

Senate Orientation

Lauren Sergio, Vice-Chair of Senate
Pascal Robichaud, Secretary of Senate

September 28, 2023



redefine THE POSSIBLE.



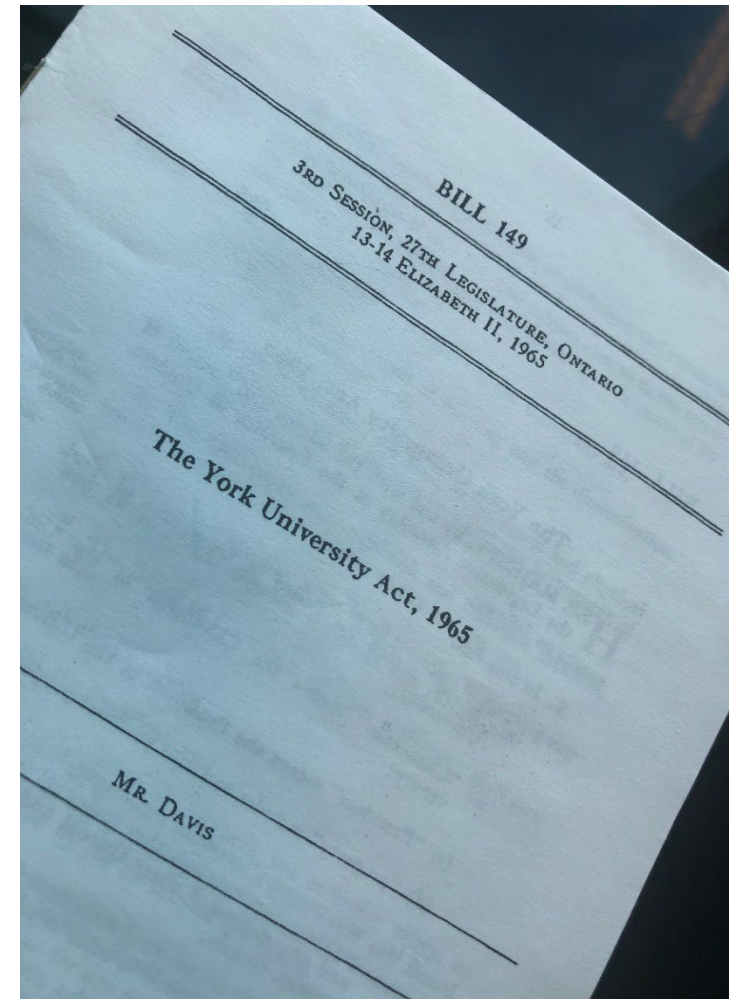
University Governance Primer



Self-directed module on the fundamentals of Governance at York

- **Bicameral governance**
- **Senate at the top of a collegial governance structure**
- **Responsible for:**
 - **Academic policy of the University**
 - **Admissions standards**
 - **Programs and courses**
 - **Creation of academic units, chairs**
 - **Creation of Faculty Councils and rules**
 - **Rules regarding its affairs**

(PA)



Other Senate Responsibilities



- (a) to consult with the Board and to make recommendations as to the **appointment of the Chancellor and the President;**
- (b) to determine and regulate the **standards for the admission** of students to the University, **the contents and curricula of all courses of study, and the requirements for graduation;**
- (c) to conduct **examinations and appoint examiners;**
- (d) to deal with matters arising in connection with the **award of fellowships, scholarships, medals, prizes and other awards for academic achievement;**
- (e) to **confer the degrees** of Bachelor, Master and Doctor and all other degrees, diplomas and certificates in all branches of learning that may appropriately be conferred by a University;
- (f) after consultation with the Board, to **confer honorary degrees**

Senators and the University



Senators

Place the University's overall interests at the forefront

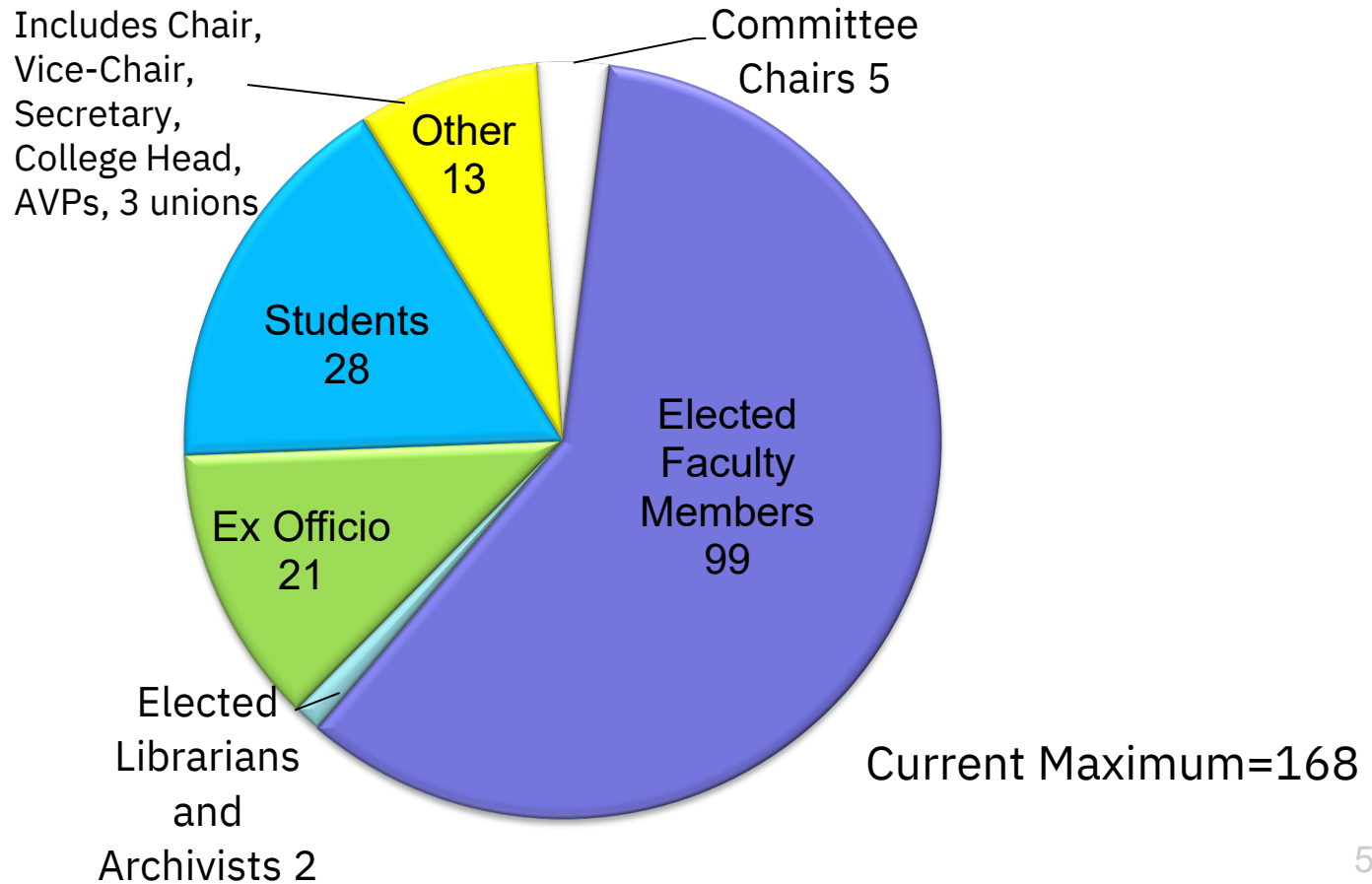
Advance academic planning objectives

Help connect Senate with the collegium and communities

Promote pride in governance and York

Act with respect and in collegial manner

Membership of Senate



Inclusion and Diversity



- As York strives to be inclusive, Senate must be a safe space where members may feel free to express themselves.
- Senators are encouraged to recognize the diversity of the collegium, take it upon themselves to foster respectful and inclusive debate and discussion.
- To remove barriers to free expression and ensure that Senate benefits from a variety of points of view, the Chair may give precedence to new members, those from underrepresented groups or members less heard.

Now That You're A Senator



Your name appears on the [list of Senators](#) on the Senate Website

You have been subscribed to the listservs “Senate-L” and “Senate-R” for notices of meetings and other important communications, and “Senate-D” as a forum for discussion.

You are eligible to vote in Senate elections (Passport York is needed for e-votes)

Brush up on [rules and procedures](#) – remember Senate is a welcoming body that emphasizes contributions

Visit frequently the [Senate Website](#) where key background information is maintained, and special announcements appear

Rights and Responsibilities

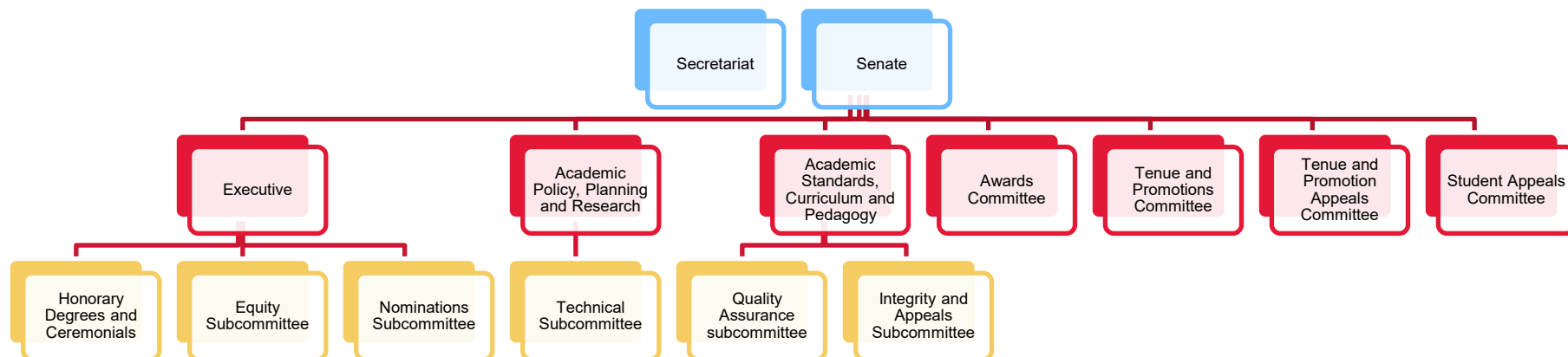


Principles from The Rules of Senate

- All have the same rights and obligations
- Right to **receive due notice of matters** to be decided and responsibility to **read documentation ahead of meetings**
- **Right to bring forth motions** in respect of the Rules
- Duty to **attend meetings and to vote on resolutions**
- Obligation to **act with respect and decorum**
- Obligation to **debate issues** under consideration

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Senate and Committees



Senate Committees (continued)



Senate **conducts most of its business through committees** and receives most recommendations from committees.

Between Senate meetings, Committees of Senate meet and approve recommendations to be considered by Senate.

Senate Committees can be grouped either by **role** (policy, adjudication or execution) or the process select its members (designated or elected)

Senate Committees (continued)



Some Senate Committee members are selected either through designation by Faculty Councils or election by Senate. Others are ex-officio, while some student members are elected by the Student Senators' Caucus.

Designation: APPRC, Hon. Docs. and Executive have a member for each Faculty selected by their respective Faculty Council and confirmed by Senate Executive. The Faculty Council Secretaries facilitate the process and forward the names of selected members to the University Secretary.

Election: All other committees have members that are elected by Senate. At the call of – and through - the University Secretary, candidacies are brought to Senate Executive for the slate of candidates to be confirmed and recommended to Senate. Senate approves the slate of candidates. The University Secretary facilitates elections and reports the results at the next meeting of Senate.

Senate Committees



Between Senate meetings, Committees of Senate meet and approve recommendations to be considered by Senate.

There are three types of committees:

Policy-oriented (policies, planning, programs / diplomas / certificates degree and admission requirements, quality assurance, establishment of units, etc.):

- APPRC (Academic Policy, Planning and Research)
- ASCP (Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy)

Primarily **adjudicative** (decisions on individual cases; may also deal with policy matters): Awards, T&P (Tenure and Promotion), T&P Appeals, (Student) Appeals.

Executive (coordination, communication, direction): - Executive (Po)

Before Senate Meetings

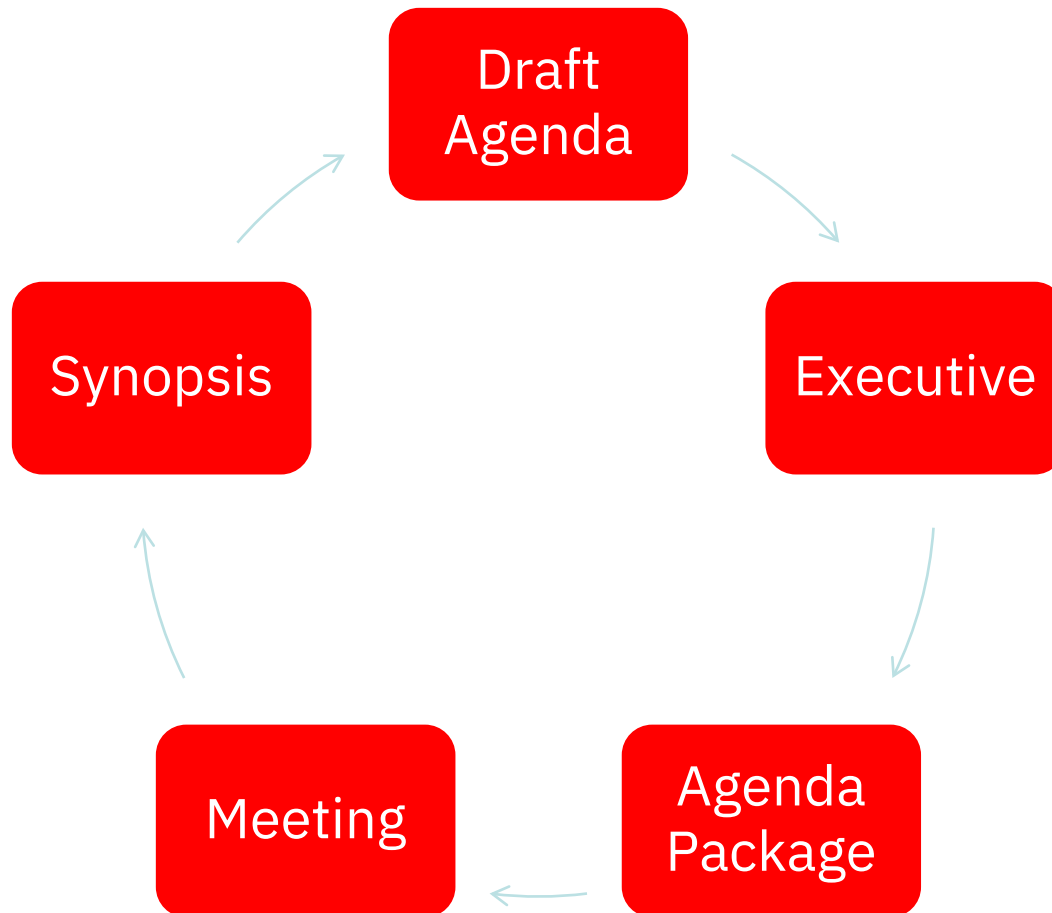


Notice of meetings (agendas) are issued **approximately a week prior to meetings.**

- For in-person meetings, notice on **Senate-L**. In-person meetings are open to the Community. Virtual option offered to those who cannot attend due to extenuating circumstances.
- For virtual meetings, notice on **Senate-R**, a link to the agenda package on the Senate Website will be embedded in the notice. Virtual meetings are webcast, but not recorded.

NOTE: Watch for additional notices just before meeting – with supplementary items from committees or presentations.

Senate Cycle



Conduct of Meetings



Meeting Officers:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Assistant Secretaries



The Chair of Senate normally presides.

The Vice-Chair may preside over all or part of the meeting (if the Chair is absent or when Senate meets in committee of the whole)

At meetings, members address each other as “Senator...”

Conduct of Meetings



Senate acts by **resolution** – that is, by passing motions.
There are also many information items – you can always ask questions or make suggestions.



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Types of motions



There are four types of motions that Senate may consider:

- 1. Substantive** motions – the most common type, sometimes called “regular motions”, deal with a substantive matter at hand.
- 2. Statutory** motions – infrequent, establishment of Faculties and Faculty Councils, revisions to Senate Rules, creation of Committees of Senate, etc.
- 3. Procedural** motions – frequent, motions related to process and not substance (adjournment, motion to divide, refer, calling the question, etc.)
- 4. Hortative** motions – rather rare, Senate expresses an opinion on a matter outside its jurisdiction.

How Can Substantive or Hortative Motions be Brought to Senate?



1. Motions normally brought to Senate Committees. Presented to Senate by the Committee Chair.
2. Motions by members submitted to Secretary of Senate in advance of Senate Executive meeting; ~12 days before meeting of Senate.

Chair may seek advice of the Executive Committee to determine if the motion is in order. A ruling that a motion is not in order is reported to Senate, as it can be appealed. Motions on the agenda are in order.

3. A motion can be brought without notice if it is presented in writing to the Chair or Secretary at least 24 hours before the meeting commences. The Chair rules on whether the motion is in order. It must further receive the support of two-thirds of Senators present and voting at the meeting.

4. Motions from members are considered “Other Business”.

Procedural Motions (Continued); Points of Order/Privilege



Procedural motions (continued):

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Motion to extend the meeting (specify end time)

Motion to put the question, motion to adjourn debate,
motion to refer, ...

Point of order: Made when it is alleged that there has been a breach of the rules of Senate.

Point of privilege: Made when it is alleged that the integrity of Senate or a Senator has been compromised.

Amendments and Sub-Amendments



Amendments alter the main motion without substantially changing its intent. Any amendment that negates or substantially alters the intent of the motion is out of order.

Senators can move an amendment to a motion:

- Debate on the main motion stops and pivots to the amendment
- Motion to amend must be seconded
- The amendment must be resolved before resuming discussion on the main motion
- An amendment may be further amended by a sub-amendment (only once).

(LA)

Senate Agenda



Agenda normally contains three parts:

- Opening Items (Chair's remarks, Business Arising from the Minutes, President's Items, Communications and Inquiries)
- Committee Reports
- Consent Agenda:
 - Routine items for approval or receipt by Senate
 - Deemed to be approved or received without a vote
 - Can be moved to the regular business agenda upon request
 - Consent agenda items include: minutes of the previous meeting, minor modifications to academic programs, Board of Governors synopsis.

Senate Agenda (continued)



Examples of items of business for Senate:

- Report from the COU Academic Colleague
- President's items – discussion period
- Committee reports
- Creation or modification of an academic program
- Approval of - or amendment to - academic policies
- Establishment of academic units
- Review and modifications to The Rules of Senate
- Election of Committee members

Nominations and Elections



- Nominations and elections are critical for Senate
- Senate Executive presents recommendations
- Some elections are conducted by **e-ballot** (a secure, accurate and anonymous process)
- Balloting requires a Passport York account
- If you do not have a Passport York account – which is also required to access some other York Websites – contact **Elaine MacRae**, University Secretariat (**emacrae @yorku.ca**)

Participating in Senate Meetings



When you can speak:

- A report is presented, and feedback is sought
- A motion is on the floor
- There is business arising from the minutes or there are inquiries and communications
- You have a point of order
- You have a point of privilege

Participating in Senate Meetings



Wait until:

- Your name is called by the Chair: “**Senator** ---”
- For in-person meetings, move to the microphone.
- For virtual/hybrid meetings, wait a second or two for your microphone to be activated
- You may speak just **once** to an item for no more than **five minutes**
- The Chair may permit additional interventions if time permits and new, **brief** thoughts will assist Senate

Tips for Effective Participation



- Review The Rules of Senate
- Review the agenda package in advance, note your questions or comments
- Discuss items with others
- Amendment to a motion written out in advance for Secretary
- When you begin, indicate why you are speaking (have a question, in support of or opposed to something, in need of clarification or additional information, wish to suggest some action by a committee)
- Address the Chair but speak to the plenary– the Chair will determine who should respond and when
- Be succinct. Keep your remarks brief and pointed
- Speak with respect – a key collegial value

(LA)

After a Senate Meeting



A **synopsis** is issued by the Secretary following the meeting.

Synopses are not minutes, but they are an accurate report of actions taken by Senate, including decisions.

Senators are informed on the listserv when synopses have been posted on the [Senate Website](#) – Y-File also announces availability

Faculty Councils reprint the synopses or link to them.

Senators let others know about Senate initiatives and encourage them to share their views with you.

(PA)

Role of the Chair



Chairs Senate and Executive Committee.

Serves ex-officio on committees with active participation in Academic Policy, Planning and Research (and its Technical Sub-Committee) as well as Honorary Degrees and Ceremonials.

Represents Senate at official occasions like Convocation.



Role of the Chair at Meetings



Assisted by the Vice-Chair and Secretary, the Chair:

- Opens proceedings
- Determines what is in order (motions, interventions, documents etc.)
- Recognizes speakers (no one may speak until recognized, and must halt or pause when the Chair intervenes)
- Makes definitive rulings as necessary to ensure that rules are properly followed, that speakers are focused on the matters at hand, and are respectful to others
- Promotes judicious use of Senate's time
- Maintains decorum and civility

(LA)

The Secretariat



Pascal Robichaud, University Secretary, Secretary of Senate and Executive

Cheryl Underhill, Senior Assistant University Secretary, Secretary of APPRC, supports Senate and Senate Executive

Pamela Persaud, Assistant University Secretary, Secretary of ASCP, Honorary Degrees and Ceremonials

Amanda Wassermuhl, Assistant University Secretary, Secretary of Tenure and Promotions Committee, Tenure and Promotions Appeals Committee, Student Appeals Committee, Awards Committee

Michael Pogorzelski, Senior Policy Advisor

Elaine MacRae, Governance Coordinator

Michelle Roseman, Administrative Assistant

Governance Resources

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/governancedocs/index-governancedocs.html>



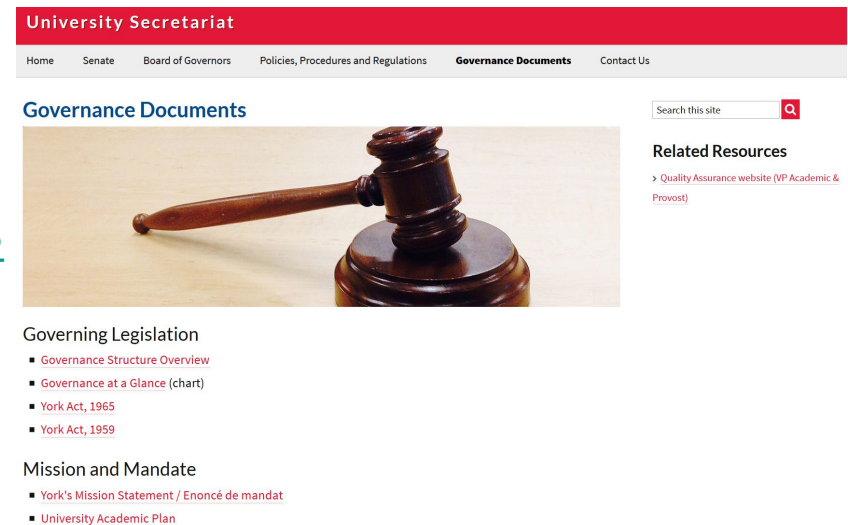
[Senate Rules](#)

[Governance at a Glance](#)

[University Academic Plan 2020-2025](#)

[Strategic Research Plan 2018-2023](#)

[Retention and Disposal of Senate Documents](#)



The screenshot shows the 'University Secretariat' website. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Senate, Board of Governors, Policies, Procedures and Regulations, Governance Documents (which is highlighted), and Contact Us. The main heading is 'Governance Documents'. Below this is a search bar and a 'Related Resources' section with a link to 'Quality Assurance website (VP Academic & Provost)'. A large image of a wooden gavel is featured. Underneath the image, there are two sections: 'Governing Legislation' with links to 'Governance Structure Overview', 'Governance at a Glance (chart)', 'York Act, 1965', and 'York Act, 1959'; and 'Mission and Mandate' with links to 'York's Mission Statement / Enoncé de mandat' and 'University Academic Plan'.

Today's Meeting Begins at 3pm....

