Anti-Black Racism announced the membership of the university’s twenty-member Anti-Black Racism Task Force which will submit recommendations for “creating a safer and equitable experience for Black lives” at the university in Fall 2021.¹⁴

The following new spaces have been developed as part of the university’s ongoing campus transformation initiative:

- The former Armouries building in downtown Windsor has been transformed to house the university’s **School of Creative Arts (SoCA)**.
- A new “state-of-the-art, energy-efficient” **Science Research and Innovation Facility** has been built with “upgraded laboratory and collaboration spaces for leading-edge research and commercialization in the fields of materials chemistry and translational health.”
- The new \$73 million **Lancer Sport and Recreation Centre** will “foster athletic excellence and support quality recreational services” for students and the wider community.¹⁵

THE WITNESS

The witness, of Windsor, is seeking appointment as a part-time member.

According to information provided by the Office of the Premier, Tom Porter is a partner at Mosseau Law Firm. His community involvement includes serving as a member on the board of directors for Windsor Port Authority, and a Legal Advisor for Windsor Endowment for the Arts.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What has motivated the witness to seek this appointment?

What is the witness’s understanding of the challenges faced by academic institutions such as the University of Windsor?

What particular skills or interests does the witness bring to the Board of Governors of the University of Windsor?

¹³ Office of Public Affairs & Communications, University of Windsor, “[Sewage testing for COVID spread receives special federal funding](#),” news release, November 13, 2020.

¹⁴ University of Windsor, “[Members appointed to Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#),” *Daily News*, November 13, 2020.

¹⁵ University of Windsor, “[Campus Transformation: LSRC Overview](#).”