



# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

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General Faculties Council  
Academic Standards Committee  
Approved Open Session Minutes

Thursday, January 16, 2014  
2-31 South Academic Building (SAB)  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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### **ATTENDEES:**

#### Voting Members:

Bill Connor	Chair (Delegate), Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Gary Barron	Member (Delegate), Graduate Students' Association Vice-President (Academic)
Dion Brocks	Member (Delegate), Dean, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Janice Causgrove Dunn	Member (Delegate), Dean, Physical Education and Recreation
Dustin Chelen	Member, Students' Union Vice-President (Academic)
Yvette d'Entremont	Member (Delegate), Dean, Saint-Jean
Elaine Geddes	Member (Delegate), Dean, Business
Gian Jhangri	Member (Delegate), Dean, Public Health
Nat Kav	Member (Delegate), Dean, Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
Nathalie Kermoal	Member (Delegate), Dean, Native Studies
Sharla King	Member, Health Sciences Council, Appointed Representative
Stuart Landon	Member (Delegate), Dean, Arts
Moan Yahiya	Member (Delegate), Dean, Law
Glen Loppnow	Member (Delegate), Dean, Science
Heather McRae	Member (Delegate), Dean, Extension
Marc Moreau	Member (Delegate), Dean, Medicine and Dentistry
Ada Ness	Member (Delegate), Vice-Provost and University Registrar
Harry Prest	Member (Delegate), Dean, Augustana
Natalie Sharpe	Member, Director of the Student Ombudservice
Joanna Harrington	Member (Delegate), Dean, Graduate Studies and Research
Liz Taylor	Member (Delegate), Dean, Rehabilitation Medicine

#### Presenter(s):

Bill Connor	Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee
Kathleen Brough	Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Dale Olausen	Senior Research Analyst, Office of Strategic Analysis

#### Staff:

Garry Bodnar, Coordinator, GFC Academic Standards Committee  
Andrea Patrick, Scribe

## **OPENING SESSION**

### 1. Approval of the Agenda

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Prest/Kav

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Agenda.

**CARRIED**

### 2. Approval of the Open Session Minutes of November 21, 2013

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

Motion: Taylor/Geddes

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve the Minutes of November 21, 2013.

**CARRIED**

### 3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair commented on a number of relevant items to members.

Following the Chair's comments, members expressed a number of comments and questions, including, but not limited to: a request for more details on the international college and clarification regarding which skills the international college will provide its students; whether there are plans to partner with the Edmonton Public School Board to attract students to the University of Alberta; whether there are plans to build on to existing student services; and commentary regarding existing funds being utilized on international students.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### 4. Items Deemed Minor/Editorial

The Following Proposal(s) are Deemed Minor/Editorial (GFC ASC's Terms of Reference (Mandate) (3.A.i and iii)) by the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC ASC, and are APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM GFC IN A SINGLE OMNIBUS MOTION.

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee

*Discussion:*

There was no discussion.

Omnibus Motion: Harrington/Chelen

4A. Faculty of Arts: Proposed Changes to Existing Admission/Transfer Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to existing admission/transfer requirements, as submitted by the Faculty of Arts and as set forth in Attachment A, to be effective in 2015-2016.

**CARRIED**

4B. Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research: Proposed Changes to Existing Admission/Transfer and Academic Standing/Graduation Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to existing admission/transfer and academic standing/graduation requirements (highlighted in yellow), as submitted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and as set forth in Attachment B, to be effective in 2014-2015.

**CARRIED**

4C. Faculty of Native Studies: Proposed Changes to Existing Admission/Transfer Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to existing admission/transfer requirements, as submitted by the Faculty of Native Studies and as set forth in Attachment C, to be effective in 2014-2015.

**CARRIED**

4D. Office of the Registrar: Proposed Changes to Admissions Chart 6 (International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses Approved for Advanced Standing)

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to Admissions Chart 6 (International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses Approved for Advanced Standing) of the University Calendar, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and as set forth in Attachment D, for implementation in 2015-2016 and for publication in 2014-2015 University Calendar.

**CARRIED**

4E. Office of the Registrar: Course Approvals and Denials for January, 2014

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from GFC, the proposal for approval of transfer credit, as submitted by the Office of the Registrar and as set forth in Attachment E, to take effect upon final approval.

**CARRIED**

4F. Faculté Saint-Jean: Proposed Changes to Existing Admission/Transfer, Academic Standing/Graduation, and French Language Proficiency Requirements

THAT the GFC Academic Standards Committee approve, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council, proposed changes to existing admission/transfer requirements, academic standing/graduation, and French Language Proficiency requirements, as submitted by Faculté Saint-Jean and as set forth in Attachment F, to be effective in 2014-2015.

**CARRIED**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 5. Presentation of Grades from 2012/2013 in Comparison to Previous Years

Materials before members are contained in the official meeting file.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee; Dale Olausen, Senior Research Analyst, Office of Strategic Analysis

*Purpose of the Proposal:* To share with GFC ASC and the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) grading data since the implementation of the Assessment and Grading Policy in the Fall Term, 2012.

*Discussion:*

Dr Connor introduced the presenter, Mr Dale Olausen, to members and explained that this presentation had been given at a recent meeting of GFC CLE.

Mr Olausen, aided by a PowerPoint presentation, provided members with information in relation to grading data at the University of Alberta since the implementation of the Assessment and Grading Policy in 2012. His presentation included reference to the source of the data; trends within first-, second-, third- and fourth-year undergraduate courses as well as graduate-level courses; Grade Point Average (GPA) comparisons; regression analyses; one-way analysis of variance; and descriptive trends of grading averages within the Faculty of Arts, Augustana Faculty, and the Faculty of Science.

Dr Connor stated that, recognizing that Faculties have their own individual grading cultures, he hoped more Faculties would fulfill the commitment for greater transparency regarding their grading processes and, in turn, provide information to the wider community with regarding to these processes (eg, provide updates on their Faculty-specific websites on grading practices).

During the extensive discussion with regard to this presentation, members provided a number of comments and questions, including, but not limited to: clarification surrounding the possible correlation of admitting students with strong academic backgrounds *versus* grade inflation; that there has been an effort to change the grades-based competitive culture within the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry; that according to the data within the presentation, the Assessment and Grading Policy appears not to have significantly altered grading across the institution; clarification about the impact of the merger of Augustana Faculty with the University of Alberta and its impact on the data presented; that many within the academy did pay attention to the grade distribution guidelines; a suggestion to monitor withdrawals; that major issues have existed, including that there can be vastly different grading averages within the same academic unit; concerns with the grading distribution documents within certain Faculties; confusion surrounding the Assessment and Grading Policy in relation to the continued existence of grading assessment documents; that the Assessment and Grading Policy requires the Office of the Registrar to provide annual data around grading at the institution; whether any Faculties are currently updating their grading guidelines which would make the issue clearer for students; concern that the grading distribution documents imply that they should be followed literally; and commentary that this information might be useful to be included within the University Calendar.

6. External Programs for Review and Programs in Progress on Campus: Standing Item

There were no documents.

*Presenter(s):* Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and Chair, GFC Academic Standards Committee; Kathleen Brough, Portfolio Initiatives Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

*Purpose of the Proposal:* For discussion/information.

*Discussion:*

Ms Brough provided an update of current programs being considered by the Provincial Government:

**Currently with Innovation and Advanced Education (IAE) Undergoing System Coordination Review:**  
Faculty of Extension proposal for a Master of Arts (MA) in Community Engagement

**Currently with Campus Alberta Quality Council Undergoing Quality Review:**  
Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences proposal for the Sustainable Agriculture Major

**Recently Approved:**

Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences proposal for new Plant Biotechnology and Agronomy Majors;  
Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences proposal for changes to the Nutrition and Food Science (NUFS) programs

**External Reviews of Proposals from Other Institutions:**

Bachelors of Arts (BA) in Psychology, Concordia University College

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

7. Items Approved by the GFC Academic Standards Committee by E-Mail Ballots

There were no items.

8. Information Items Forwarded to Committee Members Between Meetings

There were no items.

9. Question Period

There were no questions.

**CLOSING SESSION**

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:25 am.