



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, June 24, 2015
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Voting Members:

Olive Yonge	Chair, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Walter Dixon (Delegate)	Member, Vice-President (Research)
Phyllis Clark	Member, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
Nadir Erbilgin	Member, Academic (A1.0) Staff-at-large
Lise Gotell	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Navneet Khinda	Member, President of the Students' Union, President, Students' Union
Harsh Thaker (Delegate)	Member, President of the Graduate Students' Association, President, Graduate Students' Association
Wendy Rodgers	Member, Academic Staff, Member of GFC
Brayden Whitlock	Member, Graduate Student-at-Large

Staff:

Meg Brolley, Coordinator, GFC Academic Planning Committee
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Olive Yonge, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair, GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

Motion: Erbilgin/Rodgers

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Agenda.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of June 10, 2015

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter: Olive Yonge, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC)

Motion: Rodgers/Clark

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the Minutes of June 10, 2015.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair provided commentary regarding a number of relevant issues to members.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Implications of Bill 3 APPROPRIATION (INTERIM SUPPLY) ACT, 2015 (NO. 2)

There were no documents.

Presenter(s): Olive Yonge, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, GFC Academic Planning Committee (APC); Phyllis Clark, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

Purpose of the Proposal: For discussion/information.

Discussion:

Ms Clark provided members with a summary of the specific changes as proposed in Bill 3, including the reversal of the 1.4% cut to the Campus Alberta grant announced in the March Provincial Budget; an increase of 2% to the Campus Alberta grant for both 2015–2016 and 2016–2017; restoration of funding for targeted enrolment; a two year freeze of domestic tuition and mandatory non-instructional fees (MNIFs) at 2014–2015 levels. In addition, she noted that the market modifiers approved earlier this year will be rolled back; however, universities will receive base funding to cover the losses incurred by the rollback.

She explained that even though the 2% increase to the Campus Alberta grant was welcome news, there were concerns about the rollbacks of tuition, because they are based on dated rates.

Ms Clark reported that the Provincial Government plans to conduct a funding model review, and has requested a Budget Impact Letter, due by the end of September. She added that there was no mention of “lights on” funding within Bill 3.

She stated that the biggest issue to consider was international tuition rates. She invited members to provide advice regarding this issue.

Members, during the discussion in regards to this, expressed a number of comments and questions, including, but not limited to: concerns about the logistics of actually reversing the fees; clarification on how the University of Calgary’s international tuition rates compared to the University of Alberta’s; discussion regarding target numbers for international students; clarification regarding whether previous budget-related motions will be rescinded and in what manner, due to the onset of summer; clarification regarding the timeline of the decision-making; clarification regarding whether the University of Toronto and other peer institutions are meeting their international student targets; that certain departments will be impacted by this negatively as many Faculties utilize the international student fees to meet budget needs; whether the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases will still apply; whether material could be provided outlining all of the outcomes of the options; that fees are not the only major factor in international enrolment; that this may have a bigger impact on international graduate students; a suggestion to keep levels as they are for now, with plans to review student support services; that taxpayers view international students differently from domestic students; that this issue is politically sensitive; that messaging surrounding keeping rates static

will be a key consideration; that the approved fees are already posted and students are already expecting them.

Ms Clark invited members to provide commentary on investing in strategic initiatives, as well as license renewal fees for Sitecore. She noted that both PEC-O and PEC-S will be involved in identifying areas of possible investment.

During the ensuing discussion, members provided a number of comments and questions, including, but not limited to: ongoing concerns at the Faculty level in terms of maintaining operations and that if Faculties are forced to go into deficit, it will not be beneficial for the financial standing of the University; that the next budget year is the problematic one; a suggestion to reserve a certain amount of the money for administrative expenses such as Sitecore licensing; whether prior strategic initiatives discussed before the budget cuts can be revisited; that members of the academy are maturing and that not enough younger members are being added; that rankings have gone down as a result of budget cuts; that the future discussion should include the maturing professoriate; a suggestion to invest in renewal this year and review strategic initiatives the following year; that it might be beneficial to discuss retirement incentive strategies; whether the pension plan mandates a certain retirement age; whether the Renaissance Committee (REM) Report touches upon any of these issues; that a maturing professoriate draws high salaries and that there can be reduced productivity; a suggestion for clearer expectations for full professors; that a mandatory retirement age could be revisited; clarification about the funding model review proposed by the Government; a suggestion to provide more education to the Provincial Government on the operational requirements of a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution (CARI); that the budget cuts have impacted the strategy and mission of several Alberta colleges; clarification regarding setting admission averages; clarification on why the University of Alberta advertises admission averages.

The Chair thanked members for their robust commentary and Ms Clark noted that any future initiatives must align with the University's academic mission.

5. Question Period

There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

6. Items Approved by the GFC Academic Planning Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

7. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

CLOSING SESSION

8. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.