



General Faculties Council
Academic Planning Committee
Approved Open Session Minutes

Wednesday, February 09, 2022
Zoom Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

Jelena Holovati, Vice-Chair
Steven Dew, Chair
Sandeep Agrawal
Chris Andersen
Chris Beasley
Peter Berg
Heather Bruce
Martin Coutts (delegate)
Shannon Erichsen

Anas Fassih
Vadim Kravchinsky
Jacqueline Leighton
Rowan Ley
Catherine Moore (delegate)
Melissa Padfield
Sanhita Pal
Yan Yuan
non-voting:
Kate Peters

REGRETS:

Brad Hamdon
Runjuan Liu
Todd Gilchrist
Aminah Robinson

Staff:

Heather Richholt, Assistant
Secretary to GFC

OPENING SESSION

1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jelena Holovati, Associate Professor and Vice-Chair, Academic Planning Committee (APC)

The Vice-Chair began by acknowledging the territory:

Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that the University of Alberta resides on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. To acknowledge the territory is to recognize the longer history of these lands and signifies our commitment to working in Good Relations with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as we engage in our institutional work.

Motion: Andersen/Leighton

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the agenda.

CARRIED

2. Comments from the Chair (no documents)

- COVID Update
- Update on Facilities Optimization

Presenter(s): Jelena Holovati, Associate Professor and Vice-Chair, APC

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair asked Vice-Provost and Registrar Melissa Padfield to provide an update on COVID. Ms Padfield acknowledged that the province had announced changes to restrictions and the plans for Return to Campus. She provided information on the work of the Academic Impacts Team to provide advice on admissions, the academic schedule, and exams. She advised members to expect a loosening of restrictions for dining and recreation facilities, and further discussions about what the provincial changes may mean for the Campus.

The Vice-Chair then shared the following information provided by the Chair to inform the conversation on Item 4, Facilities and Development:

- The Chair would like to inform you about work being done by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Facilities & Operations).
- They have established two committees focused on optimizing use of our facilities and, where necessary, reducing the overall infrastructure footprint.
- The objective is to ensure use of space is best aligned to support our academic and research mission as well as our enrollment growth.
- The administrative committees, the Facilities Optimization Oversight Committee and the Facilities Optimization Implementation Team, are initiating an inventory of our space in February 2022.
- Staff from Facilities and Operations are working directly with stakeholders across the University to undertake a comprehensive inventory.
- Updates on this work will be provided to the Academic Planning Committee and the Committee on the Learning Environment.

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of January 12, 2022

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Padfield/Erichsen

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee approve the open session minutes of January 12, 2022

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Authority over Facilities and Development

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Kate Peters, GFC Secretary and Manager, GFC Services, University Governance; Heather Richholt, Assistant Secretary to General Faculties Council, University Governance

Discussion:

The Vice-Chair reminded members that APC holds delegated authority to recommend on policy matters related to facilities and operations and invited Ms Peters to explain the impacts of a proposal to disband the GFC Facilities Development Committee (FDC).

Ms Peters noted that APC holds overlapping authority with FDC and that a proposed change to the APC terms of reference would see the committee taking on additional authority to approve General Space Programs and Functional Space Programs. These decisions are currently made by FDC, but are rare and may be even less frequent in the coming years. APC members were asked to discuss the impact of the additional responsibilities.

Members asked about the reaction of members of GFC and FDC in response to some changes to facilities and operations. The authority of GFC was explained and particularly, the limitations of authority as set out within the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*. Members inquired whether it would be possible to reinstate a standing committee of GFC, should the scope of work require it in the future. The authority of GFC to create standing committees, delegate its authority, and move delegated authority around was explained as were other models of governance for facilities found in academic senates across the U15.

ACTION ITEMS

Dr Holovati stepped out of the Chair and Dr Dew assumed the role.

5. Faculty of Education Restructuring

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Presenter(s): Jennifer Tupper, Dean, Faculty of Education; Lynn McGarvey, Vice Dean, Faculty of Education

Discussion:

The Chair began by articulating APC's delegated authority from GFC to make recommendations to GFC on the establishment and termination of Departments and encouraged members to consider the implications of this decision to the university's academic plan, as well as any institution-wide impacts on research, financial health, and facilities development. He noted that additional documents had been distributed in response to requests from members at the last meeting, specifically the accreditation standards for the Master's of Library and Information Studies (MLIS). He also noted that members had received the minutes from the 1991 GFC meeting where the Faculty of Library and Information Sciences was merged with the Faculty of Education. He invited Dean Tupper and Dr McGarvey to present and they provided a high level overview of the proposal.

Members asked questions, expressed opinions, and raised concerns including:

- The value of student consultation and the need to be proactive in seeking opportunities to hear from students;
- Recognition for the work that had been done since APC first saw the proposal and support of student-members of APC;
- How the two chair-like positions would support colleagues through mentorship, assignment of teaching responsibility, and their role in the faculty evaluation process;
- The role of the School of Library Studies (SLIS) in the Faculty and the perceived inconsistency between the merger approved in 1991 and the proposal before APC;
- Whether SLIS would have a chair at FEC and would be otherwise treated differently, or whether they would have chair-like autonomy to oversee all the aspects of the School's work;
- Whether SLIS would continue to function primarily as a department and continue to have autonomy over its programs, selection of students, hiring and promotion of faculty;
- How the decision had been perceived by Faculty Council and the context for the three approvals of the non-departmentalized structure by the Faculty Council;
- An opinion that the structure that was presented to the Faculty and that was illustrated through the infographic lacked clarity and that the Faculty Council vote may not have been valid;
- Whether budget considerations were a factor in the decision and what the impacts on the programs, faculty and students might be if the proposal did not move ahead;
- That the budget situation at the University required that each decision take into account budget restrictions and that at the same time, decisions needed to foreground the academic context;
- The importance of sustainability to APC's mandate and that this proposal would enable the sustainability of the academic, research and teaching mandate of the Faculty;
- How the proposal accounted for the preservation of accreditation standards; and
- An opinion that, from a Dean's perspective, there had been an erosion of trust over the past semester, especially between faculty and administrators and that the proposal had been consultative and structured to facilitate engagement.

The Chair and the Secretary to GFC were asked to clarify the decision that APC was being asked to make and reminded members that the responsibility of APC was to review the proposed structure and that the Dean has the authority and responsibility to make decisions about how to make the structure function.

Motion: Andersen/Bruce

THAT the Academic Planning Committee recommend that, the Board of Governors approve the proposal for a non-departmentalized structure for the Faculty of Education, to take effect July 1, 2022.

CARRIED

6. Proposed New Non-Regulated Exclusion to Program Fees, Proposed Changes to Existing Non-Regulated Exclusion to Program Fees

Presenter(s): Melissa Padfield, Vice-Provost and Registrar

Discussion:

Ms Padfield noted that these proposals are vetted through the Registrar's Advisory Committee on Fees and noted members pay attention to regulatory compliance, the need to show outcomes of student engagement, integrating where appropriate, a range of fees, and the need to consider how introduction of fees may impact equity deserving groups and inclusivity within our programs.

Members asked whether comparators were provided for the proposals.

Motion: Padfield/Bruce

THAT the GFC Academic Planning Committee recommend, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, that the Board of Governors approve:

- the proposed New Non-Regulated Exclusion to Program Fees (set forth in Attachment 1)
- the proposed Changes to Non-Regulated Exclusion to Program Fees (set forth in Attachment 2) as submitted on behalf of the relevant Faculties/Departments by the Registrar's Advisory Committee on Fees (RACF), to take effect as noted in each respective attachment.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Budget Update (standing item)

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, APC; Martin Coutts, Associate VP (Finance, Procurement and Planning)

Discussion:

Mr Coutts invited members to comment on the budget briefing materials distributed for the Joint Board APC meeting.

Members asked:

- about timelines and whether the provincial budget announcement will impact the materials presented to APC on March 10;
- how the cuts would be distributed across the Faculties and whether they would be proportionate;
- if there are savings from COVID and excess revenue, and if so, how they would be accounted for, and a request that the information be shared;
- whether the University can go into a deficit or accumulate debt;
- whether, if consolidation were to be approved, the University could run a deficit, access carry-forwards, or have a surplus; and
- if the University has a priority list that would be used to manage a larger-than-expected cut;

8. Question Period

Presenter(s): Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Chair, APC

The Chair announced the selection of Robert Wood as the next Dean of Arts and invited questions from members. There were no questions.

INFORMATION REPORTS

9. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings
 - Meeting Materials Now Available - Joint Budget Briefing

CLOSING SESSION

10. Adjournment
 - Next Meeting of APC: March 9, 2022
 - Next Meeting of GFC: February 28, 2022

The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.